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SENATE—*Thursday, March 10, 2016*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the Earth. You are the giver of everlasting life, and nothing can separate us from Your limitless love. You know us better than we know ourselves, and You work for the good of those who love You. You have given us the privilege to be called Your children.

Give our Senators today a faith sufficient for these challenging times. May their trust in You empower them to solve problems, to conquer temptations, and to live more nearly as they ought. Remind them that all things are possible to those who believe. May their trust in You create in them both the desire and power to do Your will.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later this morning the Senate will have an opportunity to take decisive action to address our Nation's devastating prescription opioid and heroin epidemic.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is good legislation that will help tackle this crisis by expanding education and prevention initiatives, improving treatment programs, and bolstering law enforcement efforts. This authorization bill, in conjunction with the $400 million appropriated for opioid-specific programs just a few months ago, can make important strides in combating the growing addiction and overdose problem we have seen in every one of our States.

In Kentucky, what we have seen is some of the highest drug overdose rates in the country, and we know all too well that the work that must be done to overcome this crisis lies before us. Kentuckians also know the positive impact this legislation can have.

Let me remind you of what a top anti-drug official from Northern Kentucky said about CARA. She said this bill ''will address the growing needs of our communities in getting appropriate treatment to those who are suffering . . . [and] allow individuals, families, and communities to heal from this scourge.'' So we will keep working hard to build on these efforts so that fewer Americans ever have to know the heartache of drug addiction and overdose.

I appreciate the work of Senators on both sides of the aisle to advance this bill. On the Democratic side, that includes the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Minnesota. On the Republican side, that includes Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire. She cares deeply about this issue and has studied the problem carefully. She has seen the effect it has had on her home State, and she has worked hard to do something about it.

Now, of course, today's vote on CARA would not have been possible at all without the leadership and work of other colleagues. I particularly want to mention Senator PORTMAN from Ohio, who has been involved with this for several years, from the very beginning, in developing this important legislation for our country. He has worked diligently over the past few years as the lead Republican sponsor of this much-needed bill. He has held many meetings and expert conferences to get an even greater understanding of the issue. We appreciate the long hours he has devoted to addressing this national crisis through the legislation we will pass today.

And of course, we thank the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for everything he has done to make this moment possible. He understands the urgency of addressing this epidemic, and we all appreciate the very important role he played in guiding this legislation to passage.

Indeed, this critical legislation to address America's national drug epidemic languished in a previous Senate Judiciary Committee, but then Chairman GRASSLEY came along. Under a new chairman and a new Republican majority, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act became a real priority. It passed the committee swiftly, and it will pass the Senate today.

Important legislation to help the victims of modern slavery languished in a previous Senate Judiciary Committee, but then Chairman GRASSLEY came along. Under a new chairman and a new Republican majority, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act became a real priority. It passed the committee swiftly, and then it passed the Senate.

The list goes on. Here is the chairman who has worked to give voices to the voiceless. He also has a passion for letting Iowans and the American people be heard. No wonder he is working so hard now to give the people a voice in the direction of the Supreme Court.

The next Supreme Court Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court and our country for a generation. It is a change in direction that could have significant implications for the rights we hold dear. That includes our Second Amendment rights and our First Amendment rights, things such as Americans' ability to speak out politically and practice their religion freely.

The American people obviously deserve to have a voice in this matter. It is the fairest and most reasonable approach we could take. During our current national conversation, Americans

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a member of the Senate on the floor.

could make their voices heard on the kind of judicial philosophy they favor.

One view says that judges should be committed to an even-handed interpretation of the law and the Constitution so that every American gets a fair shake. Another view—the so-called empathy standard that President Obama favors—says that judges should, on critical questions, rely on their personal ideology to resolve a case.

I know which view Justice Scalia took. He said that setting aside one's personal views is one of the primary qualifications for a judge. ''If you're going to be a good and faithful judge, you have to resign yourself to the fact you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach.''

The American people will have the chance to make their voices heard in the matter, and that is thanks to a dedicated Senator from Iowa who continues to stand strong for Americans' right to have a say. Chairman GRASSLEY has gotten a lot done under the new majority, just as the Senate has gotten a lot done under the new majority. We will mark another important accomplishment for the American people this morning with the passage of CARA.

Now Senators have a choice. Senators can endlessly debate an issue where the parties don't agree or they can keep working together in areas where we do. I say we should continue doing our work, and the American people should continue making their voices heard. That is good for the country, and that is the best way forward now.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are certainly pleased we are going to pass this opioid bill shortly. Everyone should understand that the bill would have had some meat if, in fact, we had an opportunity to adopt the Shaheen amendment. It would have funded the authorization that we are now talking about.

My friend always talks about the $470 million. That has already been obligated. That was last year's obligation to take care of this issue. This authorization bill has no money. For my friend to say we have $470 million is certainly not a factual statement.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 3 years ago voters went to the ballot to elect a President of the United States, the most powerful Nation in the world. The American people spoke, and they overwhelmingly elected President Obama to a second term.

We know that my friend the Republican leader stated that the Republicans had two goals: No. 1, to make sure that Obama was not reelected; and No. 2, that they would oppose everything Obama tried to do. On the first, they were a failure. Obama was reelected with more than 5 million votes. The other agreement the Republicans made was to oppose everything that Obama wanted to do or tried do, and they have stuck with that. That is why we have had 7 years of turmoil, 7 years of not doing nearly as much as we should, 7 years of endless filibusters.

So my friend the Republican leader can talk all he wants about the progress made last year, but anyone studying what has gone on in the Senate recognizes that simply is without any basis. We have done so little that some political scientists say it is the most unproductive year that has ever been spent in Washington. But 3 years ago, voters went to the ballot box to elect a President. The American people spoke. They spoke loudly, as I have indicated, and they overwhelmingly elected Barack Obama for a second term. It was a 4-year term he was elected to, not a 3-year term—a 4-year term.

During the Presidential term of office, our President has obligations—constitutional obligations. But Republicans continue to reject that election. They continue to reject Barack Obama's Presidency. They say he is illegitimate. They continue to reject the will of the people.

When he was reelected overwhelmingly, obviously, they gave him the constitutional powers to do whatever is within the Constitution. One of those is to nominate Supreme Court Justices, just as he did in his first term. Yet the Republican leader and the senior Senator from Iowa remain committed to blocking the President's nominee. They are not following the Constitution. Republicans are not following the Constitution. The whole country is taking note. But the State of Iowa is taking special note.

Earlier this week, a mother wrote an open letter to Senator GRASSLEY that appeared in the Des Moines Register. Here is what she said:

> Refusal to abide by the tenants of our Constitution, and confirm a qualified candidate to the Supreme Court, is a violation of our common values. Your example to my children is that it doesn't really matter what the rules say; if the stakes are high enough and the chips don't fall your way, it's OK to arbitrarily change the rules and deny the other player his/her turn.

That is the Senate Republicans' lesson to the people who elected them. It doesn't matter who you elected for President, we will refuse to do our duty just to follow Donald Trump's example. Remember what Donald Trump told all of my Republican friends and the country on the Supreme Court nomination. Here is his very, very detailed explanation of what he wants to do. Here is what he said: ''Delay, delay, delay.'' Then he went on to something else. The Republicans have followed that.

Yesterday, Professor Jonathan Carlson of the University of Iowa—he is a professor of law there—published an op-ed in the Cedar Rapids Gazette, a newspaper in Iowa. In the editorial, Professor Carlson wrote:

> Grassley's decision [will] rob Americans of their voice.

He went on to say:

> The voters elected President Obama to fill the next Supreme Court vacancy, and that vacancy is now upon us. Obama should be allowed to do the job he was elected to do.
>
> Grassley's problem isn't that he wants to give the American people a chance to decide this issue. His problem is that he doesn't like the decision they already made.

Republicans should not ignore the voice of the people just because they don't like what the American people declared, but that is just what the senior Senator from Iowa continues to do—ignore the people of Iowa and the rest of America.

Thirty years ago, Senator GRASSLEY had it right. When the Judiciary Committee began its consideration of the elevation of Justice Rehnquist to be Chief Justice, he said: ''This committee has the obligation to build a record and to conduct the most in-depth inquiry that we can.'' Let me repeat that. ''This committee''—he is referring to the Judiciary Committee—''has the obligation to build a record and to conduct the most in-depth inquiry that we can.''

Now Senator GRASSLEY isn't interested in inquiries or building a record. He refuses to meet with the nominee, even if the nominee is from Iowa. He refuses to hold a hearing, and he refuses, of course, to have a vote.

Senator GRASSLEY isn't interested in inquiries or building a record. Through his obstruction, he is already choosing to close the door on a potential nominee. He has even said that he will not consider the nomination of his fellow Iowan Judge Jane Kelly, even though she was overwhelmingly elevated from the trial court to the appellate court in this body with, of course, Senator GRASSLEY leading the charge on her behalf. So what he said about his fellow Iowan, Jane Kelly, is a little strange—a little odd—because it was Senator GRASSLEY who strongly supported Judge Kelly and pushed her confirmation to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Senator GRASSLEY says he will preemptively reject Judge Kelly, or any nominee, out of—listen to this one—principle, and that is because Republicans' only principle is obstruction.

As chairman of the Judiciary Committee, he has fallen in line with the Republican leader's obstruction and followed what Donald Trump has suggested: Delay, delay, delay. He is going to great lengths to shut down voices who simply want to do their jobs. For example, at the behest of the Republican leader, he met privately with Republicans on the Judiciary Committee and twisted his colleagues' arms to sign a loyalty oath, promising to block consideration of the President's nominees. That point has already been made here and is a part of the RECORD. Next, he tried to move a committee markup behind closed doors. When Democrats objected, he canceled the meeting. He also used the Presiding Officer's chair here on the floor to shut down debate on the Supreme Court vacancy, which is really unheard of, but he did it.

Time and again, the senior Senator from Iowa has followed the orders of the Republican leader and Donald Trump and sought to silence his critics and shut the American people out of the Senate's business. Why? If the Senator's obstruction is truly supported by the Constitution and history, why wouldn't he want to have a debate in the open? Let's debate it on the Senate floor. President Obama's nominee deserves a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. The American people deserve a Senate that honors the Constitution and provides its advice and consent on Supreme Court nominees.

As Professor Carlson said, by refusing to give President Obama's nominee consideration, Senator GRASSLEY is robbing Iowans and Americans of their voice. Listening to the American people is our job, and Senate Republicans should do their job.

Mr. President, what is the Senate business today?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:15 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Illinois.

NATIONAL SECURITY SATELLITE LAUNCHES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday the senior Senator from Arizona took to the floor to criticize the work of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. I am honored to be on that subcommittee as the vice chairman and to work with Senator COCHRAN, the Republican from Mississippi.

The senior Senator from Arizona argued that the support for Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump is somehow connected to the work of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. I have heard some pretty outlandish claims by Mr. Trump on the campaign trail, but the fact that he would capture the hearts and minds of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee with his rhetoric is beyond me.

Senator COCHRAN has been a Member of the Senate for many years. He is respected and has worked his way up to be chairman of the full committee. I have worked with him and found him to be an excellent partner. He is bipartisan and tries to make sure that we protect our Nation's national defense. I have never found him to be in the thrall of Donald Trump, but that suggestion was made yesterday by the senior Senator from Arizona. I will leave it to the American people to judge the wisdom or absurdity of that allegation.

I would like to take a moment to correct the record on a few of the things that the senior Senator from Arizona said. The issues involved are pretty complex, but the crux of it comes down to this: The senior Senator from Arizona is proposing to waste $1.5 billion—and perhaps as much as $5 billion—on a controversial proposal on how the Department of Defense and intelligence agencies should launch national security satellites. In addition to costing billions of dollars—that is billions, not millions—the senior Senator from Arizona's proposal is opposed by the Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter; the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper; the Under Secretary of Defense, Frank Kendall; and the Secretary of the Air Force, Deborah James. One would think that the senior Senator from Arizona, who chairs the Defense Authorization Committee, would note that it is unified opposition from the Department of Defense to his ideas. Each of these individuals has expressed strong concern about the ideas of the senior Senator from Arizona. They have stated as clearly as they can and as often as they can that what he has in mind will harm our national security. They have even stated it in the senior Senator's committee hearings. He is either not listening, paying attention, or refusing to agree. Nevertheless, all that I did, all that the Senate has done last year with Senator COCHRAN on a bipartisan basis, was to listen to our senior national security leaders while protecting taxpayers from wasting billions of dollars.

The matter generating all of this discussion is about competition for launching defense satellites into space. Let me tell you at the outset that before I came to the subcommittee, we made a terrible decision. About 10 years ago, the two leading competitors for launching satellites into space were two private companies, Boeing Aircraft and Lockheed. They came to the government with a suggestion, and they said: We've got a great idea. Instead of competing against one another to launch satellites—listen to this—we will merge our companies together, and we will save the government lots of money. I don't know why, but the Department of Defense and the committees on Capitol Hill bought it, and they created the United Launch Alliance, or ULA. It became a monopoly. These two merged corporations became a monopoly in launching satellites. You know what happens when you have monopoly status? The costs go up dramatically, and that is exactly what happened.

In the last 10 years, United Launch Alliance has been a reliable partner with the Department of Defense, and they have launched satellites and other things into space which have been critical for national security. But because they are a monopoly with no competition, they became very expensive.

There are new entries in the market that are promising in terms of launching satellites, and one of them is SpaceX. SpaceX has matured into a company that can play an important role in the future of satellite launches. I noted this fact, and as chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I did something that is unusual by Capitol Hill standards. In January of 2014, I held a hearing. At the same table I invited the CEO of United Launch Alliance and the CEO of SpaceX to sit next to one another and testify. They answered questions about their capabilities and about the history of space launch in the future. The committee members asked them how they could save money, and each of them responded. At the end of the hearing, I suggested to each of the CEOs that they propound up to 10 questions to the other CEO that they didn't think were covered in our hearing. I tried to make this as open as possible and to invite a new competitive spirit when it came to these space launches. I think it was constructive.

It is also clear that there is another element in this issue that brought the senior Senator from Arizona to the floor. The United Launch Alliance has several engines that can take a satellite into space. The most economical one, the RD–180, is not built in America. It is built in Russia. Now, that has become a major problem. Put Vladimir Putin and his adventurism to the side here. I have even joined with the senior Senator from Arizona, condemning what Putin has done in countries such as Georgia and Ukraine and his threats to the Baltics and Poland. Put that over to the side for a moment. It is best for us to make our own engines when it comes to the launching of satellites for America's national defense and intelligence. We put millions of dollars in the appropriations bill to incentivize the building of a new engine so we can finally break away from

our dependence on this Russian RD–180 engine. For 2 years we have been putting that money in the bill.

I am not opposed to competition. I favor competition. I favor an American-made engine. That is not the issue. Here is the problem: You can't just waive a wand or pass an appropriation and recreate a new rocket engine. It can take up to 5 years. What will happen in that 5-year period of time while we in America are developing at least one new American-made reliable rocket engine? We will have to be dependent either on that Russian engine in transition or run the risk that we are not going to have any engines available when we desperately need them for satellite launches. That is exactly what the Secretary of Defense has told the senior Senator from Arizona, and he just will not buy it. He has said: We have to cut the cord and walk away from the Russian engines.

Here is something he can't answer: NASA also uses engines to launch satellites and people into space. Why would we launch people into space? For the space station. How do we get those folks up to the space station and bring them home? On Russian rocket engines.

If the senior Senator from Arizona says that's it, cold turkey, no more Russian engines, what in the world is he going to do about NASA's needs for this engine in supplying the space station and making sure that the folks in orbit can safely come home? He can't answer that question because the answer truly tells him the problem he is creating here.

What we are trying to do is this: Transition to American-made engines. I am for that. Create competition for space launches in the future. I am for that. And make sure we do it in a thoughtful, sensible way and not at the expense of America's national defense, our national intelligence, or the future of our space program. We can work with the Senator from Arizona. I would like to do that, but when he comes to the floor and suggests that all of us who oppose him are somehow cronies of Vladimir Putin or marching to the orders of Donald Trump, it doesn't create a very productive environment for conversation.

Let's do the right thing. Let's work together on an appropriations authorization. Let's put the Russian engines behind us in an orderly way, let's create the American engine, and let's push for competition. That is where I got started on this, and that is where I am today.

We need to listen to the experts—the experts at the Pentagon—who have told us repeatedly that to do this cold turkey and to cut off the Russian engines is, frankly, to jeopardize our national defense, security, intelligence gathering, and even our space program. That is something I hope the senior Senator from Arizona can agree is an outcome which we should avoid.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to address an issue we are confronting in the Senate, and it is an issue folks in Pennsylvania and across the country are dealing with every day; that is, the opioid crisis. There are a lot of ways to describe this crisis. I am pleased to be able to talk about this issue with two of my colleagues who will be following me in succession after my remarks have concluded.

This Senator wants to thank, in a particular way, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator SHAHEEN, and our leadership for bringing this issue to the forefront within our caucus and here in the Senate. I know the effort to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—known by the acronym CARA—is a bipartisan effort. I certainly appreciate that.

In the case of Senator WHITEHOUSE, he brings a deep reservoir of experience as a Federal prosecutor, U.S. attorney, as well as the attorney general of Rhode Island. He brings a law enforcement set of experience as well as his caring and concern about those who have addiction issues. We appreciate his leadership. Senator BROWN has worked on this for many years in the Senate and as a Member of the House of Representatives. This is an issue that confronts all of us in our States. Our efforts have to be commensurate to match the severity of the problem.

This week the Senate missed an important opportunity to invest substantial resources in our Nation's heroin crisis. The amendment offered by Senators SHAHEEN and WHITEHOUSE would have provided $600 million in emergency funding to aid public health professionals and law enforcement, the two main segments of our society that deal with the challenge of addiction on a daily basis. That amendment was defeated, and I think that was the wrong conclusion for the Senate and wrong for the country.

While the Senate failed to act on this amendment, there is no reason we shouldn't find other opportunities to invest in anti-heroin strategies or, expressed another way, strategies that will lessen or reduce the likelihood that more people will be addicted to some opioid which often leads to other kinds of challenges such as heroin. It too often leads not just to the darkness of addiction but literally to the darkness of death itself. We have some work to do.

We know we can pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the CARA Act, as I mentioned before. That is good, but it is not nearly enough. We have to do more than simply pass good legislation that will authorize policies to better confront the challenge. That will not be enough. If we have in place new programs, new approaches, and new strategies, that is a measure of progress, but we can't ask medical professionals to do more to treat addiction if they don't have the resources. We cannot ask law enforcement to do more if they don't have the resources.

Heroin overdose deaths have increased 244 percent from 2007 to 2013. In roughly a 6-year timeframe, heroin overdose deaths are up 244 percent. It is hard to even comprehend that kind of increase of a death statistic—not just a number but a number that indicates the increase in the number of deaths. That alone should motivate us to do everything possible to do whatever it takes. Whatever authority, whatever policy, whatever dollars we need to invest in this, we have to do that. There are lots of other numbers, and sometimes you can get lost in reciting the numbers. I will mention a few that are relevant to Pennsylvania before I conclude.

In addition to just passing the CARA bill, we ought to focus on taking measurable steps to solve the crisis. We don't want to just address the issue, confront the challenge, we want to solve the crisis. It will not happen in 1 year, and it will not happen because of one bill or one policy, but we have to put every possible resource or tool on the table to actually solve the crisis.

There are lots of ways to illustrate the degree of the problem. I will talk about a couple of communities in Pennsylvania, just by way of example.

The Washington Post—a great newspaper here—went to Washington, PA. We have a county and city just below the city of Pittsburgh, just south of Pittsburgh, Washington County and the city of Washington. The Post went there last summer and began to interview people at the local level.

In one of the more stunning statistics they found in their reporting, in 70 minutes there were eight overdoses related to heroin—in this case not yet deaths but overdoses. A newspaper could track in 1 hour 10 minutes, eight overdoses in one community in one State. Then they tracked it over a 2-day timeframe. In 48 hours there were 25 overdoses in Washington County, PA, and 3 deaths, in a 48-hour period. I cite that not just for the compelling nature of those numbers but because of where it happened. This is not happening in communities we used to

think of as having a major heroin or drug addiction problem. We tended to think of it, at least in my lifetime, as being an urban issue that big cities have this problem and less so in small towns, suburbs, and rural communities. In this case, this horror, this evil knows no geographic or class boundaries. It is happening in big cities and very small towns in Pennsylvania. It is happening in suburban communities, high- and low-income communities and in middle-income communities. It is happening everywhere. There is no escaping it.

If it is happening in places like Washington County—the city of Washington, PA, is not a big city but a moderate-sized city. Other parts of that county tend to be more rural, small towns to rural. If it is happening there in those kinds of numbers, in 70 minutes or 48 hours, overdoses and overdose deaths, that gives you an indication of the gravity of the problem.

The Coroners Association in Pennsylvania, which has to track the number of deaths in their counties, reported that in just over a few years in Pennsylvania, the number of deaths from overdoses went from less than 50 to hundreds of deaths in just a couple of years. The gravity of this problem is self-evident.

It is not good enough to diagnose the problem and recite statistics. We have to solve the crisis. There is no doubt this is a huge issue for the country.

By not passing the funding that we tried to pass, we are missing a chance to support, for example, the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant, the so-called SABG, or the SA block grant. That is an existing program—an existing block grant program—that works. The only good news here, in this debate about what policy to put in place, is that local officials know what they are doing. Addiction and medical professionals know exactly what to do. They know exactly what works. They know exactly what they need. What they are asking us for is a little bit of policy or a significant amount of policy, maybe. But they are also asking for research and resources, and we have to give those resources to them.

I conclude with the following. We know that good treatment works. All the professionals tells us it works. We know so much more today than we did 25 years ago about what works. We know that good treatment works. It takes a long time. There is no 90-day program here because it takes a lot longer than that. So we know that for sure. There is no dispute about that. We also know that good treatment costs money. You cannot just have good intentions here.

Lifesaving overdose reversal drugs such as naloxone cost money. The good news is we have a drug to reverse the adverse impact of an overdose, and yet a lot of communities cannot afford to get this very important drug called naloxone, the so-called reversal drug as some call it.

Intercepting drugs before they reach our streets costs money. The worse this epidemic gets, the more these services are in demand.

So Congress—the Senate and the House of Representatives—must provide additional funding to make sure local communities can meet the demand. We know that investing in programs that treat addiction and save lives is an abiding obligation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 additional seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. It is an abiding obligation that we must fulfill. We have to tackle this problem. We can't do it without resources.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am delighted to join Senator CASEY of Pennsylvania and Senator BROWN of Ohio on the floor this morning to applaud what appears to be the imminent passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. So far we have had less than a handful of votes against this bill at any stage through the voting on it, and I suspect that some of those votes may have had to do with amendments and so forth. We might even do better than that on final passage.

I thank my cosponsors. This was not a bill that was just dreamed up in back offices. We had five national seminars in Washington, bringing people in from all around the country to share their experiences, to share their advice, to share their best practices, and to inform the development of this bill. It has been years of work in the making.

On our side of the aisle, Senator KLOBUCHAR has been an extremely valuable colleague. On the other side of the aisle, Senator PORTMAN and Senator AYOTTE were our coconspirators on this bill. I thank them and extend my appreciation to all of them.

This truly is a comprehensive bill: everything from at the point of overdose getting naloxone into the hands of first responders so that lives can be saved; through the prescribing process and the prescription drug monitoring process; through a whole variety of new treatment programs; and through intervention for people who are incarcerated and the prevention of incarceration, particularly for our people in veterans courts and so forth, who can be diverted out of the prison system through new means of treatment such as medically assisted treatment that is emerging as a very promising new strategy; and all the way, ultimately, to disposal of excess drugs. This truly is a comprehensive bill.

Its only faults are ones that the Republican leadership are in a terrific position to remedy, if they would.

The first is that there is no additional funding to support any of these new programs that I have described. The funding for the accounts in question was determined months and months and months ago in the Appropriations Committee before anybody could know what this bill was going to look like on the floor.

When the final deal was reached, the numbers actually matched the President's budget, and the President's budget was issued even before the appropriations measure came out of its relevant subcommittee. So the President's budget folks would have had to have been astonishing masters of prediction in order to put in money for programs that weren't even law at that time.

There has been considerable commentary from the other side that there is funding for this, but what they overlook is that, yes, there is funding for these programs, but you would have to take it away from other treatment and recovery programs to fund these. It would be robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Now, an argument could be made that under this bill, Paul will be a more effective program than the pre-CARA Peter would have been, and, therefore, robbing Peter to pay Paul is a net good. But, please, let's not pretend there is money for this.

If there is one indication of how there really isn't new money for this, it is the fact that our friends on the other side can't agree on how much money there is for this. Some Senators have said that there is $78 million for funding CARA. The majority leader has said there is $400 million to fund CARA. The deputy majority leader has said there is $517 million to fund CARA. If the money were real, I suspect they could agree on the amount of it. I think the fact of the matter is that there is no new money for this, and the sooner we can get this funded, the sooner it will save lives.

The second problem is that the House, under Republican leadership, has taken no action on this bill. No committee has taken it up and passed it. So I take this opportunity to call on the leadership here and in the House to put money where their proverbial mouth is to pass this bill, to get some funding behind it—Senator SHAHEEN's measure would have been terrific—and to get some action out of their colleagues in the House. If we pass it in the Senate and the House takes no action, this will be a sham, and that will have been a shame.

With that, I yield the floor for Senator BROWN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Madam President. Thank you to my colleagues for the terrific work they have done on such an important issue, which in my State sort of began in the most rural of the areas of the State and spread and spread and spread. This is the right kind of comprehensive response for this, but as Senator WHITEHOUSE just said, it means real funding for CARA and what we are doing.

I am pleased we are coming together in a bipartisan way overall, finally taking action on the opioid epidemic that is devastating communities across our country.

We know some of the statistics. More people died in my State than in the country as a whole in 2015 from opioid overdoses rather than they did from auto accidents. We are experiencing a record number of fatal overdoses. There is no State and probably county untouched by the scourge.

We need to remember the human cost of addiction. In Warren, OH, a couple of weeks ago, there was middle-age woman who now has a child now in his midtwenties who has suffered addiction for a dozen years, has been in and out and is doing better, and then falls back. His family is affluent, so his treatment has been better than some. But she says that when there is an addiction, it afflicts the whole family. Nobody is really exempt.

In my State, 2,500 Ohio families in one year lost a loved one to addiction. Thousands more continued to struggle with opioid abuse or with a family member's addiction. It is not an individual problem or a character flaw. It is a chronic disease. Right now, it is placing an unbearable burden on families and communities in our health care system. That is why we need to tackle this at the national level.

It is why I am encouraged to see us debate this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or the CARA Act. The ideas in this bill are an important first step in tackling the epidemic, but they are just the first step. On their own they are not nearly enough to put a dent in this epidemic. The initiatives are going to mean very little—and here is the key point that both Senator CASEY and Senator WHITEHOUSE made—without additional funding to back them up.

My colleagues Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and Senator WHITEHOUSE introduced an amendment that would have provided an additional $600 million to fight the opioid epidemic. That would be a serious commitment in putting the ideas in this bill into place into action.

But my colleagues on the other side of the aisle blocked this investment. Again, they want to do things on the cheap. They want to pass things to pat ourselves on the back but not provide the funding to actually accomplish things. It would block the investment in health professionals and communities who are on the frontlines of this battle.

You simply can't do a roundtable with health professionals and people working toward recovery and families affected by it without hearing from them. They need resources locally. The States aren't coming up with it adequately. They need resources, and they need real investment in prevention programs. We need real investment in treatment options to help patients not just get cured and get clean but stay clean.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act with my colleague Senator BALDWIN of Wisconsin. Our bill would boost prevention efforts that would improve tools for crisis response. It would expand access to treatment, and it would provide support for lifelong recovery, the kind of serious investment we need to back up our rhetoric.

In public health emergencies, we are sometimes, somehow able to come up with necessary money—swine flu, Ebola, Zika virus. But addiction is not a public health emergency. Addiction is a public health problem, but one we need to fund in an ongoing way. You can look at the spike in the number of deaths. You can conclude nothing else but that it is a long-term public health problem. Too many lives have been destroyed. Too many communities have been devastated. I am just puzzled why my colleagues won't come up with $600 million for this very important public health program. It is time to get serious. It is time to call it what it is—the public health crisis that demands real and immediate investment, not more empty rhetoric, not more empty gestures.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about what I have been hearing from people in Wyoming about the issue of whether President Obama should nominate the next Supreme Court Justice.

This past last weekend, I was around the State of Wyoming in Rock Springs, in Rawlings, and in Casper and the weekend before that, as well, in Casper, Cheyenne, and Big Piney. I am hearing the same thing from all around the State of Wyoming.

What I am hearing is that President Obama should not be the one to put another nominee on the Supreme Court and that it should come down to the people: Give the people a voice. That is what I am hearing back home.

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, is doing exactly what the people of Wyoming are insisting upon—the right thing. He is doing the right thing by insisting that the American people decide. I think Senator GRASSLEY is doing a great service to this body, to the American people, and also to whomever the next President nominates for the Supreme Court.

On Monday, after traveling around the State of Wyoming, Senator ENZI, who had also traveled around the State of Wyoming this past weekend, and I jointly held a telephone townhall meeting. Folks at home are very familiar with these. We do these just about every month. We have a chance to visit with people about what is on their mind. Then there is a little way you can do a poll during that telephone townhall meeting, and 88 percent of the people of Wyoming agree with Senator GRASSLEY, agree with Senator ENZI and with me about the next Supreme Court Justice and giving the people a voice.

Democrats want to turn this all around into a fight on the Senate floor. They want this to be a backroom deal between the President and the special interest groups. These are the groups that are pushing the President to appoint someone who will rule the way they want. But that is not what the American people want.

The American people—and certainly the people in Wyoming—want this to be a fight about what happens and what they decide in the voting booth in November. When an election is just months away, the people should be allowed to consider possible Supreme Court nominees as one factor in deciding whom they will support for President. This shouldn't really even be controversial.

Democrats in the past have come to the floor, and they said it would be a bad idea to let the President make a lifetime appointment in his last months in office. In 1992 Senator JOE BIDEN came to the Senate floor to explain his rule. He called it the Biden rule, and it had to do with Supreme Court nominations.

On the Senate floor, JOE BIDEN—now the Vice President, former chairman of the Judiciary Committee—said that once the Presidential election is underway—and I will tell you, Madam President, the Presidential election is underway—''action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.''

Those are the words of JOE BIDEN. Senator BIDEN said that a temporary vacancy on the Court was ''quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and our Nation would have to pay for what assuredly would be a bitter fight.''

That is what Senator BIDEN at the time was worried about. He was worried that a bitter fight over a nominee would do damage to the nominee and to the Senate. He knew there would be Senators who would come to the floor and try to politicize this process for their own purposes, and we are seeing the Democrats doing that right now. He knew it because that is what Democrats have done for years.

This is politics as usual for the Democrats. It is the way they tend to live their lives here on the Senate floor—talking this way. It is exactly what Democrats did when Robert Bork was nominated to serve on the Supreme Court. So Vice President BIDEN, former Senator BIDEN, understands it completely. It is what they did when Miguel Estrada was nominated to the circuit court. It is what Democrats did when Samuel Alito was nominated to the Supreme Court. Democrats in the Senate even filibustered Justice Alito when he was the nominee. They did everything they could to slander good, qualified people to try to score political points. It is what they do.

Well, there is no need for us to have this bitter political fight that JOE BIDEN worried about. Republicans have said there should not be a bitter political fight. We have called on the President to spare the country this fight. The best way to avoid the fight is to agree to let the people decide. Give the people a voice, and let the next President put forth the nomination. That is certainly what the people of Wyoming want us to do. It is what I heard, along with Senator ENZI, on the telephone townhall meeting this past Monday, and that is what I heard as I traveled around the State of Wyoming the past several weekends. I will be back in Wyoming this weekend, and I expect to hear the same thing as I travel to Buffalo to the health fair and to communities around the State.

That is what the American people are saying: Give the people a voice. They are saying that a seat on the Supreme Court should not be just another political payoff to score points in an election year. They are saying it should not be a decision for a lameduck President with one foot out the door. It is too important for that.

The Supreme Court is functioning just fine with eight Justices right now. That is not me saying it; it is the Justices of the Supreme Court saying the same thing. Since Justice Scalia died last month, the Court has heard oral arguments in 10 cases. They have released written opinions in five cases. They have scheduled more cases for the rest of the term, and they are doing their jobs. That is exactly what Justice Breyer said they would do. He is a liberal Supreme Court Justice who was appointed by President Bill Clinton.

A reporter asked Justice Breyer about the death of Justice Scalia, and he said: ''We'll miss him, but we'll do our work.'' He said: ''For the most part, it will not change.''

So there is no urgency to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court right now. There is no danger in waiting for the next President to act. There is tremendous danger, however, if we rush through a nomination in the last few months of a Presidential election, to the nominee, to the Senate, and to the Nation, just as JOE BIDEN said 24 years ago. The stakes are very high, too high to let that happen.

The people are telling us what they want. Eighty-eight percent of the people in Wyoming involved in our telephone townhall meeting on Monday said exactly that: Give the people a voice. We must let the people decide.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Mississippi.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I understand we are on the bill, but there are no speakers presently here, so I would like to address the Chair and my colleagues for a few moments about the matter my colleague from Wyoming was discussing just now, and that is the very serious matter of how we will fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia.

I want to read to my colleagues a message I got from one of my constituents in Columbus, MS. As you can imagine, we have all received quite a bit of opinion from the people who put us in office, but I think this constituent really hits it on the head when she says: ''The next appointment is probably the most crucial in our history and will have ramifications on future generations.''

I really agree with that, and I think it is such a profound decision that we ought to feel comfortable, as the Senator from Wyoming just said, in letting the people decide. We are in the midst of a great debate about the direction our country will take, the executive branch will take, over the next 4 and possibly 8 years.

The Court has been relatively balanced, with a slight 5–4 tilt toward the conservative side. Clearly there is an effort in this city and on the part of some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to shift that balance. I think it is reasonable to conclude, with so much involved and with the ramifications on future generations, as my constituent has said, that it is very appropriate that this be a matter of debate in this Presidential election and, frankly, in the Senate elections also. And I realize there is a lot of heat and light on this issue, but I would simply suggest that we are on the right track in letting the American people speak to this.

There is another matter in this regard that I have been reluctant to bring to the attention of my colleagues until today, but I think it has gotten to the point where we need to be reminded that there are rules of decorum that apply to this debate and to all debates we have on the Senate floor. I would direct the Chair's attention and the attention of my colleagues to rule XIX of the Standing Rules of the Senate. Paragraph 2 of that rule states: ''No Senator in debate shall, directly or indirectly, by any form of words impute to another Senator or to other Senators any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming a Senator.''

I read that paragraph in its entirety because it is quite obvious to me, to my colleagues on this side of the aisle, and I think to objective observers, that what has ensued over the last week or two has been a concerted effort to impugn the reputation and honor of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the distinguished Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

I would just suggest to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and particularly to my friend the distinguished minority leader that in reviewing some of the statements that have been made on this floor—and I have them in my hand, although I will not read them again to the Chair because they are in the RECORD—particularly those statements coming from the very top leadership of the other side of the aisle, there has been statement after statement that crosses the line, that is prohibited under the rules. It is a breach of our rules to suggest about any other Senator motives unworthy or unbecoming of a Senator.

I hope we can continue this debate, and certainly we will, but I hope we will confine it to the merits of the issue, and there are merits on both sides. This is not the place to conduct an election or reelection campaign—the floor of the Senate is not that place—and it seems to me that in recent days that line has been crossed and crossed repeatedly.

I will get back to my original point. We are prepared to let the American people speak on this issue, and it is of

vital importance not just for the next 4 years but perhaps for the next decade, two decades, or three decades. And I would ask us to dial the rhetoric back, dial the heat back, and stay on the issues. We are comfortable making the case that this is a decision that should be left to the American people.

I thank the Chair for giving me the time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I want to take a few minutes to describe the funding that my substitute amendment for S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, is intended to authorize.

Section 202 of the amendment authorizes SAMHSA's grants to prevent prescription drug/opioid overdose-related deaths. These grants were appropriated $12 million in H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016. The specific appropriating language is located on page 50 of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education report to H.R. 2029.

Section 204 authorizes the COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force and Anti-Methamphetamine Task Force. These two task forces were appropriated $7 million each in H.R. 2029, for a total of $14 million. The specific appropriating language is located in paragraphs three and four under the section entitled ''Community Oriented Policing Services'', on page 70 of H.R. 2029.

Section 301 authorizes SAMHSA's grants for targeted capacity expansion—medicated assisted treatments. Grants under this program were appropriated $25 million in H.R. 2029. The specific appropriating language for this program is located in the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education report to H.R. 2029, on page 47.

Section 501 authorizes SAMHSA's Services Grant Program for Residential Treatment for Pregnant & Postpartum Women. This grant program was appropriated $15.9 million in H.R. 2029. The specific appropriating language for this program is located in the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education report to H.R. 2029, on page 46.

Finally, some of the other sections in CARA are being authorized through 42 U.S.C. section 3797cc, which was appropriated $11 million in H.R. 2029. The specific appropriating language is located in paragraph one under the section entitled ''Community Oriented Policing Services'', on page 69 of H.R. 2029. Therefore, the managers' amendment authorizes a total of $77.9 million in total.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COTTON. I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

Ms. AYOTTE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted ''nay.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 34 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Schatz
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schumer
Capito	Inhofe	Scott
Cardin	Isakson	Sessions
Carper	Johnson	Shaheen
Casey	Kaine	Shelby
Cassidy	King	Stabenow
Coats	Kirk	Sullivan
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Tillis
Corker	Manchin	Toomey
Cornyn	Markey	Udall
Cotton	McCain	Vitter
Crapo	McConnell	Warner
Daines	Menendez	Warren
Donnelly	Merkley	Whitehouse
Durbin	Mikulski	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Wyden
Ernst	Murkowski	
Feinstein	Murphy	

NAYS—1

Sasse

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	McCaskill	Sanders
Lee	Rubio	

The bill (S. 524), as amended, was passed, as follows:

S. 524

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The abuse of heroin and prescription opioid painkillers is having a devastating effect on public health and safety in communities across the United States. According to

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths now surpass traffic accidents in the number of deaths caused by injury in the United States. In 2014, an average of more than 120 people in the United States died from drug overdoses every day.

(2) According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (commonly known as ''NIDA''), the number of prescriptions for opioids increased from approximately 76,000,000 in 1991 to nearly 207,000,000 in 2013, and the United States is the biggest consumer of opioids globally, accounting for almost 100 percent of the world total for hydrocodone and 81 percent for oxycodone.

(3) Opioid pain relievers are the most widely misused or abused controlled prescription drugs (commonly referred to as ''CPDs'') and are involved in most CPD-related overdose incidents. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (commonly known as ''DAWN''), the estimated number of emergency department visits involving nonmedical use of prescription opiates or opioids increased by 112 percent between 2006 and 2010, from 84,671 to 179,787.

(4) The use of heroin in the United States has also spiked sharply in recent years. According to the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than 900,000 people in the United States reported using heroin in 2014, nearly a 35 percent increase from the previous year. Heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

(5) The supply of cheap heroin available in the United States has increased dramatically as well, largely due to the activity of Mexican drug trafficking organizations. The Drug Enforcement Administration (commonly known as the ''DEA'') estimates that heroin seizures at the Mexican border have more than doubled since 2010, and heroin production in Mexico increased 62 percent from 2013 to 2014. While only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the United States identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area in 2008, that number rose to 38 percent in 2015.

(6) Law enforcement officials and treatment experts throughout the country report that many people who have misused prescription opioids have turned to heroin as a cheaper or more easily obtained alternative to prescription opioids.

(7) According to a report by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (commonly referred to as ''NASADAD''), 37 States reported an increase in admissions to treatment for heroin use during the past 2 years, while admissions to treatment for prescription opiates increased 500 percent from 2000 to 2012.

(8) Research indicates that combating the opioid crisis, including abuse of prescription painkillers and, increasingly, heroin, requires a multipronged approach that involves prevention, education, monitoring, law enforcement initiatives, reducing drug diversion and the supply of illicit drugs, expanding delivery of existing treatments (including medication assisted treatments), expanding access to overdose medications and interventions, and the development of new medications for pain that can augment the existing treatment arsenal.

(9) Substance use disorders are a treatable disease. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in the treatment of substance use disorders that help people stop abusing drugs and prescription medications and resume their productive lives.

(10) According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 22,700,000 people in the United States needed substance use disorder treatment in 2013, but only 2,500,000 people received it. Furthermore, current treatment services are not adequate to meet demand. According to a report commissioned by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (commonly known as ''SAMHSA''), there are approximately 32 providers for every 1,000 individuals needing substance use disorder treatment. In some States, the ratio is much lower.

(11) The overall cost of drug abuse, from health care- and criminal justice-related costs to lost productivity, is steep, totaling more than $700,000,000,000 a year, according to NIDA. Effective substance abuse prevention can yield major economic dividends.

(12) According to NIDA, when schools and communities properly implement science-validated substance abuse prevention programs, abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs is reduced. Such programs help teachers, parents, and healthcare professionals shape the perceptions of youths about the risks of drug abuse.

(13) Diverting certain individuals with substance use disorders from criminal justice systems into community-based treatment can save billions of dollars and prevent sizeable numbers of crimes, arrests, and re-incarcerations over the course of those individuals' lives.

(14) According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected since the enactment of the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–273; 124 Stat. 2858).

(15) Faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models can provide a critical path to successful recovery for a number of people in the United States. The 2015 membership survey conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous (commonly known as ''AA'') found that 73 percent of AA members were sober longer than 1 year and attended 2.5 meetings per week.

(16) Research shows that combining treatment medications with behavioral therapy is an effective way to facilitate success for some patients. Treatment approaches must be tailored to address the drug abuse patterns and drug-related medical, psychiatric, and social problems of each individual. Different types of medications may be useful at different stages of treatment or recovery to help a patient stop using drugs, stay in treatment, and avoid relapse. Patients have a range of options regarding their path to recovery and many have also successfully addressed drug abuse through the use of faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models.

(17) Individuals with mental illness, especially severe mental illness, are at considerably higher risk for substance abuse than the general population, and the presence of a mental illness complicates recovery from substance abuse.

(18) Rural communities are especially susceptible to heroin and opioid abuse. Individuals in rural counties have higher rates of drug poisoning deaths, including deaths from opioids. According to the American Journal of Public Health, ''[O]pioid poisonings in nonmetropolitan counties have increased at a rate greater than threefold the increase in metropolitan counties.'' According to a February 19, 2016, report from the Maine Rural Health Research Center, ''[M]ultiple studies document a higher prevalence [of abuse] among specific vulnerable rural populations, particularly among youth, women who are pregnant or experiencing partner violence, and persons with co-occurring disorders.''

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''first responder'' includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

(2) the term ''medication assisted treatment'' means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

(3) the term ''opioid'' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

(4) the term ''State'' means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

SEC. 101. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR THE PRESCRIBING OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

(2) the term ''task force'' means the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force convened under subsection (b).

(b) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.—Not later than December 14, 2018, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall convene a Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force to review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The task force shall be comprised of—

(1) representatives of—

(A) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(B) the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(C) the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) the Department of Defense;

(E) the Drug Enforcement Administration;

(F) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(G) the National Academy of Medicine;

(H) the National Institutes of Health;

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and

(J) the Office of Rural Health Policy of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(2) physicians, dentists, and nonphysician prescribers;

(3) pharmacists;

(4) experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research;

(5) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups; and

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal; and

(6) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as

appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care; and

(E) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) LIMITATION.—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d); and

(2) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 102. AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall advance the education and awareness of the public, providers, patients, consumers, and other appropriate entities regarding the risk of abuse of prescription opioid drugs if such products are not taken as prescribed, including opioid and methadone abuse. Such education and awareness campaigns shall include information on the dangers of opioid abuse, how to prevent opioid abuse including through safe disposal of prescription medications and other safety precautions, and detection of early warning signs of addiction.

(b) DRUG-FREE MEDIA CAMPAIGN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, shall establish a national drug awareness campaign.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The national drug awareness campaign required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into account the association between prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

(B) emphasize the similarities between heroin and prescription opioids and the effects of heroin and prescription opioids on the human body; and

(C) bring greater public awareness to the dangerous effects of fentanyl when mixed with heroin or abused in a similar manner.

SEC. 103. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended by striking section 2997 and inserting the following:

''SEC. 2997. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997' means chapter 2 of the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.);

''(2) the term 'eligible entity' means an organization that—

''(A) on or before the date of submitting an application for a grant under this section, receives or has received a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997; and

''(B) has documented, using local data, rates of abuse of opioids or methamphetamines at levels that are—

''(i) significantly higher than the national average as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the Monitoring the Future Survey published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); or

''(ii) higher than the national average, as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in clause (i)), over a sustained period of time;

''(3) the term 'local drug crisis' means, with respect to the area served by an eligible entity—

''(A) a sudden increase in the abuse of opioids or methamphetamines, as documented by local data;

''(B) the abuse of prescription medications, specifically opioids or methamphetamines, that is significantly higher than the national average, over a sustained period of time, as documented by local data; or

''(C) a sudden increase in opioid-related deaths, as documented by local data;

''(4) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

''(5) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may make grants to eligible entities to implement comprehensive community-wide strategies that address local drug crises within the area served by the eligible entity.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CRITERIA.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, the Secretary shall require an eligible entity to submit a detailed, comprehensive, multisector plan for addressing the local drug crisis within the area served by the eligible entity.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section—

''(1) for programs designed to implement comprehensive community-wide prevention strategies to address the local drug crisis in the area served by the eligible entity, in accordance with the plan submitted under subsection (c)(2); and

''(2) to obtain specialized training and technical assistance from the organization funded under section 4 of Public Law 107–82 (21 U.S.C. 1521 note).

''(e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

''(f) EVALUATION.—A grant under this section shall be subject to the same evaluation requirements and procedures as the evaluation requirements and procedures imposed on the recipient of a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, and may also include an evaluation of the effectiveness at reducing abuse of opioids, methadone, or methamphetamines.

''(g) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 8 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary to pay for administrative expenses.''.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

SEC. 201. TREATMENT ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means a State, unit of local government, Indian tribe, or nonprofit organization.

(2) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT.—The term ''eligible participant'' means an individual who—

(A) comes into contact with the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system or is arrested or charged with an offense that is not—

(i) a crime of violence, as defined under applicable State law or section 3156 of title 18, United States Code; or

(ii) a serious drug offense, as defined under section 924(e)(2)(A) of title 18, United States Code;

(B) has been screened by a qualified mental health professional and determined to suffer from a substance use disorder, or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, that there is a reasonable basis to believe is related to the commission of the offense; and

(C) has been, after consideration of any potential risk of violence to any person in the program or the public if the individual were selected to participate in the program, unanimously approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, as applicable depending on the stage of the criminal justice process—

(i) the relevant law enforcement agency;

(ii) the prosecuting attorney;

(iii) the defense attorney;

(iv) the pretrial, probation, or correctional officer;

(v) the judge; and

(vi) a representative from the relevant mental health or substance abuse agency.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to—

(1) develop, implement, or expand a treatment alternative to incarceration program for eligible participants, including—

(A) pre-booking, including pre-arrest, treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) law enforcement training on substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(ii) receiving centers as alternatives to incarceration of eligible participants;

(iii) specialized response units for calls related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders; and

(iv) other pre-arrest or pre-booking treatment alternative to incarceration models; and

(B) post-booking treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) specialized clinical case management;

(ii) pretrial services related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(iii) prosecutor and defender based programs;

(iv) specialized probation;

(v) programs utilizing the American Society of Addiction Medicine patient placement criteria;

(vi) treatment and rehabilitation programs and recovery support services; and

(vii) drug courts, DWI courts, and veterans treatment courts; and

(2) facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems in order to more efficiently and effectively carry out programs described in paragraph (1) that address problems related to the use of heroin and misuse of prescription drugs among eligible participants.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) provide extensive evidence of collaboration with State and local government agencies overseeing health, community corrections, courts, prosecution, substance abuse, mental health, victims services, and employment services, and with local law enforcement agencies;

(B) demonstrate consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e)));

(C) demonstrate consultation with the Single State criminal justice planning agency;

(D) demonstrate that evidence-based treatment practices, including if applicable the use of medication assisted treatment, will be utilized; and

(E) demonstrate that evidenced-based screening and assessment tools will be utilized to place participants in the treatment alternative to incarceration program.

(d) REQUIREMENTS.—Each eligible entity awarded a grant for a treatment alternative to incarceration program under this section shall—

(1) determine the terms and conditions of participation in the program by eligible participants, taking into consideration the collateral consequences of an arrest, prosecution, or criminal conviction;

(2) ensure that each substance abuse and mental health treatment component is licensed and qualified by the relevant jurisdiction;

(3) for programs described in subsection (b)(2), organize an enforcement unit comprised of appropriately trained law enforcement professionals under the supervision of the State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency involved, the duties of which shall include—

(A) the verification of addresses and other contacts of each eligible participant who participates or desires to participate in the program; and

(B) if necessary, the location, apprehension, arrest, and return to court of an eligible participant in the program who has absconded from the facility of a treatment provider or has otherwise violated the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(4) notify the relevant criminal justice entity if any eligible participant in the program absconds from the facility of the treatment provider or otherwise violates the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(5) submit periodic reports on the progress of treatment or other measured outcomes from participation in the program of each eligible participant in the program to the relevant State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency;

(6) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

(7) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of a treatment alternative to incarceration program, including—

(1) salaries, personnel costs, equipment costs, and other costs directly related to the operation of the program, including the enforcement unit;

(2) payments for treatment providers that are approved by the relevant State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide needed treatment to eligible participants in the program, including medication assisted treatment, aftercare supervision, vocational training, education, and job placement;

(3) payments to public and nonprofit private entities that are approved by the State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide alcohol and drug addiction treatment and mental health treatment to eligible participants in the program; and

(4) salaries, personnel costs, and other costs related to strategic planning among State and local government agencies.

(f) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

(g) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the geographical distribution of grants under this section is equitable and includes a grant to an eligible entity in—

(1) each State;

(2) rural, suburban, and urban areas; and

(3) tribal jurisdictions.

(h) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall give priority to—

(1) a State that submits a joint application from the substance abuse agencies and criminal justice agencies of the State that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between the agencies, including coordination to better address the needs of incarcerated populations; and

(2) a State that—

(A) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(B) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(i) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(I) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(II) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(ii) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(i) REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, each recipient of a grant under this section during that fiscal year shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the outcomes of activities carried out using that grant in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall specify.

(2) CONTENTS.—A report submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) describe best practices for treatment alternatives; and

(B) identify training requirements for law enforcement officers who participate in treatment alternative to incarceration programs.

(j) FUNDING.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may carry out this section using not more than $5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 202. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 103, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2998. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section—

''(1) the terms 'drug' and 'device' have the meanings given those terms in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321);

''(2) the term 'eligible entity' means a State, a unit of local government, or an Indian tribal government;

''(3) the term 'first responder' includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or

other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

''(4) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

''(5) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to allow appropriately trained first responders to administer an opioid overdose reversal drug to an individual who has—

''(1) experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; or

''(2) been determined to have likely experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

''(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

''(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

''(A) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program;

''(B) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective;

''(C) identify the governmental and community agencies that the program will coordinate; and

''(D) describe how law enforcement agencies will coordinate with their corresponding State substance abuse and mental health agencies to identify protocols and resources that are available to overdose victims and families, including information on treatment and recovery resources.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section to—

''(1) make such opioid overdose reversal drugs or devices that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, available to be carried and administered by first responders;

''(2) train and provide resources for first responders on carrying an opioid overdose reversal drug or device approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, and administering the drug or device to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; and

''(3) establish processes, protocols, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment, which may include an outreach coordinator or team to connect individuals receiving opioid overdose reversal drugs to follow-up services.

''(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.—The Secretary shall make a grant for the purpose of providing technical assistance and training on the use of an opioid overdose reversal drug, such as naloxone, to respond to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

''(f) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of grants made under this section to determine—

''(1) the number of first responders equipped with naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, for the prevention of fatal opioid and heroin overdose;

''(2) the number of opioid and heroin overdoses reversed by first responders receiving training and supplies of naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, through a grant received under this section;

''(3) the number of calls for service related to opioid and heroin overdose;

''(4) the extent to which overdose victims and families receive information about treatment services and available data describing treatment admissions; and

''(5) the research, training, and naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, supply needs of first responder agencies, including those agencies that are not receiving grants under this section.

''(g) RURAL AREAS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that not less than 25 percent of grant funds are awarded to eligible entities that are not located in metropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.''.

SEC. 203. PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EXPANSION.

(a) DEFINITION OF COVERED ENTITY.—In this section, the term ''covered entity'' means—

(1) a State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency;

(2) a manufacturer, distributor, or reverse distributor of prescription medications;

(3) a retail pharmacy;

(4) a registered narcotic treatment program;

(5) a hospital or clinic with an onsite pharmacy;

(6) an eligible long-term care facility; or

(7) any other entity authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration to dispose of prescription medications.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, shall coordinate with covered entities in expanding or making available disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications.

SEC. 204. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 202, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

''(a) DEFINITION OF OPIOID.—In this section, the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability.

''(b) AUTHORITY.—The Attorney General may make grants to State law enforcement agencies for investigative purposes—

''(1) to locate or investigate illicit activities through statewide collaboration, including activities related to—

''(A) the distribution of heroin or fentanyl, or the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or

''(B) unlawful heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid traffickers; and

''(2) to locate or investigate illicit activities, including precursor diversion, laboratories, or methamphetamine traffickers.''.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

SEC. 301. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 204, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999A. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the terms 'Indian tribe' and 'tribal organization' have the meaning given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603));

''(2) the term 'medication assisted treatment' means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

''(3) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability;

''(4) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

''(5) the term 'State substance abuse agency' means the agency of a State responsible for the State prevention, treatment, and recovery system, including management of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.).

''(b) GRANTS.—

''(1) AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and in coordination with the Attorney General and other departments or agencies, as appropriate, may award grants to State substance abuse agencies, units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes or tribal organizations that have a high rate, or have had a rapid increase, in the use of heroin or other opioids, in order to permit such entities to expand activities, including an expansion in the availability of medication assisted treatment and other clinically appropriate services, with respect to the treatment of addiction in the specific geographical areas of such entities where there is a high rate or rapid increase in the use of heroin or other opioids.

''(2) NATURE OF ACTIVITIES.—The grant funds awarded under paragraph (1) shall be used for activities that are based on reliable scientific evidence of efficacy in the treatment of problems related to heroin or other opioids.

''(c) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall ensure that grants awarded under subsection (b) are distributed equitably among the various regions of the United States and among rural, urban, and suburban areas that are affected by the use of heroin or other opioids.

''(d) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—In administering grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

''(1) evaluate the activities supported by grants awarded under subsection (b);

''(2) disseminate information, as appropriate, derived from the evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate;

''(3) provide States, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and providers with technical assistance in connection with the provision of treatment of problems related to heroin and other opioids; and

''(4) fund only those applications that specifically support recovery services as a critical component of the grant program.''.

SEC. 302. CRIMINAL JUSTICE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''criminal justice agency'' means a State, local, or tribal—

(A) court;

(B) prison;

(C) jail; or

(D) other agency that performs the administration of criminal justice, including prosecution, pretrial services, and community supervision;

(2) the term ''eligible entity'' means a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe; and

(3) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to implement medication assisted treatment programs through criminal justice agencies.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) certify that each medication assisted treatment program funded with a grant under this section has been developed in consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(B) describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program described in subparagraph (A).

(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of—

(1) a medication assisted treatment program, including the expenses of prescribing medications recognized by the Food and Drug Administration for opioid treatment in conjunction with psychological and behavioral therapy;

(2) training criminal justice agency personnel and treatment providers on medication assisted treatment;

(3) cross-training personnel providing behavioral health and health services, administration of medicines, and other administrative expenses, including required reports; and

(4) the provision of recovery coaches who are responsible for providing mentorship and transition plans to individuals reentering society following incarceration or alternatives to incarceration.

(e) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to a State that—

(1) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(2) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(A) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(i) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(ii) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Attorney General, shall provide technical assistance and training for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall submit a report to the Secretary on the outcomes of each grant received under this section for individuals receiving medication assisted treatment, based on—

(A) the recidivism of the individuals;

(B) the treatment outcomes of the individuals, including maintaining abstinence from illegal, unauthorized, and unprescribed or undispensed opioids and heroin;

(C) a comparison of the cost of providing medication assisted treatment to the cost of incarceration or other participation in the criminal justice system;

(D) the housing status of the individuals; and

(E) the employment status of the individuals.

(2) CONTENTS AND TIMING.—Each report described in paragraph (1) shall be submitted annually in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary shall specify.

(h) FUNDING.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may carry out this section using not more than $5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 303. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 301, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999B. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means—

''(A) a high school that has been accredited as a recovery high school by the Association of Recovery Schools;

''(B) an accredited high school that is seeking to establish or expand recovery support services;

''(C) an institution of higher education;

''(D) a recovery program at a nonprofit collegiate institution; or

''(E) a nonprofit organization.

''(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

''(3) RECOVERY PROGRAM.—The term 'recovery program'—

''(A) means a program to help individuals who are recovering from substance use disorders to initiate, stabilize, and maintain healthy and productive lives in the community; and

''(B) includes peer-to-peer support and communal activities to build recovery skills and supportive social networks.

''(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, may award grants to eligible entities to enable the entities to—

''(1) provide substance use disorder recovery support services to young people in high school and enrolled in institutions of higher education;

''(2) help build communities of support for young people in recovery through a spectrum of activities such as counseling and health- and wellness-oriented social activities; and

''(3) encourage initiatives designed to help young people achieve and sustain recovery from substance use disorders.

''(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under subsection (b) may be used for activities to develop, support, and maintain youth recovery support services, including—

''(1) the development and maintenance of a dedicated physical space for recovery programs;

''(2) dedicated staff for the provision of recovery programs;

''(3) health- and wellness-oriented social activities and community engagement;

''(4) establishment of recovery high schools;

''(5) coordination of recovery programs with—

''(A) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

''(B) providers of mental health services;

''(C) primary care providers and physicians;

''(D) the criminal justice system, including the juvenile justice system;

''(E) employers;

''(F) housing services;

''(G) child welfare services;

''(H) high schools and institutions of higher education; and

''(I) other programs or services related to the welfare of an individual in recovery from a substance use disorder;

''(6) the development of peer-to-peer support programs or services; and

''(7) additional activities that help youths and young adults to achieve recovery from substance use disorders.''.

SEC. 304. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 303, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999C. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'recovery community organization' means an independent nonprofit organization that—

''(1) mobilizes resources within and outside of the recovery community to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery from substance use disorders; and

''(2) is wholly or principally governed by people in recovery for substance use disorders who reflect the community served.

''(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may award grants to recovery community organizations to enable such organizations to develop, expand, and enhance recovery services.

''(c) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of a program funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under subsection (b)—

''(1) shall be used to develop, expand, and enhance community and statewide recovery support services; and

''(2) may be used to—

''(A) advocate for individuals in recovery from substance use disorders;

''(B) build connections between recovery networks, between recovery community organizations, and with other recovery support services, including—

''(i) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

''(ii) providers of mental health services;

''(iii) primary care providers and physicians;

''(iv) the criminal justice system;

''(v) employers;

''(vi) housing services;

''(vii) child welfare agencies; and

''(viii) other recovery support services that facilitate recovery from substance use disorders;

''(C) reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorders;

''(D) conduct public education and outreach on issues relating to substance use disorders and recovery, including—

''(i) how to identify the signs of addiction;

''(ii) the resources that are available to individuals struggling with addiction and families who have a family member struggling with or being treated for addiction, including programs that mentor and provide support services to children;

''(iii) the resources that are available to help support individuals in recovery; and

''(iv) information on the medical consequences of substance use disorders, including neonatal abstinence syndrome and potential infection with human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis; and

''(E) carry out other activities that strengthen the network of community support for individuals in recovery.''.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

SEC. 401. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 304, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999D. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'eligible entity' means a State, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe.

''(b) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may make grants to eligible entities to design, implement, and expand educational programs for offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities, including to pay for—

''(1) basic education, secondary level academic education, high school equivalency examination preparation, career technical education, and English language learner instruction at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary levels, for adult and juvenile populations;

''(2) screening and assessment of inmates to assess education level and needs, occupational interest or aptitude, risk level, and other needs, and case management services;

''(3) hiring and training of instructors and aides, reimbursement of non-corrections staff and experts, reimbursement of stipends paid to inmate tutors or aides, and the costs of training inmate tutors and aides;

''(4) instructional supplies and equipment, including occupational program supplies and equipment to the extent that the supplies and equipment are used for instructional purposes;

''(5) partnerships and agreements with community colleges, universities, and career technology education program providers;

''(6) certification programs providing recognized high school equivalency certificates and industry recognized credentials; and

''(7) technology solutions to—

''(A) meet the instructional, assessment, and information needs of correctional populations; and

''(B) facilitate the continued participation of incarcerated students in community-based education programs after the students are released from incarceration.

''(c) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form and manner, at such time, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General specifies.

''(d) PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to applicants that—

''(1) assess the level of risk and need of inmates, including by—

''(A) assessing the need for English language learner instruction;

''(B) conducting educational assessments; and

''(C) assessing occupational interests and aptitudes;

''(2) target educational services to assessed needs, including academic and occupational at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary level;

''(3) target career and technology education programs to—

''(A) areas of identified occupational demand; and

''(B) employment opportunities in the communities in which students are reasonably expected to reside post-release;

''(4) include a range of appropriate educational opportunities at the basic, secondary, and post-secondary levels;

''(5) include opportunities for students to attain industry recognized credentials;

''(6) include partnership or articulation agreements linking institutional education programs with community sited programs provided by adult education program providers and accredited institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational training institutions; and

''(7) explicitly include career pathways models offering opportunities for incarcerated students to develop academic skills, in-demand occupational skills and credentials, occupational experience in institutional work programs or work release programs, and linkages with employers in the community, so that incarcerated students have opportunities to embark on careers with strong prospects for both post-release employment and advancement in a career ladder over time.

''(e) REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall—

''(1) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate each program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

''(2) describe how each program described in paragraph (1) could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

''(f) CONTROL OF INTERNET ACCESS.—An entity that receives a grant under this section may restrict access to the Internet by prisoners, as appropriate and in accordance with Federal and State law, to ensure public safety.''.

SEC. 402. NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON RECOVERY AND COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''collateral consequence'' means a penalty, disability, or disadvantage imposed on an individual who is in recovery for a substance use disorder (including by an administrative agency, official, or civil court) as a result of a Federal or State conviction for a drug-related offense but not as part of the judgment of the court that imposes the conviction.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall establish a bipartisan task force to be known as the Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences (in this section referred to as the ''Task Force'').

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS.—The Task Force shall include 10 members, who shall be appointed by the Attorney General in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

(B) MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE.—The Task Force shall include—

(i) members who have national recognition and significant expertise in areas such as health care, housing, employment, substance use disorders, mental health, law enforcement, and law;

(ii) not fewer than 2 members—

(I) who have personally experienced a substance abuse disorder or addiction and are in recovery; and

(II) not fewer than 1 of whom has benefitted from medication assisted treatment; and

(iii) to the extent practicable, members who formerly served as elected officials at the State and Federal levels.

(C) TIMING.—The Attorney General shall appoint the members of the Task Force not later than 60 days after the date on which the Task Force is established under paragraph (1).

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Task Force shall select a chairperson or co-chairpersons from among the members of the Task Force.

(c) DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall—

(A) identify collateral consequences for individuals with Federal or State convictions for drug-related offenses who are in recovery for substance use disorder; and

(B) examine any policy basis for the imposition of collateral consequences identified under subparagraph (A) and the effect of the collateral consequences on individuals in recovery in resuming their personal and professional activities.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall develop recommendations, as it considers appropriate, for proposed legislative and regulatory changes related to the collateral consequences identified under paragraph (1).

(3) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.—The Task Force shall hold hearings, require the testimony and attendance of witnesses, and secure information from any department or agency of the United States in performing the duties under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) REPORT.—

(A) SUBMISSION TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit a report detailing the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to—

(i) the head of each relevant department or agency of the United States;

(ii) the President; and

(iii) the Vice President.

(B) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The individuals who receive the report under subparagraph (A) shall submit to Congress such legislative recommendations, if any, as those individuals consider appropriate based on the report.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

SEC. 501. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ''(referred to in this section as the 'Director')'' after ''Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment''; and

(2) in subsection (p), in the first sentence—

(A) by striking ''Committee on Labor and Human Resources'' and inserting ''Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions''; and

(B) by inserting ''(other than subsection (r))'' after ''this section''.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM GRANTS FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.—Section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (r); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (q) the following:

''(r) PILOT PROGRAM FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a pilot program under which the Director makes competitive grants to State substance abuse agencies to—

''(A) enhance flexibility in the use of funds designed to support family-based services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

''(B) help State substance abuse agencies address identified gaps in services furnished to such women along the continuum of care, including services provided to women in nonresidential based settings; and

''(C) promote a coordinated, effective, and efficient State system managed by State substance abuse agencies by encouraging new approaches and models of service delivery that are evidence-based, including effective family-based programs for women involved with the criminal justice system.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Director—

''(A) shall require State substance abuse agencies to submit to the Director applications, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Director, to be eligible to receive a grant under the program;

''(B) shall identify, based on such submitted applications, State substance abuse agencies that are eligible for such grants;

''(C) shall require services proposed to be furnished through such a grant to support family-based treatment and other services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

''(D) notwithstanding subsection (a)(1), shall not require that services furnished through such a grant be provided solely to women that reside in facilities; and

''(E) shall not require that grant recipients under the program make available all services described in subsection (d).

''(3) REQUIRED SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall specify minimum services required to be made available to eligible women through a grant awarded under the pilot program under this subsection. Such minimum services—

''(i) shall include the requirements described in subsection (c);

''(ii) may include any of the services described in subsection (d);

''(iii) may include other services, as appropriate; and

''(iv) shall be based on the recommendations submitted under subparagraph (B)

''(B) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Director shall convene and solicit recommendations from stakeholders, including State substance abuse agencies, health care providers, persons in recovery from a substance use disorder, and other appropriate individuals, for the minimum services described in subparagraph (A).

''(4) DURATION.—The pilot program under this subsection shall not exceed 5 years.

''(5) EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Out of amounts made available to the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, the Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in cooperation with the recipients of grants under this subsection, shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program under this subsection, beginning 1 year after the date on which a grant is first awarded under this subsection. The Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in coordination with the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, not later than 120 days after completion of such evaluation, shall submit to the relevant Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on such evaluation.

''(B) CONTENTS.—The report to Congress under subparagraph (A) shall include, at a minimum, outcomes information from the pilot program, including any resulting reductions in the use of alcohol and other drugs, engagement in treatment services, retention in the appropriate level and duration of services, increased access to the use of drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of substance use disorders in combination with counseling, and other appropriate measures.

''(6) DEFINITION OF STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCY.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'State substance abuse agency' means, with respect to a State, the agency in such State that manages the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant program under part B of title XIX.

''(s) FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $15,900,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Of the amounts made available under paragraph (1) to carry out this section, not more than 25 percent may be used each fiscal year to carry out subsection (r).''.

SEC. 502. REPORT ON GRANTS FOR FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.

Section 2925 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797s–4) is amended—

(1) by striking ''An entity'' and inserting ''(a) ENTITY REPORTS.—An entity''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT ON FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.—The Attorney General shall submit to Congress an annual report that describes the number of grants awarded under section 2921(1) and how such grants are used by the recipients for family-based substance abuse treatment programs that serve as alternatives to incarceration for custodial parents to receive treatment and services as a family.''.

SEC. 503. VETERANS' TREATMENT COURTS.

Section 2991(j)(1)(B)(ii) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(j)(1)(B)(ii)), as amended by the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015 (S. 993, 114th Congress), is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(I)'' after ''(ii)'';

(2) in subclause (I), as so designated, by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) was discharged or released from such service under dishonorable conditions, if the reason for that discharge or release, if known, is attributable to a substance use disorder.''.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

SEC. 601. STATE DEMONSTRATION GRANTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE RESPONSE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''dispenser'' has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802);

(2) the term ''prescriber'' means a dispenser who prescribes a controlled substance, or the agent of such a dispenser;

(3) the term ''prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance'' does not include a prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance that dispenses the substance—

(A) for use on the premises on which the substance is dispensed;

(B) in a hospital emergency room, when the substance is in short supply;

(C) for a certified opioid treatment program; or

(D) in other situations as the Attorney General may reasonably determine; and

(4) the term ''schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance'' means a controlled substance that is listed on schedule II, schedule III, or schedule IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

(b) PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in consultation with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may award grants to States, and combinations thereof, to prepare a comprehensive plan for and implement an integrated opioid abuse response initiative.

(2) PURPOSES.—A State receiving a grant under this section shall establish a comprehensive response to opioid abuse, which shall include—

(A) prevention and education efforts around heroin and opioid use, treatment, and

recovery, including education of residents, medical students, and physicians and other prescribers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on relevant prescribing guidelines and the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(B) a comprehensive prescription drug monitoring program to track dispensing of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances, which shall—

(i) provide for data sharing with other States by statute, regulation, or interstate agreement; and

(ii) allow for access to all individuals authorized by the State to write prescriptions for schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(C) developing, implementing, or expanding prescription drug and opioid addiction treatment programs by—

(i) expanding programs for medication assisted treatment of prescription drug and opioid addiction, including training for treatment and recovery support providers;

(ii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs for behavioral health therapy for individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction;

(iii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs to screen individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction for hepatitis C and HIV, and provide treatment for those individuals if clinically appropriate; or

(iv) developing, implementing, or expanding programs that provide screening, early intervention, and referral to treatment (commonly known as ''SBIRT'') to teenagers and young adults in primary care, middle schools, high schools, universities, school-based health centers, and other community-based health care settings frequently accessed by teenagers or young adults; and

(D) developing, implementing, and expanding programs to prevent overdose death from prescription medications and opioids.

(3) PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A State seeking a planning grant under this section to prepare a comprehensive plan for an integrated opioid abuse response initiative shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—An application for a planning grant under this section shall, at a minimum, include—

(I) a budget and a budget justification for the activities to be carried out using the grant;

(II) a description of the activities proposed to be carried out using the grant, including a schedule for completion of such activities;

(III) outcome measures that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives to address opioids; and

(IV) a description of the personnel necessary to complete such activities.

(B) PERIOD; NONRENEWABILITY.—A planning grant under this section shall be for a period of 1 year. A State may not receive more than 1 planning grant under this section.

(C) STRATEGIC PLAN AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—A State receiving a planning grant under this section shall develop a strategic plan and a program implementation plan.

(4) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—A State seeking an implementation grant under this section to implement a comprehensive strategy for addressing opioid abuse shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—A State that receives an implementation grant under this section shall use the grant for the cost of carrying out an integrated opioid abuse response program in accordance with this section, including for technical assistance, training, and administrative expenses.

(C) REQUIREMENTS.—An integrated opioid abuse response program carried out using an implementation grant under this section shall—

(i) require that each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State; and

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before prescribing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance;

(ii) require that each dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before dispensing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance; and

(III) reports to the prescription drug monitoring program of the State, at a minimum, each instance in which a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance is dispensed, with limited exceptions, as defined by the State, which shall indicate the prescriber by name and National Provider Identifier;

(iii) require that, not fewer than 4 times each year, the State agency or agencies that administer the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance an informational report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms;

(iv) if informational reports provided to a prescriber under clause (iii) indicate that the prescriber is repeatedly falling outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, direct the prescriber to educational resources on appropriate prescribing of controlled substances;

(v) ensure that the prescriber licensing board of the State receives a report describing any prescribers that repeatedly fall outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, as described in clause (iii);

(vi) require consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(vii) establish requirements for how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

(D) PERIOD.—An implementation grant under this section shall be for a period of 2 years.

(5) PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding planning and implementation grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to a State that—

(A)(i) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(ii) submits to the Attorney General a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(I) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(aa) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(bb) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(II) concluded that the law described in subclause (I) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons;

(B) has in effect legislation or implements a policy under which the State shall not terminate, but may suspend, enrollment under the State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) for an individual who is incarcerated for a period of fewer than 2 years;

(C) has a process for enrollment in services and benefits necessary by criminal justice agencies to initiate or continue treatment in the community, under which an individual who is incarcerated may, while incarcerated, enroll in services and benefits that are necessary for the individual to continue treatment upon release from incarceration;

(D) ensures the capability of data sharing with other States, such as by making data available to a prescription monitoring hub;

(E) ensures that data recorded in the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State is available within 24 hours, to the extent possible; and

(F) ensures that the prescription drug monitoring program of the State notifies prescribers and dispensers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances when overuse or misuse of such controlled substances by patients is suspected.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, the Attorney General may use, from any unobligated balances made available under the heading ''GENERAL ADMINISTRATION'' to the Department of Justice in an appropriation Act, such amounts as are necessary to carry out this section, not to exceed $5,000,000 per fiscal year.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 701. GAO REPORT ON IMD EXCLUSION.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion'' means the prohibition on Federal matching payments under Medicaid for patients who have attained age 22, but have not attained age 65, in an institution for mental diseases under subparagraph (B) of the matter following subsection (a) of section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) and subsection (i) of such section.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact that the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion has on access to treatment for individuals with a substance use disorder.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (b) shall include a review of what is known regarding—

(1) Medicaid beneficiary access to substance use disorder treatments in institutions for mental disease; and

(2) the quality of care provided to Medicaid beneficiaries treated in and outside of institutions for mental disease for substance use disorders.

SEC. 702. FUNDING.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42

U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 401, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2999E. FUNDING.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this part $62,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SEC. 703. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the part heading, by striking ''**CONFRONTING USE OF METHAMPHETAMINE**'' and inserting ''**COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY**''; and

(2) in section 2996(a)(1), by striking ''this part'' and inserting ''this section''.

SEC. 704. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) GRANTS UNDER PART II OF TITLE I OF THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.—Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.); as amended by section 702, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2999F. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'applicable committees'—

''(A) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

''(i) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

''(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

''(i) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

''(ii) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

''(2) the term 'covered agency' means—

''(A) the Department of Justice; and

''(B) the Department of Health and Human Services; and

''(3) the term 'covered official' means—

''(A) the Attorney General; and

''(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All grants awarded by a covered official under this part shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

''(1) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

''(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term 'unresolved audit finding' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

''(B) AUDIT.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of grants awarded by the applicable covered official under this part to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

''(C) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of grant funds under this part that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this part during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

''(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this part, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this part.

''(E) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this part during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the covered official that awarded the grant funds shall—

''(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

''(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

''(2) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs under this part, the term 'nonprofit organization' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

''(B) PROHIBITION.—A covered official may not award a grant under this part to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(C) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this part and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this subparagraph available for public inspection.

''(3) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

''(A) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to a covered official under this part may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this part, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than $20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

''(B) WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.—Written authorization under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

''(C) REPORT.—

''(i) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this paragraph.

''(ii) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this paragraph.

''(4) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

''(A) indicating whether—

''(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

''(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued; and

''(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

''(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

''(c) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Before a covered official awards a grant to an applicant under this part, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under this part by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

''(2) REPORT.—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

''(A) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

''(B) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.''.

(b) OTHER GRANTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term ''applicable committees''—

(i) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

(I) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(B) the term ''covered agency'' means—

(i) the Department of Justice; and

(ii) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(C) the term ''covered grant'' means a grant under section 201, 302, or 601 of this Act or section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) (as amended by section 501 of this Act); and

(D) the term ''covered official'' means—

(i) the Attorney General; and

(ii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All covered grants awarded by a covered official shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

(A) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

(i) DEFINITION.—In this subparagraph, the term ''unresolved audit finding'' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

(ii) AUDIT.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment

of this Act, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of covered grants awarded by the applicable covered official to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(iii) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of covered grant funds that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive covered grant funds during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in clause (i).

(iv) PRIORITY.—In awarding covered grants, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a covered grant.

(v) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded covered grant funds during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under clause (iii), the covered official that awarded the funds shall—

(I) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(II) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(B) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(i) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subparagraph and the covered grant programs, the term ''nonprofit organization'' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(ii) PROHIBITION.—A covered official may not award a covered grant to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(iii) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a covered grant and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this clause available for public inspection.

(C) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

(i) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to a covered official under a covered grant program may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under a covered grant program, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than $20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

(ii) WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.—Written authorization under clause (i) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

(iii) REPORT.—

(I) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this subparagraph.

(II) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this subparagraph.

(D) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

(i) indicating whether—

(I) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under subparagraph (A) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

(II) all mandatory exclusions required under subparagraph (A)(iii) have been issued; and

(III) all reimbursements required under subparagraph (A)(v) have been made; and

(ii) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under subparagraph (A) from the previous year.

(3) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Before a covered official awards a covered grant to an applicant, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other covered grants awarded by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

(B) REPORT.—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

(i) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

(ii) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.

SEC. 705. PROGRAMS TO PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

(a) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

''(A) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH.—A PDP sponsor may establish a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under which, subject to subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor may, in the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse who is an enrollee in a prescription drug plan of such PDP sponsor, limit such beneficiary's access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under such plan to frequently abused drugs that are prescribed for such beneficiary by a prescriber (or prescribers) selected under subparagraph (D), and dispensed for such beneficiary by a pharmacy (or pharmacies) selected under such subparagraph.

''(B) REQUIREMENT FOR NOTICES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A PDP sponsor may not limit the access of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan until such sponsor—

''(I) provides to the beneficiary an initial notice described in clause (ii) and a second notice described in clause (iii); and

''(II) verifies with the providers of the beneficiary that the beneficiary is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, as described in subparagraph (C)(iv).

''(ii) INITIAL NOTICE.—An initial written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary—

''(I) notice that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

''(II) information, when possible, describing State and Federal public health resources that are designed to address prescription drug abuse to which the beneficiary may have access, including substance use disorder treatment services, addiction treatment services, mental health services, and other counseling services;

''(III) a request for the beneficiary to submit to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor to select under subparagraph (D) in the case that the beneficiary is identified as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as described in clause (iii)(I);

''(IV) an explanation of the meaning and consequences of the identification of the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, including an explanation of the drug management program established by the PDP sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A);

''(V) clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (IV) and any other communications relating to the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by the PDP sponsor;

''(VI) contact information for other organizations that can provide the beneficiary with information regarding drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries (similar to the information provided by the Secretary in other standardized notices to part D eligible individuals enrolled in prescription drug plans under this part); and

''(VII) notice that the beneficiary has a right to an appeal pursuant to subparagraph (E).

''(iii) SECOND NOTICE.—A second written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary notice—

''(I) that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

''(II) that such beneficiary has been sent, or informed of, such identification in the initial notice and is now subject to the requirements of the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by such PDP sponsor for such plan;

''(III) of the prescriber and pharmacy selected for such individual under subparagraph (D);

''(IV) of, and information about, the right of the beneficiary to a reconsideration and an appeal under subsection (h) of such identification and the prescribers and pharmacies selected;

''(V) that the beneficiary can, in the case that the beneficiary has not previously submitted to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select under subparagraph (D), submit such preferences to the PDP sponsor; and

''(VI) that includes clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (V).

''(iv) TIMING OF NOTICES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), a second written notice described in clause (iii) shall be provided to the beneficiary on a date that is not less than 30 days after an initial notice described in clause (ii) is provided to the beneficiary.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor, in conjunction with the Secretary, determines that concerns identified through rulemaking by the Secretary regarding the health or safety of the beneficiary or regarding significant drug diversion activities require the PDP sponsor to provide a second notice described in clause (iii) to the beneficiary on a date that is earlier than the date described in subclause (II), the PDP sponsor may provide such second notice on such earlier date.

''(III) FORM OF NOTICE.—The written notices under clauses (ii) and (iii) shall be in a format determined appropriate by the Secretary, taking into account beneficiary preferences.

''(C) AT-RISK BENEFICIARY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse' means a part D eligible individual who is not an exempted individual described in clause (ii) and—

''(I) who is identified through criteria developed by the Secretary in consultation with PDP sponsors and other stakeholders described in subsection section ___(g)(2)(A) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 based on clinical factors indicating misuse or abuse of prescription drugs described in subparagraph (G), including dosage, quantity, duration of use, number of and reasonable access to prescribers, and number of and reasonable access to pharmacies used to obtain such drug; or

''(II) with respect to whom the PDP sponsor of a prescription drug plan, upon enrolling such individual in such plan, received notice from the Secretary that such individual was identified under this paragraph to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under a prescription drug plan in which such individual was previously enrolled and such identification has not been terminated under subparagraph (F).

''(ii) EXEMPTED INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.—An exempted individual described in this clause is an individual who—

''(I) receives hospice care under this title;

''(II) resides in a long-term care facility, a facility described in section 1905(d), or other facility under contract with a single pharmacy; or

''(III) the Secretary elects to treat as an exempted individual for purposes of clause (i).

''(iii) PROGRAM SIZE.—The Secretary shall establish policies, including the criteria developed under clause (i)(I) and the exemptions under clause (ii)(III), to ensure that the population of enrollees in a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries operated by a prescription drug plan can be effectively managed by such plans.

''(iv) CLINICAL CONTACT.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor, the PDP sponsor shall contact the beneficiary's providers who have prescribed frequently abused drugs regarding whether prescribed medications are appropriate for such beneficiary's medical conditions.

''(D) SELECTION OF PRESCRIBERS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by such sponsor, a PDP sponsor shall, based on the preferences submitted to the PDP sponsor by the beneficiary pursuant to clauses (ii)(III) and (iii)(V) of subparagraph (B) if applicable, select—

''(I) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, individual who is authorized to prescribe frequently abused drugs (referred to in this paragraph as a 'prescriber') who may write prescriptions for such drugs for such beneficiary; and

''(II) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, pharmacy that may dispense such drugs to such beneficiary.

''(ii) REASONABLE ACCESS.—In making the selection under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor shall ensure, taking into account geographic location, beneficiary preference, impact on cost-sharing, and reasonable travel time, that the beneficiary continues to have reasonable access to drugs described in subparagraph (G), including—

''(I) for individuals with multiple residences; and

''(II) in the case of natural disasters and similar emergency situations.

''(iii) BENEFICIARY PREFERENCES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—If an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse submits preferences for which in-network prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select in response to a notice under subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor shall—

''(aa) review such preferences;

''(bb) select or change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary based on such preferences; and

''(cc) inform the beneficiary of such selection or change of selection.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor determines that a change to the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under item (bb) by the PDP sponsor is contributing or would contribute to prescription drug abuse or drug diversion by the beneficiary, the PDP sponsor may change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary. If the PDP sponsor changes the selection pursuant to the preceding sentence, the PDP sponsor shall provide the beneficiary with—

''(aa) at least 30 days written notice of the change of selection; and

''(bb) a rationale for the change.

''(III) TIMING.—An at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse may choose to express their prescriber and pharmacy preference and communicate such preference to their PDP sponsor at any date while enrolled in the program, including after a second notice under subparagraph (B)(iii) has been provided.

''(iv) CONFIRMATION.—Before selecting a prescriber or pharmacy under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor must notify the prescriber and pharmacy that the beneficiary involved has been identified for inclusion in the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries and that the prescriber and pharmacy has been selected as the beneficiary's designated prescriber and pharmacy.

''(E) APPEALS.—The identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph, a coverage determination made under a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries, and the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under subparagraph (D) with respect to such individual shall be subject to an expedited reconsideration and appeal pursuant to subsection (h).

''(F) TERMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop standards for the termination of identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph. Under such standards such identification shall terminate as of the earlier of—

''(I) the date the individual demonstrates that the individual is no longer likely, in the absence of the restrictions under this paragraph, to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse described in subparagraph (C)(i); or

''(II) the end of such maximum period of identification as the Secretary may specify.

''(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed as preventing a plan from identifying an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under subparagraph (C)(i) after such termination on the basis of additional information on drug use occurring after the date of notice of such termination.

''(G) FREQUENTLY ABUSED DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'frequently abused drug' means a drug that is determined by the Secretary to be frequently abused or diverted and that is—

''(i) a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII; or

''(ii) within the same class or category of drugs as a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII, as determined through notice and comment rulemaking.

''(H) DATA DISCLOSURE.—

''(i) DATA ON DECISION TO IMPOSE LIMITATION.—In the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (or an individual who is a potentially at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse) whose access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan has been limited by a PDP sponsor under this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require such PDP sponsor to disclose data, including necessary individually identifiable health information, about the decision to impose such limitations and the limitations imposed by the PDP sponsor under this part.

''(ii) DATA TO REDUCE FRAUD, ABUSE, AND WASTE.—The Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require PDP sponsors operating a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph to provide the Secretary with such data as the Secretary determines appropriate for purposes of identifying patterns of prescription drug utilization for plan enrollees that are outside normal patterns and that may indicate fraudulent, medically unnecessary, or unsafe use.

''(I) SHARING OF INFORMATION FOR SUBSEQUENT PLAN ENROLLMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish procedures under which PDP sponsors who offer prescription drug plans shall share information with respect to individuals who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (or individuals who are potentially at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse) and enrolled in a prescription drug plan and who subsequently disenroll from such plan and enroll in another prescription drug plan offered by another PDP sponsor.

''(J) PRIVACY ISSUES.—Prior to the implementation of the rules and procedures under this paragraph, the Secretary shall clarify privacy requirements, including requirements under the regulations promulgated pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note), related to the sharing of data under subparagraphs (H) and (I) by PDP sponsors. Such clarification shall provide that the sharing of such data shall be considered to be protected health information in accordance with the requirements of the regulations promulgated pursuant to such section 264(c).

''(K) EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall provide education to enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors and providers regarding the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries described in this paragraph, including education—

''(i) provided through the improper payment outreach and education program described in section 1874A(h); and

''(ii) through current education efforts (such as State health insurance assistance programs described in subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 119 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 1395b–3 note)) and materials directed toward such enrollees.

''(L) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that existing plan sponsor compliance reviews and audit processes include the drug management programs for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph, including appeals processes under such programs.''.

(2) INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS.—Section 1860D–4(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(a)(1)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(v) The drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under subsection (c)(5).''.

(3) DUAL ELIGIBLES.—Section 1860D–1(b)(3)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–101(b)(3)(D)) is amended by inserting '', subject to such limits as the Secretary may establish for individuals identified pursuant to section 1860D–4(c)(5)'' after ''the Secretary''.

(b) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)), as amended by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) A utilization management tool to prevent drug abuse (as described in paragraph (5)(A)).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TOOL TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A tool described in this paragraph is any of the following:

''(i) A utilization tool designed to prevent the abuse of frequently abused drugs by individuals and to prevent the diversion of such drugs at pharmacies.

''(ii) Retrospective utilization review to identify—

''(I) individuals that receive frequently abused drugs at a frequency or in amounts that are not clinically appropriate; and

''(II) providers of services or suppliers that may facilitate the abuse or diversion of frequently abused drugs by beneficiaries.

''(iii) Consultation with the contractor described in subparagraph (B) to verify if an individual enrolling in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor has been previously identified by another PDP sponsor as an individual described in clause (ii)(I).

''(B) REPORTING.—A PDP sponsor offering a prescription drug plan in a State shall submit to the Secretary and the Medicare drug integrity contractor with which the Secretary has entered into a contract under section 1893 with respect to such State a report, on a monthly basis, containing information on—

''(i) any provider of services or supplier described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) that is identified by such plan sponsor during the 30-day period before such report is submitted; and

''(ii) the name and prescription records of individuals described in paragraph (5)(C).

''(C) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that plan sponsor annual compliance reviews and program audits include a certification that utilization management tools under this paragraph are in compliance with the requirements for such tools.''.

(c) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—Section 1860D–42 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–152) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—In conducting a quality or performance assessment of a PDP sponsor, the Secretary shall develop or utilize existing screening methods for reviewing and considering complaints that are received from enrollees in a prescription drug plan offered by such PDP sponsor and that are complaints regarding the lack of access by the individual to prescription drugs due to a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries.''.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING USE OF TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO COMBAT FRAUD.—It is the sense of Congress that MA organizations and PDP sponsors should consider using e-prescribing and other health information technology tools to support combating fraud under MA–PD plans and prescription drug plans under parts C and D of the Medicare Program.

(e) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the implementation of the amendments made by this section, including the effectiveness of the at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse drug management programs authorized by section 1860D–4(c)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–10(c)(5)), as added by subsection (a)(1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(A) the impediments, if any, that impair the ability of individuals described in subparagraph (C) of such section 1860D–4(c)(5) to access clinically appropriate levels of prescription drugs;

(B) the effectiveness of the reasonable access protections under subparagraph (D)(ii) of such section 1860D–4(c)(5), including the impact on beneficiary access and health;

(C) how best to define the term ''designated pharmacy'', including whether the definition of such term should include an entity that is comprised of a number of locations that are under common ownership and that electronically share a real-time, online database and whether such a definition would help to protect and improve beneficiary access;

(D) the types of—

(i) individuals who, in the implementation of such section, are determined to be individuals described in such subparagraph; and

(ii) prescribers and pharmacies that are selected under subparagraph (D) of such section;

(E) the extent of prescription drug abuse beyond Controlled Drug Substances in Schedule CII in parts C and D of the Medicare program; and

(F) other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2019, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

(f) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on ways to improve upon the appeals process for Medicare beneficiaries with respect to prescription drug coverage under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act. Such report shall include an analysis comparing appeals processes under parts C and D of such title XVIII.

(2) FEEDBACK.—In development of the report described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall solicit feedback on the current appeals process from stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, consumer advocates, plan sponsors, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists, providers, independent review entity evaluators, and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to prescription drug plans for plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

(2) STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall convene stakeholders, including individuals entitled to benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act or enrolled under part B of such title of such Act, advocacy groups representing such individuals, clinicians, plan sponsors, pharmacists, retail pharmacies, entities delegated by plan sponsors, and biopharmaceutical manufacturers for input regarding the topics described in subparagraph (B). The input described in the preceding sentence shall be provided to the Secretary in sufficient time in order for the Secretary to take such input into account in promulgating the regulations pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) TOPICS DESCRIBED.—The topics described in this subparagraph are the topics of—

(i) the impact on cost-sharing and ensuring accessibility to prescription drugs for enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (as defined in paragraph (5)(C) of section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–10(c)));

(ii) the use of an expedited appeals process under which such an enrollee may appeal an identification of such enrollee as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under such paragraph (similar to the processes established under the Medicare Advantage program under part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act);

(iii) the types of enrollees that should be treated as exempted individuals, as described in clause (ii) of such paragraph;

(iv) the manner in which terms and definitions in paragraph (5) of such section 1860D–4(c) should be applied, such as the use of clinical appropriateness in determining whether

an enrollee is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as defined in subparagraph (C) of such paragraph (5);

(v) the information to be included in the notices described in subparagraph (B) of such section and the standardization of such notices;

(vi) with respect to a PDP sponsor that establishes a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under such paragraph (5), the responsibilities of such PDP sponsor with respect to the implementation of such program;

(vii) notices for plan enrollees at the point of sale that would explain why an at-risk beneficiary has been prohibited from receiving a prescription at a location outside of the designated pharmacy;

(viii) evidence-based prescribing guidelines for opiates; and

(ix) the sharing of claims data under parts A and B with PDP sponsors.

(C) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, taking into account the input gathered pursuant to subparagraph (A) and after providing notice and an opportunity to comment, promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of, and amendments made by subsections (a) and (b).

TITLE VIII—TRANSNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015''.

SEC. 802. POSSESSION, MANUFACTURE OR DISTRIBUTION FOR PURPOSES OF UNLAWFUL IMPORTATIONS.

Section 1009 of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''It shall'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance in schedule I or II or flunitrazepam or a listed chemical intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that such substance or chemical will be unlawfully imported into the United States or into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States.

''(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a listed chemical—

''(1) intending or knowing that the listed chemical will be used to manufacture a controlled substance; and

''(2) intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that the controlled substance will be unlawfully imported into the United States.''.

SEC. 803. TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS OR SERVICES.

Chapter 113 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 2318(b)(2), by striking ''section 2320(e)'' and inserting ''section 2320(f)''; and

(2) in section 2320—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) traffics in a drug and knowingly uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with such drug,'';

(B) in subsection (b)(3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''counterfeit drug'' and inserting ''drug that uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with the drug''; and

(C) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6) the term 'drug' means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, March 14, at 4 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 476, that there be 90 minutes for debate only on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and then the Senate resume legislative session without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as many Iowans know, I made a practice of holding townhall meetings in each of the 99 counties of my State every year. It has become known in the media as a ''Full Grassley.'' That is not something I named it. That is something someone else named it. It is kind of a flattering name, but in some ways it does not make sense because the townhalls are not about Senator GRASSLEY. They are about hearing from Iowans whom I am proud to serve. They are about hearing about the real problems my constituents have, and, of course, from our end, trying to find practical solutions to those problems. That is what I work on every day. I suppose all of my colleagues would say that is what they work on every day.

On many occasions at my townhall meetings in recent years, Iowans have asked me why the Senate never gets anything done. Both parties probably shoulder some of the blame for this attitude out there at the grassroots, but the reality is that the most obvious, the most glaring, the most unmistakable reason for the Senate's recent paralysis is the way Democratic Leader REID ran it before he was toppled as majority leader.

When the Democratic leader was in control of the Senate, he was the one who decided not to empower his committee chairs to craft and advance bipartisan legislation. He decided not to give all Members, Republican and Democratic alike, a real opportunity to participate in the process. He decided not to empower the Senate to address real problems that real people face every day.

Instead, he chose dysfunction and gridlock over practicality and problem solving. By November 2014, the American people had finally had enough. After the American people spoke, the Democratic leader no longer controlled the Senate. Since the Senate has been under Republican leadership, things have started to work again. You see it in the latest example of this bill passing almost unanimously. So this is an example of Senators partnering across the aisle. Legislation is moving. The result is real progress on real issues facing our country.

I am proud the Judiciary Committee has played its part. As chairman, my goal has been to open the process and seek as much consensus as possible. The results reflect that. We have reported 21 bills out of committee, all with bipartisan support. I would like to walk through some of these results because there is a lot of credit to go around on both sides of the aisle.

Last February the committee passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. We passed it unanimously, 19 to 0. The bill enhances penalties for human trafficking and equips law enforcement with new tools to target predators who traffic in innocent young people. The bill passed the Senate 99 to 0 and was passed into law.

Yes, there were some bumps along the way. When the Democratic leader realized that genuine bipartisanship had broken out and that we might actually accomplish something, a controversy had to be manufactured about the Hyde amendment on that particular trafficking bill, but eventually the Democratic leader took yes for an answer and the bill got done.

This victory was a credit to the leadership of one Democrat and one Republican—Senator CORNYN and Senator KLOBUCHAR. Their bill provided real solutions for real victims of trafficking. A few months later, in October, the committee passed the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act. Sentencing reform is a difficult and complex issue. Many Senators have strongly held views. Despite that, the bill emerged from our committee with a strong 15-to-5 bipartisanship vote. My bill would recalibrate prison sentences for certain drug offenders, target violent criminals, and grant judges greater discretion at sentencing for low-level, nonviolent drug crimes. I am grateful for the Senators who have partnered with me on this legislation, especially Senators DURBIN, CORNYN, WHITEHOUSE,

and LEE. I am hopeful that if we keep working together, landmark sentencing reform can be another major accomplishment of this Senate. Time is growing short, but I cannot think of a more productive use of the Senate's time than to make our criminal laws more just. This is another example of a real problem we can solve together.

Also, in July of last year, the committee passed my Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act, again, without opposition. The bill will ensure that at-risk youth are fairly and effectively served by juvenile justice grant programs. These important programs provide the chance for kids to get back on the right track so they will not enter the criminal justice system as adults. Every one of these young people are worth helping to reach their greatest potential. Senator WHITEHOUSE, a Democrat from Rhode Island, and I are working hard to move this bill through the full Senate. I thank him for working with me on it.

There are many other bipartisan accomplishments of this Senate that the Judiciary Committee cannot take credit for. I will not try to go through all of them, of course, but one example that comes to mind was the outstanding work of Senator BURR, a Republican, Senator FEINSTEIN, a Democrat, on the cyber security bill. That legislation passed the Senate on a solid 74-to-21 vote. A conference version of it was later signed into law by the President. With reports of breaches of our personal data on an almost daily basis, it is self-evident that this bill helped to address a real problem that has affected millions of Americans.

That brings me to the Senate's passage of the bill that was just voted on, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—CARA, for short. It passed today with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. This legislation reflects the Senate at its finest, working in a bipartisan way to address an awful epidemic that is gripping our country.

I thank the authors of CARA for their leadership in crafting the legislation and working with me to move it through the Judiciary Committee and out of that committee unanimously. In particular, I thank Senators PORTMAN, AYOTTE, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR; you see, two Democrats and two Republicans. Real lives will be saved because of the leadership of this bipartisan group. That is not something we can say every day around the Senate. I know the efforts of those Senators and others to address this epidemic stretch back a few years.

It is a shame the Democratic leader decided not to address this crisis at the early stage when he was deciding the agenda of the Senate, but he decided not to act, even in the face of mounting evidence that the country was facing a grave and gathering epidemic of heroin and opioid painkiller overdoses. Deaths from prescription opioid painkillers rose over 30 percent from 2007 to 2014. Heroin overdose deaths more than quadrupled during that time. Heroin seizures at the southwest border more than quadrupled as well. All the while, the Democratic leader never brought a bill to the floor to address the crisis.

So given the dysfunction that had overtaken the Senate not long ago, we should take a moment to appreciate the bipartisan process through which the Senate just passed this CARA bill. As the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I moved a Democratic bill through the committee. It passed without opposition. Then the Republican leader promptly scheduled the bill for floor consideration. I don't recall that ever happening under the former Democratic leadership. The Senate had rollcall votes on four amendments, although the Republican leader offered more such votes on Democratic amendments. All four of those amendments were offered by Democratic Senators, and the bill passed overwhelmingly, as amended. This process would have been unthinkable under the Democratic leader. This simply would not have happened. You know the statistics. There were 18 rollcall votes on amendments all during the year 2014. During 2015, we had 198 rollcall votes on amendments and only 4 more Republican amendments than Democratic amendments.

Yes, once again the Democratic leader tried to manufacture a controversy when this bill first came to the floor about a week ago Monday, this time over some alleged funding for this heroin-opioid epidemic. But when $400 million in newly appropriated money for it hasn't even been spent yet, well, that argument by the Democratic leader was a tough one to sell.

Over the last few days, the Democratic leader played some games with negotiations on a managers' package of amendments. The Republican side, the majority side, worked hard to clear amendments offered by many Democrats, including Senators DURBIN, GILLIBRAND, HEINRICH, KAINE, MCCASKILL, BLUMENTHAL, SCHATZ, HEITKAMP, and CARDIN, but the Democratic leader objected to completely uncontroversial, commonsense amendments that would be in the package offered by two Republicans, Senator JOHNSON and Senator KIRK. Why? Simply because these Republican Senators are up for reelection this year, and under those circumstances, we couldn't reach an agreement. So all these Democratic amendments didn't go because the Democratic leader had objection to two Republican, relatively noncontroversial amendments, one of them absolutely noncontroversial.

How noncontroversial were these amendments? Let me give you one example. Senator JOHNSON wanted to add the Indian Health Service as a member of the task force the bill creates to develop best prescribing practices for opioids. I suspect many Americans, including even people living in the State of Nevada, would think Senator JOHNSON's idea is a good one. Addiction is a problem for so many in our country, and the Native American community is unfortunately no exception. But this is the kind of dysfunction, the kind of gridlock that the Democratic leader is known for. A good idea becomes a bad idea if it is simply offered by a Member of the Republican Party, and that especially is the case if you are a Republican up for reelection.

As CARA's name reflects, the bill addresses this epidemic comprehensively, supporting prevention, education, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement. CARA begins with prevention and education. The bill authorizes awareness and education campaigns so that the public understands the dangers of becoming addicted. It also creates a national task force to develop best prescribing practices, as I mentioned. The bill encourages the use of prescription drug monitoring programs, such as those in my State of Iowa, which help to detect and deter what is called doctor shopping behaviors by addicts. The bill authorizes an expansion of the Federal program that allows patients to safely dispose of old or unused medications so that these drugs don't fall into the hands of young people. In fact, along with a few other committee members, I helped start the original take-back program in 2010 through the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act.

CARA also focuses on treatment and recovery. The bill authorizes programs to provide first responders with training to use naloxone, a drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and directly save lives. Critically, the bill provides that a set portion of naloxone funding go to rural areas, like much of Iowa, which are being affected most acutely. This is critical when someone overdoses and isn't near a hospital.

The bill also authorizes an expansion of Drug-Free Communities Act grants to those areas that are most dramatically affected by the opioid epidemic. And it also authorizes funds for programs that encourage the use of medication-assisted treatment, provide community-based support for those in recovery, and address the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum women who are addicted to opioids.

Finally, the bill also bolsters law enforcement efforts as well. The bill reauthorizes Federal funding for State task forces that specifically address heroin trafficking.

So in all these ways, CARA will help real people address the very real epidemic. The eastern part of my State has been hit the hardest. The human

costs of what is happening across so many of these communities is incalculable. Every life that is lost or changed forever by this crisis is precious, especially for many young people who fall victim to addiction early in their lives. There is so much human potential at stake.

I can't wait until my next townhall meeting. I am going to be proud to explain how the Senate did something today that will help so many people in Iowa and around the Nation, Republicans and Democrats working together. Let's keep it going.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING DR. MIGUEL ENCINIAS

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I rise today to remember a great New Mexican and a great American, Dr. Miguel Encinias, who passed away on Saturday, February 20, at the age of 92.

New Mexico has a long and proud tradition of military service. Dr. Encinias is often called ''New Mexico's most decorated veteran.'' He fought in three wars and was the recipient of 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 14 Air Medals, and 2 Purple Hearts. His military career is one of courage and sacrifice. He later played an important role in the creation of the World War II Memorial here in Washington, DC.

If the measure of a life is living to the utmost of one's talents and giving the utmost of one's self, Miguel Encinias is an inspiration to all of us. I think that is why he will long be remembered with such admiration and gratitude.

His service began at the young age of 16 when he joined the New Mexico National Guard in 1939. Within 4 years, he had become a second lieutenant and a pilot in the Army Air Corps. Over the next three decades he fought with distinction in three wars: World War II, the Korean war, and Vietnam.

As his friend and mine, Ralph Arellanes, who is chairman of the Hispano Roundtable of New Mexico, said of Miguel: Miguel flew 245 combat missions as a fighter pilot. Few American aviators in history have flown combat missions in three wars. Miguel was one of them.

He was shot down over Italy in 1944 and served over 15 months in a Nazi prison camp. He volunteered to go to Korea and was shot down again but not captured. He answered the call of his country many times with great courage and sacrifice.

Dr. Encinias retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1971, but if that was the conclusion of his storied military career, it was just the beginning of new accomplishments and new achievements. He returned to New Mexico and earned a doctorate in Hispanic literature at the University of New Mexico.

In an article about his life, the Albuquerque Journal said: ''As a scholar, educator, New Mexico historian, and decorated combat flyer in three wars, Miguel Encinias both studied and shaped history in a life that spanned nine decades.''

There was an article about Miguel in the Santa Fe New Mexican, and they put it this way: ''An ace in the air, a scholar on the ground.''

He earlier obtained a degree in political science at Georgetown University and a master's degree at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris.

In 1995 he was requested by President Clinton to serve on the World War II Memorial Advisory Board. By the time the memorial was built in 2004, Dr. Encinias was the only living member of the board to see it completed. It was a happy day for him.

In an interview with the Albuquerque Journal, Dr. Encinias's son, Juan-Pablo Encinias, summed up what so many who knew Dr. Encinias understood: ''It's kind of amazing how much he accomplished,'' his son said. ''He really didn't stop.''

Those accomplishments, according to the Journal, included teaching Hispanic literature at two universities and developing bilingual education in New Mexico schools.

Dr. Encinias also found the time to write several books on New Mexico history and to fund a theater group and a light opera company in Albuquerque.

His son Juan-Pablo also remarked to the Journal that Dr. Encinias ''was very just and felt very strongly about people getting their fair shake in life.''

Dr. Encinias was honored for his work for civil rights and social justice by the New Mexico LULAC branch in 2007 and the Hispano Roundtable of New Mexico in 2011. As important as the medals and honors are, they aren't the most important thing we will remember about Dr. Encinias. It is the example he set in always doing his best, in always giving back, both in wartime and at home.

His daughter Isabel shared with me that although her father had incredibly high standards and was very tough, he had an incredible amount of compassion and always fought for the underdog.

Whether risking his own life to save that of his fellow airmen or fighting for quality education and opportunity for everyone, Miguel Encinias committed himself to the needs of others.

On November 11, 1995, at the World War II Memorial site dedication, Dr. Encinias was introduced by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He received a standing ovation from President Clinton and everyone present. They knew they were seeing a true patriot and a true hero and a great American. On that day, President Clinton thanked Dr. Encinias and said for ''your truly remarkable service to our nation.''

To all who knew this extraordinary man and who mourn him now, we know his life was indeed a remarkable story of courage, of dedication, and of generosity of spirit.

Madam President, my State has lost one of its heroes. Over the course of a long and distinguished life, Dr. Miguel Encinias always found ways to serve, and New Mexico and our Nation are better for it.

My wife Jill and I extend our sincere condolences to the Encinias family on the passing of Dr. Encinias. We honor his courage, we honor his service, and we mourn his loss with the family.

Thank you very much.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SALE OF FIGHTER JETS TO PAKISTAN

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I rise to speak about the discharge vote that will take place momentarily. I just want to say that I know that many people in our country and certainly in this body have significant frustrations with the country of Pakistan. This Senator is one of those. I have been to Afghanistan multiple times. I have visited Pakistan multiple times. Our relationship is one that is very complex. Certainly, Pakistan has been duplicitous in many ways with us relative to their relationship with the Taliban and with Al Qaeda and, certainly and most importantly, as it relates to this particular topic, the Haqqani network.

Our country has worked with them to clear out the FATA areas, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. I think most of us have seen the work that has taken place there, and they have worked with us closely in that regard.

There still are issues undoubtedly that exist relative to their relationship with the Haqqani network, in particular, but also the Taliban. At the same time, there are negotiations that

are underway that are very important to create a lasting peace in Afghanistan. Even though they play both sides of the fence—and I understand that—and even though we have concerns about their relationship with the Haqqani network, they do play a role relative to how those negotiations are taking place.

I have issues with them. I think everyone in the country of Pakistan by this point knows that I have issues with them, at least those who are paying attention to this issue.

What this discharge petition is about today is that it is voting to discharge something to the Senate floor so that there can be a vote on ending the allowance of a sale of some fighter jets. These will be U.S.-made fighter jets. In spite of some of the rhetoric around this, this has nothing to do with the potential subsidy that could take place by U.S. taxpayers.

This is about one thing. It is about whether we as a country would prefer for Pakistan to buy American-made fighter jets or whether we would prefer for them to buy Russian jets or French jets. This is what this is about.

There are some issues that people have raised about potential subsidies for this. I know Senator CARDIN, who is on the floor right now, and myself both have a hold on that—a hold to ensure that there is some behavior changes that take place in Pakistan before any U.S. dollars go toward this sale.

But this vote is not about that. This vote is a vote about whether we believe that countries around the world are better off buying U.S. made materials or whether we think they should buy them from Russia or France. That is what this is about in its entirety.

We are seeking some behavior changes with Pakistan relative to how they are dealing with the Taliban, with how they are dealing with the Haqqani network. It is something that General Campbell, who has been in charge of Afghanistan from a military standpoint, has pushed for. We are working closely with our military and others to try to effect the behavior changes that are necessary for us to have an appropriate response in Afghanistan—but this is a foreign policy issue.

Again, everyone in this body, thankfully, is very concerned about our foreign policy. Foreign policy, I might say, sometimes has to have a degree of nuance to it. We are working with people and with relationships that matter. It matters deeply to the people who we have on the ground, the men and women in uniform in Afghanistan and other places. Our efforts around foreign policy are to do everything we can to ensure we are not utilizing men and women in uniform to solve a problem, because that happens when diplomacy fails.

So this is a very nuanced topic, and I can just say that the Senate deciding en bloc to block a sale to Pakistan of U.S.-made fighter jets is going to be a huge public embarrassment to the country of Pakistan, and there are better ways, in my opinion, for solving this problem. All of us want to see the behavior change, and I am privileged to be in a position to have some effect on the financing, as does Senator CARDIN, and we can deal with this issue in a more nuanced way.

I know some people will say that this is a great thing for back home. Our people back home will love this. Surely, surely, in this body when it comes to dealing with a country with nuclear arms and dealing with Afghanistan, where we have been for 14 years, how we deal with foreign policy will rise above just the immediate response and maybe misunderstandings even that people back home can have about this type of issue.

This relationship with Pakistan needs to move beyond the transactional way that it is carried out. I understand that. I understand that people are frustrated. But at the end of the day, our goal here as representatives of the United States is to see through good things happening for our country. That is what foreign policy is about. It is about pursuing our national interests.

It is my strong belief that the Senate's voting today, in essence, to begin the process of denying Pakistan the ability to purchase U.S. fighter jets is not a way to engender things that are good for our own U.S. national interests. A better way is for us to continue to put pressure on them as we are doing at present, placing holds on financing until they do some things to change their behavior and work with us more fully relative to the Haqqani network, in particular, but also Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

So I would urge my fellow citizens and fellow Senators to please think about the long-term interests of our country, to think about when a country is radicalized and has so many problems as the country of Pakistan has, the public embarrassment that will take place by our body doing this. Let's work together in other ways that actually can generate behavior change by dealing with this in a more subtle way than this blunt object that we are dealing with today.

I want to close with this—and I know Senator CARDIN wants to speak, and I know he has a meeting to go to. What we are voting on, if we discharge this, is that we are voting on whether we would rather for Pakistan to purchase U.S.-made fighter jets, which carry with that at least 30 years of maintenance, meaning that every single year the United States would be involved with these fighter jets. We could withdraw that at any time if we thought their behavior continued to be such that we didn't want to support it. It can stop. It maintains our leverage with Pakistan over the longer haul. That is what our selling them these pieces of equipment does. It maintains our leverage over them.

Today, publicly embarrassing them and sending them to Russia or to France to buy fighter jets ends that leverage and humiliates them at a time when, in spite of the fact that we don't like some of the things they do, it in essence damages our ability to continue the negotiations that are taking place relative to trying to bring a more lasting peace in Afghanistan.

I thank you for the time, Madam President. I yield the floor for my good friend and ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Madam President.

I want to thank Senator CORKER. The two of us have worked on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee without any partisanship. These are foreign policy issues that require the Senate to work together, and I want to thank Senator CORKER for his leadership on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on this issue and on many other issues.

Let me first try to explain what we believe will happen in the next 45 minutes. Under the Arms Export Control Act, the sale of military armament to Pakistan requires the administration to give formal notification to the Congress. Prior to that formal notification, there is an informal process where the administration will inform the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee that they intend to make a sale. They did that in regard to the F–16s for Pakistan, and that is the issue we are talking about.

For several months we have been in negotiations with the administration—as well as with stakeholders with regard to the sale of the F–16 to Pakistan—because quite frankly we did have concerns. We had concerns as to how it would impact the region, including India. We had concerns about Pakistan being a nuclear weapons state. We had concerns about Pakistan's efforts for counterinsurgency. We had concerns about Pakistan's participation in the peace process with Afghanistan. All of those are issues we were able to get some discussions on and we think some progress to the F–16 sale.

The administration formally notified Congress of the F–16 sale on February 25. At that time the bipartisan leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee had agreed the administration should go forward with the sale.

What we think will happen under the Arms Export Control Act—and any

Member can offer a resolution of disapproval—is that Senator PAUL will be offering to bring up a resolution of this approval. We think that will take place in about 45 minutes. It is likely it will require a motion to proceed or to bring the motion forward, and it is possible the leader, the Republican leader, the majority leader, may offer a motion to table in regard to that motion.

I urge my colleagues to understand the next vote will be whether we are going to take up—or not—the resolution of disapproval.

Senator CORKER and I both urge our colleagues that this resolution not be approved, not be taken up; that we allow the sale to go forward but that we maintain our leverage, as Senator CORKER has explained, because there are many more issues involved before the sale becomes complete.

Quite frankly, the reason the F–16s are being recommended is because Pakistan needs the F–16s for their fight against counterinsurgency. I think all of my colleagues are aware of the mountainous terrain, territory that is in Pakistan on the Afghan border. Pakistan needs an air force capacity to deal with that counterinsurgency.

It is our military's judgment that these F–16s are important in regard to that fight against counterinsurgency; that it is in our interests, U.S. interests; that it is in the regional interests, including the stability of its neighbor, India; and it is in the interests of dealing with the fight against the extremists.

As I said earlier, the relationship with Pakistan is complicated. We have several areas of major concern in that relationship, and we fully understand the reasons Members would be concerned. We are a strategic partner with Pakistan in rooting out terrorism. Let me remind my colleagues, the people of Pakistan have had 40,000 deaths as a result of extremist activities within their borders. That is an incredible sacrifice that has been made in their campaign against terrorists, against extremists. They have the Haqqani network, which we know has taken out American interests in that region, they had the fight against ISIS, and they had the fight against LeT, which is a terrorist organization within Pakistan that has committed terrorist attacks in India.

We want them to focus on all of these extremists. At times we don't get the full cooperation of Pakistan for these to be the priorities they go after. Obviously, we want to continue our partnership with Pakistan, but we want them to deal with the threat of the Haqqani network. We want them to focus on the threats of ISIS. We want them to concentrate on the destabilizing impact that LeT has on the relationship between Pakistan, India, and the cause of problems in India. We want to see more progress.

On the second front, on the nuclear phase, Pakistan is the fastest growing nuclear stockpile in the world. Our relationship with Pakistan is critically important for the certainty, safety, and security of the command and control network of their nuclear arsenal. Are they doing everything we want them to do in that regard? No. Have we made significant progress in the safety of their nuclear stockpile? Yes. Do we want to continue our relationship so we can continue to make progress? Absolutely.

The third area we need Pakistan's cooperation is in bringing together all the stakeholders for a peaceful discussion of the peace talks in Afghanistan. The extreme elements that are located in Pakistan need to be part of those discussions. Pakistan can play a critical role in helping that come about. Has Pakistan been helpful? Quite frankly, they have. They have been working with us to get all the stakeholders together in the talks. Could they do more? Yes, we think they could do more.

What Chairman CORKER said is absolutely accurate. We would encourage our colleagues to vote against the resolution of disapproval or to support our efforts to keep that off the floor, first and foremost because the F–16s are needed by Afghanistan and U.S. interests to fight the extremists, but just as important, it maintains the ability of the United States to deal with Pakistan to bring about further progress in all the areas I have talked about. As the chairman said, the worst-case scenario is that we break our relationship with Pakistan and other countries step in, and our ability to get changes in Pakistan's practices as they relate to support or fighting terrorist organizations or nuclear nonproliferation and participation in the Afghan peace talks could be marginalized.

In order to maintain the type of bipartisan, bilateral pressure on the problematic elements of the security sector, but while supporting reformers in the military and civilian governments, we urge our colleagues that it is important we take this sale to the next level.

The last point—and Chairman CORKER pointed this out—we are not signing off on the foreign military financing part. The administration has brought forward a proposal for some reprogramming of funds to help pay for the F–16 sale to Pakistan. In other words, we would use some of the moneys we have already programmed for Afghanistan to be used to pay for the sale of the F–16s. That requires a signoff from the leadership of the two authorizing committees. Senator CORKER and I had not signed off on that—nor do we intend to sign off on that until we have further explanations on a lot of the issues Senator CORKER and I have already raised. We have ample ways of dealing with our bilateral relationship with Pakistan, allowing the sale formally to go forward by how the sale will be financed.

For all those reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose Senator PAUL's resolution and allow us to continue the diplomatic path in regard to that region.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I thank Senator CARDIN and Senator CORKER for how diligently they have worked over the course of the last several months, as both of them have stated on the floor, to make this sale much more palatable and to address many of the concerns that both the chairman and the ranking member had about the nature of the sale and this long history of conflict with the Pakistanis when it comes to our mutual concern of confronting terrorism.

The reason I come to the floor is because this body historically has had a history of deep engagement on questions of major arms sales, especially in regions as dangerous and as complicated as the Middle East. As it stands today, virtually the only two Members who are deeply and meaningfully engaged in the question of attaching conditions to these very important arms sales are the ranking member and the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. I trust their ability to hold the administration's feet to the fire—whether it be the Pakistanis', the Saudis', the Emirates' feet to the fire as they request weapons from the United States, but this body writ large has to get back into the game of providing meaningful oversight on a radical and significant increase in the amount of arms sales the United States is providing to the rest of the world.

From 2011 to 2015, our arms exports have increased by 27 percent. When you compare these two periods, it is striking to note that during that period of time our arms sales to the Middle East have increased by 61 percent.

This Senate has, at its best moments, raised important questions about these sales. I bring you back to the 1980s, when the Senate raised important questions and concerns about the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia. On this side of the aisle, it was Senator BIDEN and Senator Kerry opposing those sales. Those motions of disapproval were ultimately unsuccessful, but through that process of deep congressional introspection, new conditions were placed on the sale of that technology to the Saudis that ended up a much better and safer deal for American national security interests and for the security of our partners in the region.

With respect to the specific sale of F–16 to Pakistan, my colleagues have already pointed out—and I think Senator PAUL will do a better job than I of pointing out—the ways in which our aims of fighting terrorism have been

contradictory with the actions of the Pakistanis, whether it be their unwillingness to confront the Haqqani network, whether it be their oftentimes open coordination with elements of the Taliban that the United States is fighting inside Afghanistan. The Pakistanis have been an unreliable partner over the course of the last 10 years in the fight against extremism, but what I worry more about is that these F–16s will provide cover, will provide a substitute for truly meaningful action inside Pakistan to take on the roots of extremism. Frankly, it is too late in many respects to beat these extremist groups if they are so big, so powerful, so deadly that you have to bomb them from the air.

Today there are 20,000 madrassa, religious schools. Many, if not most, are funded by the Saudis, the Gulf States, and the Iranians and are often preaching an intolerant version of Islam that when perverted, forms the basis of the extremist groups the United States is fighting in the Middle East and throughout the world.

The Pakistanis have done little to nothing to try to reduce the influence of those madrassas, of those religious schools, and of the foreign funding that often breeds this intolerant version of religious teaching. In a sense, we let them off the hook by selling them new weapons systems that will, in effect, constantly force the Pakistanis to chase their own tail.

I think it is important to understand that the Pakistanis are not making the real meaningful contributions to rooting out extremism, and just handing out weapon systems on the back end doesn't do the job.

I would point this body to the path forward. This is an incredibly important conversation that we are having with respect to the F–16s, but we have other pending military sales that will directly involve the United States in regional civil wars and conflicts, unbeknownst often to the American people.

One of them is a major military sales agreement with the Saudis that would eventually resupply them for their bombing campaign in Yemen, a campaign that has killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, that has stopped emergency relief from reaching those who have been the victims of this humanitarian disaster, and frankly that has created space for the expansion of ISIS and Al Qaeda, groups that want to do damage and attack the United States, inside the newly ungovernable territory of Yemen. Yet we are going to be confronted with another military sale to Saudi Arabia that would double down the U.S. commitment on one side of a civil war that if you look at the reality, doesn't seem to be advancing our national security interests. It doesn't seem to be helping us win the fight against ISIS and Al Qaeda.

I hope that after the break we will have the opportunity to discuss that military sale as well because it is time for Congress to get back into the game when it comes to our constitutional responsibility to oversee the foreign policy led by the executive branch. It is time for Congress to start having a meaningful impact when it comes to these massive arms sales that often undermine U.S. national security and come without the necessary conditions to change the reality of the decisions made in places such as Pakistan.

I am going to support Senator PAUL's resolution today, although I hope in the future we will approach these resolutions of disapproval with a slightly greater degree of subtlety in this respect. This is an outright disapproval. If we vote in favor of it, this sale will not go forward. There is another way. Congress could pass a motion of disapproval with conditions. We could disapprove of a sale to Pakistan pending, for instance, their commitment to join the fight against the Haqqani network; contingent upon, for instance, their movement to implement a law to shut down the worst and most intolerant of the madrasas. I would suggest that should be our path forward when it comes to the sale to the Saudis. Simple conditions could be applied to that resolution—making sure the munitions we are selling to the Saudis aren't used to target civilians inside Yemen; committing the Saudis to open up pathways of humanitarian relief and assistance; a promise that none of the funding from the United States to the partners in the coalition to fight the Houthis will be used to directly aid extremist groups. That is probably the better path forward for this body to take.

This is a very blunt instrument, a resolution of disapproval. I think it is important for some of us to be on record supporting it to show that Congress is getting back in the game when it comes to overseeing this fairly substantial increase in arms sales to our named partners in the Middle East, but I think there is a better way forward. I hope that Senator PAUL and others, as we start to go about doing due diligence on future sales, will take a look at maybe a more meaningful contribution this body can take rather than expressing our outright unconditional disapproval. How can we make sure, if these arms sales go forward, that they go forward with conditions attached that are in the best interest of the United States and our partner nations?

Again, I thank Senators CORKER and CARDIN for their important work in the Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am a member, and I thank Senator PAUL for having the courage to bring this resolution to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, let me first of all thank my colleague from the State of Connecticut for his comments. I, too, will be joining him and others in supporting the resolution to be brought forward in some moments by Senator PAUL. I, too, agree that this is a rather blunt instrument. A more strategic use of bringing some leverage to this kind of action would be a more appropriate path, and I hope that in future times, when we have a chance to review foreign arms sales, we will take that more nuanced approach.

Madam President, while I approve of much of what the Senator from Connecticut has said, I want to speak to this issue from a slightly different perspective, and that is the message that at least inadvertently we will be sending with approval of the sale of these jets. And let me again commend Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for appropriately looking at the issue of public financing of these sales. If we move forward with these sales without putting some markers down, I think we potentially not only do damage to holding Pakistan's feet to the fire in terms of the threat of terrorists in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the region but also potentially do damage to one of the most important relationships our country has, and that is the strategic relationship between the United States and India. This relationship has been one of enormous, growing importance. India has been a valuable and strategic partner of the United States and is a tremendous ally in promoting global peace and security. That has not always been the case. Relations between our two nations have been steadily improving over the past decade, ranging from approval on the Civilian Nuclear Agreement, to frequent coordination between our militaries, and at this point over $100 billion in bilateral trade. Prime Minister Modi in India has made a personal commitment to improving the ties between the United States and India. The Prime Minister will come back to the United States at the end of this month.

Nowhere is the potential for our strategic relationship greater than in our bilateral defense relationship, which again has seen great progress over the past decade. Last year our two nations signed the framework that will advance military-to-military exchanges. We are also proceeding with joint development of defense technology, which seeks to increase defense sales and to create a cooperative technology and industrial relationship that can promote both capabilities in the United States and in India.

I viewed with some concern last month when the administration announced the sale of these eight F–16s to Pakistan. And again I want to commend the leadership of the Foreign Relations Committee for making very clear that even if this sale should go forward, the financing of this sale is still subject to further American review.

What brings me to wanting to support Senator PAUL's resolution is the

fact that as recently as January of this year, Pakistani-based terrorists claimed responsibility for an attack against an Indian military base at Pathankot. The attack on this air force base, which resulted in the killing of Indian military forces, was a great tragedy. So far, Pakistan has refused to share intelligence or to turn over those suspects to the Indian Government.

With those kinds of actions, I cannot go ahead and continue this policy where we continue, in effect, to give Pakistan a pass, whether it is actions in the region vis-à-vis Afghanistan or within their own country but also in terms of their unwillingness to meet India even halfway in terms of trying to bring a greater stability to one of the regions that could potentially become a tinderbox in terms of the border regions between India and Pakistan.

So I will be supporting Senator PAUL's resolution. I hope the Government of Pakistan hears the concern of this Senator and other Senators. I hope they will act aggressively in terms of bringing justice to those terrorists who invaded Indian space and attacked the Indian Air Force base. Showing that kind of responsible behavior might lead to at least this Senator taking a different view in terms of future military sales.

With that, I yield the floor, and I recognize my colleague, who I believe will bring this resolution to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES. 31

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 31, relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Pakistan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is debatable for up to 1 hour.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I rise in opposition to the American taxpayers being forced to pay for fighter jets for Pakistan. Over $300 million from the American taxpayers will be designated to go to Pakistan to pay for eight new F–16s for Pakistan. We have a lot of problems here in our country, my friends. We have a lot of things going on in our country that need to be taken care of, and we don't have enough money to be sending it to Pakistan. I can't in good conscience look away as America crumbles at home and politicians tax us to send the money to corrupt and duplicitous regimes abroad.

When I travel across Kentucky and I see the look of despair in the eyes of out-of-work coal miners, when I see the anguish in the faces of those who live in constant poverty, I wonder why the establishment of both parties continues to send our money overseas to countries that take our money, take our arms, and laugh in our faces.

We have given $15 billion to Pakistan—$15 billion over the last decade—yet their previous President admits that Pakistan armed, aided, and abetted the Taliban. You remember the Taliban in Afghanistan that harbored and hosted bin Laden for a decade? Pakistan helped them. Pakistan was one of only two countries that recognized the Taliban. Why in the world would we be taxing the American people to send this money to Pakistan?

Remember when bin Laden escaped? We chased him and he escaped. Where did he go? To Pakistan. He lived for a decade in Pakistan. Where? About a mile away from their military academy. Somehow they missed him. There in a 15-foot-high walled compound, bin Laden stayed in Pakistan while we funneled billions upon billions of dollars to them.

Pakistan to this day is said to look away, to not look at the Haqqani network. In fact, it is accused that many members of their government are complicit with the Haqqani network. Who is the Haqqani network? It is a network of terrorists who kill Americans. We have American soldiers dying at the hands of Pakistani terrorists while that government looks the other way.

GEN John F. Campbell testified before Congress that the Haqqani network remains the most capable threat to U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Yet we are asked to send F–16s and good money after bad to a government in Pakistan that looks the other way.

Pakistan is, at best, a frenemy—part friend and a lot enemy. If Pakistan truly wants to be our ally, if Pakistan truly wants to help in the war on radical Islam, it should not require a bribe; it should not require the American taxpayer to subsidize arms sales. They already have 70 F–16s. They have an air force of F–16s. What would happen if we didn't send them eight more that we are being asked to pay for? Maybe they would listen. Maybe they would help us. Maybe they would be an honest broker in the fight against terrorism.

We are $19 trillion in debt. We borrow $1 million a minute. We don't have any money to send to Pakistan to bribe them to buy planes from us. We don't have the money. We have problems at home. Our infrastructure crumbles at home. We have longstanding poverty at home. We have problems in America, and we can't afford to borrow the money from China to send it to Pakistan.

In my State, in Kentucky, we have a dozen counties with unemployment nearly double the national rate. In Magoffin County, KY, 12.5 percent of people are out of work. Today, those who will vote to send money to Pakistan need to come with me to Kentucky. They need to come to Magoffin County, and they need to look people in the face who are out of work in America and explain to them why we should send money to Pakistan. We have people hurting here at home.

In Harlan, the President's war on coal has led to longstanding double-digit unemployment. In Harlan, KY, people are out of work. People live in poverty, and they don't understand why Congress is sending money to Pakistan.

In Leslie County, high unemployment prompts their citizens to ask: Why? Why is the government spending billions of dollars for advanced fighter jets for foreigners? They don't understand it. They can't understand, when they live from day to day, why their government is sending money to Pakistan.

As I travel around Kentucky, I ask my constituents: Should America send money and arms to a country that persecutes Christians? I have yet to meet a single voter who wants their tax dollars going to countries that persecute Christians.

In Pakistan, it is the law; it is in their Constitution that if you criticize the state religion, you can be put to death. Asia Bibi has been on death row for nearly 5 years. Asia Bibi is a Christian. Her crime? She went to the well to draw water, and the villagers began to stone her. They beat her with sticks until she was bleeding. They continued to stone her as they chanted ''Death, death to the Christian.''

The police finally arrived, and she thought she had been saved, only to be arrested by the Pakistani police. There she sits on death row for 5 years. Is it an ally? Is it a civilized nation that puts Christians to death for criticizing the state religion? I defy any Member of this body to go home and talk to the first voter. Go outside the Beltway. Leave Congress and drive outside the Beltway and stop at the first gas station or stop at the first grocery store and ask anybody—Republican, Democrat, or Independent: Should we be sending money to a country that persecutes Christians?

Asia Bibi sits on death row for criticizing the state religion, and your money goes to support her government. What will happen to Pakistan if they don't get eight more F–16s? They will have only 70 F–16s.

Most of the politicians here simply don't care. They don't care whether Pakistan persecutes Christians. They know only one way. The one way is to open our wallet and bleed us dry and hope that someday Pakistan will change its behavior. Guess what. If you are not strong enough to vote for this resolution, if you think some kind of

cajoling, flattery, and nice talk with empty words are going to change the behavior of Pakistan, you have another thought coming. It has been going on for decades.

When I forced a vote in the Foreign Relations Committee to say that countries which put Christians to death for criticizing the state religion—there are about 34 of these countries, a couple of dozen of them who received money from us, American tax dollars going to countries that persecute Christians. When I introduced the amendment to say: Guess what. Let's not do it anymore. Any country that has a law that compels a Christian and puts a Christian to death, that country would no longer receive our money. Do you know what the vote was? It was 18 to 2 from Washington politicians to keep sending good money after bad because they say: Oh, the moderates there are going to change their minds someday.

We have given them $15 billion, and I see no evidence of change in behavior. I see insolence, arrogance, and people who laugh as they cash our checks.

Is Pakistan our ally in the War on Terror? Well, not only did they help the Taliban that hosted Bin Laden for a decade, but when they finally got Bin Laden, we got him with evidence that was given to us by a doctor in Pakistan. His name is Shakil Afridi. Where is he now? Pakistan has locked him away in a dark, dank prison from which he will probably never be released.

Shakil Afridi has essentially been given a life sentence by Pakistan for the crime of helping the United States and helping all civilized nations get to Bin Laden. He sat under the noses of the Pakistani Government for a decade. We finally got him when Shakil Afridi helped us.

People aren't going to continue to help America if we don't help them, if we don't protect our human intelligence, if we don't protect those who are willing to help America. He sits and rots in a prison. What message do we send to Pakistan if we send them eight more F–16s and we tell you, the American taxpayer, you are paying for it? What message does that send to Pakistan? The message to Pakistan is that we will just keep thumbing our nose at America, we will keep cashing their checks, and we will laugh all the way to the bank as we do nothing to release the Christians on death row or to release the doctor who helped us.

Should we give planes to a country that imprisons these heroes—heroes who helped and put their lives on the line for our country?

Today we will vote on whether the American taxpayers should foot the bill. I have yet to meet a voter in my State of Kentucky or across America who thinks it is a good idea to send more money to Pakistan. We have a $19-trillion debt. We borrow $1 million a minute. We have no money. It is not even a surplus. They say we are going to influence Pakistan or they may rise up and say: Oh, the resolution will not stop the money. The heck it will not. If my resolution passes, if it becomes law, the eight jets will not go to Pakistan, they will not be subsidized, and not one penny of American tax dollars will go to Pakistan. That is the absolute truth. No matter what they tell you, this stops the sale. It stops the subsidy.

We have to borrow money from China to send it to Pakistan. Such a policy is insane and supported by no one outside of Washington. You go anywhere in America and ask them: Should we give money? Should the taxpayer be forced to give money to Pakistan, a country that persecutes Christians? Nobody is for it. Yet the vast and out-of-touch establishment in Washington continues to do it. Is it any wonder that people are unhappy with Washington? Is it any wonder that Americans are sick and tired of the status quo, sick and tired of people not listening to them?

We have no money in the Treasury. We are all out of money. This influences nothing, other than to tell the Pakistanis they can continue doing what they want. I urge my colleagues to vote against subsidized sales of fighter jets to Pakistan.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Can the Chair tell me how much time I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator has used 14 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. So I have 16 remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to say a few remarks about this resolution of disapproval.

While I oppose this measure, I share the junior Senator from Kentucky's frustration with some aspects of our relationship with Pakistan. Notably, I think the jailing of Dr. Shakil Afridi for 23 years under highly questionable charges is an outrage.

For those of you who don't remember, Dr. Afridi helped the United States locate Osama bin Laden. His approach may have been debatable, but one thing is clear—he doesn't deserve to languish in a Pakistani jail for more than two decades on manufactured charges.

I have also been troubled by the Pakistani military and intelligence service's support for militant groups that work against U.S. interests in the region. In fact, I would argue that many of these groups are also working against the long term interests of our friends in Pakistan as well, as evidenced by its own domestic terrorist problem.

I am also concerned that, despite important foreign aid given to Pakistan, there remains a troubling failure to address basic and urgent development needs—particularly education and schooling for girls. We also see continued cases of extreme religious intolerance, including death sentences for dubious charges of blasphemy.

At the same time, I also want to take a moment to acknowledge that Pakistan has suffered horrible losses in taking on militant groups within its own borders—something I don't think we always recognize.

And most importantly, I want to stress the importance of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—let's allow it to do its work and thoroughly consider this resolution first, rather than rush it through the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to table the motion to discharge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted ''nay.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 71, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 35 Leg.]

YEAS—71

Alexander	Enzi	Menendez
Baldwin	Ernst	Merkley
Barrasso	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bennet	Fischer	Murkowski
Blumenthal	Flake	Murray
Blunt	Franken	Nelson
Boozman	Gardner	Perdue
Burr	Graham	Peters
Cantwell	Hatch	Portman
Cardin	Heitkamp	Reed
Carper	Hirono	Reid
Casey	Inhofe	Risch
Cassidy	Isakson	Roberts
Coats	Johnson	Rounds
Cochran	Kaine	Sasse
Coons	King	Schumer
Corker	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cornyn	Lankford	Shaheen
Cotton	Leahy	Shelby
Crapo	Markey	Stabenow
Donnelly	McCain	Sullivan
Durbin	McConnell	

Thune	Toomey	Wicker
Tillis	Whitehouse	Wyden

NAYS—24

Ayotte	Grassley	Paul
Booker	Heinrich	Schatz
Boxer	Heller	Scott
Brown	Hoeven	Tester
Capito	Kirk	Udall
Collins	Manchin	Vitter
Daines	Moran	Warner
Gillibrand	Murphy	Warren

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	McCaskill	Sanders
Lee	Rubio	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I would like to address a very important issue, which is the right for American citizens to know what is in their food. I am going to be talking about the topic of genetically modified ingredients in food. I will be pointing out that there are genetic modifications that are largely considered to have been beneficial and others that are largely considered to be causing significant challenges. In both cases, there is science to bring to bear around the benefits and there is science to bring to bear around the disadvantages. Ultimately, I will conclude—to give a preface here—that this is not a debate about the pros and cons. There is information on both sides, different aspects. What is at debate is whether our Federal Government wants to be the large, overbearing presence in the lives of Americans and tell them what to think, or whether we believe in our citizens' ability to use their own minds and make their own decisions. To be able to do that, they have to be able to know when there are genetically modified ingredients in the foods they are consuming.

Let's start with the point that there are significant benefits from various GM modified plants. One example is golden rice. Golden rice, as seen here, has been modified in order to produce a lot more vitamin A. So growing this in an area where there is a vitamin A deficiency has been beneficial to the help of local populations.

Let's take, for example, a certain form of carrot. It has been modified to produce an enzyme that helps rid the body of fatty substances. When you can't do that, you have Gaucher's disease. We have a lot of trouble with Gaucher's disease, with brain and bone damage, anemia, and bruises. But through the modification of these carrots, there is a solution, and should you be afflicted with Gaucher's disease, you would be very happy about that.

Let's take another example. These are sweet potatoes that have been modified to resist a number of viral infections common in South Africa. So a place where otherwise you may not be able to grow these sweet potatoes, where the local population might not be able to benefit from nutrition in these sweet potatoes, they can now do so. These are some of the examples of some of the benefits that have come from some forms of genetic modification of plants.

But just as there is science that shows benefits, there is also science showing concerns. I am going to start by explaining that the largest modification in America—the largest deployed modification—is to make plants such as corn, soybeans, and sugar beets resistant to an herbicide called glyphosate.

The use of glyphosate has increased dramatically over the last two decades. In 1994 we are talking about 7.4 million pounds—not very much. But by 2012, we are talking about 160 million pounds of this herbicide being put onto our crops.

Well, one's reaction may be this: OK, but is there any downside to that massive deployment of herbicides? Yes, in fact, there is. This herbicide is so efficient in killing weeds that it kills milkweed. Well, milkweed happens to grow in disturbed soil. So it has been a common companion to our agricultural world. Milkweed is the single substance that monarch butterflies feed on. So as the glyphosate expansion has increased over this time period, the monarch butterfly has radically decreased because its food supply has been dramatically reduced. This is not the only factor considered to affect the Monarch butterfly, but it is an example of a significant factor. That is something of which you think: What else could happen in the natural world as a result of changing dramatically the variety of plants that surround our farm fields?

Let's turn to another impact. Millions of pounds of glyphosate go on the fields, and much of it ends up running off the fields and running into our streams and rivers. It is an herbicide. So it has a profound impact on the makeup of organisms in those streams and rivers.

For example, it can have an impact on microorganisms, algae, and things that feed on that up the food chain—fish, mussels, amphibians, and so forth. We don't understand all the impacts of massive amounts of herbicides in our streams and rivers, but scientists are saying: Yes, there is an impact. Studies are underway to understand those impacts more thoroughly. Of course, we care about the health of our streams and rivers.

Let's take another example. Sometimes you just can't fool Mother Nature. One impact of the massive application of glyphosate is that weeds start to develop a resistance to it, and then you have to start to use more of it. Also, that is true in a different sphere. I am talking about a particular genetic modification that goes into the cells of plants and is designed to fend off the western corn rootworm.

The western corn rootworm eats corn when it is in the larvae stage—that is the worm stage—and it does so when it is in the beetle stage. Some beautiful examples are shown here. It can eat the pollination part of the corn so that the corn doesn't produce healthy kernels as well. It can eat the leaves. It pretty much loves the entire corn plant.

This genetic modification produces a pesticide inside the cell and was in the beginning very effective in killing these corn rootworms. But guess what. Mother Nature has a continuous stream of genetic mutations, and if you apply this to millions and millions of acres and millions of pounds, eventually Mother Nature produces a mutation that makes it immune to this pesticide. Then those immune rootworms start multiplying, and you have to start applying a pesticide again, and maybe you have to apply even more than before because they develop a resistance to it. That is exactly what is happening here. So that is a significant reverberation.

All I am trying to point out here is that this is not really an argument about science. Science can tell us that there have been occasions in which genetic modifications have had an initial beneficial impact, and science will tell us that there are situations in which the reverberations of using the genetically modified plants are having a negative impact. So that is where it stands. It is like any other technology. It can be beneficial. It can be harmful.

So the question is this: Does our government—the big hand of the Federal Government—reach out and say to our cities, our counties, and our States that there is only one answer to this and that is why we are going to ban you from letting citizens know what is in their food. Of course, there is no one answer. We have seen there are benefits and there are disadvantages. Quite frankly, I think it is just wrong for the Federal Government to take away our citizens' right to know. That is why I am doing all I can to publicize this at this moment.

Various States have wrestled on whether to provide information to citizens so that the citizens can decide on their own whether they have a product that has genetically modified ingredients. Most of our food products do because virtually all of our corn, sugar beets, and soybeans are genetically modified, but citizens can look at what type of genetic modification. They can respond and use their minds with information.

This is really what is beautiful in democracy. Government doesn't make up your mind for you. Government doesn't impose a certain framework in which you have to view the world.

Yet, right now, at this very moment, there are a group of Senators in this body who want to impose those blinders on you, American citizens. They

want to tell you how to think. They are supporting a bill that says the Federal Government will take one side of this argument and tell you it is the truth and spend your tax dollars publicizing it. This is the type of propaganda machine that you would expect outside of a democracy but not here in the ''we the people'' government of the United States of America—not here, where we value our citizens' ability to make their own choices. So it is very important that we wake up quickly and respond to this, because the simple truth is a group of very powerful companies are working right now to get a bill passed that will take away our citizens' right to know about GM ingredients in their products. This bill is called the DARK Act, or the Deny Americans the Right to Know Act, and it has passed out of committee. The majority leader has said it is a priority for him to put the DARK Act on the floor of this Senate next week with virtually no notice to the United States of America.

Most of these positions percolate inside committees for a length of time and then get digested on the floor for a length of time. But, no, there is an effort to slam this through—this imposition on the right to know in America. That is just absolutely wrong.

Now let me talk a little bit about how American citizens feel about this. There was a survey done at the end of 2015, just a couple of months ago. This was a nationwide survey of likely 2016 election voters done in November of 2015.

The question that was asked of the participants was this: As you may know, it has been proposed that the Food and Drug Administration, or the FDA, require foods that have been genetically engineered or contain genetically engineered ingredients to be labeled to indicate that. Would you favor or oppose requiring labels for foods that have been genetically engineered or contain genetically engineered ingredients?

After the respondent gives the answer, then the follow-up question is this: Is that strongly or not so strongly? Well, 89 percent of Americans say they favor mandatory labels on foods that have genetically modified ingredients. That is powerful. That is nine 9 of 10 Americans.

Furthermore, 77 percent of the respondents said that they not only favor mandatory labels but they strongly favor the proposal. Now, this is very unusual to have nine Americans line up on one side versus one on the other.

Is this something that has to do with party affiliation? Absolutely not. Across the great spectrum of ideologies in America, citizens agree in this poll, with 89 percent of Independents—the same as overall—84 percent of Republicans, and 92 percent of Democrats. In other words, regardless of party, basically 9 out of 10 individuals say the same thing on the right, on the left, and in the middle.

Well, that should be listened to up here on Capitol Hill because we are intended by constitutional design to be a ''we the people'' government, not the government of, by, and for powerful ag companies. If you want to serve in that kind of government, go to some other country because that is not the design of our Constitution.

Our responsibility is to the people of America. They don't like Big Government trying to tell them how to think, and that is why this DARK Act is just wrong.

There are some ideas floating around this building today. One of those ideas is, well, we will put a label on a food product that will be just a phone number, and if you, the citizen, want to know details about this product—whether it contains genetically modified ingredients—well, you can ring up this phone number and maybe somebody will answer your question. You can call the company, and the company will tell you what they think about their product.

Well, first, Americans don't want to stand there in the grocery store and start making phone calls to companies. Can you imagine, you are standing there—and you actually care about whether there is a GMO in this product. You are going to make a phone call. You are going to wait while you go through a telephone tree. You are probably going to have to speak to somebody overseas who may not even understand what you are asking, or you get a company spokesman who is going to lay out the company line and never really give you an answer. Why should you have to do that?

Think about the parallel situation. We have all these other ingredients on the package. We include things such as sea salt as opposed to salt. We have preservatives. We have colors that are incorporated into the food because people want to know about the colors, the food dyes that have gone into the food. They want to know about the preservatives that have gone into the food.

We even tell companies that on the label they have to tell the consumer whether the fish has been caught in the wild or raised on a farm. Why do we require that label? Well, we require that label because citizens want to know about the ingredients in their food—in this case, the makeup of their fish, because it is different. There are different farming practices between catching wild salmon and raising salmon on a farm, in a pond, or in an ocean-contained area. There are different impacts. Citizens care about that, so we require it to be disclosed.

We require our juice companies to say whether the juice is fresh or reconstituted. Why do we provide that information? Why do we require that? Because citizens want to know. There is a difference between the two products, and they want to know. It is their right to know what they put into their own bodies, what they feed to their families, what their children consume. It is their right to know. Again, 9 out of 10 Americans say this is important to them.

This telephone idea is just the worst possible scam. Let's put it frankly. Nobody is going to stand there comparing soups, making phone call after phone call after phone call. Nobody who wants to know if there is high fructose corn syrup in their food is going to stand there, look at a can, and dial phone number after phone number. That is why it is printed on the label. That makes it very simple.

There is another idea floating around here: Put a computer code on the product, and people can scan it with their smartphone and get information. Well, this may be even more ludicrous than the phone idea in terms of stripping the power of American citizens' right to know. First, you have to be in the grocery store, and here are the different cans of soup you are going to compare. Oh, let me take a picture of the first one with my phone. Oh, OK, now I have to go to the Web site. I am taking a picture of the bar code, and I am going to go to the Web site. OK, which page of this Web site do I go to? Oh, look, this Web site was written by the company that makes it.

They are making it hard for this information to be found. They are making it hard for this to be understood. They are not disclosing the details of the type of genetic modification. Well, that is absurd. Can any Member of this Chamber really tell me—can you stand and tell me that you are going to take pictures of 10 different products while your child is sitting in your grocery cart? And that is just to buy one thing on your grocery list. Does anyone here want to stand and claim they would do that? I think the silence speaks for itself.

Certainly we are in a situation where people don't want to take pictures of these codes with their cell phones because it reveals information about them that the companies collect on them. Why should they have to give up their privacy to know about an ingredient in their food?

Let's be clear. There are two scams being discussed right now by the majority leaders of this Chamber, this esteemed Chamber which should stand for free speech and knowledge, not suppressed speech and lack of knowledge. They want to send you down this rabbit hole of 800 numbers or this blind alley of computer bar codes rather than a simple indication on a package.

Let's recognize that this is a pretty easy problem to resolve because most of the world has figured it out—64 other countries, 28 members of the European Union, Japan, Australia, and

Brazil. They all have a simple disclosure on the package, a consumer-friendly phrase or symbol. That symbol is straightforward. There is no smokescreen. There is no blind alley. There is no rabbit hole. There is no cleverness over an 800 number or a bar code or another computer code called a quick response code. No, they simply give the information, the way we do on everything else, the way we do on preservatives, food colorings, core ingredients, wild-caught fish versus farm fish, and juice from concentrate versus fresh juice. They make it simple. They just have a simple marking on the package.

Do you know who else provides this simple information to their consumers? China. Do our citizens deserve less information than the Chinese, who live in a dictatorship? Why are Members of this Chamber trying to strip more information away from American citizens than does the dictatorship of China? That is just wrong.

There is an easy solution here. There are a number of reasonable arguments that Big Agriculture is making. They say: Look, we do not want 50 States producing 50 different label standards.

I absolutely agree.

They say: We don't want a bunch of counties and cities producing yet other label standards; that could go into the thousands.

Fair point.

One common way of doing this would make sense. You cannot have a warehouse that is serving three or four different States or multiple communities that need to have this product sorted and distributed, one group to here and one group to there. You can't keep it all straight. It is expensive. There are all these different labels. It is confusing. That is a fair point. I agree. Let's do one 50-State solution.

The industry says: We don't want anything pejorative. We don't want anything that says GM is scary or GM is bad.

I pointed out that there are some advantages to genetic modifications and there are some disadvantages. So I agree there too. Let's not put a marking on a package that is pejorative.

The industry says: We don't want anything on the front of the package. It takes up space. It may suggest there is something scary about this if you are putting it on the front of the package.

OK, fair enough. Let's not put it on the front of the package. I completely accept that point.

The industry says: There are several different ways we could do this. We would like flexibility.

Absolutely. Let's have flexibility.

So I have put together a bill which hits all these key points the food industry has raised. It is a 50-State solution. There is nothing on the front of the package. There is nothing pejorative. And it gives the type of flexibility the industry has talked about.

Under the bill I have put forward, they are allowed to put initials behind an ingredient in parentheses or to put an asterisk on the ingredient and put an explanation below or to put in a phrase—as Campbell Soup plans to do—that simply says: This product contains genetically modified ingredients. Campbell Soup is planning to do that because they say they want a relationship of full integrity with their customers. Shouldn't we all be for full integrity with our citizens? Doesn't that make a lot of sense?

Yet another option would be to put a simple symbol—any symbol chosen by the FDA, so certainly not one that suggests there is anything pejorative about it. Brazil uses a little ''t.'' OK, how about a little ''t'' in a triangle or in a box or something else that the FDA or the food companies would like?

The point is, if someone cares enough to pick up a package, turn it over, and look at the fine print on the ingredients, if they care enough to look, just as they might care enough to look up whether there is high fructose corn syrup, just as they might care enough to see if there are peanuts in it because they have a peanut allergy, or just because they want to look at the ingredients to see how many calories are in a product, if they care enough to pick it up and turn it over, a little symbol—all of those options are available under this type of reasonable compromise. It would appear on each product involved in interstate commerce. OK, so that is consistent, and that is a point made. It is clear. These symbols are clear.

The public that cares get educated. They know what to look for. It is easy to find. It is right there on the package. There is no sending you off on a wild goose chase through a phone tree and an 800 number. There is no proceeding to tell you that you have to use a smartphone, which many people don't have. They might not even have reception to be able to use it effectively if they wanted to. No. It is a simple, straightforward phrase or initials right there on the ingredients package. What could be more appropriate than the simplicity of that?

Many folks have stepped forward to say this makes tremendous sense. Campbell Soup said: Yes, we endorse this. This makes sense. Also, Nature's Path, Stonyfield, Ben & Jerry's, Amy's Kitchen, Consumers Union, the American Association for Justice, the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, and the Just Label It coalition.

Yes, OK, that is fine, we are not asking for something on the front of the package. It doesn't have to be on the front. It doesn't have to be scary. It can be in that tiny print on the ingredients page. When an earnest, sincere citizen wants to know, they have the right to know in a consumer-friendly fashion.

I particularly thank the Senators who have already signed on to endorse this legislation: Senator LEAHY and Senator BERNIE SANDERS, who come from Vermont, which has a State labeling bill that would be preempted by this bill. It would be replaced by this 50-State national standard. But because this is a fair standard for consumers, they are endorsing this bill. I also thank Senator TESTER of Montana, Senator FEINSTEIN of California, Senator MURPHY of Connecticut, Senator GILLIBRAND of New York, Senator BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut, Senator BOXER of California, Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts, and Senator HEINRICH of New Mexico. All parts of the country, different parts of the country, and they are all saying: You know what, our citizens, 9 to 1, want a simple, fair statement or symbol on the ingredients list. That is just the right way to go.

If you are going to step on the authority of States to provide information that citizens want, you have to provide a simple, clear, indication on the package. That is the deal. That is the fair compromise. That is standing up for citizens' right to know. That is honoring the public interest. That is a compromise in the classic sense that works for the big issues the companies are talking about. They don't want the expense from individual States and they don't want the complexity and confusion from individual States. What consumers want is a simple indication on the package.

Let's do the right thing. Let's not be worse than China and block our consumers from having access to information. Let's do the right thing that virtually every developed country has done and provide a simple, clear system for citizens to be able to know what is in their food.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to come to the floor and talk a little about the ongoing dialogue we are having on the Supreme Court nomination.

Before I start this speech, I wanted to comment on something for those who think all we do is fight here. I think the Presiding Officer was at our bipartisan lunch. I think it is a great opportunity. So often we see the debate on the floor and the dialogue in the committee rooms, but we take the opportunity every month or so and Democrats and Republicans come together and we enjoy each other's company. We talk a little about policy but more about the folks back home. So I just wanted to let the American people know that because we happen to have differences, it doesn't mean we don't like and respect so many of our colleagues.

Today, though, I am talking about something that is a point of contention between Democrats and Republicans, and it relates to the open Supreme Court seat as a result of the tragic passing of Justice Scalia. Originally, I was going to come to the floor and provide a speech I had prepared, but I was in the Judiciary Committee today and I decided—probably against my staff's wishes—to deviate a little from the script and to talk about some of the facts that were put forth in the Judiciary Committee today.

One of the arguments we hear from Members of the Democratic Party is that somehow the Supreme Court has been shut down. That couldn't be further from the truth. Actually, since the passing of Justice Scalia, there have been some 12 arguments heard in the Supreme Court and 5 opinions. There will be several more.

As a matter of fact, over the course of history there have been a number of instances where the Supreme Court has had Justices recuse themselves or Justices go on a leave of absence for another duty. So there have been a number of instances where the Court continues to function just fine with eight, and sometimes even fewer than eight, Justices active in any given opinion. So to say for some reason until we make an appointment to the Supreme Court that the Supreme Court is going to cease to function defies the facts.

As a matter of fact, in the October 2014 session—the Supreme Court has two sessions, the first half of the year and the second half of the year. In October of 2014, there were 72 arguments heard before the Supreme Court. There were only 18 of them that actually were divided along ideological lines within the Court. So three-fourths of all the cases in 2014 were actually settled with significant numbers of people joining together to render an opinion. So the Court is working just fine, and it will continue to work just fine.

I would also argue that the idea put forth by some Members that the Supreme Court is suddenly going to be shut down for a year defies logic and history. The Supreme Court is already in session. They will go through probably the end of June or the beginning of July. There is no possible way, under normal circumstances, that we would have time to appoint a Supreme Court Justice who would be participating in this term. So what we are really talking about is the October term. If the October term of this year bears any resemblance to the October term of 2014, there may be 5 or 10 cases where the 9-member Court would be material. The vast majority of them are going to move through. That is why this idea of shutting down the third branch of government is disingenuous and really supporting a political agenda and less about whether the government is functioning properly.

The other thing I wanted to talk about before I get into some of the reasons I do not support nomination proceedings going through under President Obama is related to some history. Before I get to the history that specifically relates to the constitutional obligation of the Senate, the Senate rules, and maybe some of the positions that have been taken by Members of the minority in the past, I also want to talk about one other area that concerns me in this dialogue.

There has been a discussion about the backroom meetings, making the decisions. Well, members meet oftentimes—we tend to meet the majority of the time—in public settings, but members got together and we decided to come up with a policy that was a clear position that the majority of the members of the Judiciary Committee—and the majority of the members are today Republicans—that we were going to take on the nomination. We all agreed—all 11 of us—that we are not going to move forward with the nomination.

They can call it a backroom deal, but whether you would argue that is an improper practice, what I found interesting is that members of the Judiciary Committee who brought this up did something that I think was a profound show of disrespect to this institution. It happened a few years ago, when in a back room the leader of the then-majority, Senator REID, convinced all the members of the Democratic conference to vote on the nuclear option. The nuclear option is—well, it is great I guess for TV—but structurally the nuclear option is that throughout decades there was a 60-vote threshold for moving nominations through the Senate unless you had consensus to hold it down to 51 votes. In a back room, the then-majority leader, Senator REID, convinced his conference to come to this floor and break the rules to change the rules in order to prevent the minority from being able to weigh in on judicial nominations and a number of other nominations. In fact, after that rule was passed, after that decision was made in a back room and after those folks came to the floor and broke the rules to change the rules, they ended up confirming judges without any input from the then-minority Republicans.

So when people want to stand up here and say that somehow what we did was different, this is one nomination. This is a decision we made about one nomination, but we have a group of people—every single person on the Judiciary Committee, in fact, who are in the Democratic conference, voted to deny the minority from having what has been a decades-old tradition in the Senate to have the minority weigh in on nominations.

I would now like to get to some of the other discussions. First off, we have to recognize we are in the throes of the primary season for the Presidential nomination. It would be very difficult to live in the United States and not know a little about the primary that is going on. The people are in a position where, over a very few short months, they are going to make a decision. They are going to voice their vote, and I, for one, think the people should be allowed to weigh into this decision. I do believe many of the Senators on the other side of the aisle have felt the same way. In fact, I will go through a couple of quotes where they made it very clear. In fact, they are very trained and very articulate and can probably voice their position—which now is my position—better than I ever could.

One thing that comes up in this discussion is our constitutional obligation, and that is the obligation to advise and consent. Keep in mind, the advice and consent is not a constitutional obligation for the Senate to rubberstamp the decisions of the President. Quite the contrary. The whole idea of the three branches was to have certain checks and balances in place. So there absolutely was no concept on the part of the Founding Fathers to say when the President makes a decision, the Congress will rubberstamp that decision. We then have an equal authority to determine whether that nomination will come to a nominations process or we will simply decide not to take up the nomination.

Now, a lot of people think that is a new concept, but the reality is, it is a concept that has been in place for many years in the Senate rules. For people to say we always dispose of nominations in the term we are in defies the existence of this rule, which simply says: Should the Senate choose not to take up a nomination, then the next President will put forth another nomination for consideration.

Again, I think people are finessing what our responsibilities are and whether this is really something different or something that wasn't anticipated by the people who have come before us and who established the rules that govern the Senate.

I want to talk a little about what I think must be a very uncomfortable place for some Members of the minority to be; that is, their own history on the current situation in the Senate. We are in the middle of a campaign. We are in the middle of a tough campaign on both sides of the aisle, whether it is the Democratic primary or the Republican primary. People are engaging in a way they haven't in many years. Turnouts in many of the primaries have been more significant than they have been in many years. People are watching. So we have an opportunity to educate the people on this very important choice in terms of a Supreme Court nomination.

I, for one, think the nomination should be instructed by the vote that is cast in November for the President, and, actually, for that matter, the Senate congressional elections. Some people say: Well, the people have spoken and President Obama was reelected to a second term. That is true. And 2 years later the people spoke again, and I was elected to the Senate and Republicans were brought to a majority. So the people spoke in a different way. Just a few months from now we will get the most up-to-date read of where the American people are, who they want to lead the country, and who they want to nominate as the next Supreme Court Justice.

This quote has been famously reported in the press, and I couldn't say it any better than then-Senator BIDEN did. He talked about the need, at a certain point in time during the political process, to set things aside, let the people speak, and let that be instructive to the Supreme Court nomination.

Incidentally, I know the Vice President, at the time he made this quote, was the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the position Senator GRASSLEY currently holds. He was basically saying what Senator GRASSLEY has said and that I fully support. So I think Vice President BIDEN was right the first time. He seems to be stepping back on his words, but I don't think his words can be parsed. They were pretty well-articulated right here on the Senate floor.

Then we come to the minority leader. We now have the minority leader and others coming to the floor talking about what our constitutional duty is, but the minority leader came to this floor—right over there, not very far from where I am now—and he said:

> The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential appointees a vote.

I agree with Senator REID. And finally, we have one from my good friend from New York, Senator SCHUMER. Senator SCHUMER is a very articulate man. He is a practiced attorney, and there are many aspects of the man I admire. In another instance, in a very passionate speech given—it is on YouTube so you can all watch it—he has taken a very similar position; that circumstances get to a point to where maybe we need to hold nominations until we get the information we need that is instructive to the future nomination or the future vote or consent matter.

I agree with Senator REID's 2005 statement, I agree with Senator BIDEN, Chairman BIDEN, now-Vice President BIDEN's statement of 1992, and I agree with Senator SCHUMER's of 2007.

My colleagues, it is time for us to move on and recognize the position we have taken is a position that is going to stand. We can go to the American people back in our States, States like North Carolina, where we have a primary next week, and I will be traveling all across the State tomorrow and Saturday, back again on Monday. I will explain to them why I have taken the position I have, and when we do, all the games that are being played now, with one poll saying one thing or another poll saying another thing, we can cut through the noise and talk about what we are really trying to do.

What we are trying to do is to give the people an opportunity to voice where they want to take the direction of the Supreme Court, where they want to take the Nation in terms of the Presidency, and where they want to take the Nation in terms of the Congress. I am willing to bet on the people's voice, and I am looking forward to it being instructive to the ultimate decision I make about a Supreme Court nominee.

I love getting letters from folks in my State, so the last thing I leave you with is a quote from a lady named Lois from North Carolina. I think she does a good job of summing up my own feelings. She said:

> I really wish the discussions and hoopla could have waited a little longer after Judge Scalia's passing, but we are having the back and forth of what to do. As your constituent, I'm in agreement with the committee position of waiting until after we have a new President. Word out of the White House to the Senate is: Do your job. Well, I, for one, think you are doing your job. It's called checks and balances.

In the coming weeks, I am looking forward to continuing this debate. I want to especially note that Senator GRASSLEY is a wonderful Member of the Senate. He has support and admiration from both sides of the aisle. I appreciate his leadership on this matter. I appreciate Leader MCCONNELL's leadership on this matter. I look forward to getting back to North Carolina and hearing what the people would like for me to consider as we move forward with the nomination process.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH CUBA

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, last month we reached a milestone in the continuing reform of our policy toward Cuba. The United States and Cuba completed a bilateral air service agreement that is key to ensuring the continued travel of Americans to the island. The newly minted air services agreement will, for the first time in 50 years, provide scheduled air service between the United States and Cuba, including 20 daily flights to Havana and 10 daily flights to other Cuban airports.

As someone who believes that all Americans should have a chance to see a living museum of a failed socialistic experiment, I look forward to the day when all Americans can use Web sites they are familiar with to make reservations, even with their frequent flyer miles, to book flights to Havana and elsewhere in Cuba. Clearly, there is interest on our side of the Florida Strait. With easing of regulatory restrictions, authorized travel to Cuba by Americans has increased by more than 50 percent in just one year. Freedom to travel between the two countries will continue to open cultural and economic ties, benefiting the Cuban people and Americans alike.

While I ardently support everyone's right to travel to Cuba, key to the success will be ensuring that the initial flights being awarded by the Department of Transportation provide for the continued and expanded ability of the Cuban American community to travel to the island via regular air service. This should include adequate regular service to accommodate the growing demand from the largest and closest Cuban American population located in Miami-Dade County.

In addition, having traveled to Cuba multiple times over the years, I hope that the Department closely evaluates the complexity of operating there and ensures that those selected to operate these routes are up to the task—those with experience.

A failure-to-launch scenario would represent a critically missed opportunity represented by the potential of successfully scheduled air services between the United States and Cuba. We can't afford to let this opportunity go to waste.

I have long supported efforts to restore the rights of American citizens to travel to Cuba and have introduced legislation to lift the statutory ban on travel, along with my colleague from Vermont, Senator LEAHY. I am pleased to say that our legislation continues to gain bipartisan support.

As the situation changes on the ground with developments like regular air service, direct air service, and scheduled air service, I hope that thousands upon thousands of Americans will visit Cuba and Congress will do the right thing when it comes to changing our outdated law.

I yield back, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the Nation has lost one of the greatest Justices ever to sit on the Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia. My condolences and prayers go out to his wife of 55 years, Maureen, his 9 children, and 36 grandchildren.

My thought is that Justice Scalia's greatness was founded on the power of his ideas. His defense of those founding principles of America at the highest intellectual level is unprecedented, to my knowledge, in the United States. Over his career, he moved the legal world. As a young lawyer out of law school, I remember what the trends were and how Justice Scalia relentlessly, intellectually, aggressively, and soundly drove the message that many of the ideas that are out there today are inconsistent with the rule of law and the American tradition.

The trend was relentlessly toward activism. Judges were praised if they advanced the law—not when they followed the law, or served under the law, or the Constitution, but if they advanced it. By advancing it, what that really means is you change it. If you advance it, it means the legislature hadn't passed something that you would like, or the Constitution doesn't advance an idea that you like, then you figure out a way to reinterpret the meaning of the words so it says what you would like it to say and what you wish the legislature had passed.

One of the bogus ideas at that time—you don't hear much about it anymore, but it was current, and it was mainstream then—was that the ink-stained parchment, well over 200 years old and right over in the Archives Building, was alive. Our Constitution, they said, was a living document.

Well, how ridiculous is that? The judges said that the Constitution gave them the power to update it, advance it, and make it say what they wanted it to say. They even contended that it was the duty of the judge, not just the privilege of the judge, to advance the words of the Constitution. Justice Scalia saw this as a direct threat, and he understood at the most fundamental level who was threatened by it, and that was ''we the people.''

You know how the Constitution begins with ''We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare . . . do ordain and establish''? Well, friends and colleagues, we establish this Constitution, the one we have, not the one some judge would like it to be or some politician would like it to be but the one we have.

He boldly criticized the idea that a mere five judges—it just takes five out of nine—with lifetime appointments who are totally unaccountable to the American people. We are prohibited from even reducing their pay, which I support because we want an independent judiciary.

Judges need to know they are given independence and a lifetime appointment because we trust them to serve under the Constitution and not above it. They serve under the laws duly passed by the elected representatives of the people of the United States, not above those laws. They were not given the power to set policies that they would like to set no matter how strongly they feel about it. That is not what they have been given to do. He boldly criticized those ideas and those individuals and didn't mind saying it in plain words: You are setting policy, you are not following the law.

I would say that Professor Van Aylstyne—while at William & Mary or Duke—had a great quote about this. He said: If you really honor the Constitution, if you really respect the Constitution, you will reinforce it as it is written whether you like it or not.

If judges today can twist the Constitution to make it say something it was not intended to mean, how might a new Court—five judges in a new age a decade or two from now—reinterpret the words to advance an agenda during that time? Isn't that a blow to the very concept of the democratic Republic we have? I think so.

I will tell you that this has been a long and tough intellectual battle. You don't hear many people say that paper document over in the Archives is a living thing. Of course it is not a living thing. It is a contract. The American people have a contract with their government. They gave it certain powers and reserved certain powers for themselves. They reserved certain powers for their States, and the Federal Government is a government with limited power. This is absolutely, undeniably fundamental, and people don't fully understand it today.

I remember when I was a U.S. attorney back in Alabama and an individual brought me a high school textbook. He said: I want you to see this.

The book said: How do you amend the Constitution? It talked about several different ways to amend the Constitution, such as Congress and the Constitutional Convention, but it also said by judicial decision.

He said: Mr. U.S. Attorney, I thought the judges were bound by the Constitution. They don't get to change the Constitution.

Well, of course that is correct. But, in effect, we have had many instances when judges, through their interpretation, have in effect amended the Constitution. It is an absolute legal heresy, and they should not do that. It weakens the power of the democracy.

One of the things that I think is very unfortunate is that judges have created an incredible amount of law that is contrary to common sense in the area of religion in the public life of America. Many of these cases are very confusing. But Justice Scalia, in a series of cases where he wrote the majority opinion, or wrote the dissent, or wrote concurring opinions, applied the principles of the Constitution as they were intended to lay out a lawful and commonsense framework for faith in the public square. I think that is a significant achievement.

When Chief Justice Roberts came before our committee for confirmation, I remember telling him: Sir, I would like you to try to clear up and bring some common sense to the expression of faith. You have a right to free speech in America, you have a right to the free exercise of religion under the Constitution, so how has it gotten around that you can be protected more in filthy speech than you can be protected in religious speech?

So as I said, Justice Scalia issued a series of opinions that were important on this subject. For example, in 1992, the Supreme Court decided Lee v. Weisman. This case involved a challenge to a Rhode Island public school policy that permitted a member of the clergy to deliver prayers at middle school graduation ceremonies. In this instance, a rabbi had delivered a prayer at one such ceremony, and one of the families in attendance that objected brought suit, alleging that the school's policy permitting prayer at graduation was a violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. By a vote of 5-to-4, the Supreme Court concluded that the school's policy violated the Establishment Clause. Justice Scalia dissented. He wrote:

> In holding that the Establishment Clause prohibits invocations and benedictions at public school graduation ceremonies, the Court—with nary a mention that it is doing so—lays waste a tradition that is as old as public school graduation ceremonies themselves, and that is a component of an even more longstanding American tradition of nonsectarian prayer to God at public celebrations generally.

Two years later, the Supreme Court decided Board of Education of Kiryas Joel Village School District v. Grumet. This case involved a challenge to a New York statue that tracked village boundaries to create a public school district for practitioners of a strict form of Judaism known as Satmar Hasidim. By a vote of 6-to-3, the Court concluded that the government had drawn political boundaries on the basis of religious faith in violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. Justice Scalia dissented. He wrote:

> the Founding Fathers would be astonished to find that the Establishment Clause—which they designed to insure that no one powerful sect or combination of sects could

use political or governmental power to punish dissenters, has been employed to prohibit characteristically and admirably American accommodation of the religious practices—or more precisely, cultural peculiarities—of a tiny minority sect. . . . Once this Court has abandoned text and history as guides, nothing prevents it from calling religious toleration the establishment of religion.

Ten years later, in 2004, the Supreme Court decided Locke v. Davey. In this case, a student challenged a Washington State statute which created a scholarship for students enrolled ''at least half time in an eligible postsecondary institution in the state of Washington,'' but excluded from eligibility for this scholarship students seeking degrees in devotional theology. A student sued to enjoin Washington from refusing to award him a scholarship. By a vote of 7-to-2, the Supreme Court upheld the statute. Justice Scalia dissented. He wrote that:

When the State makes a public benefit generally available, that benefit becomes part of the baseline against which burdens on religion are measured; and when the State withholds that benefit from some individuals solely on the basis of religion, it violates the Free Exercise Clause no less than if it had imposed a special tax. That is precisely what the State of Washington has done here. It has created a generally available public benefit, whose receipt is conditioned only on academic performance, income, and attendance at an accredited school. It has then carved out a solitary course of study for exclusion: theology.

The next year, the Supreme Court decided McCreary County v. ACLU of Kentucky. This case involved a challenge to the placement of the Ten Commandments on the walls inside two Kentucky courthouses. By a vote of 5-to-4, the Supreme Court held that the placement of the Ten Commandments inside of courthouses was a violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. Justice Scalia dissented. He wrote that:

Historical practices demonstrate that there is a distance between the acknowledgment of a single Creator and the establishment of a religion. The former is, as Marsh v. Chambers put it, ''a tolerable acknowledgment of beliefs widely held among the people of this country.'' The three most popular religions in the United States, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—which combined account for 97.7% of all believers—are monotheistic. All of them, moreover (Islam included), believe that the Ten Commandments were given by God to Moses, and are divine prescriptions for a virtuous life. Publicly honoring the Ten Commandments is thus indistinguishable, insofar as discriminating against other religions is concerned, from publicly honoring God. Both practices are recognized across such a broad and diverse range of the population—from Christians to Muslims—that they cannot be reasonably understood as a government endorsement of a particular religious viewpoint.

More recently in 2014, Justice Scalia dissented from a denial of certiorari in the case of Elmbrook School District v. Doe. In this case, the entire seventh circuit, over three dissents, held that a suburban Milwaukee public high school district violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment by holding its graduation in a nondenominational church. Justice Scalia wrote that:

Some there are—many, perhaps—who are offended by public displays of religion. Religion, they believe, is a personal matter; if it must be given external manifestation, that should not occur in public places where others may be offended. I can understand that attitude: It parallels my own toward the playing in public of rock music or Stravinsky. And I too am especially annoyed when the intrusion upon my inner peace occurs while I am part of a captive audience, as on a municipal bus or in the waiting room of a public agency.

In this case, at the request of the student bodies of the two relevant schools, the Elmbrook School District decided to hold its high-school graduation ceremonies at Elmbrook Church, a nondenominational Christian house of worship. The students of the first school to move its ceremonies preferred that site to what had been the usual venue, the school's gymnasium, which was cramped, hot, and uncomfortable. The church offered more space, air conditioning, and cushioned seating. No one disputes that the church was chosen only because of these amenities.

In this case, it is beyond dispute that no religious exercise whatever occurred. At most, respondents complain that they took offense at being in a religious place. It bears emphasis that the original understanding of the kind of coercion that the Establishment Clause condemns was far narrower than the sort of peer-pressure coercion that this Court has recently held unconstitutional.

Although many of his dissents were memorable, not all of Justice Scalia's notable opinions on religion in public life were issued in dissent. In 1995, Justice Scalia wrote the opinion for the Court in Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board v. Pinette, where the Court rejected an Establishment Clause challenge to the Christmas season display of an unattended Latin cross in a plaza next to the Ohio State Capitol. Writing for the Court, Justice Scalia said:

Respondents' religious display in Capitol Square was private expression. Our precedent establishes that private religious speech, far from being a First Amendment orphan, is as fully protected under the Free Speech Clause as secular private expression. Indeed, in Anglo-American history, at least, government suppression of speech has so commonly been directed precisely at religious speech that a free-speech clause without religion would be Hamlet without the prince.

And just last term, Justice Scalia wrote the opinion for the Court in EEOC v. Abercrombie & Fitch Stores, a case about accommodation on the basis of religion in the employment environment. In this case, a Muslim individual who wore a head scarf as part of her religious observation applied for a job at a clothing retailer, but was not hired due to the company's policy, which prohibited employees from wearing ''caps.'' In reversing the court of appeals in favor of the applicant, Justice Scalia wrote that:

Congress defined ''religion'' for Title VII purposes as ''including all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief.'' Thus, religious practice is one of the protected characteristics that cannot be accorded disparate treatment and must be accommodated.

As we see, these opinions by Justice Scalia involve parties of varied faiths—Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Regardless of the identity of the party, Justice Scalia's opinions on religion in public life consistently evidence a deep respect for the unique history of religious pluralism in this country and a heartfelt appreciation for its positive impact across the landscape of the nation. While some may say his opinions are not consistent, I disagree. Religion in American life is an important and complex subject. Judges must think carefully but not abandon common sense as so many opinions have. Justice Scalia saw limits on free exercise of religion when it came to the contention, for example, that one's religion required the use of drugs that a State had declared illegal.

So this is an important area that needs to be cleared up so that we can bring some reality to the question of the expression of religious conviction in public life. Because the Constitution says we shall not establish a religion—Congress shall not establish a religion. It doesn't say States couldn't establish a religion; it says Congress can't establish a religion. It also says ''nor shall Congress prohibit the free exercise thereof.'' So you can't prohibit the free exercise of religion.

I think we have forgotten the free exercise clause and over-interpreted the establishment of religion. Some States at the time had established religions. Most of the countries in Europe had a religion that they put in law for their country, and we said: No, we are not going to establish any religion here. You have the right to exercise your religious faith as you choose.

Madison and Jefferson particularly believed it was absolutely unacceptable for this government to tell people how to relate to that person they considered to be their creator. That was a personal relationship that ought to be respected and the government ought to have no role in it.

Like Madison and Jefferson, Justice Scalia, too, believed in American exceptionalism. Indeed, he was truly exceptional. Although he will be impossible to replace, his seat on the Supreme Court will eventually be filled by the next President. After that nominee is confirmed, his or her decisions will likely impact our Nation for the next 30 years and far beyond. Next year, when we debate this eventual nominee's qualifications to assume Justice Scalia's seat, we need look no further than his own words for wisdom

to guide us as we consider our decision. In no uncertain terms, Justice Scalia's McCreary County dissent reminds us that:

> What distinguishes the rule of law from the dictatorship of a shifting Supreme Court majority is the absolutely indispensable requirement that judicial opinions be grounded in consistently applied principle. That is what prevents judges from ruling now this way, now that—thumbs up or thumbs down—as their personal preferences dictate.

That is the governing principle that Justice Scalia abided by—unwavering commitment to the rule of law even when reaching the outcome that the law dictated did not align with his policy preferences. This—above all things—is the duty of a judge or Justice, and it is a principle that has fallen by the wayside far too often in recent years. It is imperative that we keep these words in mind when we consider appointments not only to the Supreme Court, but all lifetime appointments to the Federal judiciary.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, now that the Senate has passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, I wish to take a few moments to reflect on what I believe are going to be additional steps that are needed to really put an end to the horrible opioid epidemic. This is a horrible, horrible health scourge that has carved a path of destruction throughout communities in Oregon and across our country.

Now, over the last several weeks, I have traveled around Oregon to spend time listening to experts. We heard powerful testimony in the Finance Committee, and I have spoken with colleagues here in the Senate about the urgency and the important scale of this national crisis. The message has been very clear: Our country is paying for a distorted set of priorities. Our citizens get hooked on opioids, there is not enough treatment, and enforcement falls short. My view is that is a trifecta of misplaced priorities.

What it says to me is that our country needs a fresh approach where prevention, better treatment, and tougher enforcement work in tandem. We have to have all three working together to really get on top of this horrible, horrible health scourge. The Congress ought to be working overtime on policies that start moving our Nation towards this tandem approach that I have described.

Now, my view is that the bill that was passed by the Senate takes the first step toward updating the country's out-of-date approach to substance abuse. More needs to be done, and that is what I and other colleagues have pushed hard to do. I very much hope that more can be done in this Congress.

As ranking member of the Finance Committee, we are required to pay for Medicare and Medicaid. I wish to spend a few minutes talking about the fundamental role that is going to play in stemming the tide of opioid abuse.

These are bedrock health programs, and they are expected to account for over a third of substance abuse-related spending in the upcoming years. We are talking about billions and billions of dollars. Medicare and Medicaid have an important role when it comes to preventing addiction at its source, and talking about prevention has to include talking about how these drugs are prescribed in the first place.

As I visited with citizens around Oregon, I was struck—and I know of the Presiding Officer's expertise in health care as a practitioner—by what I have come to call the prescription pendulum. Doctors were once criticized for not treating pain aggressively enough, and today they are criticized for prescribing too many opioids to manage pain. So in the days ahead, our country is going to have to look for solutions that get the balance right.

During the debate on this bill, the Senate considered an amendment I wrote that would have doubled the penalties for opioid manufacturers who give kickbacks to prescribers and put profits over patients. It has been well documented in recent years that companies are pushing the unapproved use of some drugs at the expense of patient safety. It is high time for real accountability when the manufacturers go too far.

My amendment would also have made significant progress to connect those struggling with addiction to appropriate treatment. Some parts of the bill the Senate passed crack down on those on Medicare who are suspected of abusing opioids. It is an enforcement-only approach, and my view is that the story cannot stop there. Without treatment, those addicted to opioids might try to get their pills on the street or turn to heroin. My amendment would have ensured that those who are at risk for opioid abuse are connected to meaningful treatment choices so they can better manage their pain and limit excessive prescriptions.

I also proposed an amendment that would have helped some of the most vulnerable Americans, including pregnant women on Medicaid who struggle with addiction. The costs of inaction here add up every single day for moms and their babies. A recent Reuters investigation found that, on average, an opioid-dependent baby is born every 19 minutes. These are high-risk pregnancies that can have lifelong consequences for mothers and their children. Some of these babies tragically aren't going to make it. Many of them are going to be placed in foster care if their mothers cannot break their addiction.

So it is critical that these women have and retain full access to pre- and post-natal care as well as addiction treatment. Yet, today, if a pregnant woman on Medicaid receives treatment for drug or alcohol dependency, in certain in-patient facilities, that woman loses her health coverage for the duration of her stay. That just defies common sense.

The good news is, the country has a pretty good idea of a straightforward solution. There is no reason someone who is pregnant should lose access to their health insurance. This amendment simply states that no pregnant woman would lose her Medicaid while she receives treatment for addiction. To be clear, this amendment doesn't instruct Medicaid to pay for these treatment services. That charge requires a broader debate. I do believe, though, in the meantime, access to services like prenatal care should not be restricted for pregnant women who want to receive care for their addiction.

It is unfortunate these amendments didn't make it into the Senate legislation today, but I have seen a number of times—and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate—that sometimes we don't win on day one, and you have to come back again and again and again. A few weeks ago, a bill I authored well over a decade ago, the Internet Tax Freedom Act, finally got passed permanently into law. So sometimes when something is important, you just have to stay at it, and I want colleagues to know I think the CARA bill is a good start. It focuses on enforcement, but unless you get the prevention and treatment part of it in addition to enforcement, you are not going to get the job done properly.

The Congress obviously has some tough choices to make. If prevention and treatment aren't addressed upfront, the costs are going to be even higher—pregnant mothers giving birth to opioid-dependent babies, EMTs in emergency rooms dealing with overdose calls every night, county jails taking the place of needed treatment, able-bodied adults in the streets instead of working at a family wage job. American tax dollars need to be spent more wisely, and it is my view the Senate has to come back to this issue. It has to come back to this issue and get the job done right.

I indicated earlier that I am very much aware of the expertise of the Presiding Officer in health care and his involvement as a practitioner, and I look back, as I said, to how the prescription pendulum has moved. It wasn't very long ago when I was of the view that there wasn't enough done to manage pain. As patients began to insist on those kinds of drugs and therapies to help them with their pain, we saw they were able to get relief. The pendulum may have swung the other way now, and there is too much prescribing. I don't pretend to be the authority on how to get the prescription pendulum right, but I do know from listening to practitioners in the field, to citizens, to grieving parents, that you have to have more than enforcement. That is what the Senate has done with the bill that was passed today. The story must not end there. The Senate can do better in the days ahead. The Senate can fill in the rest of the story and ensure that in addition to enforcement, there will be prevention, there will be treatment, and a sensible policy that ensures that these three priorities work in tandem and is what the Senate pursues on a bipartisan basis in the days ahead.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I want to spend just a few minutes to discuss women's health care because I believe women's health care in America is in trouble—very deep trouble. It is in trouble in Congress, it is in trouble in the courts, and it is in trouble in our statehouses. In these bodies, I think there is a serious risk to women's access to affordable, high-quality health care. There is an assault on women's right to choose their own physicians and their own providers, and that assault is wrong. Drip by drip, State by State, the assault goes on.

The latest example is in Florida, where lawmakers seem to be heading down the same road that Texas and Louisiana have traveled, restricting the choices of women. This all began with a Texas law, HB2, that has been challenged all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Arguments were heard just last week. HB2 backers have argued the law is about protecting women's health. My view is that is pretty much fiction. HB2 has very little to do with women's health. It is a thinly veiled scheme to block women's health choices with unjustifiable requirements for abortion clinics. The AMA and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists—people who obviously have expertise on this issue—have said very clearly in a legal brief, an amicus brief, that the restrictions are ''contrary to accepted medical practice and are not based on scientific evidence.'' Despite the advice of the American Medical Association and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Texas went ahead with the law anyway. If it stands, the number of clinics that provide abortion care will drop by more than three-quarters. Now HB2 backers say it is about preventing complications from abortion. Yet they ignore other procedures—colonoscopies, for example, that have much higher rates of complications. HB2 backers say women who live where these clinics have shuttered could go to other States, but the fact is, we are hearing that really isn't an option for so many women.

Louisiana just passed its own version of HB2. Just yesterday the news came down that legislators in Florida have passed a similar measure. The Florida bill goes one dangerous step further by going after funding for Planned Parenthood. Attacks on Planned Parenthood aren't anything new, not in statehouses like Tallahassee or here in the Congress. When you threaten Planned Parenthood in this way, you are going far beyond restricting access to abortion. Here is the list of vital women's health care services which have absolutely nothing to do with abortion, and these services which have nothing to do with abortion are under threat: pregnancy testing, birth control, prenatal services, HIV testing, cancer screenings, vaccinations, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, basic physical exams, treatment for chronic conditions, pediatric care, hospital and specialist referrals, adoption referrals, nutrition programs.

The fact is, this assault on women's health care is going to hit disadvantaged, struggling women hard across our country. There are countless women across America enrolled in Medicaid who rely on Planned Parenthood and similar programs for their basic, essential medical care. It is their first line of defense for basic health care, particularly in rural communities in rural Oregon. The women know and trust their doctors at those clinics. Without those clinics, they aren't going to have anywhere to turn for their care. If you are working an hourly job, you have kids to care for on your own, it is pretty clear you are not going to find an easy way to take a day off work and travel far away for medical care. Yet these are the kind of laws that are being passed in States across America. These anti-woman laws are unfair and they are dangerous.

This will not be the last time I come to the floor to discuss this. My view is access to health care for women in this country is in trouble, and a number of the services I have talked about are essentially part of what is a constitutional right—a constitutional right. It doesn't just mean it is a constitutional right if you are well-off. It is a constitutional right because the U.S. Supreme Court has said it, and I intend to defend that constitutional right. I intend to do everything I can to build bipartisan support so that instead of women's health services being in deep trouble as I described today, women can know that those essential services are available for them across the country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STUDENTS' FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about one of our most cherished rights as U.S. citizens; that is, the freedom of speech and why allowing our children and young people to exercise this right at a young age is critical to learning and understanding complex and tough issues and ideas.

The ability to effectively teach and learn journalism—and for other students to be challenged to engage in public discourse on tough issues—was severely hindered by the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1988 in Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier. The Hazelwood case legitimized a school's decision to remove material about divorce and teen pregnancy from the pages of a student newspaper on the grounds that the material was overly mature for a high school audience.

Justice William Brennan, one of the First Amendment's greatest judicial champions, dissented from that ruling in words that resonate with us here today. He said: ''Instead of teaching children to respect the diversity of ideas that is fundamental to the American system and that our Constitution is a living reality, not parchment preserved under glass, the Court today teaches youth to discount important principles of our government as mere platitudes.''

History has vindicated Justice Brennan's dire warning. Students regularly report that they have been prevented from discussing matters of public importance in the pages of student media or, perhaps worse, they have restrained themselves from even attempting to address an issue of social or political concern in fear of adverse consequences. That is not an environment that values and empowers student voices, and it is not a climate conducive to the effective learning of civic participation. We can and must do better.

On the 25th anniversary of the Hazelwood decision in 2013, every major journalism education organization in the

Nation enacted a resolution calling on schools and colleges to abandon reliance on the Hazelwood level of institutional control. The sentiment was perhaps best expressed by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the largest organization in the country of college journalism instructors, which stated that ''no legitimate . . . purpose is served by the censorship of student journalism even if it reflects unflatteringly on school policies and programs, candidly discusses sensitive social and political issues, or voices opinions challenging to majority views on a matter of public concern.''

Since then, nine States have statutes protecting the independence of student journalists to report on issues of public concern without fear, and two have comparable protections by way of the State board of education rules. The combined experience of these 11 States spans well over 160 years, demonstrating that young people are fully capable of exercising a measure of legally protected press freedom responsibly and without incident or harm.

I am proud to say that my own home State of North Dakota established a position of national leadership by enacting the John Wall New Voices of North Dakota Act in 2015. The statute was named in memory of a truly amazing educator, John Wall, who lived his own civics lesson by running for the North Dakota House of Representatives, where he served with great distinction for 10 years after retiring from a 34-year career as a public school teacher.

The New Voices Act passed the North Dakota State Legislature with bipartisan sponsorship and without a single negative vote. That is truly an amazing fact. As we think about the importance of student journalism, the importance of voicing opinions and the importance of learning the value of participation through the First Amendment or through speech, I am often reminded of a personal incident that I had in my family.

My daughter was not on the school newspaper when she was in high school, but she frequently wrote a column. One column that she wrote generated a lot of controversy in a very small town at a time when it was much more controversial. It was an article that promoted marriage equality. She ended up getting a lot of grief and a lot of negative attention as a result of writing that article. My daughter is pretty opinionated. So it didn't bother her too much.

But many years later, I received a letter from a mother. That letter from a mother talked about how she was in a same-sex relationship, had been most of her life and most of her daughter's life, and how once my daughter had published this article in the Mandan school newspaper, it changed the outcome. It changed the way her daughter went to school every day because she knew she wasn't alone. She knew someone was there in that school who understood her challenges and supported her family. So where it may not move big issues—and it may not be a big, moving example like Hazelwood—it can, in fact, change outcomes. The ability to express yourself, the ability to be part of a community where we have open ideas is absolutely instrumental and critical to the future of our country.

When you look at the restrictions that still today are put on student press and student newspapers, we know we have to do better.

I applaud the new voices of North Dakota organization and its founder, Professor Steven Listopad of Valley City State University and those teachers, professors, and students around the country who engage in similar efforts for helping shine the Nation's attention on the urgent need to protect meaningful and candid journalism so that young people have an opportunity to participate and drive the civic dialogue about the world in which they live and they will eventually lead.

The skills learned and developed by student journalists and the roles they can play in driving public conversation among their peers speak to the indispensable role that journalism can play—if adequately supported by our schools—in educating the next generation for the careers of the future and for preparing our children to discuss, debate, and lead on important and controversial issues.

I think that, as we are moving forward and taking a look at what can be done, it is important that we all appreciate that the First Amendment is not something that you should just learn in school books. It is something that you must exercise. And the sooner you exercise that First Amendment right to speech, the sooner we recognize that young voices in this country are as critical as older voices and no student should be restricted or prevented from expressing an opinion and the stronger we will grow in our democracy.

I look forward to continuing to work on this issue. I look forward to taking on the difficult task of talking about what we can do nationally to advance this, but I mainly came to the floor to applaud the great State of North Dakota for recognizing the importance of students' First Amendment rights.

I encourage all Members in this Chamber to examine what happens at home with students' First Amendment rights, to provide leadership, to promote those rights in their State, and to potentially look at how we can reverse the Hazelwood decision so that we can grow a more confident, a more educated, and a more diverse population for our future.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING DOCTOR QUENTIN YOUNG

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about an extraordinary person who passed away on Monday, March 7, at the age of 92. Dr. Quentin Young was a dedicated physician and an advocate for civil rights in Chicago.

Some of Dr. Quentin's patients included the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Beatles, Studs Terkel, the late Mayor Harold Washington, and even President Obama.

Dr. Young's commitment to the common good is what makes him a legend. He spent 35 years at Cook County Hospital and 56 years of private practice in Hyde Park improving health care while fighting for social justice and racial equality. His autobiography is titled, ''Everybody In, Nobody Out: Memoirs of a Rebel Without a Pause.'' And he meant it.

Doctor Quentin Young grew up in Hyde Park in Chicago's Southside. And when America entered World War II, he enlisted in the Army and served his country honorably.

After returning from the war, Dr. Young graduated from medical school at Northwestern University and would go on to spend 35 years at Cook County Hospital treating patients and becoming a moral voice during the Civil Rights era. When people outside of Chicago hear the words Cook County and hospital, people think about the show ''ER'' and doctors resembling George Clooney. For the people in Chicago, they think of Dr. Quentin Young.

Dr. Young's experience at Cook County Hospital and his efforts during the Civil Rights movement were intertwined. In 1951, he was a founder of the Committee to End Discrimination in Chicago Medical Institutions, which focused on ending racist practices in Chicago's hospitals and clinics.

By 1960, the Cook County Hospital was serving the Black community and immigrant Mexican community almost exclusively. Eighty percent of Chicago's Black births and nearly half of all Black deaths were at Cook County Hospital. This place was one of the frontlines of social inequality and Dr. Young and his family fought to change that. His efforts were not limited to the Chicagoland area. Dr. Young was a founder and national chairman of the Medical Committee for Human Rights or MCHR, which formed in June 1964 to

offer support and medical care for civil rights workers, community activists, and summer volunteers working in Mississippi during the Freedom Summer.

It was the MCHR that provided help and emergency medical care to antiwar protesters at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. In October of that year, Dr. Young received a summons by the House Un-American Activities Committee for his involvement in MCHR. He valiantly defended the MCHR's work.

After Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was struck in the head by a rock while marching through a White neighborhood, Dr. Young was there to patch him up. He was not only Dr King's physician but a fellow marcher during the Marquette Park protest in 1966.

Dr. Young and the late Dr. Jorge Prieto, former head of the Chicago Board of Health, became the primary force behind the movement to found neighborhood medical clinics in the late 1960s. These clinics gave medical help to countless people when they couldn't afford to go to the doctor.

From 1972 to 1981, he served as chairman of Medicine at Cook County Hospital. His example helped bring many dedicated people back to the hospital, but it wasn't without challenges. The staff went on strike because of the lack of resources in 1975. Dr. Young sided with the young doctors, and the governing commission fired him for it. With loyalty, the striking staff took his office door off its hinges so management couldn't change the locks and held a 24-hour vigil outside his office until he regained his position after a court fight.

In 1980, Dr. Young founded the Chicago-based and Illinois-focused Health & Medicine Policy Research Group, which conducts research, education, policy development, and advocacy for policies that impact health systems to improve the health status of all people. He would go on to serve as Mayor Harold Washington's appointment as president to the Chicago Board of Health.

Dr. Quentin Young never lost his passion for providing equal access to health care for the people of Illinois. Since retiring from private practice in 2008, he fought hard for a single-payer system.

In 2001, at the age of 78, he walked 167 miles across Illinois, from Mississippi River to Lake Michigan, with former Governor Pat Quinn to promote access to health care.

He never wavered in his belief in humanity's ability and responsibility to make a more equal and just nation. My prayers and thoughts go out to his family, Michael, Ethan, Nancy, Polly, Barbara, William, Karen, and his nine grandchildren.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, 8 years ago, I convened the first in a series of hearings in Vermont where the Senate Judiciary Committee examined the growing problem of drug addiction in rural communities. As we gathered in Rutland in March 2008, the mayor noted in his opening statement that there was a part of him that wished that the committee did not have to be there in his city that day. He wished that his community was not facing the scourge of drug abuse and addiction that was creeping across rural America.

But in true Vermont fashion, Mayor Louras and the other community leaders, law enforcement officials, and health professionals who gathered with us that day in March 2008 did not shy away from the problem. Instead, we had an honest discussion about how to fight this problem together and about how the Federal Government could help. Over the past 8 years, we have continued this important conversation at other hearings I convened in St. Albans, in Barre, and again in Rutland. We have heard testimony from community leaders and officials throughout Vermont about the growing problem of opioid addiction. In St. Albans, for example, Dr. Fred Holmes told us tragic stories about teenagers getting hooked on OxyContin and other opioids and then committing crimes to support their habits. These stories have been heartbreaking.

Despite these difficult circumstances, I am struck by the determination of Vermonters to come together to address this crisis—and to do so not just through law enforcement and locking people up, but through comprehensive prevention, treatment, and recovery programs.

In Rutland, for example, Project VISION brings together city officials, law enforcement, and social services to work together, all in the same office, to confront the problems of drug abuse and related crime. What they have found is that something as simple as sharing office space improves communication and coordination and begins to turn the tide.

Mary Alice McKenzie, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club, testified at the most recent hearing in Rutland about children who are neglected because their parents are opioid addicts and how there is sometimes no money for food because parents have spent it on drugs. Kids are also becoming addicts at younger and younger ages. The Boys & Girls Club has responded by extending evening hours and staying open on Saturdays. They now serve dinner 6 nights a week and drive kids home after dark. They provide safety for these children. They are also working with schools and public health officials to provide education and prevent them from getting swept up in that world.

At that same hearing, Vermont's health department commissioner, Harry Chen, described to us Vermont's innovative and successful ''hub and spoke'' treatment model. This system has two levels of care, with the patients' needs determining the appropriate level. Although challenges remain and waiting lists are still too long, I believe this system can be a model for the Nation's response to the opioid crisis.

Earlier this year, we heard powerful testimony from Governor Shumlin about the progress that Vermont has made because of this comprehensive approach—but also about the work that still remains to be done. Vermont's focused and persistent efforts are now drawing attention and replication in communities across the Nation.

In many ways, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, builds upon the work in Vermont.

To specifically address the opioid problem in Vermont and other rural areas, I made sure that CARA will help get the overdose-reversal drug naloxone into more of our rural communities. Getting naloxone into more hands will save lives. I also ensured that CARA includes a new Federal grant program to fund expanded treatment options for heroin and opioid abuse and Federal funding to expand State-led anti-heroin task forces.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of CARA, and I am glad to see the Senate pass this bill. This bill is historic because it marks the first time that we are treating addiction like the public health crisis that it is. We are not imposing harsh and arbitrary mandatory minimum sentences on those who abuse drugs. We are not condemning the poor and sick among us to be warehoused in our Nation's jails. Today I am hopeful that we have finally learned our lesson from the failed war on drugs.

But our work is not done. The Senate missed an opportunity to provide real funding for this effort when Republicans blocked Senator SHAHEEN's amendment that would have provided for emergency supplemental appropriations, so we need to keep fighting to ensure that we provide the necessary resources to support implementation of this bill. In Vermont and across this country, there are few issues more pressing than opioid and heroin addiction, and I will not stop working with people throughout our State to help fight this epidemic.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, earlier today the Senate overwhelming passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which is a good first step toward combatting the opioid addition epidemic facing our Nation. The bill authorizes expanded treatment options

and empowers local health and law enforcement agencies to intensify efforts to combat opioid addiction. This bill is a good start, but there is a lot of work left to do to address this increasingly dire situation. This body needs to put real resources behind the initiatives we approved today and place a greater priority on investing in research for non-opioid alternatives to pain management.

The CDC estimated that, in 2014, overdose related to prescription pain killers killed nearly 19,000 Americans. In Montana alone, according to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, prescription drug overdoses led to at least 369 deaths and more than 7,200 hospital inpatient admissions and emergency department encounters statewide over a recent 3-year period. The effects of opioid addiction are undisputedly devastating.

It is also important to keep in mind that chronic pain is a very real problem that affects millions of Americans. When discussing the negative consequences of opioids, we must also remember that effective treatments for chronic pain are absolutely necessary for those struggling with long-term pain management.

That is why I believe it is time to devote more energy and funding to the development of non-opioid painkillers. Early stage research in my home State of Montana is demonstrating incredible promise in developing non-opioid drugs that could help treat both chronic and acute pain. I am confident that medical professionals will eventually be empowered to offer their patients effective pain management alternatives that may significantly reduce our society's reliance on opioids.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the coming months to find ways to invest in the research and development of non-opioid painkillers. In the meantime, I encourage Federal agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health, to ramp up focus on finding alternative treatments for chronic pain to reduce our Nation's dependency on opioids. Thank you.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's votes.

On S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, I would have voted yea.

On the motion to table S.J. Res. 31, a joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sales to the Government of Pakistan of F–16 Block 52 aircraft, I would have voted yea.●

REMEMBERING JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, on February 13, 2016, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia passed away in his sleep. He was an enduring legacy of the Reagan administration and the conservative standard not only on the Supreme Court but for the entire American judicial community.

History will remember Scalia as a stalwart defender of the Constitution and a brilliant legal mind. He authored the majority opinion on countless rulings of the Court, preserving and protecting our Nation's founding principles. His intellectual honesty, as well as his humor, will be greatly missed.

Justice Scalia played a pivotal role in the shaping of constitutional interpretation throughout his 30-year tenure on the Supreme Court. He had within him a fervor for law and order; yet he demonstrated a warmth that resonated with many colleagues on both sides of the political divide.

Scalia built meaningful relationships across that divide which were indicative of the strength of his character. Hadley Arkes, an expert in constitutional law, said that Scalia was able to ''find something redeeming and likeable in just about everyone he met, regardless of politics.'' This was no doubt a reflection of his strong Christian background and tremendous character.

You can learn the character of a man best by listening to how those who knew him speak of him. Former colleagues and intellectual adversaries alike are unrestrained in their kind words for Justice Scalia.

Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer spoke fondly of the late Justice, saying: ''Nino sparkled with enthusiasm, energy, sense of humor, insight, and seriousness of purpose—the very qualities that I and his other colleagues have benefited from in more recent years.''

Justice Thomas described Scalia as a patriot with a true calling for interpreting the Constitution and noted that their relationship flourished based on that common interest. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg also described their relationship as close and ''how blessed she was to have a friend of such brilliance, high spirits, and quick wit.''

Scalia had a positive impact on so many lives as a Justice, a colleague, a father, and a friend. His demeanor was just and fair, but marked with personality and humor. Late Justice Scalia was a staunch defender of the Constitution, rendering unbiased opinions and a unique perspective.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I honor the late Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Antonin Scalia.

During his many years of serving our country, Justice Scalia proved to be a great defender of our constitutional liberties. Regardless of one's politics, it is undeniable that Justice Scalia was a true patriot whose passion for upholding our American principles was matched only by his eloquence and intellect.

Justice Scalia's record of public service stretched from the time President Nixon appointed him as general counsel of the Office of Telecommunications Policy in 1971 to when President Reagan nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court in 1986, where he served until his death in February 2016. Before and intermingled during this service, Justice Scalia also served as an extremely talented attorney in private practice, a brilliant law professor, including for my alma mater Tulane Law School in its summer programs, and an effective leader in the U.S. Justice Department at a number of levels.

One of the single most memorable events in my time in the Senate was when Justice Scalia agreed to visit with and speak to me and my staff. His presence and authority impressed all of us and, as he discussed a number of topics including the importance of protecting our constitutional rights; I admit to being awestruck. It was a great honor to hear directly from one of most significant jurists in American history, and I know my staff remember that day as clearly as I do.

One thing that distinguished Justice Scalia was not necessarily what he did, but what he chose not to do. As a staunch adherent of limited, constitutional government, on numerous occasions, he advocated for the Court to separate itself from political fights or matters involving individuals who are free to decide their own fate. Originalism, the theory that the clear meaning given to words in the Constitution by our Founding Fathers should be honored, was prevalent in Justice Scalia's decisions. He abhorred judicial activism, and he correctly understood that the place for instituting laws was in the legislature, where the will of the people is democratically represented.

I know that Justice Scalia will also be remembered for his upbeat nature, affability, charm, and wit. At the heart of his larger-than-life personality was an educator, a person who not only ruled on the law, but also took the opportunity to inform readers of his opinions about the history behind the decisions.

I commend his lifetime commitment as a public servant and hope his example will inspire us all as we work to respect the Constitution and protect the freedoms of all Americans. We would be wise to follow Justice Scalia's lead in remembering America's founding principles as we are deciding matters of the future.

I also wish to express our deepest condolences to his wife, Maureen, and to the rest of his family. I am honored

to join with the rest of the United States Senate in celebrating the wonderful memory and lasting legacy of Justice Antonin Scalia.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in expressing the deepest respect and admiration for Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Our country has lost a brilliant, principled, and determined jurist.

For three decades, Justice Scalia invigorated the Supreme Court, becoming an icon for constitutional originalism. He had a remarkable ability to espouse legal theory with memorable turns of phrase, and he could expose gaps in opposing opinions with laserlike precision. He did not fear differences of opinion but embraced the intellectual challenge that conflicting viewpoints could offer. The enduring friendships he made with those across the ideological spectrum are a true testament to his indomitable scholarship.

Antonin Scalia had a distinguished career in law, academia, and public service before being confirmed to the DC Circuit and later the Supreme Court. The many accolades and achievements of his biography are well known. But Antonin, fondly known as ''Nino,'' was much more than an extraordinary legal mind. He was a man of faith and family, raising nine children with his wife, Maureen.

His son, Christopher, wrote this in the Washington Post following his father's death: ''As proud as we are of his legacy as a jurist, of course it's his presence in our personal lives that we'll miss the most.'' To his children, he was a loving father who took them to Sunday mass, listened to Bach in his study, and never shied away from playfulness at the dinner table.

We will remember Justice Scalia in my home State of Mississippi, where we were honored to host him over the years. We shared with him our variety of southern hospitality during his regular visits to the Magnolia State in pursuit of duck, deer, and turkey. When he wasn't outdoors, he spent time educating the public, especially college students, delivering thought-provoking lectures at the University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, William Carey University, and MUW.

Justice Scalia's unanimous confirmation as the first Italian-American Justice was a historic moment for the Supreme Court and the beginning of a legendary tenure that will have a profound effect for generations to come. He leaves a vibrant legacy—perhaps most notably characterized by his steadfast protection of the Constitution as the Framers intended it. As I said shortly after learning the news of his death, ''I like to think Antonin Scalia and James Madison are having the damnedest visit right now.''

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today we honor the life and public service of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, whose passing signifies a great loss for our country. Justice Scalia was a devoted family man, scholar, and tireless public servant. He faithfully served Nevadans and all Americans for over 30 years on our Nation's highest Court. My thoughts and prayers continue to go out to his wife, Maureen, and the entire Scalia family.

Born on March 11, 1936, to Salvatore and Catherine Scalia, Justice Scalia was a disciplined, intellectual conservative from a young age. A diligent student who studied his way to become valedictorian at Georgetown University and graduating magna cum laude at Harvard Law School, Justice Scalia began his legal career in Cleveland, OH in 1961. After practicing law for 6 years in Cleveland, Justice Scalia accepted a position teaching administrative law at the University of Virginia.

Justice Scalia entered public service in 1972, during which he served as general counsel for the Office of Telecommunications Policy and chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States. In these positions, he expanded his expertise in administrative law, a topic that interested him throughout his career. In 1974, Justice Scalia became the Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel. It was here that Justice Scalia would argue and later win his first case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed Justice Scalia to the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Justice Scalia's originalist mindset, keen perception, and witty writing caught the attention of President Reagan, making Justice Scalia a top prospect to fill a potential Supreme Court vacancy. In 1986, Justice Scalia was confirmed by the Senate upon the retirement of Chief Justice Warren Burger. As a Supreme Court Justice, Justice Scalia would dramatically change the Court through his powerful dissents and sharp oral arguments.

Throughout his over 30-year tenure on the bench, Justice Scalia never strayed from his conservative principles and steadfast dedication to upholding the Constitution. His prominent leadership and originalist philosophy will never be forgotten as his legacy will live on through generations. I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me today in remembering and celebrating the life of Justice Antonin Scalia.

● Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, Antonin Scalia was one of the greatest Supreme Court Justices in the history of our country. A lion of the law, Justice Scalia spent his tenure on the bench championing federalism, the separation of powers, and our fundamental liberties. He was a passionate defender of the Constitution—not the Constitution as it has been contorted and revised by generations of activist Justices, but the Constitution as it was understood by the people who ratified it and made it the law of the land. Scalia understood that if the Constitution's meaning was not grounded in its text, history, and structure, but could instead by revised by judicial fiat, then the people were no longer sovereign. No longer would the Nation be governed by law, which expresses the will of the people; it would be governed by, as Scalia put it, ''an unelected committee of nine.'' This, he believed, ''robs the People of the most important liberty they asserted in the Declaration of Independence and won in the Revolution of 1776: the freedom to govern themselves.''

As one of the leading advocates of this restrained judicial philosophy, Justice Scalia became an intellectual force on the Court, where he authored a number of noteworthy majority opinions. In 1997, for example, Scalia wrote the opinion in Printz v. United States, one of the few cases in the last century where the Supreme Court has actually limited the Federal Government's power to coerce the states. In 2001, in Kyllo v. United States, he led the Court in holding that the Fourth Amendment requires the government to obtain a warrant before using high-tech equipment to invade the sanctity of the home. And in 2008, he penned the lead opinion in District of Columbia v. Heller, which finally recognized the people's individual right under the Second Amendment to keep and bear arms.

As important as these majority opinions were, though, Justice Scalia was even better known for his dissents, in which he let his true personality—jovial, acerbic, and witty—fully shine through. Scalia understood that changing the languishing legal culture would take drastic measures, so he wrote his dissents with a specific target in mind: law students. His aim? To delight their senses and engage their brains. To this end, he liberally employed colorful metaphors, pithy phrases, and biting logic; and he mercilessly, yet playfully, exposed the abundant flaws in the writing and reasoning of other Justices. Pure applesauce. Jiggery-pokery. Argle-bargle. If you squinted hard enough, you could almost convince yourself that G.K. Chesterton had taken a seat on the Supreme Court.

But perhaps the highest compliment I can pay to Justice Scalia is this: Several of his key opinions went against some of his staunchest supporters—and they still loved him. Why is that?

The answer is simple: Even in disagreement, Justice Scalia's supporters had confidence that he did not make up his mind by reading the political tea leaves, by voting lockstep with ideological cohorts, or by working his way backward from a desired end to whatever means was necessary to reach that end. Rather, he actually attempted to

interpret the law; that is, he consistently did his best to come to a conclusion based on the only items that make a Supreme Court opinion valid in the first place: text and logic.

You don't have to take my word on this, though. Unlike many in our modern society who espouse ''diversity'' yet surround themselves with ideological yes-men, Justice Scalia actively sought out opposing views. His typical practice was to hire at least one ''liberal'' law clerk per term so that he would always have someone calling him out for unexpected mistakes and weaknesses. And in the wake of Scalia's passing, one of those clerks—a self-identified liberal—wrote the following:

If there was a true surprise during my year clerking for Scalia, it was how little reference he made to political outcomes. What he cared about was the law, and where the words on the page took him. More than any one opinion, this will be his lasting contribution to legal thought. Whatever our beliefs, he forced lawyers and scholars to engage on his terms—textual analysis and original meaning. He forced us all to acknowledge that words cannot mean anything we want them to mean; that we have to impose a degree of discipline on our thinking. A discipline I value to this day.

I first met Justice Scalia in 1996, when I was serving as a law clerk for Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who was a judicial gamechanger in his own right. And I had the good fortune of knowing Scalia personally for 20 years. He was brilliant, passionate, and full of humor. He adored his wife, Maureen; his nine children; and his 36 grandchildren. He had a zest for life. He relished anchovy pizzas at A.V. Ristorante Italiano, where he would take his law clerks and the clerks of other Justices. Over the decades, Scalia inspired and mentored a generation of conservatives on the bench and in the legal academy.

Any advocate who stood before Justice Scalia, as I was privileged to do nine times, knew to expect withering questions that would cut to the quick of the case. When he was with you—when he believed the law was on your side—he was ferociously with you. And when he was against you, he would relentlessly expose the flaws in your case.

President Ronald Reagan could not have picked a better person to exemplify the true, nonpartisan role of a judge. A philosopher-king Justice Scalia was not. Rather, he showed the world, with his trademark wit and impassioned personality, what a legitimate, limited, and principled judiciary would actually look like. An incomparable writer, Scalia's legacy will live on for generations. He wasn't perfect, but he was close. What his supporters—myself included—treasured especially was the rock-solid ground he gave us on which to expect so much more from everyone else. And in doing so, he, along with Chief Justice Rehnquist and others, helped spark a revolution on a Court where politics and power had been the only guideposts for decision-making for far too long. That, more than anything else, is Scalia's great contribution to the Nation and will be his steadfast legacy.●

HARRIET TUBMAN

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman on Harriet Tubman Day. Harriet Tubman is a true trailblazer and one of the most inspiring people in the history of our Nation and in the history of the State of Maryland.

Tubman was born into slavery around 1822 in Maryland's Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore. After 30 years of enslavement, she escaped. But instead of staying up North with her newfound freedom, she returned to the Eastern Shore 13 times to lead her family and hundreds of other slaves to freedom, becoming the most well-known ''conductor'' of the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman was such a central figure in liberating slaves that many simply knew her as Moses.

In addition to her work liberating slaves through the Underground Railroad, Tubman served as a Union scout and spy during the Civil War. She was the first woman to lead an armed expedition, guiding the raid at Combahee Ferry and liberating 700 slaves. After the war, she became an active leader in the women's suffrage movement and opened a home to serve the aging African-American community in her new hometown of Auburn, NY.

In 2014, Congress established the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, which creates a National Park on Maryland's Eastern Shore dedicated to tracing Tubman's early life and work leading the Underground Railroad. Congress also established the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, NY, which will commemorate her later years as an active participant in the women's suffrage movement and a caregiver for aging African Americans.

I am proud that Congress has recognized Harriet Tubman's lifelong dedication to our country through the establishment of these two national parks. We must continue to tell the stories of heroes like Harriet Tubman, amplify the voices of more women and people of color, and make sure they are equally represented in our national parks and monuments. I also urge Secretary Lew to include Harriet Tubman's portrait on our currency as the U.S. Department of the Treasury redesigns the $10 bill.

As Harriet Tubman said, ''Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.''

It is my hope that, as we commemorate this Harriet Tubman Day, we can all follow Harriet Tubman's example and work together to change the world for the better.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, people across the Washington area were saddened by the death of Officer Ashley Guindon, slain in the line of duty just one day after being sworn into the Prince William County Police Department in Virginia. This brave police officer is also being mourned in New Hampshire, especially in her hometown of Merrimack, where the law enforcement community considers her one of their own. As Merrimack Police Chief Mark Doyle said: ''When any law enforcement officer is struck down, it leaves a hole in our hearts. The fact that she and her family are part of the Merrimack community drives that point home even more so.''

Ashley was the only child of Sharon and the late David Guindon, a Navy veteran who also served in the Marine Corps Reserve and later the New Hampshire National Guard. After graduating from Merrimack High in 2005, she followed in her father's footsteps by joining the Marine Corps Reserve. Ashley loved flying and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Florida and later a master's degree in forensic science. As a Marine Reservist for 6 years, she flew helicopters and used her forensic skills to assist the Mortuary Affairs Office.

Ashley had a passion for public service and was always eager to help people in need. She volunteered with a suicide prevention program and regularly spent Thanksgiving helping out at a soup kitchen. She is fondly remembered by teachers and classmates at Merrimack High as exceptionally kind and friendly and as the talented leader of the Merrimack Cardinals cheerleading team.

As a newly sworn-in police officer, Ashley was struck down while coming to the assistance of a woman who was being threatened by her husband. ''She has accomplished more in 28 years than I think I could in 100,'' Prince William County Police Chief Stephan Hudson told The Washington Post. ''That was her desire: to serve, to be involved with things that mattered, to give her life to something worth giving it to. And that's exactly what she did.''

In New Hampshire as in Virginia, the loss of a police officer is felt deeply in the local community and far beyond. We know that the work of law enforcement professionals is difficult and dangerous. They perform their duties with

great professionalism and selflessness, putting their lives on the line every day.

Ashley Guindon worked and studied hard to become a superbly qualified law enforcement professional. She was proud to wear the badge and to be a police officer. She gave her life in the line of duty, coming to the assistance of a stranger. I join with so many others in the Granite State and across the Washington area in expressing my respect and admiration for this remarkable young woman and my deep condolences to Sharon Guindon and the entire family. I know how proud they are of Ashley. We are all proud of Ashley. She was America at its finest.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES BROWN

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize James Walter Brown, a true public servant, an accomplished businessman, and a longtime family friend. Over the course of the last 30 years, Jim has served at some of the highest levels of the State and Federal Governments; most recently, as my chief of staff here in the Senate. For 9 years, my staff and I benefitted from his considerable experience, sage counsel, and signature personal charm.

Jim's impressive academic credentials prepared him well for success: a diploma from Scranton Preparatory School; an undergraduate degree from Villanova University; and a J.D. from the University of Virginia. He also has a combination of substantial public and private sector experience from which to draw. He began his public service career as a counsel and, later, staff director for the Subcommittee on Oversight for the House Banking Committee. After serving the Federal Government, Jim returned to Pennsylvania to join the prestigious Pennsylvania law firm, Dilworth Paxson, where my father was a partner. In a pattern that would be repeated throughout his career, Jim's skill and dedication were quickly recognized by those around him, and he made partner himself in just 4 short years.

When my father was elected Governor of Pennsylvania in 1986, he asked Jim to return to public service as the Secretary of the Department of General Services for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He would serve only 10 months in that position before being called on again by my father, this time to take on the role of executive secretary to the Governor. Jim continued to prove his commitment to his work and to Pennsylvania, and in 1989, Governor Casey named him chief of staff at the young age of 37. Serving as one of the chief executive officers in one of the most populous States in the Nation is a daunting task, but Jim approached this challenge like he would every other in his life: with poise, determination, and a commitment to excellence. He served as chief of staff until late 1994. His strong and patient manner was crucial in guiding State government through the difficult months of 1993 while Governor Casey recuperated from serious health issues. After leaving State service, he continued his dedication to Pennsylvania through his service as chairman of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Facilities Authority, chairman of the Pennsylvania Public School Building Authority, and chairman of the Finance Committee of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

When I was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006, I knew Jim would be the best architect to help me build my Senate organization. He moved to recruit the best and brightest for our team and quickly set up a highly functional and transparent office to work for the best interests of the citizens of Pennsylvania. He fostered an internal culture of hard work and mutual respect and established a firm open door policy within the office. Jim eschewed the notion of a hierarchical Senate office and referred to himself as the ''first among equals,'' rolling up his sleeves ''for the good of the order,'' as he was fond of saying. He took a particular interest in the professional development of our junior staff and interns, happily engaging in countless career counseling sessions, as he called them. While some managers quickly forget about the staff who move on, Jim did the opposite; instead, he grew with care a formidable alumni association of past staff and interns, staying in touch with people as their careers took them to different posts here in Washington and beyond.

It is a rare honor to work with anyone of Jim's caliber, but rarer still when that person can be counted as one of your closest friends. Over the years, from his time as a mid-level staffer in the House of Representatives, to the chief of staff to the Governor of Pennsylvania, from his success in the private sector, to his public service in the Senate, Jim has always stood out as exceptional. Serving in the Senate has been one the highest honors of my life, equaled only by the privilege of working with a man of such integrity and professionalism.

As Jim leaves Senate service, I must thank his patient wife Lynne, who tolerated her husband living in Washington for half of every week in the name of public service. While Jim's day job kept him closer to his son, Patrick; daughter-in law, Michelle; and daughter, Laura, I know he is eager to give his Buick a rest and spend more time back at home in the Commonwealth. I wish Jim and his entire family good health and good fortune as they embark on this next phase of their lives.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT JAMES J. GERAGHTY

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I join with people across my State of New Hampshire in mourning the loss of State police Lieutenant James J. Geraghty, who passed away late last month after a valiant battle with cancer. He devoted his career to public service, serving in the U.S. Army, later as a police officer in Hudson, NH, and for the last 24 years as a State trooper.

''His priorities in life were well defined,'' said his friend and colleague, State police Lieutenant John Marasco. ''He was committed to his family, he was committed to this organization, and he was committed as the lieutenant overseeing the Major Crimes Unit to delivering justice to victims, many of whom were victims of homicide and relied on his voice to bring that justice to them.''

Jim, as he was known to family and friends, was born in Boston, MA, and grew up in Tewksbury. He attended St. John's Prep in Danvers, MA, and the University of Lowell before joining the U.S. Army in 1984. After assignments at U.S. Army bases in the southern United States and Germany, his love of New England motivated him to end his military service and return home for what would be a long career in law enforcement. He began his service with the police department in Hudson, NH, and went on to serve for two decades as a State trooper, respected by his colleagues as a model officer, mentor, and leader. He was promoted to detective sergeant in 2008 and took command of the major crimes unit. He retired in 2015.

Jim was deeply devoted to his wife of 30 years, Valerie, and their four adult children, Jimmy, Colleen, Katie, and Erin. Friends say that his mantra was ''family first.'' He cherished annual family vacations in Wells, ME. Instead of talking about himself, he would often speak glowingly about the achievements of his children.

At the 2015 Congressional Achievement Awards ceremony, Lieutenant Geraghty received a richly deserved Lifetime Achievement Award—the capstone of a distinguished career in public service. An inscription at Arlington National Cemetery accurately describes his service both in the military and in law enforcement: ''Not for fame or reward, nor lured by ambition or goaded by necessity, but in simple obedience to duty.''

I would like to express my gratitude to New Hampshire State police Lieutenant James Geraghty for his service and my sincere condolences to his beloved wife and family.●

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Eric K. Fanning, of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of the Army.

By Mr. SHELBY for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*Adam J. Szubin, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes.

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Robert Annan Riley III, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Nominee: Robert Annan Riley, III.

Post: Micronesia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: $10.00, 2015 Democratic National Committee; $25.00, 2015 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $30.00, 2014 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $10.00, 2013 Alison Lundergan Grimes; $5.00, 2013 Michelle Nunn; $5.00, 2013 Natalie Tennant; $396.75, 2012 Obama for America; $52.50, 2012 Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; $12.00, 2012 Democratic Party Wisconsin; $10.00, 2012 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $35.00, 2011 Obama for America; $22.00, 2011 DFA Wisconsin.

2. Spouse: None.

3. Children and Spouses: Susan Kadidia Riley: None; Carol Ina Riley: None.

4. Parents: Elfrieda Mueller Riley (mother): None; Robert Annan Riley, Jr. (father): Deceased; John Kenny (stepfather): $125.00, 2015 Republican National Committee; $50.00, 2015 Heritage Funds; $10.00, 2015 Reagan Ranch; $65.00, 2015 National Republican Senatorial Committee; $121.00, 2014 Republican National Committee; $10.00, 2014 National Republican Survey; $80.00, 2014 Heritage Funds; $40.00, 2014 Reagan Ranch; $55.00, 2014 Ben Carson; $100.00, 2014 National Republican Senatorial Committee; $10.00, 2013 Republican National Committee; no contributions years 2011–2012.

5. Grandparents: Marie DeHez Riley (grandmother), Deceased; Robert Annan Riley, Sr. (grandfather), Deceased; Mathilda Engebrecht Mueller (grandmother), Deceased; Arthur Mueller (grandfather), Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Frank Arthur Riley (brother): $25.00, 2014 Ann McLane Kuster; $295.00, 2014 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $35.00, 2013 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $325.00, 2012 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $50.00, 2012 Patrick Leahy's Green Mountain PAC; $50.00, 2012 Bob Kerrey; no contributions years 2011, 2015; Unni Skog (Frank Riley spouse): None; Richard Mueller Riley (brother): None; Tracey Riley (Richard Riley spouse): None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Carol Marie DeHez Riley Gauer (sister): None; Richard John Gauer (Carol Riley spouse): None.

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*Karen Brevard Stewart, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Nominee: Karen Brevard Stewart.

Post: Marshall Islands.

The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: No spouse.

3. Children and Spouses: No children.

4. Parents: Selden L. Stewart II—Deceased; Brevard N. Stewart—Deceased.

5. Grandparents: Selden L. Stewart—Deceased; Nancy Stewart—Deceased; Roy D. Stubbs—Deceased; Georgia S. Stubbs—Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Selden L. Stewart III—Deceased; (Spouse) Kathryn H. Stewart—None.

David N. Stewart and (Spouse) Christine L. Stewart: $75, 2011, Club for Growth, $80, 2011, Libertarian Party; $11, 2011, National Republican Senatorial Committee; $50, 2011, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate; $40, 2012, Club for Growth Action; $40, 2012, Libertarian Party; $25, 2012, Republican National Committee; $75, 2013, Libertarian Party; $50, 2013, Club for Growth; $30, 2013, National Republican Senatorial Committee; $50, 2013, Rubio Victory Committee; $25, 2013, Madison Project; $25, 2014, Libertarian National Committee; $25, 2014, Club for Growth; $70, 2014, Terri Lynn Land for Senate; $25, 2015, Libertarian Party; $25, 2015, Marco Rubio for President; $7, 2015, Marco Rubio for President; $25, 2015, Ben Carson for President.

7. Sisters and Spouses: No sisters.

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*Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be United States Alternate Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

*Matthew John Matthews, of Oregon, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Senior Official for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum.

*Amos J. Hochstein, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Energy Resources).

*Marcela Escobari, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDs on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators .

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Eric Del Valle and ending with Ryan Truxton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2015.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Cheryl L. Anderson and ending with Melissa A. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Jennifer M. Adams and ending with Sunil Sebastian Xavier, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Daryl Arthur Brehm and ending with Melinda D. Sallyards, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 19, 2016.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Scott D. Hocklander and ending with Catherine Mary Trujillo, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 19, 2016.

*Foreign Service nomination of Holly S. Higgins.

*Foreign Service nomination of John McCaslin.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Laurie Farris and ending with James Rigassio, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 2660. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for an evaluation and report on the costs of health care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2661. A bill to clarify the period of eligibility during which certain spouses are entitled to assistance under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2662. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to include in income the unrepatriated earnings of groups that include an inverted corporation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2663. A bill to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 2664. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4910 Brighton Boulevard in Denver, Colorado, as the ''George Sakato Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2665. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require State and local coordination on cybersecurity with the national cybersecurity and communications integration center, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. NELSON, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2666. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent earnings stripping of domestic corporations which are members of a worldwide group of corporations which includes an inverted corporation and to require agreements with respect to certain related party transactions with those members; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 2667. A bill to designate the Gulf of Mexico Alliance as a Regional Coordination Partnership of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2668. A bill to provide housing opportunities for individuals living with HIV or AIDS; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CARPER):

S. 2669. A bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2670. A bill to provide for the operation of micro unmanned aircraft systems; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. VITTER, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 396. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that individuals captured by the United States for supporting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant should be detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. Res. 397. A resolution supporting the recognition of 2016 as the ''Year of Pulses'' and acknowledging the nutritional benefit and important contribution to soil health of pulse crops; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 683

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to extend the principle of federalism to State drug policy, provide access to medical marijuana, and enable research into the medicinal properties of marijuana.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1110

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1110, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1252, a bill to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1390

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1390, a bill to help provide relief to State education budgets during a recovering economy, to help fulfill the Federal mandate to provide higher educational opportunities for Native American Indians, and for other purposes.

S. 1446

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1446, a bill to establish the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond to Health and Wellness Training pilot program to address human trafficking in the health care system.

S. 1512

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1512, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2348

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2348, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 2476

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2476, a bill to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination or ceiling fans using direct current motors from energy conservation standards for external power supplies.

S. 2495

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2495, a bill to amend the Social Security Act relating to the use of determinations made by the Commissioner.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to provide flexibility for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to increase the total amount of general business loans that may be guaranteed under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2512, a bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

S. 2559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2559, a bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

S. 2563

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, a bill to affirm the importance of the land forces of the United States Armed Forces and to authorize fiscal year 2016 end-strength minimum levels for the active and reserve components of such land forces, and for other purposes.

S. 2572

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2572, a bill to make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2650

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2650, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games.

S.J. RES. 31

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 31, a joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Pakistan of F–16 Block 52 aircraft.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. RES. 370

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 370, a resolution recognizing that for nearly 40 years, the United States and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have worked toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 378, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 383, supra.

S. RES. 388

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 388, a resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

S. RES. 391

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 391, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to oppose the transfer of foreign enemy combatants from the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States homeland.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2668. A bill to provide housing opportunities for individuals living with HIV or AIDS; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joining my colleague, Senator COLLINS, in introducing a bill to update the funding formula for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, or HOPWA, program.

HOPWA is a program within the Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, that provides state and local governments with resources to ensure that stable housing and supportive services are available for low-income individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

Stable and affordable housing is a critical component of treatment for HIV-positive individuals. More than half of this population will face homelessness or an unstable housing situation at some point during the course of their illness. Medication for treatment is extremely expensive, and the assistance offered by HOPWA results in better management of this illness, reduces the risk of HIV transmission, and ensures that better public health outcomes can be achieved.

Our bipartisan legislation seeks to strengthen HOPWA by improving the accuracy of the formula used to distribute funding to housing programs that benefit people living with HIV/AIDS. This improved funding formula would take into account the number of persons currently living in a community with HIV/AIDS.

HOPWA's current funding formula instead considers the cumulative number of individuals diagnosed with HIV in a community since 1981, and includes those individuals who have since passed away. In fact, according to HUD, 55 percent of the cases used to determine funding allocations under the current formula are deceased individuals. As a result, this diverts already limited funding from communities that are dealing with the effects of this epidemic most acutely today

Our bill proposes a more accurate formula that will protect low-income individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families and will better target federal resources to the states and localities with the greatest need today. In short, we hope to make the program more effective and responsive in addressing the current needs of communities.

Furthermore, to ease the move to a fairer allocation of resources, the bill transitions current grantees to the new formula over a 5-year period. Grantees will not lose more than 5 percent of their share of HOPWA formula funds in each successive year until fiscal year 2021 and cannot gain more than 10 percent of their share in each successive fiscal year.

I thank Senator COLLINS for her partnership, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, which will enable communities to provide care to those living with HIV/AIDS by ensuring that their current housing challenges can be addressed.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CARPER):

S. 2669. A bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2669

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act''.

SEC. 2. INCREASING OVERSIGHT OF TERMINATION OF MEDICAID PROVIDERS.

(a) INCREASED OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING.—

(1) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (9); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

''(8) PROVIDER TERMINATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on July 1, 2018, in the case of a notification under subsection (a)(41) with respect to a termination for a reason specified in section 455.101 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on November 1, 2015), or for any other reason specified by the Secretary, of the participation of a provider of services or any other person under the State plan, the State, not later than 21 business days after the effective date of such termination, submits to the Secretary with respect to any such provider or person, as appropriate—

''(i) the name of such provider or person;

''(ii) the provider type of such provider or person;

''(iii) the specialty of such provider's or person's practice;

''(iv) the date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of such provider or person;

''(v) the reason for the termination;

''(vi) a copy of the notice of termination sent to the provider or person;

''(vii) the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice; and

''(viii) any other information required by the Secretary.

''(B) EFFECTIVE DATE DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'effective date' means, with respect to a termination described in subparagraph (A), the later of—

''(i) the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice of such termination; or

''(ii) the date on which all appeal rights applicable to such termination have been exhausted or the timeline for any such appeal has expired.''.

(2) CONTRACT REQUIREMENT FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) CONTRACT REQUIREMENT FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—With respect to any contract with a managed care entity under section 1903(m) or 1905(t)(3) (as applicable), no later than July 1, 2018, such contract shall include a provision that providers of services or persons terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI be terminated from participating under this title as a provider in any network of such entity that serves individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under this title.''.

(3) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(ll) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—In the case of a provider of services or any other person whose participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI is terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8)), the Secretary shall, not later than 21 business days after the date on which the Secretary terminates such participation under title XVIII or is notified of such termination under subsection (a)(41) (as applicable), review such termination and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, include such termination in any database or similar system developed pursuant to section 6401(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc note).''.

(4) NO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ITEMS AND SERVICES FURNISHED BY TERMINATED PROVIDERS.—Section 1903 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b) is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''or'' at the end; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) beginning not later than July 1, 2018, under the plan by any provider of services or person whose participation in the State plan is terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) after the date that is 60 days after the date on which such termination is included in the database or other system under section 1902(ll); or''; and

(B) in subsection (m), by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) No payment shall be made under this title to a State with respect to expenditures incurred by the State for payment for services provided by a managed care entity (as defined under section 1932(a)(1)) under the State plan under this title (or under a waiver of the plan) unless the State—

''(A) beginning on July 1, 2018, has a contract with such entity that complies with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(5); and

''(B) beginning on January 1, 2018, complies with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(6)(A).''.

(5) DEVELOPMENT OF UNIFORM TERMINOLOGY FOR REASONS FOR PROVIDER TERMINATION.—Not later than July 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, in consultation with the heads of State agencies

administering State Medicaid plans (or waivers of such plans), issue regulations establishing uniform terminology to be used with respect to specifying reasons under subparagraph (A)(v) of paragraph (8) of section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)), as amended by paragraph (1), for the termination (as described in such paragraph) of the participation of certain providers in the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act or the Children's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of such Act.

(6) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1902(a)(41) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(41)) is amended by striking ''provide that whenever'' and inserting ''provide, in accordance with subsection (kk)(8) (as applicable), that whenever''.

(b) INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAID PROVIDER INFORMATION.—

(1) FFS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (77) the following new paragraph:

''(78) provide that, not later than January 1, 2017, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis, the State shall require each provider furnishing items and services to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under such plan to enroll with the State agency and provide to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider;''.

(2) MANAGED CARE PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)), as amended by subsection (a)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) ENROLLMENT OF PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than January 1, 2018, a State shall require that, in order to participate as a provider in the network of a managed care entity that provides services to, or orders, prescribes, refers, or certifies eligibility for services for, individuals who are eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under this title and who are enrolled with the entity, the provider is enrolled with the State agency administering the State plan under this title. Such enrollment shall include providing to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as requiring a provider described in such subparagraph to provide services to individuals who are not enrolled with a managed care entity under this title.''.

(c) COORDINATION WITH CHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (L), (M), (N), and (O) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (M), (N), (O), (P), (Q), and (R), respectively;

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

''(B) Section 1902(a)(39) (relating to termination of participation of certain providers).

''(C) Section 1902(a)(78) (relating to enrollment of providers participating in State plans providing medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis).'';

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (K) (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)) the following new subparagraph:

''(L) Section 1903(m)(3) (relating to limitation on payment with respect to managed care).''; and

(D) in subparagraph (P) (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)), by striking ''(a)(2)(C) and (h)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(C) (relating to Indian enrollment), (d)(5) (relating to contract requirement for managed care entities), (d)(6) (relating to enrollment of providers participating with a managed care entity), and (h) (relating to special rules with respect to Indian enrollees, Indian health care providers, and Indian managed care entities)''.

(2) EXCLUDING FROM MEDICAID PROVIDERS EXCLUDED FROM CHIP.—Section 1902(a)(39) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(39)) is amended by striking ''title XVIII or any other State plan under this title'' and inserting ''title XVIII, any other State plan under this title, or any State child health plan under title XXI''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as changing or limiting the appeal rights of providers or the process for appeals of States under the Social Security Act.

(e) OIG REPORT.—Not later than March 31, 2020, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the amendments made by this section. Such report shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the extent to which providers who are included under subsection (ll) of section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) (as added by subsection (a)(3)) in the database or similar system referred to in such subsection are terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(1)) from participation in all State plans under title XIX of such Act.

(2) Information on the amount of Federal financial participation paid to States under section 1903 of such Act in violation of the limitation on such payment specified in subsections (i)(2)(D) and subsection (m)(3) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(4).

(3) An assessment of the extent to which contracts with managed care entities under title XIX of such Act comply with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(5) of such Act, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(4) An assessment of the extent to which providers have been enrolled under section 1902(a)(78) or 1932(d)(6)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(78), 1396u–2(d)(6)(A)) with State agencies administering State plans under title XIX of such Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 396—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT INDIVIDUALS CAPTURED BY THE UNITED STATES FOR SUPPORTING THE ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT SHOULD BE DETAINED AT UNITED STATES NAVAL STATION, GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. VITTER, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 396

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has declared war on the United States;

(2) the United States Armed Forces are currently engaged in combat operations against ISIL;

(3) in conducting combat operations against ISIL, the United States has captured and detained individuals associated with ISIL and will likely capture and hold additional ISIL detainees;

(4) following the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States determined that it would detain at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, individuals who had engaged in, aided, or abetted, or conspired to commit, acts of international terrorism, or acts in preparation therefor, that have caused, threaten to cause, or have as their aim to cause, injury to or adverse effects on the United States, its citizens, national security, foreign policy, or economy;

(5) members of ISIL captured by the United States during combat operations against ISIL meet such criteria for continued detention at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay; and

(6) all individuals captured by the United States during combat operations against ISIL that meet such criteria by their affiliation with ISIL must be detained outside the United States and its territories and should transferred to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay.

SENATE RESOLUTION 397—SUPPORTING THE RECOGNITION OF 2016 AS THE ''YEAR OF PULSES'' AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE NUTRITIONAL BENEFIT AND IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO SOIL HEALTH OF PULSE CROPS

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. RES. 397

Whereas the United States will celebrate 2016 as the ''Year of Pulses'';

Whereas the 68th United Nations General Assembly declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses;

Whereas a pulse is a dry, edible seed of a plant in the legume family, including a dry bean, dry pea, lentil, or chickpea;

Whereas pulse crops are grown in abundance in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming;

Whereas a pulse is an important component of a nutritious diet and is high in plant-based protein, vitamins, fiber, and minerals, including iron, potassium, magnesium, and zinc;

Whereas a pulse helps prevent serious and chronic illness, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and stroke;

Whereas a legume serves as an important rotation crop, keeps soil fertile, and improves overall soil health by replenishing nitrogen;

Whereas a pulse crop provides food security and nutrition to much of the developing world as a low-cost source of protein; and

Whereas a pulse crop is an important economic development crop for small farmers, for both domestic production and export potential: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports—

(1) the recognition of 2016 as the ''Year of Pulses'';

(2) the participation by representatives of the Federal Government in events and activities organized pursuant to the observance by the United Nations of the International Year of Pulses in 2016; and

(3) the future funding of programs to support the cultivation and consumption of pulses.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 11:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Nominations.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR–428A of the Russell Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Up in the Air: Examining the Commercial Applications of Unmanned Aircraft for Small Business.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 10, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Review of the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance CO-OP Program.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of Calendar Nos. 474 and 475; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and the motions to be reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Coast Guard Reserve in the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203(a):

To be rear admiral

Francis S. Pelkowski

The following named officer for appointment to a position of importance and responsibility as Deputy Commandant for Operations in the United States Coast Guard and to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., section 50:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Fred M. Midgette

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative sessions.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, March 14; that following the prayer and pledge the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:27 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 14, 2016, at 3 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 10, 2016:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be rear admiral

FRANCIS S. PELKOWSKI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR OPERATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. FRED M. MIDGETTE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Thursday, March 10, 2016*

The House met at 11:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 10, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend Michael Siconolfi, Society of Jesus, Quantico, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Lord, You are the author and sustainer of our lives; Yours is the love that bears mercy and the sweet waters that never run dry. By the power of Your word, You stilled the chaos of primeval seas, made the raging waters of the flood subside and etched the channels of fruitful rivers from the Jordan to the Nile, from the Mississippi to the Rio Grande.

We gather this day not far from the river called Potomac to pray for Your blessing upon the Members of this House. Much has been given them; and from them much will be required. Assist them with Your help that they may arrive at the final rollcall vote in Your grace and favor.

Grant all of us here on the shores of this nearby river a sense of hope as we strive to be instruments of Your peace. ''In this brief transit . . . teach us to care and not to care. Teach us to sit still. Our peace is in Your will.''

We ask this for Your greater glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 635, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WHITFIELD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

PERMISSION TO FILE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON H.R. 4596

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Commerce be authorized to file a supplemental report on the bill, H.R. 4596.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 9, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 9, 2016 at 9:29 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2426.

That the Senate concur in the House amendment to the bill S. 1580.

That the Senate concur in the House amendment to the bill S. 1172.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1755.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 113.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2016.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House,
House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On March 2, 2016, pursuant to section 3307 of Title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider 24 resolutions included in the General Services Administration's Capital Investment and Leasing Programs.

The Committee continues to work to reduce the cost of federal property and leases. Of the 24 resolutions considered, the six alteration projects include space consolidations, security improvements, and improvements to space efficiency; the three construction projects include two land ports of entry and a federal courthouse consistent with existing funding; the prospectus for site acquisition and design and the prospectus for a building purchase both will result in significant cost savings from avoided lease costs; and the 13 lease prospectuses include significant reductions of leased space. In total, these resolutions represent $386 million in avoided lease costs and offsets.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on March 2, 2016.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Enclosures.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—CONSOLIDATION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM, VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the reconfiguration and renovation of space within government-owned and leased buildings during fiscal year 2016 to improve space utilization, optimize inventory, and decrease reliance on leased space at a total cost of $75,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that consolidation projects result in reduced annual rent paid by the tenant agency.

Provided, that no consolidation project exceeds $20,000,000 in costs.

Provided further, that preference is given to consolidation projects that achieve an office utilization rate of 130 usable square feet or less per person.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
CONSOLIDATION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PCA-0001-MU16

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the reconfiguration and renovation of space within government-owned and leased buildings during fiscal year 2016 to support the General Services Administration's (GSA's) ongoing consolidation efforts to improve space utilization, optimize inventory, decrease reliance on leased space, and reduce the government's environmental footprint.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....$200,000,000

Program Summary

As part of its ongoing effort to improve space utilization, optimize inventory, decrease reliance on leased space, and reduce the government's environmental footprint, GSA is identifying consolidation opportunities within its inventory of real property assets. These opportunities are presented through surveys and studies, partnering with client agencies, and through agency initiatives such as Client Portfolio Planning (CPP). Projects will vary in size by location and agency mission and operations, however, no single project will exceed $20 million in total Federal (GSA and tenant agency) costs. Funds will support consolidation of tenant agencies and is not available for GSA internal consolidations. All projects will aim for a typical Office Utilization Rate of 130 usable square feet per person or less and an Estimated Economic Payback of 7 years or less.

Typical projects include the following:

- Reconfiguration and alteration of existing federal space to accommodate incoming agency relocation/consolidation. (Note: May include reconfigurations of existing occupied federal tenant space)

- Incidental alterations and system upgrades such as fire sprinklers or HVAC, needed as part of relocation and consolidation

Projects will be selected in line with the following criteria:

- First consideration will be given to projects that are identified as a reduction opportunity in a Customer Portfolio Plan which has been agreed to by both GSA and the subject agency and meet the remaining criteria.

- Proposed consolidation projects will result in a reduction in annual rent paid by the impacted customer agency.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
CONSOLIDATION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PCA-0001-MU16

- Preference is given to consolidations within or into owned buildings over consolidations within or into leased space.
- Consolidation of expiring leases into owned buildings will be given preference over those business cases for lease cancellations which include a cancellation cost.
- Co-location with other agencies with shared resources and special space will be given preference over single agency occupancies.
- Links to other consolidation projects will be given preference over stand-alone projects

Justification

Consistent with Administration initiatives such as the June 2010 Presidential Memorandum, *Disposing of Unneeded Federal Real Estate*, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-12-12, *Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations*, as well as Congressional efforts to dispose of excess and underutilized properties, GSA continually analyzes opportunities to improve space utilization and realize long-term cost savings for the government. Funding for space consolidations is essential to ensuring that GSA can execute those opportunities.

Projects funded under this authorization will enable agencies to consolidate within government-controlled leased space or relocate from either government-controlled leased or federally owned space to federally owned space that more efficiently meets mission needs. These consolidations will result in improved space utilization, cost savings for the American taxpayers, and a reduced environmental impact.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....$200,000,000

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
CONSOLIDATION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PCA-0001-MU16

Certification of Need

Current Administration and Congressional initiatives call for improved space utilization, lower costs for the government and a reduced environmental footprint. It has been determined that the proposed consolidation program is the most practical solution to meeting those goals.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES PROGRAM, VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for alterations to implement energy and water retrofit and conservation measures, as well as high performance energy projects, in Government-owned buildings during Fiscal Year 2016 at a total cost of $10,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU16

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the implementation of energy and water retrofit and conservation measures, as well as high performance energy projects, in Government-owned buildings during Fiscal Year 2016.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested $20,000,000

Program Summary

GSA proposes the implementation of energy and water retrofit and conservation measures in Government-owned buildings during fiscal year 2016.

The Program is designed to reduce on-site energy and water consumption through building alteration projects or retrofits of existing buildings systems. These projects are an important part of GSA's approach to reach mandated percentage reduction goals through 2016.

GSA is identifying projects in federal buildings across the country through surveys and studies. These projects will have positive savings-to-investment ratios, must provide reasonable payback periods that reflect GSA's priority of being a green proving ground of next generation technologies, and may generate rebates and saving from utility companies and incentives from grid operators.

This prospectus requests approval for proposed projects involving energy and water retrofit work, geothermal and other High Performance Green Building retrofit work, as well as design/construction work for new facilities that incorporate these technologies. The projects contained in this prospectus are for a diverse set of design and retrofit projects with engineering solutions to reduce energy or water consumption and/or costs.

Projects will vary in size by location and by delivery method. Typical projects include the following:

- Upgrading heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems with new, high-efficiency systems including the installation of energy management control systems.
- Altering constant volume air distribution systems to variable air flow systems by adding variable air flow boxes, fan volume control dampers, and related climatic controls.
- Installing building automation control systems, such as night setback thermostats and time clocks, to control HVAC systems.

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU16

- Installing automatic occupancy light controls, lighting fixture modifications, and associated wiring to reduce the electrical consumption per square foot through the use of higher efficiency lamps and use of non-uniform task lighting design.
- Installing new or modifying existing temperature control systems.
- Replacing electrical motors with multi-speed or variable-speed motors.
- Insulating roofs, pipes, HVAC duct work, and mechanical equipment.
- Installing and caulking storm windows and doors to prevent the passage of air and moisture into the building envelope.
- Providing advanced metering projects that enable building managers to better monitor and optimize energy performance.
- Providing and implementing water conservation projects.
- Providing and installing renewable projects including photovoltaic systems, solar hot water systems, and wind turbines.
- Providing distributed generation systems.
- Drilling to install vertical and horizontal geothermal loops.
- Installing heat pumps and other types of geothermal equipment.
- Installing building insulation and seals to enhance equipment performance and reduce the size and energy consumption of geothermal and other energy-efficient equipment.
- Installing wastewater recycling processes for use on lawns, in toilets, and for washing cars.
- Insulating roofs, pipes, HVAC duct work, and mechanical equipment.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU16

Justification

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58) required a 2 percent energy usage reduction as measured in BTU/GSF per year from 2006 through 2016 over a 2003 baseline. Guidance issued by the Department of Energy pursuant to this requirement states that savings anticipated from advanced metering can range from 2 to 45 percent annually when used in combination with continuous commissioning efforts. Executive Order 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management concerning energy consumption reduction, was incorporated into law as the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). Both increased the energy reduction mandates to 3 percent per year, and the Executive Order also established a water reduction mandate of 2 percent per year based on a 2007 baseline as measured in gallons/gsf.

By the year 2016, all Federal agencies are directed to reduce overall energy use in buildings they operate by 30 percent from 2003 levels and reduce overall water use by 16 percent from 2007 levels. Increased energy and water efficiency in buildings and operations will require capital investment for changes and modifications to physical systems which consume energy and water, as well as other high performance green building initiatives and infrastructure designs and retrofits.

In addition, EISA included provisions that exceed the requirements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. One such long-term requirement is to eliminate fossil fuel-generated energy consumption in new and renovated Federal buildings by FY 2030 by achieving targeted reductions beginning with projects designed in FY 2010. Other shorter-term measures include increasing the use of solar hot water heating (to 30 percent); installation of advanced meters for steam and gas (previously only electricity was covered); and broader application of energy efficiency in all major renovations.

Approval of this FY 2016 request will enable GSA to continue to provide leadership in energy/water conservation and efficiency to both the public and private sectors.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested $20,000,000

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU16

Certification of Need

It has been determined that the practical solution to achieving the identified building energy and water management goals is to proceed with the energy and water retrofit and conservation work indicated above.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—JUDICIARY COURT SECURITY PROGRAM, VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for alterations to improve physical security in government-owned buildings occupied by the Judiciary and U.S. Marshals Service during Fiscal Year 2016 at a total cost of $20,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
JUDICIARY COURT SECURITY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PJCS-0001-MU16

FY2016 Project Summary

This prospectus proposes alterations to improve physical security in government-owned buildings occupied by the Judiciary and U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) during Fiscal Year 2016 in lieu of future construction of new facilities.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....$20,000,000

Program Summary

The Judiciary Court Security Program (JCS) is dedicated to improving physical security in buildings occupied by the Judiciary and the USMS in lieu of construction of brand new facilities, thereby providing cost savings and expedited delivery. These projects will vary in size, location, and delivery method and improve the separation of circulation for the public, judges, and prisoners. Funding provided for the security improvement projects would address elements such as additional doors, reconfiguring or adding corridors, reconfiguring or adding elevators, sallyports, and constructing physical or visual barriers.

Justification

The JCS will provide a vehicle for addressing security deficiencies in a timely and less costly manner when constructing a new courthouse is unlikely in the foreseeable future. In FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2015 GSA's appropriation included funding for this special emphasis program to undertake security improvements to buildings occupied by the Judiciary. This prospectus requests separate funding to specifically address such security conditions at existing federal courthouses for locations that are unlikely to be considered for construction of a new courthouse. The Judiciary's asset management planning process serves to help compile a preliminary assessment of potential JCS projects that identify courthouses with poor security ratings nationwide.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
JUDICIARY COURT SECURITY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PJCS-0001-MU16

Certification of Need

Over the years a number of security issues have been identified that need to be addressed in order to reduce risk to physical security. The proposed program is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING, PHILADELPHIA, PA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for Phase I of a two phase repair and alteration project for the approximately 841,000 gross square feet of William J. Green, Jr., Federal Building located at 600 Arch Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at an additional design cost of $1,200,000, a total estimated construction cost of $39,950,000 and a total management and inspection cost of $3,850,000 for an estimated project cost of $45,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes Phase I of a two phase repair and alteration project for the approximately 841,000 gross square foot (gsf) William J. Green, Jr., Federal Building (Green Building), located at 600 Arch Street in Philadelphia, PA. The project involves the realignment and reconfiguration of tenant space, and multiple building system upgrades/replacements.

This project will improve the building's overall utilization through the realignment and implementation of various economical workplace solutions and result in the effective long term housing solution for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Field Office, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Field Division Office, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Philadelphia Office. By maximizing space in the Green Building, tenant agencies will relocate from leased space resulting in a reduction of approximately $3.5 million in annual lease payments to the private sector.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Additional Design, Phase I ECC, M&I) $45,000,000

Major Work Items

Interior Construction; Elevator, Plumbing, HVAC, Electrical, and Fire Protection System Upgrades/Replacement; Demolition/Abatement; Site/Garage Upgrades

Project Budget

Design (FY 2014)	$6,500,000
Additional Design (FY 2016 Request)	1,200,000
Total Design	**$7,700,000**
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	
Phase I (FY 2016 Request)	$39,950,000
Phase II (TBD)	38,750,000
Total ECC	**$78,700,000**
Management and Inspection (M&I)	
Phase I (FY 2016 Request)	$3,850,000
Phase II (TBD)	3,850,000
Total M&I	**$7,700,000**
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$94,100,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for tenant improvements above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

Schedule	Start	End
Design	FY2015	FY2017
Phase I Construction	FY2016	FY2018
Phase II Construction	TBD	TBD

Building

The Green Building along with the adjoining James A. Byrne U.S. Courthouse (Byrne Courthouse), is part of a 1.7 million gsf Federal complex in downtown Philadelphia. The Green Building, along with the Byrne Courthouse, was designed to share common mechanical systems. The first floors are linked by a common circulation area, that includes a ceremonial courtroom and plaza. The complex also shares an underground parking garage. Constructed in 1973, it is currently not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Green Building which provides approximately 507,000 usable square feet (usf) and is 10 stories above grade, includes amenities such as a full service cafeteria, fitness center, credit union, conference center, health unit, and a plaza area for public gatherings.

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Department of Homeland Security, GSA, Department of Justice, Department of the Treasury, Office of Personnel Management, Department of State

Proposed Project

The primary driver for the proposed renovation is to improve the overall utilization of the Green Building, house additional employees and merge operations, including consolidating multiple leases into Green. Through innovative approaches to space management and alternative workplace arrangements, including the realignment of agencies onto contiguous floors and sharing resources such as conference rooms and other specialized space, the overall utilization rate for the building is expected to improve by approximately 20%. The project also includes upgrades/replacement of multiple building systems.

The first phase of the project will focus on the lower half of the building. This phase will allow the tenants occupying these floors to consolidate, and reduce their footprint, resulting in the creation of vacant space that will serve as internal swing space for Phase II. Work under this phase to the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire life safety systems will affect both tenant and building wide components. HVAC work includes replacing mixing boxes and the chiller plant, refurbishing the cooling tower, and

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

replacing/reconfiguring duct work and fan coil units within tenant space. Electrical upgrades/replacements will be made both within tenant suites and in common corridors and joint use spaces, while new domestic water risers will be installed to address plumbing. Sprinklers will be relocated, upgraded and replaced where necessary. Additionally, this phase will also upgrade some of the building's joint use space such as reducing the size of the cafeteria and increasing the number and size of conference space available to the tenants. The security visitor screening station in the building lobby will be upgraded and reconfigured to address challenges with the current layout, reduce wait times and provide sufficient space for the public.

Phase II will focus on the upper half of the building. Under Phase II, space for the occupying agencies will be realigned, reconfigured, and will allow for contiguous operations. HVAC, electrical, and fire protection upgrades/replacements will also be made to both the tenant and common spaces on these floors. Additionally, this phase includes upgrades/replacements to the elevator components, the cleaning of the curtain wall and repairs to the plaza drainage system. Exhaust fans will be installed in the underground parking garage to properly ventilate the area and comply with local code.

Major Work Items	
Interior Construction	$28,000,000
Elevator Upgrade/Replacement	1,800,000
Plumbing Upgrade/Replacement	2,000,000
HVAC Upgrade/Replacement	20,700,000
Fire Protection Upgrade/Replacement	1,100,000
Electrical Upgrade/Replacement	15,600,000
Demolition/Abatement	7,200,000
Site/Garage Upgrades	2,300,000
Total ECC	**$78,700,000**

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

Justification

The reconfiguration and realignment of space will improve the efficiency of FBI and DEA operations. By providing contiguous space in the Green Building and consolidating them from leased space, this project will provide a secure work environment essential to collaborating with local law enforcement and other stakeholders, as well as improved handling of the expanding intelligence mission of these agencies in the most efficient and cost effective manner while providing state of the art infrastructure. This opportunity has been made in part by IRS' aggressive downsizing efforts, which has left the building with various pockets of vacant space. This project realigns and reconfigures vacant space allowing for other agencies to realize contiguous footprints.

As part of the reconfiguration and renovation of tenant space, multiple building systems will be upgraded. Reconfiguration of the duct work, sprinklers, and replacement of fan coil units is prudent to accomplish while space is vacant. The duct work and electrical system is outdated and in need of upgrades/replacement and reconfiguration to accommodate the proposed open office floor plans. Sprinklers need to be relocated, and upgraded/replaced where necessary, to meet code. The fan coil units are beyond their useful life and are no longer able to properly regulate the temperature in the suites. The cooling tower and the chiller plant need to be addressed to properly integrate with the needs of the new tenant space. Elevator components need to be upgraded and one elevator will be converted from a passenger to a prisoner transport elevator.

At present, the visitor screening area is insufficient to handle the amount of foot traffic the building receives and long lines result in spillover to the plaza area, posing a potential security risk. The plaza drainage system must be repaired because it is currently leaking into the secure parking garage under the building.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
113-76	2014	$6,500,000	Design
Appropriations to Date		**$6,500,000**	

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
Senate EPW	2/6/14	$6,500,000	Design
House T&I	3/13/14	$6,500,000	Design

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
PPA-0277-PI07	IRS Renovations (IRS funded)	2007	$ 4,726,000
111-5	Air Handling Units	2009	$22,624,000

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Alteration $163,445,000
Lease $341,647,000
New Construction $219,946,000

The 30 year, present value cost of alteration is $56,501,000 less than the cost of new construction, an equivalent annual cost advantage of $3,189,000.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-0277-PH16
Congressional District: 01

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
William J. Green, Jr. Federal Building

PPA-0277-PH16
Philadelphia, PA

	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Lease Locations												
701 Market Street												
DOJ-Drug Enforcement Administration*	36	36	8,071	295	4,451	12,817	-	-	-	-	-	-
Treasury-Internal Revenue Service*	41	41	18,604	421	91	19,116	-	-	-	-	-	-
DOJ-Federal Bureau of Investigation*	98	98	25,460	-	-	25,460	-	-	-	-	-	-
DHS - Federal Protective Service	31	31	7,170	2,018	3,134	12,322	-	-	-	-	-	-
170 S. Independence Mall							-	-	-	-	-	-
DOJ-Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives	36	36	8,217	2,553	8,255	19,025	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lease Locations Subtotal	**242**	**242**	**67,522**	**5,287**	**15,931**	**88,740**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Government Owned Locations												
William J. Green Jr. Federal Building												
DOJ-Federal Bureau of Investigation*	446	446	93,088	10,352	17,641	121,081	669	669	87,152	28,803	65,104	181,059
Treasury-Internal Revenue Service*	533	533	111,446	10,287	23,644	145,377	537	537	84,042	11,050	5,666	100,758
DOJ-Drug Enforcement Administration*	194	194	33,705	161	8,762	42,628	225	225	26,508	8,808	17,856	53,172
Judiciary-Probation	99	99	26,467	471	236	27,174	103	103	25,971	598	585	27,154
DHS-U.S. Secret Service	56	56	19,695	1,808	3,009	24,512	56	56	19,695	1,808	3,009	24,512
Office of Personnel Management	41	41	10,044	100	603	10,747	55	55	7,772	608	115	8,495
DOJ-U.S. Marshals Service	-	-	-	5,743	3,336	9,079	-	-	-	5,743	3,336	9,079
Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration	20	20	6,365	429	1,235	8,029	17	17	1,997	965	426	3,388
Judiciary-Pre-trial	22	22	6,483	-	547	7,030	25	25	5,717	607	689	7,013
DOJ-U.S. Attorney	0	0	3,900	216	197	4,313	-	-	3,671	244	244	4,159
Department of State	11	11	1,939	-	217	2,156	12	12	3,131	233	811	4,175
Judiciary-U.S. District Clerk	-	-	-	3,074	-	3,074	-	-	-	3,074	-	3,074
DHS-Federal Protective Service	2	2	537	-	745	1,282	51	51	7,021	1,734	4,945	13,700
DOJ-Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	36	5,203	1,560	8,236	14,999
Judiciary-Court of Appeals	43	43	10,258	-	297	10,555	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Services Administration	33	33	7,506	2,044	2,914	12,464	31	31	3,945	505	3,037	7,487
Joint Use **	-	-	2,347	1,746	43,546	47,639	-	-	1,273	1,878	41,017	44,168
Vacant ***	-	-	23,862	-	-	23,862	-	-	4,722	-	-	4,722
Government Owned Locations Subtotal	**1,500**	**1,500**	**333,780**	**36,431**	**106,929**	**477,140**	**1,817**	**1,817**	**283,098**	**68,218**	**155,076**	**506,392**
Total	**1,742**	**1,742**	**401,302**	**41,718**	**122,860**	**565,880**	**1,817**	**1,817**	**283,098**	**68,218**	**155,076**	**506,392**

* Denotes agencies primarily impacted by proposed project

** Joint use space is not occuupied by tenant agencies and includes such things as Food Preparation, Snack Bar, Credit Union and Childcare Center.

*** Vacant square footage will be absorbed under Phase II of the project

January 2015

Housing Plan
William J. Green, Jr. Federal Building

PPA-0277-PH16
Philadelphia, PA

Office Utilization Rate[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Building Office Tenants (excluding Joint Use, Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	180	117
All Building Office Tenants (excluding Joint Use; including Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	174	122

Current Office UR excludes 68,142 usf of office support space.
Proposed Office UR excludes 55,789 usf of office support space

Total Building USF Rate[3]		
	Current	Proposed
(excluding Joint Use, Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	296	249
All Building Tenants (excluding Joint Use; including Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	318	279

Current Office UR excludes 78,681 usf of office support space.
Proposed Office UR excludes 63,320 usf of office support space

Special Space	USF
Holding Cell	274
Fitness Center	5,735
ADP	1,558
Telephone	3,090
SCIF	23,019
Secure Areas/Storage	40,311
Locker Room	3,146
Health Unit	4,113
Restroom	390
Conference/Training	34,968
Childcare	12,136
Break Room	2,737
Interview Room	3,435
Lab	270
Light Industrial	2,043
Mail Room	5,199
Food Service	12,652
Total	**155,076**

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Office Utilization Rate = total office space available for office personnel. UR calculation excludes office support space USF.

[3] Total Building USF Rate = total building USF (office, storage, special) available for all building occupants (office, and non-office personnel).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY, PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BLAINE, WA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to resolve exterior envelope deficiencies and promote energy savings at the U.S. Land Port of Entry located at Pacific Highway in Blaine, Washington at a design cost of $1,030,000, an estimated construction cost of $9,956,000 and a management and inspection cost of $944,000 for a total estimated project cost of $11,930,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BLAINE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-00BN-BL16
Congressional District: 1

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to resolve exterior envelope deficiencies and promote energy savings at the U.S. Land Port of Entry (LPOE) located at Pacific Highway in Blaine, WA.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $11,930,000

Major Work Items

Exterior construction; roof replacement

Project Budget

Design	$1,030,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	9,956,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	944,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$11,930,000**

Schedule	**Start**	**End**
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Building

The Pacific Highway LPOE, constructed in 1999, is the largest commercial LPOE in Washington State, and processes inbound and outbound traffic from arterial roads that connect to Interstate 5. This LPOE serves several federal agencies and operates 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. It is the major commercial port in Western Washington, serving automobiles, buses, and commercial traffic.

The 11.8-acre LPOE site contains two buildings: the Auto Bus building and the Cargo building. The Auto Bus building is a one-story automobile and bus processing building with 30,418 gross square feet (gsf) including canopies. The Cargo building is a three-story commercial inspection and administration building with a single-story warehouse wing. The building has 67,013 gsf including canopies.

1

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BLAINE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-00BN-BL16
Congressional District: 1

Tenant Agencies

U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Customs and Border Protection; U.S. Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; U.S. Department of Interior – Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Food and Drug Administration; General Services Administration

Proposed Project

The proposed project will address several exterior deficiencies and improve energy performance. The exterior envelope will be upgraded to stop water intrusion and involves deconstruction and reconstruction of exterior walls, installation of waterproofing materials, repair/replacement of the roof, repair/replacement of windows seals, and improved thermal protection.

Major Work Items

Exterior construction	$8,121,000
Roof Repair/Replacement	1,835,000
Total ECC	**$9,956,000**

Justification

The existing exterior envelope allows water to infiltrate into the LPOE and is causing interior finish deterioration and mold growth. In addition to the lack of moisture barrier protection from original construction, water enters the walls at multiple locations, including gaps in cedar and corrugated metal cladding and through roofing screws that have penetrated insulation and building paper. These deficiencies, coupled with failing aluminum window wall gaskets and single pane translucent panels, contribute to the building's poor thermal performance and occupant discomfort at the building's perimeter.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BLAINE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-00BN-BL16
Congressional District: 1

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
PACIFIC HIGHWAY, BLAINE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-00BN-BL16
Congressional District: 1

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN—FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING, BOYERS, PA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for site acquisition and design for the construction of 462,000 gross square feet of space to provide a long-term housing solution for the Office of Personnel Management, the Social Security Administration, and the Department of Defense in the vicinity of Boyers, Pennsylvania to allow the Government to consolidate these operations, currently housed in leased space in an underground mine, into an owned facility at a site acquisition cost of $12,000,000, a design cost of $11,562,000, and a Management and Inspection cost of $7,638,000 for a total estimated project cost for design and site acquisition of $31,200,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
BOYERS, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-FBC-BO17
Congressional District: 03, 12

FY 2017 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the construction of a new federally owned facility of approximately 462,000 gross square feet (gsf) to provide a long-term housing solution for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Social Security Administration (SSA) and Department of Defense (DOD) in the vicinity of Boyers, PA. The project will allow the Government to consolidate these operations, currently housed in leased space in an underground mine, into an owned facility and eliminate annual lease payments to the private sector by approximately $13,500,000.

A project to consolidate OPM and multiple other Federal agencies was among those previously included in the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Budget. The FY 2016 prospectus (PPA-FBC-BO16), which requested Site Acquisition and Design and Related Services funding in the amount of $35,000,000 in support of a proposed 695,000 gsf facility, has yet to be approved by either the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works or the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and no appropriations have been received in support of the project. GSA is resubmitting this project for Site Acquisition and Design and Management and Inspection in FY 2017 with changes in scope and budget.

FY 2017 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Site Acquisition, Design, Management and Inspection).....$ 31,200,000

Overview of Project

The proposed new construction will provide approximately 462,000 gsf of office and related space and 1,500 parking spaces for OPM, SSA and DOD in the vicinity of Boyers, PA, including portions of Butler, Lawrence, and Beaver Counties. The facility will provide National Archives and Records Administration-compliant records storage in environmentally conditioned, fire-protected space in a secured facility. The project will consolidate OPM from its operations in the mine and one additional leased location along with SSA and DOD operations in the mine into a single federally owned location. Consolidation will allow for economies of scale and will provide opportunities for maximizing space efficiency, operational flexibility, and sharing special support spaces and building amenities.

This request reflects refinement to previously identified requirements related to the building square footage and project costs subsequent to preparation of the FY 2016 prospectus. This request includes the reduction of usable square footage required for records management storage due to the use of a higher density filing system, and more

PROSPECTUS – SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
BOYERS, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-FBC-BO17
Congressional District: 03, 12

accurate costs reflecting the requirements to build-out the space. In addition, tenants located in leased space outside of the mine, originally slated to be a part of this consolidation were, for various reasons including the need to interface with the public, determined not to be an optimal fit in a facility that will have high security requirements. Those tenants will remain in lease space.

Location

Vicinity of Boyers, PA – including portions of Butler, Lawrence and Beaver Counties.

Project Budget

Site Acquisition (FY 2017)	$12,000,000
Design (FY 2017)	11,562,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	179,950,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (FY17)	7,638,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$211,150,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for tenant improvements above the standard normally provided by GSA.

Schedule	**Start**	**End**
Site Acquisition/Design	FY 2017	FY 2018
Construction	TBD	TBD

Tenant Agencies

OPM – Federal Investigative Services (FIS), Retirement Operations Center (ROC), Chief Information Officer (CIO), and Facilities, Services and Contracting (FSC); SSA, DOD, and GSA

Justification

OPM, SSA and DOD are currently housed in leased space at 1137 Branchton Road, Boyers, PA, a converted limestone mine, which includes approximately 580,000 rentable square feet (rsf) that also houses multiple Federal operations and offices in subterranean space. In recent years, portions of the mine have degraded resulting in pieces of the ceiling falling into active workspace. To enhance employee safety and prevent injuries to occupants, the lessor installed mesh netting. While GSA continues to work with the lessor on interim mitigation measures regarding ceiling degradation, means of egress, and

PROSPECTUS – SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
BOYERS, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-FBC-BO17
Congressional District: 03, 12

sprinklers and alarms, continued housing at this location is not a viable long-term solution.

OPM began occupying the facility in 1970. OPM has experienced significant increases in operations over the past several years, particularly among the main operations currently housed in the mine: FIS and ROC. Because of the significant number of retirees in recent years, OPM has an increased need of additional file storage for its ROC. This project will allow for a more space-efficient solution such as a high-density system, which will reduce the anticipated amount of file storage space needed in the long term. Additionally, FIS has seen a significant increase in personnel security clearances since 2005 in support of processing background investigations and suitability determinations for the DOD and other Federal agencies. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 mandated that 90 percent of security clearance determinations be made within 60 days. To comply with this mandate, OPM hired additional personnel. It is not prudent for OPM to continue to meet these needs in the existing mine location. OPM has a 2,500 rsf field office location outside of the mine that will be consolidated into the proposed new facility.

The proposed project also provides the opportunity for OPM, SSA and DOD to be housed in a proposed facility that will meet their long term requirements, reduce overall space, facilitate shared resources, and eliminate lease payments.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
BOYERS, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-FBC-BO17
Congressional District: 03, 12

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Lease $292,916,000
New Construction: $237,695,000

The 30-year, present value cost of ownership is $55,222,000 less than the cost of leasing, with an equivalent annual cost advantage of $3,155,000.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – SITE ACQUISITION AND DESIGN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
BOYERS, PA

Prospectus Number: PPA-FBC-BO17
Congressional District: 03, 12

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 8, 2016

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

BUILDING ACQUISITION—IRS ANNEX BUILDING PURCHASE, AUSTIN, TX

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the acquisition of the Internal Revenue Service Annex Building composed of 144,101 rentable square feet of space and 179 parking spaces located at 2021 Woodward Street in Austin, Texas at a building, site acquisition and total estimated project cost of $12,756,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – BUILDING ACQUISITION
IRS ANNEX BUILDING PURCHASE
AUSTIN, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-1665-AU17
Congressional District: 35

FY2017 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes to acquire the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Annex Building located at 2021 Woodward Street in Austin, TX. The leased facility provides 144,101 rentable square feet of space and 179 parking spaces and is currently occupied entirely by the IRS. Purchase will reduce the Government's rental payment to the private sector by approximately $1,163,000 annually.

This project was among those previously included in GSA's FY 2015 Capital Investment Program. The prospectus was not approved by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the project could not be accommodated within the enacted level. GSA is resubmitting the project in FY 2016.

FY2017 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Site, Design, ECC, M&I).....$12,756,000

Building

The IRS Annex was built in 1979 by the lessor and is a single story tilt-up pre-cast concrete building. The building is co-located on a 57-acre campus with federally-owned buildings housing a regional IRS Service Center, a Department of Veterans Affairs administrative facility, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury Financial Management Service. The campus is bounded by East Woodward Street on the North and East, IH-35 on the West and U.S. Highway 290 on the South. The location of the IRS annex on this campus is critical to the IRS mission since trucks make daily runs between the Annex, Service Center, Compliance Center and other IRS locations transporting supplies, furniture and tax returns.

Project Budget

Building and Site Acquisition.....$12,756,000

Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*.....$12,756,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for tenant improvements above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule	Start	End
Acquisition	FY 2017	FY 2017

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – BUILDING ACQUISITION
IRS ANNEX BUILDING PURCHASE
AUSTIN, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-1665-AU17
Congressional District: 35

Overview of Project

The project proposes acquisition of the building currently leased by GSA for the IRS. The facility provides office, warehouse and light industrial storage space for IRS adjacent to the main IRS Service Center Building in Austin, TX. In addition, the warehouse is located in close proximity to four other IRS leases located in southeast Austin.

Tenant Agencies

IRS

Justification

The IRS Annex is an integral part of the tax return submission processing pipeline. As a receiving point for mail during tax season and a holding place for the completed returns, this building is the first and last stop for tax returns through the pipeline. It is entirely within the secure fenced campus perimeter and is tied in to the communications, security and fire alarm systems in the IRS Service Center. The IRS Annex building is the only part of the 57-acre campus facility that is not federally owned. Ownership of the annex would provide greater flexibility for future development of the campus site as needed for IRS or other agencies. Additionally, purchase of the IRS Annex will reduce the Government's rental payment to the private sector by approximately $1,163,000 annually.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

None

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – BUILDING ACQUISITION
IRS ANNEX BUILDING PURCHASE
AUSTIN, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-1665-AU17
Congressional District: 35

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Purchase: $56,621,000
Lease:.....$131,382,000
New Construction:.....$72,835,000

The 30-year, present value cost of purchase is $16,214,000 less than the cost of new construction with an equivalent annual cost advantage of $871,000.

Recommendation

ACQUISITION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – BUILDING ACQUISITION
IRS ANNEX BUILDING PURCHASE
AUSTIN, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-1665-AU17
Congressional District: 35

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 8, 2016

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY, COLUMBUS, NM

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the construction of new replacement land port of entry facilities of 69,243 gross square feet (including canopies) to safely and efficiently accommodate steady increases in car, truck and pedestrian traffic as well as incorporate extensive site improvements to address significant stormwater drainage issues at the port at an estimated construction cost of $79,600,000 and a management and inspection cost of $6,045,000 for an estimated project cost of $85,645,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

FY 2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) requests approval for construction of new replacement land port of entry (LPOE) facilities in Columbus, NM. The project will expand the facilities to safely and efficiently accommodate steady increases in car, truck and pedestrian traffic as well as incorporate extensive site improvements to address significant stormwater drainage issues at the port.

FY 2016 House Committee Approval Requested

(ECC and M&I) $85,645,000

FY 2016 Senate Committee Approval Requested

(ECC and M&I) $26,047,000

FY 2016 Appropriation Requested

(ECC and M&I) ..... $85,645,000[1]

Overview of Project

The Columbus LPOE was built in 1989 to screen visitors entering the United States. Existing building workspace and inspection facilities do not meet the tenant agency's operational need. The tenant has identified a current requirement of 69,243 gross square feet of building space; however, the existing facility provides 21,370 gross square feet. The project will consist of expanding existing facilities to handle future traffic volumes predicted for this port and site improvements to control stormwater flow.

[1] GSA has worked closely with DHS program offices responsible for developing and implementing security technology at the LPOEs. These programs include Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs), Land Border Integration (formerly Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)), Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII), Outbound Inspection, and Port Hardening/Absconder programs. This prospectus contains the funding of infrastructure requirements for each program known at the time of prospectus development since these programs are at various stages of development and implementation. Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of each of these programs to be implemented at this port.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

The project includes construction of a new main building, commercial and non-commercial primary and secondary inspection facilities, pedestrian processing, an outbound canopy, export facilities, non-intrusive inspection systems, hazardous materials containment area, a new earthen berm and drainage basin, and enlargement of an existing culvert. The project also includes outside vehicle parking and a kennel. Additionally, requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration are addressed in the project with relocation of an existing canopy structure and building and new paving.

Site Information
Government-Owned ..... 14.72 acres
Building Area[2]
Building (including canopies) ..... 69,243 gsf
Building (excluding canopies) ..... 48,415 gsf
Outside parking spaces 106

Cost Information
Site Development Costs[3] $37,412,000
Building Costs (includes inspection canopies) ($609/gsf) $42,188,000

Project Budget

Design (FY 2007 and FY 2009)	$3,338,395
Additional Design[4] (FY 2014)	7,400,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)[5]	79,600,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	6,045,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$96,383,395**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for emerging technologies and alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

[2] The project may contain a variance in gross square footage from that listed in this prospectus due to changes in the CBP Design Guide.

[3] Site development costs include grading, utilities, paving, demolition of existing facilities, drainage ponds and culverts (including piping and structures), lighting, and fencing.

[4] The additional design funds are needed to reflect updated agency requirements since design was originally authorized and to incorporate extensive site improvements needed to address significant storm water drainage issues at the port.

[5] Costs have increased since approval of Prospectus No. PNM-BSC-CO14 due to labor and materials market increases (example: booming oil and gas market in west Texas has affected most costs including plumbing/piping, steel, concrete, electrical, road work).

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

Location

The site is bordered on the west by New Mexico State Highway 11 and on the east by a bypass road, approximately 3 miles south of the village of Columbus, New Mexico, adjacent to the city of Palomas, Mexico.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design	FY 2014	FY 2016
Construction	FY 2016	FY 2019

Tenant Agencies

Department of Homeland Security – Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement; U.S. Department of Agriculture – Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine; U.S. Food and Drug Administration; Department of Transportation – Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and General Services Administration.

Justification

Since its construction in 1989, screening of visitors at the Columbus LPOE has increased significantly and advances in technology have led to significant changes in the inspection process. The LPOE continues to experience an increase in commercial traffic, with anticipated additional growth over the next 15 years.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

Efforts are underway by the Government of Mexico to relocate port facilities south of the border further east. The construction of a bypass road to access these new crossings was completed in 2011. New commercial traffic circulation resulting from the addition of the bypass road will be accommodated in the port expansion project.

The LPOE has experienced significant flooding during high volume rainfall events. In the past decade, the area has been inundated multiple times which has subsequently elevated the flooding problem to the attention of both the U.S. and Mexican Governments and the State of New Mexico. Improvements to the LPOE will protect new and existing structures, retain all new onsite storm water, and convey storm water flows across the site. The proposed site drainage and grading improvements have a significant cost; however, the work is necessary in order for the project to proceed and for the LPOE to maintain operations.

Summary of Energy Compliance

The project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
110-5	2007	$2,629,000	Design
111-5	2009 (ARRA)	$709,395	Design
Reprogram	2014	$7,400,000	Design
Appropriations to Date		**$10,738,395**	

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T & I	4/5/2006	$2,629,000	Design
Senate EPW	5/23/2006	$2,629,000	Design
Senate EPW	12/8/11	$59,598,000	M&I = $4,900,000; Construction = $54,698,000
House T&I	7/16/14	$7,400,000	Additional Design
Senate EPW	9/18/14	$7,400,000	Additional Design
House Approvals to Date*		**$10,738,395**	
Senate Approvals to Date*		**$70,336,395**	

* Approvals to Date include $709,395 via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA); authorization is inherent in the Public Law (PL 111-5 – Recovery Act).

Alternatives Considered

SA owns and maintains the existing facilities at this port of entry; thus, no alternative other than Federal construction was considered.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
COLUMBUS, NM

Prospectus Number: PNM-BSC-CO16
Congressional District: 2

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
Columbus Land Port of Entry

PNM-BSC-CO16
Columbus, NM

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Columbus, NM LPOE						-						-
U.S. Department of Homeland Security - CBP	53	53	5,310	-	9,817	15,127	54	54	7,236	2,110	44,836	54,182
U.S. Department of Homeland Security- ICE	-	-					4	4	590	-	-	590
General Services Administration-PBS, Field Offices	1	1	191			191	1	1	460	433	-	893
U.S. Health and Human Services - FDA	1	1	480			480	1	1	215		201	416
Joint Use	-	-	1,640		451	2,091	0	0	-			-
U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS	2	2	504		458	962	2	2	259		234	493
U.S. Department of Transportation - FMCS	1	1	340		1,019	1,359	1	1	340		1,019	1,359
Total	**58**	**58**	**8,465**	-	**11,745**	**20,210**	**63**	**63**	**9,100**	**2,543**	**46,290**	**57,933**

Special Space	USF
Laboratory	616
Holding Cells	482
Restroom	1,089
Fitness	949
ADP	168
Food Service	165
Vault/Hardened Area	1,651
Booth	205
Kennels	962
Inspection Bay/Dock	16,052
Hazardous Materials Storage	2,826
Processing Area	198
Mail Rooms	99
Inspection Canopy	20,828
Total	46,290

Notes:
[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY, ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the construction of facilities of 261,000 gross square feet (including canopies and structured parking) to replace the existing land port of entry in Alexandria Bay, New York in support of Phase II of a two-phase project at an estimated construction cost of $91,617,000 and a management and inspection cost of $8,854,000 for a total estimated project cost of $100,471,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) requests approval for construction of facilities to replace the existing land port of entry (LPOE) in Alexandria Bay, NY, and funding in support of Phase I of this two-phase project. The project includes construction of commercial inspection lanes, a new veterinary services building, an impound lot, a main administration building, non-commercial inspection lanes, a new non-commercial secondary inspection plaza, new non-intrusive inspection buildings, and employee and visitor parking areas. The project will meet the current and future operational requirements of the tenant agencies and be flexible to adapt to future changes.

FY2016 House Committee Approval Requested

(Phase II ECC, Phase II M&I) $100,471,000

FY2016 Senate Committee Approval Requested $32,476,000

(Additional Design, Phase I & II ECC, Phase I & II M&I)

FY2016 Appropriation Requested

(Additional Design, Phase I ECC; Phase I M&I) ..... $105,570,000[1]

Overview of Project

The proposed project will address traffic issues by expanding the queuing area, increasing the number of primary inspection lanes, increasing the area for secondary inspection, providing safe and secure vehicle parking, and a safe well-defined truck queuing and maneuvering area.

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[1] GSA has worked closely with DHS program offices responsible for developing and implementing security technology at the Land Ports of Entry (LPOE's). These programs include Radiation Portal Monitors (RPM's), Land Border Integration (formerly Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII), Outbound Inspection, and Port Hardening/Absconder programs. This prospectus contains the funding of infrastructure requirements for each program known at the time of prospectus development since these programs are at various stages of development and implementation. Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of each of these programs to be implemented at this port.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

The project will replace the existing port and is proposed in two phases. Phase I includes construction of a commercial inspection warehouse with inspection bays, commercial inspection lanes (with split-level booths for either commercial or non-commercial), a new veterinary services building, impound lot, and a portion of the elevated parking over the commercial side. Phase I also includes acquisition of the two remaining necessary parcels of land.

Phase II includes construction of a new main administration building, a new outbound inspection facility, non-commercial inspection lanes, a new non-commercial secondary inspection plaza, new non-intrusive inspection buildings, and employee and visitor parking areas.

Site Information

Government Owned ..... 5 acres
To Be Acquired ..... 10 acres

Building Area
Building (including canopies and structured parking) ..... 261,000 gsf
Building (excluding canopies and structured parking) ..... 116,000 gsf
Outside parking spaces 50
Inside parking spaces 5
Structured parking spaces 134

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

Project Budget

Site Acquisition	
Site Acquisition (FY 2005 and FY 2008)	$2,965,000
Total Site Acquisition	**2,965,000**
Design	
Design (FY 2005 and FY 2008)	$17,595,000
Additional Design (**FY 2016**)	3,500,000
Total Design	**$21,095,000**
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	
Phase I (**FY 2016**)	$93,216,000
Phase II (future year request)	91,617,000
Total ECC[2]	**$184,833,000**
Site Development Cost[3]	$82,865,000
Building Costs (includes inspection canopies) ($391/gsf)	$101,968,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	
Phase I (**FY 2016**)	$8,854,000
Phase II (future year request)	8,854,000
Total M&I	**$17,708,000**
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$226,601,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Location

The site is located at the existing LPOE on Interstate Route 81 in Alexandria Bay, NY.

[2] ECC is broken into two parts – Site Development Costs and Building Costs
[3] Site development costs include grading, utilities, paving and demolition of existing facilities.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

Schedule

	Start	End
Design	FY2008	FY2010[4]
Construction		
Phase 1	FY2016	FY2019
Phase 2	TBD	TBD

Tenant Agencies

Department of Homeland Security - Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement; U.S. Department of Agriculture - Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service; U.S. Food and Drug Administration; U.S. General Services Administration.

Justification

The existing LPOE does not meet the current and future operational needs of the inspection agencies at the port. The lack of an adequate commercial cargo inspection facility is hampering the safe and secure execution of CBP and other tenant agencies' missions.

The short distance between the international border and the primary commercial inspection area is inadequate for vehicle queuing. Given the limited capacity of the US-bound bridges and roadways, the Thousand Island Bridge Authority (TIBA) currently limits the number of vehicles (in Canada) that can proceed through to the crossing. This results in significant queuing of commercial vehicles on the Canadian roadways entering the crossing and sometimes back to Highway 401. The bridges are not designed to handle prolonged periods of dead load associated with stationary commercial traffic. In addition, the removal of significant amounts of rock is necessary to allow for increased program and vehicle circulation.

The existing main building does not accommodate the current and future needs of the tenants. The existing commercial building barely has enough space to unload a single truck, and the office component is housed in mobile trailers. The projected increases in traffic volume and implementation of new security procedures necessitate an increase in the LPOE workforce beyond the capacity of the existing facility.

[4] Design refresh to be completed upon receipt of project funds requested in this prospectus.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
108-447	2005	$8,884,000	Site acquisition & design
110-161	2008	$11,676,000	Additional site acquisition & design to meet expanded scope
Appropriations to Date		**$20,560,000**	

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T&I	7/21/2004	$8,884,000	Design = $8,684,000; Site acquisition = $200,000
Senate EPW	11/17/2004	$8,884,000	Design = $8,684,000; Site acquisition = $200,000
House T&I	9/20/2006	$11,676,000	Additional design = $8,911,000; additional site acquisition = $2,765,000
Senate EPW	9/27/2006	$11,676,000	Additional design = $8,911,000; additional site acquisition = $2,765,000

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

Senate EPW	12/8/2011	$173,565,000	Construction = $160,990,000; M&I = $12,575,000
House T&I	7/16/14	$105,570,000	Additional Design = $3,500,000; Phase I ECC = $93,216,000; Phase I M&I = $8,854,000
Approvals to Date (House T&I)		**$126,130,000**	
Approvals to Date (Senate EPW)		**$194,125,000**	

Alternatives Considered

GSA owns and maintains the existing facilities at this port of entry; thus no alternative other than Federal construction was considered.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
ALEXANDRIA BAY, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-BSC-AB16
Congressional District: 21

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
Alexandria Bay Land Port of Entry

PNY-BSC-AB16
Alexandria Bay, NY

	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Alexandria Bay LPOE												
U.S. Department of Homeland Security - CBP	47	47	7,455	-	30,628	38,083	89	89	21,661	-	101,922	123,583
U.S. Department of Homeland Security - ICE	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	663	-	-	663
General Services Administration - PBS	7	7	2,687	-	749	3,436	3	3	1,155	-	-	1,155
U.S. Health and Human Services - FDA	-	-	-		-	-	5	5	1,842	-	623	2,465
U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS	2	2	375		2,625	3,000	2	2	978	-	2,202	3,180
Outlease - Customs brokers	-		-	-	-	-	5	5	4,780	-	-	4,780
Total	56	56	10,517	-	34,002	44,519	108	108	31,079	-	104,747	135,826

Special Space	USF
Light Industrial	35,873
Inspection Canopy	59,905
Structurally changed	1,500
Fitness/Restrooms	3,812
Conference Training	973
Laboratory	1,145
ADP	641
Food Service	828
Total	104,747

Notes:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE, NASHVILLE, TN

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the minimal additional site-related work, design and construction of a U.S. Courthouse, up to 386,000 gross square feet (including underground parking), located in Nashville, Tennessee, at additional site costs of $2,417,000, an additional design costs of $1,955,000, a total estimated construction cost of $172,193,000, and total management and inspection costs of $9,860,000 at a proposed total additional authorization of $186,425,000, for which a prospectus and fact sheet, amending the prospectus, is attached to, and included in this resolution. This resolution amends the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure resolutions of July 26, 2000, July 18, 2001, and July 21, 2004.

Provided, that the Administrator of General Services shall ensure that construction of the new courthouse complies, at a minimum, with courtroom sharing requirements adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

Provided further, that the Administrator of General Services shall ensure that the construction of the new courthouse contains no more than eight courtrooms, including four for District Judges, two for Senior District Judges, and two for Magistrate Judges.

Provided further, that the design of the new courthouse shall not deviate from the design as reflected in the attached prospectus as amended by the fact sheet and any additional design shall conform with the requirements of the U.S. Courts Design Guide.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes minimal additional site-related work and design and construction of a new U.S. Courthouse of approximately 386,000 gross square feet, including underground parking spaces in Nashville, Tennessee. GSA will construct the courthouse to meet the 10-year space needs of the court and court-related agencies. The site, which completed assemblage in 2012 with a prior appropriation, would accommodate the 30-year needs of the court. Currently, construction of the Nashville courthouse project is ranked as the top priority on the Judicial Conference of the United States' Five-Year Courthouse Project Plan for FY's 2016-2020, issued in September 2014.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Addition Site and Design, ECC and M&I)..... $181,500,000

Overview of Project

The project will allow for relocation of the courts and court-related agencies from the existing court facilities located in the Estes Kefauver Federal Building (FB) and Annex. The new courthouse will provide seven courtrooms and 11 chambers to accommodate 11 judges (four active district, three seniors, one visiting, and three magistrate), the U.S. Marshals Service, the Office of the U.S. Attorney, and a U.S. Senate office. The proposed project reflects senior district and magistrate judge sharing policies and does not include courtrooms for projected new judgeships. When complete, the new courthouse will provide for the 10-year space requirements and the structure and site will allow for expansion to meet the 30-year needs of the U.S. District Court in Nashville, TN.

Site Information
Acquired..... 3.5 acres

Building Area
Gross square feet (excluding inside parking).....363,000
GSF (including inside parking).....386,000

Inside parking spaces 55

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Project Budget

Site (FY2002 and FY 2004)	$19,000,000
Additional Site	$2,477,000
Design (FY 2003)	$7,095,000
Additional Design	$815,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) ($437/gsf including inside parking)	$168,582,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	$9,626,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$207,595,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Addition Site and Design, ECC and M&I)..... $181,500,000

Location

The new courthouse site is in the Central Business District of Nashville and is bounded by Church Street, 7th Avenue North, Commerce Street, and 8th Avenue North.

Schedule	Start	End
Design	FY2003	FY2016
Construction	FY2016	FY2019

Tenant Agencies

U.S. District Court; Probation; U.S. Marshals Service; Office of the U.S. Attorney, GSA/PBS Field Office; U.S. Senate

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Justification

The existing Kefauver FB and Annex are unable to meet the requirements of the Courts. Only five existing courtrooms meet minimum USCDG standards. The FB and Annex do not provide separate public, restricted, and secure circulation, and there are no courtroom holding cells. Separate circulation for the public, judges, and prisoners cannot be achieved and the parking facility is not secured. The court is divided between the FB and Annex, causing inefficiency. The new courthouse will greatly improve the efficiency and security of the Court's operations.

GSA has acquired the site, however additional site funding is required to accommodate demolition and abatement of the site as it is cleared of existing construction.

The existing court facilities are located in the Estes Kefauver Federal Building (FB) at 801 Broadway, between Eighth Avenue South and Ninth Avenue South, in Nashville, and the Annex, which is directly to the South and accessible by common corridors. The FB was constructed in 1952 and has 9 floors. The Annex is a 10-floor annex to the FB that was added in 1974. A 600-car parking garage was built behind the Annex and is connected by an underground tunnel below McGavock Street.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Explanation of Changes from Previously Authorized

The square footage for the proposed project is based on 100 percent construction documents, measured according to GSA space measurement standards, excluding atrium phantom floors, rather than pre-design programmatic formulas used previously.

The project is 7,700 gross square feet (2 percent) larger than the project currently authorized by the House Committee.

The project is 27,600 gross square feet (8 percent) larger than the project currently authorized by the Senate Committee.

The Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC) reflects an increase from the ETPC of the project currently authorized by the House Committee and from the ETPC of the project currently authorized by the Senate Committee. The increase is due to larger scope, construction escalation, change in the projected start of construction from FY 2006 and 2008 to 2016, and the addition of high-performance green building features and requirements of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA).

Space Requirements of the U.S. Courts

	Current		Proposed	
	Courtrooms	**Judges**	**Courtrooms**	**Judges**
District				
- Active	4	3	4	4
- Senior	2	3	1	3
- Visiting				1
Magistrate	3	3	2	3
Total:	**9**	**9**	**7**	**11**

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Future of Existing Federal Building(s)[1]

GSA plans to reuse the existing Kefauver FB and Annex to house the following agencies: Department of Veterans Benefits, Internal Revenue Service, the Corps of Engineers, and other smaller agencies. This plan is tentative pending confirmation of agency program requirements and Feasibility Study to determine costs and implementation strategy.

Challenges with Implementing the Plan: Funding for reuse of the existing Kefauver FB and Annex will require a future prospectus-level project. GSA must complete a feasibility study to determine appropriate funding, schedule, and implementation of any proposed future project.

Proposed backfill and reuse of the Kefauver FB and Annex could approach $95,000,000. This estimated cost is based on the actual square foot costs from similar completed projects of the same era, escalated as necessary. GSA's feasibility study will allow more accurate, project-specific estimates of costs for the reuse of the Kefauver FB and Annex.

Long Term Lease Cost Avoidance: Upon relocation of the Courts and Court-related agencies to the new courthouse, GSA will backfill an estimated 180,000 rentable square feet with tenants from various leased locations. This tentative backfill plan is estimated to reduce lease payments to the private sector by approximately $5 million annually. More detailed backfill and lease cost avoidance information will follow upon completion of the feasibility study, confirmation of agency requirements, and full development of the proposed project

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project is designed to conform with the requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service. It will also meet the EISA requirements for the FY15 design refresh. GSA will encourage exploration of opportunities to gain increased energy efficiency above the measures achieved in the design.

[1] This section is included to address recommendations in the following GAO Report: Federal Courthouses: Better Planning Needed Regarding Reuse of Old Courthouses" (GAO-14-48).

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
107-67	2002	$14,700,000	Site
108-7	2003	$7,095,000	Design
Reprogram	2004	$4,300,000	Site
Appropriations/Funding to Date		**$26,095,000**	

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T&I	7/26/2000	$13,411,000	Site, Design for 310,294 gsf; 169 inside parking spaces
Senate EPW	7/26/2000	$13,784,000	Site, Design for 326,655 gsf; 169 inside parking spaces
House T&I	7/18/2001	$7,285,000	Addition Site & Design for 385,449 gsf; 170 inside parking spaces
Senate EPW	9/25/2001	$7,285,000	Additional Site & Design for 385,449 gsf; 170 parking spaces
House T&I	7/21/2004	$7,013,000	Additional Site & Design for 378,307 gsf; 55 parking spaces
Senate EPW	11/17/2005	$7,644,000	Additional Site & Design for 358,372 gsf; 55 parking spaces
House Approvals to Date		**$27,709,000**	
Senate Approvals to Date		**$28,713,000**	

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

New Construction.....$208,148,000
Lease.....$271,165,000

The 30 year, present value cost of new construction is $63,017,000 less than the cost of leasing and equivalent annual cost advantage of $3,600,000.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN

Prospectus Number: PTN-CTC-NA16
Congressional District: 05

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

GSA PBS

FACT SHEET
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
January 2016

Congressional District: 05

FY2016 Project Summary

This fact sheet provides an update to prospectus number PTN-CTC-NA16, which was transmitted in support of the President's Fiscal Year FY2016 Budget.

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the design and construction (with minimal additional site-related work) of a new U.S. Courthouse of approximately 386,000 gross square feet, including underground parking spaces in Nashville, Tennessee. GSA will construct the courthouse to meet the 10-year space needs of the court and court-related agencies. The site, which completed assemblage in 2012 with support of a prior appropriation, would accommodate the 30-year needs of the court. Construction of the Nashville courthouse project is ranked as the top priority on the Judiciary's Courthouse Project Priority (CPP) list for fiscal year (FY) 2016 (approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States on September 17, 2015).

FY2016 House Committee Approval Requested

(Additional Site and Design, ECC and M&I).....$186,425,000

FY2016 Senate Committee Approval Requested

(Additional Site and Design, ECC and M&I).....$3,921,000

FY2016 Funding Requested (as outlined in the FY 2016 Spend Plan)

(Additional Site and Design, ECC and M&I).....$188,100,000

Overview of Project

The project will allow for relocation of the courts and court-related agencies from the existing court facilities located in the Estes Kefauver Federal Building (FB) and Annex. The new courthouse will provide eight courtrooms and 11 chambers to accommodate 11 judges (four active district, three seniors, one visiting, and three magistrate) consistent with the application of courtroom sharing policies and limitation on the provision of space for projected judgeship. Other tenants include the U.S. Department of Justice - Marshals Service, the U.S. Department of Justice - Office of the U.S. Attorney, and a U.S. Senate office. When complete, the new courthouse will provide for the 10-year space requirements and the structure and site will allow for expansion to meet the 30-year needs of the Judiciary in Nashville, TN.

GSA PBS

FACT SHEET
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
January 2016

Congressional District: 05

Site Information
Acquired.....3.5 acres

Building Area
Gross square feet (excluding inside parking).....363,000
GSF (including inside parking).....386,000

Inside parking spaces.....55

Project Budget

Site (FY2002 and FY 2004)	$19,000,000
Additional Site	$2,986,000
Design (FY 2003)	$7,095,000
Additional Design	$3,000,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) ($446/gsf including inside parking)	$172,193,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	$9,860,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$214,134,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Location

The new courthouse site is in the Central Business District of Nashville and is bounded by Church Street, 7th Avenue North, Commerce Street, and 8th Avenue North.

Schedule	**Start**	**End**
Design	FY2003	FY2016
Construction	FY2017	FY2020

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NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
January 2016

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Tenant Agencies

U.S. District Court; Probation; U.S. Marshals Service; Office of the U.S. Attorney, GSA/PBS Field Office; U.S. Senate

Justification

The existing Kefauver FB and Annex are unable to meet the requirements of the Courts. Only five existing courtrooms meet minimum U.S. Courts Design Guide (USCDG) standards. The FB and Annex do not provide separate public, restricted, and secure circulation, and there are no courtroom holding cells. Separate circulation for the public, judges, and prisoners cannot be achieved and the parking facility is not secured. The court is divided between the FB and Annex, causing inefficiency. The new courthouse will greatly improve the efficiency and security of the Court's operations.

GSA acquired the site in 2012, however additional site funding is required to prepare the site for the planned construction.

The existing court facilities are located in the Estes Kefauver Federal Building (FB) at 801 Broadway, between Eighth Avenue South and Ninth Avenue South, in Nashville, and the Annex, which is directly to the South and accessible by common corridors. The FB was constructed in 1952 and has 9 floors. The Annex is a 10-floor annex to the FB that was added in 1974. A 600-car parking garage was built behind the Annex and is connected by an underground tunnel below McGavock Street.

Design Guide Exceptions

The following exceptions to the USCDG were approved by the Sixth Circuit Council in March 2003 and were incorporated into the existing design:

- Alternate Dispute Resolution Suite (1,264 sq. ft.)
- Additional space requirements for U.S. Probation (1,200 sq. ft.)
- Additional Space for District Court Clerk's Office and Jury Assembly Room (1,230 sq. ft.)

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The total space represented by these exceptions is 3,694 of usable square feet at a construction cost of $2.4 million. While it would not be cost effective to completely remove these spaces from the building, GSA and the court are looking at potentially eliminating these exceptions and backfilling the space with other Federal tenants. This change in the space use will not affect the cost of the building. GSA will continue to work with U.S. Marshals Service and U.S. Attorney's Office to seek reduction in their space requirements in the building designed in 2003. For any resulting space reductions, GSA will seek Federal backfill tenants.

Explanation of Changes from Previously Authorized

The square footage for the proposed project is based on 100 percent construction documents, measured according to GSA space measurement standards, excluding atrium phantom floors, rather than pre-design programmatic formulas used previously.

The project is 7,200 gross square feet (2 percent) larger than the project currently authorized by the House Committee.

The project is 27,000 gross square feet (8 percent) larger than the project currently authorized by the Senate Committee.

The Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC) reflects an increase from the ETPC of the prospectus submitted in support of the FY 2016 budget, the ETPC of the project currently authorized by the House Committee and from the ETPC of the project currently authorized by the Senate Committee. The increase is due to construction escalation, change in the projected start of construction from FY 2006 and 2008 to 2017, and the addition of high-performance green building features and requirements of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). Had the number of courtrooms and chambers not been reduced from the project currently authorized to reflect courtroom sharing policies and limitation on provision of space for projected judgeships, additional cost increases would have been realized to account for the higher level of build out associated with these spaces.

GSA PBS

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NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
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Space Requirements of the U.S. Courts

	Current		Proposed	
	Courtrooms	**Judges**	**Courtrooms**	**Judges**
District				
- Active	4	3	4	4
- Senior	2	3	2	3
- Visiting				1
Magistrate	3	3	2	3
Total:	**9**	**9**	**8**	**11**

Future of Existing Federal Building(s)[1]

GSA plans to reuse the existing Kefauver FB and Annex to house the following agencies: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Benefits, U.S. Department of Treasury - Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of Defense – Army Corps of Engineers, and other smaller agencies. This plan is tentative pending confirmation of agency program requirements and a feasibility study to determine costs and implementation strategy.

Challenges with Implementing the Plan: Funding for reuse of the existing Kefauver FB and Annex will require a future prospectus-level project. GSA will complete a feasibility study to determine appropriate future funding request, schedule, and implementation of any proposed future project.

Proposed renovation, backfill and reuse of the Kefauver FB and Annex could approach $108,000,000. This estimated cost is based on the actual square foot costs from similar completed projects of the same era, escalated as appropriate. GSA's feasibility study will

[1] This section is included to address recommendations in the following GAO Report: Federal Courthouses: Better Planning Needed Regarding Reuse of Old Courthouses" (GAO-14-48).

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NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
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allow more accurate, project-specific estimates of costs for the reuse of the Kefauver FB and Annex.

Long Term Lease Cost Avoidance: Upon relocation of the Courts and Court-related agencies to the new courthouse, GSA will backfill an estimated 180,000 rentable square feet with tenants from various leased locations. This tentative backfill plan is estimated to reduce lease payments to the private sector by several million annually. More detailed backfill and lease cost avoidance information will follow upon completion of the feasibility study, confirmation of agency requirements, and full development of the proposed project.

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
107-67	2002	$14,700,000	Site
108-7	2003	$7,095,000	Design
Reprogram	2004	$4,300,000	Site
114-113*	2016	$188,100,000	Additional Site and Design; ECC and M&I
Appropriations/Funding to Date		**$214,195,000**	

*Public Law 114-113 funded $947,760,000 for new construction projects of the Federal Judiciary as prioritized in the Federal Judiciary Courthouse Project Priorities plan. Nashville is the top priority on the list. GSA will submit a Spend Plan describing each project to be undertaken with this funding. The FY2016 need for Nashville is $188,100,000.

GSA PBS

FACT SHEET
NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE
NASHVILLE, TN
January 2016

Congressional District: 05

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T&I	7/26/2000	$13,411,000	Site, Design for 310,294 gsf; 169 inside parking spaces
Senate EPW	7/26/2000	$13,784,000	Site, Design for 326,655 gsf; 169 inside parking spaces
House T&I	7/18/2001	$7,285,000	Addition Site & Design for 385,449 gsf; 170 inside parking spaces
Senate EPW	9/25/2001	$7,285,000	Additional Site & Design for 385,449 gsf; 170 parking spaces
House T&I	7/21/2004	$7,013,000	Additional Site & Design for 378,307 gsf; 55 parking spaces
Senate EPW	11/17/2005	$7,644,000	Additional Site & Design for 358,372 gsf; 55 parking spaces
Senate EPW	1/20/2016	$181,500,000	Additional Site, Design & Construction 386,000 gsf; 55 parking spaces
House Approvals to Date		**$27,709,000**	
Senate Approvals to Date		**$210,213,000**	

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a lease extension of up to 75,269 rentable square feet of space, including 2 official parking spaces, for the Department of Education currently located at 50 Beale Street in San Francisco, California at a proposed total annual cost of $5,494,637 for a lease term of up to 3 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 468 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 468 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that,* if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number:	PCA-02-SF16
Congressional District:	12

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a lease extension of up to 75,269 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of Education (ED), currently located at 50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA, under one lease that was effective in 2006.

The proposed lease will continue to house ED while space is completed and readied for occupancy in the Phillip Burton Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse. ED will maintain its current office utilization rate of 253 useable square feet (USF) per person and overall utilization rate of 468 USF per person.

Description

Occupant:	Department of Education
Lease Type	Extension
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	75,269 (Current RSF/USF = 1.25)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	75,269 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.25)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	468
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	468
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	3 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	09/18/2016
Delineated Area:	50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	2
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$73.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$5,494,637
Current Total Annual Cost:	$3,427,095 (Lease effective 09/19/2006)

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2016 and may be escalated by 1.6 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for negotiating this lease extension to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-02-SF16
Congressional District: 12

Justification

The Department of Education, currently located at 50 Beale Street, requires continued housing while space within the Phillip Burton Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is completed for occupancy. Once work is completed in 2018, ED will move into the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse and improve its office utilization and overall utilization rates from 253 to approximately 100 usable square feet (USF) per person and 468 to approximately 209 USF per person, respectively.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-02-SF16
Congressional District: 12

Certification of Need

The proposed lease is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on July 27, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

December 2014

Housing Plan
Department of Education

PCA-02-SF16
San Francisco, CA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA	129	129	41,796		18,581	60,377						
Proposed Lease							129	129	41,796		18,581	60,377
Total	**129**	**129**	**41,796**	-	**18,581**	**60,377**	**129**	**129**	**41,796**	-	**18,581**	**60,377**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	253	253

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 9,195 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 9,195 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	468	468

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	60,377	1.25	75,269
Proposed	60,377	1.25	75,269

Special Space	USF
Regional Training Facility	4,189
Training	2,639
Lactation Room	865
Mailroom	768
Pantry	845
Union	991
VTC	614
Conference Room	3,415
OCIO(LAN)	1,001
Library	1,381
Team Rooms	763
Workroom	1,110
Total	**18,581**

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a lease extension of up to 71,728 rentable square feet of space for the Army Corps of Engineers currently located at 1455 Market Street in San Francisco, California at a proposed total annual cost of $4,662,320 for a lease term of up to 2 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 204 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 204 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-03-SF16
Congressional District:12

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a lease extension of up to 71,728 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of Defense - Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), currently located at 1455 Market Street, San Francisco, CA.

The proposed lease will continue to house ACE while space is completed and readied for occupancy in the Phillip Burton Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse. ACE will maintain its current office utilization rate of 130 useable square feet (USF) per person and all-in utilization rate of 204 USF per person.

Description

Occupant:	Army Corps of Engineers
Lease Type	Extension
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	71,728 (Current RSF/USF = 1.14)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	71,728 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.14)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	204
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	204
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	2 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	02/19/2017
Delineated Area:	1455 Market Street, San Francisco, CA
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	None
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$65.00 / RSF

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.6 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for negotiating this lease extension to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-03-SF16
Congressional District:12

Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]	$4,662,320
Current Total Annual Cost:	$2,610,462 (Lease effective 02/20/2007)

Justification

The Army Corps of Engineers is currently located at 1455 Market Street and will be moving into the Phillip Burton Federal Building-U.S. Courthouse upon completion of its space in 2018. ACE recently reduced its square footage at 1455 Market from 89,995 RSF to 71,728 RSF in an effort to reduce costs and improve utilization. When ACE moves to the Federal Building in 2018, it will occupy approximately the same square footage as the existing lease.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

[2]New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-03-SF16
Congressional District: 12

Certification of Need

The proposed lease is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on July 27, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

December 2014

Housing Plan
Army Corps of Engineers

PCA-03-SF16
San Francisco, CA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
1455 Market Street, San Francisco, CA	310	310	51,485	2,272	9,400	63,157						
Proposed Lease							310	310	51,485	2,272	9,400	63,157
Total	**310**	**310**	**51,485**	**2,272**	**9,400**	**63,157**	**310**	**310**	**51,485**	**2,272**	**9,400**	**63,157**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	130	130

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 11,327 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 11,327 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	204	204

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	63,157	1.14	71,728
Proposed	63,157	1.14	71,728

Special Space	USF
Automated Data Processing	2,365
Copy/File Room	2,180
Conference Room	3,337
Break Room	512
Waiting Room	400
Mail Room	249
Communication Room	357
Total	**9,400**

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION REVIEW AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a succeeding lease of up to 85,000 rentable square feet of space, including 25 official parking spaces, for the Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review and the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Principle Legal Advisors currently located at 100 Montgomery Street in San Francisco, California at a proposed total annual cost of $6,460,000 for a lease term of up to 10 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 556 square feet or less per person for the Executive Office of Immigration Review and 253 square feet or less per person for the Office of Principle Legal Advisors, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rates cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 556 square feet or higher per person for the Executive Office of Immigration Review or 253 square feet or higher per person for the Office of Principle Legal Advisors.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION REVIEW
AND
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECUIRITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number:	PCA-01-SF16
Congressional District:	12

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a succeeding lease for 85,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR); and the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Principle Legal Advisors (OPLA), currently located at 100 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA.

The succeeding lease will provide continued housing for EOIR and OPLA and will improve office and overall utilization while providing space for additional personnel needed at the current location due to increases in the caseload.

Description

Occupant:	Executive Office of Immigration Review and Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Lease Type	Succeeding
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	77,529 (Current RSF/USF = 1.18)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	85,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.18)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	7,471 (Increase)
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	576/338
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	556/253
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	10 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	10/12/2016
Delineated Area:	100 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	25
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$76.00 / RSF

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION REVIEW
AND
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECUIRITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number:	PCA-01-SF16
Congressional District:	12

Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$6,460,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$3,218,334 (Leases effective 10/13/2006 and 08/18/2008)

Background

EOIR and OPLA are currently co-located at 100 Montgomery Street in San Francisco, CA. In conjunction with approximately 9,000 RSF in a nearby Federal building, this location acts as one of the 59 EOIR Courts around the country. The judges and staff administer and interpret Federal immigration law and regulations through immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. OPLA is comprised of attorneys and staff and is the legal representative and litigator for the Federal Government in exclusion, deportation, and removal proceedings before EOIR. In fiscal year (FY) 2013, the San Francisco EOIR Court completed 9,600 court-related matters, including notices to appear, bonds and motions.

Justification

The two leases at 100 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA, expire on October 12, 2016. Both EOIR and OPLA require continued housing to ensure continuity in meeting the agencies' mission requirements. The number of court-related matters heard at this location has increased in recent years and is expected to continue growing. To handle this increase, EOIR will be dedicating additional resources to this location in the coming year and will need courtrooms and the associated office and special space to support their mission.

Special Space Requirements

In FY 2013 the San Francisco EOIR Court completed 9,600 court matters, a 6 percent increase from the previous year. Due to the courtrooms, secure corridors, file storage, and associated space needed to provide safe and secure immigration, deportation, and removal proceedings, the special space requirements of this location are substantially higher than other locations of similar size.

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a benchmark for negotiating this lease extension to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION REVIEW
AND
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECUIRITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-01-SF16
Congressional District: 12

These courtrooms are constructed to facilitate assembly functions and to comply with current accessibility standards, including circulation for wheelchair accessibility. Each courtroom has a raised desk for the judge, clerk, and interpreter and a litigation area for the prosecution, defense, and witness, along with public seating for court visitors. The current courtroom standard of approximately 850 square feet was developed to meet the needs of the court and comply with applicable accessibility standards. The courtrooms are used on a daily basis and are designed to handle approximately 35 people.

In addition to courtrooms, EOIR also has a need for approximately 12,000 square feet of storage to maintain the Records of Proceedings (ROP). ROPs are critical to the function of the immigration courts and are used by immigration judges, attorneys, and EOIR Board Members if a court decision is appealed. Documents found in the ROP include charging papers initiated by the Department of Homeland Security and the progression of case documentation. The size of an ROP can be as small as 1.5" or can become large enough to be referred to as a "box case." The Federal Records Act requires the storage of records in paper form, although EOIR has begun the transition to electronic filing and digital recordings of court proceedings. At this time, these initiatives affect only a small portion of the ROP and paper files remain critical for continuity between agencies accessing documentation during the years a case remains active.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION REVIEW
AND
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECUIRITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-01-SF16
Congressional District: 12

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed lease is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 8, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

March 2015

Housing Plan
Executive Office of Immigration Review and
Office of Principle Legal Advisors

PCA-01-SF16
San Francisco, CA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
100 Montgomery Street, SF (EOIR)	75	75	11,755		31,448	43,203						
100 Montgomery Street, SF (OPLA)	67	67	13,522		9,128	22,650						
Proposed Lease EOIR							98	98	12,805		41,653	54,458
Proposed Lease OPLA							67	67	11,096		5,881	16,977
Total	**142**	**142**	**25,277**	**-**	**40,576**	**65,853**	**165**	**165**	**23,901**	**-**	**47,534**	**71,435**

Office Utilization Rates (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
EOIR	122	102
OPLA	157	129

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current URs excludes 5,561 usf of office support space
Proposed URs excludes 4,809 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
EOIR	576	556
OPLA	338	253

Agency	Special Space	USF
OPLA	Secure Files/Bulk Storage	1,565
OPLA	Break Room	480
OPLA	Secure Waiting Area	278
OPLA	Telecom Suite	556
OPLA	Conference/Training Rooms	1,343
OPLA	Office Support Centers	712
OPLA	Administration File Room	542
OPLA	Law Library	405
EOIR	Courtroom	22,440
EOIR	Judges Secure corridor	1,560
EOIR	Reception/Waiting Area	2,128
EOIR	Interpreter Waiting Room	195
EOIR	Pro Bono Rooms	312
EOIR	ADP	156
EOIR	Conference/Training Room	710
EOIR	Printer/Copy/Mail Room	748
EOIR	File Room	11,913
EOIR	File Archive Room	390
EOIR	Supply Rooms	420
EOIR	Break Rooms	390
EOIR	Staff Rest Rooms	291
	Total	**47,534**

NOTES:
[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	65,853	1.18	77,529
Proposed	71,435	1.18	85,000

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 105,000 rentable square feet of space, including 2 official parking spaces, for the Federal Election Commission currently located at 999 E Street, NW in Washington, DC at a proposed total annual cost of $5,250,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 218 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 218 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-01-WA16

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 105,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Federal Election Commission (FEC), currently located at 999 E Street, NW, Washington DC.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for FEC and improve FEC office and overall utilization rates from 152 to 117 usable square feet (USF) per person and 292 to 218 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the replacement lease will reduce the rentable square footage (RSF) of the requirement by 23 percent, a 31,957 RSF reduction from the total of its current occupancy.

Description

Occupant:	Federal Election Commission
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	136,957 (Current RSF/USF = 1.17)
Proposed Maximum RSF[1]:	105,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	31,957 (Reduction)
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	292
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	218
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	9/30/2017
Delineated Area:	Washington, DC Central Employment Area
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	2
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$50.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[3]:	$5,250,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$5,345,342 (lease effective 10/1/2007)

[1] The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.17; however, to maximize competition, a RSF/USF ratio of 1.20 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.
[2] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.
[3] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-01-WA16

Background

The FEC is an independent regulatory agency established in 1975 to administer and enforce the Federal Election Campaign Act. That statute limits the sources and amounts of the contributions used to finance federal elections; requires public disclosure of campaign finance information; and, in tandem with the Primary Matching Payment Act and the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act, provides for the public funding of Presidential elections.

Justification

The current lease at 999 E Street, NW, Washington, DC, expires September 30, 2017. FEC requires continued housing to carry out its mission. The total space requested will reduce the FEC footprint 31,957 RSF, or 23 percent of the 136,957 RSF currently occupied. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $6,847,850 per year.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-01-WA16

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 8, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

Novemeber 2014

Housing Plan
Federal Election Commission

PDC-01-WA16
Washington, DC

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
999 E. Street, NW	400	400	77,828	8,000	31,000	116,828						
Proposed Lease							400	400	60,000	4,000	23,000	87,000
Total	400	400	77,828	8,000	31,000	116,828	400	400	60,000	4,000	23,000	87,000

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	152	117

UR = average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 17,122 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 13,200 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	292	218

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	116,828	1.17	136,957
Proposed	87,000	1.20	105,000

Special Space	USF
Conference/Training/Inte	9,000
IT/Server/Hubs/Tele	1,100
Copy/File Rooms	2,000
Hearing Rooms	3,200
Public Records	2,000
Vending/Breakroom	1,400
Mail Room	500
Health Unit	600
Locker Room	700
Library	2,000
Security Screening	500
Total	23,000

NOTES:
[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, BALTIMORE, MD

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 143,000 rentable square feet of space, including 44 official parking spaces, for the Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers currently located at 10 South Howard Street in Baltimore, Maryland at a proposed total annual cost of $4,842,200, including an annual parking cost of $123,200, for a lease term of up to 20 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 183 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 183 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BALTIMORE, MD

Prospectus Number:	PMD-01-BA16
Congressional District:	3,7

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 143,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Department of Defense - Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), currently located at 10 South Howard Street, Baltimore, MD, under one lease that was effective in 1993.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for ACE and will improve ACE office and overall utilization rates from 133 to 108 usable square feet (USF) per person and 227 to 183 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the replacement lease will reduce the rentable square footage of the requirement by 19 percent, a 33,332 RSF reduction from the total of its current occupancy. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $5,818,956.

Description

Occupant:	Army Corps of Engineers
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	176,332 (Current RSF/USF = 1.15)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	143,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.15)
Reduction RSF:	33,332
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	227
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	183
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	20 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	3/30/2018
Delineated Area:	Baltimore Central Business District
Number of Official Parking Spaces[1]:	44
Scoring:	Operating lease

[1] ACE security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location. This control may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, as a separate operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BALTIMORE, MD

Prospectus Number:	PMD-01-BA16
Congressional District:	3,7

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$33.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Parking Cost[3]:	$123,200
Proposed Total Lease Cost[4]:	$4,719,000
Proposed Total Annual Cost	$4,842,200
Current Total Annual Cost:	$4,562,710 (Lease effective 3/31/1993)

Justification

The City Crescent Building, at 10 South Howard Street, houses the ACE headquarters office for the Baltimore District, which supports infrastructure projects in five states; the District of Columbia; the watersheds of the Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay; and overseas and provides emergency response during disasters. The City Crescent Building houses ACE and several other agencies under one lease agreement.

A number of the other tenant agencies in the building plan to backfill vacancies in nearby Federal Buildings; ACE will continue to be housed in leased space because there is no federally owned space large enough to accommodate the requirement.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

[2]This estimate is for fiscal year 2018 and may be escalated by 1.9% percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[3]This estimate is for fiscal year 2018 and may be escalated by 1.9% percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation.

[4]New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BALTIMORE, MD

Prospectus Number: PMD-01-BA16
Congressional District: 3,7

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed lease is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 8, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

November 2014

Housing Plan
Army Corps of Engineers

PMD-01-BA16
Baltimore, MD

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
City Crescent Building	675	675	115,210	20,400	17,722	153,332						
Proposed lease							675	675	93,830	13,120	16,830	123,780
Total	**675**	**675**	**115,210**	**20,400**	**17,722**	**153,332**	**675**	**675**	**93,830**	**13,120**	**16,830**	**123,780**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	133	108

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 25,346 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 20,643 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	227	183

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	153,332	1.15	176,332
Proposed	123,780	1.15	143,000

Special Space	USF
Health Unit	2,150
Physical Fitness	2,250
Conference/Classroom	3,176
Wet Lab	174
Library	725
Mail Room	2,448
Food Service	2,313
Emergency Response Center	1,418
Multimedia Studio	1,233
Security Center	508
ADP	438
Total	16,833

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, NEWARK, NJ

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 123,000 rentable square feet of space, including 58 official parking spaces, for the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection currently located at 1100 Raymond Boulevard in Newark, New Jersey at a proposed total annual cost of $4,551,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 290 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 290 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
NEWARK, NJ

Prospectus Number: PNJ-01-NW16
Congressional District: 10

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 123,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Department of Homeland Security - Customs and Border Protection (CBP), currently located at 1100 Raymond Boulevard, Newark, NJ, under one lease that was effective in 2002.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for CBP and will improve CBP's office and overall utilization rates from 178 to 79 usable square feet (USF) per person and 525 to 290 USF per person, respectively, while housing current personnel in 94,419 RSF less than the total of its current occupancies at the 1100 Raymond Boulevard location. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $8,044,503.

Description

Occupant:	Customs and Border Protection
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	217,419 (Current RSF/USF = 1.17)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	123,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.15)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	94,419 RSF (Reduction)
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	525
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	290
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	5/31/2016
Delineated Area:	Central Business District of Newark, New Jersey with the following boundaries: North: Center Street South: Kinney Street East: McCarter Highway West: University Ave.
Number of Official Parking Spaces[1]:	58
Scoring:	Operating Lease

[1] CBP security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location. This control may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, as a separate operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
NEWARK, NJ

Prospectus Number: PNJ-01-NW16
Congressional District: 10

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$37.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[3]:	$4,551,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$11,692,276(Lease effective 4/1/2002)

Justification

The Newark Center Building located at 1100 Raymond Blvd. in Newark, NJ, currently houses CBP's Field Operations and Administrative Support division. The replacement lease will house the current CBP personnel located at the Newark Center Building and absorb additional personnel from offices relocating to One World Trade Center in New York City, NY. The new lease will meet the long-term needs of CBP.

Special Space Requirement

CBP has many unique spaces at this location that support national CBP offices and programs. The laboratory space at this facility accounts for nearly half of all of the special space. The laboratory is one of only four port materials testing labs in CBP's national inventory and is responsible for performing analysis on materials retrieved from the northeast Sea Ports of Entry, and all Land and Air Ports of Entry. The laboratory is staffed with CBP scientists who perform the analysis using onsite testing equipment.

In addition to the laboratory, the special space also accounts for the need to store any seized materials onsite. At any one time, the volume of testing and the amount of seized materials require CBP to maintain a large secured storage facility.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

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[2] This estimate is for fiscal year 2016 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[3] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
NEWARK, NJ

Prospectus Number: PNJ-01-NW16
Congressional District: 10

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 8,2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

June 2015

Housing Plan
Customs and Border Protection

PNJ-01-NW1(
Newark, NJ

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)1				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
1100 Raymond Blvd	352	352	80,535	16,295	87,971	184,801						-
Proposed Lease							368	368	37,126	3,780	65,929	106,835
Total	**352**	**352**	**80,535**	**16,295**	**87,971**	**184,801**	**368**	**368**	**37,126**	**3,780**	**65,929**	**106,835**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	178	79

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 17,717 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 8,168 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	525	290

R/U Factor4	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	184,801	1.18	217,419
Proposed	106,835	1.15	123,000

Special Space	USF
Laboratory	35,924
ADP	270
Conference/Training	7,560
Breakroom/Cafeteria	3,004
Mail room	1,750
Private Toilets	162
Physical Fitness with lockers	1,485
Lactation Room	108
Polygraph Room	810
Secured Storage	6,894
PIV Room	432
HSDN Room	270
Sample Room	203
Copy Rooms	1,991
Swipe Security	203
Communication	203
Swipe Control Room	203
Public Access for Dwlk	405
Secured Reception	1,283
LAN Equipment Room	486
Business Service Center	405
Interview Rooms	203
Cashiers	108
Money Counting Room with Safe	284
Broker Box Room	135
Defensive Tactics	1,148
Total	65,929

NOTES:
[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 3307, appropriations are authorized for a lease extension of up to 326,057 rentable square feet of space, including 15 official parking spaces, for the Environmental Protection Agency currently located at 2777 Crystal Drive (One Potomac Yard) and 2733 Crystal Drive in Arlington, Virginia at a proposed total annual cost of $12,716,223 for a lease term of up to 5 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 196 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 196 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number: PVA-02-WA16
Congressional District: VA-8, 10, 11

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a lease extension of 326,057 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), currently located at 2777 Crystal Drive (One Potomac Yard) and 2733 Crystal Drive in Arlington, Virginia. The 5 year lease extension will consolidate the EPA functions housed in 2733 Crystal Drive into One Potomac Yard while EPA and GSA develop and budget for EPA's long-term consolidation into federally owned space.

Description

Occupant:	Environmental Protection Agency
Lease Type	Extension
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	453,651 (Current RSF/USF = 1.14)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	326,057 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	127,594 Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	275
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	196
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	5 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	03/01/2016 (2777 Crystal Drive) 04/05/2016 (2733 Crystal Drive)
Delineated Area:	2777 Crystal Drive, Arlington, Virginia
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	15 spaces
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$39.00 / RSF

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2016 and may be escalated by 1.8 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced, including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number: PVA-02-WA16
Congressional District: VA-8, 10, 11

Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$12,716,223
Current Total Annual Cost:	$16,674,749 (leases effective 03/02/2006 and 04/06/2006)

Justification

In the short term, the consolidation of functions at One Potomac Yard will eliminate the need for 127,594 rentable square feet of leased space at 2733 Crystal Drive with an annual lease cost avoidance of approximately $5.6 million. Long term, EPA is continuing to reduce its footprint in the national capital region and will continue to consolidate functions within federally owned space. GSA and EPA will be requesting funding for the consolidation in a future fiscal year. The lease extension will allow EPA and GSA to budget for move and relocation costs, conduct assessment studies, and any necessary renovation costs to implement the best overall long term strategy for EPA in the Washington Metropolitan market area. The current leases expire on March 1, 2016, and April 5, 2016, respectively. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $17,692,389.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number: PVA-02-WA16
Congressional District: VA-8, 10, 11

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 8, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

June 2015

Housing Plan
Environmental Protection Agency

PVA-02-WA16
Northern, VA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
2777-2733 Crystal Dr, Arlington, VA	1,420	1,442	323,618	3,137	69,536	396,291						
One Potomac Yard							1390	1,390	224,936	1,768	46,085	272,789
Total	**1,420**	**1,442**	**323,618**	**3,137**	**69,536**	**396,291**	**1,390**	**1,390**	**224,936**	**1,768**	**46,085**	**272,789**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	178	126

UR = average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 71,196 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 49,486 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	275	196

R/U Factor[4]			
	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	396,291	1.14	453,651
Proposed	272,789	1.20	326,057

Special Space	USF
Badging	150
Bike Facilities/Showers	1,707
Conferencing	10,495
Training Center	5,826
Computer & Security	3,062
LAN, Reproductions, Pantries	8,362
Fitness Center	3,321
High Density File	9,692
Health Unit	915
Lactation Room	155
Shipping/Receiving/Mail	2,400
Total	46,085

NOTES:
[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space avail
[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 97,000 rentable square feet of space for the Department of Veterans Affairs currently located at 801 I Street, NW in Washington, DC at a proposed total annual cost of $4,850,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 184 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 184 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PC-02-WA16

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 97,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in Washington, DC. VA is currently housed at 801 I Street, NW, in Washington, DC, under a lease that expires June 30, 2017.

Description

Occupant:	Department of Veterans Affairs
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	86,927 (Current RSF/USF = 1.06)
Proposed Maximum RSF[1]:	97,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	161
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	184
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	6/30/2017
Delineated Area:	Washington, DC, Central Employment Area
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	None
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$50.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[3]:	$4,850,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$3,671,984 (lease effective 2007)

[1] The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.06; however, to maximize competition, a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

[2] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[3] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PC-02-WA16

Justification

The current location houses three VA components: the Office of Inspector General (OIG), the Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), and the Office of Information Technology (OIT).

This prospectus seeks authority to house two of the components, OIG and OSDBU, while the third component, OIT, will be relocated into federally owned space. OIG will be increasing by 22 personnel to respond to VA's recent issues regarding patient wait times, and the office has already received appropriations to respond to this matter. OIT will be relocating into the Lafayette Federal Building.

OIG and OSDBU will improve their office utilization rate from 100 USF per person to 89 USF per person. The overall utilization rate will increase slightly from 161 USF per person to 184 per person due to OSDBU's need for office and special space that is currently shared with the other VA components.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space for which this prospectus seeks authorization. GSA encourages offerors to work with energy service providers to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PC-02-WA16

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on October 23, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

Novemeber 2014 | **Housing Plan Veterans Affairs** | **PDC-02-WA16 Washington, DC**

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Techworld Plaza												
OIG	241	241	42,332	1,088	16,033	59,453						
OSDBU	174	174	5,927			5,927						
OIT	95	95	16,948			16,948						
Proposed Lease							437	437	49,806	1,088	29,573	80,467
Total	**510**	**510**	**65,207**	**1,088**	**16,033**	**82,328**	**437**	**437**	**49,806**	**1,088**	**29,573**	**80,467**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	100	89

UR = average amount of office space per person

Current UR excludes 14,346 usf of office support space

Proposed UR excludes 10,957 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	161	184

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	82,328	1.06	86,927
Proposed	80,467	1.20	97,000

Special Space	USF
Investigative Operations	400
Evidence Room/Vault	250
Health Inspection Rooms	550
Interview Rooms	200
Conference	8,797
LAN Rooms	3,333
Copy/Supply	2,461
File Room	1,435
Break Room	1,715
Fitness Room	2,025
Forensics	1,700
Training	5,869
IT/Comms Closet	274
Health Unit	564
Total	29,573

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS, DENVER, CO

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 176,000 rentable square feet of space, including 40 official parking spaces, for the Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 Headquarters currently located at 1595 Wynkoop Street in Denver, Colorado at a proposed total annual cost of $8,096,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 200 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 200 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
DENVER, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-08-DE16
Congressional District: 1

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 176,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 Headquarters, currently located at 1595 Wynkoop Street in Denver, CO, under one lease that was effective in 2006.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for EPA and will improve its office and overall utilization rates from 150 to 108 usable square feet (USF) per person and 272 to 200 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the replacement lease will reduce the rentable square footage of the requirement by 29 percent, a 72,849 RSF reduction from the total of its current occupancy. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $11,447,054.

Description

Occupant:	Environmental Protection Agency
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	248,849 (Current RSF/USF = 1.23)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	176,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.23)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	72,849 Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	272
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	200
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	12/31/16
Delineated Area:	North: Platte River South: Intersection of Broadway Street and Speer Boulevard East: Broadway Street West: Speer Boulevard
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	40
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$46.00 / RSF

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
DENVER, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-08-DE16
Congressional District: 1

Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$8,096,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$7,702,000 (Lease effective 12/15/2006)

Justification

EPA has occupied the seven-story building leased at 1595 Wynkoop Street in Denver, CO, since 2006, under a lease that expires December 31, 2016. EPA has a continued need for housing to carry out its mission. The proposed replacement lease will ensure continuity of operations for the EPA Region 8 Headquarters while reducing the space requirement by 72,849 RSF.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

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for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2]New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
DENVER, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-08-DE16
Congressional District: 1

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on October 23, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

June 2015

Housing Plan
EPA Region VIII Headquarters

PCO-08-DE16
Denver, CO

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
1595 Wynkoop Street	740	740	142,758	1,656	57,134	201,548						-
Proposed Lease							715	715	98,932	6,177	38,026	143,135
Total	**740**	**740**	**142,758**	**1,656**	**57,134**	**201,548**	**715**	**715**	**98,932**	**6,177**	**38,026**	**143,135**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	150	108

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 31,407 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 21,765 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	272	200

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	201,548	1.23	248,849
Proposed	143,135	1.23	176,000

Special Space	USF
Secure/High Floor Load Storage	3,859
Conference Rooms	11,762
Food Service	4,793
ADP	4,536
LAN/Phone	900
Library	2,800
Copy/Print Rooms	3,052
Mail Rooms	1,692
Public Restrooms	448
Fitness Center	2,688
Health Unit	168
Reception and Security	908
Soundlock Interview Rooms	420
Total	**38,026**

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 115,000 rentable square feet of space for the Department of State currently located at 2121 Virginia Avenue, NW in Washington, DC at a proposed total annual cost of $5,750,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 195 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 195 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-05-WA16

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 115,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of State (DOS), currently housed at 2121 Virginia Ave., NW, Washington, DC.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for DOS and will improve DOS office and overall utilization rates from 130 to 121 usable square feet (USF) per person and 209 to 195 USF per person, respectively.

Description

Occupant:	Department of State
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	110,294 (Current RSF/USF = 1.16)
Proposed Maximum RSF[1]:	115,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	209
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	195
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	10/31/2017
Delineated Area:	Washington, DC CEA
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	None
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$50.00 / RSF

[1] The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.16; however, to maximize competition, a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

[2] This estimate is for fiscal year 2018 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced, including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-05-WA16

Proposed Total Annual Cost[3]:	$5,750,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$5,691,805 (leases effective 11/1/2007)

Justification

The current lease at 2121 Virginia Ave., NW, expires October 31, 2017. DOS requires continued housing for 456 personnel currently working in this location and will consolidate an additional 34 personnel by relocating existing functions dispersed in other locations. The proposed leases will streamline current DOS operations and allow for more efficient use of space.

The FY 2016 President's Budget includes the purchase of the American Red Cross Building located at 2025 E Street, NW. If the purchase is executed as proposed, the Federal Government would eliminate $12 million in annual private sector lease costs. The DOS personnel housed under this prospectus would relocate into the purchased facility. This prospectus will be necessary if that purchase is not funded or cannot be executed.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

[3] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-05-WA16

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-05-WA16

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on November 24, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

Novemeber 2014

Housing Plan
Department of State

PDC-05-WA16
Washington, DC

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
2121 Virginia Avenue, NW	456	456	76,280	3,507	15,535	95,322						
Proposed Lease							490	490	76,280	3,507	15,535	95,322
Total	**456**	**456**	**76,280**	**3,507**	**15,535**	**95,322**	**490**	**490**	**76,280**	**3,507**	**15,535**	**95,322**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	130	121

UR = average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 16,782 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 16,782 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	209	195

Special Space	USF
Conference/Training/Inte	5,164
ADP	540
File Rooms	1,754
Break Rooms	1,023
Training	600
SCIFs	5,000
Security	48
Copy Rooms	1,406
Total	15,535

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	95,322	1.16	110,294
Proposed	95,322	1.20	115,000

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION, NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 575,000 rentable square feet of space, including 85 official parking spaces, for the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration currently located at 600–700 Army Navy Drive in Arlington, Virginia at a proposed total annual cost of $22,425,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 192 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 192 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number: PVA-01-WA16
Congressional District: VA-8,10,11

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 575,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the U.S. Department of Justice - Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), currently located at 600-700 Army Navy Drive, in Arlington, VA, under a lease that expires September 30, 2018.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for DEA and will maintain DEA's efficient office utilization rate of 116 usable square feet (USF) per person and overall utilization rate of 192 USF per person.

Description

Occupant:	Drug Enforcement Administration
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	503,776 (Current RSF/USF = 1.05)
Proposed Maximum RSF[1]:	575,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	192
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	192
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	9/30/2018
Delineated Area:	Northern VA
Number of Official Parking Spaces[2]:	85
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[3]:	$39.00 / RSF

[1] The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.05; however, to maximize competition, a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

[2] DEA security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location. This may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, under an operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building(s).

[3] This estimate is for fiscal year 2018 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced, including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as the basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number:	PVA-01-WA16
Congressional District:	VA-8,10,11

Proposed Total Annual Cost[4]:	$ 22,425,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$ 19,402,581

Justification

The current lease at 600-700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA, expires September 30, 2018. The current location provides housing for DEA headquarters components, a visitor center, and a museum. DEA requires continued housing for the 2,495 personnel working in this location to oversee and enforce the controlled substance laws and regulations of the Unites States.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

[4] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Prospectus Number: PVA-01-WA16
Congressional District: VA-8,10,11

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on November 24, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

July 2015

Housing Plan
Drug Enforcement Administration

PVA-01-WA16
Northern, VA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
600-700 Army Navy Drive	2,495	2,495	372,539	6,055	100,013	478,607						
Proposed Lease							2,465	2,465	372,539	6,055	100,013	478,607
Total	**2,495**	**2,495**	**372,539**	**6,055**	**100,013**	**478,607**	**2,495**	**2,495**	**372,539**	**6,055**	**100,013**	**478,607**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	116	116

UR = average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 81,959 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 67,699 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	192	192

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	478,607	1.05	503,776
Proposed	478,607	1.20	575,000

Special Space	USF
SCIF	9,504
Fitness Center/Locker Room	6,008
Food Service	7,040
Museum/Gift Shop	3,461
Auditorium/Press Room	5,491
Audio Visual Control Room	723
Mailroom Distribution	941
Secure File Rooms	12,303
Credit Union	551
Print Shop/Supplies	3,868
Command Center/PIV	4,602
Health Unit	3,235
Secure Network Server Rooms	13,146
Library	2,732
Mainframe Telco Room	565
Conference/Training/Interview	25,843
Total	**100,013**

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES, DALLAS, TX

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 261,000 rentable square feet of space, including 8 official parking spaces, for the Department of Homeland Security, Citizenship and Immigration Services currently located at 4141 N. St. in Augustine, Mesquite, Texas, 7701 N. Stemmons Freeway in Dallas, Texas, and 8001 N. Stemmons Freeway in Dallas, Texas at a proposed total annual cost of $7,830,000 for a lease term of up to 20 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 218 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 218 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA16
Congressional District: 3, 6, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 261,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Department of Homeland Security - Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), currently located in three leased locations at 4141 N. St. Augustine, Mesquite, TX; 7701 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX; and 8001 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX.

The replacement lease will house USCIS in one location, allowing for a more streamlined and efficient operation, and will improve USCIS' office and overall utilization rates from 215 to 81 usable square feet (USF) per person and 405 to 218 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the replacement lease will reduce the rentable square footage of the requirement by 16 percent, a 51,138 RSF reduction from the total of its current occupancy. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $9,364,140.

Description

Occupant:	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	312,138 (Current RSF/USF = 1.04)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	261,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.15)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	51,138 Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	405
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	218
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	20 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	4/30/2021, 11/2/2022, 3/15/2024
Delineated Area:	**North:** Highway 2499 and Highway 1171 (W. Main Street), east to Highway 121; continuing east on Highway 121 to Highway 544 (Parker Road); continuing east on Highway 544 (Parker Road) to the Dallas North Tollway. **East:** Highway 544 (Parker Road) and the Dallas North Tollway; south on

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA16
Congressional District: 3, 6, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33

	Dallas North Tollway to Interstate 35; south on Interstate 35 to Interstate 30. **South:** Intersection of Interstates 35 and 30, west on I-30 to Highway 360. **West:** Intersection of Interstate 30 and Highway 360, north on Highway 360 to Highway 121, continuing north on Highway 121 to Highway 2499 (International Parkway); continuing north on Highway 2499 to Highway 1171
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	8
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$30.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$7,830,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$7,248,810 (Leases effective 5/1/2011, 11/3/2012 and 3/16/2014)

Justification

USCIS oversees lawful immigration to the United States, providing services that include citizenship, immigration of family members, visas, verification of legal rights to work in the United States, humanitarian programs, adoptions, civic integration, and genealogy. The USCIS Texas Service Center (TSC) is one of four USCIS Service Centers and consists of two separate leased locations in Dallas, TX, and one leased location 30 miles away in Mesquite, TX.

The geographically separate locations create obstacles for management and oversight as well as security vulnerabilities in transporting client files between locations. To reduce these obstacles, USCIS studied the feasibility of consolidating the operation housed in Mesquite into the two

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9% percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for negotiating this lease to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA16
Congressional District: 3, 6, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33

buildings in Dallas, but the study showed that the consolidation was not feasible due to the lack of adequate square footage and the structural deficiencies that prevent the buildings from accommodating the weight of mission-critical files. Since none of the existing locations can accommodate the Service Center requirement, a replacement lease is needed to meet the long-term requirements of USCIS. To minimize vacancy risk, the existing leases contain flexible terms to coincide with the estimated occupancy of the replacement lease.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA16
Congressional District: 3, 6, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33

Certification of Need

The proposed lease is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 27, 2016

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

March 2015

Housing Plan
Citizenship and Immigration Services

PTX-01-DA16
Dallas, TX

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
4141 St. Augustine	241	241	67,004		54,996	122,000						
7701 North Stemmons	225	225	58,292		14,291	72,583						
8001 North Stemmons	276	276	78,879		26,876	105,755						
Proposed Lease							1,038	1,038	108,340	19,840	98,536	226,716
Total	**742**	**742**	**204,175**	**0**	96,163	300,338	**1,038**	**1,038**	**108,340**	**19,840**	**98,536**	**226,716**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	215	81

UR = average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 44,918 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 23,835 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	**Proposed**
Rate	405	218

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	300,338	1.04	312,138
Proposed	226,716	1.15	261,000

Special Space	USF
Clinic	160
Conference	1,950
ADP	7,476
Break Rooms	5,700
File Processing	61,020
Mail Rooms	4,800
Receiving Area	7,800
Secured Room	630
Secured Storage	1,440
Training Room	7,560
Total	**98,536**

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE, LOS ANGELES, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations for the building system upgrades and the reconfiguration and alteration of space currently occupied by the U.S. District Courts in the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Los Angeles, California to allow for the consolidation of court operations currently housed in the Roybal Federal Building and in 312 North Spring Street at a design cost of $2,207,000, an estimated construction cost of $15,753,000 and a management and inspection cost of $1,423,000 for a total estimated project cost of $19,383,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0283-LA14
Congressional District: 34

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project for building system upgrades and the reconfiguration and alteration of space currently occupied by the U.S. District Courts in the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (Roybal FBCT). The proposed alterations will allow for the consolidation of court operations currently housed in the Roybal FBCT and in 312 North Spring Street (NSS).

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC and M&I).....$19,383,000

Major Work Items

Interior construction; demolition and abatement; HVAC, fire sprinkler, plumbing and electrical system adjustments.

Total Project Budget

Design	$2,207,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	15,753,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	1,423,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$19,383,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule	Start	End
Design	FY2014	FY2014
Construction	FY2014	FY2016

Building

The Roybal FBCT is located in the civic center of downtown Los Angeles, in proximity to the 300 N. Los Angeles Federal Office Building (300 NLA), the new Los Angeles Courthouse (LACT), 312 North Spring Street (312 NSS), the Los Angeles City Hall, the County Courts Buildings and the Metropolitan Detention Center. The Roybal FBCT occupies 3.68 acres of an 8.08 acre parcel shared with 300 NLA. The two buildings share a common mechanical plant. The building is a Class A stand-alone structure occupied primarily by the U.S. District Courts, court-related agencies, and the Drug Enforcement

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0283-LA14
Congressional District: 34

Agency (DEA). Constructed in 1993, the building is steel-frame construction with exterior granite cladding. The building has 22 stories, with three below-grade basement levels, including an underground parking facility. The building was named for Edward Roybal, a city councilman in Los Angeles in the 1950s and U.S. Congressman from 1963-1993.

Tenant Agencies

U.S. District Courts, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Marshal Service, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Office of US Attorneys and U.S. Tax Court.

Proposed Project

The project includes build out of ten chambers for Magistrate and Court of Appeals judges and construction of general office space for expansion of District Clerk, Pretrial Services and Probation. Upon project completion, the Roybal FBCT will house 9 senior judges, 17 magistrate judges and 14 bankruptcy judges. This project will allow the Court to consolidate in two locations (Roybal and the new LACT) and vacate 312 NSS to position it for exchange. Build out of chambers and usage of courtrooms will be consistent with the Court's policies on sharing.

Major Work Items

Demolition and Abatement	$1,785,000
Repair HVAC	2,266,000
Interior Construction	8,692,000
Repair Electrical System	2,758,000
Repair Plumbing	252,000
Total ECC	**$15,753,000**

Justification

When the new LACT is complete in 2016, the active District judges and a portion of the senior District judges and their support functions will be consolidated in the new LACT. The remaining court operations will be consolidated in the Roybal FBCT. The proposed Roybal FBCT alteration project provides only the minimum tenant improvements required for this consolidation. The Roybal FBCT alterations are also required so court functions currently located in 312 NSS can be relocated to Roybal FBCT. Once vacant, the 312 NSS property can be exchanged for a new federal office building (FOB) to be constructed on the LACT site consistent with the announcement made on December 10,

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0283-LA14
Congressional District: 34

2012. The Roybal FBCT alterations must occur concurrently with the completion of the new courthouse in 2016. This schedule requires design and construction appropriation in FY14 for alterations in Roybal FBCT.

Prior to the start of construction for this project, the Court will, at its expense, vacate sufficient space to construct ten new chambers and provide space for the consolidation of ancillary functions. The vacation of space will be accomplished through consolidation using advanced workplace strategies including optimizing their workplace, courtroom sharing, hoteling and teleworking.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

As this project is integral to the delivery of the new LACT and is tied into the proposal for 312 NSS, there are no feasible alternatives to this project.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0283-LA14
Congressional District: 34

Recommendation

ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED						Personnel Migration			10-Year Personnel Growth in office
	Personnel		Usable square Feet (USF) 1				Personnel 2		Usable square Feet (USF)							
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	From 312 NSS to Roybal	From Roybal to New LACH	From Roybal to 300 NLA	
EDWARD R. ROYBAL FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE																
U.S. Marshals Service	72	72	20,565	611	27,875	49,052	38	38	20,565	611	27,875	49,052	0	34	0	
Drug Enforcement Agency (IRS task group)	360	360	83,426	1,798	9,258	94,482	314	314	75,243	1,798	9,258	86,299	0	0	46	Reduction of 4
U. S. Attorneys	0	0	2,490	3,470	129	6,089	0	0	2,490	3,470	129	6,089				NA
Department of State	36	36	6,438	0	83	6,521	36	36	6,438	0	83	6,521				0
Department of Homeland Security Federal Protective Service	8	8	2,053	0	1,490	3,543	10	10	2,053	0	1,490	3,543				2
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	77	77	25,415	0	176	25,591	74	74	25,415	0	176	25,591				Reduction of 3
General Services Administration	2	2	1,029	0	0	1,029	2	2	1,029	0	0	1,029				0
U.S. Tax Court	0	0	1,886	0	5,374	7,260	0	0	1,886	0	5,374	7,260				NA
Public Defenders	0	0	387	0	0	387	0	0	387	0	0	387				NA
U.S. Bankruptcy Court - Courtrooms	33	66	25,093	766	67,467	93,326	33	66	14,783	2,830	48,244	65,857				0
U.S. Bankruptcy Clerk	121	121	57,708	2,589	11,521	71,818	189	189	34,699	5,391	20,769	60,858				-68
U.S. Circuit Court Library	4	4	11,190	0	0	11,190	4	4	0	250	3,529	3,779				0
U.S. District Court - Courtrooms/Chambers/Grand Jury	32	51	16,918	0	50,278	67,196	16	20	18,592	1,757	30,322	50,670	0	32		0
U.S. Magistrate Judges - Courtrooms/Chambers	18	24	12,039	0	31,390	43,429	51	68	18,750	2,900	56,940	78,590	33	0		0
U.S. District Court Clerk	39	39	10,333	4,012	5,900	20,245	144	144	16,924	18,264	2,833	38,021	105	0		20
Pretrial Services	10	13	3,472	0	133	3,605	60	63	13,052	797	1,298	15,147	34	0		0
Judicial Joint Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,161	4,161				0
Joint Use	0	0	3,992	0	0	3,992	0	0	0	0	14,813	14,813				0
Vacant	0	0	5,764	164	7,514	13,442	0	0	13,946	164	7,514	21,624				0
Sub Total:	812	873	290,198	13,410	218,588	522,197	971	1028	266,252	38,232	234,808	539,291				

Office Utilization Rate 3

	Current	Proposed
Building Judiciary Tenants	248	187
All Building Tenants (including Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	259	202

Total Building Utilization Rate 4

	Current	Proposed
Building Judiciary Tenants	720	607
All Building Tenants (including Judiciary, Congress, and agencies with less than 10 employees)	598	525

Special Space	USF
Secured Circulation	22,266
Private Toilets	14,172
ADP Room	672
Conference/Library	32,471
Food Service	19,593
Courtrooms	38,462
Judges Chambers	58,527
Jury Functions	18,215
Lab	1,001
Vault	5,772
Mail/Print Room	5,300
Childcare	2,769
Health Unit	332
Fitness Center	5,694
Secured Custodial	75
Equipment Room	227
Existing Firing Rang	2,045
Holding Cells	3,782
Secured Rooms	3,434
Total:	234,808

1 USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
2 Personnel totals in the proposed column include both actual migration of personnel as well as 10-year court projections.
3 Office Utilization Rate = total office space available for office personnel. UR calculation excludes office support space USF.
4 Total Building USF Rate = total building USF (office, storage, special) available for all building occupants (office and non-office personnel)

AMENDED COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, DALLAS, TX

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 229,000 rentable square feet of space, including 40 official parking spaces, for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency currently located at 1445 Ross Street in Dallas, Texas, at a proposed total annual cost of $6,412,000 for a lease term of up to 20 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution as amended by this resolution. This resolution amends the Committee resolution dated February 12, 2015, authorizing a lease with an overall utilization rate of 188 square feet or less per person.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 210 square feet or less per person, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the overall utilization rate cannot be achieved, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 210 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA15
Congressional District: 30

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 229,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently located at 1445 Ross Street, Dallas, Texas.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for EPA and will improve EPA's office and overall utilization rates from 153 to 102 usable square feet (USF) per person and 226 to 188 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the replacement lease will reduce the rentable square footage of the requirement by 12 percent, a 30,432 RSF reduction from EPA's current occupancy.

Description

Occupant:	EPA
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	259,432 (Current RSF/USF = 1.08)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	229,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.15)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	30,432 RSF reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	226
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	188
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	20 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	2/8/2017
Delineated Area:	The Central Business District bounded by: North - Woodall Rogers Freeway South - R.L. Thornton Freeway East - Central Expressway West – Stemmons Freeway
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	40
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$28.00 per RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$6,412,000
Current Total Annual Cost[3]:	$4,819,272(lease effective 2/09/1997)

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 2.0 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

[3] The current lease includes 13,215 rentable square feet of space that was vacated by EPA in 2010. The current total annual cost includes the rent associated with the vacancy. The entire lease is 272,647 rentable square feet.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA15
Congressional District: 30

Acquisition Strategy

In order to maximize the flexibility in acquiring space to house EPA, GSA may issue a single, multiple award solicitation that will allow offerors to provide blocks of space able to meet the requirements in whole or in part. All offers must provide space consistent with the delineated area defined by this prospectus.

Justification

EPA has developed a program of requirements for replacement space to house its Region 6 Headquarters in Dallas, Texas. The proposed requirements utilize new space standards developed to improve space efficiency and employee productivity and will reduce EPA's footprint by 30,432 RSF. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $7,264,096 per year.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
DALLAS, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-01-DA15
Congressional District: 30

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 29, 2014

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2014

Housing Plan
Environmental Protection Agency

PTX-01-DA15
Dallas, TX

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, TX	1,058	1,058	207,726	-	31,404	239,130						
Proposed Lease							1,058	1,058	137,785	1,810	59,144	198,739
Total	1,058	1,058	207,726	-	31,404	239,130	1,058	1,058	137,785	1,810	59,144	198,739

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	153	102

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 48,380 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 30,312 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	226	188

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	239,130	1.08	259,432
Proposed	198,739	1.15	229,000

Special Space	USF
Secured records	26,722
Conference	8,626
ADP	5,670
Mail/copy	5,429
Fitness	4,222
Food Service	3,258
Secured office	3,106
Library	1,086
Health unit	724
Secured storage	301
Total	59,144

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 635, the House stands adjourned until noon on Monday, March 14, 2016, for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

Thereupon (at 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 14, 2016, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4593. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Uniform Procurement Identification (DFARS Case 2015-D011) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0025] (RIN: 0750-AI54) received March 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4594. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's joint interim final rules — Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks [Docket No.: R-1531] (RIN: 7100-AE45] received March 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4595. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's Major interim final rule — Federal Reserve Bank Capital Stock [Regulation I; Docket No.: R-1533] (RIN: 7100-AE47) received March 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4596. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report entitled ''Report to Congress on the Social and Economic Conditions of Native Americans: Fiscal Year 2013'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2992-1; Public Law 88-452, Sec. 811A (as added by Public Law 102-375, Sec. 822(12)); (106 Stat. 1299); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4597. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report entitled ''2015 Annual Report to the Congress on the Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2991b-1(g)(1); Public Law 88-452, Sec. 803A (as amended by Public Law 102-375, Sec. 822(2)); (106 Stat. 1296); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4598. A letter from the PRAO Branch Chief, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC): Implementation of Electronic Benefit Transfer-Related Provisions (RIN: 0584-AE21) received March 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4599. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4600. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report entitled ''Annual Report to Congress on the Use of Mandatory Recall Authority'' for FY 2015, pursuant to Sec. 206(f) of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011, Public Law 111-353; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4601. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final order — Schedules of Controlled Substances: Extension of Temporary Placement of 10 Synthetic Cathinones in Schedule 1 of the Controlled Substances Act [Docket No.: DEA-386] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4602. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Exemption From Registration for Persons Authorized Under U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission or Agreement State Medical Use Licenses or Permits and Administering the Drug Product DaTscan [Docket No.: DEA-394F] (RIN: 1117-AB38) received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4603. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's report entitled ''Third Report to Congress: Highlights from the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Program'', as required by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 16134(a); Public Law 109-58, Sec. 794(a); (119 Stat. 843); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4604. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Base Year Emission Inventories for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0658; FRL-9943-46-Region 5] received March 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4605. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluopyram; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0443; FRL-9943-21] received March 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4606. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans: New Mexico; and Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Revisions to Establish Small Business Stationary Source Technical and Environmental Compliance Assistance Programs [EPA-R06-OAR-2014-0642; FRL-9943-43-Region 6] received March 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4607. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Promoting Diversification of Ownership in the Broadcasting Services [MB Docket No.: 07-294]; Review of Media Bureau Data Practices [MB Docket No.: 10-103]; Amendment of Part 1 of the Commission's Rules, Concerning Practice and Procedure, Amendment of CORES Registration System [MB Docket No.: 10-234] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4608. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014, and, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4609. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities that was declared in Executive Order 13694 of April 1, 2015, and, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4610. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency with respect to Iran, originally declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 114—115); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4611. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report covering the period from August 15, 2015, to October 13, 2015 on the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolutions, pursuant to Public Law 107-248, Sec. 8137; (116 Stat. 1569) and 50 U.S.C. 1541 note; Public Law 107-243, Sec. 4; (116 Stat. 1498); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4612. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of the Navy's proposed lease amendment, to the Government of Canada, Transmittal No. 03-16, pursuant to Sec. 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4613. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting reports of the Department's first quarter FY 2016 sales agreements developed in accordance with Secs. 36(a) and 26(b) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4614. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Export Control Reform: Conforming Change to Defense Sales Offset Reporting Requirements [Docket No.: 150825780-6125-02] (RIN: 0694-AG38) received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4615. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State,

transmitting the Department's report on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period of October 1, 2015 through November 30, 2015, pursuant to Sec. 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with Sec. 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4616. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-325, ''Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4617. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-323, ''Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools Salary and Benefits Approval Temporary Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4618. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-324, ''Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Temporary Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4619. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's 2016 Annual Performance Plan, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4620. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the FY 2015 Annual Performance Report and FY 2017 Annual Performance Plan, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1115(b); Public Law 111-352, Sec. 3; (124 Stat. 3867); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4621. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Technical Amendment [FAC 2005-87; Item II; Docket No.: 2016-0052; Sequence No.: 1] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4622. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's Small Entity Compliance Guide — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-87 [Docket No.: FAR 2016-0051, Sequence No.: 1] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4623. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's summary presentation of final rules — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-87; Introduction [Docket No.: FAR 2016-0051, Sequence No.: 1] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4624. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Information on Corporate Contractor Performance and Integrity [FAC 2005-87; FAR Case 2013-020; Item I; Docket 2013-0020, Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AM74) received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4625. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE419) received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4626. A letter from the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a copy of the decision of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit for the National Association of Manufacturers v. Securities and Exchange Commission, 800 F.3d 518 (D.C. Cir. 2015), pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 530D(a); Public Law 107-273, Sec. 202(a); (116 Stat. 1771); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4627. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility; Pennsylvania: Abington, Township of, Montgomery County; [Docket ID: FEMA-2015-0001] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8419] received March 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4628. A letter from the Director, Tax Issues, Strategic Issues Team, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the Office's report entitled ''List of Active and Completed Tax-Related Assignments as of December 31, 2015''; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4629. A letter from the Chief Privacy Officer, Privacy Office, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Privacy Office's 2015 Data Mining Report to Congress, as required by the Federal Agency Data Mining Reporting Act, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000ee-3(c)(1); Public Law 110-53, Sec. 804(c)(1); (121 Stat. 363); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

4630. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's FY 2015 report of the Federal Coordinated Health Care Office, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1315b(e); Public Law 111-148, Sec. 2602(e); (124 Stat. 316); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4631. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CCIIO, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2017 [CMS-9937-F] (RIN: 0938-AS57) received March 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. Supplemental report on H.R. 4596. A bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements (Rept. 114–444, Pt. 2).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1820. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to retire coal preference right lease applications for which the Secretary has made an affirmative commercial quantities determination, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–446). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2857. A bill to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–447). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3079. A bill to take certain Federal land located in Tuolumne County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–448). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself and Mr. BRADY of Texas):

H.R. 4721. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4722. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require inclusion of the taxpayer's social security number to claim the refundable portion of the child tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 4723. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the recovery of improper overpayments resulting from certain Federally subsidized health insurance; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 4724. A bill to repeal the program of block grants to States for social services; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PITTS:

H.R. 4725. A bill to reduce the Federal deficit through reforms in spending under Medicaid, CHIP, and the Prevention and Public Health Fund; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4726. A bill to prohibit the obligation of funds to pay the salary of the Secretary of Homeland Security until a biometric entry and exit data system has been fully implemented, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4727. A bill to require the Secretary of the Department of Energy to issue a report on fusion innovation; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 4728. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to expand the exception to the windfall elimination provision based on years of coverage; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

177. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Colorado, relative to the members of the General Assembly, recognizing the bravery and sacrifice of the crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SHUSTER:

H.R. 4721.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1, Clause 3, and Clause 18.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4722.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4723.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the United States Constitution, Section 8, Clause 1 (''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises . . .''), and from the 16th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 4724.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. PITTS:

H.R. 4725.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4726.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, requires Congress to provide for the common defense and the general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4727.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 4728.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 605: Mr. KILMER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 611: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 721: Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 746: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 923: Mr. BUCSHON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 1578: Mr. JORDAN.

H.R. 1625: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 2144: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 2237: Mr. HONDA and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2737: Mr. OLSON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 2817: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2894: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3071: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 3394: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 3559: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3846: Mr. ASHFORD and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 4055: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 4160: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 4266: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4336: Mr. WALZ, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. POSEY, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 4438: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4522: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4626: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. HUELSKAMP, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. BARTON, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. FLEMING.

H. Res. 112: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H. Res. 220: Ms. NORTON and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H. Res. 343: Mr. KENNEDY.

H. Res. 584: Mr. ELLISON.

H. Res. 617: Mr. GOHMERT.

H. Res. 637: Ms. BROWN of Florida and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

49. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Bannock County Commissioners, Idaho, relative to asking Congress to work together, urging a long-term sustainable solution to fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program and eliminate the uncertainty communities face with ongoing funding issues; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING JUDGE CYNTHIA RUFE ON WINNING THE 2016 BUCKS CO. WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AWARD

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, U.S. District Court Judge Cynthia M. Rufe is the recipient of the 2016 Bucks County Women's History Month Award, presented annually to distinguished women whose professional and civic achievements have ''made a difference.''

Her career began as a high school teacher, later an attorney, leader and mentor. Judge Rufe was a member of the panel that established a county-wide system to provide free legal representation to civil litigants and also worked with the Bucks County district attorney's office to establish safe protocols for women and child abuse victims. Prior to her appointment to the federal bench, Judge Rufe served with honor and distinction in the Court of Common Pleas of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. I had the great pleasure of working with Judge Rufe on issues of mutual concern during my years as a County Commissioner in Doylestown.

Judge Rufe continues to advocate for legal education and mentors law students and new attorneys and regularly presents legal and ethics courses to state and local bar associations. Additionally, she serves as a faculty member of the TIPS Trial Academy. As the granddaughter of immigrants, Judge Rufe takes great pride in her frequent role in naturalization ceremonies, welcoming new American citizens with sincere and inspiring words.

The Women's History Month Award presented to Judge Rufe is one page in the story of generations of women whose belief in equality and justice motivated them to make a difference in society, ultimately affecting the lives of subsequent generations. Judge Rufe exemplifies a belief in our nation's inherent values, including the rule of law and justice and, in so doing, has set an example for women who may choose to follow in her footsteps.

FEMA DISASTER ASSISTANCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for H.R. 1471, the ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015.''

The Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA), which was signed into law in 1979 by President Carter, provides support to improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards.

Under the Clinton Administration FEMA became the premier emergency response organization in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we all remember the disastrous response to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana and the management mistakes that cost so many innocent Americans their lives.

Since that time FEMA has vastly improved its organization and response protocols to disasters throughout the country.

An example is FEMA's response to the 2015 historic floods in of Houston, Texas, which helped saved countless lives.

H.R. 1471 reauthorizes FEMA through Fiscal Year 2018 authorizes millions per year up to $947 million in annual appropriations, and authorizes the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

This legislation also contains several provisions intended to reduce future losses from disasters and to improve the recovery process for victims and affected communities.

In addition the bill provides for a study of disaster costs and why they have continued to increase and gives greater weight to severe localized impact and adjusts disaster relief policies to reflect this change.

To protect families and individuals H.R. 1471 prohibits FEMA from initiating new action to recover disaster assistance payments made to an individual or household more than three years after the payments were made, or to recover emergency assistance funds owed by an individual or household more than three years after the funds were determined to be owed.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1471, ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015'' provides many changes that will allow this vital agency to operate effectively and respond quickly to the areas in this country where its services are needed most.

HONORING THE NATIONAL CHAMPION NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL PROGRAM

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to congratulate the Northwest Missouri State University Football Program on their ninth appearance and fifth title in the NCAA Division II National Championship. It isn't every day that a team from the 6th District of Missouri wins a National Championship, but thanks to the Northwest Bearcats it is starting to become a tradition.

On December 19, 2015, the Northwest Bearcats took on the Shepard University Rams in a game at Children's Mercy Park in Kansas City, Kansas. Although the competition was undeniably tough, I never doubted the ability of our team. So when Representative Alex Mooney of West Virginia challenged me to a wager over the game—I gladly accepted. As all of Missouri cheered, the Bearcat football team, under the leadership and direction of Head Coach Adam Dorrel, defeated the Rams 34–7 and sealed their place in sports history as one of only two NCAA Division II teams to win five National Championship titles.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the accomplishments of the Northwest Missouri Football Team for their tremendous undefeated season and title.

CONGRATULATING CAPTAIN THOMAS ROCHE

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Captain Thomas M. Roche on the occasion of his retirement from the Lower Makefield Township Police Department. Throughout his 42-year career in the township, Capt. Roche distinguished himself with his contributions, service and responsibilities, including oversight of the police department's internal affairs investigations, traffic safety unit, events and planning and as deputy emergency management coordinator. Furthermore, his supervisors recognized the key role he played in the Lower Makefield department's award and designation in the Pennsylvania Accreditation program. Prior to joining the department, Capt. Roche was a proud member of the United States Army in Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam and also as a member of the military police, stationed at several Army bases in the U.S. He is a decorated veteran and a dedicated member of the law enforcement community, Capt. Roche has set a fine example of public service for others to follow and begins his retirement with the appreciation of the citizens he willingly served.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILLIAM FENTON HOWE FAMILY IN PORT ORCHARD, WASHINGTON

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the William Fenton Howe family for their

contributions to the history of the Pacific Northwest and to recognize their 125th anniversary of calling the city of Port Orchard, Washington, home.

In 1888 the William Fenton Howe family migrated from Altoona, Pennsylvania, to Tacoma in what was then the Washington Territory.

On March 6, 1891, William Fenton Howe moved his family to the town of Sidney, now known as Port Orchard, on the shores of the Sinclair Inlet of Puget Sound. The family, which consisted of his wife Emma and children Harry, William, Edwin, Roy, and Edith, moved into the house located at 307 Cline Street, which remains standing today.

At the time of the Howe family's arrival, Sidney was becoming known for its lumber industry, pottery works, small business, and agricultural opportunities. In 1890, Sidney became the first town in Kitsap County to incorporate and was chosen as the county seat, and later renamed Port Orchard. The Howe family was a leader in the business community and contributed to the town's growth by establishing Howe Hardware, the first hardware store in the community.

In 1895 the Howe family suffered a devastating year with the death of Emma Howe and a fire at Howe Hardware. After the losses, William Fenton Howe left his children with various families in the community and headed north to Alaska to pursue opportunities to provide for them.

William Fenton Howe, a savvy businessman, set out to make his mark in Alaska's booming mining industry. Not only did Mr. Howe know how to manage a hardware store, but he was also a skilled tinsmith and built stoves for the miners while they looked for gold. One of his sons, Edwin Scott Howe, joined in the pursuit of ''mining the miner'' as they built stoves that prevented the miners from facing certain death in the Arctic wilderness of Nome, Alaska.

In Port Orchard, William Fenton Howe's children continued their father's legacy in the business community. After the death of William Fenton Howe, sons Edwin and Harry opened Howe Brothers Hardware as partners. The family also owned and operated Howe Oil Company and Howe Motor Company, a Ford dealership still in operation after 103 years. Deeply embedded in the community, members of the Howe family served on town council, were engaged in civic organizations, and rallied the community to bring electric power to Port Orchard and the Washington Veterans Home Retsil to Kitsap County.

Mr. Speaker, the Howe family has a long lineage of public service in the business community as well as in local government and local organizations. In 2013, the Howe family was one of five families to be recognized for their contributions to Port Orchard and the surrounding area by the Kitsap County Historical Society. I am honored to recognize the Howe family's contributions to the community of Port Orchard and recognize their 125th anniversary on this past Sunday, March 6, 2016.

NANCY DAVIS REAGAN: TIRELESS ADVOCATE FOR DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH AND FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Nancy Davis Reagan, the former First Lady of the United States, who died on March 6, 2016 at her home in California at the age of 94.

Born July 6, 1921, in New York, New York, Nancy Davis Reagan was the only child of Kenneth Robbins, a salesman, and Edith Luckett Robbins, an actress.

In 1929, Edith Luckett Robbins married a prominent Chicago neurosurgeon, Loyal Davis, who adopted young Nancy in 1931.

Nancy Davis studied drama at Smith College where she earned a baccalaureate degree in 1943.

After college, Nancy Davis followed her dreams to pursue a career in acting.

Her first role was a nonspeaking part in the touring company production of Ramshackle Inn.

The play eventually made it to Broadway in New York City, where Nancy Davis landed a minor role in the 1946 musical Lute Song, starring Yul Brynner and Mary Martin.

In 1949, Nancy Davis noticed that her name was listed on the Hollywood blacklist, which was established by the film industry to warn studios and producers of individuals suspected of being communist sympathizers.

This case of mistaken identity resulted in Nancy Davis meeting the love of her life and husband, Ronald Reagan, who at that time was the president of the Screen Actors Guild.

They were married on March 4, 1952, and within a few years daughter Patty and son Ronald were born, joining Maureen and Michael, Ronald Reagan's children by a prior marriage.

Nancy Reagan became California's first lady in 1967, when her husband was elected to Governor of California.

In 1980, Nancy Reagan became the First Lady of the United States when her husband was elected the 40th President of the United States.

As First lady she championed the ''Just Say No'' campaign to help dissuade youth from using and abusing drugs.

Nancy Reagan worked tirelessly to retrieve a number of White House antiques, which had been in storage, and placed them throughout the Executive Mansion.

During the Reagan Administration, Nancy Reagan was known most importantly as the president's personal protector.

After her husband's term was completed Nancy established the Nancy Reagan Foundation to support after-school drug prevention programs.

Nancy Reagan and President Ronald Reagan retired to the ''Reagan Ranch'' in Santa Barbara where they devoted much of their time to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

After President Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 1994, the couple founded the Ronald and Nancy Reagan Research Institute, located in Chicago, Illinois.

As Ronald Reagan's disease progressed, Nancy became the primary caregiver for her husband.

After President Ronald Reagan's death in 2004, Nancy Reagan became a supporter of stem-cell research.

Nancy Reagan was a true symbol of American elegance during her time as First Lady of the United States and a tireless advocate for those Americans who suffer from Alzheimer's Disease.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to take a moment of silence in remembrance of this extraordinary woman who transcended political lines.

HONORING PERCY CONWAY AND THE HI-STYLING BEAUTY CENTER ON 50 YEARS OF SUCCESS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2016

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Percy Conway who is celebrating 50 years as owner of Conway's Hi-Styling Beauty Center in Fairmont, Illinois.

Mr. Conway has been barbering since he was ten years old on his father's porch in Canton, Mississippi. Looking for work he moved to Illinois in 1950 and settled in Fairmont, an unincorporated area between Lockport and Joliet. He got a job at Mastic Tile Company in Joliet, but was called to serve his country in the Korean War.

After his return from the Army, he saw a need for jobs and services in Fairmont so he decided to become an entrepreneur and opened the Hi-Styling Beauty Center. When he opened his shop, roads in Fairmont barely existed and some areas had no water service. While serving his customers, he frequently listened to their concerns with the state of the community.

Rather than confine himself to his barbershop. Mr. Conway saw an opportunity to help his community. He was elected to the Lockport Township Board of Trustees where he served for twenty years.

While on the Board of Trustees he worked to secure a $1.3 million loan from the federal government to install sewer and water services. This work opened the door to new improvements to the area including paved roads and small business opportunities.

Through his work, Fairmont has changed into the diverse community it is today. Percy Conway can still be found most days at Hi-Styling Beauty Center, imparting his wisdom. He also serves on the boards of several nonprofits and remains involved at Shiloh Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Percy Conway for all he has done for his community and to congratulate him on 50 years of business success.

SENATE—*Monday, March 14, 2016*

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God only wise, great is Your faithfulness.

Inspire our lawmakers to focus on Your priorities, striving to do Your will on Earth even as it is done in Heaven. During moments of confusion, help them to whisper a prayer for Your wisdom. Remind them that You desire that they set their affection on the things above that will live beyond time into eternity. May they not forget that You expect them to be accountable to You and to be stewards of their talents and abilities. Lord, fill them with Your Spirit so that they will mount up with wings like eagles, running without weariness and walking without fainting.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

WORKING TOGETHER IN THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, last week the Senate took decisive action to address America's devastating prescription opioid and heroin epidemic by passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is an important accomplishment for the American people. It is the latest example of a Republican Senate leading on important issues. It also reminds us what can be accomplished when Senators focus on issues where they can agree rather than only fighting about issues where they don't agree.

It is clear that Democrats and Republicans do not agree on whether the American people should have a voice in the current Supreme Court vacancy. Republicans know the American people elected a Republican Senate to be a check-and-balance to President Obama. We know the next Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court for decades. We think the American people deserve a voice in that conversation. Democrats would rather the President make this incredibly consequential decision on his way out the door. This is one issue where we simply don't agree, so let's keep our focus on the areas where we can find agreement instead.

I ask colleagues to join us in continuing to do our work here in the Senate. As we do that, the American people can continue making their voices heard in this important national conversation. Passing CARA was a great example of what we can get done when we work constructively toward solutions.

This week we will have the opportunity to make progress on other issues, including one I would like to mention now.

Vermont recently passed food-labeling legislation that according to one study could increase annual food costs by more than $1,000 per family. These aren't just Vermont families I am talking about; these are families all across our country.

The Senate will soon consider commonsense, bipartisan legislation that aims to ensure that decisions in one State or a patchwork of different State laws do not hurt American families throughout our country—especially at a time when so many are already struggling to make ends meet. The goal is to set clear, science-based standards in order to prevent families from being unfairly hurt by a patchwork of conflicting local and State labeling laws passed in States and cities where they don't even live.

I would like to recognize the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Senator ROBERTS, for his continuing work on this issue. The Agriculture Committee moved to pass the chairman's mark last week with bipartisan support. I know Chairman ROBERT continues to work with Senator STABENOW, the ranking member, and others across the aisle on a pathway forward on legislation we can pass in the Senate to resolve this issue. I urge Members to continue working with him in that endeavor.

Let's not forget that this may well be our last chance to prevent the actions of one State—just one State—from hurting Americans in all the other States. Legislation to address this issue passed the House last summer with bipartisan support. With cooperation from across the aisle, we can take action on a bipartisan basis here on the Senate floor as well.

COAL FAMILIES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, when President Obama was a candidate, he boasted that his energy tax policies would make electricity prices skyrocket for American families. When President Obama took office, his administration declared a war on coal families and on their jobs. For a time, his administration tried to deny it was declaring war on anyone, but now we hear boasting from the highest ranks of the Democratic Party that these policies are going to put coal miners out of business.

Miners in Kentucky and across the country know that coal keeps the lights on and puts food on the table. What they want is to provide for their families. But here is how more Democrats seem to view these hard-working Americans and their families: just statistics, just the cost of doing business, just obstacles to their ideology. This is callous, it is wrong, and it underlines the need to stand up for hard-working, middle-class coal families. That is what I have done here in the Senate. That is what I will continue to do. I hope our colleagues will join me.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. REID. Madam President, GMO, genetically modified food—that is basically what it is. What we want is to make sure consumers know what is in their food. They deserve clear standards. They require the disclosure of what is in their food, not a voluntary standard that Senator ROBERTS is talking about bringing out of the committee. All that does is leave consumers in the dark, and that is the wrong way to go.

COAL MINER PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I understand the Republican leader's concern about coal not being the way it was. It is simply that the American people have made a decision that we are going to have to look for another way to produce energy. There is still a place for coal in our society, but everyone

has to acknowledge that it is not as it was a few years ago.

I wish the Republican leader cared more about moving to help the pensions of these coal miners. They are desperately looking for support. We support them on this side. All the coal miners support it. We can get no support from the Republicans. We tried during the work we did at the end of the year. We came close, but Republicans said no.

I want all those coal miners from Kentucky and around the country to understand that we are trying to help them with their pensions, but unless we get some help from the Republicans, there will be no support. That is too bad. We are trying. We are trying. We are trying.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, Senate Republicans have finally admitted that their obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee has nothing to do with precedent, it has nothing to do with history, it has nothing to do with the Constitution, but it has everything to do with partisan politics.

Last Thursday, Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee forced Chairman GRASSLEY and the committee Republicans to debate the Supreme Court vacancy during a markup. Remember, this is the same markup the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, canceled a week earlier because he and Republicans didn't want to make the meeting open to the public. He tried to have a secret meeting; Democrats wouldn't agree.

On last Thursday when they finally had a meeting, the senior Senator from South Carolina, a Republican, said:

> We are setting a precedent here today, Republicans are, that in the last year at least of a lame duck eight-year term—I would say it's going to be a four-year term—that you're not going to fill a vacancy of the Supreme Court based on what we're doing here today. We're headed to changing the rules, probably in a permanent fashion.

I applaud Senator GRAHAM's forthrightness in admitting what his Republican colleagues refuse to admit: Their obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee is unprecedented. The senior Senator from South Carolina said that, and that is what I have been saying.

So the question then remains, if denying President Obama's nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote has nothing to do with Senate precedent, then what is this all about? Fortunately, last Thursday also yielded an answer to that question. During an interview with a Wisconsin radio station, the Republican Senator from Wisconsin, Senator RON JOHNSON, was asked if he would treat a Supreme Court nominee from a Republican President differently. He answered:

> Generally, and this is the way it works out politically . . . if a conservative president's replacing a conservative justice, there's a little more accommodation to it.

The Senator from Wisconsin admitted that he and his colleagues would accommodate the Supreme Court nomination from a Republican President. So Senate Republicans are talking out of both sides of their mouths. Republicans claim they are simply adhering to precedent, even as they admit they are permanently changing the way the Senate treats Supreme Court nominees.

Republicans claim they want to give the American people a voice. That is what elections are all about. President Obama's reelection was the American people's voice.

Republicans claim—I repeat—they want to give the American people a voice and wait until after a new President is sworn in, even while admitting they would consider a Republican President's nominee right now. It doesn't make sense. It is illogical. It is unfair.

The American people do not accept this duplicitous posturing. They don't accept it as a rationalization for why Republicans won't do their jobs.

Over the weekend, the editorial board of Iowa City Press-Citizen—the Presiding Officer's home State—made clear what they want Senator GRASSLEY and Senate Republicans to do: They want Republicans to follow the Constitution.

> Partisan posturing to score points at the expense of Constitutional process doesn't change character based on the letter next to a lawmaker's name. . . . Currently, a Democrat is in the White House as this pitched battle is fought, but were the roles reversed, we would not alter our position. If, down the line, a Supreme Court Justice retired or died in a presidential election year with a Republican in power, we would similarly urge a fair hearing for that president's nominee.

The Senate's constitutional duty transcends partisan bickering. The people of Iowa and America don't want a Senate that treats its constitutional duties differently based on who is in the White House. They want a Senate that does its job. They want Republicans to do their jobs.

So I say to my Republican colleagues, enough with the hollow excuses and groundless rationalizations. Do your jobs and give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote.

Madam President, there is another aspect of this Supreme Court fight we must address. Already, as we know, Republicans are resorting to what they call piñata politics. That is what Senator CORNYN promised. Radical conservative groups are starting to run smear campaigns targeting President Obama's potential Supreme Court nominees. One of those potential nominees is from Iowa.

One such ad from the Judicial Crisis Network, a dark money, rightwing political organization that operates in total secrecy—not knowing where its money comes from; probably the Koch brothers because they fund most everything else—is especially appalling. The ad takes aim at an Iowan serving on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Jane Kelly. The accusations leveled against Judge Kelly are despicable, and they deserve to be answered by her home State Senator—I should say Senators.

Senator GRASSLEY is on record as having strongly supported Judge Kelly's confirmation to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. It was he who came to the floor in 2013 and read from a letter stating that Judge Kelly is ''a forthright woman of high integrity and honest character . . . and exceptionally keen intellect.'' It was Senator GRASSLEY who told his colleagues at about the same time: ''I am pleased to support her confirmation and urge my colleagues to join me.'' And Senator GRASSLEY's Judicial Committee, of which he was a senior member, even helped vet Judge Kelly's record before endorsing her confirmation to the bench.

If there was something wrong with her judicial nomination, he certainly didn't find it. Yet Senator GRASSLEY has been silent in the wake of these recent smears against Judge Kelly. I know the senior Senator from Iowa has been busy listening to what the Republican leader's line is on the Supreme Court vacancy, but this disgusting rightwing attack from Republicans to a fellow Iowan—a judge he enthusiastically supported—demands a response.

Senator GRASSLEY needs to tell the people of Iowa whether he supports the smear campaign that his own Republicans are hurling at Judge Jane Kelly. Does he support the smear campaign? That is a question that needs to be answered, especially since the Judicial Crisis Network—this rightwing, secretly funded by dark money—has been in lockstep with Senator GRASSLEY's obstruction and even praising him while at the same time smearing Judge Kelly.

If he doesn't go on record, he needs to do something. I can't imagine why he wouldn't go on record denouncing this type of disgusting rhetoric. I look forward to the senior Senator from Iowa setting the record straight on his fellow Iowan and a judge whom he personally endorsed.

Madam President, there is no one on the floor. Will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise today to speak about something that guides the work of each and every one of us—the U.S. Constitution. Each and every one of us has taken an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We all solemnly swear that we will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution and that we will faithfully discharge the duties of our office. Have some of the Senate Republicans forgotten this?

Last week a colleague was asked in a radio interview on a Wisconsin radio station if Republicans would be more likely to advance a Supreme Court nomination had a Republican been elected President in 2012. He said: ''Generally, and this is the way it works out politically, if you're replacing—if a conservative president's replacing a conservative justice, there's a little more accommodation to it.'' Do Senate Republicans really believe that they need a Republican President simply to do their jobs?

I would like to remind my colleagues that President Obama was elected to a 4-year term in 2012 with over 65 million votes. The American people decided who our President is, and according to the Constitution, the term the President earned has more than 300 days remaining. The voices of those 65 million Americans need to be heard and respected despite how much some people want to silence them, disrespect them, and ignore them.

On Supreme Court vacancies, the Constitution is also clear. Under article II of the Constitution, the President shall appoint judges to the Supreme Court and the Senate's role is to provide advice and consent. It is the constitutional duty of the President to select a Supreme Court nominee, and the Senate has the responsibility to give that nominee fair consideration with a timely hearing and a timely vote.

It is deeply troubling to me and the people for whom I work in Wisconsin that the Republican majority would choose not to fulfill their constitutional duty. Before the President has even made a nomination to fill the current vacancy, a number of Senators have announced that they will not perform their constitutional duty. This not only runs contrary to the process that the Framers envisioned in article II, but it runs counter to our Nation's history.

Now, some of my colleagues have claimed that the Senate history supports their historic obstruction. This is simply false. In fact, six Justices have been confirmed in Presidential election years since 1900, including Louis Brandeis, Benjamin Cardozo, and Republican appointee Anthony Kennedy, who was confirmed by a Democratic-controlled Senate during President Ronald Reagan's last year in office.

Recently, one of my colleagues on the other side suggested that the nomination and confirmation process for a Supreme Court Justice—perhaps just this impending Supreme Court nomination—would be nothing more than playing pinata. I would like to point out that when playing pinata, children are typically blindfolded, spun around in circles, and then they take a whack at the pinata with either a bat or stick. It is as if my Republican colleagues have become dizzied by what they are hearing around them—perhaps Donald Trump's divisive rhetoric.

Do they see a Supreme Court nominee as nothing more than something to whack over and over, like a pinata? The violence of the metaphor is problematic. Have they lost faith and allegiance in their constitutional duties?

Today, the American people deserve a full and functioning Supreme Court, not an empty seat on the highest Court in the land. The American people cannot afford partisan obstruction that threatens the integrity of our democracy and the functioning of our constitutional government.

In my home State of Wisconsin, people get it. A recent poll there done by Marquette University showed a majority of the people believe that the Senate should hold hearings and a vote on a nominee this year. A majority of Wisconsinites also said they believe that leaving this seat on our highest Court vacant for more than a year will hurt the U.S. Supreme Court's ability to do its job. They are right, and their message to Washington and the Republican majority is simple: Do your job so the Supreme Court can do its job on behalf of all of the American people. The American people deserve better than a long-term vacancy that could jeopardize the administration of justice across our whole country.

So I call on my colleagues to join together on behalf of the American people to fulfill our constitutional obligation of restoring the U.S. Supreme Court to its full strength.

In the spirit of cooperation, in the spirit of bipartisanship, I call on Senate Republicans to end their partisan obstruction and do their jobs.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRAGEDY IN KANSAS AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I wish to address the Senate in regard to a terrible tragedy that has occurred in our State. I start with the premise that our immigration system is terribly broken and the consequences of flawed immigration policies exhibit themselves across our society. It is hard to understand why nothing has been done to address certain obviously dangerous vulnerabilities and specific problems that put American lives at risk.

Sanctuary city policies and indifference about prosecution of illegal immigrants arrested for dangerous crimes and the tolerance of bureaucratic redtape by the administration all contribute to a dangerous degrading of the criminal justice system. The failure to address illegal immigration at all levels of government has been accounted for in lost lives.

Sometimes a government failure is just annoying. Sometimes it is deadly. Decades of broken immigration policy contributed to the situation that led to the murder of four people in Kansas and another in Missouri. The victims are Michael Capps, 41 years old, Jake Waters, 36 years old, Clint Harter, 27 years old, and Austin Harter, 29 years old, all of Kansas City, KS, and Randy Nordman, 49 years old, of New Florence, MO. The man suspected of taking these lives is an illegal immigrant—a man who has unlawfully entered the United States three times. He has been arrested over and over. He has repeatedly demonstrated that he is a serious threat. Yet, despite these red flags, the system failed, and this man was free and able to commit these barbaric acts.

The extent of the systemic breakdown in this case is sickening. How criminal suspects unlawfully in the country are processed is a failure. The policies are terribly ineffective. In the current system, justice is delayed by bureaucracy or obstructed, in some cases, amazingly, by design. A broken system—some people prefer it that way and work to make it so. Others simply permit it to persist. Regardless, this has resulted in horrific crimes.

Sanctuary city policies and the laws that enable them must be fixed before the unnecessary loss of innocent life happens again. Failure to do so only allows more crimes like these murders and the spree of criminal behavior that preceded them.

Congress needs to act now. The President needs to act now. The Department of Homeland Security needs to act now. Local governments and law enforcement agencies need to act now.

The Senate's attempt to do just that has been stymied, but we must not give up on an effort to secure our Nation and protect Americans from harm. Failure to address these problems will only make the problems worse and will make them more difficult to solve later. Continuing the status quo means empowering career offenders, incentivizing law-evading behavior, impeding the prosecution of crime, and releasing dangerous and habitually unlawful individuals who have no place in our communities.

The victims of crime like last week's horrors in Kansas City have been failed by their communities and by their political leaders. Americans and our communities will continue to pay the price for the failure of our immigration system and the refusal of policymakers to work together to fix it.

Americans and their families will continue to pay—hopefully not again in the loss of life, but how can we guarantee that? We must act quickly. We must act now to correct these immediate problems, improve our Nation's broken immigration policies and laws, and stop the terrible consequences.

The loss of life is a terrible thing, and probably in this circumstance had no reason to happen, would not have happened if jobs had been done.

Kansans, Kansas families, Americans, American families deserve much, much better. These victims and their families—we honor them today, we offer our condolences and provide our sympathies—but these individuals and their families deserved better.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

NOMINATION OF JOHN KING

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I rise to speak on the nomination of John King to be Secretary of Education.

Dr. King has impressive credentials and an inspiring personal story. I have had the opportunity to meet with him and discuss his leadership and his view of the law.

I shared with Dr. King that in the view of many legal experts and school officials across the country, the Department of Education has been bullying schools to comply with policies that simply do not have the force of law. This coercive use of power, however well intentioned, is wrong and it is unlawful.

Leadership requires making sure that those serving within the Department conduct themselves in full compliance with the law.

I have an obligation to the people of Oklahoma to ensure that the President's nominees adhere to the law. Regrettably, Dr. King has refused to commit to stopping these regulatory abuses if he were confirmed. For that reason, I will oppose his nomination today.

For far too long we have witnessed executive overreach in this administration. From the Clean Power Plan to waters of the United States, Federal departments and agencies have usurped the power to invent law with increasing boldness. The Department of Education overreach is similar in this kind.

Instead of promulgating rules that conflict with congressional intent, the Department of Education is skirting the rulemaking process altogether by issuing guidance documents they call Dear Colleague letters. Guidance documents cannot and do not have the force of law. Guidance documents may only interpret existing obligations found in statute or regulation.

Some agencies complain that the rulemaking process is too long and it requires too much public input, so it is easier just to say that the new rule simply interprets an existing rule, and then skip the compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act that is required for a new rule. It is complete irony that agencies see regulatory compliance as too burdensome, so they impose new regulatory guidance on States, local governments, tribes, and private institutions at a faster pace, and those institutions have no way to fight the rules—only comply.

Let me give an example from the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. They have a great responsibility to promote our shared American values of equal opportunity, ensuring gender equality, and to work with federally funded schools to prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence. As the father of two daughters, I fully support the objectives of Title IX and condemn all forms of sexual discrimination.

But the Office of Civil Rights enforcement authority comes from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 bill, and those Office of Civil Rights Dear Colleague letters that are now being put out there supposedly notify schools of their obligations under Title IX.

Two of the Office of Civil Rights Dear Colleagues letters significantly expand school liability by prescribing policies required neither by Title IX nor by OCR's regulations. I am particularly concerned with OCR's 2010 Dear Colleague letter on harassment and bullying and a 2011 letter on sexual violence.

These letters respectively prohibit conduct and require procedures not required by law. For example, the 2010 letter says that making sexual jokes or distributing sexually explicit pictures or creating emails or Web sites of a sexual nature can be actionable under Title IX. Well, regardless of what one personally thinks about abhorrent things like what I have just described, the First Amendment protects all forms of speech, and no part of our Federal Government can dictate what is said and not allowed to be said on a university campus. The 2010 letter leaves schools to wonder whether they should police certain speech on their campus or fear a Title IX investigation.

The 2011 letter requires schools to change their Title IX disciplinary procedures to require what is called a preponderance-of-the-evidence standard of proof. This means that the decisionmaker is 51 percent sure a student committed an act of sexual assault or sexual violence. But the Office of Civil Rights doesn't require many due process protections for the accused that he or she would enjoy being provided in a court of law.

The Office of Civil Rights said it was merely interpreting the ''equitable resolution'' standard that is in the law. So it changed, creating a new standard and saying it is just interpreting some equitable standard that is in the law—a standard that no other administration has ever applied.

If these policies had been subjected to notice-and-comment rulemaking, I wouldn't be standing here today. When agencies follow the law, notice and comment allows for public input and leads to better regulatory outcomes.

But universities never got that chance. So on January 7, 2016, I asked the Department of Education a simple question: From where in the text do you derive this new authority? Where is it in the law that you created this new policy? Because the Department of Education can't create a new law; they can simply promulgate rules from existing law. That is a pretty basic question: Where did it come from in the law?

Unfortunately, the Department of Education did not answer my question. They sent me a letter back, but in their response they insisted that they have the authority to issue guidance under Title IX and cited general abilities in the statute. They also cited prior guidance documents, which are also not legal documents. You can't make a new guidance off of old guidance documents.

So on March 24, 2016, I replied back to them, pointing out that the 2010 and 2011 letters did, in fact, create new policy. In my reply, I also expressed concern over the reliance by the Office of Civil Rights on letters of findings to support their policy requiring the preponderance-of-the-evidence standard. But these letters are not binding on other schools, either. In fact, they show that the Office for Civil Rights looks to and has enforced these policies enumerated only in ''Dear Colleague'' letters across the country.

Legal scholars at Harvard Law and Penn Law have argued that the Office for Civil Rights' sexual harassment policy was ''inconsistent with the most

basic principles we teach.'' Title IX was not written and has never been said to imperil these ''basic principles,'' as the professors pointed out, which include free speech, due process, and adherence to good administrative procedures. To me, this is evidence that the ''Dear Colleague'' letters changed the application of title IX and its regulatory landscape in fundamental ways. These policy changes should be subject to rulemaking process, not just inventing new guidelines.

Other prominent voices have also stated their concerns with the substance of and the manner in which the guidance documents were issued. Take, for example, the director of the civil liberties-minded Foundation for Individual Rights and Education, known as FIRE, who stated that ''OCR has consistently avoided giving real answers to questions about its power to issue regulations outside the bounds of the law. It cannot avoid accountability forever.''

An analysis from Inside Higher Ed, a respected news outlet for the postsecondary education community, stated:

Last week, the Department clarified in a letter . . . that the Dear Colleague letter acts only as a guidance for college and does not ''carry the force of law.'' But many college presidents and lawyers argue that the Department's Office for Civil Rights treats the guidance far more than as a series of recommendations. Instead, they say, OCR uses the letter to determine which colleges are in violation of Title IX and to threaten the federal funding of those that don't follow every suggestion. Some Department officials have recently said there are clear ''musts'' and clear ''shoulds'' in the guidance, though colleges say the Office for Civil Rights does not seem to clearly differentiate between the two. Attempts to clarify which parts of the letter should be read as hard regulations and which should be considered recommendations have only led to more confusion and frustration.

That from this well-respected entity.

The publication also quotes Terry Hartle of the American Council on Education saying that ''the department's political leadership can say or write whatever they want, but where the rubber meets the road is where the Office for Civil Rights shows up to investigate cases on campus, and in those cases they consistently treat every single word of the guidance as an absolute mandate.''

Kent Talbert, a lawyer who served as general counsel at the Department of Education from 2006 until 2009, went on the record to say that the response to my letter that I got back from Dr. King and from the Department of Education ''glosses over'' concerns regarding whether the Department circumvented notice-and-comment rulemaking.

Hans Bader, another former attorney in the Office for Civil Rights, characterized OCR's response as a ''question-begging rationalization'' that did not ''address the criticisms . . . made by many lawyers and law professors.'' Mr. Bader went on to say that ''the 2011 Dear Colleague letter that was the subject of Senator LANKFORD's questions is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the Education Department imposing new legal rules out of thin air, without codifying them in the Code of Federal Regulations, or complying with the notice-and-comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act.''

Commentator George Will penned an op-ed on the same issue as my letter, and he said that when the Department argues ''its 'guidance' letters do not have the force of law—it's a distinction without a difference.''

Last week in my conversations with Dr. King about the Department of Education's practice of issuing guidance in lieu of rulemaking as required by law, he stated that if a school has a problem, they can challenge the Department in court, basically saying: If the schools have a problem with our guidance, they can sue us.

Were the Office for Civil Rights to take adverse action against a school for failure to comply with the guidance documents and if that school fought back in court, I believe that school would prevail. In fact, the legislative and policy director for FIRE said that institutions ''would be on very solid ground in challenging OCR because OCR's statements and policies clearly skirted the notice-and-comment requirements.'' But you tell me what school would have an incentive to accept the existential threat that litigation poses to their university when they file suit against the Office for Civil Rights? They risk reputational harm, legal penalties, and recision of Federal funding, all because the OCR thinks no one would actually sue them. Many schools decide the risk is not worth the reward, and the Department of Education knows it.

While individual companies or entire industries can and often do fight back against regulatory overreach from the Department of Labor or EPA, the Department of Education is in a position to hold Federal funding ransom if universities don't comply with its policies even when those policies are unlawful abuses of regulatory power. This is unacceptable.

Just because we share an objective of equality and school safety doesn't mean we can turn a blind eye to a Federal department running roughshod over the very regulatory process we require. Here the ends certainly do not justify the means, and schools and the very students we want to protect suffer as a result.

I do want to stress that I admire Dr. King's dedication to bettering our Nation's schools. All Americans are undoubtedly enriched by contributions made by such conscientious and exceptional educators. I thank him for his previous time of service, which is an impressive record.

Likewise, I appreciate that these guidance documents predate Dr. King's service at the Department and that he had no role in overseeing their development or issuance, but when asked to reexamine them and the process of how they were created, he protected them instead of acknowledging the problem with the process. That tells me there are more ''Dear Colleague'' letters coming to our schools, and this agency will continue to make up the rules in a vacuum and threaten Federal funding for those who dare not comply.

As part of my continuing discussions with the Office for Civil Rights, the Department has assured me they will take steps to clarify the interpretive role of guidance, increase transparency, and enhance opportunity for public input. I am encouraged that the Office for Civil Rights has committed to these improvements, and I look forward to a continued discussion on how better guidance practices, both in the Office for Civil Rights and across the entire government, can actually occur. Unfortunately, these proposals don't answer the questions I have asked Dr. King, nor do they in any way address the fundamental problems with the 2010 or 2011 ''Dear Colleague'' letters or the Office for Civil Rights' broader practice of issuing guidance in lieu of rulemaking. Because I have not received a full answer to the questions I asked the Department and because Dr. King does not acknowledge that this overreach is even occurring within the agency he is nominated to lead, I have no choice but to oppose his nomination today.

Time will tell whether this Department of Education is about to take a new direction with new leadership or whether they will continue the same path of coercive overreach they have already been on. This needs to stop. The American people require a voice in the rulemaking process, and I hope this can press on today.

With that, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 90

minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent that all time during quorum calls between 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. today be equally divided in the usual form.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LANKFORD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, last Thursday the Democratic candidates for President had a debate. They made several extremely irresponsible statements about immigration policy. I oppose their calls to reward mass illegal immigration with blanket amnesty, which would undermine the rule of law, cost Americans jobs, drive down wages for working Americans, and invite more illegal immigration.

But what must President Obama think? After all, he has attempted to grant amnesty by fiat to over 5 million illegal immigrants, although the courts have blocked most of those amnesties for now. Yet the Senator from Vermont and Hillary Clinton both insisted that the President hadn't gone far enough. They would expand on his actions and go even further. In fact, a debate moderator called President Obama ''the deporter in chief,'' and Hillary Clinton tacitly accepted the characterization, saying she wouldn't deport nearly as many illegal immigrants as President Obama has—which of course isn't a terribly high bar to clear since deportations are down 42 percent since the start of President Obama's second term and last year deportations hit a 10-year low. Still, I can't imagine President Obama is too pleased with his would-be successor.

I also can't imagine a more opportunist and irresponsible position than the one taken by Hillary Clinton. As she panders for votes, she limited deportation priorities to violent criminals and terrorists. Apparently, Secretary Clinton will welcome con artists, identity thieves, and other nonviolent criminal illegal immigrants with outstretched arms into our country.

Even more astonishing, she stated unequivocally, ''I will not deport children. I would not deport children.'' As I stated, this is pure opportunism. For instance, I imagine this child shown in this poster would have liked Secretary Clinton's policy to have been in effect during her husband's administration. This is the famous picture of Elian Gonzalez, a 6-year-old Cuban boy who reached our shores despite his mother tragically dying at sea. Elian's U.S.-based family pleaded with the Clinton administration to grant him asylum, as was our common custom for refugees from communism, but President Clinton rejected those pleas, siding with the Castros. Federal agents stormed the private residence and apprehended Elian at gunpoint. Where was Secretary Clinton? I guess she didn't have a no-kids policy back then. But we don't have to guess. The then-First Lady was campaigning for Senate in New York. She opposed congressional action to protect Elian and advocated returning the boy to Cuba—contrary to a decades-long bipartisan consensus that we should grant safe harbor to refugees from totalitarian Communist states.

Yet, the sad story of Elian Gonzalez isn't the most recent or harmful example of her opportunism. Just two summers ago, our country faced a migrant crisis on our southern border. Nearly 140,000 people—about half of them unaccompanied kids—poured across our border. Notably, most did not flee from the Border Patrol or try to avoid capture; on the contrary, they ran to U.S. border agents.

Why would brandnew illegal immigrants, having successfully crossed our border, turn themselves in? The answer is simple: They have been led to believe they would be allowed to stay.

From the multiple administration memos instructing agents not to fully enforce immigration law to President Obama's unlawful Executive amnesties, to the Senate's own amnesty legislation, every signal from Washington said our political class lacked the willpower to secure our borders and enforce our immigration laws in the country's interior.

Some might say these policies and proposals wouldn't have covered the newly arrived immigrants; that they would have faced deportation. Perhaps, but what they signaled was a complete unwillingness to enforce our immigration laws, just as amnesty granted in 1986 invited another generation of illegal immigrants to migrate to our country and wait for the next amnesty.

These policies certainly gave the human traffickers who transported and abused these kids plenty of grounds to tell desperate parents: Send your kid north with me, and he will get a permiso. In the end, they weren't wrong. Nearly 2 years later, only a very tiny minority of unaccompanied children have been deported. In fact, more than 111,000 unaccompanied minors entered the United States illegally from 2011 to 2015, but only 6 percent have been returned to their home countries. Yes, some may have received a deportation order from a court—usually after failing to appear for a hearing. Yet the Obama administration has made little to no effort to locate them.

Therefore, it is fair to say the human traffickers, the so-called coyotes, weren't wrong, and many Central American parents took an understandable risk. After all, a life in America in the shadows—as advocates for amnesty and open borders call it—may be preferable to poverty and violence back home. While these factors may have been the push factors in the migrant crisis, there can be no doubt that the pull factors of amnesty, deferred action, nonenforcement, economic opportunity, and safety were just as strong, if not stronger.

That is why even the Obama administration tried to address them. President Obama met with leaders of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to seek their assistance. Vice President BIDEN flew to Guatemala and publicly urged parents not to believe the coyotes' promises of amnesty. The Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson wrote an open letter to Central American parents, and, yes, Hillary Clinton got involved too. Secretary Clinton stated in 2014 that these children ''should be sent back as soon as it can be determined who responsible adults in their families are.'' She insisted that ''we have to send a clear message: Just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean the child gets to stay.''

That was the right position then, and it is the right position now, even if real action didn't back up the Obama administration's words, but that was then, and this is now, in the middle of another flailing Presidential campaign. Secretary Clinton now says she would not deport children under any circumstances, not even those who just arrived or presumably those who arrive in the future.

We have come to expect such opportunism from the ''House of Clinton,'' but even worse is the irresponsibility. Put yourself in the position of a desperate parent in Central America. You live in Third World conditions. Work is scarce. Food and water are a struggle. Power doesn't always come on with the flip of a switch. Gangs control many of the streets. Murder rates are some of the highest in the world. You have every reason to try to escape these conditions or at least get your kid out, but where to go?

You just got your answer. Hillary Clinton, one of the most famous people in the world—one of only six people likely to be the next President of the United States—just broadcast new hope to the world: You can come to the United States.

Of course, it is a peculiar kind of hope. She didn't say go to our Embassy and seek asylum. She certainly didn't say get on an airplane and fly safely to the United States, nor will she ever take such massively unpopular positions. Indeed, she essentially invited you to take a life-or-death gamble: If you survive the trip, you can stay.

How is this moral? How is it compassionate to create incentives for such reckless behavior? Hillary Clinton just created a full employment opportunity for human traffickers. She helped oversell illicit tickets on this train, The Beast, a network of freight trains aboard which migrants from Central America cross Mexico to the United States.

The Beast has another name—The Death Train. It is called that because many who ride it don't survive or, if they do, they only escape with grievous injuries or after enduring physical and sexual abuse at the hands of criminal gangs. With her irresponsible pandering, Secretary Clinton's words will help contribute to untold suffering, pain, and death among American families.

Her words are equally irresponsible when looked at from the American perspective. Secretary Clinton's promise to deport only violent criminals and no children under any circumstances will badly harm struggling Americans. Decades of mass immigration has contributed to joblessness, stagnant wages, and communities stressed to the breaking point to provide education, housing, emergency services, public safety, and other basic government services.

The coming Clinton wave of illegal immigration will only make it harder to secure our borders, enforce our laws, and get immigration under control and working for Americans who are, after all, the people we are supposed to serve.

The world is full of violence, oppression, corruption, and injustice. We cannot turn a blind eye to this. It often has a way of arriving at our borders and on our shores. Similar to most Americans, my heart breaks when I imagine the plight of those desperate parents in Central America as they look upon their little ones. That is why I strongly support efforts to assist countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to develop stronger institutions and improve living conditions there. Many dedicated professionals in the State Department, FBI, DEA, Southern Command, and other Federal agencies are there serving us—to do just that.

At the same time, we cannot solve all the world's ills and our foremost responsibility is to Americans, not foreigners. We can help reduce the push factors in foreign countries driving migrants to our borders, but we are not obligated to accept their citizens into our country. On the contrary, our obligation is to protect and serve Americans. To do so, we must eliminate the pull factors for these migrants here at home.

Like any country, we have a right, indeed, we have a duty to control who comes to our country and allow them here only if it is in our national interests. America is a nation of immigrants, but we are also a nation of laws. Secretary Clinton has not only displayed contempt for our immigration laws but also encouraged foreigners to break those laws, to their own grave danger. We must say to these foreigners, loudly and clearly: Do not make this dangerous journey. Do not violate our laws. Do not come here illegally. It is the humane thing to do, and it is the right thing to do. Secretary Clinton should be ashamed of herself for doing otherwise.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise to discuss the vacancy created by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Those of us who knew the late Justice well are still mourning the loss of a dear friend, and the Nation is feeling the loss of one of the greatest jurists in its history. We will never find a true replacement for Justice Scalia, only a successor to his legacy. We owe it to the late Justice's extraordinary legacy of service to ensure that we treat confirmation of his successor properly.

My friends in the Democratic minority have settled upon one mantra above all others in addressing this vacancy; that the Senate must ''do its job.'' While I have no doubt this talking point has been poll tested and refined to serve as the most effective political attack possible, the truth is that this point is completely uncontroversial. I have not heard a single one of my Republican colleagues argue that the Senate should not do its job with respect to the Supreme Court vacancy. Where we have a legitimate difference of opinion is how the Senate can best do its job.

Article II, section 2 of the Constitution divides the appointment process into two—two—distinct roles: the power of the President to nominate and the power of the Senate to provide its advice and consent. Despite the wild claims of some of my Democratic friends to the contrary, the Constitution does not define how the Senate is to go about its duty to provide advice and consent. It does not dictate that the Senate must hold confirmation hearings or floor votes on the President's preferred timeline. After all, how could the Constitution provide such instruction if the Judiciary Committee did not come into existence until 27 years after the Senate first convened in 1789? Indeed, the Judiciary Committee only began holding confirmation hearings in the past century, and nominees only began appearing before the committee regularly in the past 60 years.

In fact, the Constitution prescribes no specific structure or timeline for the confirmation process, and the Constitution's text and structure, as well as longstanding historical practice, confirm that the Senate has the authority to shape the confirmation process how it sees fit. In other words, the Senate's job is to determine the best way to exercise its advice and consent power in each unique situation.

Over the years, the Senate has considered nominations in different ways at different times, depending on the circumstances. Consider these precedents with great bearing on the current circumstances. The Senate has never confirmed a nominee to a Supreme Court vacancy that opened up this late in a term-limited President's time in office. This is only the third vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting in a Presidential election. In the previous two instances, in 1956 and 1968, the Senate did not confirm the nominee until the following year. The only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after voting began in a Presidential election year was in 1916, and that vacancy only arose when Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned his seat on the Court to run against incumbent President Woodrow Wilson.

Key Democrats have long expressed strong agreement with the decision to defer the confirmation process in these circumstances. For example, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, the incoming Democratic leader, argued in July 2007—with a year and a half left in President George W. Bush's term and with no Supreme Court seat even vacant—that the Senate ''should not confirm any Bush nominee to the Supreme Court except in extraordinary circumstances.'' Vice President JOE BIDEN argued in 1992, when he was Judiciary Committee chairman, that if a Supreme Court vacancy occurred in that Presidential election year, ''the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.''

Past practice and the well documented past positions of key Democrats certainly support the notion that deferring the confirmation process is an option reasonably available to the Senate in certain circumstances. As for its appropriateness in the present situation, one need only consider how the confirmation process would be further poisoned by election-year politics.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee for nearly four decades, I have witnessed the judicial confirmation process become increasingly divisive and sometimes—oftentimes, as a matter of fact—downright nasty. First

came the campaigns of character assassination waged against Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas. Then came the Senate Democrats' unprecedented filibusters of President George W. Bush's lower court nominees. Then came the attempt to deny an up-or-down vote on the nomination of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court—a move supported by then-Senators Obama, BIDEN, CLINTON, REID, DURBIN, SCHUMER, and LEAHY. Finally came the unilateral use of the nuclear option to blow up the filibuster and pack the DC Circuit Court of Appeals—widely considered the second most powerful court in the Nation—with liberal judges committed to rubberstamping the President's agenda.

Those who were responsible for every single one of these major escalations in the so-called judicial confirmation wars have no credibility to lecture anyone on what a proper confirmation process should look like in this situation. For those of us who have fought against the breakdown of the confirmation process, the prospect of considering a nomination in the middle of what may be the nastiest election of my lifetime could only further damage the long-term prospects of a healthy confirmation process. Deferring the process is in the best interests of the Senate, the judiciary, and the country.

The tenor of the debate since Justice Scalia's passing has only confirmed how right we were to take a stand to defer the process until after the election. For example, a speech I delivered to the Federalist Society on Friday was briefly disrupted by protestors chanting ''Do your job,'' ironically just as I began to explain why our approach to this vacancy is the best way the Senate can indeed do its job. Now, I do not mind protestors speaking their minds, but I don't appreciate it when they try to prevent others from expressing differing views. That a respectful discussion among attorneys was disrupted by professional activists wielding materials from Organizing for Action, a political arm of the White House and the Democratic National Committee, demonstrates what I have been saying all along: Considering a nominee in the midst of a Presidential election campaign would further inject toxic political theater into an already politicized confirmation process.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of an article from Politico detailing the extensive political coordination between the White House and the parent organization of these protestors that risks turning what should be serious consideration of a weighty lifetime appointment into an election-year political circus.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From POLITICO, Mar. 13, 2016]

WHITE HOUSE PREPS SUPREME COURT BATTLE PLAN

(By Edward-Isaac Dovere and Josh Gerstein)

As soon as President Barack Obama announces a Supreme Court nominee from his short list—which is now set—the White House and its allies will unleash a coordinated media and political blitz aimed at weakening GOP resistance to confirming the president's pick.

Administration allies have already started putting a ground game in place. Obama campaign veterans have been contracted in six states—New Hampshire, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, where GOP incumbents are most vulnerable, plus Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley's Iowa.

With Republicans flatly refusing even courtesy meetings with a nominee, let alone confirmation hearings, they're also looking into photo ops with Senate Democrats, and could pursue mock hearings or other events meant to highlight GOP intransigence, according to sources familiar with the planning.

Still, the West Wing is trying to strike a balance between pushing the nominee forward to create pressure and the danger of seeming to politicize the fight or accidentally straying into hypothetical discussions of future court decisions.

Obama is expected to announce a nominee as early as this week. Many believe that the choice will be one of three federal appeals court judges: Sri Srinivasan, Merrick Garland or Paul Watford.

The first calls for outside help went out from the White House as soon as Antonin Scalia's death was confirmed and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R–Ky.) ruled out confirming a successor. That Thursday, senior Obama adviser Valerie Jarrett and White House counsel Neil Eggleston gathered in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building for a larger version of their regular judicial nominations action meeting, with participants including Judy Licthman of the National Partnership for Women & Families, frequent White House collaborator Robert Raben, People for the American Way and the Leadership Conference On Civil and Human Rights. Tina Tchen, chief of staff to the First Lady, also attended.

In follow-up conference calls and smaller meetings, a plan and strategy took shape, which they agreed would be led by Obama 2012 deputy campaign manager Stephanie Cutter, with White House communications director Anita Dunn leading the media plan, and recently departed legislative affairs director Katie Beirne Fallon taking the lead on the Hill. The following week, leaders of more of the operational groups gathered in Jarrett's office for a brainstorming and coordination meeting, with Eggleston and political director David Simas attending. Among the outside groups that attended: Center for American Progress president Neera Tanden, Americans United for Change president Brad Woodhouse, political consultant Bob Creamer and Patty First from the Raben Group.

The White House is still unsure how to deploy Obama. Some advisers feel like the presidential bully pulpit is the only way to bring enough pressure to have a chance at making Senate Republicans crack. Others have been advising that the more this is about Obama, the worse their chances are, and the more they can focus attention on the nominee, and his or her qualifications, the better they'll do.

Obama's aides haven't made a final decision on the long-term strategy. They're more focused for the moment on finalizing plans for the roll-out, hoping to at least generate some initial buzz around the nominee.

Outside allies are lining up progressive organizations, labor leaders, women's groups and black ministers, to focus attention on the battle, which is likely to drag on for months. Monday morning, for example, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is releasing a letter from law school deans pushing the Senate to act.

''We are building this campaign for the long haul. Our number one goal is that Senate Republicans do their job, follow their Constitutional responsibility and take up the president's nominee and put that person on the court,'' said one of the people involved in the outside efforts. ''But if they want a political fight, we're more than willing to accommodate them. And if they maintain this unprecedented obstruction, they can kiss their majority goodbye.''

Senate Democrats have been pitching in too. First up: photos and video of the nominee going to meet with Democratic senators on Capitol Hill, hoping will keep the nominee in the news. The administration and Senate Democrats are also weighing whether to stage mock hearings or other photo ops highlighting the nominees inability to even talk to Republicans—all in the hope of generating embarrassing footage for the GOP.

''Unprecedented Republican obstruction calls for an unconventional response,'' is how one Senate Democratic leadership aide put it.

Traditionally, Supreme Court nominees go completely silent except for their private meetings with senators and committee hearings. Though White House aides appear ready to break with that tradition, they'll only go so far: the nominee won't be making the rounds of Sunday talk shows, but some outside advisers have pushed for more contained and scripted appearances, like speeches at bar associations or law schools.

But the White House is proceeding carefully, feeling that the politics work best for them if they're able to keep the focus on Republican obstructionism.

''It's going to be largely about the person, so it's up to us to be as serious and dogged about how we present that person to the country,'' a White House aide said.

Top aides remain optimistic that McConnell will ease his blockade, but right now there's zero indication Republicans plan to back down. With that in mind, the administration is prepared for the fight to become more about ramping up embarrassment for Republicans up and down the ballot going into November, hoping they can help elect a Democratic president and more Democrats to the Senate, who would then fill the seat in January.

Asked aboard Air Force One on Friday whether the White House is prepared to have the nominee do interviews or whether the president will take a more public role, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said, ''it's too early to say exactly how this will play out.''

Within the White House, the planning is being overseen by Jarrett, Brian Deese, the senior adviser whom Obama tapped to lead the process, and Shailagh Murray, the senior adviser and former newspaper reporter who's specialized in developing unconventional media strategies for this White House. White House principal deputy press secretary Eric Schultz has become the point person for the media approach.

Jarrett's chief of staff, Yohannes Abraham, has been organizing about 125 outside experts, including legal experts, law school

deans, former Supreme Court clerks, officials from previous administrations, former elected officials (including dozens of Republicans), civil rights leaders, mayors, union officials, CEOs and environmental leaders.

They've also convened conference calls with leaders broken down by groups. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Latino, African-American, civil rights, small business, state and local elected officials, academics and law school deans, disability advocacy, faith, youth, labor and progressives, women and lawyers.

''The coordinated grassroots effort that has already proven a powerful tool to put pressure on Republicans will only ramp up,'' said Amy Brundage, a former deputy communications director at the White House currently helping coordinate communications for the outside effort at Dunn's firm. ''That includes events in targeted states with real working Americans pushing Senate Republicans to do their jobs, press events with key Democratic members and groups, and coordinated validator pushes like those with the legal scholars, historians and attorneys general.''

So far, the administration doesn't have a set calendar for each day following the submission of the nomination, but they're developing the plan to accommodate variables such as who the nominee is, what that person's biography includes, and what that person's current job allows for. With the short list reportedly limited to sitting federal judges, there may be less room to maneuver. Judges face more restrictions on their activities than a practicing attorney, academic or politician.

''The formal ethics rules applicable to appellate court judges wouldn't apply to a senator,'' said Indiana University professor Charles Geyh. The standard rules for judicial candidates technically don't apply to Supreme Court nominees, Geyh pointed out. Strategic considerations have led recent nominees to be fairly evasive about their views, but that doesn't preclude trying to keep the spotlight on the nomination.

''I wouldn't hesitate to have cameras at the ready to the extent this person is having doors slammed in his face, using that as a way to embarrass the Republicans, but that's different from having the nominee out there chatting about what he'd do as a judge,'' Geyh said, adding that most of the reticence nominees have shown in recent years ''is all strategic and has nothing to do with ethics.''

Democrats have already been talking about holding unofficial hearings on a potential nomination. Whether the nominee himor herself would attend is an open question, but experts say it would also be within ethical bounds.

''We're entering uncharted waters here. We've never had a situation in which the party in power, in this case the Republicans, were denying even a hearing to the nominee,'' said Nan Aron of the liberal Alliance for Justice.

If the fight stretches into late summer and the Democratic focus turns to an election-focused campaign, the situation gets dicier. A nominee who's a sitting judge would need to steer clear of events where those arguments are being made, and even a non-judge would be wise to do the same.

Conservatives say they're bracing for an aggressive campaign by the White House and Democrats who'll be looking to keep the Supreme Court fight on the front burner. Already, some groups have been circulating opposition research about several of the potential nominees whose names have been most discussed, hitting Sri Srinivasan, Jane Kelly and Ketanji Jackson.

''This is just going to push the boundaries,'' said veteran GOP judicial nominations advocate Curt Levey, now with Freedomworks. ''They can certainly make the meetings with Democratic senators into a show—more of a show than it normally is.''

The White House theory is that if there's enough pressure to get Republicans to cave on a hearing, that will start the ball rolling in a way that'll make winning confirmation a real possibility.

Democrats pounced on Sen. John Cornyn's (R–Texas) promise last week that the Republicans will turn Obama's nominee into a piñata. That raises additional questions about who Obama chooses, since the person will have to endure not just a stranger than normal process, but likely a very negative one. As Cornyn warned, that could be enough to make some potential picks say no. If this fight goes on long enough and the nominee is a judge who'll likely recuse from pending and future cases, the person could be open to attacks of getting paid for not working—or going back to their day job and appearing to throw in the towel.

Levey said he expects the fight will eventually morph into full-blown election politics. ''At some point this is going to turn,'' Levey said. ''It may turn very quickly in terms of the White House giving up whatever little hope they have.''

Mr. HATCH. Furthermore, Madam President, the minority leader has turned his daily remarks on the floor into constant diatribes against the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. These diatribes rank among the most vicious and most personal attacks I have heard on the Senate floor in my nearly four decades in this Senate body. Having myself served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee for more than 8 years, I know that the position is no stranger to controversy and political hardball. But the vile and unfair attacks on Senator GRASSLEY's independence and work ethic have gone too far.

I have had the privilege of serving with Senator GRASSLEY for more than 35 years. I know no one more committed to doing his job. Senator GRASSLEY has not missed a vote in a record-setting 27 years—when he was home in Iowa, touring the awful damage of the Great Flood of 1993—and yet still manages to hold townhall meetings in all 99 of his State's counties every year. He sets the gold standard of service in the Senate.

If anyone knows his mind, it is Senator GRASSLEY. Each of us is entitled to our opinions on issues that come before this body, even controversial ones, but I want to condemn in the strongest possible terms the notion that a difference of opinion with Senate Democrats means that Senator GRASSLEY is compromising his own integrity or the independence of the Judiciary Committee he leads. These attacks come very close to impugning his character, and that sort of behavior is beneath the dignity of this body.

The minority leader came to the floor to seize on the comments of the senior Senator from Texas to manufacture what I consider to be another cheap political attack on the Republican majority. In those comments, Senator CORNYN had speculated that the election-year political environment could, unfortunately, turn any Supreme Court nominee into a political pinata. The minority leader's comments are a total mischaracterization of Senator CORNYN's record of fairness toward nominees of both parties and of Senate Republicans' intentions in this situation. After all, the whole point of deferring the nomination and confirmation process is to limit the mistreatment of any nominee, as Senator CORNYN suggested in his remarks. This unfounded accusation is also deeply ironic, coming from the party that stooped to the character assassination of Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas.

If there is anyone who has been treated like a piñata in this debate, it has been Senator GRASSLEY. Now, CHUCK GRASSLEY is as tough as they come, and I have every confidence that he will weather these attacks. But if these scorched-earth political tactics reflect the length some of the Democratic minority are prepared to go in an election-year confirmation battle, there can be no better illustration of why we should defer this process.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, today the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Dr. John King to be the next Secretary of Education. While there is only 1 year left in the Obama Presidency, this is still one of the most important jobs in Washington because the Department of Education has a powerful set of tools available that it can use to stand up for people who are struggling with student loan debt and tools to help make a quality, affordable college education a reality for millions of Americans.

Secretary of Education must be one of the most difficult jobs in Washington because for years there has been some kind of problem at the Department of Education that has made it practically impossible to get the Department to put the interests of students ahead of the interests of private contractors and for-profit colleges that are making the big money off our students.

The Department has powerful tools to make sure that fraudulent colleges aren't sucking down billions of taxpayer dollars of student loans. But for the most part, these tools gather dust

on the shelf while shady institutions like Corinthian Colleges spend years gobbling up taxpayer money while they defraud their own students.

The Department has powerful tools to help students when they get ripped off by fraudulent colleges. But for years, it has been like pulling out your own teeth simply to get relief for the victims who got cheated by for-profit colleges like Corinthian.

There are literally dozens of examples of how the Department of Education's trillion-dollar student loan bank has been putting profits for these companies and for-profit colleges ahead of the needs of students. One of the worst has been the bank's approach to overseeing the student loan servicing companies that are paid by the government to collect student loan payments.

Consider the case of Navient, a student loan servicer that got caught redhanded ripping off tens of thousands of active duty members of the military. Two years ago, the Department of Justice and the FDIC fined the company $100 million for breaking the law and overcharging our active duty military on their student loans. But the Department of Education didn't take any action against Navient. Instead of following the lead of the Justice Department and using the Justice Department's evidence—no, the Department of Education announced its own separate review of whether soldiers were harmed.

A year later, they released their results, and notwithstanding the fact that Navient was already sending checks to thousands of servicemembers under the DOJ and FDIC agreement, the Department of Education student loan bank concluded that everything was just fine, and the Department's bank had no need to impose any additional fines or restrictions on Navient. In fact, things were so fine that the Department's bank rewarded Navient by renewing a $100 million contract.

If that sounds stinky to you, it should. The Department's inspector general took a close look at what was going on over at the Department's bank, and 2 weeks ago they released a scathing report on the bank's whitewash. The IG slammed the Department for a report that was a complete and utter mess, loaded with errors, calling for ''inconsistent and inadequate actions.'' The IG concluded that the Department of Education's happy-face press release announcing that everything was fine with the servicer was ''unsupported and inaccurate.''

When a private company breaks the law and steals from American soldiers who are literally in the field fighting overseas, those companies should be held accountable. The Justice Department held Navient accountable. The FDIC held Navient accountable. But the Department of Education's bank decided it was more important to protect Navient than to watch out for our military students.

Let's not mince words. The Navient fiasco is outrageous, but it is not surprising. At a Senate hearing 2 years ago, I asked James Runcie, who runs the Department of Education's student loan bank, how he could turn around and renew the contract of a company like Navient that had just copped to ripping off American soldiers. His answer, essentially, was that moving borrowers away from Navient would simply be too disruptive. Senator Harkin said at the time that sounded an awful lot like too big to fail. And Senator Harkin was right. So long as that theory remains the operating principle of the Department of Education, the American people can forget about the law because there will be no real limits on how much money big private companies and large fraudulent schools can steal from students and taxpayers.

Dr. King didn't create any of these problems. These problems have grown and festered over a long time, and they won't be easy to solve. For several weeks now Dr. King and I have talked about these issues, and I believe he understands the magnitude of the task he faces. He has committed in no uncertain terms to a top-down review of the way the student loan program is administered and the way the Department oversees financial institutions. He has announced that he will force all of the major student loan servicers to review their records and make refunds to all members of the military who were illegally ripped off. And he has embraced strong, new proposals to protect borrowers who are taken in by fraudulent colleges so they can get their money back.

These are serious steps in the right direction. For those reasons, I will vote for him today, but let's be clear that this is not the end of the story. Dr. King has an enormous amount of work to do to get the Department's higher education house in order, and the American people will be watching closely for results.

One of the first things that must be done is a total reform of student loan servicing to make sure nothing like the Navient disaster ever, ever happens again. Here are five simple principles that should guide that reform:

First, put students and families first—every time, every decision. The Department exists to serve students, not student loan companies. It is time they acted like it.

Second, punish bad actors. Navient broke the law and cheated soldiers, but the Department bent over backward to protect them. Right now Navient owes the Federal Government $22 million it stole in another scam, and the Department hasn't even bothered to collect it. The Department needs to show it is willing and able to punish companies that break the rules, and that includes kicking them out of the student loan program if necessary.

Third, change the financial incentives for servicers. Two years ago, the Department renegotiated the servicer contracts and basically ended up paying the companies more money for the same bad outcomes. No more. Our country pours millions of tax dollars into these companies, and it is time to leverage those dollars to make sure the companies are working for students.

Fourth, release more data. The Department of Education adamantly refuses to share basic data about the student loan program with anyone, even other folks within the Department of Education. That means nobody—nobody—can even see how this bank is being run. It is time for some sunshine.

Fifth, take responsibility for aggressive oversight of student loan servicers. The Department needs to act before this problem metastasizes, and when the Department doesn't have the tools to act, it needs to get out of the way and let the CFPB or other Federal agencies do their jobs.

Five simple principles. Everyone in government who is serious about standing up for the tens of millions of student loan borrowers in this country should embrace them because we shouldn't be running the student loan program to create profits for private companies. We should run it for students.

We are facing a crisis in higher education. Student debt is exploding, crushing our young people and threatening the economy. Opportunity is slipping away from millions of Americans. The time for reform is now—not in the next Presidency, not 5 years from now but now. Reform starts with the Department of Education, and if he is confirmed today, it is my strong hope that Dr. King will make fixing these problems a top priority from his first day on the job to his last day on the job.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, last week the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee voted to advance President Obama's nominee for Secretary of Education, Dr. John King. Tonight the nomination is set to come before the Senate not for a robust debate but for a hasty vote, and by all accounts confirmation is expected.

I rise to oppose the nomination of Dr. King and to urge my colleagues to join me in voting against his confirmation as Secretary of Education. I have studied Dr. King's professional record—most notably, his time in New York's Department of Education. I have reviewed the transcripts of his confirmation hearing. Based on the policies he has supported, the bipartisan opposition he has invited throughout his career, and his uncompromising commitment to the designs of bureaucrats and central planners over the lived experiences of parents and teachers, I believe it would be a grave error for the Senate to confirm Dr. King's nomination at this time.

Indeed, I believe it would be difficult for anyone to support Dr. King's nomination on the basis of his record. The problem is not that Dr. King lacks experience. On paper, you might even think that Secretary of Education is the natural next step in his career. After 3 years as a teacher and a brief stint at managing charter schools, Dr. King has risen through the ranks of the education bureaucracy, climbing from one political appointment to the next, but do we think that someone who has spent more time in a government agency than in a classroom is best suited to oversee Federal education policy? More to the point, what matters aren't the jobs someone has held but the policies that person has advanced. This is the problem with Dr. King's nomination.

Look closely at his record, especially look closely at the 3½ years he spent as New York's education commissioner, where he forced on an unwilling school system unpopular Common Core curriculum and standards, an inflexible testing regime, and a flawed teacher evaluation system.

All of this proves that Dr. King is the standard bearer of No Child Left Behind—the discredited K–12 regime that has become synonymous with dysfunctional education policy in classrooms and households all across America. This is not just my opinion. It was the opinion of New York's parents, teachers, legislators, school board members, and superintendents. The vast majority of them opposed and protested against Dr. King and the policies he championed while at the helm of the State's education department.

This Congress and President Obama have promised to move Federal education policy in the opposite direction established by No Child Left Behind. Under these circumstances, Dr. King—the embodiment of the failed K–12 status quo—is not the person who should be put in charge of the Department of Education. If confirmed, Dr. King would serve as the head of the Department of Education for 10 months, until January 2017, when the next President is sworn into office. This may sound like an insignificant amount of time for a Cabinet Secretary to serve, but in reality the next 10 months are crucially important to the future of Federal education policy in America.

Just a few months ago, Congress passed and President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA—a bill that reauthorized the law governing Federal K–12 education policy. Now the Department of Education will begin implementing the ESSA, which will set the course of the Department for years to come. So what happens over the next 10 months within the Department of Education will have sweeping, far-reaching consequences for America's schools, teachers, and students—consequences that will affect not just the quality of education students receive as children but the quality of life available to them as adults.

One of the most serious flaws of the ESSA, and one of the primary reasons I voted against the bill, is that it reinforces the same K–12 model that has trapped so many kids in failing schools and confined America's education system to a state of mediocrity for half a century. This is a model that concentrates authority over education decisions in the hands of Federal politicians and bureaucrats instead of parents, teachers, principals, and local school boards.

There is no government official who is granted more discretion or more authority under the ESSA than the Secretary of Education. The ESSA purports to reduce the Federal Government's control over America's classrooms by returning decisionmaking authority to parents, educators, and local officials. For instance, there are several provisions that prohibit the Secretary of Education from controlling State education plans or coercing States into adopting Federal standards and testing regimes, but when you look at the fine print, you see that in most cases these prohibitions against Federal overreach contain no enforcement mechanisms—only vague, aspirational statements encouraging the Secretary to limit his own powers.

So the question is, If confirmed as Secretary of Education, would Dr. King adhere to the spirit of the ESSA and voluntarily return decisionmaking authority to parents, teachers, and local officials? There is little reason to believe he would.

Dr. King's former boss and would-be predecessor, Arne Duncan, certainly had no qualms about violating similar prohibitions against Federal overreach found in No Child Left Behind, nor has he shied away from advertising the fact that ESSA would function in much the same way as No Child Left Behind.

In an interview with POLITICO, Duncan discussed whether the ESSA would, in fact, reduce the Federal Government's control over America's classrooms. He was asked: ''How do you respond to the notion that you've had your wings clipped on your way out the door?'' This was Duncan's response: ''Candidly, our lawyers are much smarter than many of the folks who were working on this bill.''

In other words, Congress can write whatever bill it wants, and the administration's lawyers will be able to figure out a way to implement it according to the preferences of the Cabinet Secretaries and their armies of bureaucrats. This is certainly a brazen admission of bureaucratic arrogance by former Secretary Duncan, but it is exactly in line with the way Dr. King approached his job as education commissioner of New York just a few years ago.

Under Dr. King's leadership, New York became one of the first States to implement Common Core standards and testing requirements starting in 2011. Dr. King was one of the only education commissioners in the country to insist on rolling out the tests before teachers had been given adequate time to adapt to the new curriculum imposed by Common Core. To the surprise of no one—except perhaps for Dr. King—the results were a disaster.

The 2013 Common Core tests only widened the achievement gap and sparked the Opt Out movement in New York, which mobilized 65,000 students to opt out of the Common Core tests in 2014 and more than 200,000 students to opt out in 2015. To make matters worse, around the same time teachers were being forced to test their students on material they hadn't been given time to incorporate into their curriculum, Dr. King implemented a teacher evaluation system that relied heavily on these distorted student test scores. This evaluation system was so unpopular that in 2014 one of New York's teachers unions called for Dr. King's resignation.

What is most troubling about Dr. King's tenure as education commissioner isn't that he centralized decisionmaking authority within the State's education department, imposing one-size-fits-all policies across a diverse school system. Plenty of education commissioners are guilty of the same, if not worse. No, the real problem with Dr. King's record is that he routinely and apparently as a matter of policy ignored the advice and feedback of teachers, parents, principals, and school board members. Even as his centrally planned house of cards was tumbling down around him, Dr. King stayed the course, believing against all evidence that when it comes to running a classroom, bureaucrats and politicians know better than teachers, parents, and local school boards.

When the Senate confirms a Presidential nominee, we are doing more than just approving a personnel matter; we are accepting, to a degree, what that nominee stands for. As we consider this nomination, we must ask ourselves, what kind of policy do the

American people want? What kind of policy do America's elementary and secondary students deserve? We know that local control over K–12 and even pre-K education is more effective than Washington, DC's, prescriptive, heavy-handed approach because we have seen it work in communities all across the country. The point isn't that there is a better way to improve America's schools but that there are 50 better ways, thousands of better ways, but Washington is standing in the way, distrustful of any alternative to the top-down education status quo. And under the leadership of Dr. King, Washington's outdated, conformist policies will continue to stand in the way. America's students deserve better than this. The least we can do is to not accept the failed status quo.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting against this nomination.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes before the vote, to be followed by Senator MURRAY for as much time as she may require, and then we will have a vote.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes following Senator ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Senator from Utah has given an excellent speech about why it would be a good idea to have a Republican President of the United States, but we don't have one.

The reason we are voting today is because we need a U.S. Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law to fix No Child Left Behind will be implemented the way Congress wrote it.

In December, at the ceremony where President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, the new law to fix No Child Left Behind, I urged the President to send a nominee to the Senate to be the Education Secretary to replace Arne Duncan. Without that, we would have gone a whole year without a leader of that Department confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate. I made that recommendation to the President because this is such an important year for our 100,000 public schools and the 50 million students who are in those schools. We need an Education Secretary who is confirmed and accountable to Congress while we are implementing a law that may govern elementary and secondary education for some time. I want to be sure we are working together to implement the law the way Congress wrote it. That law was passed with broad bipartisan support. It passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 85 to 12. It passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 359 to 64.

We achieved that result because, as Newsweek said, No Child Left Behind was a law everybody wanted fixed and fixing it was long overdue. Governors, teachers, superintendents, parents, Republicans, Democrats, and students all wanted No Child Left Behind fixed. Not only was there a consensus about the need to fix the law, there was a consensus about how to fix it, and the consensus was this: Continue the important measures of academic progress of students, disaggregate the results of those tests, report them so everyone can know how schools, teachers, and children are doing, but then restore to States, school districts, classroom teachers, and parents the responsibility for deciding what to do about those tests and about improving student achievement.

This new law is a dramatic change in direction for Federal education policy. In short, it reverses the trend toward what had become a national school board and restores to those closest to children the responsibility for their well-being and academic success.

The Wall Street Journal called the new Every Student Succeeds Act ''the largest devolution of federal control of schools from Washington back to the states in a quarter of a century.''

I suppose you could say it didn't go far enough, but that would be like standing in Nashville and waiting 7 years to hitchhike to New York City, and when somebody offers you a ride to Philadelphia, you say: I think I will wait another 7 years. I think I would take the ride and then see if I could get another ride to New York City, and that is what 85 U.S. Senators thought when they voted for this.

There is no group more interested in restoring responsibility to States than the Nation's Governors. The Governors gave our new law the first full endorsement of any piece of legislation since their endorsement of welfare reform 20 years ago in the U.S. Congress.

I believe the law can inaugurate a new era of innovation and student achievement by putting the responsibility for children back in the hands of those closest to them: the parents, classroom teachers, principals, school superintendents, school boards, and States.

The Senate Education Committee, which I chair and on which the Senator from Washington is the senior Democrat, will hold at least six hearings to oversee implementation of the new law. All of those hearings will be bipartisan, as our hearings almost always are. We already held the first hearing on February 23 with representatives of many of the groups who worked together to pass the law, and now they are working together to implement the law. They already formed a coalition made up of the National Governors Association, the School Superintendents Association, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Parent Teacher Association, with the support of the Chief State School Officers.

They sent Dr. King a letter saying:

> Although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is an historic opportunity to make a world-class 21st century education system. And we're dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members and states and districts to guarantee the success of this new law.

They go on to say:

> That new law replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative state and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent: ESSA is clear. Education decisionmaking now rests with the states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

You may say something different, but you are disagreeing with the Governors, the school superintendents, the NEA, the AFT, the State legislatures, the State boards of education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Parent Teacher Association.

Our first oversight hearing with Dr. King will be April 12.

Some have objected to this nomination on the grounds that Dr. King was supportive of common core when he was education commissioner in New York State. I want those who are worried about that to know that this new law has ended what had become, in effect, a Federal common core mandate. More than that, it explicitly prohibits Washington, DC, from mandating or even incentivizing common core or any other specific academic standards. That is in the law. What standards to adopt entirely up to States, local school boards, and classroom teachers.

Here is what Senator ROBERTS of Kansas, who wrote this part of the law, asked Dr. King at our hearing on February 25:

> I know that we have differences on Common Core. I don't want to get into that. But it is part of the existing legislation in law. And I want to be absolutely clear, the language says, no officer or an employee of the federal government, including the secretary, shall attempt to influence, condition, incentivize or coerce state adoption of the Common Core state standards or any other academic standards common to a significant number of States or assessments tied to such standards.

Senator ROBERTS continued:

I know that we, again, have differences. But nevertheless, will you give us your commitment that you will respect the intent as well as the explicit binding letter of that prohibition?

Dr. King said: ''Absolutely.''

That is why we needed a confirmation hearing. That is why we need to have a confirmed Secretary of Education.

In my questions to Dr. King, I said this about my exchanges at an earlier hearing with Dr. Tony Evers, the Wisconsin State superintendent of public instruction, who is also the president of all the chief state school officers. I said to Dr. Evers:

Do you read the new law to say that if Wisconsin wants to have Common Core, which it does, I believe, that it may? If it does not want to have Common Core, that it may not? That if it wants part of Common Core or more than Common Core, it can do that? It simply has to have challenging academic standards that are aligned to the entrance requirements for the public institutions of higher education in the state.

The superintendent said he agreed with that.

In other words, to be blunt, it doesn't really make much difference what Dr. King thinks of common core. Under the law, he doesn't have anything to do with it. He doesn't have anything to do with whether a State adopts it or whether a State chooses not to adopt it.

The new law also ended the practice of granting conditional waivers, through which the U.S. Department of Education has become, in effect, a national school board for more than 80,000 schools in 42 States. Governors have been forced to come to Washington to play ''Mother, may I?'' in order to put in a plan to evaluate teachers or help a low-performing school, for example. That era is over. It ends the ''highly qualified teacher'' definition. It ends the teacher evaluation mandate. It ends the Federal school turnaround models, Federal test-based accountability, and adequate yearly progress. Those decisions—after all the reports are made about how schools, teachers, and children are doing—will be made by those closest to the children. The new law moves decisions about whether schools, teachers, and students are succeeding or failing from Washington, DC, and back to States and communities, where those decisions belong.

In conclusion, please permit me to add a personal note. This day is actually 25 years to the day since I was confirmed as the U.S. Education Secretary. I believe the Senator from Indiana was on the Education Committee at that time. But here is the difference: Under a Democratically controlled Senate, my nomination took 87 days from the day it was announced and 51 days from when the nomination was formally submitted to the Senate. Under a Republican-controlled Senate, Dr. King's nomination has taken 32 days. His nomination was announced and formally submitted on February 11.

Let me conclude the way I started. The reason we are voting today is that we need an Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law that 85 of us voted for to fix No Child Left Behind is implemented the way we wrote it. This vote is not about whether one of us would have chosen Dr. King to be the Education Secretary. Republicans won't have the privilege of picking an Education Secretary until we elect a Republican President of the United States. What we need is an Education Secretary confirmed by and accountable to the U.S. Senate so that the law to fix No Child Left Behind will be implemented the way we wrote it.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes. I conclude my remarks, but I want to do so with thanks to the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, who played such a crucial role in passing the law fixing No Child Left Behind.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor as well today to speak in support of Dr. John King's nomination to serve as Secretary of Education.

This is really an important time for students when it comes to early learning. We have seen improvements, but we have much more to do to expand access to high-quality preschool so more of our kids can start school on strong footing.

This is a critical moment as well, as we just heard, for K–12 education as schools and districts and States transition from the broken No Child Left Behind to the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act that the President signed into law late last year.

I hear all the time from students and families who are struggling with the high cost of college and the crushing burden of student debt. With all of these challenges and opportunities, the Department of Education will need strong leadership, and I am glad President Obama has nominated Dr. John King who is currently serving as Acting Secretary of the Department.

I want to commend Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, chairman of our HELP Committee, for moving forward with Dr. King's nomination in a timely and bipartisan manner in our committee. I also appreciate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL for bringing this nomination to the floor.

Dr. John King has a longstanding commitment to fighting for kids. Through his personal background, he knows firsthand the power that education can have in a student's life. He has enriched students' lives as a classroom teacher and as a principal. He has worked with schools to help close the achievement gap. And he served as the commissioner of education for New York State for 4 years. No one can question his passion for our Nation's young people.

This administration has a little less than a year left in office, but that is still plenty of time to make progress in several key areas, and that progress is more likely with a confirmed Secretary in place at the Department.

In higher education, I, along with my Democratic colleagues, will continue to focus on ways to make college more affordable, reduce the crushing burden of student debt that is weighing on so many families today, and continue working to fight back against the epidemic of campus sexual assaults and violence.

I would also like to see the Department take new steps to help protect students who are pursuing their degrees. As one example, students like those who went to Corinthian Colleges, have the right to seek loan forgiveness if they attended a school that engaged in deceptive practices. I am really pleased the Department has a new proposal to set up a simple way for students to get relief. And all borrowers should receive the highest levels of customer service and protections under the law, particularly our servicemembers and our military families. This is an issue I and others have raised directly with Dr. King during his confirmation and one where we are finally seeing the administration make progress.

The role of Education Secretary has become especially important as the Department begins implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act. I expect the Department to use its full authority under the Every Student Succeeds Act to hold our schools and States accountable, to help reduce the reliance on redundant and unnecessary testing, and to expand access to high-quality preschool.

A good education can be a powerful driving force for success in our country and help more families live out the American dream. That is what makes education such a vital piece of our work to help our economy grow from the middle out, not from the top down. I hope to partner with Dr. King as Secretary of Education to work toward that shared goal.

I urge all of our colleagues today to support his nomination.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the King nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted ''nay.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 36 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Bennet	Hatch	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boxer	Hirono	Reid
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	King	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Cochran	Markey	Udall
Collins	McCaskill	Warren
Coons	McConnell	Whitehouse
Cornyn	Menendez	Wyden
Donnelly	Merkley	
Durbin	Mikulski	

NAYS—40

Ayotte	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Sasse
Capito	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Shelby
Corker	Isakson	Sullivan
Cotton	Johnson	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—11

Brown	McCain	Sessions
Cruz	Portman	Toomey
Flake	Rubio	Warner
Kirk	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I object. Reserving the right to object, I would say to the majority leader that we are about to enter a topic where people have strong opinions, and they should be able to speak what amount they desire and not be limited to 10 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am not sure what the question of the Senator from Oregon is related to. I was simply going to commend the Senator from Louisiana for presiding over the Chamber for 100 hours—not a terribly controversial thing, I don't think.

Mr. MERKLEY. And I certainly don't object to the Senator doing that. But as we go into morning business, there is no need to put a 10-minute limit to accomplish that.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOLDEN GAVEL AWARD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a word to Senators about our colleague currently in the chair. He has just passed an important milestone. He has now presided over the Senate for 100 hours. We all know what that means. He will be receiving the Golden Gavel, and I look forward to presenting it to him tomorrow.

Presiding over the Senate may not seem the most glamorous job around here to some people, but it is an important one. You learn a lot about procedure, you learn a lot about your colleagues, and because the use of electronic devices is prohibited, you rediscover the lost art of communicating with a pen and a piece of paper. I think we could all stand to benefit from that kind of practice.

Today's Golden Gavel recipient often dashes off notes for pages to bring to his staff while in the chair, and because today's Golden Gavel recipient is a doctor, it also takes his staff about 3 hours to decipher each of the notes he writes.

Here is the bottom line for our friend from Louisiana. Being in the chair reminds him of all the history in this Chamber. It brings to mind the many important decisions that have been made here over the years, and it gives him perspective.

''Every now and then,'' Senator CASSIDY says, he likes to just ''soak up the moment.'' I hope he will take the opportunity to do so now. He is the first Member of the class of 2014 to earn the Golden Gavel distinction, and all of our colleagues are pleased to acknowledge this accomplishment.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany S. 764.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 764) entitled ''An Act to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes,'' do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 3450

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 764 with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to S. 764 with an amendment numbered 3450.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to concur.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment with an amendment to S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, Orrin G. Hatch, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Jeff Flake, Tim Scott, Cory Gardner, Shelley Moore Capito.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO REFER

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to refer the House message on S. 764 to the Committee on Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to refer the bill, S. 764, to the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to Sarah Root, a young woman from Iowa who had a very bright future but was taken from this Earth too soon.

Sarah was 21 years old and just graduated from Bellevue University with perfect grades. In the words of her family, ''She was full of life and ready to take on the world.''

According to a close friend of hers, Sarah was smart, outgoing, and dedicated to her friends and family. She embodied the words that were tattooed on her body: ''Live, laugh and love.''

The day Sarah graduated, she was struck by a drunk driver. That driver was in the country illegally. The alleged drunk driver was Edwin Mejia, and he had a blood alcohol content of .241, three times the legal limit. The driver was charged with felony motor vehicle homicide and operating a vehicle while intoxicated on February 3. Bail was set at $50,000, but he was only required to put up 10 percent. So for a mere $5,000, the drunk driver walked out of jail and into the shadows. As Sarah's father said, after laying his daughter to rest, ''The cost of a bond cost less than the funeral.''

Those are painful words to hear, but what is more frustrating is that the driver should have never been released. When local law enforcement apparently asked the Federal Government—specifically U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement—to take custody of the person, the Federal Government declined. ICE refused to place a detainer on the driver. An ICE spokesman stated that the agency did not lodge a detainer on the man because his arrest for felony motor vehicle homicide ''did not meet ICE's enforcement priorities.''

Now the Root family must face the consequences of the Federal Government's inaction while grappling with their daughter's death. It is difficult for the family to have closure since the man is nowhere to be found. It is unknown if he is still in the United States or if he has fled to his home country of Honduras, but this is not an isolated incident. It is business as usual in the Obama administration. Because of the administration's policies and carelessness, Sarah Root became another victim. Once again, this case shows that there is a colossal and systematic breakdown of immigration enforcement thanks to the Obama administration's flawed policies and lack of commitment to the rule of law.

Unfortunately, a talented young lady whose life was cut short, who didn't have an opportunity to take on the world, is a story all too common. Under President Obama's Priority Enforcement Program, a person in the country illegally will only be detained or removed in a few limited circumstances. Some say that nearly 90,000 undocumented immigrants were released in 2015 thanks to this policy.

Secretary Jeh Johnson has claimed that only those who have laid down roots and do not have serious crimes would not be subject to removal. Yet their words don't match up with their actions. Local law enforcement, such as those in Omaha, NE, have asked the Federal Government to take custody of certain individuals, but the agency in charge refuses. It hides behind their so-called priorities.

The President has a constitutional duty to ''take care that the laws be faithfully executed.'' The Constitution does not say the President shall make a list of which criminals would be punished or removed and which criminals may go about their lives. The Obama administration may not agree with the laws that Congress passes, but that has no bearing on its responsibility to make sure the laws are faithfully carried out.

The administration claims it is well within its constitutional duties under the doctrine of prosecutorial discretion. However, this administration's approach of announcing its priorities and only enforcing the laws on individuals who fall under its priorities is both unusual and obviously an abuse of prosecutorial discretion.

This is unusual to prosecutorial discretion because prosecutors do not usually announce their priorities or when they will exercise prosecutorial discretion. A liberal law professor and immigration attorney, Peter Margulies, explained that prosecutors strive ''to keep prospective lawbreakers in the dark.'' He explains that if prosecutors' discretion priorities are not kept secret, they ''would effectively license the wrongdoing.''

He then went on to give an example in the case of a burglary. He said:

> When an admitted burglar is youthful and the burglar's ''take'' is relatively modest, judges may not wish to sentence an offender to prison, and may look with favor on a plea bargain that reflects this sentiment. However, it would be difficult to imagine prosecutors soliciting applications from known burglars for a ''burglar's holiday'' that would guarantee a specific period of immunity.

In other words, it is as ridiculous to let people contemplating illegally migrating to the United States know they will get a pass under certain conditions as it would be to let people contemplating burglary know they would be let off the hook if they met certain qualifiers.

Consider the drunk driver who killed Sarah Root. What message does this send to people who make a conscious decision to get behind the wheel after drinking? What this case says is that drunk driving—unless convicted—is not a serious enough offense to force removal proceedings. This is moral hazard. Hence, this administration's Priority Enforcement Program is creating a moral hazard and given license to illegal activities.

Sarah Root is one of many victims in the past few weeks who died at the hands of undocumented immigrants. In Louisville, KY, Chelsea Hogue was put into a coma when Jose Aguilar, an undocumented person, hit her while driving under the influence of alcohol. ICE issued a detainer and did not take custody of Aguilar but released him a day later, again because he had ''no prior significant misdemeanor or felony conviction.''

Then there is Esmid Pedraza, who had been transferred to ICE in August of 2013 after serving time for driving under the influence. However, he was let go on bond because of limited detention space. This is what ICE said at that particular time:

> Due to limited availability of detention space, ICE prioritizes the use of its immigration detention beds for convicted felons, known gang members, and other individuals whose conviction records indicate they pose a likely threat to public safety.

This is ironic, given that the administration has failed to live up to the mandated detention bed limit that Congress sets every year.

Just a little over 2 years after his drunk driving offense, Pedraza was charged with the murder of his girlfriend Stacey Aguilar. Then on March 8, an individual illegally present in the United States allegedly murdered five people in Kansas and Missouri. The suspect entered the country in 1993, committed a series of crimes, and was removed from the United States in 2004. He attempted to illegally enter again the same month but was given ''voluntary return.'' However, he returned at some point and continued his criminal ways. The suspect had been arrested and charged with numerous crimes, including communicating a threat with intent to terrorize; battery of a spouse; several driving without a license offenses; a subsequent felony conviction for communicating a threat with intent to terrorize, reportedly based on his threat to kill his wife with a rifle, for which he was sentenced to incarceration for 2 years; two arrests for driving under the influence, which produced one conviction; and a conviction for domestic battery.

On at least two occasions, ICE was notified of the suspect but, for various reasons, did not take custody of that person. That was a major failure between the Feds and local law enforcement.

People are illegally entering the country, being removed, entering again, and committing more crimes. Illegal reentries are happening because

there are no consequences. That is what happened in Kate Steinle's death, and that is why we need to move to what is called Kate's Law. That bill would deter people from illegally reentering by enhancing penalties and establishing new mandatory minimum sentences for certain individuals with previous felony convictions.

The Obama administration cannot continue to turn a blind eye to sanctuary communities and ignore those who have broken our laws by illegally crossing the border time and again.

How many more people have to die? How many more women—like Kate Steinle, Sarah Root, Chelsea Hogue, and Stacey Aguilar—are going to be taken from their families and friends? The parents of these young women are grieving today, yet their stories fall on deaf ears at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Things have to change. The President must rethink his policies and must find a way to ensure that criminal immigrants are taken off the streets. The Obama administration should try enforcing the law, instead of its priorities, for the sake of the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from New Jersey.

(The remarks of Mr. MENENDEZ pertaining to the introduction of S. 2675 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. MENENDEZ. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, my colleague has brought to our attention a very crucial issue. We need to be there for each other. That is what makes America great—when we are there for each other.

(The remarks of Mrs. BOXER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2674 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mrs. BOXER. I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO KIM DINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the extraordinary work of United States Capitol Police Chief Kim C. Dine, who served with distinction for more than 3 years with the department.

Chief Dine, who has over 40 years of distinguished service in the field of law enforcement, was sworn in as the eighth chief of police of the United States Capitol Police in December 2012. As chief, he commanded a force of nearly 2,000 sworn and civilian personnel who provide comprehensive law enforcement, security, and protective operations services for the U.S. Congress, its staff, and more than 11 million annual visitors. Chief Dine also served as an ex-officio member of the Capitol Police Board.

Chief Dine's outstanding dedication to duty shined during a tenure that included a Presidential inauguration, the historic visit of Pope Francis, hundreds of protests, and four State of the Union addresses, as well as overseeing the department's strategic plan update. Chief Dine also oversaw other important events such as the 2013 Ricin incident, Memorial Day and July Fourth concerts, the annual National Peace Officers Memorial Service, the implementation of a new radio system, and the tragic line-of-duty death of Sergeant Clinton Holtz.

Chief Dine's outstanding policing career began in 1975 at the Metropolitan Police Department, MPD, in Washington, DC, where he spent 27 years, rising through the ranks to an appointment as an assistant chief of police. During his MPD career, Chief Dine worked in many diverse neighborhoods across Washington, DC, as well as serving in a broad range of organizational assignments throughout the agency, gaining expertise in critical aspects of policing and crime reduction strategies. His accomplishments included building community coalitions, honing community policing strategies, developing juvenile crime prevention programs, and initiating use of force training and internal investigations.

During his tenure as MPD's First District commander—an area encompassing Capitol Hill and downtown Washington, DC—homicides declined by 60 percent and community policing flourished. His last assignment as assistant chief included command over internal affairs, force investigation teams, the disciplinary review division, the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, and management of the memorandum of agreement between MPD and the U.S. Department of Justice to institute agencywide reforms.

In July 2002, Dine became the chief of police of the Frederick Police Department, FPD, in Maryland, where he served as chief of police for over 10 years. During his tenure, he and the women and men of the FPD focused on strengthening the relationship between the police and the community, building a new strategy of community policing and intelligence-led policing, improving training, producing the agency's first ever strategic plan, acquiring national law enforcement accreditation, achieving flagship status, and aggressively using technology.

By outreach; marshaling and maximization of resources; acquisition and intelligent use of technology; extensive crime analysis; and aggressive acquisition of grants, FPD was able to combat crime more effectively, build bridges with Frederick's minority communities and deaf community, and make major strides in working with the mental health community through effective partnerships to improve services and minimize use of force issues. Through implementation of cohesive and multifaceted approaches, these efforts resulted in a 10-year record of crime reduction, value-added problem solving, enhanced trust, and communication with all constituents that made meaningful strides in maintaining the high quality of life and pride in Frederick—Maryland's second largest city.

Chief Dine holds a bachelor of arts from Washington College in Chestertown, MD, and a master of science from American University in Washington, DC. Chief Dine's graduate study at American University included study abroad at the University of London Imperial College of Science and Technology Institute on Drugs, Crimes, and Justice in England. Chief Dine is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and a member of a number of organizations, including the Police Executive Research Forum, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association. He is married to a former NASA scientist and is the proud father of two daughters.

Congratulations on your retirement from public service, and we wish you the very best in your future.

EFFORTS TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was disturbed to hear Senator MCCONNELL's remarks on the floor last week questioning my commitment to supporting survivors of human trafficking. I think anyone who follows our efforts to stop this terrible crime knows the ridiculousness of that claim. I was particularly surprised to hear it coming from Senator MCCONNELL who, along with Senator GRASSLEY and other Republicans, voted against reauthorizing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the Violence Against Women Act—two watershed laws that changed the way this country approaches human trafficking and other violence against women.

I am deeply committed to supporting victims of crime and have been for my entire career. I started out as a prosecutor, and I have never forgotten the terrible crime scenes I saw. Those images serve as a constant reminder of how important it is to do all we can to support survivors and their families. And those efforts must include a commitment to providing real money—not

just lip service—to support survivors as they rebuild their lives.

That is why last Congress, as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I led the effort to reauthorize the landmark Trafficking Victims Protection Act. That historic, bipartisan legislation—and the funds it authorized—signaled our country's commitment to ending all forms of human trafficking, both here at home and around the world. I also led the effort to pass the historic Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Act, which included vital updates to help women on college campuses, tribal lands, immigrants, and new protections for those in the LGBT community to ensure that every victim in need gets the lifesaving services they deserve. These impactful laws were enacted 3 years ago, and they are making a real difference in peoples' lives. Senator MCCONNELL may have forgotten about what we did in 2013 to greatly expand protections for victims of violence, but I have not. I will continue fighting for our most vulnerable populations and work across the aisle to make real progress.

I was glad to see the Senate return its attention to the issue of human trafficking this Congress with the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, which I supported. However, the Senate should have also passed my bipartisan Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, critical legislation to prevent trafficking in the first place. That bill would authorize funding to provide shelter and services for some of our most vulnerable kids, kids who are literally walking prey for traffickers. Unfortunately, Senators MCCONNELL and GRASSLEY opposed that effort. Republicans cannot pretend to stand up for the rights of trafficking victims while leaving these children behind. They had a chance to help and they said no. That is not leadership.

Senator MCCONNELL also suggested that I had somehow ignored the opioid epidemic gripping our Nation and my State of Vermont and let the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act ''languish'' in the Judiciary Committee. Again, anyone who knows my record is aware of how focused I am on helping ensure that communities are getting the resources they need to respond to this devastating problem. I have been holding Senate Judiciary Committee field hearings on heroin and opioid addiction since 2008. Long before the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, was introduced, I worked to deliver funding—real dollars—for antiheroin task forces across the country. And when we did first introduce the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act in September 2014, I was an original cosponsor of that legislation and have worked tirelessly to see it enacted.

At the same time, I have worked to change the focus from imposing harsh and arbitrary mandatory minimum sentences on those who abuse drugs to actually providing treatment. I know that bumper sticker slogans and the ''war on drugs'' are failed approaches.

It is unfortunate that Republicans in the Senate are unwilling to put real money behind CARA to ensure its programs will succeed. Just last week, Senator MCCONNELL led the Republican opposition to Senator SHAHEEN's amendment that would have provided emergency supplemental appropriations. Ending this crisis is going to cost money, and it is disappointing that Senator MCCONNELL and other Republicans are not willing to dedicate the resources that are so desperately needed by law enforcement and health care providers throughout this county.

Passing one bill in one Congress is not the answer to addressing the very serious problems facing our communities. It takes a sustained commitment. I am proud of my record to support victims of human trafficking and communities struggling to respond to the opioid epidemic. Unfortunately, too often, Republicans have blocked efforts to provide real funding for these priorities. I will not stop working until we are able to end these scourges.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ANNIVERSARY OF ASSOCIATED LOGGING CONTRACTORS, INC., OF IDAHO

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Associated Logging Contractors of Idaho.

The Associated Logging Contractors, Inc., of Idaho, ALC, have an important voice in advocating for policies that support an essential sector of Idaho—the logging and wood hauling industry. Throughout the past 50 years since its organization, the association has worked to serve its purpose of ''developing programs that are instrumental in helping members to reduce costs of operation and to craft creative solutions to problems confronting the industry.'' ALC represents nearly 400 independent logging contractor businesses from across Idaho.

From Endangered Species Act reform, to boosting rural economies, to addressing forest health and much more, the ALC has been involved in a wide range of discussions central to Idaho. I value the organization's and its members' input and involvement in shaping solutions to our natural resources challenges. We have much work ahead, but progress is being made on public lands issues to the benefit of Idahoans and our economy. Positive developments in job opportunities and more timber identified for harvest for the betterment of forest health are the result of the State and Federal Government working more closely with private landowners and the logging community to make progress toward the removal of salvage timber from last year's fires.

While challenging, collaboration is working, and ALC members have been instrumental in advancing this effort. The organization has much to be proud of for its efforts in bringing folks together to achieve solutions and working toward their implementation. Collaboration is difficult but indispensable work, as it brings lasting advancements for habitats, recreation, rural economies, and job production. I have greatly valued ALC member's support of local collaborative efforts.

Congratulations to the members of the Associated General Contractors of Idaho on 50 years of accomplishments. Thank you for your hard work building up our great State and Nation. I wish you all the best for continued success.●

RECOGNIZING CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am proud to serve as a co-chair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth. Through this caucus and from my time in the Senate, I have learned about the experiences that many young people have faced when entering the foster care system. I have worked to help improve the system by ensuring that children are cared for and that we do all we can to find them safe, loving, and permanent homes. Children should grow up in families, not foster care.

Today, I want to pay tribute to Casey Family Programs. It is the Nation's largest operating foundation focused exclusively on child welfare. Casey is operating in Iowa and all the States to provide strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research and evaluation. It enjoys a unique partnership with the States by asking what jurisdictions hope to achieve that matches the foundation's mission and working with the State in partnership. Casey Family Programs also provides direct service to children and families in some States, and it is committed to the goal that no child will age out of their care without a caring adult by 2017.

As a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, I value the research, data, and policy information that Casey Family program shares. They have done so much for States, children, and families since their inception.

This month, Casey Family Programs is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. I want to say congratulations to its board of trustees and leadership for working so hard to reduce the number of youth in foster care. With their help, we are working every day to make sure foster care is a layover, not a destination.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL BROWN

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Michael Brown on his retirement after serving the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, NLTFPD, for over 26 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his years of hard work and dedication to creating a safe environment for the communities of Incline Village and Crystal Bay.

Mr. Brown began his career in fire services 37 years ago. In 1986, he joined the NLTFPD as a firefighter and paramedic. Throughout his tenure, he worked diligently, moving up the chain of command, until he left the NLTFPD to serve the Nevada Division of Forestry. He returned to the district in 2003, assuming the role of assistant fire chief. In 2007, Mr. Brown was named fire chief, taking full responsibility for the department and leading his colleagues in fighting fires and providing emergency services. Mr. Brown commanded the department with over 20 years of experience as a paramedic, serving the local communities with unparalleled knowledge. His years of service in responding to all types of emergency and public service situations are invaluable to residents across the Lake Tahoe community. Mr. Brown truly went above and beyond in his role with the NLTFPD.

It is the brave men and women who serve in our local fire departments that help keep our communities safe. These heroes selflessly put their lives on the line every day. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Brown for his courageous contributions to the people of Lake Tahoe. His sacrifice and courage earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly put their lives on the line to benefit others.

For the last 50 years, the NLTFPD has provided risk services to residents of Incline Village and Crystal Bay. The department has three stations and provides two staffed ambulances and two reserve ambulances to address needs within the local community. All firefighters serving the NLTFPD are Nevada emergency medical technicians. In addition, the department has over 20 paramedics ready to assist at any time. This department serves as a special resource to the community with the ability to rescue residents in all types of scenarios, including emergencies in snow, water, or in backcountry, in addition to protecting local residents in incidents of fire. In 1982, it also began providing transportation of the sick and injured to various hospitals. This department has shown unwavering dedication to keeping Nevadans of this community safe. We are lucky to have had someone like Mr. Brown leading the way in the department's efforts.

Mr. Brown has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the NLTFPD. I am both humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Brown on his retirement, and I give my deepest appreciation for all he has done to make Nevada a safer place. I offer him my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.•

TRIBUTE TO ROSSI RALENKOTTER

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Rossi Ralenkotter for his hard work and dedication to the State of Nevada. I would also like to congratulate him on his induction into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame. Mr. Ralenkotter has gone above and beyond in his role with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, LVCVA, contributing greatly to the touristic success of our great State.

Mr. Ralenkotter earned his bachelor of science in marketing from Arizona State University in 1969 and obtained his master's degree in business administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1971. Prior to working with LVCVA, Mr. Ralenkotter served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force with the 468th Medical Service Flight. No words can adequately thank him for his service and sacrifices in protecting our freedoms.

He began his career with LVCVA more than 40 years ago, starting his lengthy tenure as a research analyst. From there, Mr. Ralenkotter worked diligently, ascending the chain to the very top. He was named the authority's executive vice president and senior vice president of marketing before taking the role of president and CEO in 2004. As president and CEO, Mr. Ralenkotter launched the LVCVA's ''What happens here, stays here'' branding campaign, one of the most successful in Nevada tourism history.

He also spearheaded the Las Vegas Convention Center District project, further expanding the convention center and increasing Las Vegas's reputation as the leading business destination in the world. He is truly a role model to the local business community, going above and beyond to grow Nevada tourism. As our State continues to flourish as one of the Nation's top destinations, I remain committed to introducing new policies and strengthening existing ones that positively affect Nevada tourism. I am grateful to have allies like Mr. Ralenkotter working toward a similar goal.

Over the past decade, Mr. Ralenkotter has been recognized for his efforts. He was named Co-Brand Marketer of the Year in 2004 by Brandweek Magazine, as one of the 25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry by Meeting News in 2005, and as Employer of the Year by the Employee Service Management Association in 2006. He was also recognized by the International Association of Exhibitions and Events with the Pinnacle Award, as well as being inducted into both the U.S. Travel's Hall of Leaders and the Destination Marketing Association International Hall of Fame in 2014. These awards are given to those individuals who have gone to great lengths to grow business and tourism in their communities, and without a doubt, Mr. Ralenkotter's efforts merit each one of these prestigious awards.

For the last 40 years, Mr. Ralenkotter has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to growing Nevada's tourism industry and further establishing its prestige. The State of Nevada is fortunate to have someone of such commitment working towards these goals. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Ralenkotter on his induction into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame, and I wish him well as he continues in his efforts for the Silver State.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 6:40 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4674. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Margin and Capital Requirements for Covered Swap Entities'' (RIN3052–AC69) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4675. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Livestock Mandatory Reporting: Revision of Lamb Reporting Requirements'' ((RIN0581–AD46) (Docket No. AMS–LPS–15–0071)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4676. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pistachios Grown in California, Arizona, and New Mexico; Increased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–15–0038) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4677. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Domestic Dates Produced or Packed in Riverside County, California; Decreased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–15–0034) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4678. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4679. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Energy, Installations and Environment), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4680. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Energy, Installations and Environment), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4681. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Legal Authority Citations for 15 CFR Chapter VII'' (RIN0694–AG84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4682. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 on March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4683. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4684. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2016'' (Notice 2016–21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4685. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consistent Basis Reporting Between Estate and Person Acquiring Property From Decedent'' ((RIN1545–BM98) (TD 9757)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4686. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modification of Rev. Rul. 2005–3'' (Rev. Rul. 2016–8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4687. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Utility Allowances Submetering'' ((RIN1545–BI91) (TD 9755)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4688. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations under IRC Section 7430 Relating to Awards of Administrative Costs and Attorneys' Fees'' ((RIN1545–BX46) (TD 9756)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4689. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pharmaceutical Science and Clinical Pharmacology Advisory Committee'' (Docket No. FDA–2016–N–0001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4690. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–323, ''Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools Salary and Benefits Approval Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4691. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Information Required in Notices and Petitions Containing Interchange Commitments'' (RIN2140–AB13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4692. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements for Unfinished and Untreated Wood'' (CPSC Docket No. CPSC–2011–0081) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4693. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment to Clarify When Component Part Testing Can Be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits; Delay of Effective Date and Reopening of Comment Period'' (CPSC Docket No. CPSC–2011–0081) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4694. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–324, ''Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4695. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–325, ''Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 742. A bill to appropriately limit the authority to award bonuses to employees (Rept. No. 114–226).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 1638. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–227).

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2055. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2671. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish rules for payment for graduate medical education (GME) costs for hospitals that establish a new medical residency training program after hosting resident rotators for short durations; to the Committee on Finance .

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 2672. A bill to reauthorize the program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department health care providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2673. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act to accelerate the development and deployment of innovative water technologies; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2674. A bill to authorize the President to provide major disaster assistance for lead contamination of drinking water from public water systems; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2675. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2676. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 398. A resolution designating March 15, 2016, as ''National Speech and Debate Education Day'' ; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. Con. Res. 33. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide''; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 337

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 337, a bill to improve the Freedom of Information Act.

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 681, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 683

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to extend the principle of federalism to State drug policy, provide access to medical marijuana, and enable research into the medicinal properties of marijuana.

S. 804

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 838

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 838, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish a national usury rate for consumer credit transactions.

S. 1110

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1110, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes.

S. 1378

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1378, a bill to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1392, a bill to require certain practitioners authorized to prescribe controlled substances to complete continuing education.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1975

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1975, a bill to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2289

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2289, a bill to modernize and improve the Family Unification Program, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 378, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2674. A bill to authorize the President to provide major disaster assistance for lead contamination of drinking water from public water systems; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I rise to address the crisis of lead contamination in drinking water that we are seeing all across this Nation. It is time for us to come together and solve these problems. We have all been outraged by the crisis in Flint, where we

know children and families are being poisoned by lead in their drinking water.

My colleagues from Michigan, Senators STABENOW and PETERS, have an excellent bipartisan bill—which Senator INHOFE and I helped to negotiate—that would provide emergency relief to address this crisis. The people of Flint need this relief now. So I call on any of those holding up this bill to get out of the way and let this legislation pass immediately. The crisis in Flint has also brought attention to the broader issue of lead in drinking water in communities throughout our Nation.

I want to read to you some headlines from just the last few weeks. Here is one from the Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, MS: ''Pregnant women, kids cautioned over Jackson water, lead.'' That is February 25, 2016.

From Newsweek: ''With lead in the water, could Sebring, Ohio, become the next Flint?'' That is January, 27, 2016.

From the Associated Press: ''Elevated Lead Levels Found in Newark Schools' Drinking Water.''

In Charlotte, the Charlotte Observer: ''Lead in water not confined to Flint.'' That is January 30, 2016.

Whether it is Flint, MI; Newark, NJ; Jackson, MS; or Durham, NC—or shall I name some places that are going to hit us—the American people have a right to expect clean, safe drinking water when they turn on their faucets.

It is clear that this is a national crisis that demands a national solution going forward. So that is why today I have introduced new legislation, the Lead in Drinking Water Disaster Act. We are doing this because, should there be more Flints, we want to have a better way to move forward.

Currently, the President can declare a major disaster for catastrophes such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, droughts, fires, floods, and explosions. Now, sometimes those fires, floods, and explosions are manmade and, yet, we are able to act through FEMA, or the Federal Emergency Management Agency. But lead in drinking water is not on the list of major disasters covered under FEMA's rules.

It is critical that future Presidents do not have their hands tied because the definition of a major disaster does not include lead in drinking water. My bill ensures that a lead-contamination crisis would be considered a disaster, which it clearly is.

Take a look at the color of the water coming out of the fountains here—the faucets. Nobody could face this in their homes. You would get your kids out of there so fast. Current law doesn't think this is a disaster. So I think this simple way I have of moving forward should be attractive to colleagues. I hope they will sign on to this very simple bill.

The way it would work is that the Governor in any State that is hit by this would ask the President for a major disaster declaration. So for all of my colleagues who feel we should process these things through the State, that is exactly what happens in my bill. If the President agrees, FEMA would provide immediate assistance to protect families from lead in the water.

What we do in this legislation is we name several agencies who would help create the plan to address the emergency. It would be, in addition to FEMA, Health and Human Services, the EPA, and the Army Corps of Engineers. They would work together to create a plan to resolve the crisis.

We can see what is happening to the kids in Flint. Instead of doing their afterschool activities—look how sweet they are—they are carrying bottles of water throughout their community.

Look, there is no safe level of lead for children. The effects of exposure are generally irreversible. Lead harms the developing brains and nervous systems of children and babies. It can cause miscarriage, stillbirths, and infertility in both men and women. People with prolonged exposure to lead may be at risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and kidney disease.

What is the extent of this problem? Millions of homes across America receive water from pipes that date back to an era before scientists knew of the harm caused by lead exposure. While we take steps toward investing in modernizing our water infrastructure, which I hope we will do as we write a new Water Resources Development Act—Senator INHOFE and I are very hard at work in doing just that—we also have to step in and help communities that are in crisis right now.

I want to conclude with this. Again, take a look at the drinking water coming out of the tap. Would anyone in the Senate stand still for a minute if their children or grandchildren were in a situation where this was the drinking water, this was the bathing water? We know there is no way we would ever allow that to happen.

No American should ever have to drink water that puts their health and the health of their children at risk. I hope we take action by passing the emergency legislation by the Michigan Senators this week. The children and families of Flint should not have to wait one more day.

After we pass that measure, which addresses itself just to Flint, MI, I hope we will take up my legislation to help future Presidents address this public health threat, which is going to pop up all over this great Nation of ours. We must be prepared. We cannot tie the hands of this President or any future President.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2675. A bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to be a voice for the 3.5 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico, the 200,000 Puerto Ricans who have served in our Armed Forces in every conflict since World War I, and the 20,000 who currently wear the uniform and put their lives on the line for our country.

I rise to introduce a comprehensive stability and recovery package that restores fairness, ensures accountability, and gives Puerto Rico the tools it needs to dig itself out of this hole. And I rise to implore this Congress to act before it is too late.

Let me thank Senators SCHUMER, BROWN, WARREN, CANTWELL, BLUMENTHAL, and BOOKER for supporting these efforts and working so hard on behalf of the people of Puerto Rico. I also want to thank Congressman PIERLUISI, who coauthored the tax sections of this bill along with parts of the healthcare titles.

Finally, I want to thank Governor Padilla for his incredible leadership on the island and for strongly endorsing our legislation. The people of Puerto Rico are fortunate to have a Governor who cares deeply about their lives and is so dedicated to putting them first and above politics.

Let me put it this bluntly: Puerto Rico is on the brink of default and staring into the abyss. For the better part of the past year, the government has been compelled to take drastic and unprecedented actions just to avoid a total default of the central government. They have closed schools and hospitals, they have laid off police officers and firefighters, and they have raised taxes on businesses and individuals. But all the spending cuts and tax hikes in the world will not make a dent in this crisis unless Puerto Rico has the ability to restructure its debts. That is because servicing the government's $72 billion debt is swallowing a massive 36 percent of the island's revenue. That is 36 cents of every dollar the government takes in going not to roads or bridges and schools but to bondholders instead. This percentage is six times the U.S. State average and simply unsustainable by any measure.

In fact, despite all we hear about Puerto Rico's significant annual budget deficits, the island would actually be running a surplus—a surplus—if it didn't have to make debt payments. Let me repeat that: It would have a surplus.

These debt service payments act like an albatross and handcuff the people of Puerto Rico, preventing them from investing in their economy. Fewer resources for education, infrastructure, and essential services cause a death

spiral as talented workers opt to leave the island, businesses are shuttered, and revenue drops even further. That is why the first and most important step we must take is to give Puerto Rico the ability to restructure its debt in an orderly fashion—a right that they had at one time and that was surreptitiously stripped out. There is no legislative history as to why it was stripped out, but they had this right. This is not novel. Our legislation would in essence do just that, providing a fair and reasonable way for Puerto Rico to restructure all of its debts while avoiding a costly race to the courthouse that would result in years—years—of costly litigation. But before Puerto Rico can even access this authority, it needs to affirmatively opt in and accept the establishment of an independent fiscal stability and reform board and create a chief financial officer.

This both ensures that any restructuring plan is based on objective and independent analysis of the island's situation and provides assurances to creditors that future governments will adhere to a prudent long-term fiscal plan, while affirming and respecting Puerto Rico's sovereignty.

Once Puerto Rico opts in, it receives an automatic 12-month stay to give government officials the necessary breathing room to organize their finances and develop a sustainable 5-year fiscal plan upon which annual budgets and their restructuring proposal will be based.

Once the Governor submits a restructuring proposal, a judge selected by the First Circuit Court of Appeals would have to confirm that it complies with the fiscal plan, protects the rights of pensioners, and, if feasible, does not unduly impair general obligation bonds.

Our process follows precedent by giving creditors a voice and the ability to object in court, and it ultimately gives an independent judge the authority to ensure that any plan is fair and reasonable. In order to ensure the long-term fiscal plan is followed—not just now, but in the future—our legislation gives the independent board the power to review annual budgets and future debt issuances and to exercise strong oversight and transparency powers.

If future budgets do not comply with the fiscal plan, the board has the authority to issue a vote of no confidence, which will send a strong and unequivocal message to the legislature, to capital markets, and to the Puerto Rican people that the proposed path is unsustainable, which, in turn, will provide much needed transparency and accountability to the budgeting process.

At the same time, we are careful to affirm the fundamental pillars of democracy by making the board of, by, and for the people of Puerto Rico. The board will consist of nine members chosen by the Governor of Puerto Rico, its legislature, both parties, the Supreme Court, and the President of the United States. At least six of the board members must be full-time residents of Puerto Rico, at least six must have knowledge of its history, culture, and socioeconomics, and all members—all members—must have financial and management expertise.

This structure strikes the proper balance by providing strong and independent oversight and accountability while still respecting the sovereignty and democratic rights of the people of Puerto Rico.

It is not a bailout—far from it, in fact. This proposal wouldn't cost the U.S. Treasury a penny—not a dime—and, because it is limited to the territories, wouldn't have a contagion effect on the broader municipal market.

As I have said before, giving Puerto Rico the flexibility to restructure its debt is the top priority and a prerequisite for any legitimate recovery plan. But it is also clear that the lack of health care funding parity is adding pressure to the overall financial situation as the island's health care system accounts for 20 percent of the island's economy, and it is responsible for a third of its overall debt burden.

Currently, Puerto Rico's Medicaid Program, rather than being reimbursed for necessary costs, is capped. Not only is it capped, it is set to hit a funding cliff as soon as mid-2017. When this happens, the island will instead receive funding to cover only a very small portion of its Medicaid costs, a burden no State could handle.

The second piece of our legislation fixes this by moving Puerto Rico toward a Medicaid system that provides stable funding for the long term. Additionally, there are several policies in Medicare that treat the island differently from the rest of the Nation, leaving providers and seniors to face unfair penalties and low reimbursements.

This bill eliminates many of these discrepancies to more accurately align Medicare policies in Puerto Rico with the rest of the country. As citizens of the United States—and I emphasize that because sometimes Members of Congress have asked me whether they need an American passport to go to Puerto Rico. I thought they were joking, but they were serious. As citizens of the United States, it is only fair that Puerto Ricans be afforded the same access to care, coverage, and health benefits as everyone else.

Finally, our legislation would incentivize Puerto Rican workers to enter the formal economy and give families the help they need to raise their children by providing parity to the island for the earned-income tax credit and child tax credit. Praised by both Republicans and Democrats as one of the most effective tools to combat poverty and encourage workers to enter the labor market, the earned-income tax credit is currently unavailable to the people of Puerto Rico. However, as American citizens, all it takes for a resident of Puerto Rico to become eligible for a credit is a short plane ride to Miami.

This is just another reason why so many Puerto Ricans have fled the island and taken up residence on the mainland. It makes no sense to prohibit American citizens living in Puerto Rico from taking advantage of this important credit, especially with such a stubbornly lower labor participation rate.

Our legislation corrects this inequity, providing equal treatment for all American citizens, regardless of whether they reside in Puerto Rico or in the States.

I shouldn't need to remind this body that from the infancy of our Nation, the people of Puerto Rico have been there for us and with us, and now we need to be there for them. Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States in 1898 after the Spanish-American War. Less than two decades later, in 1917, Congress passed the Jones-Shafroth Act, granting American citizenship to the residents of the island. But even long before they were granted U.S. citizenship, Puerto Ricans have had a long and profound history of fighting on the side of America.

As far back as 1777, Puerto Rican ports were used by U.S. ships, enabling them to run British blockades and keep commerce flowing, which was so crucial to the war effort. It was Puerto Rican soldiers who took up arms in the U.S. Civil War, defending this Nation's Capital, Washington, DC, from attack, and they fought in the Battle of Fredericksburg.

In World War I, almost 20,000 Puerto Ricans were drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces. Let's not forget about the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers, the segregated military unit composed almost entirely of soldiers from Puerto Rico, who played a crucial and prominent role in World War I, World War II, and the Korean war.

I am proud to say that I worked with Senator BLUMENTHAL and others to make sure that the heroic Borinqueneers—the only Active-Duty segregated Latino military unit in the history of the United States and the last segregated unit to be deactivated—received well deserved and long overdue national recognition when we passed a bill awarding these courageous patriots with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions to the United States.

While some might be tempted to point their finger at our brothers and sisters on the island and fault Puerto

Rico for carrying more than $70 billion in debt, I challenge my Senate colleagues to work with us on finding solutions because this problem isn't going away.

Mark my words. If we don't act now, this crisis will explode into a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe, not in a matter of decades or even years but in months. In just a couple of months, they have a major payment they do not have the wherewithal to make.

We may think we will kick the ball down the road. But, no, that human catastrophe is going to take place in months, and we will be right back here next year with the same set of problems, only far, far worse.

Delaying action is akin to letting an infection reach the bloodstream before seeking treatment. The longer you wait, the more painful and challenging the treatment is. Puerto Rico isn't asking us to pull them out of this, just to give them the wherewithal to help them help themselves be able to achieve the goal.

Let's not stand aside and do nothing while the island burns. Let's not turn our backs on our friends and fellow citizens when they need us the most. Let's instead come together as a nation and support our fellow citizens like we always do when things get tough. The people of Puerto Rico have always been there for us and with us. Let's make sure that we are there for them.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 398—DESIGNATING MARCH 15, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY''

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 398

Whereas it is essential for youth to learn and practice the art of communicating with and without technology;

Whereas speech and debate education offers students myriad forms of public speaking through which students may develop talent and exercise unique voice and character;

Whereas speech and debate education gives students the 21st-century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration;

Whereas critical analysis and effective communication allow important ideas, texts, and philosophies the opportunity to flourish;

Whereas personal, professional, and civic interactions are enhanced by the ability of the participants in those interactions to listen, concur, question, and dissent with reason and compassion;

Whereas students who participate in speech and debate have chosen a challenging activity that requires regular practice, dedication, and hard work;

Whereas teachers and coaches of speech and debate devote in-school, afterschool, and weekend hours to equip students with life-changing skills and opportunities;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the lifelong impact of providing people of the United States with the confidence and preparation to both discern and share views;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day acknowledges that most achievements, celebrations, commemorations, and pivotal moments in modern history begin, end, or are crystallized with public address;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day recognizes that learning to research, construct, and present an argument is integral to personal advocacy, social movements, and the making of public policy;

Whereas the National Speech & Debate Association, in conjunction with national and local partners, honors and celebrates the importance of speech and debate through National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the importance of speech and debate education and the integration of speech and debate education across grade levels and disciplines: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 15, 2016, as ''National Speech and Debate Education Day'';

(2) strongly affirms the purposes of National Speech and Debate Education Day; and

(3) encourages educational institutions, businesses, community and civic associations, and all people of the United States to celebrate and promote National Speech and Debate Education Day.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 33—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THOSE WHO COMMIT OR SUPPORT ATROCITIES AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, INCLUDING YEZIDIS, TURKMEN, SABEA-MANDEANS, KAKA'E, AND KURDS, AND WHO TARGET THEM SPECIFICALLY FOR ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS REASONS, ARE COMMITTING, AND ARE HEREBY DECLARED TO BE COMMITTING, ''WAR CRIMES'', ''CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY'', AND ''GENOCIDE''

Mr. SASSE submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 33

Whereas those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, intend to exterminate or to force the migration or submission of anyone who does not share their views concerning religion;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and suffered grievous bodily and psychological harm, including sexual enslavement and abuse, inflicted in a deliberate and calculated manner in violation of the laws of their respective nations, the laws of war, laws and treaties forbidding crimes against humanity, and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948 (in this concurrent resolution referred to as the ''Convention'');

Whereas these atrocities are undertaken with the specific intent to bring about the eradication and displacement of their communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage in violation of local laws, the laws of war, laws and treaties that punish crimes against humanity, and the Convention;

Whereas local, national, and international laws and treaties forbidding ''war crimes'' and ''crimes against humanity'' and the Convention condemn murder, massacre, forced migration, extrajudicial punishment, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, torture, rape, and persecution of individuals because of their religion and shall be punished, whether committed by ''constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals'' as provided by local laws, international laws and agreements, and the Convention;

Whereas Article I of the Convention and international and local laws confirm that genocide and crimes against humanity, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, are crimes that government authorities are obligated to prevent and to punish;

Whereas Article II of the Convention declares, ''In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.'';

Whereas Article III of the Convention affirms, ''The following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) Attempt to commit genocide; (e) Complicity in genocide.'';

Whereas, on July 10, 2015, Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, declared that Middle Eastern Christians are facing genocide, a reality that must be ''denounced'' and that ''[i]n this third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide—and I stress the word genocide—is taking place, and it must end'';

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report of the United Nations Committee on Human Rights prepared at the request of the Government of Iraq stated that ''[e]thnic and religious groups targeted by ISIL include Yezidis, Christians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, Kurds and Shi'a'' and that ''[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of the incidents [in Iraq in 2014–2015] . . . may constitute genocide''; and

Whereas attacks on Yezidis included the mass killing of men and boys and enslavement and forcible transfer of women and children: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities targeted specifically for religious reasons are, and are hereby declared to be, ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'';

(2) each of the Contracting Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948, and other international agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations under the Convention and these international agreements;

(3) every government and multinational body should call the atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful names: ''crimes against humanity'', ''war crimes'', and ''genocide'';

(4) the United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General are called upon to assert leadership by calling the atrocities being committed in these places by their rightful names: ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'';

(5) the member states of the United Nations, with an urgent appeal to the Arab States that wish to uphold religious freedom, tolerance, and justice—

(A) should join in this concurrent resolution;

(B) should collaborate on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

(C) should collaborate on the establishment and operation of domestic, regional and international tribunals to punish those responsible for the ongoing crimes;

(6) the governments of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, and other countries are commended for having undertaken to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (''ISIS'' or ''Da'esh'') and other extremists until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(7) all those who force the migration of religious communities from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived and practiced their faith in safety and stability for hundreds of years—including specifically in the Nineveh Plain, a historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq and Mount Sinjar, the historic home of the Yezidis—should be tracked, sanctioned, arrested, prosecuted, and punished in accordance with the laws of the place where their crimes were committed and under applicable international criminal statutes and conventions.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3450. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''Subtitle E—National Voluntary Bioengineered Food Labeling Standard

''SEC. 291. DEFINITIONS.

''In this subtitle:

''(1) BIOENGINEERING.—The term 'bioengineering', and any similar term, as determined by the Secretary, with respect to a food, refers to a food—

''(A) that contains genetic material that has been modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques; and

''(B) for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature.

''(2) FOOD.—The term 'food' has the meaning given the term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

''(3) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

''SEC. 292. APPLICABILITY.

''This subtitle shall apply to any claim in the labeling of food that indicates, directly or indirectly, that the food is a bioengineered food or bioengineering was used in the development or production of the food, including a claim that a food is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using bioengineering.

''SEC. 293. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL VOLUNTARY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall—

''(1) establish a national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard with respect to—

''(A) any bioengineered food; and

''(B) any food that may be bioengineered or may have been produced or developed using bioengineering; and

''(2) establish such requirements and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the standard.

''(b) REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A food may be labeled as bioengineered only in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary in accordance with this subtitle.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A regulation promulgated by the Secretary in carrying out this subtitle shall—

''(A) prohibit any express or implied claim that a food is or is not safer or of higher quality solely based on whether the food is or is not—

''(i) bioengineered; or

''(ii) produced or developed with the use of bioengineering;

''(B) determine the amounts of a bioengineered substance that may be present in food, as appropriate, in order for the food to be labeled as a bioengineered food;

''(C) establish a process for requesting and granting a determination by the Secretary regarding other factors and conditions under which a food may be labeled as a bioengineered food; and

''(D) require that, if a food is voluntarily labeled under this section through means of scannable images or codes or other similar technologies—

''(i) the label clearly indicates to consumers that more information is available about the ingredients of the food; and

''(ii) the scannable image, code, or similar technology provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is bioengineered or whether bioengineering was used in the development or production of the food.

''(c) STATE FOOD LABELING STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 295, no State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling or disclosure of whether a food is bioengineered or was developed or produced using bioengineering for a food that is the subject of the bioengineered food labeling standard under this section that is not identical to that voluntary standard.

''(d) CONSISTENCY WITH CERTAIN LAWS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall establish consistency between—

''(1) the national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard established under this section; and

''(2) the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).

''SEC. 294. RULEMAKING ON SUBSTANTIAL PARTICIPATION.

''(a) DEFINITION OF LABELED FOOD.—In this section, the term 'labeled food' means food that bears, or to which is attached, any written, printed, or graphic matter, including on the immediate container or on the package of the food.

''(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations defining the circumstances that constitute substantial participation by labeled foods with voluntary disclosures of whether a food is, is not, or may be bioengineered or whether bioengineering was, was not, or may have been used in the development or production of the food.

''(c) CONSIDERATION.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (b), the Secretary shall consider—

''(1) the percentage of the labeled foods consumed by consumers that disclose whether the food is, is not, or may be bioengineered or whether bioengineering was, was not, or may have been used in the development or production of the food; and

''(2) the extent to which there is clear indication in a usual and customary form that information is available for the most frequently consumed labeled foods or direct access to disclosures for the most frequently consumed labeled foods, including through means that are clear and direct other than the label or labeling, such as responses to consumer inquiries through call centers, the Internet, websites, social media, scannable images or codes or other similar technologies that would allow consumers to access the information, or any other means the Secretary considers appropriate for disclosing the bioengineered content of food.

''(d) REQUIREMENT.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (b), the Secretary shall define the term 'most frequently consumed labeled foods'.

''SEC. 294A. NATIONAL MANDATORY BIOENGINEERED FOOD LABELING STANDARD.

''(a) REQUIREMENT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY STANDARD.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The mandatory standard under subsection (b) shall be established only if the Secretary determines there is not substantial participation as determined in accordance with section 294(b).

''(2) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall make the determination as described in paragraph (1) not earlier than the date that is 2 years after the date on which the Secretary has promulgated regulations under each of sections 293 and 294(b).

''(3) INITIATION.—If the Secretary determines that there is not at least 70 percent substantial participation as determined in accordance with section 294(b), the Secretary shall promulgate regulations to establish a mandatory standard in accordance with this section.

''(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY STANDARD.—If the Secretary determines that there is not substantial participation as described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

''(1) establish a national mandatory bioengineered food labeling standard with respect to—

''(A) bioengineered food; and

''(B) food that may be bioengineered or may have been produced or developed using bioengineering; and

''(2) establish such requirements and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the standard.

''(c) REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary establishes a mandatory standard under subsection (b), a food may be labeled as bioengineered only in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A regulation promulgated by the Secretary in carrying out this section shall—

''(A) prohibit any express or implied claim that a food is or is not safer or of higher quality solely based on whether the food is or is not—

''(i) bioengineered; or

''(ii) produced or developed with the use of bioengineering;

''(B) determine the amounts of a bioengineered substance that may be present in food, as appropriate, in order for the food to be labeled as a bioengineered food;

''(C) establish a process for requesting and granting a determination by the Secretary regarding other factors and conditions under which a food may be labeled as a bioengineered food;

''(D) exclude food served in a restaurant or similar establishment; and

''(E) require an appropriate person (as determined by the Secretary) to disclose food that is subject to the mandatory standard either through—

''(i) a statement made on the food label or labeling; or

''(ii) means other than the label or labeling, including responses to consumer inquiries through call centers, the Internet, websites, social media, scannable images or codes or other similar technologies that would allow consumers to access the information, or any other means the Secretary considers appropriate for disclosing the bioengineered content of food.

''(3) IMPLEMENTATION.—The implementation date for regulations promulgated in accordance with this section shall be not earlier than 2 years after the later of—

''(A) the date on which the Secretary promulgates the final regulations under this section; or

''(B) the date on which the Secretary makes a determination under subsection (a)(1).

''(d) STATE FOOD LABELING STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 295, no State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling or disclosure of whether a food is bioengineered or was developed or produced using bioengineering for a food that is the subject of the bioengineered food labeling standard under this section that is not identical to the mandatory labeling requirement under this section.

''(e) ENFORCEMENT.—

''(1) PROHIBITED ACT.—It shall be a prohibited act for a person to knowingly fail to make a disclosure as required under this section.

''(2) RECORDKEEPING.—Each person subject to the mandatory labeling requirement under this section shall maintain, and make available to the Secretary, on request, such records as the Secretary determines to be customary or reasonable in the food industry, by regulation, to establish compliance with this section.

''(3) EXAMINATION AND AUDIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct an examination, audit, or similar activity with respect to any records required under paragraph (2).

''(B) NOTICE AND HEARING.—A person subject to an examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A) shall be provided notice and opportunity for a hearing before an administrative law judge on the results of any examination, audit, or similar activity.

''(C) AUDIT RESULTS.—After the notice and opportunity for a hearing under subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall make public the summary of any examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A).

''(4) RECALL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall have no authority to recall any food subject to this subtitle on the basis of whether the food is labeled as bioengineered or developed or produced using bioengineering.

''SEC. 294B. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

''(a) TRADE.—This subtitle shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

''(b) OTHER.—Nothing in this subtitle—

''(1) affects the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

''(2) affects the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 201 et seq.).

''Subtitle F—Labeling of Certain Food

''SEC. 295. FEDERAL PREEMPTION.

''(a) DEFINITION OF FOOD.—In this subtitle, the term 'food' has the meaning given the term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

''(b) FEDERAL PREEMPTION.—No State or a political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food or seed in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling of whether a food (including food served in a restaurant or similar establishment) or seed is genetically engineered (which shall include such other similar terms as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture) or was developed or produced using genetic engineering, including any requirement for claims that a food or seed is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using genetic engineering.''.

NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 398, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 398) designating March 15, 2016, as ''National Speech and Debate Education Day''.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 398) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 105–292, as amended by Public Law 106–55, Public Law 107–228, and Public Law 112–75, appoints the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Ambassador Jackie Wolcott of Virginia.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 15; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the Senate stand in recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, at 2:15 p.m., the Senate then resume consideration of the message to accompany S. 764.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise to address the motion that is on the floor right now, which is a motion to adopt an amendment that is essentially a new version of the Monsanto DARK Act. Now, DARK is an acronym that stands for ''Denying Americans the Right to Know.'' This is, by the way, an amendment that has not been seen in any committee in the Senate ever.

We heard a lot of discussion about how we were going to have a process in this Chamber where things would be in the ordinary fashion—go through the committee so it could be digested and analyzed—but instead this amendment is to an underlying bill that has been ping-ponging back and forth between the House and Senate. This legislation has never been heard in committee. It was crafted over the last few hours. Here we are with a fundamental issue of citizens' right to know, and the majority leader of this Chamber has decided to bypass any ordinary consideration to jam this through on behalf of Monsanto.

What is at stake here? What is citizens' right to know about? It is about genetically modified or genetically engineered ingredients that are in their food. Across the country 90 percent of Americans want to have some indication of what is in their food and whether there are GE ingredients. They feel this is relevant to what they would like to buy. Even if they don't personally look it up when they buy a product, they feel citizens should have a right to know. I rounded it off and said 90 percent, but it is actually 89 percent. The survey took place last fall. I believe it took place in November of 2015. This fundamental notion about the right to know what is in your food transcends every ideology in our country.

The Presidential primary season is going on right now, and we are seeing a huge range of ideologies from the left to the right on display, but when we talk to citizens about this right to know, it doesn't matter if they are Democrats, Independents, Republicans, rightwing Republicans or leftwing Democrats, they all come out essentially the same. Let's break it down by each party. Democrats are at 9 to 1, or 92 percent; Republicans are at 84 percent, which rounds out to about 8½ Republicans to 1 Republican. It is a huge ratio. Independents are 9 to 1, or 89 percent. When asked if they feel strongly about this, they say, yes, they do feel strongly about this. That just goes to the fundamental notion that here in America citizens believe they have the right to make up their own minds and not have the overreach of the Federal Government telling them what to believe or the government saying: You can't have the information you want in order to make your decision as a consumer. Citizens resent that. Citizens get angry about that. Yet right now the majority party in this Chamber is trying to push through just such a repression of a citizen's right to know.

This has been triggered by a law in Vermont. Citizens in Vermont voted and decided they want to know if their food has GE, genetically engineered, ingredients, and that law goes into effect on July 1 of this year. Our big food industry—Monsanto and friends—said: No, we can't let the citizens of Vermont have the information they want. We must pass a Federal law to stop them. By the way, we need to stop every other State in the United States of America and every other subdivision of any State in the United States of America from providing this information, which 9 out of 10 Americans want to have listed on their food.

We are all acquainted with labels on food. That is not something new. Some citizens look at it to determine how many calories are in the food. Others look at what vitamins may be in the food or if it meets the daily recommended dose of vitamins. Some go to see if it has a form of cornstarch, corn sugar, or high fructose corn syrup that maybe they like or don't like.

We also have labeling laws about other things consumers care about on their food. If you sell fish in a grocery store in America, you have to tell the consumer whether that fish has been caught in the wild or whether it has been raised on a farm. Why? Because citizens wanted that information. They considered that relevant to their decision about their purchase of foods for themselves and their families.

Let's consider the fact that here in America if you put juice in a store, you have to say whether it is made from concentrate or whether it is fresh. Why? Because consumers thought that was relevant to how they would like to exercise their judgment. Well, 9 out of 10 Americans say they want the information on whether there are GE ingredients, but now we have this bill on the floor—this Monsanto DARK Act addition 2.0—that says, no, we are going to take away that power from every State in the country, not just Vermont, not just my home State of Oregon but every State. We are going to take it away from any subdivision of those States. We are going to black out that information so consumers can't have it.

Here is the question we face: Are we going to hold a vote this week in this Chamber, as scheduled by the majority leader for Wednesday, to shut down debate on this topic? The majority leader didn't allow debate today because he just introduced the bill tonight and he just set the schedule for tomorrow. We are not going to have the debate until 2:15 p.m. tomorrow, and he said we are going to vote on Wednesday morning on this critical issue affecting citizens' right to know. So on behalf of Monsanto and friends, he wants to make sure there are only a few hours of debate and that the citizens of our country don't even know this dirty deed is being done in this Chamber. That is why I am speaking right now, because it is important for the citizens to know this is being rammed through right now at a time when it is most likely not going to gain public attention.

Why is that? Why did the majority leader do this on a Monday night right before the five big primaries that occur tomorrow? Because the news media is very busy covering those five big primaries. Who is going to win the Republican primary in Florida that will affect, one way or another, whether a Member in this Chamber stays in the race? Who will win the Republican primary in Ohio? That is possibly going to affect whether the frontrunner gets a majority by the time the convention comes up. Who is going to win the Democratic primary in Illinois? Who is going to win the Democratic primary in Ohio? That will have a big impact on the rhythm of that. So the media is very consumed and very busy, and that is why here, on the eve of this major Tuesday primary, this bill has been put on the floor. Americans have no idea it is happening. They can ram this thing through with no notice to the American people because, again, this bill was never considered in committee. This is a whole new creature—this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0.

What specifically does it do and how has it morphed? Well, this is very interesting. This act says States are banned from providing information that 9 out of 10 of their citizens want. It says subdivisions are banned from providing information that 9 out of 10 of their citizens want, and then it says there will be a voluntary program, and if, after a series of years, citizens can get information based on consumer inquiries, then this ban will continue forever. If they can't get the information on 70 percent of the major foods that are being sold, then all that is required is a response to consumer inquiries. In other words, no labeling requirement, no simple fashion for a consumer to find out what is in their food. If we put a ban on States from providing easy-to-use consumer information about GM or GE ingredients, then there must be a national consumer easy-to-use indication on the label.

The argument is put forward—and I share it—that 50 different State standards would be confusing and expensive and almost impossible to implement. One warehouse serves multiple States and so on and so forth. Having a different label in every State makes no sense. OK. I take that point. But if we are going to ban the States from providing the information consumers want on the argument that there should be one national standard for simplicity, then there must be a consumer-friendly national standard, and there is no such standard in this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 placed on the floor tonight.

There is an interesting twist here because they have proposed some ideas that are different from putting consumer-friendly information on the label. The first of those ideas is a 1–800 number. It works like this. Let's say, like my daughter, you are interested in high fructose corn syrup.

I am going to use this book here as a visual aid, and I ask unanimous consent to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank the Chair.

Imagine these are products that are in the grocery store. So I, the consumer, am going down the aisle, and I say: I want to know whether these contain high fructose corn syrup. Well, I turn it over and look at the ingredients, and I see that one does. Looking at this one: No, this one doesn't. Let me check the third. It is right here. I have the answer. I have checked three products in 5 seconds. That is consumer friendly. But let's say we have to call the 1–800 number to find out.

I ask unanimous consent to use my cell phone as a visual aid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. So now I have to pull my cell phone out of my pocket, and I have to find this number that is probably too small for me to read. I have to turn on my phone and hope there is a cell connection in the store, which there may or may not be. I dial it up. Oh, I am talking to somebody in the Philippines, and they have no idea what I am asking about. Oh, I am talking to some call center somewhere else, and they have all kinds of information, but they are not sure exactly what my question is about GE ingredients. And maybe I have to wait 15 minutes while I am on hold. We have all had that experience. Every one of us has had the experience of not just waiting 15 minutes; we call a consumer help line or maybe a 1–800 number and maybe it is half an hour. They give you a little message: We are sorry, we have a high call volume and we just can't get to you yet, but we will get back to you in maybe 30 or 40 minutes. I am standing here in the aisle. I want to compare these three products. I have to call three different 800 numbers. I ask, can anyone on this floor stand up and say this is a consumer-friendly way to answer the fundamental question as to whether there is a GE or GM—genetically engineered or genetically modified—ingredient? No. This is absurd. This is a sham. That is why it is sham No. 1.

But there is not just one sham in this bill; there are more. The second sham is a computer code. So picture this: Instead of being able to pick up a product and say ''I want to see if this has peanuts in it; I am allergic to peanuts,'' I can check my second product. Oh, here it is. I check the third product. No, no peanuts. I am allergic to peanuts. In 5 seconds, I have checked three products. That is consumer friendly.

But now this second sham is that I have to have a smartphone with me. I have to take a picture of this code called a quick response code, and that will take me to a Web site, and maybe I will find out the information in the format presented by the company itself, which will probably be completely incomprehensible and indigestible. All I wanted to know was whether there is a GM ingredient. But now I have to take a picture. I have to go to a Web site. I have to negotiate the information on the Web site. All I needed was a little symbol right here. It doesn't matter what the symbol is. It could be ''GM.'' It could be ''GE.'' It could be a ''t'' for transgenic. That is what Brazil uses. It could be a happy face. Just anything so that consumers knew what that symbol stood for. That would allow them to check it very quickly and very easily.

A QR code is even more diabolical because when you use your phone to take a picture of this and go to that Web site, they track some of your information. You have to give up your privacy. I have to give up my privacy to find out if there is a GE ingredient in the food I am eating? No. No way. No how. Just wrong. An invasion, an overreach of the Federal Government asking me to give up my privacy by having to take a picture of this.

Envision now whether this is really practical in any way. Not only might it take half an hour to go through those three different QR codes and find out what they really mean, but I am shopping for groceries. This is just one item I want to buy. I want to buy a can of soup. That is what I want to do. But I have 20 more things on my list. I go to the second thing. Maybe I want to buy hot dogs, and now there are 10 different versions of hot dogs. What am I going to do—take a picture of all 10 hot dogs for my second item on the list?

Now I am 2 hours into my shopping trip. I have a child in the grocery cart who is hungry and who is tired and who wants to go home. I want to go home. I want to get home and cook dinner for myself and my family. I have to spend 2 hours to check out two products on my grocery shopping list. This is a complete sham.

There is even more to come. This is sham No. 3 that is in the Monsanto Protection Act, Monsanto DARK Act—Denying Americans the Right to Know—2.0. Here is a wonderful idea. This says a company can provide information via social media, as in Facebook or Twitter or who knows what—Instagram. So here I am now. Picture this. This really takes the cake. I am in the store. I care about GE ingredients, and I check product No. 1 for their 800 number, but they don't have an 800 number, or they have it but it is not for this purpose because this company has done their voluntary disclosure not through the 800 number. So I think, well, am I supposed to take a picture of the smart code? I look for it. Maybe I find one. I take a picture, I go to the Web site, but no information is there because this company has decided to do voluntary disclosure through social media. Well, which social media? I am supposed to know if they are putting it up on Facebook or if they are supposed to be putting it on Instagram or on Twitter? No, because they can put it anywhere they want.

So here we have a completely unworkable system in every possible way. In other words, all three of these ideas were put into this bill solely for the pretense that there is some form of disclosure to consumers.

Now, why would the author of this bill that was put on the floor tonight go to this tremendous effort to have this pretense about disclosure? Well, let's go back to where I started. The reason for the pretense is that 9 out of 10 Americans want to know. So this is a scam on the American people.

Right now, citizens in our country are very angry. They are very upset. We have gone through four decades in which the middle class has been squeezed, and they know they are getting the short end of the stick. They know that our national wealth has grown enormously but nothing is shared with the middle class. They know the system is rigged. And here comes our majority leader to put a bill on the floor that further rigs the system with this Monsanto DARK Act edition 2.0.

So citizens across the country, this is being done to take away your rights when you are not paying attention because we are in the middle of a major primary tomorrow. So if you are aware of this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 being on the floor right now and that there is going to be a vote on it on Wednesday morning, then weigh in and say it is not all right. Share with other Americans on your social media and say that this sham disclosure bill is not OK, that taking away the desire and right of 9 out of 10 Americans to want to know if there is GE ingredients in their food—taking away that right is a complete travesty.

This is the type of overreach that makes citizens mad. This is the type of jam-through legislation on behalf of a powerful special interest to take away what citizens care about that makes people mad. My colleagues across the aisle know that, so they want to jam this through in the dark of night when the country is not paying attention. That is simply not OK. It is not OK.

Some may say: What is the big deal here? Aren't genetically engineered products all wonderful, and why would any citizen actually be concerned about them? Why do these 9 out of 10 citizens have this desire? They are just misled. There is no concern about GE ingredients. We are just taking away their right because they don't know what they are talking about. Their concerns are not legitimate.

Well, I will tell my colleagues tonight that their concerns are legitimate. Genetic engineering can produce a benefit and it can produce problems, and therefore it is the citizens' right to be able to make the evaluation of how they want to spend their dollar, just as it is their right if they want to buy reconstituted juice versus fresh juice, just as it is their right if they want to buy wild fish rather than farmed fish, just as it is their right if they don't want to buy food with high fructose corn syrup, or maybe they do want to buy it, but they get to choose. They get to look at the ingredients and the labeling and they get to choose.

Let me expand a little bit on this because science has provided us with both an accounting of some of the benefits and an accounting of some of the problems. Science indicates that there is some truth in both. For example, let's take one of the benefits. This is a picture of golden rice. Well, what is golden rice? In parts of the world, citizens suffer from a big deficiency of vitamin A. Therefore, this rice has been genetically engineered to have vitamin A in it, and it can, in parts of the world where rice is routinely eaten, help address that. Folks have said that is a good thing. Now, I don't know all the reverberations of cultivating this type of rice versus another type of rice. There might be a problem hidden away in those different cultivation techniques. But by and large, I have heard positive things about golden rice helping address a vitamin deficiency.

Let's take transgenic carrots. Their cells have been cultivated in order to provide a substance that provides a cure to Gaucher's disease. So that seems like a benefit because people who suffer from Gaucher's disease are awfully happy about having a remedy.

Let's take yams grown in South Africa. Well, they have several different viruses that affect these yams, and so by genetically engineering to resist these viruses, as far as I am aware, we don't know yet of any side effects that are a problem. As of now, this can be something that is generally registered as a benefit, to have that resistance to these viruses. There is even discussion of genetic modifications that can be done that serve in lieu of immunizations. That is a very interesting scientific idea. That could be a way to provide resistance to humans with certain diseases.

That is only part of the story. Just as science has documented that there are benefits, there are also some concerns. Here in the United States, the major genetic modification is something called Roundup Ready. It makes a particular plant immune to the effects of an herbicide. Herbicides kill the plants, so this makes the plant immune to the substance that kills plants. Therefore, you can use this herbicide to control weeds without killing the corn or without killing sugar beets or without killing the cotton, and so forth.

(Mr. DAINES assumed the Chair.)

So what have we seen? Since this genetically engineered quality was developed, we have seen a massive increase in the use of herbicides on crops. It has gone from 7.4 million pounds back in 1994 to now over 160 million pounds. We see this massive increase and its continued path to 2012. One of the effects is that if you have this massive 160 million pounds of herbicide on fields that weren't there 20 years earlier, what you have is a lot of runoff of herbicide into our streams and into our rivers. When you put plant-killing stuff in our streams and rivers, it has an impact on the ecosystem. That is a scientifically documented legitimate concern.

There is another concern. When we tilled fields to take down the weeds, it was mechanical, and in that disturbed soil grew a variety of things and the edges of fields grew a variety of things. One example is milkweed. It has been scientifically documented that there is a big reduction in these miscellaneous weeds and some of the related insects and species that otherwise would have inhabited that area near these fields. One example is the monarch butterfly. The monarch butterfly has crashed in the Midwest because of the dramatic reduction in milkweed with a change from mechanical tilling to herbicide control of weeds. That is just the canary in the coal mine—or the monarch in the coal mine. We don't know what else is being affected by this massive application of herbicides.

Here is another challenge. This is an interesting genetic modification. This is called Bt corn. Bt corn has been genetically modified so it produces a pesticide inside each corn cell, and particularly the goal is that when the larvae of these beetles start eating, the pesticide would kill the larvae of these beetles. These larvae are referred to as the ''western corn worm.''

The western corn worm does a lot of damage, and you put the pesticide inside the cells. Both the larvae and the beetles themselves like to eat the corn. They like to eat the strands of pollen that pollinate the corn. What can end up is corn that has only a few kernels on them. There is a greatly reduced amount of kernels as a result of the pollen being compromised. What is happening as a result of the prevalence of this Bt corn which is grown all over the United States? What is happening is that these larvae of the corn worms and beetles are developing a resistance to it because Mother Nature has a few surprises. At any one moment in a large population, there are thousands or millions of accidental mutations occurring. Out of those mutations, when millions and millions of these beetles and their larvae are exposed, eventually a few of them have a mutation that makes them immune to the pesticide. Then they proceed to have offspring, and then the offspring have more mutations and become more resistant. Suddenly, you now have to go back and put pesticides in these fields, even though there is a pesticide produced in each cell of the corn itself. That type of biofeedback is scientifically documented. That is a concern.

There is an impact on creating what is sometimes called superweeds through herbicides and superbugs that are pesticide-resistant through the massive application of Bt GE engineering.

This chart is just a reference to the problem in the waterways that I have already spoken to, so I don't think I need to repeat that.

If there are advantages or benefits and there are scientifically documented problems, shouldn't it be up to the consumer to decide if they want to buy a product with genetically engineered ingredients? They are not stupid. They are not crazy. They have not invented some concerns. There are legitimate, scientifically documented benefits and legitimate scientifically documented concerns. So it should be up to the consumer.

We tell consumers: Hey, you have thoughts about whether you would rather have wild fish or farm-raised fish, for example. Why do we require that? I will give you an example from the Pacific Northwest. In the Pacific Northwest a lot of salmon are raised in ocean pens. Those are farmed fish. They are very close together, and because they are very close together, they develop more diseases. There is a type of sea lice that becomes prevalent. Also, because they are not eating the same stuff wild fish eat, their meat is white, so they have to be fed a dye to make their meat the same color as wild salmon. There are folks who hear that and say: I have a preference. I would rather have farmed fish because they are cheaper, or I would rather have wild fish because I don't like the way farmed fish is raised. Maybe one likes the idea of supporting the wild fishing

industry rather than the farm fishing industry. That is why we require the disclosure. So it should be a citizen's right to know.

Right now here is where we are with this issue being jammed through in the middle of the night on behalf of a very powerful special interest, even though 9 out of 10 Americans don't agree.

Well, let's ask the Presidential candidates where they stand—each and every candidate, Hillary Clinton and BERNIE SANDERS from the Democratic side, Mr. Trump, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. Kasich on the Republican side: Where do you stand on this issue that is going to be voted on Wednesday morning in this Chamber? Do you stand with the 9 out of 10 Americans who want the right to know whether there are GE ingredients in their food? Do you stand with the people, or do you stand with the powerful special interests that want American citizens to be kept in the dark? This is very relevant. Folks voting tomorrow in five primaries, in Florida, Illinois—whatever the other three are tomorrow—they want to know where the Presidential candidates stand. Are they going to be the type of leader who stands with the people, or are they going to be the type that wants to approve and say it is OK to slam this Deny Americans the Right to Know Act 2.0—this Monsanto act. It is all right to slam it through with no committee consideration in the dark of night when the country is not paying attention because of the big set of primaries tomorrow. I want to know where they stand.

So I say to these candidates on the Republican side and the Democratic side: Call us up. Tell us where you stand. Call my office: 202–224–3753. I will let the rest of the Senate know where you stand. We will make sure everyone knows whether you, the Presidential candidates, stand with the citizens of America and the right to know or whether you stand with the powerful special interests that want to strip States' rights to inform their citizens about information that they want.

I want to know from the Presidential candidates: Do you believe that the Federal Government should strip States of the ability to label, even if their labels are all consistent with each other? Do you think that is OK? Do you care about States' rights? Do you see States as a laboratory where we can experiment with ideas and see if they work or not?

Right now Vermont is a laboratory. On July 1 they are going to have their first labeling law in the country, and that is an experiment that their citizens wanted, consistent with 9 out of 10 Americans who want to know. They responded; Vermont responded. They are the first State in the Union to do so. Are we going to cut that short? We are going to trash that ability of Vermont to conduct this experiment? We are going to stomp on the citizens' rights to know, not just in Vermont but in Oregon, Montana, Florida, and all 50 States, and throw in a few U.S. territories as well?

Now the argument is made that this is very dangerous because there could be multiple States that produce different standards. But that doesn't exist. There will not be multiple States in July. There is only one State that has a bill. So it is a phony argument to say that this is somehow causing big, expensive problems because there are conflicting State standards, because there are no conflicting State standards. It is just one great State that responded to its citizens' desires. Who are we to stop that experiment now? We should endorse that experiment. We should endorse that State laboratory. We should watch to see how well it works. We know citizens want this and that they care a lot. So why take it away just because Monsanto and friends don't want Americans to know?

How many Members here want to go home to their citizens and say: You know what, I represent all of us here in our State of Iowa or our State of Florida or our State of Montana or our State of Oregon—my home State—and it is OK with me if the Federal Government takes away your rights on something you really care about. That is what this Chamber is poised to do. That is why they are doing it in the dark of night, because the Senators who are here who are prepared to vote for the Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 don't want their citizens to know about it. That is why they have encouraged the strategy of putting it on the Senate floor on Monday night right before the big Tuesday primary, because citizens care a lot about knowing what they put in their mouth, and they care a lot about what they feed to their children. It is not simply whether it will make them sick. They care about the implications about the way different food is raised.

When we talk about the difference between farmed fish and wild fish, it doesn't have anything to do with what is going to poison you. It isn't even necessarily the taste. The taste may be similar. It is about the citizens' concerns about the way the harvesting is done, about the way the crop is grown, the produce is grown. When we talk about the difference between constituted juice and we require disclosure, the difference between fresh juice and concentrated juice, it isn't because it is going to poison us when we put in our bodies, it is because citizens care about the process that got them to the product they are about to buy. They care about this, too.

They care about it—Democrats, 92 percent; Republicans, 84 percent; Independents, 89 percent. In this deeply divided country, when 9 out of 10 folks—Independents, Democrats, or Republicans—all say it is important, shouldn't we honor that? Shouldn't we not trounce on their rights? Shouldn't we not suppress the first State pilot project on something that 9 out of 10 citizens across the spectrum agree on? Yet that is the dirty deed this Chamber is planning for Wednesday morning. It is just wrong.

I am deeply disturbed about what has become of our ''we the people'' Nation. What are those beautiful first three words of our Constitution? If you ask that in any townhall in America, the crowd at the townhall will respond: ''We the People.'' Those words are carved in our hearts because the core principle on which this Nation was founded is that we would establish a republic where the decisions would be of, by, and for the people. But this vote on Wednesday morning is not of, by, and for the people; it is of, by, and for Monsanto and friends because they want to take away what we the people care about—the right to know whether there are GE ingredients in their food.

Each of us came to Congress and we pledged to uphold our responsibilities under the Constitution. I would have to assume that each and every one of the 100 Senators on this floor had actually read the Constitution. I certainly hope every Senator on this floor knows it starts out ''We the People,'' and I hope they understand why.

After President Jefferson was out of office, he talked about the mother principle of our Republic, and that is that the decisions will serve the people. He talked about how for that to happen for each citizen, there has to be an equal voice.

You can imagine the vision of the town square and that there is no charge for standing in the town square and expressing your opinion. It is free. But every citizen gets to stand and have their say with an equal voice before a vote is taken. That is the equal voice President Jefferson talked about. That is the equal voice concept President Lincoln talked about, that understanding that each citizen would have a proportionate equal voice. That was embedded in our Founders' minds. They hadn't yet envisioned a world in which the town square is now for sale. The town square is now for sale. The town square is television, radio. You have to buy ads on it, and it is expensive. So you have to pay to stand and make your point. And those with the most money get to stand up for a longer period of time than those with little money. Those with the most money get to purchase the equivalent of a stadium sound system to drown out the voice of ordinary people.

Here is what I want to know: On Wednesday morning, is this Chamber going to respond to those with those stadium sound systems and proceed to drown out the voice of the people?

Let's put up that 89 percent chart.

This is the choice of the people—Democrats, Republicans, Independents who care about this. Wednesday morning, are we going to drown out their desires on behalf of the powerful special interests? Are we going to stamp out States' rights on behalf of a powerful special interest?

Let's not do that. Let's not go in that shameful direction, that direction which is completely contrary to the principles that founded this Nation of an equal voice, a nation, as Lincoln said, that operates of, by, and for the people.

If we want to have this debate over conflicting State labels, then fine. Let's create a common standard. Let's create one common standard for the entire country, a little symbol on the ingredients. That is all it would take. It could be any symbol, and the FDA could choose it so there is nothing pejorative about it. It is not taking up space on the package. It is not taking up space on the cover. It is not pejorative. It is not demeaning. It doesn't imply there is anything wrong. It just says this is something citizens want to know, just as they want to know farm versus wild for fish; just as they want to know concentrate versus nonconcentrate for juice; just as they want to know what minerals, vitamins, and ingredients are in the food they are buying. This they want to know. So honor that. Let's not tear down that vision laid out in the first three words of our Constitution and replace ''We the People'' with ''We the Titans.''

If you want to be a Senator in a republic that starts out with a Constitution that says ''We the Titans,'' then please go be a Senator in a different nation. Go to work somewhere else but not here in the United States of America where we have a responsibility to the citizens and the citizens are clear on where they stand.

So if we must vote on Wednesday—and there is no need to. We are only voting on Wednesday because within seconds of this bill being introduced tonight, the majority leader also put forward a petition that forces a vote on closing debate on Wednesday morning. No. So before anyone has had a word to say, a petition has already been filed to close debate. What kind of a democratic process is that? So the only time to speak to this is tomorrow when the whole world is paying attention to the primaries in five different States—and tonight. That is why I am speaking tonight.

So I am hoping a few people are tuned in enough to activate their networks and to say: This is wrong, Mr. Majority Leader. Pull that bill from this floor. That is a terrible assault on deliberative democracy. Send it to a committee and actually have a debate on it so people can analyze it. Give people in that committee the opportunity to do amendments. Give citizens across the Nation the chance to find out this is going on. Honor the people of this Nation and their right to know.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:52 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. MARK H. BERRY

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. GREGORY S. CHAMPAGNE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. MARSHALL B. WEBB

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT N. POLUMBO

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. DANIEL J. SWAIN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES J. KEEFE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREA D. TULLOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRADLEY C. SALTZMAN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREW E. SALAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. CRAIG D. WILLS

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. TAMHRA L. HUTCHINS–FRYE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. CURTIS M. SCAPARROTTI

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. LINDA L. SINGH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. AUSTIN S. MILLER

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM J. PRENDERGAST IV

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM P. BARRIAGE
BRIG. GEN. PETER A. BOSSE
BRIG. GEN. TROY D. KOK
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM S. LEE

To be brigadier general

COL. MARILYN S. CHIAFULLO
COL. ALEX B. FINK
COL. JOHN B. HASHEM
COL. SUSAN E. HENDERSON
COL. ANDREW J. JUKNELIS
COL. JEFFREY W. JURASEK
COL. DEBORAH L. KOTULICH
COL. JOHN H. PHILLIPS
COL. STEPHEN T. SAUTER
COL. STEPHEN E. STRAND

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B).

To be colonel

MARTIN T. MITCHELL

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGES ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGES PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be colonel

LARSS G. CELTNIEKS
JAMES W. HERRING, JR.

To be lieutenant colonel

PAULETTE V. BURTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

ERIC DANKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

STEVEN N. CAROZZA
NOAH C. CLOUD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RAMIT RING

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be captain

DONALD C. KING

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW UNDER TITLE 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(3). IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CONTINUED STATUS AS AN APPELLATE MILITARY JUDGE PURSUANT TO THEIR ASSIGNMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 950F(B)(2), WHILE SERVING ON THE UNITED STATES COURT OF MILITARY COMMISSION REVIEW, ALL UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE PROHIBITIONS REMAIN UNDER 10 U.S.C. SECTION 949B(B):

To be colonel

KURT J. BRUBAKER

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 14, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHN B. KING, OF NEW YORK, TO BE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Monday, March 14, 2016*

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 14, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ADRIAN SMITH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day.

You alone can trace the deepest fault lines of history and read the highest aspirations of the human heart.

Bless the Members of the people's House today. Give them sound judgment and make them as practical as the American people who sent them here as their Representatives.

Help them to withstand open criticism when they know what is right before You and conscience. Often they are characterized by half-truths and attributed motives that are far beneath them. Uphold them at such times with personal integrity and compassion for those most in need.

Having called them to serve others to the best of their ability, lift them even higher by Your grace and power to live and work for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A PUBLIC SERVANT REMEMBERED

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Washington County Commissioner Ted Bearth, who passed away last week.

Ted was elected to the county board in 2012 and was reelected in 2014, representing Washington County's Second District. However, Ted's long record of public service began more than 40 years ago, when he was elected to the Oakdale City Council in 1974. He spent an impressive 26 years of service as a city council member and mayor.

Ted's commitment to Minnesota and his community goes well beyond elected office. As a Marine Corps veteran, he was also involved in the Oakdale Veterans Memorial Committee.

Ted Bearth was a beloved member of our community and a dedicated public servant. Despite his declining health, he stayed involved and in touch with county staffers and fellow commissioners. He was known for his strong leadership and ability to forge lasting connections.

I wish Ted's family peace during this difficult time and assure them that he will be greatly missed by many Minnesotans.

IN HONOR OF NANCY DAVIS REAGAN

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week the American people lost a devoted public servant, Nancy Davis Reagan.

As a former staff member of the Reagan administration, I will always appreciate the devotion of Nancy Reagan to the American people, especially to her husband ''Ronnie.''

Nancy Reagan will always be cherished for how she inspired a Nation and showed that goodwill prevailed. She demonstrated that service by showing small acts could make a world of difference. Nancy's fierce love for her husband and her country was her service.

A passionate advocate for drug awareness and prevention, Nancy Reagan launched the ''Just Say No'' program to fight drug and alcohol abuse among young people to promote fulfilling lives. She strived to always make a positive impact for our citizens.

Mrs. Reagan showed that no act of kindness, no act of love, is too small to be meaningful. She practiced what she preached, living every day to the fullest. In every sense of the word, she was the very model of a First Lady, wife, and mother.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Happy 13th birthday, Addison.

DINA KIM RECEIVES PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dina Kim, a senior at State College Area High School, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, on earning the national President's Volunteer Service Award.

This award honors people across the Nation who have volunteered 100 hours per year or more in service to their communities. Dina has worked for years as a translator for Compassion Korea and was a former volunteer in Malaysia, helping to teach English to refugee students.

Dina started volunteering with Compassion Korea when she was in fifth

grade. The organization allows people from around the world to sponsor a child in need from another country. Dina works to translate letters from children to their sponsor families in Korean.

Dina Kim estimates that she has accumulated 600 hours of volunteer service both in State College, her former home in Texas, and in Malaysia.

She will graduate this year and plans to attend college, majoring in linguistics. She is an example of the great contributions young people can bring to the communities we serve. I congratulate Dina on this award and wish her the best of luck in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 10, 2016 at 1:35 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 524.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1506

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS) at 3 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FAIR RATEPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICIENCY STANDARDS ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2984) to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2984

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act'' or the ''Fair RATES Act''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.

Subsection (d) of section 205 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''Any absence of action by the Commission that allows a change to take effect under this section, including the Commission allowing the sixty days' notice herein provided to expire without Commission action, shall be treated as an order issued by the Commission accepting such change for purposes of section 313.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we begin consideration of this legislation, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) for bringing this matter to the attention of our committee.

The Federal Power Act sets forth processes to set rates for electricity, including opportunities for the public to protest a rate change filed with FERC. New rates take effect if FERC approves them or if FERC fails to issue an order approving or denying the filed rate within 60 days. The failure to approve or deny a rate may result from agency delay or, in some limited cases, from a vote that results in a deadlocked Commission, for example, a 2–2 vote. In such cases, the rates become effective by operation of law even when these rates were not approved by a majority of Commissioners.

The Federal Power Act provides administrative redress for members of the public to protest Commission rate decisions. However, if these rates become effective by operation of law—for example, a deadlock, 2–2—the administrative processes are not available to the public because FERC did not actually issue an order for the public to protest. The public literally gets shut out.

I don't want to speak for the gentleman from Massachusetts, but I think some of his constituents recently experienced this firsthand. As a result of that and of the hard work of Mr. KENNEDY's, of his staff's, and of the committee staffs' on both sides of the aisle, this legislation was drafted, and we considered it in committee. We have it on the floor today, and I would urge all of the Members to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the House for allowing me to discuss the Fair RATES Act, H.R. 2984, and for bringing it to the floor for a vote.

I also thank Chairman WHITFIELD, Chairman UPTON, Ranking Members RUSH and PALLONE, as well as the committee staffs on both sides, for their work with our office to help this bill move forward. In particular, to echo Chairman WHITFIELD's comments, he has been an incredible partner with us as we have tried to move this bill forward, and I am truly grateful for his assistance in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, every year regulators in New England hold energy capacity auctions to ensure that we have sufficient energy that is generated to meet consumer demand. Two years ago, during an auction, there was a shortfall that triggered administrative pricing at triple the current capacity payments, skyrocketing from about $1 billion to $3 billion.

That rate increase hasn't even reached our constituents yet, and our region already pays the highest energy rates in the continental United States. Next June, a significant portion of their bills will triple due to that auction.

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviewed the rate increase, it was down to four commissioners and it deadlocked 2–2. One Democratic Commissioner and one Republican Commissioner raised concerns about whether those rates were just and reasonable for consumers. However, the rates took effect by operation of law without any action from FERC; and because there was no official decision by FERC, there was no decision to appeal, holding our constituents voiceless.

Another annual auction just took place last month with rates, again, that were three times higher than they

are today. Those rates are, again, being reviewed by a shorthanded FERC, which sets up the potential for the exact same outcome of consumers, once again, being shut out of the process.

With bipartisan support and endorsements from the American Public Power Association, the New England Public Power Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, my bill, the Fair RATES Act, would simply ensure that avenues of good governance remain open. It provides that if at any time rate changes take effect by operation of law without Commission action, deadlocked or otherwise, aggrieved parties retain the right to protest those rates through the process that is outlined by the Federal Power Act.

I am the first to admit that this is a complex issue, but my bill is a simple fix to a complex problem. When we as lawmakers identify a flaw in one of our laws, especially one that unduly harms our constituents, it is our obligation to act to amend the law.

The unpredictability of my region's energy rates means families can't save for the future and local businesses can't grow. The least we can do is to ensure that they will never be held voiceless when their electric bills arrive at the end of each month; so I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to give particular thanks to the committee staffs on both the majority and minority sides, including Patrick Currier, Allison Trexler, Rick Kessler, Caitlin Haberman, and Alexander Ratner.

Finally, I have to acknowledge somebody on my own team, Eric Fins, who knows more about energy rates and capacity markets than he ever thought he would, and I am grateful for that. He is now writing a law school essay on the topic.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I do want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts, once again, for bringing this important issue before us.

We must allow the public to have administrative process relief, and this legislation will do that in those cases when FERC does not actually issue an order; so I would urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2984.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1268) to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1268

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Energy Efficient Government Technology Act''.

SEC. 2. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Subtitle C of title V of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140; 121 Stat. 1661) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 530. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The term 'information technology' has the meaning given that term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

''(b) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each Federal agency shall coordinate with the Director, the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy (that includes best practices and measurement and verification techniques) for the maintenance, purchase, and use by the Federal agency of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies, taking into consideration the performance goals established under subsection (d).

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing an implementation strategy under subsection (b), each Federal agency shall consider—

''(1) advanced metering infrastructure;

''(2) energy-efficient data center strategies and methods of increasing asset and infrastructure utilization;

''(3) advanced power management tools;

''(4) building information modeling, including building energy management;

''(5) secure telework and travel substitution tools; and

''(6) mechanisms to ensure that the agency realizes the energy cost savings brought about through increased efficiency and utilization.

''(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish performance goals for evaluating the efforts of Federal agencies in improving the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technology.

''(2) BEST PRACTICES.—The Chief Information Officers Council established under section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, shall recommend best practices for the attainment of the performance goals, which shall include Federal agency consideration of, to the extent applicable by law, the use of—

''(A) energy savings performance contracting; and

''(B) utility energy services contracting.

''(e) REPORTS.—

''(1) AGENCY REPORTS.—Each Federal agency shall include in the report of the agency under section 527 a description of the efforts and results of the agency under this section.

''(2) OMB GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY REPORTS AND SCORECARDS.—Effective beginning not later than October 1, 2017, the Director shall include in the annual report and scorecard of the Director required under section 528 a description of the efforts and results of Federal agencies under this section.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 529 the following:

''Sec. 530. Energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies.''.

SEC. 3. ENERGY EFFICIENT DATA CENTERS.

Section 453 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17112) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(D)(iv), by striking ''determined by the organization'' and inserting ''proposed by the stakeholders'';

(2) by striking subsection (b)(3); and

(3) by striking subsections (c) through (g) and inserting the following:

''(c) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall carry out subsection (b) in collaboration with the information technology industry and other key stakeholders, with the goal of producing results that accurately reflect the most relevant and useful information available. In such collaboration, the Secretary and the Administrator shall pay particular attention to organizations that—

''(1) have members with expertise in energy efficiency and in the development, operation, and functionality of data centers, information technology equipment, and software, such as representatives of hardware manufacturers, data center operators, and facility managers;

''(2) obtain and address input from Department of Energy National Laboratories or any college, university, research institution, industry association, company, or public interest group with applicable expertise;

''(3) follow—

''(A) commonly accepted procedures for the development of specifications; and

''(B) accredited standards development processes; and

''(4) have a mission to promote energy efficiency for data centers and information technology.

''(d) MEASUREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall consider and assess the adequacy of the specifications, measurements, best practices, and benchmarks described in subsection (b) for use by the Federal Energy Management Program, the Energy Star Program, and other efficiency programs of the Department of Energy or the Environmental Protection Agency.

''(e) STUDY.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, make available to the public an update to the Report to Congress on Server and Data Center Energy Efficiency published on August 2, 2007, under section 1 of Public Law 109–431 (120 Stat. 2920), that provides—

''(1) a comparison and gap analysis of the estimates and projections contained in the original report with new data regarding the period from 2008 through 2015;

''(2) an analysis considering the impact of information technologies, including virtualization and cloud computing, in the public and private sectors;

''(3) an evaluation of the impact of the combination of cloud platforms, mobile devices, social media, and big data on data center energy usage;

''(4) an evaluation of water usage in data centers and recommendations for reductions in such water usage; and

''(5) updated projections and recommendations for best practices through fiscal year 2020.

''(f) DATA CENTER ENERGY PRACTITIONER PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall maintain a data center energy practitioner program that leads to the certification of energy practitioners qualified to evaluate the energy usage and efficiency opportunities in Federal data centers. Each Federal agency shall consider having the data centers of the agency evaluated every 4 years, in accordance with section 543(f) of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 8253), by energy practitioners certified pursuant to such program.

''(g) OPEN DATA INITIATIVE.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish an open data initiative for Federal data center energy usage data, with the purpose of making such data available and accessible in a manner that encourages further data center innovation, optimization, and consolidation. In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall consider the use of the online Data Center Maturity Model.

''(h) INTERNATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS AND METRICS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall actively participate in efforts to harmonize global specifications and metrics for data center energy and water efficiency.

''(i) DATA CENTER UTILIZATION METRIC.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall facilitate the development of an efficiency metric that measures the energy efficiency of a data center (including equipment and facilities).

''(j) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not disclose any proprietary information or trade secrets provided by any individual or company for the purposes of carrying out this section or the programs and initiatives established under this section.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

□ 1515

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Representative ESHOO of California, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, for her work on this bill.

This legislation would require Federal agencies to coordinate with the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy, including best practices and measurement and verification techniques for the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies. OMB would be required to track and report on each agency's progress.

In 2013, the U.S. data centers consumed an estimated 91 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, enough electricity to power all of the households in New York City twice over; and, I might say, they are on track to reach 140 billion kilowatt-hours by 2020. This amounts to roughly 2 percent of all the electricity used in the U.S. each year. Federal data centers are responsible for at least 10 percent of all U.S. data center energy use.

Consequently, this bill seeks to improve the energy efficiency of Federal data centers by, in part, requiring the Department of Energy to update a 2007 report on data center energy efficiency and maintain a data center energy practitioner certification program. DOE also would establish an open data initiative to help share best practices and support further innovation and develop a metric that measures data center energy efficiency.

So this is a very important bill that focuses on efficiency in these Federal data centers, and I would urge all of the Members to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 1268, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, sponsored by two Energy and Commerce Committee members, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER).

H.R. 1268 promotes the use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies and practices across the Federal Government, especially in data centers.

The bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, the EISA Act, to require Federal agencies to coordinate with OMB, DOE, and EPA in developing an implementation strategy for maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies.

The legislation highlights specific items that should be considered in the strategy and sets performance goals to evaluate agencies' efforts. It would also amend EISA to require DOE and EPA to collaborate with stakeholders as they implement the data center efficiency program and other measures to improve data center efficiency.

This legislation was reported with unanimous consent last month by the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the provisions of H.R. 1268 previously passed committee in 2015 as part of H.R. 8.

I commend Ms. ESHOO and Mr. KINZINGER. This is good, bipartisan efficiency legislation that deserves all of our support.

I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today in support of my legislation, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act. I thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member PALLONE, and my legislative partner Congressman ADAM KINZINGER for their strong support of this bill.

This bill is all about bringing our federal government's IT and data centers into the 21st century. The federal government is the nation's largest landowner, employer, and energy user and should lead by example in this field. By requiring federal agencies to utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies, this legislation will reduce the federal government's energy use, save taxpayer dollars, and set the standard for the private sector.

Today, the world generates more data in twelve hours than was generated in all of human history prior to 2003. This data must be stored and processed at data centers which are the backbone of the 21st century economy but can be highly energy inefficient. While we now routinely hear about data centers, this was not the case when I began examining this issue over a decade ago. In those days I had to explain to my colleagues what a data center was. Today, most people understand that data centers are a critical part of our national infrastructure and are found in nearly every sector of our economy. According to the GSA, the federal government alone has more than 2,000 data centers which store everything from Social Security and tax records to e-books at the Library of Congress.

Data centers are critical to our economy and our lives, but they can be extremely inefficient when it comes to energy use. Experts estimate that most data centers could slash their energy use by up to 80 or 90 percent by simply implementing existing technologies and best practices. Several Silicon Valley companies have taken the lead in developing efficient, sustainable data centers, but we can do much more across both the private sector and government.

H.R. 1268 will drive energy efficiency improvements across the government's IT and data centers by requiring federal agencies to:

1. Utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies;

2. Formulate specific goals and periodically evaluate their energy efficiency; and

3. Make data center energy usage statistics public in a way that empowers further innovation.

Importantly, the bill requires government agencies to formulate specific performance goals and a means to calculate overall cost savings. The Department of Energy estimates that implementation of best practices alone could reduce the government's data center energy bill by 20 to 40 percent. And the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions found that widespread adoption of energy efficient information technologies could save the federal government over $5 billion in energy costs through 2020.

In 2005, I authored language in the Energy Policy Act which mandated an EPA study on the energy use and energy costs of data centers. This report was transmitted to Congress in 2007 and served as a driver of both private and public investment in energy efficiency. Based on widespread agreement across government, industry and academia, the bill before us today requires an update to this important report. H.R. 1268 also creates a new "Open Data" initiative to make federal data center energy usage statistics publicly available in a way that empowers further innovation.

The Energy Efficient Government Technology Act passed the House last Congress with 375 votes. It passed the House again in this Congress as part of H.R. 8, and it is included in the Senate's comprehensive energy bill which is currently being debated. This noncontroversial, bipartisan bill has strong support from both industry and energy efficiency advocates, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1268, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL POWER ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4427) to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4427

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CLARIFICATION OF FACILITY MERGER AUTHORIZATION.

Section 203(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking ''such facilities or any part thereof'' and inserting ''such facilities, or any part thereof, of a value in excess of $10,000,000''.

SEC. 2. NOTIFICATION FOR CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS.

Section 203(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7)(A) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Commission shall promulgate a rule requiring any public utility that is seeking to merge or consolidate, directly or indirectly, its facilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or any part thereof, with those of any other person, to notify the Commission of such transaction not later than 30 days after the date on which the transaction is consummated if—

''(i) such facilities, or any part thereof, are of a value in excess of $1,000,000; and

''(ii) such public utility is not required to secure an order of the Commission under paragraph (1)(B).

''(B) In establishing any notification requirement under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize the paperwork burden resulting from the collection of information.''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by section 1 shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Section 203 of the Federal Power Act establishes requirements for the sale, disposition, merger, purchase, and acquisition of certain utility assets and facilities. In the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress amended section 203 by dividing the section into separate statutory subsections, adding a new subsection granting FERC jurisdiction to review sales of certain generating facilities and increasing the minimum monetary threshold from $50,000 to $10 million for three of the four statutory subsections. This monetary threshold serves as a floor to ensure that public utilities would only be required to file and FERC to review proposed transactions of a minimal material significance.

As amended by Congress in 2005, the subsection in section 203 of the Federal Power Act that pertains to mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities did not include an express minimum monetary threshold of $10 million or any other amount. FERC has since interpreted this statutory change as eliminating the de minimis exceptions for mergers and consolidations. As a result, mergers and consolidations of any amount, no matter how small, require FERC approval.

This legislation, H.R. 4427, which was introduced by Mr. POMPEO of Kansas, remedies this discrepancy by amending section 203 to expressly include a minimum monetary threshold of $10 million for mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities, thereby mirroring the existing $10 million monetary threshold set forth in the other three subsections of section 203.

As explained by the general counsel of FERC, ''adding a $10 million de minimus threshold to the 'merge and consolidate clause' . . . could ease the administrative burden on the Commission staff and the regulatory burden on industry without a significant negative effect on the Commission's regulatory responsibilities.''

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to pass this legislation introduced by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO).

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4427, legislation by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO), which would add a $10 million threshold to trigger FERC review of a merger or consolidation under section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

This is a significant change to current law as established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that essentially did away with the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, PUHCA, as it had existed for 70 years, in order to reduce the burden on industry.

But it also fundamentally altered and strengthened section 203 of the Federal Power Act to protect against potential market abuses that might arise without the protections of PUHCA. With that reasonable compromise authored by then-Chairmen BARTON and Domenici, it earned the bipartisan support of Ranking Members Dingell and Bingaman.

Testimony we heard at a recent Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing highlighted that, last year, roughly 20 percent of section 203 applications fell beneath the $10 million threshold. That is a significant number of applications.

Furthermore, in multiple conversations with FERC general counsel and others, it became clear that, if the bill were to be enacted in its original form, FERC would have no way to know if attempts were being made to evade the review threshold by structuring major merger consolidation activity as a series of below-threshold consolidations. FERC has already told us that it has the tools to deal with efforts to evade review through such schemes if it finds out that they are occurring.

However, the clear problem was, which FERC acknowledged, that the bill, as introduced, would leave the Commission with no standardized way to acquire information to even know that these below-threshold transactions were actually occurring. I think we can all agree that FERC

should not have to rely on trade publications or word of mouth to know that merger consolidation activity is occurring involving regulated entities.

The easiest way to address this problem is by requiring regulated entities engaging in merger or consolidation activity to simply have to notify FERC that a transaction is occurring, and that is exactly what the committee did when it adopted by voice vote an amendment by Subcommittee Ranking Member BOBBY RUSH.

The bill, as reported by the Energy and Commerce Committee, requires FERC to begin a rulemaking process to develop a short, simple notification process for transactions between $1 million and $10 million. The bill also includes statutory direction to FERC to minimize the notification burden on industry to the maximum extent possible.

What we envisioned is a standard form of a page or less, able to be completed online, that simply informs FERC that a transaction is occurring or has recently occurred, who is involved, what the appropriate amount of that transaction is, and a brief description of the transaction. The bill we are considering now also adds language requested by industry, supported by both the chairman and ranking member of the committee, which provides further certainty by setting a reporting deadline of not later than 30 days from the consummation of a reportable transaction.

I commend the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Kansas, along with Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, and Ranking Member PALLONE, for coming together and addressing this issue. It is a sensible piece of legislation that reduces the burden not only on industry, Mr. Speaker, but also on the government, while ensuring the public good is protected.

I urge passage of the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Massachusetts made reference, this bill will reduce regulatory burdens, bring important parity to the statute, while also protecting ratepayers by providing important notice requirements. I would urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4427, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REINSTATING AND EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2080) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2080

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR A FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM.

Notwithstanding the time period described in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12429, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'') shall, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, reinstate the license and extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of project works for the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), who is the author of this legislation.

□ 1530

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in firm support of H.R. 2080, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project.

The dam is located outside of Dillon, Montana, and will provide critical electricity to both Montana and Idaho. That is why I am proud to have the entire Idaho delegation with me and the entirety of the Montana delegation in support of this bill.

The issue is the red tape. Despite the importance of the project, the red tape with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created an impassable deadlock in it that won't allow for construction of it. Even though we all recognize that hydroelectric power is clean and it is appropriate and the project is enormously important to Montana and Idaho, the bureaucratic red tape has just prevented it from going forward.

This is why we are here. Congress must act, and Congress will act. I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will agree that this is a worthy project for Congress to use our authority and to introduce the legislation to authorize such projects and independently move ahead.

This is why I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 2080.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2080, a bill sponsored and led by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction on the hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

Mr. Speaker, on August 26, 2009, FERC licensed the Clark Canyon Dam project at the Bureau of Reclamation's Clark Canyon Dam on the Beaverhead River in Beaverhead County, Montana.

Section 13 of the Federal Power Act requires licensees to commence construction of the hydroelectric project within a time fixed by the license, no more than 2 years from its being issued. It also authorizes FERC to issue one extension of that deadline for no more than 2 years.

In March of 2015, FERC terminated the license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project after the licensee did not commence construction by the already extended deadline of August 2013.

The bill authorizes FERC to reinstate the terminated license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project to extend for 6 years the date by which the licensee is required to commence construction. FERC has no objections to this legislation, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce reported the bill by voice vote without dissent.

I hope my colleagues will support passage of H.R. 2080. I commend the gentleman from Montana for all his work in bringing this to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation to give additional time for the development of Clark Canyon Dam, for which a license has been issued in the past. I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2080.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2081) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2081

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12478–003, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'') may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project for a 6-year period that begins on the date described in subsection (b).

(b) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date described in this subsection is the date of the expiration of the extension of the period required for commencement of construction for the project described in subsection (a) that was issued by the Commission prior to the date of enactment of this Act under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), the author of this legislation.

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in firm support of H.R. 2081, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Gibson Dam hydroelectric project.

Similar to the project before, the Gibson Dam—this is situated in Augusta, Montana—is a partnership between the Greenfields Irrigation District of Fairfield, Montana, and Tollhouse Energy of Bellingham, Washington.

The project was officially licensed by FERC in 2014, and a 2-year extension was also granted that year. Unfortunately, delays once again in paperwork and redtape require that Congress act to extend the deadline.

I am fairly confident that my colleagues on the other side will also support this bill, being that the same issue before us is dams provide a clean source of power.

The project has been reviewed multiple times, and it is in the best interests of Montana and our country. The dam itself is important not only to Montana and local farming communities, but it also protects pivotal wildlife in areas around it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2081.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend Mr. ZINKE for his work on bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2081.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12642

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3447) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3447

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12642, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a strong thanks to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for her work on this legislation.

This, like the other two pieces of legislation that we have just passed, refers to a hydroelectric project, in North Carolina in this instance.

Like the facts in the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the W. Kerr Scott Dam project for 6 years.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3447, as amended

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12715

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4416) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4416

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12715, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission. Any obligation of the licensee for the payment of annual charges under section 10(e) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(e)) shall commence upon conclusion of the time period to commence construction of the project, as extended by the Commission under this subsection.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a special thanks to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for his work on this legislation.

Like the other three before, this relates to a hydropower project, this one located at the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia. Like the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia for 6 years.

I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4416.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 13287

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4434) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4434

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 13287, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 4 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the time period required for commencement of construction prescribed in the license.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, once again, this is legislation extending, for 8 years in this case, construction of a hydropower project at the Collinsville Dam in New York.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GIBSON) for his work on this bill.

Once again, the FERC had issued a license to commence construction of this project. They then issued an order terminating the project because it did not meet certain time deadlines because of delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for a period of 8 years. I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. It has the support of a number of Democrats on the Committee on Energy and Commerce from New York who have been working with Mr. GIBSON on the legislation, including Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. CLARKE. It was reported out, as I said, without dissent.

I urge passage of the bill.

I commend Mr. GIBSON for bringing it to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr.

WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4434.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12737

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4411) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4411

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12737, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

□ 1545

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH), who is the author of this legislation.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, this bill, like the others before it dealing with dams, deals with a dam in Alleghany County, Virginia, the Gathright Dam project. It, too, was given a license. It, too, for various reasons amongst the agencies in the company seeking to build a hydroelectric dam or add to the project there, has not met the time constraints. This bill would extend that for up to 6 years. I would ask that we adopt it.

I would point out that this project would be a run-of-river project. In other words, it is not going to change the flow of the river in any way.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I ask that this bill be passed by the entire House.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported out unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think the House may be setting a record today on hydropower projects.

I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4411.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12740

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4412) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4412

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12740, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before I get into a specific discussion of this legislation, I do want to thank the staff on both the Republican and Democratic side of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I certainly want to thank Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. PALLONE for working with us on all of these important pieces of legislation.

Once again, this particular bill relates to a hydropower project at the Flannagan Dam in Virginia. I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for his work on this legislation.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, like the previous bills, this is a dam project in which the license was issued, but for various reasons, the timeline has expired or is about to expire, and this would give it up to an additional 6 years in which to get the project completed.

This, like the other one I mentioned, is also a run-of-river hydroelectric project, which means it won't change the flow of the river. None of the sports and recreational activities will be affected negatively in any way.

This is located in Dickenson County. It is the Flannagan project. I ask the House to approve this extension.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude today by thanking committee staff from both sides of the aisle, again, on

the Energy and Commerce Committee for all the work they put into making sure that the legislation today is possible. A tremendous amount of hours went into those efforts.

I also want to commend Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. UPTON for working in such a collaborative manner to get these bills to the floor today as well as the individual sponsors of the bill. Mr. GRIFFITH had two important pieces of legislation for his district.

Mr. Speaker, this specific piece of legislation was reported, again, unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I also urge passage of H.R. 4412.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4412.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 121

Whereas the Government of Syria, led by President Bashar al-Assad, has engaged in widespread torture and rape, employed starvation as a weapon of war, and massacred civilians, including through the use of chemical weapons, cluster munitions, and barrel bombs;

Whereas the vast majority of the civilians who have died in the Syrian conflict have been killed by the Government of Syria led by President Bashar al-Assad and its allies, specifically the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Iran's terrorist proxies including Hezbollah;

Whereas the Government of Syria reportedly has subjected nearly 1,000,000 civilians to devastating sieges and manipulated the delivery of humanitarian aid for its own gain, thereby weaponizing starvation against populations, such as in Madaya;

Whereas the Government of Syria continues to target schools, water, electric, and medical facilities as a way to deny civilians access to critical infrastructure and basic services;

Whereas the Government of Syria has conducted massive and widespread enforced disappearances, systematic torture, and killing, amounting to what the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic recently described as ''extermination'' at the hands of the State;

Whereas the same Commission of Inquiry described these and other actions perpetrated by the Government of Syria as war crimes and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have carried out mass atrocities without regard for international norms or human decency;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have attacked various religious and ethnic minority populations in Syria, including Christians, Turkmens, and Ismaelis;

Whereas the Russian Federation has not only enabled the Government of Syria's perpetration of these crimes but has committed its own violations of international law by leading deliberate bombing campaigns on civilian targets including bakeries, hospitals, markets, and schools, contrary to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, adopted on December 18, 2015, which demanded ''that all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects'';

Whereas the attacks by the Government of Syria and its allies have focused on civilian targets and the United States-backed opposition, and have led to the expansion of the Islamic State in Syria;

Whereas other parties to the conflict in Syria, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and the al-Nusra Front, have engaged in torture, rape, summary execution of government soldiers, kidnapping for ransom, and violence against civilians;

Whereas these continued violations of international law, without any promise of accountability, jeopardize hope for establishing a meaningful and lasting peace through the Geneva and Vienna processes;

Whereas Syria is not a state-party to the Rome Statute and is not a member of the International Criminal Court;

Whereas the United States supports the collection and analysis of documentation related to the ongoing violations of human rights, the coordination of Syrian and international actors working on documentation and transitional justice efforts, and education and outreach on transitional justice concepts and processes, including efforts of the Syria Justice and Accountability Center sponsored by the United States and various other states and multilateral institutions;

Whereas the international community has previously established ad hoc or regional tribunals through the United Nations to bring justice in specific countries where war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide have been committed;

Whereas ad hoc or regional tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, have successfully investigated and prosecuted war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and there are many positive lessons to be learned from such tribunals; and

Whereas any lasting, peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria must be based upon justice for all, including members of all factions, political parties, ethnicities, and religions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the continued use of unlawful and indiscriminate violence against civilian populations by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(2) urges the United States and its partners to continue to demand and work toward the cessation of attacks on Syrian civilians by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(3) urges the Administration to establish additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians and to ensure consistent and equitable access to humanitarian aid for vulnerable populations;

(4) urges the United States to continue its support for efforts to collect and analyze documentation related to ongoing violations of human rights in Syria, and to prioritize the collection of evidence that can be used to support future prosecutions for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(5) urges the President to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, a regional or international hybrid court to prosecute the perpetrators of grave crimes committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict; and

(6) urges other nations to apprehend and deliver into the custody of such a Syrian war crimes tribunal persons indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria, and to provide information pertaining to such crimes to the tribunal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the U.N. Security Council should move immediately to establish a Syrian war crimes tribunal. H. Con. Res. 121, which I introduced, is a bipartisan piece of legislation backed by Chairman ROYCE as well as by ELIOT ENGEL and others, calling upon the administration to pursue this policy goal, including using our voice and vote at the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, past ad hoc/regional war crimes tribunals, including courts for Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia, have made a significant difference, holding some of the

worst mass murderers to account with successful prosecutions followed by long jail sentences.

Who can forget the picture of the infamous former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, with his head bowed, incredulous that the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2012 meted out a 50-year jail term for his crimes against humanity and war crimes.

According to the Syrian Center for Policy Research, approximately 5 years of wanton bloodshed in Syria has killed either directly or indirectly an estimated 470,000 people. Other estimates put the death toll at a quarter of a million.

While the United Nations long ago abandoned estimating the death toll due to its inability to verify the veracity of the numbers, the war in Syria has caused a massive loss of life, including genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities, especially women and children.

The International Syria Support Group, co-chaired by the United States and Russia, as we all know, brokered a cessation of hostilities that kicked in on February 27 that applies to all parties except ISIS and al-Nusra.

While we all hope and pray the ceasefire holds as it goes into the third week and humanitarian groups gain access to sick, frail, and at-risk people, the atrocities committed against Syria's population demand accountability and justice.

There have been—I think I should point this out because many people who are following the news know this—numerous violations of the cease-fire by Assad and his forces.

In an opinion piece in Newsweek a few hours ago, it was noted that ''regime forces are openly bombing and, in some cases, launching ground operations to capture key rebel territory without making any pretense of attacking the Nusra Front.''

Further, the Syria Ceasefire Monitor ''reports 111 violations as of March 9—almost all perpetuated by the Assad regime or Russian forces.''

A Syrian court is needed for all the past, present, and—God forbid—likely future atrocities being committed in Syria.

Rigorous investigations by a new Syrian court, followed by prosecutions, convictions, and serious jail time for perpetrators of crime on all sides will not only hold those responsible for war crimes accountable, but will send a clear message that such barbaric behavior has dire personal consequences. The victims and their loved ones, Mr. Speaker, deserve no less.

Can a U.N. Security Council resolution establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal prevail? Yes, I believe. With a serious and sustained diplomatic push by the United States and other interested parties, past success in creating war crimes tribunals can, indeed, be prologue.

□ 1600

Notwithstanding Russia's solidarity with Serbia during the Balkan war, especially with Slobodan Milosevic, the International Criminal Court Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was unanimously approved. Ditto for the special court in Sierra Leone in 2002. The Rwanda tribunal was created in 1994, with China choosing to abstain rather than to veto that court.

At a Syrian war crimes court, no one on any side who commits genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity would be precluded from prosecution.

As I said, in the early 1990s, the Russians knew that the Yugoslav court was designed to hold all transgressors liable, whether they be Bosnian or Croats and not just Serbians and, again, they didn't veto that particular court as it was established.

I believe the Russians and the Chinese can be persuaded to support or at least abstain from blocking establishment of such a court.

An ad hoc or a regional court has significant advantages over the International Criminal Court, or the ICC, as a venue for justice. For starters, neither Syria nor the United States is a member of the ICC, although mechanisms exist to push prosecutions there.

The ICC, however, has operated since 2002, and only boasts of only two, two, just two, convictions. By way of contrast, the Yugoslav court convicted 80 people; Rwanda, 61; and Sierra Leone, 9. Moreover, a singularly focused Syrian tribunal that provides Syrians with a degree of ownership could significantly enhance its effectiveness.

I chaired a Congressional hearing on establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal back in 2013, and included such great leaders as David Crane, the former prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and founder and chairman of the Syria Accountability Project.

Mr. Crane testified that the Syria Accountability Project has collected data ''and built a framework by which President Assad and his henchmen''—this is his quote—''along with members of the opposition can be prosecuted openly and fairly.''

He and his team have ''developed a crime base matrix which catalogs most of the incidents chronologically and highlights the violations of the Rome Statute, the Geneva Conventions, as well as domestic Syrian criminal law.''

Significantly, with respect to the ICC, Mr. Crane testified that ''it lacks the capability and the political and diplomatic sophistication to handle such a mandate.''

Indeed, I would like to relay some words that I had with David Crane just a few hours ago; and he reminded us that it is important that the Congress continue the quest to seek justice for the oppressed and work on justice for the Syrian people, in particular, as we recall the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the civil war in that country. Tomorrow, March 15, marks the fifth anniversary of this horrific conflict.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, accountability that is aggressive, predictable, transparent, and applicable to all perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity on all sides of the divide must be pursued now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to commend the gentleman from New Jersey for authoring and bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, Syria and much of Iraq face two great evils. ISIS is well-known to us, and its evil is established by them on their own Web sites every day.

The second evil is the extremist Shiite alliance, consisting of Iran, Assad, Hezbollah, and many of the Shiite militias based in Baghdad to Basra. And, of course, this Shiite alliance is aided by Russia, although today there were reports that give us a glimmer of hope that Russia will be diminishing its role in the Syrian conflict.

The Shiite extremist alliance, I believe, is even more dangerous than ISIS since they include two state actors and a nuclear program. And the extremist Shiite alliance has killed more Americans than ISIS, from the Marines who died in Lebanon in the 1980s, to the IEDs that were manufactured in Iran and deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is a substantial difference in style between these two evil forces. When ISIS kills people, they put the beheadings on YouTube. When Assad kills thousands with his barrel bombs, or even with chemical weapons there for a while, Assad had the good taste to deny it. But different styles do not mask the fact that we are confronted with two great evils; and this resolution, I think, is an important step in dealing with those evils.

This resolution condemns the gross violation of international law, perpetrated by the Assad regime and those forces supporting Assad, which have amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We all hope that the current ceasefire holds and even holds better than it has, but 5 years of civil war in Syria has shown us the use of weapons we thought were relegated only to the history books, including chemical weapons used by the Syrian government against its own civilians.

Assad has conducted deliberate bombings of schools, hospitals, and humanitarian sites for the clear purpose of causing civilians to flee, and overall, he has conducted a brutal war that has killed hundreds of thousands of Syrians and sent millions fleeing the country.

He has been aided in this process by the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps, whose chief spokesman redisclosed just

last week how proud the Revolutionary Guard Corps is of helping Assad and how Tehran is helping to finance both Hezbollah and the Shiite militias that are helping Assad.

The resolution before us today makes specific mention of the role that Iran and the Shiite extremist militias are playing, and that is an important part of the resolution. So I agree with the gentleman from New Jersey. It is time to show the people who are committing these war crimes that there will be a tribunal, that they will be personally held to account.

And while I would hope that would drive home a message that would be relevant both to those who direct ISIS and those surrounding Assad, I think it will have a bigger impact on the generals around Assad who do not view themselves as martyrs, but view themselves as powerful individuals in Syria who would wish to travel and enjoy the good life with money they have stolen and taken from the Syrian people.

So I do not see that I have any speakers on our side, and I have been notified that I should not expect any, and for that reason, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for his very eloquent remarks and strong support for this resolution. I urge support and passage of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H. Con. Res. 121.

Make no mistake, this is a War Bill—a thinly veiled attempt to use the rationale of ''humanitarianism'' as a justification for overthrowing the Syrian government of Assad. Similar resolutions were used in the past to legitimize the regime change wars to overthrow the governments of Iraq and Libya. I will have no part of it. I oppose H. Con. Res. 121 because I oppose more unnecessary, interventionist regime change wars.

We all know that Bashar al-Assad, the President of Syria, is a brutal dictator. But this resolution's purpose is not merely to recognize him as such. Rather, it is a call to action. Specifically, it is a call to escalate our war to overthrow the Syrian government of Assad.

For the last five years, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and others have been working hand-in-hand to overthrow the Assad government, supposedly for humanitarian reasons. But how has our war to overthrow Assad helped humanity?

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been killed. Millions have become homeless refugees. Much of the country's infrastructure has been destroyed. Terrorist organizations like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and others have taken over large areas of the country and are engaging in genocide. And now, the same people who are behind this war to overthrow Assad want to escalate that war, and this resolution is an attempt to gin up public support for such an escalation.

This resolution urges the Administration to create ''additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians'' which is coded language for the creation of a so-called ''no-fly'' or ''safe zone.'' The creation of a ''no fly zone'' or ''safe zone'' in Syria would be a major escalation of the war. Such a measure would cost billions of dollars, require tens of thousands of ground troops and a massive U.S. air presence, and it won't work. Furthermore, it will likely result in a direct confrontation between the United States and Russia. Fortunately, President Obama has thus far resisted pressure to escalate the war in this way.

The fact is that the main area in Syria where Christians, Alawites, Shiites, Druze, Yazidis and other religious minorities can practice their faith without fear of persecution is in the Syrian territories where Assad maintains control. Therefore, the overthrow of Assad would worsen the genocidal activities by ISIS, al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations against Christians, Alawites, and other Syrian religious minorities.

H. Con. Res. 121 could be used to lay the groundwork for the escalation of the present U.S. military action aimed at overthrowing the Assad government.

Previous Congresses passed Iraq and Libya resolutions, which were used for remarkably similar ends in several ways. The Iraq resolution was introduced in 1998, and it called upon the United States to ''take steps necessary, including the reprogramming of funds, to ensure United States support for efforts to bring Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi officials to justice.''

The Libya resolution went further, urging ''the United Nations Security Council to take such further action as may be necessary to protect civilians in Libya from attack, including the possible imposition of a no-fly zone over Libyan territory.'' Both of those statements, while not legally binding, were a part of the public campaign that were later used to build support for U.S. military action.

Similarly, H. Con. Res. 121 urging ''the Administration to establish additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians and to ensure consistent and equitable access to humanitarian aid for vulnerable populations'' could be used for similar ends by a future administration.

Of course, there are many differences in the Iraq, Libya and Syria conflicts, as well as the military action taken. But if the U.S. learned nothing else in Iraq and Libya, we should have learned that toppling ruthless dictators in the Middle East creates even more human suffering and strengthens our enemy, groups like ISIS and other terrorist organizations, in those countries.

It is undeniable that in both Iraq and Libya, humanitarian conditions today are far worse than they were before those governments were overthrown, and ISIS and other terrorist organizations are more powerful, causing even more human suffering.

If the U.S. is successful in its current effort to overthrow the Syrian government of Assad, allowing ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups to take over all of Syria, including the Assad-controlled areas where Christians and other religious minorities remain protected, then the United States will be morally culpable for the genocide that will result.

This is exactly what happened when we overthrew Saddam Hussein in Iraq. It is what happened in Libya when we overthrew Muammar Gaddafi. To do the same thing over and over and expect a different outcome is insanity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 121, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kakái, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'', as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Whereas Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated extremists are committing egregious atrocities against ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria, including Christians (including Assyrian Chaldean Syriac, Armenian, and Melkite communities, among others), Yezidis, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabaean-Mandeans, and Kakái, among others;

Whereas ISIL specifically targets these religious and ethnic minorities, intending to kill them or force their submission, conversion, or expulsion;

Whereas religious and ethnic minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and subjected to grievous bodily and psychological harm, kidnapping, human trafficking, torture, and rape;

Whereas ISIL engages in, and publicly argues in favor of, the sexual enslavement of non-Muslim women, including pre-pubescent girls;

Whereas ISIL atrocities against Christians, Yezidis, and other minorities have included mass murder, crucifixions, beheadings, rape,

torture, enslavement, the kidnaping of children, and other violence deliberately calculated to eliminate their communities from the so-called Islamic State;

Whereas ISIL has deliberately destroyed and looted numerous cultural sites, religious shrines, churches, monasteries, and museums in order to eradicate the cultures of ethnic and religious minorities from the territory it attempts to control;

Whereas these atrocities have been undertaken with the specific intent to bring about the eradication of those communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage;

Whereas ISIL operations have in fact driven minority religious and ethnic communities from their ancestral homelands;

Whereas under applicable international law referenced in section 2441 of Title 18 of the United States Code, murder, torture, mutilation, rape, cruel treatment, and hostage-taking of non-combatants constitute war crimes;

Whereas crimes against humanity, as defined by the International Military Tribunal convened at Nuremberg in 1945, and in various international instruments since then, include murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, as well as persecution on political, racial, or religious grounds in connection with such crimes;

Whereas the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed and ratified by the United States, defines genocide as ''any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group'';

Whereas on August 7, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry declared that ''ISIL's campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yezidi and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide'';

Whereas in August 2014, the United States conducted targeted airstrikes and humanitarian assistance operations to help break the siege of Mount Sinjar, saving the lives of thousands of Yezidi men, women, and children;

Whereas His Holiness, Pope Francis, has noted that ''entire communities, especially—but not only—Christians and Yezidis have suffered and are still suffering inhuman violence because of their ethnic and religious identity'' and that, for Christians being killed for their faith in the Middle East, ''a form of genocide—I insist on the word—is taking place, and it must end'';

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights detailed ''acts of violence perpetrated [by ISIL] against civilians because of their affiliation or perceived affiliation to an ethnic or religious group'' and stated that ''[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide'';

Whereas in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 13, 2015, Dominican Sister Diana Momeka, whose convent was driven from Mosul, Iraq, described the ISIL offensive as ''cultural and human genocide'' and stated that today ''[t]he only Christians that remain in the Plain of Nineveh are those who are held as hostages'';

Whereas in December 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide issued a report focused on the treatement of minorities in Nineveh from June to August 2014, which found that ISIL had ''targeted civilians based on group identity, committing mass atrocities to control, expel, and exterminate ethnic and religious minorities'' and, in that context, ''committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing against [Christian, Yezidi, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabaean-Mandean, and Kakái] communities in Nineva'' and ''perpetrated genocide against the Yezidi people'';

Whereas on December 7, 2015, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom called on the United States Government ''to designate the Christian, Yezidi, Shi'a, Turkmen, and Shabak communities of Iraq and Syria as victims of genocide by ISIL'' and urged world leaders ''to condemn the genocidal actions and crimes against humanity of ISIL that have been directed at these groups and other ethnic and religious groups'';

Whereas on February 3, 2016, the European Parliament expressed the view that ISIL ''is committing genocide against Christians and Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities'';

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al Assad's violence against the Syrian people has attracted foreign fighters from around the world, who have supported and committed ISIL atrocities; and

Whereas according to some estimates, the conflict among all parties to the Syrian civil war has killed 470,000 and displaced 11,000,000 people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) all governments, including the United States, and international organizations, including the United Nations and the Office of the Secretary-General, should call ISIL atrocities by their rightful names: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(3) the member states of the United Nations should coordinate urgently on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Iraq and Syria, and to punish those responsible for these ongoing crimes, including by the collection and preservation of evidence and, if necessary, the establishment and operation of appropriate tribunals;

(4) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the Republic of Turkey, and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq are to be commended for, and supported in, their efforts to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of ISIL and other combatants until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(5) the protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank JEFF FORTENBERRY and his lead cosponsor, ANNA ESHOO, for their extremely important resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended, calling on the Obama administration to declare the annihilation of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities, for what it is, a genocide.

On December 4 of last year, a coalition of prominent religious leaders wrote President Obama and stated, ''Christian and Yazidi minorities in Iraq and Syria are being targeted for eradication in their ancient homelands solely because of their religious beliefs.''

They had been prompted by reports of an ''imminent'' State Department finding that ISIS was committing genocide against the Yazidis, a finding they ''wholeheartedly'' endorsed, but were ''deeply troubled,'' like we all were, that the genocide of Christians was going to be bypassed or excluded.

Apparently press reports had claimed that the rationale for excluding Christians was that, unlike the Yazidis, Christians had a choice to convert to Islam and pay an Islamic tax, or be killed, tortured, enslaved, or held hostage.

In direct rebuttal of that argument at a hearing that I held on December 9, Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, stated:

> Many times the payment of the tax is not presented as an option for these Christians. In instances where the Yazidi tax has been enacted or extracted, it has failed to ensure that the Christians could live as Christians, that they were protected from rival jihadists, or even other members of ISIS, or that the amendment of payment was not raised over time until it became impossible for some of them to pay, causing the family's home, and even their children, to be confiscated, and the adults to be killed or forced to become Muslims.

It is a very, very poor argument that has been made by the State Department, so we believe they have made this. Hopefully, they will rectify it.

Let me also point out to my colleagues that the Genocide Convention

defines genocide as ''the killing and certain other acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group.''

The religious leaders who signed the December 4 letter compiled extensive files supporting a finding that ISIS' treatment of Iraqi and Syrian Christians absolutely meets this definition. They include:

Evidence of ISIS assassinations of church leaders; mass murders; torture, kidnapping for ransom in the Christian communities of Iraq and Syria; sexual enslavement and systematic rape of Christian girls and women; its practices of forcible conversions to Islam; its destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and Christian artifacts; and its theft of lands and wealth from Christian clergy and laity alike.

They went on to cite ''ISIS' own public statements taking credit for mass murder of Christians, and expressing its intent eliminate Christian communities from the Islamic State.''

The letter recounted how ''ISIS jihadis have stamped Christian homes in Mosul with the red letter N for Nazarene in the summer of 2014,'' pointing out how the ''elimination of Christians in other towns and cities in Iraq and Syria began long beforehand.''

Mr. Speaker, I held a hearing 3 years ago extolling and urging the administration to recognize the genocide against Christians, and our witnesses, the private witnesses who spoke, gave instance after instance of crimes against Christians that were done simply because they were Christians.

At a December 9 hearing, we heard from four witnesses. I mentioned one a moment ago, Carl Anderson, from the Knights of Columbus. We also heard from Dr. Stanton, of Genocide Watch, who said, ''Failure to call ISIS' mass murder of Christians, Shiia, Muslims, and other groups in addition to the Yazidis by its proper name, genocide, would be an act of denial as grave as the U.S. refusal to recognize the Rwanda genocide back in 1994.''

□ 1615

Bishop Kalabat, a Chaldean bishop, was extremely pointed in his remarks when he said that ''the Obama administration, including President Obama himself, have neglected to mention that the ISIS atrocities were committed against Christians. They rightly mention atrocities committed in Iraq against the Yazidis, and they are horrific.'' The bishop went on, ''But there are also atrocities of rape, killings, crucifixions, beheadings, hangings that the Syrian and Iraqi Christians have endured, and they are intentionally omitted.'' He compellingly stated that ''the U.S. Government should not turn a blind eye to the genocidal atrocities faced by Iraq's ethnic and religious minorities, including the Christians, the Yazidis, and others.''

Finally, in very, very powerful testimony, the head of Yezidi Human Rights Organization-International, Mr. Ismail, stated that though his people, the Yazidis, were on the verge of annihilation, he called upon the administration not to neglect the others who are also on the verge of annihilation, and said, ''the Yazidis and the Chaldo-Assyrian Christians face this genocide together.''

Now is the time to act. We cannot let the cries of the victims go unheeded as we once did when we confronted the genocide in Rwanda and other genocides that have occurred around the world. Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge my colleagues to vote for H. Con. Res. 75.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution deals with the crimes of ISIS.

I want to thank my colleague from California, ANNA ESHOO, and our colleague from Nebraska, JEFF FORTENBERRY, for their drafting of this resolution which I and so many others have cosponsored, and I want to thank the chair and ranking member of our committee for their work in preparing the amendment that we adopted in committee.

This resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, identifies the violent acts of ISIS by their right name: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, where appropriate, genocide. We could and will be conducting a complete analysis in the future to identify which atrocities of ISIS are merely war crimes and which atrocities of ISIS are part of an overall systemic genocide. But it is clear that at least some of the war crimes are part of a planned genocide against religious minorities in the areas that ISIS occupies.

This resolution also includes a call upon the United States and all the states of the U.N. to conduct measures designed to prevent these crimes and genocide in the future. Now, it is said that People of the Book, most relevantly Christians, are being told by ISIS that they only have to pay a jizya and they will be allowed to live, a special tax imposed upon them. But the fact is that we know that the Yazidis are not even given that option but are subject to extermination; whereas, Christians may be told to pay the tax and then, when they run out of money, be executed because they are not paying more. So we know that ISIS is guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

In addition to passing this resolution, we ought to focus on the most significant thing the United States is doing against ISIS, and that, of course, is our airstrikes. I believe our airstrikes have been subject to rules of engagement that are far too limited. For example, we have learned that we try to cut off ISIS' flow of money by hitting the tanker trucks that are taking the oil out of ISIS areas for sale, but we are only hitting those trucks when they are parked, not when they are moving.

It is true that, if you hit a moving truck, you may kill the driver, and that driver may be an ISIS soldier or may be a civilian; but if you look at the strategic bombing that we engaged in during World War II, not just the strategic bombing of Germany, but the strategic bombing of occupied France and occupied Belgium and so many other occupied countries, you will see that we hit munitions plants and transportation tanker trucks whether or not those people operating the transportation devices and operating in the munitions plants were civilian or military.

If we are going to get serious against ISIS, we have to be willing not to target civilians but, instead, to do everything we can to prevent killing civilians; but we have to be willing to hit strategic targets even if we are not 100 percent sure that all civilian casualties will be avoided.

So I look forward to our working both diplomatically and militarily for the destruction of ISIS and eventually holding ISIS' leaders to account for their war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), the author of H. Con. Res 75.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank my colleague and good friend, Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, for his tireless efforts on a whole, broad spectrum of assaults on human dignity. He is constantly trying to elevate the conscience of this body and the worldwide community. I thank the chairman, as well, for coordinating this effort and speaking favorably to it, as well as Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who passed this through the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I need to also, because she is not here, thank ANNA ESHOO, a Democratic colleague from California.

We are living in a time when our country looks at Congress and sees stagnation, anger, and gridlock and not being able to get things done. What we have before us today is a transpartisan resolution. It has risen above the petty and difficult differences that we often work out here on the floor of the House of Representatives. It has risen above it because of its essential nature. Not only is there a grave injustice happening in the Middle East to the people, to the Christians, Yazidis, and

other religious minorities who have as much a right to be in their ancient homeland as anyone else, but this is a threat against civilization itself.

When a group of people, ISIS—8th century barbarians with 21st century weapons—can systematically try to exterminate another group of people simply because of their faith tradition, violating the sacred space of individuality, conscience, and religious liberty, you undermine the entire system for international order building out of rule of law and proper social interaction—civilization itself. That is why so many Members have come together here in a bipartisan, transpartisan way and said, ''Enough.''

This is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis. It is a crime against humanity and against others, as well, who are suffering because of their religious faith.

By the way, it should be noted that the group of people who have been most killed by ISIS are innocent Muslims, as well.

This is an important resolution to speak clearly about what is happening in the land.

Why is it important? Because it raises the international consciousness, and it compels the responsible communities of the world to act. Secondly, it creates the potential preconditions for when there is a security settlement in the Middle East that will allow these ancient faith traditions to reintegrate back into their homeland and continue to contribute to the once-rich tapestry that made up the Middle East.

That is why this is so essential. It is just. The responsible communities of the world must act, and it is essential for international order and international stability if there is going to be a chance for any type of hope and long-lasting viability of order and tranquility in that area.

As my colleague, Mr. SMITH, mentioned, Genocide Watch has labeled this genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has called this genocide. The Yezidi Human Rights Organization-International has said this is genocide. Pope Francis has said that this is genocide and has decried the scandal of silence and the scandal of indifference in this regard—again, another reason why action by this body is so essential.

In addition to that, I want to leave you with one quick story.

I represent the largest Yazidi community in America. I have been dealing with this community for many, many years, many of whom resettled in Lincoln, Nebraska, because they were given special visas to come to America because they worked side by side with our soldiers during the Iraq war as translators. Because of the grave threat that they were under, they were given special privileges to become citizens here, and many settled in my State of Nebraska, my hometown, Lincoln.

I have been working with the community for a number of years about a number of concerns. About a year and a half ago, a group came to see me. Young men who had worked as translators were on the verge of tears. They were passionate and angry. I don't blame them for being angry. Their mothers, their sisters, and their family members were trapped on Mount Sinjar. They were pleading with me: Congressman, act. Do something now. We can't wait.

To the Obama administration's credit, shortly thereafter—and the House had passed a resolution creating some groundwork for trying to stop the annihilation of Yazidis—the Obama administration, President Obama, acted, and I am thankful for that.

This week we have an opportunity to continue to plead and urge the State Department to act as well. I know they are under an evaluation as to this real genocide that is happening. I respect their process, but I think the facts are clear; and it is my sincere hope that Secretary Kerry and the State Department will meet their lawful deadline this week and declare this fact: there is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and civilization itself is at stake.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for yielding me the time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Mr. FORTENBERRY for his very eloquent remarks and for reminding us that this is an existential threat to Christians, but really, as well, to civilization. I thank him again for the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. DONOVAN). He is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for allowing me this time to express and rise in support of H. Con. Res. 75.

When considering the long history of civilization, we look back in horror at the unimaginable pain mankind is capable of inflicting on itself, and each succeeding generation wonders how a people stood idly by as warring factions destroyed innocent life and property.

Last year, the world watched a beach turned red as executioners sawed off the heads of 21 Coptic Christians on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Two weeks ago, terrorists stormed a retirement home full of nuns caring for the elderly and frail. And in the months in between, ISIS systemically killed or enslaved thousands of Yazidi people.

Scripture speaks of perseverance and endurance in faith under siege and not growing weary. Matthew says:

> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

But that doesn't excuse our silence. Political correctness cannot stand in the way of our moral obligation as a free and decent people. I support the resolution and hope we can have the moral conviction to call this massacre what it is: genocide.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS, this evil group, has been intentionally targeting Christians worldwide because of their religious belief. ISIS not only targets Christians, it targets any religious group, including some Muslims who disagree with them.

As the previous speaker from New York mentioned, they are proud of the fact that they murder people, that they behead people, and that they put their murders on television for the world to see. These atrocities committed by this terrorist group in the name of a perverted jihad religion are the worst crimes we have seen in our lifetime.

More than that, ISIS' massacres of religious and ethnic minorities fits the definition of genocide. The definition of genocide is clear. It is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. That is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes.

□ 1630

For the first time since Jesus, there are almost no Christians left in this part of the world. There were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq in 2003—1.5 million. Since that time, terrorists have either killed or forced Christians to run for their lives.

Today, 13 years later, there are 66 percent fewer Christians in this area. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in and took over their areas have been tortured, crucified, executed, and murdered in the most inhumane possible ways, tortured because of their belief.

ISIS has not only targeted Christians, it has targeted other communities. The Yazidi community of Iraq has been tortured. ISIS slaughtered almost all of the men in one community on Mount Sinjar and then sold the women and the girls off into slavery, this demonic desire of theirs, and gave them to their fighters. It is just another example of tragic cases of genocide in world history.

ISIS will not stop, Mr. Speaker, exterminating these people, until they

bow down to their ideology, and their ideology is based on hate. ISIS does not just target those under its control. The terrorists seek to cleanse the world, the whole world, from all people who do not accept their belief, including other Muslims.

It is time the United States and the rest of the world make it clear to all what ISIS is doing. We must denounce murder, this genocide, that is occurring because of people's religious belief.

I am glad that this resolution is coming forward. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75.

Mr. Speaker, justice demands ISIS be held accountable for what it does. Justice must be done. After all, isn't justice what we do in the United States?

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Texas for his speech and the gentleman from Nebraska who spoke earlier for his introduction of this resolution, along with my colleague, ANNA ESHOO, from California. And, of course, I commend CHRIS SMITH for a lifetime of work on human rights.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to close.

I thank my good friend, Mr. SHERMAN, for his good, bipartisan, strong remarks expressed today during both of these debates on the war crimes tribunal and now on Mr. FORTENBERRY's genocide resolution, another bipartisan piece of legislation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their moving words today. Judge POE, again, hit the nail right on the head, as did our friend from New York.

I think we need to say it and we need to say it with exclamation points, that declaring genocide is a solemn and extremely serious step not to be taken lightly.

I am very proud of the work that the Foreign Affairs Committee did. I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, and the ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL, for their work on this resolution.

All of us understand the seriousness of calling crimes genocide. It represents an assertion that a legal definition has been met and that we are witnessing acts of physical and mental violence intended to destroy a group in whole or in part.

The targeted depravity of ISIS against the Yazidis, Christians, and other minorities more—I will say it again—more than meets that definition.

But far more than the legality, speaking clearly of genocide, is an appeal to the conscience of the world. It evokes the moral gravity and the imperative of never again.

The United States must not wait any longer to find its voice and call these bloody purges what they are: genocide. We and our partners must defeat ISIS so that Christians, Yazidis, all religious communities, and all the people of Syria and Iraq, can live in peace, free from this grotesque persecution.

I urge passage of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I co-sponsored and will vote for H. Con. Res. 75 because of my grave concern about the genocide against Christians, Alawites, Shiites, Druze, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria. However, I was extremely disappointed by amendment language later added to this resolution in Committee that provides ''cover'' or an excuse for ISIS and other terrorist organizations committing this genocide.

Specifically, the language I object to is the following: ''Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's violence against the Syrian people has attracted foreign fighters from around the world, who have supported and committed ISIL atrocities.''

I fully reject this amendment to the resolution which gives moral legitimacy to the actions of ISIS, al-Qaeda, and others who are committing genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria.

This amendment is an obvious attempt to make ISIS look like their cause is legitimate. This is unacceptable and undermines the heart of this resolution.

This is very unfortunate because the problem of genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria is very serious. The main area in Syria where Christians and other religious minorities have any protection from being slaughtered, and where they can practice their own religious faiths without fear of persecution, is in the territory controlled by the Syrian government of Assad.

The reality is that the language added to this Resolution, coupled with its sister H. Con. Res. 121, is really aimed at justifying the overthrow of Assad—the result of which would be a complete assault and elimination of the Christians and other religious minorities in Syria.

The fact that this Resolution, which was originally introduced to increase protection for Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities, has now been hijacked so it becomes a vehicle to increase the likelihood of even greater genocide against those religious minorities is a disgrace.

The reality is that if the Assad government is overthrown tomorrow, every Christian, every Yazidi, and every other religious minority and ethnic minority in Syria will be in greater danger than ever before from ISIS, al-Qaeda, and others who are slaughtering them.

This Resolution is no longer a sincere effort to protect religious minorities. It has become a resolution to give moral legitimacy to ISIS and al-Qaeda's genocidal activities, and would bring about even greater genocide of such religious minorities by eliminating the only area where they now have refuge—in Assad-controlled areas.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, today we take a step reserved for only the most dire of circumstances.

The so-called Islamic State—or ''ISIS''—is committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against religious and ethnic minorities. Yes, genocide. House Concurrent Resolution 75—led by Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, and more than 200 bipartisan cosponsors—declares that fact clearly, and was adopted unanimously by the Foreign Affairs Committee earlier this month.

Our Committee has held many hearings on this group's brutal war to eliminate religious minorities and bulldoze their histories. ISIS's tools include mass murder, beheadings, crucifixions, rape, torture, enslavement, and the kidnaping of children, among other atrocities. ISIS dynamites churches and flattens ancient monasteries. Put simply, their desire is to erase the existence of these groups from their self-proclaimed caliphate, by any means necessary.

The crime of genocide is killing or inflicting other serious harm with the intent to destroy a religious or ethnic group—in whole or in part. ISIS is guilty.

ISIS has clearly stated that it cannot tolerate the continued existence of the Yezidi community, and has followed these statements up with widespread killing and enslavement. Last fall, our Committee Members met with ''Bazi,'' a young Yezidi woman from Iraq, who bravely recounted her brutal captivity and abuse at the hands of the terrorist group.

ISIS also has made no secret of its ''hatred for the cross worshippers.'' In one of their gruesome videos addressed to Christians, an ISIS spokesman taunts the so-called ''people of the cross'' saying ''you will not have safety—even in your dreams—until you embrace Islam.'' Next, 15 Christian captives are beheaded on camera.

Sister Diana Momeka, who testified before us after fleeing the ISIS offensive against Mosul, poignantly described a ''cultural and human genocide,'' and observed that today ''[t]he only Christians that remain in the Plain of Niniveh those who are held as hostages.''

Most telling: Ask how many of the ancient, indigenous Christian communities survive in the areas where ISIS has consolidated its control? Experts inform me that the number is zero.

ISIS brutalizes anyone whose beliefs conflict with its own narrow ideology, including fellow Muslims. It has torn the rich religious and cultural tapestry of that region to shreds.

At a hearing four months ago, when Ambassador Anne Patterson, representing the Administration, was asked whether ISIS is committing genocide, she said that we could expect ''some announcements on that very shortly.'' We are still waiting.

In December, I wrote Secretary Kerry a bipartisan letter, with 29 colleagues, urging that any genocide determination must reflect the full reality of the situation faced by all groups—Yezidis, Christians, and others. The State Department is facing a statutory deadline of March 17th—this Thursday—to provide Congress with an evaluation of the genocide question. Today's consideration puts Congress on record as to how the Secretary of State should rule.

This past week, the Knights of Columbus sent Secretary Kerry an extensive 280-page report that provides both the legal basis and more than 200 pages of detailed, eyewitness

documentation to support its conclusion that "ISIS is committing genocide—the 'crime of crimes'—against Christians and other religious groups."

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and the European Parliament have found their voices: Both have publicly concluded that Yezidis, Christians, and other minority groups are facing genocide at the hands of ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Today, the voice of this body, representing the American people, will be heard.

The House of Representatives led the push to recognize genocide in Sudan in the late 1990s. I remember the critical role we played in that debate. We have recognized genocide in other situations, including Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. Sadly, it is time to make this solemn declaration again, to speak the truth about the atrocities of ISIS, and hope that the Administration and the world will do the same, before ISIS has succeeded in its genocidal campaign. And it should go without saying, this brutal terrorist organization and its caliphate ambitions must be shattered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2426

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Safety, security and peace is important to every citizen of the world, and shared information ensuring wide assistance among police authorities of nations for expeditious dissemination of information regarding criminal activities greatly assists in these efforts.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities. Internationally shared information with authorized police authorities is vital to peacekeeping efforts.

(3) With a history dating back to 1914, the role of INTERPOL is defined in its constitution: ''To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.''.

(4) Ongoing international threats, including international networks of terrorism, show the ongoing necessity to be ever inclusive of nations willing to work together to combat criminal activity. The ability of police authorities to coordinate, preempt, and act swiftly and in unison is an essential element of crisis prevention and response.

(5) Taiwan maintained full membership in INTERPOL starting in 1964 through its National Police Administration but was ejected in 1984 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

(6) Nonmembership prevents Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I–24/7 global police communications system, which provides real-time information on criminals and global criminal activities. Taiwan is relegated to second-hand information from friendly nations, including the United States.

(7) Taiwan is unable to swiftly share information on criminals and suspicious activity with the international community, leaving a huge void in the global crime-fighting efforts and leaving the entire world at risk.

(8) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations and has consistently reiterated that support.

(9) Following the enactment of Public Law 108–235, a law authorizing the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly and subsequent advocacy by the United States, Taiwan was granted observer status to the World Health Assembly for six consecutive years since 2009. Both prior to and in its capacity as an observer, Taiwan has contributed significantly to the international community's collective efforts in pandemic control, monitoring, early warning, and other related matters.

(10) INTERPOL's constitution allows for observers at its meetings by ''police bodies which are not members of the Organization''.

(b) TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPOL.—The Secretary of State shall—

(1) develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter; and

(2) instruct INTERPOL Washington to officially request observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and to actively urge INTERPOL member states to support such observer status and participation for Taiwan.

(c) REPORT CONCERNING OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN INTERPOL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit to Congress a report, in unclassified form, describing the United States strategy to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter. The report shall include the following:

(1) A description of the efforts the Secretary has made to encourage member states to promote Taiwan's bid to obtain observer status in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of S. 2426, the Senate version of a bill that previously passed the House with strong bipartisan support.

I especially want to commend Chairman MATT SALMON for authoring the House version of this important measure and Senator GARDNER for doing the same on the Senate side. Their leadership on this issue is much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today will help secure observer status for Taiwan at INTERPOL. The bill requires the Secretary of State to develop and execute a strategy to ensure that Taiwan participates in INTERPOL's next general assembly meeting in Indonesia. With this piece of legislation, we are sending a clear message that safety and security are a priority.

Taiwan, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, is a model of democratization and openness, a thriving nation of 23 million people. Its successful transition from authoritarianism to a thriving democracy is a shining example for so many other nations.

The sole reason that Taiwan is excluded from the international organizations is the persistent opposition of the communist government of mainland China.

But China's opposition puts politics over the safety and security of people. In a world where terrorism and international drug and human trafficking networks are global in scope, the response must be coordinated globally as well.

At this time, Taiwan relies on delayed, secondhand information from the United States about international criminals and criminal activities, making it more vulnerable to security threats. Likewise, Taiwan cannot share the law enforcement information it gathers to the benefit of INTERPOL members.

It makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from INTERPOL due to a political pique, just as it makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from the World Health Organization, another example of the government of mainland China putting politics over the health and safety of people.

But there is another reason for having a good global citizen such as Taiwan as a member of INTERPOL: INTERPOL is an organization that is in need of reform.

A number of authoritarian countries abuse the INTERPOL red notice system not against criminals, but to harass political dissidents and exiles who are unable to travel internationally for fear that they will be arrested and face extradition in their home country, where they suffer persecution, imprisonment, and even death.

For example, Jacob Ostreicher, a legitimate American businessman who was the victim of an extortion ring involving corrupt Bolivian Government officials and jailed in Bolivia, a matter on which my subcommittee held three hearings and for which I traveled to Bolivia with our colleague NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, has, since his return to the United States, discovered that he has been red-noticed by vindictive Bolivian Government officials.

The red notice effectively prevents him from traveling abroad. He is currently going through a time-consuming and costly process to clear his name.

To help encourage reform at INTERPOL, we should welcome democracies such as Taiwan.

I also believe strengthening Taiwan's law enforcement capabilities benefits American citizens as much as it does the Taiwanese.

Every year, Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of Americans travel to Taiwan, and this bill will certainly help Taiwan's police protect American citizens and other internationalists as they travel to Taiwan. It is a good bill. It is an important bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this bill. Just to put the legislative history in the RECORD, the House passed H.R. 1853 overwhelmingly late last year. In fact, the vote on this floor was 392–0.

We sent the bill to the Senate. Instead of acting on the House bill, the Senate xeroxed our bill, put their own name on it, and now sends it back here.

If I was driven by ego, I might try to serve in the other body. But the decision to send the bill back to us with their own names on it is a trend we are seeing in the Foreign Affairs area, a trend that I do not condemn because it allows us here on this floor to consider well-drafted House bills twice and to vote on them twice and to emphasize to the administration how serious we are about their being enacted.

I want to thank the Senate author for his decision that we consider this bill a second time. The vote last time was 392–0. My hope is that we have a similar vote today.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for describing why this bill is important. Since I have previously commented how important it is that we discuss Foreign Affairs bills not once, but twice, on the floor of this House, I would be remiss if I did not add my own comments.

When this bill was introduced in the House, it was by the chair and ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON and myself.

I appreciate the Senate commending our draftsmanship, since imitation is the most sincere form of flattery.

Why is this bill necessary? Because Taiwan functions day to day as an independent country and it needs to function in that manner inside international organizations.

To date, Taiwan has been admitted to only one international organization, the World Health Organization, and there it has only observer status.

The fiction that Taiwan acts as, functions as, a part of China complicates and interferes with so many international organizations, but it should not be allowed to interfere with law enforcement against criminal gangs and international criminal syndicates.

As things stand now, Taiwan gets some of the information it needs from the international police organization known as INTERPOL, but it is not consistently made available. It is not reliable.

Taiwan doesn't have realtime access to INTERPOL's networks and systems. This doesn't just hurt the people of Taiwan, but hurts people all over the world who are potential victims of criminals who cannot be apprehended because we don't have an efficient sharing of information as part of this multilateral law enforcement agency.

It is for this reason that the bill directs the President to develop a strategy to obtain at least observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, or INTERPOL.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for managing this bill here today, and I commend the chairman of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON, for introducing this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I left Houston early this morning, I met with President Ma from Taiwan, and we had an interesting and wonderful discussion.

Taiwan and the United States share a lot in common. Historically, during World War II, for example, all the way up until today, the United States has been a great partner with Taiwan so as to make sure that area of the world is free, that it is a democracy. It is a thriving democracy and the folks in Taiwan are proud of the fact of the relationship that they have with the United States. This is another way that we can help this thriving area, this thriving democracy, stay up to date on the world criminal gangs that are roaming throughout the world.

Organized crime is an international crime now, Mr. Speaker, as you being a former judge would know. They are more sophisticated and they are more in-depth about how they promote their criminal syndicates throughout the world. Most importantly, it is international. Crime has now moved to sophistication beyond what it was when both the gentleman from Tennessee and I were practicing at the courthouse as judges.

Why not help out this organization, this group of people—Taiwan, 20 million-plus individuals—so that it can keep up with the information and the intelligence about crime, which affects the whole world?

It affects not only free societies, it affects societies that aren't so free.

INTERPOL is the group. It is the organization that tracks international crime. Taiwan should have this information. It should have at least observer status to know what is going on with these criminal syndicates throughout the world. China doesn't want Taiwan to have INTERPOL access or even observer status. It is a political thing for China. As my friend from New Jersey mentioned, China, it would seem, would want Taiwan to have access to information about criminals—or outlaws, as we call them.

This is an important piece of legislation. As the ranking member pointed out so eloquently, it is such a good piece of legislation that the Senate just copied it, put its name on it, and sent it back to us because it wants us to vote on it twice. We will vote on it twice and we will show all concerned, especially the folks in Taiwan and the international community, that we support its right to know the information about criminals that lurk throughout the world.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Taiwan already missed the INTERPOL General Assembly meeting that took place last fall in Kigali, Rwanda. Our hope is that with the passage of this bill, the United States will be able to figure out a way for Taiwan to observe the General Assembly meeting later this year in Indonesia.

It is time that we insist that Taiwan be an observer to INTERPOL so that everyone can benefit from increased

safety and security. Blocking Taiwan from INTERPOL is not in the interest of any nation. And as Judge POE just mentioned a moment ago, even the People's Republic of China would benefit because this is all about trying to catch and to inhibit criminals from moving effortlessly across borders; so it is in its interest as well not to block Taiwan.

I urge my colleagues to support the Salmon-Sherman bill which is before us today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of S. 2426, directing the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

Last year, I supported H.R. 1853, which passed here in the House of Representatives, directing the Administration to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and for other purposes.

As the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, the empowerment of law enforcement in order that they be able to carry out their mandate in upholding the rule of law and preservation of peace and security are imperatives. I believe we must continue to seek to facilitate here in the homeland as well as in the global community from Nigeria to Taiwan and everywhere in between to maintain global stability and combat violent extremism.

Our world today is fraught with global terrorism, with groups such as ISIL, Boko Haram, al-Shabab and their other affiliates, utilizing information sharing and technologies to advance their vitriolic causes.

This is why organizing, inclusion and empowerment of nations willing to work together to combat domestic and global terrorism is in our global and national security interest.

This measure facilitates the United States' and the global community's ability to move swiftly to empower police and law enforcement in our collective efforts of coordinating, preempting and acting swiftly in unison, strategically in combatting terrorism, crisis prevention and response and maintaining, peace, security, law, order and respect for the rule of law.

I join this bipartisan measure which seeks to facilitate INTERPOL member states' efforts to promote Taiwan's ability to bid to obtain observer status in the INTERPOL.

Indeed, since 1964, Taiwan had maintained full membership, but was ejected 20 years later when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

Part of what the United States Administration can do is to take the lead in endorsing Taiwan in obtaining its observer status.

Let me underscore that the Administration and our Secretary of State are doing a fantastic job in diplomatic efforts on behalf of our nation, earning us goodwill in the global community.

The United States has expressed its affirmative intentions in support of Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations, as delineated in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review.

For instance, Public Law 108–235 authorized the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status at the annual World Health Assembly for six consecutive years, owing to Taiwan's significant contribution to the global community's efforts of addressing pandemic control and global public health issues of our day.

Indeed, the INTERPOL's constitution allows observer status at meetings by police entities who are not members of the Organization.

The current status of non-membership status preludes Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I–24/7 global communications systems, an important real time information sharing infrastructure on domestic and global criminals.

The current state of affairs relegates Taiwan to hearsay or second hand information from friendly nations such as the United States.

This impedes Taiwan's ability to move swiftly in information acquisition as it relates to its domestic and global crime fighting efforts.

As a senior member of the Committee on Homeland Security, global and national security efforts and infrastructures that promote global communications to achieve peace and stability are very important to me.

This measure seeks to protect our security interests in Taiwan as well as the global security of the world.

Taiwan's inaccessibility to critical information readily made available to its law enforcement forces places our entire world at risk.

This measure seeks to facilitate Taiwan's direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police which promotes global security.

I support and urge the support of this measure because it is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities to be able to share information with authorized police authorities in their law enforcement and peacekeeping efforts in combatting local and global crimes, including the contemporary crime of violent extremism.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this measure, which would direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, also known as INTERPOL.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I support the dynamic U.S.-Taiwan relationship based on our shared values, deep economic ties, and a history of close collaboration.

Gaining observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL would further enhance U.S.-Taiwan relations and provide for a pragmatic integration of Taiwan into an international compact.

Taiwan's contributions to INTERPOL will strengthen law enforcement initiatives to fight human trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, and other criminal threats.

Integrating Taiwan into an international law enforcement body like INTERPOL increases communication and information sharing to the benefit of the people of Taiwan and INTERPOL member countries.

This is a practical step that serves the interests of the U.S., Taiwan, and INTERPOL, and I would urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of Senate Bill 2426, which is the Senate companion to my bill H.R. 1853 that passed the House earlier this year. This bill directs the Administration to work to bring Taiwan in to the International Criminal Police Organization, also known as INTERPOL.

Taiwan is an important U.S. ally and I have long been a supporter of the government and people of Taiwan. In fact, I was lucky enough to serve a mission for my church in Taiwan and grew to love the Taiwanese people for their core values, democratic standards, open-market principles, and peaceful way of life.

While in Congress, I have worked hard to facilitate policies that encourage Taiwan's continued vibrancy, to provide an example of hope and democracy around the world. Although Taiwan has proven to be a faithful, global partner for those in need, China seeks to marginalize Taiwan's role in the world. As such, I have pursued ways to further include Taiwan in the global community for its own good, but perhaps more importantly, for the benefit of the global community.

Today, nearly every country is confronting threats of terrorism and international criminal organizations. Yet at a time when it is more important than ever that countries communicate about these ongoing threats, Taiwan is barred from directly participating. This is short sighted and must be addressed. For that reason, I introduced legislation to direct the President to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL, so that it can more fully engage in the international law enforcement community. The goal is to increase participation with important global actors to share information on international criminals, and together bring them to justice and protect would-be victims.

I was pleased that after my legislation passed the House unanimously last year, Senator GARDNER took up the cause and passed his companion bill, S. 2426, through the Senate. I wholeheartedly support this bill's final passage so that we can send this important, pro-security bill to the President for his signature. I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2426.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations

for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4721

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''and $2,645,218,579 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016''.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were $3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 21 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 41743(e)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence by inserting ''and $3,948,087 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' before ''to carry out this section''.

(b) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(c) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(d) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and not more than $5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''and not more than $8,172,541 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

(e) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(f) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

(g) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(h) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(i) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(j) The amendments made by this section shall take effect on March 31, 2016.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(E) and inserting the following:

''(E) $7,824,891,355 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(5) $2,254,357,923 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(9) $131,076,503 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 106. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''and $138,183,060 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''April 1, 2016'' in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting ''April 1, 2017'', and

(B) by striking the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (A) and inserting ''or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016 or any specified extension;'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) SPECIFIED EXTENSION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'specified extension' means any provision of law enacted after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and before April 1, 2017, but only to the extent that such provision of law provides for the extension (including authorization of additional amounts) of an existing authority (determined as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph) for a period ending not later than March 31, 2017, under one or more of the following:

''(A) Section 106, 41742, 41743, 47104, 47107, 47114, 47115, 47116, 47117, 47124, 47141, 48101, 48102, 48103, or 48114 of title 49, United States Code.

''(B) Section 186(d) or 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act.

''(C) Section 140(c)(1), 411(h), or 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''April 1, 2017''.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''March 31, 2017''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''March 31, 2017''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''March 31, 2017''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''April 1, 2017''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''March 31, 2017''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 4721.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4721, the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016.

This bill extends the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration programs through July 15, 2016. The

bill also extends the revenue collection authorities for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through March 31, 2017. The current FAA authorization expires at the end of this month.

Without this bill, the authority to collect aviation taxes will lapse, depriving the trust fund of more than $30 million per day. That is $30 million a day for air traffic control, airport development, and other aviation programs that can never be recovered.

Additionally, airports will be unable to receive grant money that has already been awarded to them, putting dozens of construction projects across the country at risk of delay, cost overrun, or cancelation.

H.R. 4721 will avoid these unnecessary consequences while Congress works to finish a long-term aviation bill.

On February 11, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved H.R. 4441, the Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act, or the AIRR Act.

The AIRR Act provides the transformational reform we need to modernize our antiquated air traffic control systems; to ensure the system is safe and efficient; and to ensure the U.S. leads the world in aviation.

The AIRR Act takes ATC out of the Federal bureaucracy and establishes an independent, not-for-profit corporation to provide and modernize ATC service. This corporation will be governed by an independent board and representatives of the public interest. This independent entity will provide a service. It will not be given the public airspace.

And the FAA will continue to be our Nation's aviation safety regulator. Let me stress that the FAA will continue to be the Nation's aviation safety regulator and that Congress will have full oversight over that entity.

The bill includes protections for general aviation and for service to rural communities. This structure gets ATC away from political infighting and from an FAA management structure that has wasted billions of dollars in trying to modernize the system.

I believe this reform will benefit passengers first, our communities, all system users, and will ultimately save taxpayers and the traveling public billions of dollars.

The AIRR Act also streamlines the FAA certification process so as to improve America's competitiveness and to protect jobs. It includes a robust safety title, protects investment in airport infrastructure, and promotes passenger service reforms.

We have worked every step of the way under an open process in order to address concerns and find common ground to move forward. In the markup, the committee approved 44 amendments, mostly on a bipartisan basis, to make the AIRR Act a better bill; but our work isn't done yet. With so much at stake, it is critical that we get this reform right.

We are working with Members in the House to get the ball over the goal line. Last week, Members of the Senate Commerce Committee introduced its FAA reauthorization bill, and I look forward to working with Chairman THUNE. We have worked well with the Senate Commerce Committee on the highway bill, on passenger rail reform, and on a Surface Transportation Board reauthorization. I believe we can be successful on an aviation bill as well.

I am confident that we can produce a transformational FAA bill that will restore our global leadership position in aviation and ensure that the United States has the safest, most efficient aviation system in the world. In the meantime, we need to pass this short-term extension, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Here we are in the first or second short-term extension of the FAA, hopefully the last. The Senate has introduced a bill and I have had an opportunity to review the Senate bill. If you put the bills side by side, you will find very substantial agreement. In fact, there is very substantial agreement in the House over many of the critical provisions of the bill that relate to safety, to the future regulation of drones, to flight attendant risk, and numerous other provisions that were agreed upon during the markup.

The one major disagreement between the House and the Senate bills is the same disagreement that exists here in the House, which is over the privatization of the air traffic operations in this country.

I am not going to regurgitate the entire debate again here on the floor. The point is, with both bills being so similar, absent privatization, we could move well within the temporary extension.

In fact, we could probably have a bill done—well, we are not here very much. Congress is having, I think, a record few number of legislative days this year—but whenever we are going to be around again. I think there is a week in April and maybe a couple of days in May when we are going to be here and we could get this done. That seems to me to be the more prudent course.

The chairman and I do agree on what needs to be addressed at the FAA. First off, the biggest problem the FAA has is the United States Congress—the stupid shutdowns, sequestration, and other things which have interrupted critical work, including procurement, and which have certainly interrupted the orderly operation of the air traffic control system.

How do we protect the FAA from Congress and idiots who want to shut down the government?

That is a tough one. I propose mandatory spending. The FAA is virtually self-funding. With the current tax structure and without adopting a controversial new private fee structure that would be put through by the nonprofit corporation, the existing tax structure can pay for virtually 100 percent of the FAA, as it is, on an ongoing basis. If we adopted some efficiencies with a couple of other reforms, it would be in very, very robust shape and we would no longer have to rebut the idiocy of government shutdowns.

Now, there are certainly other parts of the government I care about that shouldn't be shut down, but at least mandatory spending here, like with Social Security checks and veterans' benefits, would say no, this is critical; it will continue even if, for some reason, Congress is so dysfunctional as to shut down funding for the government.

Secondly, procurement. Congress has been trying to reform procurement at the FAA since 1996. Unfortunately, back then, Congress didn't mandate procurement reforms. They merely gave the FAA license to depart from Federal procurement procedures if they so wished. In the end, unfortunately, either through the initiative of the FAA's or perhaps of some of the people down at the Office of Management and Budget, the procurement reforms were not done. In fact, they ended up with a system that is pretty much the same as the other, which is perhaps even less functional than those of other Federal agencies.

Finally, personnel. Again, in 1996—20 years ago—Congress, in recognizing this problem, gave the FAA the opportunity, the discretion, to adopt different personnel procedures, particularly as it relates to the mid-level bureaucratic bulge in the agency which does lead to some analysis, paralysis, and other problems that slow down needed measures or actions by the FAA.

I offered a very simple amendment that addressed those three things. It shouldn't be controversial. It says let the FAA fund itself with the existing tax structure and make that mandatory spending so we never shut them down again. Let's have procurement reforms and personnel reforms that are mandatory.

□ 1700

Unfortunately, that amendment failed and, instead, this privatization proposal prevailed. But that now has brought us to this point where, what is the path forward?

Okay. We are now going to extend this agency temporarily until just before the longest summer break in history for Congress. Well, I guess back in the 1940s and 1950s they used to take the summers off. But at least since the invention and installation of air-conditioning, it is the longest summer break in history.

So we have to get it done before then. Otherwise, Congress won't be back until sometime in September for a couple of days when it is not likely to do any major legislation.

The stability and the predictability that we need with the FAA, the reforms we need—not just the ones I mentioned, but the reforms in drones, the reforms to give flight attendants the same mandatory rest hours and many, many other provisions—that are in agreement between the House and the Senate should not have to wait.

So I would hope that we won't drag this out until just before Congress adjourns and, instead, that we move forward with all dispatch after the Senate acts this week, if the Senate acts this week—you never can predict the Senate—and begin to correlate the few differences that I see between the bills.

Then, at some point, I think it will be time to give up on the privatization proposal and move forward and put this bill into place.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of points to point out. Again, we talk about privatization, but this is a not-for-profit corporation that is going to be governed by the stakeholders.

The government will have representatives, and the others that use the system will be on there to make sure that this entity operates in the most efficient, safe manner possible. Just to point out, over 50 countries around the world have done this and they have done it successfully.

As the gentleman points out, in the bill that we passed, there is much agreement, but there are significant differences on this point.

The gentleman also points out, which I agree with, Congress is part of the problem. It is not just the bureaucrats at FAA. It is the way Congress funds things.

His solution to mandatory spending, though, I would oppose significantly because that takes the Congress out of the equation. It gives the FAA money.

They will get it automatically without Congress going through appropriations or any kind of real oversight by Congress. If it comes down to it, it will be very difficult to change. The track record is very, very clear.

As the gentleman points out, over time we have reformed over and over and over, given the FAA the ability to do things that other agencies don't have.

But to paraphrase my good friend and colleague from Oregon who has said this a number of times, the only agency worse than the Department of Defense for procurement is the FAA. They just can't get it right. And Congress is an accomplice in that failure.

So, again, that reform I think will go great distances to make this a modern FAA system, to be able to get it to operate with the GPS-based systems, give us much more capacity, improve the airspace, decrease the time it takes to fly places for the traveling public, and decrease the amount of energy burned up, which will be good for the environment.

Again, I will continue to work with my colleagues and with the Senate to try to do something, which, really, its time has come, to significantly reform the FAA and do something that, again, over 50 countries have done. Britain, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, our allies around the world have done it successfully and with very, very safe results.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, well, let's just set the record straight. Only two countries have privatized. That is Canada and Great Britain.

In the case of Great Britain, the government and the taxpayers had to come in and bail out the corporation. In the case of Canada, it was a very prolonged transition, 7 or 8 years, which would set back NextGen for a generation. So those were not without their problems.

There is a MITRE report, which looks at all of the other conversions around the world which were government corporations, not private corporations. So there are only two that have gone to private corporations.

All the other countries that have changed over have gone to government corporations, and they also had transition issues. I mean, it is very instructive.

We haven't held hearings on the MITRE report or the recent GAO report that point to the potential for disruption and seeing that this proposal won't cause the sorts of disruptions that happened in other countries.

On the issue of mandatory spending, we would still, as the authorizers, have the authority to direct that agency much more so than we will have if we give it to a private corporation.

According to the most recent CBO report, they deem that this corporation will be mandatory spending and it will be a private corporation which will have the authority to tax.

So we are giving authority to a private corporation to establish some sort of a fee or tax structure—they can't tax; so it will be fees of some sort—a fee for the amount of space that you take up in an airplane when you are flying over the country—who knows what those fees will be—we don't know—which would be potentially disruptive and potentially disadvantage other users of the system, which is why you have all the regional airlines that fly 62 percent of the flights every day opposed to this bill.

You have Delta Air Lines, the largest airline, opposed to bill. You have the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association opposed to this bill. You have business aviation opposed to this proposal because they don't know what this fee structure will be and how it might or might not discriminate against them.

So what I propose is that you keep the existing structure, which everybody can live with. Now, the airlines don't like it because every time I buy an airline ticket and I pay the excise tax, the airlines say that is their money.

I say no. That is actually a tax that is levied on me, as a passenger, which goes to the government. It is not their money.

But they think they can create a system where it won't be taking money out of their pocket, which they say the excise taxes do. But I don't know where the $10 billion or so a year is going to come to.

Then, of course, the Office of Management and Budget also in this report found last week that, with mandatory spending by this private corporation, there will be a $19.848 billion deficit over a 10-year period.

Let me repeat that. Mandatory spending by a private corporation assessing some sort of new fee structure on users of the system, including passengers, and the OMB says that that would increase the Federal deficit by $19.848 billion.

Of course, the majority is always free to waive the rules and they can ignore that. I mean, the rules have been waived numerous times to create more deficit around here, just by the discussion on the other side that they want to address the deficit whenever we eliminate taxes, waive the rules, and pretend that actually eliminating taxes will raise money or it is budget-neutral.

I guess, in this case, they could waive the rules and say the mandatory spending by the private corporation that will lead to additional deficit doesn't matter and it doesn't exist.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for pointing out the potential for a prolonged period to get to NextGen.

We forget it has been a prolonged period. For over 20 years, we have been trying to get NextGen in the current system, and we haven't been able to get it.

It is the GAO, it is the Inspector General of the Transportation Department, and it is numerous reports that have said there is no end in sight as to when we can get NextGen, a GPS-based system.

Let me just point out—the gentleman mentioned Canada, which is a model we are looking at very closely. We certainly have made it to be an American model. But what has Canada done?

Canada, in this type of system, a not-for-profit corporation—which this corporation will not be able to raise taxes, will not be able to put taxes. It will go to a user fee-based system.

What has Canada done? They have decreased the cost of those user fees by 30 percent over the last 20 years, a 30 percent decrease.

What they are doing this year is that the Canadian Nav Can will launch its first batch of satellites, and over the next 13, 14 months, until the next year of 2017, they will launch 70-plus satellites. They will have visibility of 100 percent of the world's global airspace.

Today all of us together see about 30 percent. The Canadians will do this based on a system that we are trying to move toward to implement. So it has been a great success for Canada. It has lower costs. They are going to have a system that is deployed. It is safe.

The only good news about Canada doing it is that they are one of our best allies. It is not the Russians and the Chinese doing it. If they were doing it, we would be hell-bent on trying to get this done.

Let me just point back to, this is a system that the stakeholders will be in charge of at the board level. The FAA will still be the regulatory agency.

So, again, this is something that is a long time coming. The Clinton administration tried to do it. The Bush administration tried to do it.

The time has come. We should do this. We should not let the Canadians have the ability that we don't have, even though they are our allies.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have been down this path somewhat exhaustively, except we haven't held exhaustive hearings to bring in the stakeholders, poke at this idea, see if there are alternatives and other ways to make the FAA into a more efficient agency.

Actually, the Canadians are not launching a satellite. They are putting a module on a satellite, and they are allowing people to actually license in or lease in with them, which the FAA could do.

That is not the critical part of the infrastructure we need here in the U.S. That satellite-based system will not be able to improve the ground-based system that we have here in terms of our very, very busy airports. We land more planes in a day at LaGuardia than Canada lands in—I don't know how many days.

So the issue of our system and more efficiency in our system depends on many things, including one thing which is a glaring omission in both the House and Senate bills: runways, aprons, terminals. Guess what. Both the House bill and the Senate bill stiff the airports.

We haven't allowed them to assess a reasonable increase in the passenger facility charge in many, many, many years. So even if this system becomes more efficient, one way or another, at some point, you can't get more planes into LaGuardia without building another runway. That is not going to happen. So we can't even talk about that.

There are other places where we could improve efficiency with another runway, where you could improve efficiency with more terminal space, more gates, more apron. Yet, the airports are not being allowed to assess a user fee to get there.

I actually was an original advocate for the passenger facility charge many years ago when I saw the unfairness of the previous system.

I live in Springfield, Oregon, across the river from Eugene. Eugene has the airport on their property. They had to build a new airport, and they could only assess the fees in taxes against the people of Eugene. Yet, people from Corvallis, people from Springfield, people from Roseburg, all use that airport.

So I thought it would be only fair to assess a passenger facility charge for those sorts of improvements, which I probably enjoy more than most people, flying more than most people. But we haven't allowed an increase in that, and certainly the costs of construction have not gotten any cheaper.

Many of the airports are bonded out. They don't have the capability of issuing more bonds without more revenue flow, but we seem to be ignoring that.

So if you want to look at the system to increase efficiency as a whole and to help the passenger experience, you have got to look at the system as a whole, and I am afraid we are a little bit short there.

Back to the corporate model, we don't know what the user fees will be, which, again, is why business aviation, general aviation, the Nation's largest airline and the regional airlines, which fly 62 percent of the airplanes every day, are all opposed to this black hole.

□ 1715

Suddenly we are going to have a private corporation that assesses some sort of user fee, which is raising more than $10 billion a year to pay for itself, and then the gentleman says that safety will remain with the FAA. It will, with no funding.

So it is a crisis that every once in a while, you know, idiots take over, and we shut down the government, and that messes up air traffic control, and then we go into sequestration. But it is okay if they shut down every inspector in the FAA and everything else that goes into safety in the FAA and everything that goes into certification at the FAA because that will all remain with the vestigial agency over in the general fund with no funding source, because the assumption is all of the existing excise taxes are going to be repealed and replaced by new, unknown user fees by the private entity.

So what is that new system and how and where is the money going to come from for safety, for certification and all the other critical functions of the FAA? That is left to the total discretion of Congress, with no funding source. At least today you can look at that and say: Well, we are paying for 93 percent of it through taxes that are being raised, that are dedicated; all we have got to do is come up with 7 percent. But now it will be: Wow, we have got to come up with 100 percent to fund those inspectors and those certifiers and all those people over there. Wow, this is great; let's bifurcate the agency. Plus the communications problem.

And, by the way, the certifiers will have to certify the new systems that the private corporation is proposing to put in place, so the certifiers are now laid off because of a dumb government shutdown but, hey, they can move ahead over here. Well, no, they can't move ahead. They can't deploy any new systems because they are user fee-based, and these people over here are general fund-based.

So I do not believe this solves the problem. I think it would be better to say, if you want to do this, do it the way President Clinton did propose, which is a government corporation. He did not propose privatization. Virtually the vast majority of the countries in the world have gone with government corporations. If you do that, you don't have some of the bizarre problems that they are trying to work around here with the Constitution, which prohibits giving regulatory authority to a private entity.

Well, they work around that by saying everything the corporation wants to do has to be approved by the Secretary, who, by the way, will have a giant new office of experts to advise him or her on whether or not to approve the new fee structure, whether or not to approve the new routes, whether or not to approve this or that or anything that is regulatory in nature. That all still has to go back to the Secretary, who, by the way, is subject to Congress and the appropriations process and political appointment.

We aren't solving the problem. If this goes forward, you are not solving the problem. I posit that you are creating more.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on our side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SHUSTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will say, point out for the Record, correct the Record, first, the gentleman is correct: Canada is not launching satellites. They are launching modules to go on satellites by the

corporation that they own about half of to deploy this GPS-based system. So, the gentleman is correct. Technically they are not satellites, but they are components to go on satellites which will, in fact, see 100 percent of the global airspace, which America should be doing.

The next thing I would like to correct is we have had numerous hearings on this. We have had over half a dozen hearings. In fact, we had one just before we marked the bill up. We have had over 12—I think maybe even 14 or 15—roundtable discussions with both sides of the aisle and stakeholders from all over the industries who sat there and talked to us about what they thought is good and what is bad.

The concern about safety—as I said, safety stays in government, and today the FAA safety certification portion of it is paid by the general fund. That is appropriate. The other fees, the taxes, we plan to eliminate most of those taxes, eliminate those taxes and go to a user fee-based system.

There is plenty of money there. That will go to run the ATC system. This way it will be in a user fee-based system, which history has shown us what Canada has done. History has shown us, I think, in many, many cases, when you take something outside the government that can go outside the government, it is run more efficiently. We will get out of the starts and the stops of the appropriations process, of the government shutdowns, of the 23 extensions last time.

This will be a better program. And the Secretary and the FAA will still maintain that regulatory oversight, which, in fact, means that Congress will maintain regulatory oversight. And I don't know when Congress has not had oversight and, in many cases, screwed up many of the private industries in this country by our overreach and our oversight by putting rules and regulations in place that don't work. In the case of the FAA, we rolled those back in many cases, let them go outside the Federal Government human resources rules and regulations. What did they do? They just kept on doing the same old thing.

So this is an opportunity for us, again, with extensive hearings, with extensive experience around the world, looking at people who have done it successfully. Again, I believe the time has come for us to do this, to make this a modern aviation system that I believe will improve safety, although we have an incredibly safe system today.

It will reduce the cost for the traveling public. It will make their flight times faster, more efficient, and it will be good for the environment. I don't see, really, anything in this that many, many Members of this House can't embrace.

I will continue to talk about it and continue to push it because I really believe the time is now to have a modern air traffic control system that will be the envy of the world, just as our aviation system, our airlines, the development of our airlines, and our manufacturers have been for years. If we don't do it, I think we stand to diminish ourselves in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, we invented aviation. We ought to make sure that we continue to be the leaders in the world when it comes to aviation, whether it is flying planes, building planes, or controlling the airspace in the most efficient and safe way.

Again, I urge all my colleagues to support this short-term extension that is on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this short-term bill to extend the FAA authorization for three months and tax revenue for one year gives us more time to negotiate bipartisan reforms that are needed. While I will support this extension, I'm concerned that Republicans are using this bill to buy time for privatization.

Let me be clear: we should not privatize the FAA. Privatizing the FAA would put control of our skies in the hands of a private corporation that put profits over passenger safety. It gives that private corporation the power to tax the flying public who have no alternative. It would increase complexity and lead to higher costs for passengers. It would reduce air service to small and rural communities. And it hands a private corporation billions of dollars' worth of taxpayers' property and other assets—free of charge.

Capt. Chesley Sullenberger, the US Airways pilot who landed his disabled aircraft on the Hudson River in 2009, agrees. He told POLITICO: "There ought to be other, better ways to make sure that air traffic control has long-term, consistent funding for capital improvements other than eviscerating access to the air traffic control system for anyone other than airlines."

I think we can all agree that there are improvements that can and should be made to the FAA, and this bill gives us time to work toward them. But we should not cloak those improvements in a bill that gives up Congress's jurisdiction and harms taxpayers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4721.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4596, SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3797, SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

Mr. STIVERS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–453) on the resolution (H. Res. 640) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 2426, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 75, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 121, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr.

SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 0, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

YEAS—381

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—52

Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Conyers
Costa
Davis, Danny
Doggett
Duckworth
Duffy
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Huffman
Hunter
Israel
Johnson (GA)
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Langevin
Lipinski
Maloney, Carolyn
McCaul
Noem
Pascrell
Pearce
Perlmutter
Richmond
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Schiff
Shuster
Sires
Smith (WA)
Tiberi
Waters, Maxine
Wenstrup
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1847

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 111, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kakái, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'', as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 0, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]

YEAS—393

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.

Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—40

Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Honda
Israel
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Lipinski
Maloney, Carolyn
Noem
Pascrell
Pearce
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Schiff
Sires
Smith (WA)
Wenstrup
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1854

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: ''Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 392, nays 3, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

YEAS—392

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)	Velázquez	Westmoreland
Thompson (PA)	Visclosky	Williams
Thornberry	Wagner	Wilson (FL)
Tiberi	Walberg	Wilson (SC)
Tipton	Walden	Wittman
Titus	Walker	Womack
Tonko	Walorski	Woodall
Torres	Walters, Mimi	Yarmuth
Trott	Walz	Yoder
Tsongas	Wasserman Schultz	Yoho
Turner	Waters, Maxine	Young (AK)
Upton	Watson Coleman	Young (IA)
Valadao	Weber (TX)	Young (IN)
Van Hollen	Webster (FL)	Zeldin
Vargas	Welch	Zinke
Veasey	Westerman	
Vela		

NAYS—3

Amash	Gabbard	Massie

NOT VOTING—38

Adams	Gutiérrez	Pearce
Babin	Heck (NV)	Peters
Becerra	Herrera Beutler	Rohrabacher
Blackburn	Higgins	Roskam
Blumenauer	Israel	Rush
Bonamici	Joyce	Ryan (OH)
Costa	Kaptur	Sanchez, Loretta
Davis, Danny	Kelly (IL)	Schiff
Duckworth	King (NY)	Sires
Ellmers (NC)	Kirkpatrick	Smith (WA)
Frelinghuysen	Lipinski	Wenstrup
Graves (MO)	Noem	Whitfield
Grayson	Pascrell	

□ 1900

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WE MUST CONFRONT EVIL IN THE WORLD

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, there are times in history we are ashamed of, times when people were faced with great evil and the world looked away.

Cambodia's Communist regime massacred its people. Many in the world made excuses for them. Stalin purged Russians and starved the nation of Ukraine. He was praised by a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

The Jewish people of Europe were systematically murdered by Hitler, but the world was too afraid to see the truth. The scales were only lifted from their eyes when millions were already dead. At the time, people made excuses for their decision to look away. They said the politics were too dicey, or it wouldn't be diplomatic, or sometimes they couldn't believe that such evil exists.

When we look back, those excuses don't make sense. They don't matter. What matters is that people were dying and the world didn't notice. Evil does exist, but ignoring it or refusing to call it by its name does not make it go away.

ISIL is murdering Christians. They are targeting people who share my faith, the faith of many people in this House, people who believe in Jesus Christ. Because of that belief, they are being marked for execution. ISIL is murdering and enslaving religious and ethnic minorities everywhere they gain power, and we know it.

We know what they are doing, and if we don't say it, we should be ashamed. ISIL is committing genocide. They are targeting non-Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and more, and pushing them to extinction.

But we also can't ignore what else is happening in Syria. The Assad regime and its allies are indiscriminately killing on a breathtaking scale. Torture, rape, chemical weapons, barrel bombs, forced starvation—the Syrian regime is targeting civilians and millions are suffering.

The world cannot look away. The Obama administration cannot dance around the question. Today the House stands firmly to proclaim to the world that genocide is happening, that evil is real, and that it must be stopped. We urge the administration to join us.

We must look evil in the face and confront it, because if we do not wake up, more innocent blood will be shed.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL PI DAY

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join mathematicians, math lovers, and millions around the world in celebrating International Pi Day. Observed every year on March 14, beginning at 1:59 p.m., Pi Day recognizes the mathematical constant known as pi. It also coincides with the birthday of one of science's greatest minds and former resident of my district, Albert Einstein.

While many will celebrate today by indulging in a tastier type of pie, today offers a much more serious reminder of the importance of technology, engineering, and math, fields that help strengthen our Nation's economy and security. Studies have shown little improvement in math and science test scores in the United States since 1995.

And so as we honor the concept of pi and the legacy of Einstein, I ask my colleagues to join me in renewing our commitment to outstanding STEM education in our schools and support of STEM at the Federal level.

CONGRATULATING WAYZATA HOCKEY TEAM

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, Indiana has its basketball, Texas has its football, but in Minnesota it doesn't get much better than the annual high school hockey tournament.

I would like to congratulate the Wayzata High School boys hockey team for taking home the title with a tough 5–3 victory for the championship over Eden Prairie. The Trojans, under Coach Pat O'Leary, fought back from a 3–1 deficit to claim their first ever State hockey title.

The State hockey tournament is always a tremendous event, with fans from around Minnesota descending on St. Paul to fill up the Xcel Energy Center to cheer on their teams.

The players at Wayzata should be very proud of their accomplishments on and off the ice. I want to recognize their commitment not just to their sport, but to spending time in the classroom and in the community to become outstanding student athletes.

Mr. Speaker, the family, friends, and fans are very proud of the Wayzata High School hockey team. We offer them congratulations.

THE CHILDREN ARE LISTENING

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, my daughter is a kindergarten teacher, and the children are listening.

They are listening to our national debate. They are listening to the television. They are coming to class, and they are repeating. They are repeating the bullying that they hear on television, and they take it to the classroom.

The children are listening. It is time for civility in our Presidential discourse.

IRAN SCOFFS AT AGREEMENTS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Iran once again has blatantly scoffed at the West by breaking its agreements.

Just this last week, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps test-fired several ballistic missiles. The missiles were reportedly designed to hit our ally Israel and were inscribed in Hebrew, ''Israel must be wiped out.''

Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran is forbidden from undertaking any work on missiles designed to deliver nuclear weapons. But the Iranians will do what suits them. The West—specifically, the United States—probably will do nothing about this test. The Ayatollah conveniently breaks international agreements.

Under the same U.N. agreement, the Ayatollah is prohibited from buying conventional arms for the next 5 years, but the Ayatollah broke his word again. The U.N. agreement has not stopped Iran from negotiating an arms sale with the saber-rattling Russians.

Mr. Speaker, the ink is barely dry on the so-called deal that the Obama administration made with Iran. Iran is a rogue nation determined to destroy the United States and Israel. Meanwhile, the United States sits blissfully by and just wrings its hands.

Iran must be stopped. Sanctions must be enforced, and eventually the citizens of Iran must change their government.

And that is just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING FIRST TWO RECIPIENTS OF CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS for being named the first two recipients of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Congressional Patriot Award.

This prestigious award was established to biennially honor two Members of Congress who have placed the interests and the goals of nation above all other concerns.

As a former U.S. Air Force pilot, SAM JOHNSON truly understands what it means to serve one's country. He flew combat missions in both the Korean and the Vietnam wars, and he spent nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi after he was shot down over Vietnam. I commend SAM JOHNSON for his tireless work to support America's men and women in uniform as well as for his efforts on behalf of all veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I also have much praise for another wonderful colleague, JOHN LEWIS. JOHN's record of fighting for civil rights and civil liberties dates back to the 1960s, when he was named chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and served as the youngest keynote speaker alongside Dr. Martin Luther King at the March on Washington in 1963.

Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS have both lived lives of distinction, and I expect that tomorrow night's inaugural ceremony at the Library of Congress will be a great testament to their life of service.

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT

(Mr. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of our Nation's veterans, who have been targeted by criminals seeking to defraud them.

Last year, veterans in my district brought to my attention that these individuals are advertising themselves to the veterans community, claiming that, for a fee, they can speed up their claims with the VA.

Now, everybody knows that the claims process at the VA is far too slow, but these people are deliberately seeking out veterans, purporting to speed up this process with their VA claims, which they cannot do, then illegally charging them exorbitant fees and then disappearing.

I introduced a bill with my fellow Floridian and neighbor, Democrat TED DEUTCH, titled the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act, to penalize these fraudsters who are blatantly engaging in a scheme to defraud our veterans.

Yes, that is true, these people prey on American veterans. So it is our duty to ensure that our heroes are protected under every aspect of the law. I am confident that this bill can pass the House with bipartisan support.

□ 1915

SENSIBLE WATER STORAGE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am heartened to see over the weekend in a Sacramento Bee article that California Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN has also called for pumping excess water that flows through the delta, despite opinions on endangered fish numbers.

We have been talking a long time about taking that excess water and putting it aside in storage instead of just letting it run out to the ocean. I am a little frustrated we didn't get to that point earlier.

Back in December, we had a press conference and put forth legislation to acknowledge that we are losing water that could be put aside in other storage facilities for anybody to be able to use.

We are looking forward to working with Senator FEINSTEIN on this and bringing forward sensible water storage with water we already have in these high-flow times.

REMEMBERING TIFFANY JOSLYN

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sadness and overwhelming grief to acknowledge the passing of my beloved staff member, Tiffany Joslyn.

As we return to Washington, I did not want one day to pass without a tribute to her, although I will return again with more details and more expressions of how talented she was.

Tiffany died Saturday, March 5, in a very tragic car accident while traveling between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, having gone home to mourn with her family on the passing of a relative.

The greatest tragedy of all is that not only did Tiffany lose her life, but her beloved only brother died and his wife was injured in the same accident.

I come today to acknowledge her light and to tell her parents of the great respect Tiffany has garnered throughout the Washington community and beyond.

She was a brilliant writer. She served as Deputy Chief Counsel of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations of the House Judiciary Committee.

Republicans and Democrats loved her well. She had the kind of spirit, generosity, and eagerness to get the job done that everyone loved.

Tiffany had a passion to help the most vulnerable and those who were caught up in the criminal justice system unfairly, but also those who deserved restoration and rehabilitation. Together we were on a journey to continue to find a way to reform the criminal justice system.

She made great progress. Two of the bills we worked on have already passed out of the Judiciary Committee, and I am praying that they come to the floor not only in her name, but in the names of all the vulnerable people that would benefit from her great work.

To her family, this tragedy is so enormous that words cannot comfort, but you should know that your daughter and your late son were lights to so many. May good bless them as they rest in peace, for they left a legacy. It will go on and on.

I am ever grateful for the opportunity to work with Tiffany, a young woman with a big heart and maybe even an old soul. She had a lot to give and a lot of intellect to make a difference in this world.

GENOCIDE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, we are living in a time of great political difficulty. That is not a secret to anyone.

Just moments ago the House of Representatives did something essential. We came together not in a bipartisan fashion, but in a trans-partisan fashion, rising above the petty difficulties that we seemingly cannot ever resolve, and spoke to the heart of something that is essential for all of humanity. We declared together what is happening in the Middle East to Christians, Yazidis, and others to be genocide.

I am extraordinarily proud of this body for speaking clearly, for speaking factually, and for speaking about this grave injustice that is happening to so many ancient faith traditions.

This is a grave injustice, and it is an assault to human dignity. This grave injustice is a threat to civilization itself when one group of persons, namely, ISIS, can systematically target another group of persons because of their faith.

That destroys the very basis for international order, tranquility among people, and for civilization itself. That is why what we did tonight in speaking so clearly and rising above differences in a unanimous fashion is so extraordinary.

I owe an extreme debt of gratitude to my colleague, ANNA ESHOO from California. ANNA has been a stalwart leader in this effort. Her own ethnic background is Chaldean. She has an intimate familiarity with the Middle East and the suffering of this group of people.

ANNA has led Congress on her side of the aisle and my side of the aisle, in partnership with me, to continue to try to confront the scandal of silence, the indifference toward what is happening to these ancient faith traditions that have as much a right to be in their ancestral homeland as anyone else.

In June of 2014, in the Iraqi city of Mosul, there was an eerie silence one morning. For the first time in two millennia, the church bells didn't ring.

Mosul is one of those diverse cities in the Middle East. It had a rich tapestry, a vibrancy of various faith traditions: Christians, Yazidis, Muslims.

There were differences of religious perspectives, sometimes tension, but they found a way to continue to contribute an interdependency toward the well-being of that community.

They were invaded by eighth century barbarians with 21st century weaponry: ISIS. The Christians who were there were told to leave, convert, or die by the sword.

Many fled with just what was on their back. The remaining Christians in the homes had this painted on their door. This is the Arabic symbol for the letter N.

It stands for Nazarene, which is a derogatory term used by some in the Middle East to describe the Christians. This was painted on their door as a sign that it was time for them to go or they would die, except it wasn't painted in nice gold like this. It was painted blood red.

We have so many tragedies and difficulties facing humanity, we can sometimes become numb to the violence that is happening in so many places in the world because it is overwhelming.

But when you have one group of people who has extreme disregard for that sacred space of humanity, for that sacred space of conscience and individual rights that are expressed in religious freedom, you not only have a threat to a group of people far away, but you have a threat to the underpinnings of civilization itself.

I happened to be in the room when Pope Francis was given a small Christian cross, a crucifix. This cross had belonged to a young Syrian man. He had been captured by the jihadists.

He was told: Convert or die. So he chose. He chose his ancient faith tradition. He chose Christ. He was beheaded. His mother was somehow able to recover his body and this cross and bury him. She fled and came to Austria. Through this means, the small cross came into the possession of the Holy Father.

This is not an isolated story. It has happened over and over and over again, as persons who were denied their life or denied the very conditions for life and they had to flee. This is called genocide.

The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the prestigious academic body, has labeled this genocide. Genocide Watch has called this genocide. The Yazidi international community has labeled this a genocide. Pope Francis has said so. Presidential candidates on both sides of the aisle have said so. Now the House of Representatives has declared it so as well.

I live in Lincoln, Nebraska, and I am privileged to represent the largest Yazidi community in America. It is not a community that I have gotten to know just recently because of all the difficulties that they have had. We have worked with them for many, many years.

Many of these Yazidi families were translators for the United States Army during the height of the Iraq war. Because of that, this body, by law, gave them special citizenship options to live here in America, and many settled in Lincoln, Nebraska.

About a year and a half ago, a number of young men in the Yazidi community came to see me. They were on the verge of tears.

They spoke passionately, even angrily—and I don't blame them for being angry—Congressman, do something. Our mothers, our sisters, our families, are trapped in Sinjar and ISIS is coming for them. We don't have the capacity to stop them. Help us. You are the only ones who can. Help us. Please, do something. There is no more time.

The Yazidi community also took its case to Washington. Around the same time a resolution that was led by my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, who will speak momentarily, and passed by us in the House of Representatives, which called for international humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq for the besieged people, laid some of the groundwork, which was a very prudential decision—and I commend President Obama for it—to stopping what was certain to be a slaughter on Mount Sinjar, saving the remnants of the Yazidi people who were still there.

So today we, as a body, are calling upon the international community as well as the fullness of our own government to act and to call this genocide.

This is one of those Yazidi translators. His name is Omar. Again, he gained his citizenship because he was so sacrificially helpful to us during the height of the Iraq war. He has lost 36 family members of the Yazidi community to the violence.

He recently went back to the liberated areas of Sinjar and saw the bombed remains of the ancient Christian church here. He took it upon himself—a Yazidi man that does not share the Christian tradition—to put a makeshift cross over the site where the Christians previously lived.

Why is this genocide designation important? It is just to Omar and his family. It is just to the Christians who died or had to flee. It is just to the other people who are under severe persecution. By the way, I should note that the people who have been killed the most by ISIL are innocent Muslims.

The genocide declaration, though, declares that there is a systematic attempt to exterminate this ancient faith tradition of the Christians, Yazidis, and others.

What it means is we are helping set the preconditions, if you will, for when there is, hopefully, a real security settlement in northern Iraq and in Syria and in other places and that the Christians, Yazidis, and others are fully integrated back into their ancient homeland and given fullness of rights as citizens, given fullness of protection and process, full integration into their own governance structures.

□ 1930

By raising this banner tonight, I think we have done something good. It is a word, but it is a powerful word.

In 2004, Colin Powell, then-Secretary of State, came to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he declared there what was happening in Darfur to be a genocide. In doing so, it helped put an end to that grim reality.

So today the House has spoken, and I am proud that we have done so in a transpartisan manner, with unanimity. What I hope this does is, again, elevate international consciousness, calling upon the responsible communities of the world to seek out constructive, creative ways to help stop the violence, to help stop the persecution, to push for the right type of security arrangements that will restore what was once the rich tapestry of diversity of perspectives and beliefs in the Middle East.

Without that, I have little hope. But with this, and the return of persons like Omar and others who respect differences, who have true friendships, who are willing to sacrifice for their deep beliefs, these are the nobility of values that the ancient traditions can bring back to their shattered homeland; and that is why it is so important that we acted today.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn to, again, my good friend from California (Ms. ESHOO), who has worked tirelessly on this resolution and wants to share her thoughts as well tonight.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Nebraska, the very distinguished Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank him for his words and for his magnificent remarks here on the floor this evening. We obviously share the same sentiments.

I think if anyone is tuned in this evening for what we call a Special Order, the Congress is not really held in great regard today, but there is on a day-to-day basis for so many of us a discovery of deep friendship that is created, that comes about because we work so closely together on something that binds us, where we have not only common ground, but the deep, deep values of our country that are embedded in us and everyone here, people across the country, and that we get to work on it together.

Congressman FORTENBERRY is my brother, and I thank him. I thank him from the bottom of my heart for the values that he has expressed, the work that he has put into this, and what it means to the people that we are speaking for.

This resolution expresses the sense of the Congress that the atrocities that are being perpetrated by ISIS, they constitute war crimes, and they are genocide against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria and throughout the region.

Now, over the past decade we have really witnessed an acceleration. It started when there was the invasion of Iraq, but it has heightened as the years have gone on. And now the assault on Christians and other religious minorities, particularly by ISIS, has moved to a level of barbarism that we read about in the history books, and is taking place, imagine, in the 21st century.

It has included the torture and the murder of thousands, the displacement of millions, including Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, Armenians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kakái, Amalekites, and the Yazidis that Mr. FORTENBERRY has spoken to and represents so magnificently. These are families that are being torn apart, fathers and sons being executed, mothers and daughters being enslaved and raped.

The USA Today columnist, Kirsten Powers, painted a very vivid picture when she wrote in December of last year:

> In October, Islamic State militants in Syria demanded that two Christian women and six men convert to Islam. When they refused, the women were publicly raped, and then beheaded along with the men. On the same day, militants cut off the fingertips of a 12-year old boy in an attempt to force his Christian father to convert. When his father refused, they were brutalized and they were both crucified.

Today, there are fewer than 500 Christians remaining in Iraq, down from as many as 1.5 million in 2003.

Now, the United Nations has written, come up with a definition some time ago of what genocide actually is:

> Any of the following acts committed with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

This is genocide, and this is what is actually taking place today. Despite the persecution of these hundreds of thousands of religious minorities, the United States has not spoken out; but tonight the United States House of Representatives has. And this is a seminal moment for the House to have taken this on and to express unanimously that this is genocide.

There are many things that we have worked on together, as members of, and other members as well, of the House Religious Minority Caucus; humanitarian aid, protection, faster refugee processing for these vulnerable communities, and an official statement by the Congress. Tonight that happened. We have labeled these atrocities for what they are, genocide.

I think that Congressman FORTENBERRY has stated in a most eloquent way why this is important.

First of all, this is one of the great values of our country, one of the great, great values of our country, where we recognize religions of people of all religious backgrounds.

Our Constitution, in just a few words, in just a few words, I believe, has prevented bloodshed, whereas in other places, it takes place.

It is as deeply meaningful to me as a first-generation American, the only Member of the entire Congress that is of Assyrian and Armenian descent. This is a repeat of history of my family. It is why I am a first-generation American, because my grandparents fled, both sides of my family, the Armenian side and the Assyrian side, for this very reason, because they were being hunted down and persecuted because they were Christians.

We know that a century ago the world witnessed—but the House and the Congress is still silent on this, and we have to address that, too—when the Ottoman Empire rounded up and murdered Armenians, Greeks, and other minorities in Constantinople. By 1923, there were some 1.5 million women, children, and men who were lost. It was a systematic campaign that we now know as and call the Armenian Genocide.

So for those in my family who told the stories, my grandparents, my parents, this is, for me, a bittersweet evening. But I think that they are all proud, those who have been called to God, and those who are still with us, that the United States House of Representatives is calling this out for what it is.

It matters when the United States speaks. Our voices collectively, this evening, are going to echo around the world; and the stability, as Congressman FORTENBERRY spoke to, of these minority communities, have really been the glue that have held these ancient communities together for so long.

I, too, share the hope and pray for the day that there will be peace in the region and that they will be recognized and honored in their communities, on the lands, these ancient lands, with their ancient faiths. I think that is the collective hope of all of us. The stability and, I think, the cultural identity of the Middle East depends on this.

The United States has always championed human rights, basic human rights, and civil and religious liberties, both at home and abroad. Whenever we go abroad, those are the issues that we raise with whomever we are meeting with. I think that these are our most cherished values and, I think, America's greatest export.

During his trip to South America in July of 2015, Pope Francis called for an end to this genocide of Christians in the Middle East, saying, ''In this third world war which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide is taking place, and it must end.''

I think his voice spoke, obviously, for the voiceless.

Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago, recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal the following:

''It may seem like we in the United States have little ability to change conditions in the Middle East and elsewhere. But that outlook has too often led to inaction and great regret after crimes against humanity have been allowed to unfold without intervention. The United States and other members of the U.N. made a solemn vow in 2005 with the passage of the Responsibility to Protect, a response to crimes against humanity. With genocide occurring before our very eyes, we must properly identify the crimes and honor our international commitment under the Responsibility to Protect.''

So, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, with the words of Pope Francis, Bishop Demetrios, countless advocates across our country and around the world, and the 203 bipartisan cosponsors of this resolution, and the voice of the entire House, unanimous vote this evening of this resolution, I am very proud.

I am very proud and I am lastingly grateful to be a part of this body that has spoken as one on this issue of enormous import and morality because we, tonight, have let it be known to the

world that this is, in fact, the horror of genocide that is taking place in the Middle East.

Again, it is a moment of great pride to me, certainly to my family and to people, not only my own people, but to those across the United States, the religious leaders of all faiths that have spoken out.

This tonight, the evening of March 14, 2016, will live on and historians will record that we indeed did the right thing.

So I thank you all.

□ 1945

Historians will record that we indeed did the right thing. So I thank you all.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentlewoman for your impactful, important, heartfelt, and beautiful words of sympathy and compassion, but also for your action.

What you said, particularly regarding not only respecting the ancient faith traditions, but honoring them in their native lands, ought to be what we are all striving for. So I thank you for your beautiful statements.

Now I would like to turn to my friend and colleague, Congressman TRENT FRANKS, a Congressman from Arizona who, again, has been a stalwart leader on all types of assaults to human dignity as they manifest themselves in so many difficult ways across the spectrum of life. So I am grateful for your friendship and for your leadership as well.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY especially for his leadership and courage on this issue. I thank Congresswoman ESHOO not only for her personal courage, but just for the perspective that she brings to this House given her ancestors and the family history that she has with some of the challenges that are so parallel to what we are talking about tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the United States of America has been the greatest national force for good the world has ever known. Our Nation has made sacrifices to the extreme to extinguish some of the worst evils that have plagued humanity across the decades. I am honored to stand here with my colleagues who have led this fight to call the Islamic States' insidious campaign of terror against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities what it is: genocide.

For months, noble organizations like the Knights of Columbus and countless valiant individuals have worked tirelessly to document evidence of genocide against ancient faith communities in Iraq and Syria. Hundreds of pages containing accounts of massacres, unimaginable brutality, and uncovered mass graves have been delivered to world leaders, including the Obama administration, in an effort to condemn ISIS violence as the genocide that it most certainly is.

Recognition of genocide with the passage of H. Con. Res. 75 is due in large part to the conviction and commitment of these organizations and individuals—and for that humanity owes them great and profound gratitude. Yet today, despite all of the overwhelming evidence, this administration remains stunningly silent.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident, who said: ''Silence in the face of evil is evil itself: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.''

Mr. Speaker, we are now witness to some of the most glaring and brutal attacks against the universal human right of religious freedom in history. ISIS has been the very face of evil. We have seen hundreds of thousands of civilians flee the land of their spiritual heritage. We have seen mass executions and beheadings. We have seen the destruction of ancient places of worship and sacred sites. We have seen women and children assaulted and sold as commodities in a modern-day slave market—sometimes little girls for as little as 50 cents.

We have seen the Islamic State desecrate, violate, humiliate, and strip innocent men, women, and children of their God-given human dignity. And why? Because there is no place for Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in the Islamic State's self-proclaimed caliphate. The message of this metastasizing cancer is clear: those who do not conform to their abhorrent ideology will be destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has been fully aware that Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities have been subjected to the most extreme kind of brutality and barbaric attacks. The Islamic State has publicly declared their intent to annihilate those who do not submit to their caliphate, stating, ''it will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam.'' Mr. Speaker, justice demands that this be condemned as genocide.

Today, the cries of the innocent should compel us to act. Refusal to acknowledge and specifically name Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in a designation of genocide would be one of the more disgraceful chapters in the Obama administration's shameful and abhorrent response to the insidious evil of the Islamic State.

The conspicuous silence of this administration and its failure to act decisively not only has the gravest of implications for thousands of innocent fellow human beings, but it also sends a message to the world that the United States of America, which has long served as an impetus for freedom and justice, has either lost the moral conviction to defend the lives of the innocent or the political will to crush the evil that desecrates them.

Not to speak is to speak, Mr. Speaker. Not to act is to act, Mr. Speaker. And the world is watching what we will—or, shamefully, will not—say or do.

Mr. Speaker, I would adjure the President of the United States and Secretary Kerry not to callously continue to stand by in silence and let this evil relentlessly proceed.

With that, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank my friend, Congressman FRANKS of Arizona, for his powerful statement. Not to speak is to speak. Of all people in the body, I think that is a marked tribute to the Congressman who has worked tirelessly and spoken out on behalf of the protection of innocent persons.

Now I want to turn to my good friend, Congressman JUAN VARGAS from California, who as well has helped in an extraordinary way to further not only this cause, but, again, trying to elevate the nobility of the ideal that we should all be united in mind, heart, and spirit if we are going to be persons who respect the rules of law, the standards for international order, or, more basically, our need for one another.

I am so grateful for your willingness to speak out on a whole host of issues, and thank you for coming tonight, Congressman VARGAS.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, very much, Congressman FORTENBERRY, and also ANNA ESHOO for your courage to come forward and for your words today and for your powerful words that you gave a moment ago to call genocide what it is: genocide, what we are seeing with Christians in particular, Yazidis, and others. So, again, thank you very much for allowing me to speak today.

I would also like to congratulate both of you on the passage of H. Con. Res. 75, which expresses the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against religious and ethnic minorities are indeed, as I said, genocide, crimes against humanity. I sincerely hope that the Obama administration will see the bipartisan show of support for this timely resolution as an impetus to clearly and forthrightly declare these acts genocide, because that is what they are. So I am hoping that they take action.

Around the world, political and religious leaders have spoken out to condemn ISIS' acts of raping, kidnapping, torturing, and killing of Christians, Yazidis, Shias, Turkmens, and other religious minorities.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the European Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government, and His Holiness, Pope Francis have called

these actions by their proper name: genocide—genocide.

I would like to echo the words of Pope Francis, who eloquently stated: ''Our brothers are being persecuted, chased away, they are forced to leave their homes without being able to take anything with them. I assure these families that I am close to them and in constant prayer. I know how much you are suffering; I know that you are being stripped of everything.''

It has almost been 2 years since the fall of Mosul, when ISIS warned religious minorities living under its jurisdiction to either convert to Islam, pay a cumbersome religious tax, or be executed. I won't go through all the atrocious acts that they have committed. I think that they were spoken of already here in a very dramatic way. Again, they did what they said they were going to do; and that is ISIS said that, if you didn't leave, if you didn't convert, you would be executed. That is, in fact, what they have done in the most horrific way.

We have to act. It is time for us to act. I believe that this mass exodus represents the largest forced displacement in the Middle East since the Armenian genocide in Turkey 100 years ago.

A genocide, known as the crime of crimes, has both legal and moral implications under both Federal and international law. This means that if a genocide is declared, it will demand American leadership and resources to prevent and punish the ongoing assault of Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities that are targeted for extinction.

While I applaud the various actions and commitments the Obama administration has made to alleviate the suffering of thousands of victims of ISIS, I strongly and firmly believe we can, we should, and we must do more.

History is full of examples of leaders who opposed these mass atrocities in abstraction but similarly opposed any action in the moment. I call on President Obama and Secretary Kerry to take the first step in firmly calling this egregious situation a genocide. It is past time to speak the truth to power and not to mince any words, and we shouldn't mince any words.

Lastly, I would say this. This has been a bipartisan effort. I did have the opportunity to travel to Erbil with Congress Members DARRELL ISSA and JOHN MICA. We were able to talk to victims there of this horrific genocide, and we were able to talk to the Kurds who were, in fact, helping dramatically, many of them losing their own lives because they wanted to protect Christians and Yazidis.

We have to do more. Unfortunately, we probably won't get much information. Maybe if I went over and punched my good friend JEFF—out of love, of course, brother—maybe we could get some attention to this matter. But we have to shout out, and we have to get the attention of the administration. We have to do something. We have to do something because this is genocide, and we just can't sit idly by.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I want to thank my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, for your impactful words. If it does take your coming over here to punch me, come on, let's go, because that is worth it.

I want to also reiterate something I mentioned earlier. It was your resolution that called for an international humanitarian intervention that I feel created the environment, the condition, which was empowering to the Obama administration to intervene on behalf of the Yazidis trapped on Mount Sinjar. That is an overlooked fact and consideration around here. But I am glad to say it, and I want to thank you for calling as well, urging the administration to act in this regard. You have the moral authority to do so.

I know Secretary Kerry has sympathies in this regard, but just like the Yazidis when they were trapped on the mountain, to wait in the face of clear facts is to potentially not only lose time, but to lose lives and lose the option for, again, setting the preconditions for reintegration of these ancient faith traditions back into their ancestral homelands. So I thank you for your good words.

Now I want to turn to my good friend Congressman SEAN DUFFY from Wisconsin, an outspoken man of the House who has not been afraid to confront, as well, the various problems facing humanity and the assaults on human dignity as they have manifested themselves and fractured our society and so many others in so many ways. So I thank you, Congressman DUFFY.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding, and I am grateful for all of your work, Congressman FORTENBERRY, Congressman VARGAS, and Congresswoman ESHOO.

Sometimes people look at this House and think that all we do is fight and disagree. I am not going to talk about you two punching each other to get a little more press, but it is a remarkable night when we all come together and stand together on such an important issue as this, where we all lend our voices to an incredibly important cause.

We spent a lot of time tonight talking about the atrocities, and I am going to join in because we can't say enough all that has happened.

Two million Christians called Iraq home prior to 2013. Fewer than 300,000 reside there today. Many were victims of killing or kidnappings, others forced to leave their homes by radicals, al Qaeda or ISIS.

In Syria, Christians accounted for 10 percent of the population, but today their numbers have declined to less than 1 million. Last summer, ISIS kidnapped nearly 300 Christians in a Syrian village and then later ransomed them back to their families for an average of $100,000 per person.

When ISIS invaded Mosul, Iraq, in 2013, as Mr. FORTENBERRY mentioned, they tagged Christian homes with an N for Nazarene, and then they gave the occupants a choice: you can convert, you can flee, or you would face death. In July of 2014, ISIS announced that the city, no doubt, was Christian-free—no surprise.

In 2014, August, a woman from Bartella, Iraq, recounted the night that ISIS came into her village and then into her home and accused her of putting gold coins in her 11-month-old baby's diaper. So they took her baby, threw her baby on the couch, beat her baby, and threw her up against the wall. Eventually, they let her leave, but they kept her husband and made him convert.

In February of 2015, ISIS slaughtered 21 Coptic Christians on a Libyan beach, pointing them towards Rome, and proclaimed this message: ''Signed with blood to the nation of the cross.''

In March of 2016, this month, four nuns, members of the Missionaries of Charity, founded by the late Mother Teresa of Calcutta, were executed by gunmen in Yemen.

□ 2000

Their crime? They were caring for the elderly and the disabled. Pope Francis called them today's martyrs.

Just yesterday gunmen stormed three hotels on the Ivory Coast. Among the 18 people who were killed was a 5-year-old boy—a 5-year-old boy—who was shot in the head. But eyewitnesses report that the friend who was with him was spared his life because he was able to recite a Muslim prayer.

Mr. Speaker, these are hardly isolated incidents. As we have talked about tonight, this is genocide. The Knights of Columbus submitted a 280-page report chronicling the persecution of Christians by the Islamic State to the State Department this week.

The leader of ISIS recently released a video that made very clear their intent to destroy Christians throughout whatever means possible. He said:

> The co-existence of Christians and Jews is impossible, according to the Koran.

I don't think we have to scratch our heads and ask ourselves what is happening in Iraq and Syria. Pope Francis recently condemned the wholesale slaughter of Christians by ISIS, saying that entire Christian families and villages are being completely exterminated.

I look at this House tonight and I am proud that we have so many men and women who are willing to stand up and lend their voice to this great cause.

We have a reputation in America as being a beacon of light, men and

women who stand up for freedom, better known as freedom fighters, freedom of life, freedom of religion.

When there are atrocities in the world, we stand up and lend a voice to those who are being persecuted, those who are downtrodden.

I am disappointed that the President has been unwilling to join this House and call the atrocities in Syria and Iraq a genocide. The first step to making sure this ends is that we speak the truth about what is actually happening.

Hopefully, if the President is watching tonight, he will see that we have both Republicans and Democrats who agree on this very important issue. Hopefully, he will join us and take that first step to shedding light on what is happening in Iraq and Syria.

Mr. FORTENBERRY, I commend you for your good efforts on this very important issue. I am proud to stand with you and the rest of this Chamber to make sure those who might not know that people care about them as they are going through pain and anguish—we hear about the sex slaves, young little girls who are held captive, little Christian and Yazidi girls—that they know that people hear them, people care about them, and people are doing here in America all we can to help them out of this crisis. Thank you for your work.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you for your powerful words, Congressman DUFFY. The report that you mentioned is right here. Again, it is a 280-page report submitted to the State Department just recently.

The cover shows that moment where these Coptic Christians from Egypt, who are guilty only of the crime of going to Libya to try to work and earn enough money to sustain their families, were captured by ISIS and then beheaded.

This report lays out the facts. It is not the opinion of the House of Representatives. It is not my opinion or yours. The fact is that this is a genocide.

I am grateful not only to the Knights of Columbus and the organization called In Defense of Christians for producing this, but it basically is a thorough documentation of what has happened that adds further credibility to what we already know and so many people around the world have called genocide.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my good friend.

Thank you for being here tonight.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank you, Mr. FORTENBERRY, for bringing us together to talk about a most serious topic, one that goes to our heart and makes us so sad for what is happening to these remarkable people who stand up for their faith.

Mr. Speaker, just today the Associated Press reported that President Obama would likely miss the March 17 deadline established by Congress for his administration to determine whether or not ISIS has committed genocide.

This is unfathomable. How long does it take for this President to call a spade a spade and declare what Americans already know to be true?

This isn't hard. ISIS is evil. They have engaged in systematic persecution and mass killing of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities throughout the Middle East.

The United States has a moral responsibility to lead in the fight against ISIS, but we can't defeat a threat that we refuse to acknowledge exists.

I am proud to participate in tonight's Special Order and to support Congressman FORTENBERRY's resolution because we need to go on RECORD and declare the belief of crisis that ISIS has without a doubt committed genocide and must be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, we in the United States cannot turn a blind eye when our brothers and sisters around the world are murdered, tortured, and kidnapped for their faith.

It is long past time to dispense with this hyper-political correctness and to call these heinous acts by their true name. These are crimes against humanity. Stopping the violence starts with acknowledging this truth.

I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for his leadership on this much-needed resolution.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congresswoman BLACK, for your leadership not only on this issue, but so many others.

We often are in very important economic debates, debates about finances and debates about roads. Not often enough, perhaps, do we go to the core of the reason for which exists a country and its laws, namely, to protect human dignity. I want to thank you for your leadership in this regard. Thank you so much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), my good friend, for his good words.

Let me again thank you for your leadership. Your consistency and the continuity in which you apply your principles is very noble and uplifting to me.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I want to thank my friend, Congressman FORTENBERRY, for the steadfast witness that you have given to this cause and other causes of human dignity and to call us together again after this historic House vote today where the House stands in solidarity with the suffering victims of the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to condemn in no uncertain terms the slaughter of Middle Eastern Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq, Syria, and the region held by ISIS.

These are crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. Everyone should denounce this senseless brutality. The United States and the United Nations should officially recognize the mass murder of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East as acts of genocide.

We do not hear about this massacre often enough from the media. While many Americans may never have met someone from the Middle East, we are all part of the same human family. Christians in America may be set apart from our brothers and sisters in the Middle East geographically, but we worship the same God and are connected in our humanity.

We owe these suffering men, women, and children the greatest reverence and gratitude for their fortitude as they endure killings, displacement from their homes, forced migration, sexual exploitation, destruction of their property, and endure bodily and mental harm.

We must not remain silent as we live in the comfort of a Nation where our liberties are protected by the law and our culture, to a much greater degree, permits us to peacefully live out our faith.

I recall the words from 2001 of Pope John Paul II, Bishop of Rome, and His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch of all Armenians, as they commemorated the sacrifices of the Armenian Christians who were also brutalized by genocide for their faith:

> Endowed with great faith, they chose to bear witness to the truth and accept death when necessary in order to share eternal life.
>
> The most valuable treasure that one generation could bequeath to the next was fidelity to the gospel so that the young would become as resolute to their ancestors in bearing witness to the truth.
>
> The extermination of a million and a half Armenian Christians in what is generally referred to as the first genocide of the 20th century and the subsequent annihilation of thousands under the former totalitarian regime are tragedies that still live in the memory of the present-day generation.

Fifteen years later their words still ring true as entire communities of Christians and other religious minorities are ravaged by genocide and religious persecution in the Middle East.

This persecution at the hands of ISIS is so horrific that, as Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill said last month in a joint statement:

> Whole families, villages, and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated.

It is intolerable to remain silent and turn a blind eye. Silence and the failure to accurately identify not some, but all, of the victims of this genocide condemns these innocent people to a future of continued brutality, destruction, isolation, and genocide.

All religious minorities in the Middle East deserve religious freedom and the ability to live peacefully within their communities, as they have done for

centuries. We will continue to stand in solidarity with them and to denounce the war crimes and genocide being committed against the law.

I want to end with two words, Mr. Speaker, two words: moral clarity. This is the time, Mr. Speaker, for moral clarity. Today this House spoke. The whole world now watches. We need the administration to speak.

I thank my friend.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congressman ROTHFUS, for your powerful words, and thank you for reminding us that this is about the essence of what it means to be human, to stand in solidarity with people far, far away who we may never know, but whose fate and our fate should be intertwined because of our mutual concern not only for one another from the heart, but also for the structures that give rise to essential principles, such as religious liberty. Thank you for your good words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), my good friend.

Thank you for your tireless efforts as well on this resolution. Behind the scenes you have worked very aggressively in this regard.

While it has been stated clearly that ANNA ESHOO and I led this, nonetheless, your work in compelling Members to be involved in this question and raising consciousness has been invaluable. Thank you so much.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his very important work on this vital issue of religious freedom.

I know how closely you worked with my predecessor, Congressman Frank Wolf, who continues this fight for religious freedom now in his retirement from Congress, but his very active work that continues on this important issue.

I rise to recognize the ongoing struggle for human and religious rights in the Middle East and call on the administration to make a genocide designation for the war crimes committed by ISIS against the Christians and other religious and ethnic groups.

We had the resolution that we passed tonight, and I thank all of my colleagues for that unanimous vote that really should speak to the entire country, but also to the entire world, to everybody who is asking: When is there going to be help? When are people going to hear our cries of anguish?

This resolution had over 200 cosponsors, which I was proud to join the gentleman and so many of my colleagues here tonight and express the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, and other religious minorities in the region and those who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons are committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

ISIS has beheaded young children, raped young girls, and systematically slaughtered people just because of the religion they practice.

This is 2016. I remember as a young girl in Catholic school when we would study the martyrs and you would think about those ancient times and how the first Christians had to suffer and be martyred like that.

And then we see four nuns, Sisters of Charity, just trying to help the aged, the infirm, and they are slaughtered in the name of their faith.

We need to have more people hearing about this and focusing on this. At this time when we have so many side shows that we see the press covering every single day, this is something that they need to be dedicating their time and their resources to and to be using this mass media that we have in so many different mediums to get this word out and understand these atrocities that are going on.

I commend Time magazine for featuring a young Yazidi woman. I believe it was last December. She was named Nadia. Her firsthand account was chilling, a 21-year-old girl. She testified what these monsters had done to her and her family.

When she tried to escape and was recaptured, she recounted her story by saying: ''That night, he beat me up''—this was the person who was keeping her in slavery—''forced me to undress and put me in a room with six militants. They continued to commit crimes to my body until I became unconscious.''

□ 2015

She spoke of her niece, who had also been kidnapped, who had witnessed a woman who was cutting her own wrists, trying to kill herself. They heard stories of women who jumped from bridges. In one house in Mosul, where Nadia was kept, an upstairs room was smeared with evidence of suffering. '' 'There was blood, and there were fingerprints of hands with the blood on the walls,' she says. Two women had killed themselves there'' so they wouldn't have to suffer anymore.

''Nadia never considered ending her own life, but she said she wished the militants would do it for her. 'I did not want to kill myself' ''—of course, her faith wouldn't allow it—'' 'but I wanted them to kill me' '' so she wouldn't end up suffering.

Now she is out there telling the world about this, and we need to listen. The European Parliament, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Iraqi and Kurdish Governments all have labeled these actions as genocide. Now we in the House are on record also.

These terrorist organizations are not only persecuting Christians, but Jews, Yazidis, and so many others, as so many of my colleagues have discussed tonight, they also have killed thousands upon thousands of Muslims who refuse to pledge allegiance to their tormentors' extremist views.

Last week, the organization of the Knights of Columbus in Defense of Christians released a detailed, 278-page report, as Mr. FORTENBERRY, my colleague, has outlined.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the executive summary from the report that details the actions that constitute genocide. I certainly would recommend, like the gentleman did, that people look at this detailed report, and I would ask that the press cover this.

A REPORT SUBMITTED TO SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY BY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS AND IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ISIS is committing genocide—the ''crime of crimes''—against Christians and other religious groups in Syria, Iraq and Libya. It is time for the United States to join the rest of the world by naming it and by taking action against it as required by law.

ISIS' activities are well known. Killings, rapes, torture, kidnappings, bombings and the destruction of religious property and monuments are, in some instances, a matter of public record. The European Parliament, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and the Iraqi and Kurdish governments have labeled ISIS' actions genocide. Political leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—have done likewise.

Indeed, Secretary of State John Kerry in August 2014 stated: ''ISIL's campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yezidi (sic) and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide.'' Pope Francis and Cyril, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, have decried the genocide in these countries against Christians and other religious groups. Most movingly, archbishops and patriarchs of ancient Christian communities in Syria and Iraq have spoken out clearly against this crime and cried over the blood of their people and ISIS' efforts to rid their homelands forever of the Christian faithful.

None of these declarations of genocide excluded Christians, who, with the other religious minorities in the region, have endured targeted attacks at the hands of this radical group and its affiliates because of their religious beliefs.

On February 4, the Knights of Columbus co-authored a letter to Secretary Kerry requesting a meeting to brief him on evidence that established that the situation confronting Christians and other religious minorities constitutes genocide. While there has never been an official response to that letter, we were contacted by senior State Department officials who requested our assistance in making the case that Christians are victims of genocide at the hands of ISIS. Given the specificity of the information requested, our focus in this report is on the situation confronting Christians in areas that are or have been under ISIS control, primarily in Iraq, Syria and Libya.

ISIS has also targeted Yazidis and other religious minority groups in a manner consistent with genocide. Thus, our contention

is not that Christians should be designated as the sole group facing genocide, but rather, that given the overwhelming evidence and the international consensus on this issue, that the United States government should not exclude Christians from such a finding. Doing so would be contrary to fact. The evidence we are presenting to the State Department has three major components:

1. An executive summary

2. A legal brief detailing the case for genocide against Christians

3. Substantial addenda, including original source material, reports, from NGOs documenting the situation, evidence provided to the European Parliament during their consideration of this issue, lists of atrocities, and similar data

A genocide determination requires two specific aspects: intent on the part of those committing genocide and genocidal acts. Both are addressed at length in the attached brief.

Genocide is a crime defined by federal statute and international law. We are asking that Christians be included in finding of genocide and that a recommendation be made for investigation and, in proper cases, for indictment of those responsible. This is required when there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed by the accused parties. Probable cause is a low standard. When there is probable cause, the duties of the President and the Secretary of State under 22 U.S.C. §8213 and the Genocide Convention Implementation Act of 1987, 18 U.S.C. §§1091–93 require the collection of information ''regarding incidents that may constitute . . . genocide,'' 22 U.S.C. §8213, and then the President ''shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that [those] who are responsible for . . . genocide . . . are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriately constituted tribunal.'' 28 U.S.C. §8213(b).

As in any indictment, a finding of probable cause would allow the State Department to report to Congress that it believes genocide has occurred and to recommend that this be proven conclusively through a court process.

It should also be noted that a finding of genocide does not require the killing of an entire group. The words of the U.N. Convention on Genocide and the U.S. statute based on it are clear that what is required are acts aimed at destroying a group ''in whole or in part.'' Both the drafting history of the U.N. Convention and its application by courts around the world have rightly shown that destruction ''in part'' is sufficient to a finding of genocide.

Similarly, there is ample precedent for finding that forced deportation—often in concert with killing, rape and other forms of violence—qualifies as genocide.

As to the issue of intent, it should be noted that individual accounts, the collective evidence and ISIS' own public statements make clear that it targets Christians and seeks to destroy Christianity in the lands they control and beyond.

ISIS' magazine is called Dabiq, named after the place where ISIS believes it will win a battle against the army of Rome. It routinely refers to Dabiq as the location where it will destroy the ''Crusader army,'' an unmistakable Christian reference. The magazine last year published a picture of Pope Francis, captioning him as ''the crusader pope.'' Dabiq proclaims ISIS' intention to destroy Christians:

We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market.

Finally, this certainty is the one that should pulse in the heart of every mujihid from the Islamic State and every supporter outside until he fights the Roman crusaders near Dābiq.

It has also stated:

And nothing changes for the Islamic State, as it will continue to pronounce takfir [abandonment of Islam] upon the Jews, the Christians, the pagans, and the apostates from the Rāfidah, the Nusayriyyah, the Sahwah, and the tawāghīt [disbelievers]. It will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam. It will continue to wage war against the Jewish state until the Jews hide behind their gharqad trees. And it will continue to wage war against the Christians until the truce decreed sometime before the Malhamah. Thereafter, the slave markets will commence in Rome by Allah's power and might.

Elsewhere, Dābiq states ISIS' desire to target Christians under any number of ruses. In addition, a video released just last month by ISIS in Libya states that its adherents should '''Fight and kill them from their Great Priest (Tawadros II) to the most pathetic one.''' A second speaker calls for Egyptians to '''terrorize the Jews and burn the slaves of the Cross.'''

ISIS statements related to the beheading of the Coptic Christians brand Christians as ''polytheists'' for their belief in the Trinity, making Christians the same as ''pagans'' in their view.

The plain meaning of these statements, especially in context, is clear: The so-called Caliphate has slated Christianity for destruction—now and in an apocalyptic battle to come.

Consistent with its threats have been ISIS' actions. Our fact-finding mission to Iraq earlier this month found stories of rape, kidnapping, forced conversions and murder, in addition to property confiscation and forced expulsion. Almost everything we discovered has not been previously reported.

What is publicly known and what our investigation uncovered is substantial, but it has become clear that this still represents only the tip of the iceberg. We are now being sent new stories and new evidence daily. So what is known about ISIS' genocidal atrocities will only increase, and the known scale of the horrors that have occurred can only expand with time.

The victims we met or learned of were many. Their stories were of traumatic experiences they and others had endured. There were also the stories of those who could no longer tell them—the killed and the missing. Some of those we learned about had been wounded physically or emotionally, or both.

The story of the mother whose child was taken from her arms by ISIS has been reported in the media. We found that her experience was not isolated. Similar reports of family members, adults and children alike, were common.

Those we interviewed showed great strength. And some showed great heroism as well, despite the dangers to themselves. There was Khalia, a woman in her fifties, who was captured and held hostage along with 47 others. During her 15 days in captivity, she rebuffed demands to convert, despite a gun being put to her head and a sword to her neck. She literally fought off ISIS militants as they tried to rape the girls, and again later when they tried to take a 9-year-old as a bride. Because of the abuse, 14 men gave in to ISIS' demands and said they would convert to Islam. Khalia would not. Ultimately, the hostages were left in the desert to walk to Erbil. Others in Kurdistan affirmed without prompting that ''she had saved many people.''

Like the Yazidis, Christian women face sexual slavery, a main tool the ''Caliphate'' uses to recruit young men and to exterminate religious groups. A now infamous ISIS slave menu lists the prices by age for ''Christian or Yazidi'' women on sale in their slave markets.

Murder of Christians is commonplace. Many have been killed in front of their own families. The Syriac Catholic Patriarch of Antioch, many of whose flock lived on the Nineveh plain or in Syria, reports that 500 people were killed by ISIS during its takeover of Mosul and the surrounding region. In Syria, where the organization Aid to the Church in Need has reported on mass graves of Christians, Patriarch Younan estimates the number of Christians ''targeted and killed by Islamic terrorist bands'' at more than 1,000.

Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clément Jeanbart of Aleppo estimates the number of Christians kidnapped and/or killed in his city as in the hundreds, with as many as ''thousands'' killed throughout Syria.

In Nineveh, many more were taken hostage seemingly at random, or demanded as hostages in exchange for their families to leave. Many of these have not been heard from thereafter.

Shockingly, some see what is happening at the hands of ISIS as not genocidal to Christians. At the root of this argument seems to be the idea that Christians have not been targeted in the same way as others. This is not true. First, Christians have been attacked throughout the region, not simply in the Nineveh area or only during the summer of 2014. Christians have been attacked and killed by ISIS and its affiliates in Syria, Libya, Yemen and surrounding areas. Even before ISIS was constituted, Christians found themselves victims of its predecessors: the Islamic State in Iraq, Al Qaeda and other radical groups.

Some argue that Christians should be excluded from a genocide declaration because ISIS supposedly allows Christians to pay jizya—a tax historically made available in Islam to Christians in Muslim lands—while denying this option to groups like the Yazidis, who are considered ''pagans'' by Islam.

The premise is false, because what ISIS calls jizya is not comparable to the historical understanding of that term. Rather, jizya—like so many theological concepts that ISIS holds—can mean something contrary to historic Islamic practice, or it can mean nothing at all. As used by ISIS, it is almost always a term for extortion and a prelude or postscript to ISIS violence against Christians.

In Nineveh, demands for so-called jizya payments were a prelude to killings, kidnappings, rapes and the dispossession of the Christian population. Not surprisingly, the Christian negotiator Father Emmanuael Adelkello and the other Christians saw this as a ''a ploy from which ISIS could keep the Christians there to further take advantage of them and abuse them.''

In Raqqa, the offer was made after ISIS had already closed the churches, burned bibles and kidnapped the town's priests.

It is little wonder that Alberto Fernandez—Middle East scholar and, until recently, a coordinator of U.S. government ideological counterterrorism messaging—found ISIS jizya to be ''more a Satan Caliphate publicity stunt than a careful recreation of jizya as practiced by the early Caliphs.'' He added that this shows that ISIS is not similar ''to the sprawling pluralistic caliphates of history.''

Furthermore, self-styled ISIS Caliph Abu Omar al-Baghdadi has admitted for nearly a decade that Christians no longer qualify for the historical protection offered by Islamic law. And under his leadership, during the Islamic State's attack on Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad in 2010, ''the gunmen made at least four claims [justifications] for the killings, two general and two specific: all of the Christians were infidels; it is permitted to kill them; the killing was in retaliation for the burning of a Koran by an American pastor, and was also in retaliation for the alleged imprisonment of two supposed Muslim women converts in Egypt.''

The Knights of Columbus became involved in supporting Christians and other religious minorities in this region because of our longstanding humanitarian activity and support for religious freedom at home and around the world.

Beginning in 2014, our organization began raising money for refugee relief in the Middle East. These funds have helped Christian, as well as Yazidi and Muslim, individuals and families. We have provided funding for general relief in Aleppo; education for refugees now living in Jordan; and food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care in Kurdistan. One of the clinics we fund in Dohuk has been visited by several Yazidi women who recently escaped ISIS sexual slavery, and it has referred them for psychological or specialist medical treatment. To date the K of C has raised more than $8 million for this cause.

Long before our involvement on behalf of Christians in the Middle East, the Knights of Columbus stood with persecuted Christians around the world. In the 1920s, we raised awareness and lobbied the American government to help stop the persecution of Catholics in Mexico under the government of Plutarco Calles. In the 1930s the K of C successfully fought against Mussolini's attempted closure of our charitable work in Italy, and throughout the Cold War we stood in solidarity with, lobbied for and supported those who were not permitted to practice their faith in the Communist bloc.

Today, the threat is the global persecution of Christians, which the Pew Forum and The New York Times have described as occurring at an unparalleled level. What is happening in the Middle East is a microcosm of this, and perhaps its clearest example. It is for this reason that we have partnered with In Defense of Christians in producing this report and sponsoring the national television advertising campaign in support of the petition located at www.StopTheChristianGenocide.com.

It is our hope that our efforts in this regard will be helpful in highlighting and bettering the plight faced at the hands of IS by religious minorities—including Christians. And it is our belief that a declaration of genocide is a key component in that process.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the law states that the President shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that those who are responsible for genocide are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriate constituted tribunal.

Further, the President is required to develop a clear strategy to stop these organizations based on the most recent iteration of the National Defense Authorization Act that was passed in November.

As I mentioned earlier, since his retirement from Congress, my predecessor, Congressman Wolf, has worked tirelessly on these issues. I am so pleased, and I know he will be so pleased, to see so many of his former colleagues and all of us who were able to pass this unanimously this evening. I thank him for his strong voice and for all of the strong voices who were here tonight so that we can, once again, be standing throughout this country and throughout the world as that beacon of light which so many of my colleagues have talked about.

I thank the gentleman for having this Special Order today. I just close in asking for prayer for all of those who are suffering around the world and for all of those souls who have been tormented, tortured, and killed.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank Congresswoman COMSTOCK for her powerful words and her faithful leadership. The gentlewoman had big shoes to fill after Frank Wolf's retirement, and I am sure tonight, if he is watching, he would be very proud of her efforts in this regard and in so many others, leading the fight to try to stop the assaults on human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a much younger man, I entered the Sinai Desert in Egypt. The year was 1979. I was a college student. At the site of the fighting that had taken place between Israel and Egypt in the 1973 war, there was an all-too-familiar scene of a concrete pile of rubble. Scrawled on the side of the concrete pile, both in Arabic and in English, were the words: ''Here was the war, and here is the peace.''

Mr. Speaker, maybe, just maybe, on this, the remnants of this Christian church where this cross was planted by this Yazidi man who returned to his hometown of Sinjar just recently in January, one day will see those same words that here was the war, but now here is the peace.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 2426.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRAT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS—THE WORK CONTINUES: WHY VOTING MATTERS IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous materials relevant to the subject matter of this discussion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening for tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour: The Work Continues—Why Voting Matters in the African American Community.

I am so proud to join my classmate, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES from the Eighth District of New York. He is a member of the House Judiciary Committee. He continues to be a tireless advocate for social justice, working to reform our criminal justice system and to eliminate the overcriminalization of the African American community.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss the current state of voting rights in America, which, unfortunately, are under assault. The freedom to vote is one of America's most fundamentally, constitutionally guaranteed rights. It was 51 years ago this month, Mr. Speaker, that over 600 peaceful, orderly protesters set off to march from Selma, Alabama, to the State capitol in Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the State.

Last week, our Congressional Black Caucus chair, Chairman BUTTERFIELD, stated at the first in a series of CBC hearings about the current state of voting rights in America that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation that was ever passed in the United States Congress.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, as we know, in 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down this crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County v. Holder decision. Our work continues because by invalidating section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, the Supreme Court opened the doors for ways to reduce the voting power of minority communities and it put in place new voting restrictions in an effort to make it harder for millions of Americans to vote.

Our democracy has far too many missing voices, particularly those who are already at a disadvantage due to deep-rooted racial and class barriers in our society. By exercising our right, we can do great things. We can hold this

country accountable. We can advocate for legislation that supports social and economic progress, equality and fairness for all Americans. We can champion policies that create and sustain jobs and that protect against cuts to social and economic programs that are vital to our most at-risk populations. We can move forward on efforts to address the school-to-prison pipeline and criminal justice reform. We know that the inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races and that more and more Black children are victims of failing schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on all citizens, including on our community and national leaders, to join the Congressional Black Caucus to work to eliminate voter suppression and to restore what so many people fought for, marched, and died for—yes, the Voting Rights Act. It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us and to expand opportunity for all people. That begins with passing a voting rights act. Our work still continues, Mr. Speaker.

This week, we are celebrating Women's History Month, and I must note the powerful impact that African American women are having at the polls. In the past two Presidential elections, Black women led all demographic groups in voter turnout. That is why voting matters to African American communities. Black women make up the most dynamic segment of the rising American voters. A great civil rights leader said that women are among the greatest leaders of social reform, and they are fighting, literally fighting, for their political rights.

This past Saturday I had the opportunity to be with the mothers of the movement. We know who they are. They are the mothers of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Dontre Hamilton, Jordan Davis, Sandra Bland, and Hadiya Pendleton; and we have all heard what happened to their children.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, we are calling for action on gun control. We need to do more than just stand up on this floor for a moment of silence. We need to make sure that we are passing gun control legislation, commonsense legislation, that keeps the guns out of the hands of the most dangerous individuals. It is time for us to protect our children.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to give you some examples of what we should include in our call for action.

I go first to my good friend and colleague and classmate who brought it to my attention that we stand up for a moment, and then we sit down. Then we come back to this floor, and it is business as usual. We talk about wanting to keep our families safe, and we talk about the mental health issues. That is all we do, Mr. Speaker. We talk about it.

Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY of Illinois' Second District has legislation, H.R. 224, which would require the Surgeon General of Public Health Services to submit to Congress an annual report on the effects of gun violence on public health. This bill has 140 Democrat cosponsors. I am asking my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to step up and do more than just stand up for 30 seconds.

I am calling on Congress to act on Congressman JAMES CLYBURN of the Sixth District of South Carolina's legislation, H.R. 3051, the Background Check Completion Act, which would guarantee that no gun is sold by a licensed dealer until a background check is completed.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to say that I am a cosponsor of both of these bills.

I will go on and tell you about Chairman BUTTERFIELD, the chair of our Congressional Black Caucus. He understands that our work continues, because he has focused his efforts on promoting anti-poverty programs and on expanding economic development and job creation. There are a number of things that have happened in his State.

For example, the Moral Mondays are protests in North Carolina that are led by religious progressives. These protests are in response to several actions by the government of North Carolina, which was elected into office in 2013. These events, which spread throughout the South, helped bring attention to voting rights, criminal justice reform, and workers' rights. I think it is very important for us to note that.

Mr. Speaker, tonight my coanchor and I will talk about a number of issues that explain why our work continues. We are going to talk about why in African American communities it is important for us to understand, if we don't diversify those who are going to vote, we don't represent the diversity of this great America that we are here to protect and to serve.

□ 2030

It is not just members of the Congressional Black Caucus who value and understand the importance of us coming together, the importance of us celebrating our rich history, all tied to the Voting Rights Act, all tied to the movements that we have had of the past.

Let me give you a great example because I am so proud that I am going to have the privilege to yield time to my good friend, Congressman JOHN LARSON from the First District of Connecticut.

He is here, Mr. Speaker, tonight to join with us as we talk about our rich history. He is going to share with us information about the 51st anniversary of President Johnson's ''We Shall Overcome'' speech, which was given on March 15, 1965.

I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York for this opportunity to join with them this evening.

I am especially proud to associate myself with the gentlewoman's remarks and all that the Congressional Black Caucus has stood for as I would generally acknowledge that I think most of Americans stand for as well.

I thank them as well for pointing out a historic event that is happening and, in fact, will happen tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress.

Tomorrow is March 15. As the gentlewoman mentioned, it was 51 years ago that President Lyndon Baines Johnson gave his now famous ''We Shall Overcome'' speech.

It was President Johnson that recognized 8 days after Bloody Sunday what the Nation needed to do. He did this at great political risk, but he did it because of the sacrifice that so many had made.

Tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress we will celebrate two American heroes with the idea that it is far more important to come together as a Nation and understand that these issues that we face and struggle with aren't Democrat or Republican, but at their very core are American.

I want to commend the Bipartisan Policy Center for establishing what will be the first Congressional Patriot Award that will be presented tomorrow evening to JOHN LEWIS from Georgia and SAM JOHNSON from Texas.

This honor will be perpetuated forever. Not only will it be a medal in recognition of their patriotic service to the country, but of their service here in the United States Congress.

One person was nearly beaten to death by the Alabama police, the other nearly beaten to death by the Vietcong and imprisoned for 8 years, 42 months, in solitary confinement. It was a momentous time in our history in 1965.

Both of these gentlemen serve in the United States Congress. Both of them had to overcome in their lives incredible obstacles. Both of them, after their experience in 1965 and beyond, came back to serve their country, to continue to organize, to continue, in the case of SAM JOHNSON, to be a flight commander.

JOHN LEWIS, as we all know, is the conscience of the House of Representatives. SAM JOHNSON is the most admired Republican on the floor. They are both iconic and American heroes, and tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress they will be recognized.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has been helped by the Library of Congress, the fortress of knowledge, an institution started by the United States Congress, and houses our great history.

Tomorrow on display will be the documents of the civil rights movement and the direct participation of JOHN LEWIS and the documents about the Vietnam war and the captivity and imprisonment of SAM JOHNSON.

Speaking tomorrow evening on behalf of SAM JOHNSON will be JOHN MCCAIN. Who better to speak about being imprisoned in the Hanoi Hilton? Who better to speak about the sacrifice that SAM JOHNSON made, that his family made, for people who put their country first?

We will be honored tomorrow to have a former Member of this body, an ambassador of the United States, and the mayor of Atlanta in Andrew Young being here tomorrow evening.

Who better to talk about all the issues that the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York are bringing to the forefront today than the person who was there by Martin Luther King's side, a colleague of JOHN LEWIS? JOHN LEWIS holds the seat that Andrew Young occupied in this body.

Andrew Young continues to be an advocate for voting rights and is in the forefront of that continued and epic battle that goes on in this country. It will be an outstanding evening.

But the point of it all is to understand that, as Members here in the United States Congress, in the House of Representatives, we must come together and, as President Johnson said 51 years ago tomorrow evening, to overcome, to overcome not only racial prejudices, but to overcome disease, poverty, and ignorance, which is the real plague on this Nation that keeps us confined.

How fitting that this event takes place tomorrow evening and because of the benevolence of an outstanding person like David Rubenstein. Who better to interview JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON about their experience than David Rubenstein?

I thank my colleagues from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the opportunity here to echo the sentiments of their purpose here this evening and to acknowledge this event taking place tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress of distinguished Americans, their history forever perpetuated.

And as Webster says above us in the great quote here:

> Let us all, in our time here, in our service to the country, do something worthy of being remembered.

Let us take to heart the example of JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON and note especially tomorrow that we shall overcome.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON.

As I was listening to him reflect on the wonderful program that we are all going to be able to participate in at the Library of Congress—as I listened to his words, 51 years ago the President of these United States could recognize what the Nation needed.

It disappoints me, as I stand here on this House floor and I think about voting rights and I think about the condition of this Nation today and where we are when we talk about casting our votes and who we are going to cast our votes for. I say thank you for Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congressman SAM JOHNSON.

As I was listening to the gentleman, I thought about so many of the things that Congressman JOHN LEWIS has said to us not only on this floor, not only in private moments, but in our Congressional Black Caucus meetings.

He represents that sense of history of why we come to continue our work, why we come to continue to stand up for the voting rights.

Because he has said to us on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, that the vote is the most powerful and most nonviolent tool that we have in a democratic society. We must not allow the power of the vote to be neutralized. We must never go back.

So I thank Congressman LARSON for taking us forward, for taking us on March 15 on a journey that we will remember for a lifetime, because, you see, we stand on the shoulders of those individuals who came before us.

Now our voters stand on our shoulders. Our voters, Mr. Speaker, are wanting us, are thirsty for us, to stand up for them so that their vote counts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my coanchor to share some thoughts with us on why our work continues, why it is so important in the African American community for us to stand up for not only African Americans, but for our citizens who are discriminated against, those who, when we talk about social and economic programs, we see the disparities in what happens to them in education, in health care, in housing, the juvenile justice system, the criminal justice system.

I could not think of any better coanchor or colleague, someone who is such a great orator, someone who, when he stands up, we listen.

Please, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, share with us some of your thoughts.

I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman, Representative BEATTY, from the great State of Ohio for her leadership and for moving us forward throughout the past several weeks as it relates to the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order, this hour of power.

It is 60 minutes where we have the opportunity to speak to the American people about issues of importance to our country, to our economy, to the integrity of our democracy as we are doing tonight. It is an honor to share with you today.

□ 2045

I also want to acknowledge and thank our colleague, JOHN LARSON from the great State of Connecticut, for his continuing leadership and for taking to the House floor today to highlight both the historic significance of the speech that President Johnson gave from this very Chamber 51 years ago, on March 15, 1965, about voting in America and ensuring that every single person, regardless of their race or their color or their background had an opportunity to exercise their franchise, and to point out to the American people that the Congress will pause tomorrow to honor two true American legends, Representative LEWIS and Representative JOHNSON, who served the American people before they arrived in the people's House and through their service here in the House of Representatives.

It is with great humility that I stand today to address a topic that I think is of particular significance at this moment in time that we face in America in terms of the turmoil that many may be feeling, watching, undergoing: the economic changes that have been experienced over the last few decades.

We know that the middle class, in many ways, has been left behind. Wages have remained stagnant, notwithstanding the increased productivity of the American people over the last 40-plus years. When the economy collapsed, many high-income earners were able to rebound in no small part as a result of the bailout that occurred. There are a lot of Americans who are still hoping, looking out for their opportunity to be brought back into the economic mainstream by the people they have sent to Congress to represent them.

Notwithstanding all of the challenges that we have to confront, whether that is our broken criminal justice system or the economy that has still not completely recovered, we have made substantial progress under the leadership of Barack Obama. But of course there is more that needs to be done, and we could welcome some cooperation from folks on the other side of the aisle because all of our constituents were hit hard in 2008, yet President Obama has largely been left to his own devices.

Notwithstanding all of these issues, central to how our government works is the fact that it is designed to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Abraham Lincoln, of course, famously uttered those words in his Gettysburg Address.

If we are going to have that type of government, then everybody needs the opportunity to be able to participate in choosing their representatives in government without obstacle or obstruction.

We understand this is a great country, but it is also a country that has had a stain on its history as it relates to denying some the opportunity to participate fully in American democracy. That is the reason, after all, that, in the aftermath of the Civil War that threatened to tear this country apart,

we had a Reconstruction amendment related to slavery and then a Reconstruction amendment related to the equal protection under the law and due process for all Americans; and lastly, of course, with the 15th Amendment designed to make sure that, in the Constitution, racial discrimination, as it relates to the exercise of the franchise, would be prohibited.

But, unfortunately, notwithstanding the 15th Amendment being ratified and put into our Constitution, more than 100 years would pass by until this country really confronted the denial of the right to vote in a meaningful way, particularly in the Deep South, and it happened because of the efforts and sacrifice of a great many people: Dr. Martin Luther King, JOHN LEWIS, Andrew Young, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the NAACP, and those foot soldiers who were on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, and almost lost their lives when they were attacked without provocation by Alabama State troopers as they endeavored to cross that bridge on the way from Selma to Montgomery. That, of course, then prompted President Johnson to deliver that address, where he so famously uttered the words upon his conclusion that ''we shall overcome.''

The 1965 Voting Rights Act continues to be the most significant piece of civil rights legislation ever passed by this Congress, but unfortunately we know that it is currently under attack. It is under attack because the Supreme Court effectively, in the Shelby v. Holder case, eviscerated its impact by striking down section 4, so-called coverage clause, which effectively eliminated the Department of Justice's ability to require States with a history of voting rights discrimination to have to preclear any changes that it makes.

Now, what I have been struggling to figure out during my brief time here in the Congress is why voting rights has become such a controversial thing when, it seems to me, it is so central to the integrity of our democracy. For decades, in the aftermath of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, it was actually pretty bipartisan, this notion that in order for our democracy to work there should be no artificial obstacles erected to prevent people—African Americans, Latinos, immigrant families, and others—from being able to participate in what basically makes America great, what makes us unique: the ability to elect our representatives and for there to be peaceful transitions of power regardless of ideology, regardless of your region, regardless of what State a President may come from in order to keep the Republic going.

When you look at the history of the Voting Rights Act, as I indicated, it has largely been, until recently, a bipartisan endeavor. In fact, every time the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized—and it has happened four times—not only did it pass with bipartisan majorities in the Congress, but it was signed into law each and every time by a Republican President.

In 1970, Richard Nixon signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1975, Gerald Ford signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. Then in 2006, President George W. Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. This significant piece of civil rights legislation was enacted into law and then reenacted on every single occasion with the signature of a Republican President, indicating that voting, participation in the franchise, having the American people in their full, gorgeous mosaic elect their representatives is an American thing. But all of a sudden, it has become controversial.

Now, I don't know if the timing of the election of our current President has anything to do with that. Historians will make that analysis as they move forward. It is above my pay grade. I just find it interesting that this notion of voter fraud, which was always a fiction put forth by the defenders of the race-based Southern hierarchy to deny African Americans the right to vote—and was not an issue when Richard Nixon was elected; it wasn't an issue when Reagan was elected; it wasn't an issue when George Herbert Walker Bush was elected; it wasn't an issue when George W. Bush was elected, notwithstanding the fact that I am still not convinced he won the State of Florida—all of a sudden, in the aftermath of the election of President Barack Obama, apparently there has been an outbreak of this fever that we have got to deal with so-called voter fraud.

No evidence of the fraud, not a scintilla of evidence has been produced by a single proponent of this argument, but when people were elected in 2010, in the immediate aftermath of that election during President Barack Obama's first term, more than 180 different pieces of legislation in 41 States were introduced, all, in the opinion of many objective observers, designed to suppress the right to vote. And at the same time, this challenge was working its way through the Supreme Court from, of all groups of people, Shelby, Alabama.

Now, the irony of that, JOHN LEWIS almost lost his life, as Representative LARSON indicated, on the Edmund Pettus Bridge down in Selma, Alabama; and yet the Supreme Court, in a 5–4 decision, in a case brought by the folks from Shelby County, apparently thinking that they were victims because of the oppressive nature of the preclearance provision, the Supreme Court, at least for the time being, bought that argument.

So we find ourselves now in a situation here in the Congress where the Court has said to us: Fix it; update the coverage formula. So bipartisan legislation has been introduced, championed by folks like JIM SENSENBRENNER, the author of the 2006 reauthorization and a very distinguished and respected former Republican chairman of the House Committee on the Judiciary, and, of course, JOHN CONYERS, JOHN LEWIS, JOYCE BEATTY, and many others on the Democratic side of the aisle. Yet we can't get a single hearing before the Committee on the Judiciary on something seemingly so fundamental to the integrity of our democracy.

We are not asking you to turn into progressive Democrats. Just act like Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, whom you hold up as someone who is the classic embodiment of conservative politics. Just act like Ronald Reagan did in 1982 or George W. Bush.

Let's fix the Voting Rights Act in advance of the American people having to determine what comes next as it relates to both this Congress and the Presidency—not because it is a good thing for Republicans or because it is a good thing for Democrats; it is a good thing for the country: full and robust participation.

I just want to add, as I close, that it seems to me that this would be a particularly significant time to deal with the Voting Rights Act and to make sure that everybody can participate fully in our democracy at a moment when many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the Senate have said: We want the American people to decide who fills the Supreme Court vacancy.

□ 2100

Now, I am a little skeptical about that, but let's assume that that is really your view of the world. If, in fact, you don't want to do your constitutional job right now—once the President sends up a Supreme Court nominee and gives that person an opportunity to be heard before the Senate and the American people—because you claim you want the American people to decide who that nominee is through the vehicle of a Presidential election—then let's make sure that all of America can participate in that process. That means let's remove any obstacles to voting in every community.

We haven't seen a hearing in the House, and we haven't seen a hearing in the Senate. I just don't understand. We have had no hearing on the Supreme Court nomination. We have had no hearing on the Voting Rights Act when the Supreme Court told us to fix it. What exactly is going on? The American people are wondering.

We see a lot of frustration right now out there in America directed at Washington. That is because oftentimes

there are so many critical issues that we simply fail to deal with.

So I am just hopeful today that, as we mark this occasion tomorrow of these two American heroes being honored—Representative JOHNSON and Representative LEWIS—we can get back to doing the business of the American people in the spirit of service that they themselves have displayed through their life's work and deal with something so central to our democracy such as the right to vote in an unfettered fashion.

Mrs. BEATTY. Congressman JEFFRIES, you have given us a lot to reflect on tonight. You have given us the roll call of how President after President has reauthorized the Voting Rights Act.

As I was listening to you, it appears that there is an uncommon denominator that we now have in this great America: a Black man as President of these United States.

I want to stand here and say, Mr. Speaker, that I am very suspect when I listen to how eloquently my colleague walked us through the history and shared with us how 51 years ago our colleague, JOHN LEWIS, was putting his life at risk with other great leaders as a very young Black man, that it was because he understood what was at stake.

He was probably ahead of his time. But when you think about that, everyone in this Chamber should want to have that experience.

I can remember a year ago, almost to the date, that I took that journey to Selma, Alabama. I took that journey with Congressman JOHN LEWIS and some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who stood there and locked and latched hands and talked about how we should overcome.

For a moment, Congressman JEFFRIES, it gave me that hope that I came here for, that hope that one person can make a difference and change the lives of others.

It wasn't 48 hours later that we came back to this institution, to this House floor, and all of that was washed away. It was back to business as usual.

There were no hearings, whether it is a budget hearing for funds to fund things from our infrastructure, things to educate and take care of our infants and children, mental health that we have all come to an agreement on with all the things that have happened during the time you and I have been here, Congressman JEFFRIES, with the number of lives that have been lost.

I think about the Emanuel Nine. We talked about that commonality of putting more money into mental health. Yet, the President puts dollars in the budget and we can't get a hearing.

So why does our work continue? Our work continues because it is so important for us, as African Americans, to make sure we protect those who are most at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we have a huge job to do. We are 46 members strong. While we focus on the lives of African Americans and the African American community, we stand here and fight for all children of all races, all ethnicities, because that is what we do because we care.

But as I stand here today and reflect on Congressman JEFFRIES' outline of history, outline of the number of lives that have been lost, outline of the legal process and what we have gone through, it made me recall, Mr. Speaker, that a week ago I decided to write an editorial to my local newspaper, and it was published. Mr. Speaker, that editorial was titled: ''Work to improve voting rights.''

[From The Columbus Dispatch, Feb. 29, 2016]

WORK TO IMPROVE VOTING RIGHTS

(By Rep. Joyce Beatty)

As Black History Month closes, I am reminded of Martin Luther King Jr., who famously said, ''We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now.''

We have come a long way since the era of Jim Crow. Indeed, our nation has laws on the books protecting people from discrimination based on sex, age, race, religion, national origin and ethnicity. Moreover, each February, we collectively reflect on the important contributions and accomplishments African-Americans etched into the cornerstone of America.

Yet, the more things change, the more they stay the same. What do I mean?

Every year, without fail, we celebrate Black History Month and honor the many leaders, heroes and ''sheroes'' of the black community. However, we rarely discuss the systemic and pervasive bathers still preventing African-Americans from achieving the American Dream.

Our nation is still plagued by the vestiges of segregation and unequal laws and policies. Today, it is more difficult to exercise one's constitutional right to vote, not easier. Inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races, and more and more black children are victim to failing schools.

As opposed to getting bogged down in the numbers and reciting a long list of statistics and historical grievances, I am calling on all people, including our community and national leaders, to join me in working to eliminate voter suppression I and to restore what so many people fought, marched and died for: the Voting Rights Act.

It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us, to defend the foundation of our democracy and to expand opportunity for all people. It begins with the Voting Rights Act.

In Congress, I am working tirelessly to rebuild the very foundation of the Voting Rights Act undone by the Supreme Court's Shelby County v. Holder decision. As an original cosponsor of the Voting Rights Empowerment Act of 2015 (H.R. 12), I believe we must ensure every American has equal say and the opportunity to vote. This legislation would do just that by expanding access and putting in place common sense protections for our nation's electorate, no matter the color of one's skin.

It takes a village. So, let's work together in our neighborhood, at work or with family and friends to make this change possible and to help guarantee every American has fair and equal access to the ballot box.

Black History Month should be about the progress that has been made and the journey that awaits us. Remember, the past is our experience, the present is our accountability and the future is our responsibility.

Mrs. BEATTY. It is 2016. I am writing an article that sounds like I was sitting in 1955. That gives me great concern.

So when I think about our topic tonight, our work continues. What matters in the African American community I think we have answered tonight.

Whether it was from Congressman JOHN LARSON, who is not a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, whether it is from Congressman SAM JOHNSON or Congressman JOHN LEWIS, Mr. Speaker, I say to you that we stand here as members of the Congressional Black Caucus because we are the conscience of the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 13 minutes remaining.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, as I listen to you talk about the rich history and what we are dealing with today, I think about you serving on the Judiciary Committee.

I think about how, as Members of Congress and members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we often talk about our broken prison system.

We often talk about what happens to young children who go to college and then find themselves in that pipeline of education to prison.

I would like to ask you how you think the decrease in Black voters will affect that broken system.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Well, it is a great question. I look at it in two ways. First, when you think about mass incarceration as a phenomenon, one that, hopefully, in this Congress we will be able to do something about, in recognition of the fact that America imprisons more people than any other country in the world, increasingly, we have become a country that over-incarcerates and under-educates. As a result, we have lost generations of young people, disproportionately, African Americans and Latinos.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared publicly that drug abuse was public enemy number one. At the time, there were less than 350,000 people incarcerated in America. That was the starting point of the war on drugs.

More than 40 years later we have now got 2.3 million people incarcerated in America. A significant number of those folks—approximately 50 percent at the Federal level and similar numbers at the State level—are there for nonviolent drug offenses.

Yet, every single one of those people who have been incarcerated in America has lost the right to vote, some permanently, some temporarily with an opportunity to perhaps recover it. More than a million people are currently incarcerated from the African American

community. So our system is broken. Our democracy is in need of adjustment.

If there is not an understanding that the absence of refraining from participating in that democracy through exercising the franchise yields consequences that public policymakers will choose either intentionally or through benign neglect to allow things like mass incarceration to overwhelm a community, then we are going to continue to see things happen that are not in the best interest of America. Certainly, electoral participation matters to the African American community.

The other thing that we have got to look at in the context of the right to vote—and there is some bipartisan support because Senator RAND PAUL on the other side of the Capitol has been very visionary in this regard—is that disenfranchising people who have been incarcerated in America, paid their debt to society, have moved on with their life—but to permanently restrict them, even in some cases when the conviction is for a misdemeanor offense, is un-American.

But some have used this type of disenfranchisement related to the prison industrial complex to overwhelm many communities because of mass incarceration to, again, set up obstacles to full participation in American democracy.

So we have got to put everything on the table in terms of our effort to fix our broken criminal justice system, which I am pleased, to date, at least in the House on the Judiciary Committee, has been bipartisan in nature.

But we have to take an expansive approach to repairing the damage that has been done over more than 40 years of a failed war on drugs, with millions upon millions upon millions of people stamped with a criminal record, I believe in excess of 65 million people during that time period, disproportionately African Americans and Latinos.

It is one of many issues that is on the table that, hopefully, will result in folks understanding that the stakes are high as it relates to who represents you. And the vehicle is just to participate.

That is the great majesty of our democracy as it was conceived by the Founders and those who came after: Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, through electoral participation.

□ 2115

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, I paused for a moment as I was listening to you, and you are so absolutely right; the vehicle, the power of casting that vote, the power of making a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the things that is so significant about the Congressional Black Caucus, that is our history. It is our fortitude to have the courage to always continue to fight and never give up, because we actually have members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were there during that time.

When you think about Members like Congressman JOHN LEWIS, when you think about Members like JOHN CONYERS, JOHN CONYERS, a Black man, will go down in history as the longest-serving man in this Congress. Just think about it. A man that shared an office for almost 2 decades with Rosa Parks, the modern civil rights leader who decided that she was going to sit down that day because she realized one person could make a difference.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have gone through our whole history of the Voting Rights Act, we have gone through the sections of the Constitution, we have gone through what the Supreme Court has done, and yet we can't get the reauthorization of our Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to you tonight. The Congressional Black Caucus will not give up. We are holding field hearings, as I speak, so we can collect the information to come back here and tell you that the vehicle for American people, that vehicle is the ballot box.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today, we have resolved. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus don't come just to complain and put issues out there. We are scholars. We like hearing that we are the conscience of the Congress, but we are the scholars. We are Howard, and Morehouse, and Spelman, and Harvard, and Princeton, and Yale. We are the whole spectrum of this America that you and I serve.

So I ask you today, Mr. Speaker, to consider that when we stand up the next time on this House floor, why Members are sitting down. We are sitting down because I think you and Congressman JEFFRIES and all the rest of my colleagues in this Chamber, we have an obligation to do more.

Innocent lives are being taken, and there is something we can do about it. We could start with something that has been bipartisan. Congressman JEFFRIES mentioned it a number of times, and that is something as simple as passing a Voting Rights Act. That would make a difference.

I guess my question is: What are we afraid of?

Are we afraid if we increase the number of those who have been disenfranchised, those who have been discriminated against, that they will actually vote, they will actually have a voice to make a difference in the way they live in this wonderful America?

I am asking you to go to your Republican colleagues and ask them to stand with us that we can leave a great legacy in history, because history will be written. When the first Black President leaves these United States, we will read of all the wonderful things that President Barack Obama did.

But we will also have those who will write part of that history of us failing to do our job. And I will reflect back on this day when Congressman JEFFRIES and I stood at this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour and we said, the work continues, and why it matters in African American communities that we vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, nearly 51 years ago the Voting Rights Act (VRA) was signed into law to prohibit racial discrimination in voting. It was a defining moment in our nation's history that would send a clear message that all voters should have free and fair access to the polls in the United States. The Voting Rights Act became a powerful tool of our democracy that protected voter participation of individuals from all backgrounds. It has given a voice to previously disenfranchised voters, particularly that of minorities who would otherwise be left out of the political process.

Since the passage of the VRA, various groups and individuals have endeavored to reverse those protections. In 2013 the U.S., Supreme Court ultimately struck down a key enforcement component of the VRA as unconstitutional. This decision has enabled a number of states across the country to move forward with discriminatory voter laws, the effects of which have not yet been fully realized.

Texas is one of 21 states that have implemented new restrictions on voting since the 2010 midterm election. Texas first passed two harsh voter mandates in 2012, which were ultimately blocked under Section 5 of the VRA. Texas re-implemented these laws requiring valid photo identification at the polls following the Supreme Court ruling—the first time a photo ID was required to vote in a federal election in 2014. The consequences in Texas alone have been dire and disproportionately impact minority voters. The U.S. Department of Justice originally estimated that the Texas law could prevent as many as 600,000 voters from casting their votes at the polls.

The African American community has faced many barriers to voting throughout our history. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, thousands of protesters marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in order to protest the racial injustices in voting. The will of the people ultimately prevailed, resulting in the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 just five short months after the final march. It was an important struggle that still serves as a lesson for us today.

Voter disenfranchisement poses an incredible threat to the electoral process. The nationwide efforts to create barriers to voting have highlighted the importance of the protections afforded under the VRA. Voting is the principle means through which Americans can have a voice in the political process. It allows us to elect candidates who share a common vision for bettering our nation and advancing our social and economic progress. These efforts to disenfranchise voters stand contrary to our democratic principles as a nation and it is imperative that we fight to reinstate voter protections for all, which have only served to

strengthen our democracy and engage voters in the political process.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to honor the thousands of brave men and women who, 51 years ago, organized and marched over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama in support of a fundamental truth: that every American has the right to vote.

The Selma march altered the course of history. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, ''Selma produced the voting rights legislation of 1965.'' The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned discriminatory voting requirements that disenfranchised African American voters.

For 51 years, the Voting Rights Act has helped ensure that all Americans have an equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

But nearly three years ago, the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act, saying it was outdated and unjustified. Since this decision, we have seen that the Voting Rights Act is needed now more than ever before.

Today, 30 states require voters to show identification in order to vote. And 15 states already require voters to show a photo ID in order to cast a ballot. At the same time, Republican controlled-legislatures continue their efforts to cut early voting.

All of this limits access to the ballot, making it harder for American citizens to have a say in the direction of our country.

Restrictive voting laws disproportionately impact minorities and low-income communities.

Upwards of 25 percent of African Americans lack a photo ID, compared to 8 percent of white Americans. Moreover, 12 percent of those earning less than $25,000 annually lack a photo ID.

States with strict voter ID laws require voters to have certain government-issued photo IDs, like driver's licenses. However, African Americans and low-income individuals are less likely to have driver's licenses because they are more likely to live in cities and rely on public transportation.

These groups also have a harder time obtaining other valid forms of photo ID because they often lack the time and money to track down necessary documents, like Social Security cards, and because ID offices are not easily accessible to them.

America is a nation built on the democratic process, and when that process is broken for any of us, it impacts all of us.

People want to vote because they care deeply about where our country is headed. They want to create a better life for themselves and their families, and they know that their ability to do so is in many ways tied to the outcomes of elections.

As a country, we should make it as easy as possible for people to exercise this right. Election officials should not erode the democratic principles that they have sworn to uphold. They should make sure every American citizen has an equal voice in the democratic process.

Protecting every person's right to vote is essential to a fully functioning democracy. The countless men and women who risked their lives to defend that right knew our system of government only works when it's inclusive and fair—when it enables all voices to have a say in the future of our country.

So it's our responsibility to make it easier for people to cast a ballot. Just as it's the responsibility of those people to vote. When people don't vote, not only do they dishonor those who risked everything for voting rights; they risk perpetuating policies that hurt hard-working Americans. I can tell you with certainty—had we not elected President Obama, we wouldn't have the Affordable Care Act, and 20 million fewer people would have health insurance.

So it's important for every eligible American to vote. Failure to do so can have grave consequences for American families, who deserve public policies that work for them, not special interests.

Voting rights has been historically important to the African American community, which was denied its constitutional right to vote for far too long. That is why this caucus—the Congressional Black Caucus—is doing everything possible to expand voting rights protections and increase citizen participation in elections.

We are calling for an immediate restoration of the Voting Rights Act. Democracy cannot flourish until voting rights are reinstated in this country. We have broken down many barriers to justice and equality since the Selma march and the signing of the Voting Rights Act, but we dishonor those accomplishments and the people who fought for them if we accept the continued weakening of voting rights.

Fifty-one years ago, thousands of Americans marched in Selma against racial discrimination in voting. That march is ours to continue.

DECLARATION OF GENOCIDE COMMITTED BY ISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to be able to speak on this hallowed floor.

A report was made earlier today entitled, ''House Poised to Declare ISIS Committing Genocide Against Christians, Other Minorities.'' And, in fact, this report says: ''The House is poised Monday to approve a resolution that declares the Islamic State is committing genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East—putting even more pressure on the Obama administration to do the same ahead of a deadline later this week.

''The resolution passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee with unanimous support and is expected to pass the House with bipartisan backing.

''The resolution comes to a vote Monday evening, just days after the release of a graphic new report by the Knights of Columbus and In Defense of Christians on ISIS atrocities. The report made the case that the terror campaign against Christians and other minorities in Syria, Iraq, and other parts of the Middle East is, in fact, genocide.

'' 'When ISIS systematically targets Christians, Yazidis, and other ethnic and religious minorities for extermination, this is not only a grave injustice—it is a threat to civilization itself,' Representative Jeff Fortenberry, Republican, Nebraska, said in a statement. 'We must call the violence by its proper name: genocide.'

''The resolution will be voted on ahead of the congressionally mandated March 17 deadline for the Secretary of State John Kerry and the White House to make a decision on whether to make such a declaration. The measure is an effort to force the administration's hand on the issue, as the administration has so far declined to take an official position.

'' 'Christians, Yazidis, and other beleaguered minority groups can find new hope in this transpartisan, ecumenical alliance against ISIS' barbaric onslaught,' Fortenberry, who is co-chairman of the Religious Minorities of the Middle East Caucus and represents America's largest Yazidi community, said in the statement.''

So the measure received the backing of the House Republican leadership, PAUL RYAN, calling on the Obama administration to take action like recent attacks against Christians.

The article goes on, from foxnews.com, indicating: ''It is rare for Congress to make a genocide determination. In addition to the genocide resolution, the House is expected to vote on a measure to create an international tribunal to try ISIS members accused of atrocities.''

Mr. Speaker, it is pleasing to report that H. Con. Res. 75, expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL—that is, the Islamic State; and it has used different names, ISIS, ISIL—against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, that passed by 393 yeas and zero nays.

It is deeply troubling that although this House, in a bipartisan way, could vote 393 for this resolution and zero against, that Secretary of State John Kerry and President Barack Obama are having trouble deciding what they should do.

Gee, is it possible they might just notice that in the House of Representatives we came together unanimously and said what ISIS has been doing is genocide?

For heaven's sake, for the sake of the Christians, the Yazidis, the Jews in the area, is it too much to ask that this United States administration take notice that there is a genocide going on?

And though the administration is not doing much of anything about it, is it too much to ask that this administration at least call it what it is; that this House, on both sides of the aisle, unanimously said the same thing?

Is it too much to ask, even if you are not going to fight the genocide, at

least call it what it is, then that will embolden others with courage to stand up and fight more fearlessly? Is that too much to ask?

I hope and pray not, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime, what we find here at home, while we are still having the administration struggle over whether to call genocide genocide, we have a report from ICE, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, it is revealed that 124 illegal immigrant criminals released from jail by the Obama administration since 2010 have been subsequently charged with murder.

The Center for Immigration Studies report on the data from ICE to the Senate Judiciary Committee added that the committee is not releasing the names of these masses of murder suspects.

''The criminal aliens released by ICE in these years—who had already been convicted of thousands of crimes—are responsible for a significant crime spree in American communities, including 124 new homicides after the thousands of crimes they have already committed before ICE released them. Inexplicably, ICE is choosing to release some criminal aliens multiple times,' said the report written by CIS' respected Director of Policy Studies, Jessica M. Vaughan.

''She added that 75 percent were released due to court orders or because their countries wouldn't take them back.

''What's more, her report said that in 2014, ICE released 30,558 criminal aliens''—that is illegal immigrants in the United States who committed criminal atrocities—''who had been convicted already when they were released of 92,347 crimes.''

Wow. As the world suffers, as this administration cannot determine whether or not to call the genocide of Christians and other minority groups genocide; at the same time, it has been hard at work, out of those thousands, tens of thousands of aliens who have committed over 92,000 criminal acts against Americans here in this country, the administration has been hard at work and deported 3 percent of the tens of thousands of aliens illegally here who have committed over 92,000 crimes, and this administration has deported 3 percent.

□ 2130

So much for protecting Americans against all enemies foreign and domestic.

This article from Paul Bedard says: ''Her analysis is the latest shocking review of Obama's open-border immigration policy. And despite the high number of illegal immigrants charged with murder, the list doesn't include those released by over 300 so-called 'sanctuary cities' and those ICE declined to even take into custody.

''She said that 124 criminal aliens released by ICE between 2010 and 2015 were charged with murder during that period and 'associated with 250 different communities in the United States, with the most clustered in California, New York, and Texas.' ''

I would assert parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, for those that are not California, New York, and Texas, you cannot think for a minute that this is not already in your State. If you haven't heard about, it is coming.

This says: ''In a memo about the subsequent crimes of released illegals to Judiciary Committee Chairman Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, ICE said, 'The aliens were charged with a total of 135 homicide-related crimes subsequent' ''—for my liberal friends, that means after—'' 'to release from ICE custody. As of July 25, 2015, a total of 39 convictions have resulted from these homicide-related charges. Of the 121 total aliens, 2 had homicide-related convictions prior to release from ICE custody.' ''

ICE released them knowing that they already had homicide-related convictions, and they were released to kill again upon the American public. Though they violated our laws to get here and they violate our laws to stay here, this administration has seen to their release upon the American public further.

''Vaughan added that 'ICE reported that there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013. Between them, these criminals had 1,776 convictions' ''—that kind of sounds patriotic. Since 2013, ICE has released 1,776 criminals with 1,776 convictions before they are released in 2013, including burglary, larceny, you know, those things that hurt America.

This article from cis.org also says: ''Only a tiny percentage of the released criminals have been removed—most receive the most generous forms of due process available and are allowed to remain at large, without supervision, while they await drawn-out immigration hearings. They are permitted to take advantage of this inefficient processing even though they are more likely to re-offend than they are to be granted legal status.''

Further down it says: ''Some aliens had multiple ZIP Codes associated with them in ICE's system, so the records include more ZIP Codes than the 121 individual criminal aliens charged''—with murder—''through 2014. Three more were charged in 2015; ICE did not provide their ZIP Codes . . . ICE reported there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013.''

That, of course, was in the other article.

It goes on to say: ''ICE has previously disclosed that 75 percent of the homicidal criminal aliens were released due to court orders.''

Most of those would be immigration judges who sit at the discretion of the Attorney General of the United States. So perhaps people can let our Attorney General know that they would like our Attorney General to pick some immigration judges who might actually enforce our law instead of forgo the law so criminal aliens can commit more crimes against Americans.

I know, I understand there is so much going on, it is difficult to deal with all these issues at the same time, and that is why the administration is struggling so whether or not to officially say that the genocide going on in the Middle East of Christians and other minorities is actually genocide. It is just taking so much brain power. Even though in here it was 393–0, the administration right down on Pennsylvania Avenue here just can't decide if it really might be genocide or not.

''In a separate communication, ICE provided a list of the countries that currently are uncooperative in accepting their deported citizens: Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cape Verde, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe.''

Gee, Cuba?

It is a real shame that as this administration negotiated all the things that it was going to give to and do for Cuba that they didn't apparently bring this issue up: Oh, by the way, the criminal aliens that you have had come into our country are coming back to your country because they are your citizens illegally in our country. They are coming back to you, like it or not.

Apparently, I guess maybe with all the concentration on whether genocide is genocide, they weren't able to remember to bring that up to Cuba or to China.

In Afghanistan, one of my Muslim friends who is a great leader there in Afghanistan pointed out a few years ago when he was talking about the leverage that the United States has and should use to get Afghanistan to do the right thing by its people and by the United States, I said: Well, why do you think—this was in a visit in Afghanistan. I said: Why do you think we have much leverage? This is a few years ago. He said: Do you know what our annual budget is for the government in Afghanistan? No. I didn't know. He said: Around 12 billion American dollars. Do you know how much of that the United States provides? He said: We provide about 1½ billion of our 12. You provide most of the rest of it. He said: Yes, you have got plenty of leverage.

But, apparently, this administration, maybe again they are so flustered in trying to decide if ISIS, who has expressly indicated they want to wipe out all Christians and they want to wipe Israel off the map, they are trying to

decide if that means that is really a genocide, so they haven't had time to notice that we have massive leverage over the Afghan Government to get them to do the right thing and take back their criminal aliens that are in this country illegally and send them back and take them; otherwise, the 10, 12 of your budget that we provide may not get provided anymore.

But again, I know this administration doesn't want to offend people that are killing American citizens. I get that. It is special being that sensitive.

Algeria, China, India, Iran, Mr. Speaker, I just can't help but wonder if, before the President authorized $100 billion to $150 billion going to Iran, if maybe it occurred in someone's mind: Do you know what? I am going to save some American lives by forcing Iran to take back the criminal aliens from Iran that are not lawfully here in the United States.

I wonder if anybody in this administration maybe thought about that. Did they think about it and send the President the message and it just didn't get to the President? Or it didn't get to John Kerry, and they didn't think about it on their own: Gee, do you know what? We know Iran has already said they are going to spend some of that $100 billion, $150 billion on weapons systems on more terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Yeah, they have said that we are going to spend more money on all these things. We knew that. Did it occur that that is bad enough that you are giving money that is going to be used to kill Americans, Christians, Jews, Yazidis, it is going to be used to terrorize the world? Maybe you could have helped American citizens out by saying: And, by the way, before we release it, you are going—and never mind that they violated the agreement over and over—but you, Iran, are going to need to accept back the criminal aliens from your country that are killing and terrorizing Americans in our country illegally.

Did nobody think of that? It is incredible, just incredible. Americans are suffering.

Then we get this report from cis.org that 61 million immigrants and their children, young children, now live in the United States. Now, most of those, I think 43 million or so, are here legally. But it is worth noting that the number of immigrants and their children grew six times faster than our Nation's population between 1970 and 2015.

From 1970 to 2015, our United States population has grown by 59 percent. That is a good, healthy growth. In the meantime, the percentage of immigration growth, or the number of immigrants in the United States—first generation, that is. Most all, everybody here, even Native Americans weren't native probably at one time. They have come across somewhere. But first-generation immigrants who actually immigrated in with children, that number has grown by 353 percent over that same period.

In many States, the increase in the number of immigrants and their minor children from 1970 to 2015 has been nothing short of astonishing. In Georgia, the population grew 3,058 percent; whereas, before that, it grew from 55,000 immigrants to 1.75 million immigrants. That is just in Georgia. So the immigrant level grew 20 times faster, 25 times faster, than the overall State population.

So thank God for immigration. Thank God for legal immigration, that is. But when we abandon the rule of law and don't give ourselves time to welcome legal immigrants into this country and educate them—there is a reason that they have to be educated and are supposed to learn our language and supposed to learn some history, because there is a tremendous amount of responsibility that comes with the right to vote. You need to understand how you say what Ben Franklin said was ''a republic, Madam, if you can keep it.'' You cannot keep a republic if you don't educate people that are coming in and who are foreign to the idea of the responsibilities of maintaining a republic. You don't keep it. You can't keep it.

On the wave of that came this editorial from Dan Hannan, a member of the European Parliament, dated today. Apparently, he spent part of last summer volunteering in a hostel for underage migrants in the south of Italy. He talks about the migrants that came in.

He says: ''I have seen refugee columns before, and they tend to be made up disproportionately of women and children. Of the boat people landed by the coast guard while I was in Italy, more than 80 percent were young men. Young men who, I noticed, took out smartphones when they disembarked and looked for Wi-Fi so as to tell their relatives'' how good it was.

□ 2145

He says:

''Official policy in Europe is based on a misdiagnosis. The migrants are treated as refugees, and there is an implicit assumption that their displacement is somehow our fault. In the weirdly narcissistic tradition of the Left, the West is simultaneously blamed for having intervened in Libya and for not having intervened in Syria. But the lads I was working with in Italy were from countries that we never bombed—except with aid money.''

Mr. Speaker, it is time we look seriously at the oath every Member of Congress, the Senate, the President, the Vice President, everybody in elected Federal office takes. We are supposed to defend this Constitution. That means we are to provide for the common defense against all enemies, foreign and domestic. It is high time we took that more seriously.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4632. A letter from the Acting Director, Legislative Affairs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Conservation Stewardship Program [Docket No.: NRCS-2014-0008] (RIN: 0578-AA63) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4633. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Legal, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's joint interim final rules — Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions, and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks (RIN: 3064-AE42) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4634. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final evaluation of vendor submittal — Summary of BWRVIP-18 Review in Support of GAO-001 received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4635. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of

Defense, transmitting a notice of the Air Force's Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Indonesia, Transmittal No. 15-81, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2776(b)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(b) (as amended by Public Law 106- 113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 536); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4636. A letter from the Director, Presidential Appointments, Department of State, transmitting notifications of nine federal vacancies, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4637. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rights-of-Way on Indian Land [156A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.999900 253G] (RIN: 1076-AF20) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4638. A letter from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting the Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States for the September 17, 2015, session and September 9, 2015, special session, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 331; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4639. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Applicants for VA Memorialization Benefits (RIN: 2900-AO95) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4640. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Vet Centers (RIN: 2900-AP21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4641. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Veterans Transportation Service (RIN: 2900-AO92) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4642. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Expansion of the Willamette Valley Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0008; T.D. TTB-134; Ref: Notice No.: 152] (RIN: 1513-AC21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4643. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Regulations under IRC Section 7430 Relating to Awards of Administrative Costs and Attorneys' Fees [TD 9756] (RIN: 1545-AX46) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4644. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Modification of Rev. Rul. 2005-3 (Rev. Rul. 2016-8) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4645. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's temporary regulations — Consistent Basis Reporting Between Estate and Person Acquiring Property From Decedent [TD 9757] (RIN: 1545-BM98) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4646. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2016 [Notice 2016-21] received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4647. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Utility Allowances Submetering [TD 9755] (RIN: 1545-BI91) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2745. A bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority (Rept. 114–449). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2273. A bill to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir; with amendments (Rept. 114–450). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4427. A bill to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; with an amendment (Rept. 114–451). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2984. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review (Rept. 114–452). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STIVERS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 640. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy (Rept. 114–453). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 4729. A bill to provide for the more accurate computation of retirement benefits for certain firefighters employed by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BUCK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PALMER, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. RIBBLE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4730. A bill to provide for a congressional reauthorizing schedule for unauthorized Federal programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, Appropriations, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4731. A bill to provide for an annual adjustment of the number of admissible refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4732. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish rules for payment for graduate medical education (GME) costs for hospitals that establish a new medical residency training program after hosting resident rotators for short durations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733. A bill to permit the United States Capitol Police to accept certain property from other Federal agencies and to dispose of certain property in its possession; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to permit candidates for election for Federal office to designate an individual who will be authorized to disburse funds of the authorized campaign committees of the candidate in the event of

the death of the candidate; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735. A bill to establish a working capital fund for the Architect of the Capitol, to permit the Architect of the Capitol to use certain funds to operate a shuttle service for Members and employees of Congress to travel to and from the House Office Buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736. A bill to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System certain properties in New Jersey; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737. A bill to protect State and Tribal sovereignty from unwarranted infringement by an independent agency of the Federal Government by requiring the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to justify certain proposals to preempt State and Tribal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4738. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Ms. GABBARD):

H. Con. Res. 124. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the lasting significance of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 638. A resolution recognizing the life and legacy of Henrietta Lacks in honor of Women's History Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin:

H. Res. 639. A resolution authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15-674; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H. Res. 641. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 14, 2016, as ''National Pi Day''; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DENT, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. BUCK):

H. Res. 642. A resolution recognizing magic as a rare and valuable art form and national treasure; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 4729.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 4730.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1: ''All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other Bills.''

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 4731.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 4 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution—The Congress shall have Power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 4732.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to regulate interstate commerce.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Clause 8, Section 1

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. ''To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 4738.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Commerce Clause

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 183: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 184: Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 228: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 244: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 288: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 292: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 347: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 430: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 540: Mr. NADLER and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 563: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 581: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 605: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 619: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 624: Mr. WELCH and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 664: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 793: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 799: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 800: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 816: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 822: Mr. POMPEO and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 842: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 846: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 923: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 953: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 986: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 1112: Mr. WELCH and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1117: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1196: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1197: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 1198: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1220: Mr. CROWLEY and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 1221: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1336: Mrs. BLACK and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1356: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 1422: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1427: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 1453: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1516: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 1545: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 1550: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1586: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1625: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 1628: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1643: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 1650: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1655: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 1706: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1728: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1814: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1854: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 1859: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 1887: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1894: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 1948: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 2009: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 2096: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 2170: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 2216: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2257: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2404: Mr. RICHMOND and Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 2407: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 2450: Mr. KEATING and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 2460: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 2461: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 2500: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 2589: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 2622: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 2698: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 2716: Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 2739: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 2799: Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 2876: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2896: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
H.R. 2901: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 2903: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2972: Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2980: Mr. KIND, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 2998: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 3011: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 3048: Mr. GUINTA, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 3051: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 3096: Mr. MOULTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 3119: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. POCAN, Mr. DOLD, Mr. KIND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. DENT.
H.R. 3164: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 3209: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3222: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. FLEMING.
H.R. 3225: Mr. MARINO and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 3229: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 3235: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. MATSUI, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 3323: Mr. NUNES.
H.R. 3326: Mr. PERRY and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3526: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 3535: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3559: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3673: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3684: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 3706: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 3712: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3713: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3779: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3799: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3880: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3886: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3892: Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 3913: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 3926: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 3948: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4055: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4062: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 4075: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 4087: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 4118: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4165: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 4172: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4336: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 4342: Mr. REED.
H.R. 4365: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4371: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4396: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 4422: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4462: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4474: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 4479: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4488: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 4497: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4499: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 4513: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4514: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4529: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4540: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4543: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 4567: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4570: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 4585: Mr. COHEN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4592: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. WALZ, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. KIND, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Ms. LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4595: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 4599: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 4611: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 4612: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 4615: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4623: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4625: Miss RICE of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 4626: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4633: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 4640: Mr. COFFMAN and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 4642: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 4653: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4665: Ms. NORTON and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 4681: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MOORE, Ms. LEE, Mr. CLAY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 4683: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4694: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 4705: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 4715: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4722: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. RENACCI.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. ROUZER, and Mrs. NOEM.
H. Con. Res. 88: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H. Con. Res. 96: Mr. RICHMOND.
H. Res. 540 : Mr. TONKO.
H. Res. 586: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H. Res. 591: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H. Res. 600: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. RICHMOND.
H. Res. 605: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H. Res. 610: Mr. JONES.
H. Res. 617: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. COOK.
H. Res. 625: Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 630: Miss RICE of New York.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. SHUSTER

H.R. 4721 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative PALLONE, or a designee, to H.R. 3797, the SENSE Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

50. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, NJ, relative to Resolution: 2016–183, supporting the President of the United States of America's current position and executive actions in regard to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents orders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

51. Also, a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson of Austin, TX, relative to urging Congress to enact legislation which would require that an autopsy be conducted, and the results thereof be made public, whenever a still-serving President, Vice President, Member of Congress, Chief Justice or Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, or any Judge of any Federal Court dies; jointly to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE MEMORY OF RABBI GORDON

HON. BRAD SHERMAN
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and leader in the Jewish community, Rabbi Joshua B. Gordon, who passed away on February 8, 2016.

Rabbi Gordon and his wife Deborah came to the San Fernando Valley in 1973 as emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, leader of the worldwide Chabad movement of Judaism. In his more than 40 years of leadership, Rabbi Gordon oversaw the growth of Chabad of the Valley to 26 centers that provide religious education, spiritual inspiration and charitable services to thousands. In fact, Rabbi Gordon's reach was worldwide through his popular audio and video Torah classes that continue to educate people online.

I had the privilege of learning directly from Rabbi Gordon as a congregant of his spiritual home, Chabad of Encino, where I would often attend High Holiday services. The highlight of each Rosh Hashanah was to listen to Rabbi Gordon's stories and parables.

I extend my sincerest condolences to Rabbi Gordon's wife, Rebbetzin Deborah Gordon, and children, Rabbi Yossi Gordon, Yochanon Gordon, Faygie Herzog, Rabbi Eli Gordon, Dena Rabin and Chaya Mushka Drizin; as well as his siblings and 21 grandchildren. A man with 21 grandchildren is truly blessed.

It is Rabbi Gordon's enduring legacy that future generations of Valley residents will learn, grow and come together as a community.

RECOGNIZING NORTHWEST INDIANA'S NEWLY NATURALIZED CITIZENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this time to congratulate thirty individuals who took their oath of citizenship on Friday, March 11, 2016. This memorable occasion, which was presided over by Magistrate Judge Paul R. Cherry, was held at the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Hammond, Indiana.

America is a country founded by immigrants. From its beginning, settlers have come from countries around the world to the United States in search of better lives for their families. Oath ceremonies are a shining example of what is so great about the United States of America—that people from all over the world can come together and unite as members of a free, democratic nation. These individuals realize that nowhere else in the world offers a better opportunity for success than here in America.

On March 11, 2016, the following people, representing many nations throughout the world, took their oaths of citizenship in Hammond, Indiana: Juliane Makhoul Mikhael, Monika Cadikovska, Chaudhry Abdul Sattar, Ali Yigit, Nicolae Tarfulea, Nicoleta Eugenia Tarfulea, Chandrashekar Reddy Cholleti, Juan Juarez Hernandez, Young Suk Lee, Sylvia Cathy Gould, Stanko Cude, Logain Alsatti, Lars Olof Wahlen, Rigoberto Acosta Ramirez, Danilo Legaspi Bautista, Solange Jones, Angela Elizabeth Snider, Jorge Carranza Martinez, Lilibeth Catudan Natividad, Glenda Ragob Bakalar, Gilberto Antonio Benavides Alvarez, Chuto Victoria Emeka-Daniels, Heriberto Garcia, Jasmina Golabovska, Francisco Cordova Hernandez, Pamela Mendoza Lawrence, Nora Cylla Menad, Miguel Meza, Sandra Miramontes Mungula, and Parfait Karim Ukobizaba.

Although each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for education, occupation, or to offer their loved ones better lives, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country ''. . . of the people, by the people, and for the people.'' They realize that the United States is truly a free nation. By seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution, they can practice religion as they choose, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who became citizens of the United States of America on March 11, 2016. They, too, are American citizens, and they, too, are guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

HONORING YONKERS POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Yonkers' oldest and most distinguished institutions, the Yonkers Police Benevolent Association, which is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2016. Our Yonkers police do such a fantastic job of keeping us safe, and it is my pleasure to be able to honor the Yonkers PBA on their historic milestone.

The Yonkers Police Department was first established in 1871, though the group would not be incorporated for several more decades. On September 8, 1916 A.S. Tompkins, Justice of the Westchester County Supreme Court, approved and signed the certificate of incorporation for the Yonkers Police Association. The first president of the Police Association who was elected in 1916 was ''Patrolman'' John F. Dahill. Upon his election, he was dubbed the ''Father of the Police Association'' and served in that capacity for several years.

Today the former Yonkers Police Association (YPA), later renamed the Yonkers ''Police Benevolent Association'' (PBA), continues to serve as an advocate and effective voice for its entire membership. And while working to foster a spirit of camaraderie amongst its members, it also works toward developing a greater understanding, mutual respect, and a helpful relationship with the citizens its members serve so proudly.

I want to congratulate all the members of the Yonkers PBA on 100 years of service to the community, and thank them for all they do to keep us safe and secure in Yonkers.

IN TRIBUTE OF HANNES SCHNEIDER, AND THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HANNES SCHNEIDER MEISTER CUP RACE

HON. ANN M. KUSTER
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race which honors the Austrian skimeister Hannes Schneider. Schneider was a vital figure in creating the modern skiing technique, ski instruction and mountain resort industry that we know today. Additionally, he was featured in several ski films and published a book, The Wonders of Skiing, in 1931.

In 1938 Schneider was imprisoned by Austrian Nazis due to his rejection of their dogma, despite protests from the international skiing community. Thankfully, nine months later Schneider's freedom was obtained by international financier, North Conway native and Mount Cranmore founder Harvey Dow Gibson. On February 11th, 1939, Schneider and his family arrived in North Conway to begin their new lives in New Hampshire.

Schneider immediately gave back to the country that welcomed him. During World War II, he served as a trainer for the 10th Mountain Division. He taught the soldiers skiing, a skill that served them well during mountain warfare. His son joined this unit, and served honorably during the war. The soldiers of the 10th

Mountain Division would go on to be some of the essential figures in the development of US skiing after the war.

Once victory was won, Schneider used the instruction skills he honed during the war at his soon to be world famous Hannes Schneider Ski School on Mount Cranmore. Schneider created the Arlberg skiing instruction technique. This widely used method teaches students to start out skiing in a wedge or pizza shape, while making a series of turns to control their speed. As students improve, they ski downhill with their skis parallel. Countless skiers, including my sons, have experienced the joy of alpine skiing because of Hannes' innovative method of instruction.

Hannes dedicated his life to skiing. He continued to instruct thousands of pupils until his death in 1955. The Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race, which on March 12, 2016 is celebrating its 20th anniversary, is staged by the New England Ski Museum to honor the legacy of Hannes Schneider and the veterans of the 10th Mountain Division. I am proud to participate in this year's event, and to honor the great achievements of Hannes Schneider.

RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I rise to celebrate National Women's History Month and its 2016 theme, ''Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government.'' As we reflect on the struggles, sacrifices, and successes of women throughout our nation's history, this year's theme honors the many women who have helped shape America through governmental roles and civil service. During this month and always, we honor the monumental efforts of American women who fought and continue to fight for gender equality. Women have succeeded in all areas of society, from medicine and science to government and public service, and their contributions have paved the way for a better America.

The pioneers of the women's movement fought for the right to vote for decades. Through their determination, courage, and strong will, the suffragettes proudly witnessed the passage of the nineteenth amendment in 1920. The tireless efforts of these brave women brought more opportunity and democratic change. The women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s helped ensure that women had more say in government while leading the charge against workplace inequality. This helped create better jobs for women and promoted fair pay through anti-discrimination laws. Our nation's success is dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and expertise of women in public service. These strong leaders fight every day for more opportunity and equal rights, and they continue to have a profound impact on our nation.

I would also like to take the time to acknowledge the many women who have served, and continue to serve, the people of the First Congressional District at the local, state, and federal levels. As a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana, born and raised in the city of Gary, I would be remiss if I did not pay special tribute to one of Northwest Indiana's finest citizens and my dear friend, the Honorable Earline Rogers, State Senator for the 3rd District of Indiana. Senator Rogers will be retiring from office at the end of the year after a remarkable thirty-four years in the state legislature. A teacher by trade and a former Gary city council member, Senator Rogers has devoted herself to her fellow citizens and her constituency throughout her lifetime, and she is the epitome of what it means to be a public servant.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating National Women's History Month. We are indebted to the many female leaders in public service who work diligently to improve the quality of life for every American, and they are worthy of the highest praise.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LUCILE M. (LUCY) JONES

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Lucile M. (Lucy) Jones, a preeminent leader in the field of seismology, who is retiring from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Dr. Jones received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Chinese Language and Literature, with a minor in Physics, graduating Magna Cum Laude from Brown University, and her Doctor of Philosophy in Geophysics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. Jones has worked for the US Geological Service for the past thirty-three years. During her time at the USGS, she has served in various capacities, most recently as Science Advisor for Risk Reduction, Natural Hazards Mission. In this position she leads long-term science planning for natural hazards research, and directs the Science Application for Risk Reduction (SAFRR) Project, which uses USGS science to help communities at risk for natural disasters. Lucy is also a Visiting Research Associate at the prestigious California Institute of Technology Seismological Laboratory, a position she has held since 1983. Prior to serving as Science Advisor for Risk Reduction, Dr. Jones created, led and was Chief Scientist for the Multi Hazards Demonstration Project (MHDP), whose landmark programs included the Great ShakeOut, an emergency public preparedness program which has been adopted throughout the state of California, and the Southern California Debris Flow Warning System, in partnership with the National Weather Service. Lucy was also a scientist on the USGS Earthquake Hazards Team for many years, including serving as Scientist-in-Charge for Southern California from 1998 to 2006.

In addition to her work with the USGS, Dr. Jones is a member of the California Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council, which advises the Governor of California. She served as seismic safety advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, raising awareness about the city's need for greater earthquake preparedness. Lucy also served as Commissioner on the California Seismic Safety Commission. Author of multiple scientific papers on seismic research with a primary focus on earthquake hazard assessment and foreshocks, Dr. Jones has often testified before the United States Congress on various public safety seismic matters. Lucy has been the recipient of many awards, including Woman of the Year from the California Science Center, the Shoemaker Award for Lifetime Achievement in Science Communication from the USGS, U.S. Senator BARBARA BOXER's Women Making History Award, the Alquist Award from the Earthquake Safety Foundation and the Meritorius Service Award from the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Dr. Jones lives in Pasadena, with her husband Dr. Egill Hauksson, who is a fellow seismologist and a Professor at Caltech, and they have two children, Sven and Niels.

Dr. Lucile M. (Lucy) Jones will leave a scientific legacy that will be appreciated for generations to come. I ask all Members to join me today in honoring her for over three decades of exemplary public service.

HONORING THE CAROL MOORE MEMORIAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding tradition of the Carol Moore Memorial Jazz Festival at Mineral Area College in Park Hills, Missouri. This year commemorates the 30th jazz festival, begun in 1987. Music instructor Carol Moore championed the festival in its early years and helped it grow to its current prominence. Ms. Moore died of cancer in 2008 and the festival was renamed in her honor in 2010. In the years since her death, the jazz festival has been chaired by MAC faculty members Dr. Kevin White, Dan Schunks, and Michael Goldsmith.

The festival features a day of jazz performances by hundreds of students from dozens of schools. This year 42 bands will perform from districts as far away as Arkansas and Kentucky. This festival not only promotes jazz music and inspires current jazz students, it also serves as an effective means to introduce the community and potential students to the college.

In addition, the festival brings world class jazz artists to the area to perform in concert with the community's Kicks Band. These artists have included saxophonist ''Blue Lou'' Marini of Blues Brothers fame, Delfeayo Marsalis of the famed Marsalis musical dynasty, trumpet player Jon Faddis, a protégé of jazz legend Dizzy Gillespie, and trumpet master Doc Severinsen, who performs at the 30th festival.

For its impressive tradition and significant artistic contributions to the community, it is my

pleasure to congratulate the Carol Moore Memorial Jazz Festival on its 30th celebration and to recognize all those involved before the United States House of Representatives.

HELENDALE LOSES COMMUNITY LEADER

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the memory of Michael Phillip Gouin, who tragically passed away on February 16, 2016. Michael's life was taken by a drunk driver who struck his motorcycle in Oro Grande, California.

Michael was employed by the Helendale Community Services District as a wastewater treatment plant operator. Previously, he served honorably in the United States Navy and obtained his bachelor's degree from San Diego State University after his time in the service. He also spent time as an employee for the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority some years ago.

Michael was well-known throughout the community of Helendale. He will be remembered for his friendly demeanor and willingness to volunteer his spare time as a youth soccer coach.

I would like to pass along my condolences to Michael's father, mother, and sister, who are undoubtedly in a tremendous amount of pain right now. His family is in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. I ask that this body do the same in the memory of Michael Phillip Gouin.

HONORING HELENE MURTHA DOOLEY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival in Eastchester has become one of the great social events in my district, drawing the entire community together every year in the spirit of camaraderie and fun. The celebration is just one of the reasons why Eastchester is such a tight knit community, and without the incredible volunteer efforts of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal, Helene Murtha Dooley, it simply could not be done.

The oldest of four children, Helene was born in Queens and grew up on Long Island. She graduated from Fairfield University in 1985 with a BS in Business Management. Subsequently she started a career in banking at JP Morgan on Wall Street, where she met the love of her life and future husband, my good friend Joe Dooley. In 1992 the couple moved to Eastchester where they welcomed their two wonderful children, Brian and Caroline. In 1998 Helene left the business world and began work in the Eastchester School District as the librarian at Greenvale Elementary School. She has taught at all the schools in Eastchester, grades K through 12, and currently works at the middle school/high school library.

In 2001, the Dooley family joined the esteemed Eastchester Irish American Social Club. Helene has volunteered for the EIASC over the years at multiple social events including at various times on the Christmas Party Committee and organized the EIASC's Sash Presentation dinner. She has chaired the St. Patrick's Day Festival several times, served as Mistress of Ceremonies last year, and has even assisted Enda McIntyre as the Saint Patrick's Day Parade roving reporter.

Helene is also an active volunteer in the Eastchester community, serving as Treasurer for the Friends of the Eastchester Public Library, Board Member and Chairperson of the Eastchester Public Library Board, Member of the Neighborhood Association Board, and she has volunteered for the PTAs in all the Eastchester schools.

Helene has done it all, and I cannot think of a more deserving person to be named the 2016 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal. Congratulations to Helene on this honor.

TRIBUTE TO PAULEY PERRETTE—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Pauley Perrette of Hollywood, California.

Pauley is an accomplished artist, writer, photographer, and civil rights activist. Her family is from Alabama. She was born in New Orleans and grew up in several southern states. After college where she studied Sociology, Psychology, and Criminal science, she spent time in New York City before moving to Los Angeles working steadily in film and television. She is best known for her portrayal of the beloved Abby Sciuto on the CBS Television Series NCIS, the Number 1 most watched television show in the world.

Pauley's incredible commitment to community is what sets her apart. She is known as a philanthropist and she works with over 30 charities including Project Angel Food, AIDS Project Los Angeles, the Trevor Project, LAFD Foundation, Habitat for Humanities, the Thirst Project, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the Make a Wish Foundation, the Humane Society, People Assisting with the Homeless, the Los Angeles LGBT Center, Hope Gardens, the Amanda Foundation, the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association, and the Los Angeles Police Department Police Activities League, just to name a few.

Pauley inhabits both a national and local stage with ease. She joined efforts across the nation to bring justice for Alabama and Detroit child murder victims Shannon Paulk and Raven Jeffries. She can be found at National Night Out, an annual effort by the Los Angeles Police Department and Neighborhood Watch to bring together local residents and their police officers. She uses her voice to speak up for the most vulnerable in society, from children to our animal companions, from individuals faced with seemingly insurmountable odds to those fighting for civil rights for themselves and their communities.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Pauley Perrette, for her extraordinary service to the community.

''MY GOLD STAR,'' A POEM WRITTEN BY DEBB CLAY

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, as Americans and free people we must always remember the sacrifices made by those our country sends into harm's way. Their courage and sacrifice allows us to live in a safer world. It is equally fitting that we also remember and consider those who are left behind—their wives, husbands, children and parents. And so I submit a poem entitled ''My Gold Star'' written by Debb Clay, a retired teacher with 40 years' service to our youth:

I took the road ''less traveled'' and arrived upon a shore
Where sunlight danced on surface currents-opening a door
To memories of you and me—our feet upon the sand
And how our voices filled the air as your touch filled my hand.
You were just a little child but even then you knew
That giving of yourself was all that you were meant to do,
And day by day you walked the path that led you toward the day
You'd place your country and its worth ahead of ''Self'' and say,
''I'll go and serve and do my part to keep my homeland free,
When others tread a different path it matters not to me,
For this I know and will profess to all who choose to hear,
Our country needs us all to serve and that is why I'm here.''
I stand alone now on that shore, as sorrow fills my brow
A mix of tears and smiles collide with thoughts of then and now,
Yet as I witness warmth and sparkle from the water's skin,
The silent streams upon my face with brilliant light begin
To fill my heart, the air, this place with who you really are
And what you did and why you had to venture out so far,
So now I'm left without you here—my grief I try to hide
But what I can show is my ''star''—it shines as does my pride.

TRIBUTE TO RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of the 100th Anniversary of Riverside City College as well as the 25th Anniversary of both Moreno Valley College and Norco College. I have had the honor of representing these world-class community colleges for the majority of my term in Congress and am proud to commemorate today's milestones.

Riverside Junior College was founded on this date in 1916, becoming California's seventh community college. In 1964, voters approved the creation of the Riverside Community College District and elected its five member Board. The Board took on an ambitious effort to expand the college in an effort to meet the needs of a fast-growing student body. In 1991, the Riverside Community College District worked with local and state officials to open new campuses in Moreno Valley and Norco. These campuses opened new doors to educational achievement for students across the Inland Empire.

In 2010, each of the District's three campuses were officially recognized as separate colleges, making Moreno Valley College and Norco College the 111th and 112th community colleges in our state. Together, the three colleges make up the Riverside Community College District.

Serving upwards of 50,000 students annually, Riverside Community College District is by far the largest educational institution in the Inland Empire. It has educational centers throughout the region, including the Ben Clark Training Center, the Center for Social Justice and Civil Liberties, the Innovative Learning Center, Rubidoux Annex, and the Culinary Academy. The District awards nearly $600,000 in scholarships to students each year and its hundreds of thousands of graduates have made significant contributions in science, business, art, education, politics, and medicine.

Supported by the four pillars of—student excellence; academic excellence; community excellence; and workforce excellence, the District and colleges advance our region's economic growth through quality career technical training and services. Their strong focus on continuous workforce development, business attraction, retention and development have helped bring our community through tough recessions and now leave us better prepared for the economy of tomorrow.

Congratulations Riverside City College, Moreno Valley College, and Norco College. It has been my great pleasure to represent you, your faculty and staff, and especially your students. You make the Inland Empire proud.

TRIBUTE TO JANET DIEL—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Janet Diel, of Burbank, California.

Janet Diel is a dedicated volunteer who has committed endless hours of service to a variety of organizations. She has been a member of the Burbank Coordinating Council for nearly three decades, currently serving as President, Co-Chair of the Holiday Basket Program and Chair of the Campership Program. Every year, through their partnership with community members and organizations, the Burbank Coordinating Council provides holiday baskets to hundreds of families whose children participate in the free or reduced cost lunch programs in Burbank schools. This program matches needy families in the community with organizations and families that want to adopt them by providing presents for their children and food for the holidays. Through the Campership Program, needy children between the ages of 8 and 18 are given the opportunity to attend a week of resident or day-camp in the summer.

In addition to her work with the Burbank Coordinating Council, Janet finds time to volunteer for several other organizations including the Burbank Tournament of Roses Association, serving as the City Liaison for more than 28 years, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association, the City of Burbank's Advisory Council on Disabilities, the Burbank Domestic Violence Task Force, the Burbank Human Relations Council, Relay For Life, and the Burbank Transportation Commission, where she has been a member for more than 22 years and is currently serving as Vice Chair. She is also a member of the Burbank Nonprofit Coalition, the Burbank Unified School District School Facilities Oversight Committee, and the Burbank/Los Angeles Kindertransport Association, where she also serves as the Program Director, and annually speaks at Burbank middle schools to bring Holocaust awareness to young people.

Janet has been the recipient of several awards, including the Burbank Council PTA's prestigious Golden Oak Service Award in 2010. She has been married to her husband, Henry Diel, for 35 years, they have five children, and one grandson.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Janet Diel, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING DR. JOSEPH F. SHELEY

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Dr. Joseph F. Sheley, President of the California State University, Stanislaus, to thank him for his leadership and dedication to the academic advancement of the Central Valley. President Sheley announced he will be retiring on July 1, 2016.

On June 11, 2012, Dr. Joseph Sheley joined California State University, Stanislaus, as the interim president. Less than a year later, on May 22, 2013, he was appointed president of the University by the California State University Board of Trustees.

Dr. Sheley graduated from Sacramento State College in 1969, and earned his bachelor's degree in social sciences. In 1971, Dr. Sheley completed his Master's in sociology. He later attained his Doctorate in sociology from the University of Massachusetts in 1975.

In the fall of 1975, Dr. Sheley began working at Tulane University in New Orleans as part of the sociology faculty. He continued his career at Tulane University for the 21 years thereafter. During those 21 years, between 1985 and 1991, Dr. Sheley served as the chair of Tulane's Department of Sociology. Dr. Sheley returned to Sacramento State in 1996, and served as the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies.

In 2005, Dr. Sheley became the Executive Vice President at California State University, Sacramento, and served as the university's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2006 to 2012. He was recognized for his commitment and dedication to his alma mater and to the collegiate system by being awarded the Sacramento State's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Sheley is a visionary leader who worked diligently to build strong relationships between the university and the Central Valley. President Sheley has led California State University, Stanislaus, to extraordinary accomplishments including recognition by Money magazine as the nation's top public university for assisting students in exceeding expectations. In addition, National Public Radio ranked California State University, Stanislaus, as the fifth school in the nation to enhance the upward mobility of its students.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and commending Dr. Joseph F. Sheley, President of the California State University, Stanislaus, for his numerous years of unwavering leadership, many accomplishments, and selfless service to the higher education of our community.

VICTOR VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Victor Valley High School alumni,

students, and staff on the 100th anniversary of their school. This Saturday, hundreds of current and former Jackrabbits will take part in a special ceremony to commemorate this momentous occasion.

Founded as a one-room school house in 1915, Victor Valley High School has since grown to become known as the Victor Valley Union High School District. This district serves over 9,600 students and boasts Boston Red Sox owner John Henry and mixed martial arts legend Dan Henderson among its alumni.

I want to commend the Victor Valley Union High School district on this remarkable achievement. The service they provide to students in the Victor Valley is invaluable and I look forward to another 100 years of success.

TRIBUTE TO JAMIE KEYSER THOMAS—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Jamie Keyser Thomas, of Sunland, California.

Jamie is currently a Program Manager of Los Angeles Community Engagement, which is part of the Citizenship division of The Walt Disney Company, where she helps produce and execute community outreach programs in the areas of creativity, compassion, and conservation in the greater Los Angeles region, particularly in the City of Burbank. In addition, Jamie runs Disney VoluntEARS, a program which provides Disneyland Resort cast members with opportunities to give back to the community through volunteer service. She also oversees the Disney VoluntEARS Leadership Council. Jamie's dedicated service to Disney spans many years and this year will mark a major milestone—her 25th anniversary with the company. During her time at Disney, Jamie has worked in various divisions including Corporate Brand Management and the Disney Development Company.

Ms. Keyser Thomas has devoted considerable time and energy to serving the community through various organizations. She serves on the Board of Directors for Leadership Burbank, an organization that offers a leadership training program for individuals who reside or work in the City of Burbank, and is a Board Member of Burbank Business Partners, which aims to increase community interaction and investment in local schools. In addition, she has served on special committees for the Burbank Temporary Aid Center, the Burbank Chamber of Commerce, Special Olympics Southern California, and Meet Each Need with Dignity, a non-profit organization that offers basic human needs to individuals in the community who are living in poverty.

Jamie and her husband, Mike, live in Sunland with their two dogs. When she is not busy helping her community, Jamie enjoys the outdoors, traveling, cooking and spending time with family and friends.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Jamie Keyser Thomas, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING CORINNE M. MOHRMANN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary member of the East Bay community, Ms. Corinne Mohrmann upon the occasion of her retirement.

Ms. Mohrmann was orphaned in early childhood and grew up in foster care, where she first learned the impact a great teacher could have on the life of a young person. After being introduced to a parish by a Catholic family she was placed with, she began helping to teach catechism as a young teenager.

At the age of sixteen, she graduated from high school and successfully negotiated her enrollment in San Jose State University, where she supported herself by working as a kindergarten assistant at Saint Elizabeth's Day Home. While she was still a minor, she went on to successfully petition to be allowed entrance to the religious order of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

She came to Oakland and the Saint Vincent Day Home in the late 1960s and with her friend, Sister Ann Maureen Murphy, began developing a vision for a safe, nurturing educational environment. With Sister Murphy, she authored a master's thesis at Pacific Oaks College that laid the foundation for the extensive restoration and development of Saint Vincent's Day Home that turned the Day Home into the incredible learning environment it is today.

This is Ms. Mohrmann's fortieth year as acting executive director of Saint Vincent's. Saint Vincent's Day Home, which has been in operation since 1911, offers comprehensive educational programs, serves healthy meals, and provides access to health, dental, speech, and social services for toddlers and preschoolers.

Over the course of Ms. Mohrmann's forty years of leadership, Saint Vincent's Day Home has expanded to serve more than 230 children of a diverse range of working poor families each day, including the homeless, victims of abuse, and those born exposed to drugs. Throughout the years, Ms. Mohrmann has made innumerable contributions to Oakland and the Greater Bay Area and has touched tens of thousands of lives with her kindness, wisdom, and determination.

Ms. Mohrmann has frequently received honor and recognition for her work by the state and local legislative community and by the Department of Education. She was named City of Las Vegas's ''Educational Mother of the Year'', inducted to the Alameda County's Women's Hall of Fame in 1996, and was the recipient of the Oakland Diocese's Monsignor McCracken Award.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Ms. Corinne Mohrmann, I salute you. I thank you for a lifetime of service and congratulate you on your many achievements. I wish you and your loved ones the very best as you enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

CELEBRATING THE STATE CHAMPION SCHECK HILLEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Scheck Hillel Community School Men's Soccer Team on its historic 1A State Championship win on February 9, 2016. Forging past the defending state champions Maitland Orangewood Christian, the Scheck Hillel Lions were able to secure an almost perfect season with 19 wins, one tie, and no losses. It is likely the first win of its kind for a Jewish school in the U.S., and Scheck Hillel can now boast its first state championship in any sport.

After losing the championship game on the same field three years ago, this group of Lions was more determined than ever to redeem themselves. The entire student body packed the stands to support the team's final fight. With an exciting but scoreless first and second half, the players advanced to a dramatic round of penalty kicks.

After five nail-biting rounds of penalty kicks, the teams were tied. It was only after senior Lion Salo Lapco beamed a shot past the Orangewood goalie, and senior Lion goalie Alan Landau blocked the final shot from their opponents, that their fans stormed the field in celebration and the team was able to cement its victory.

It is a privilege to recognize the perseverance and dedication of this group of young men. This win is a testament to their hard work and devotion on and off the field. The true commitment of head coach Ben Magidson, and the sacrifice of each and every player will be remembered for years to come. With this achievement, they have become an enduring source of pride for their community and the entire city. Please join me in congratulating the Scheck Hillel Community School Men's Soccer Team on its thrilling victory.

TRIBUTE TO KIMBERLY HOLLAND—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding

women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kimberly Holland, of La Crescenta, California.

For nearly three decades, Kimberly Holland has been working with the Professional Development Center of Glendale Community College, serving in the capacity of Executive Director for the past decade, and has overseen the training of employees from organizations and companies in Southern California. Over the years, the Professional Development Center has been a tremendous force in providing technical services, a quality education, and training for Southern California employees, and is recognized as one of the most innovative training agencies in California. As a testament to its success, employees who undergo training provided by the Professional Development Center currently experience an average earnings increase of $5.40 per hour.

Ms. Holland's unparalleled leadership and steadfast commitment has immensely contributed to the many milestones the Professional Development Center has achieved. The Professional Development Center has trained 34,000 California workers and has created relationships with numerous clients that include USC Verdugo Hills Hospital, Glendale Adventist Medical Center, DreamWorks Animation, Lexus of Glendale, Whole Foods Market, and The Cheesecake Factory.

In addition to her work at the Professional Development Center, Kimberly spends time participating in local and community fundraising events. She also enjoys attending sporting events, and is a big fan of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Los Angeles Lakers.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ms. Kimberly Holland, for her extraordinary service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO SAMTRANS ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the San Mateo County Transit District, known locally as SamTrans, and congratulate its Board and everyone at the agency. SamTrans has provided important bus service throughout San Mateo County since it carried its first passengers on July 1, 1976.

SamTrans was formed through the consolidation of 11 separate city bus systems into a single countywide service. Since its beginning, SamTrans has provided bus service to several heavily populated employment centers on the San Francisco Peninsula. SamTrans also provides critical service to the rural coast of San Mateo County which is home to agricultural workers and many other residents who are dependent on the SamTrans bus system to get to work, school, and medical appointments.

SamTrans is also a leader in providing paratransit service for passengers with mobility impairments. In 1977, more than a decade before passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, SamTrans launched the Redi-Wheels program to provide on-demand, free transit service for passengers with disabilities. This innovative program now provides more than 1,000 trips per day.

In 1988, SamTrans was named the managing agency of a half-cent sales tax measure approved by San Mateo County voters for transportation projects. This sales tax was renewed in 2004 and will be in effect through 2033. Three years later, SamTrans joined with the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board to purchase the Caltrain right-of-way from San Francisco to San Jose and ensure that this regional commuter rail remained in service. SamTrans now serves as the managing agency for Caltrain which is the spine of our transit system on the Peninsula and serves over 55,000 passengers on an average weekday.

Today, SamTrans has a fleet of nearly 300 buses providing service to over 13 million riders per year. SamTrans operates on over 75 routes throughout San Mateo County, with service extended into parts of San Francisco and Palo Alto, and the District has continually improved and upgraded its service over the years to better align with demand.

My own experience with SamTrans dates back to my service on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors from 1982 to 1992. Throughout my tenure on the Board and in Congress, I'm proud to have worked closely with SamTrans to ensure residents of San Mateo County have access to safe, efficient transportation options that reduce congestion and improve mobility on the Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House to join me in honoring SamTrans for 40 years of superb service to the people of San Mateo County.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LAVEEN ANNUAL COMMUNITY PARADE SPONSORED BY THE LAVEEN LIONS CLUB

HON. RUBEN GALLEGO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the leadership and volunteers who organize and staged the 16th Annual Laveen Community Parade.

Since its inception, the parade has been hosted annually by the Laveen Lions Club. The Laveen chapter was chartered on October 21, 1974, as a member of the largest community service organization in the world, Lions Clubs.

Lions Clubs bring together individuals devoted to making their communities a better place, regardless of race, religion, gender or language. As their motto, ''We Serve,'' indicates, Lions Club members work tirelessly to support and assist those in need.

The 16th Annual Community Parade, which took place in February 2016, honored the agrarian heritage and diversity of the Laveen community. The parade featured local school clubs, horses and riders, community organizations and other officials and floats, including an award-winning float from the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base.

Outside of the annual parade, the Laveen Lions Club engages in a variety of community service projects. This winter, members and volunteers sent over 1,000 Christmas cards to troops in Afghanistan to honor those who serve and protect us. The Lions Club also provided Christmas Baskets full of food and Christmas gifts to thirty-five families and six senior citizens in the community. In addition, they collected and donated 2,615 pounds of food and Christmas gifts for distribution by local food banks, faith-based centers and community organizations.

The Laveen Lions Club has long worked with local elementary and charter schools to conduct a vision and hearing screening program. Across ten local schools, Lions Club volunteers have provided service to more than 3,000 kindergarten, first, second, fourth, sixth grade and special needs students.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the leadership of Jeff Sprout, this year's Laveen Lions Club Parade Chairperson, as well as the many volunteers who successfully organized and staged the 16th Annual Laveen Community Parade and who are a consistent force for good in the local community.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA A. (PAT) ANDERSON—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Patricia A. (Pat) Anderson, of La Cañada Flintridge, California.

Born in Los Angeles, Pat attended West Athens Elementary School, George Washington School and local colleges.

Pat became President/CEO of the La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce and Community Association in 2003, a position she holds today. She oversees all aspects of the chamber, including annual events such as the Fiesta Days/Memorial Day Weekend festivities and parade, the chamber's internship program, and works closely with residents, businesses and city officials on local issues. Under her stellar leadership, both the business and residential membership expanded, the chamber's revenues grew, and she was responsible for creating new programs such as the Chamber Ambassador program. Pat's professional organizations include memberships in the Southern California Chamber of Commerce Executives, Professional Women's Networking Group, California Contract Cities Association, California Chamber of Commerce, and the Los Angeles County BizFed, of which she is a Founding Member.

The consummate volunteer, Ms. Anderson's list of volunteer activities is extensive and varied. She was a member of the Palm Crest Elementary School PTA and the La Cañada

High School Drama Boosters Club, civic clubs such as the La Cañada New Members Club and the Thursday Club, the La Cañada Flintridge City Incorporation Committee and was a volunteer instructor at the Braille Institute. Also, Pat is a Founding Member and is active in the Cañada Auxiliary of Professionals, and the O. Warren Hilgren Scholarship committee, is Past President and a current Board Member of the Paradise Valley Homeowners Association, and a Director of the La Cañada Flintridge Coordinating Council. In addition, Pat is a nearly-thirty year member of the Kiwanis Club of La Cañada, and a forty-five year member of the La Cañada Congregational Church, where she has served as a Sunday School Teacher, Music Committee Member and chaired several committees. For her civic and professional accomplishments, Ms. Anderson has received the Kiwanis Club of La Cañada's La Cañadan of the Year Award, the Les Tupper Community Service Award, Business Life Magazine's Woman Achiever 2012 Award, and was named Woman of the Year for the 44th Assembly District in 2010 by then-Assemblyman Anthony Portantino.

A forty-five year resident of La Cañada Flintridge, Pat and her late husband, Rev. Philip Longfellow Anderson, were married for twenty years before his passing in 2003, and have one daughter, Katherine.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Patricia A. (Pat) Anderson, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING TROOPER SEAN CULLEN

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and life of fallen New Jersey State Trooper Sean Cullen of the Third Congressional District, and to express my sincerest condolences to his family and loved ones he has left behind, as well as to recognize his career of public service.

Sean Cullen was a standout athlete at Cinnaminson High School and All-American wrestler at Lycoming College in Pennsylvania, where he earned a degree in criminal justice. After he graduated college, Sean pursued a career in law enforcement, eventually becoming a New Jersey State Trooper. His first police job was in Sea Isle City, where he served as a Special Officer Class II. Sean dedicated five years to the Mount Holly Police Department and then served with the Westampton Township Police Department before joining the New Jersey State Police. Sean was known by fellow officers for his upbeat and positive spirit, and his ability to overcome any obstacle in his way.

Trooper Cullen sacrificed precious time with his fiancée and son to protect and serve those in need. He was fatally struck by an oncoming vehicle while responding to an accident.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously honored by the selfless dedication displayed by Sean Cullen. He was a true hero, who put his life in harm's way to protect and serve those in need. It is with a heavy heart that I rise before the United States House of Representatives to commemorate his career and life, and recognize the lasting legacy that he has left behind.

STEVEN LANTSBERGER RETIRES FROM THE CITY OF HESPERIA

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Steven Lantsberger who will be retiring from the City of Hesperia after 18 years of service. Mr. Lantsberger is the Director of the city's Economic Development Department.

Mr. Lantsberger has spent nearly 30 years in the fields of economic development and redevelopment. He spearheaded Hesperia's successful efforts to create an Enterprise Zone and Recycling Market Development Zone. His innovative thinking has led to the creation of thousands of jobs in northern and southern California.

Mr. Lantsberger holds numerous professional certifications, including Economic Development Finance Professional, Housing Development Finance Professional, and Real Estate Broker and Appraiser. I want to thank Mr. Lantsberger for his years of service to the City of Hesperia and its citizens. His contributions will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the people he served. I wish him the best of luck as he enters the newest chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA S. PURA—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Linda S. Pura, of Los Feliz, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born in New Jersey, Linda attended Skidmore College and New Jersey City University for her registered nursing degree and teaching credential, and California State University, Northridge, where she obtained her Master's of Public Administration Degree.

Linda's illustrious forty-two year career as a registered nurse, health care educator and nursing manager began at Bayonne Hospital in Bayonne, New Jersey. After moving to California, she was a critical care instructor for seventeen years at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and then clinical manager of their blood donor facility, where she was responsible for blood donations and stem cell collection patient care. Linda provided, developed and coordinated educational programs and education needs assessments for over 400 primary care clinicians for the California Department of Health Care Services' Los Angeles County Cancer Detention Program, ''Every Woman Counts.'' In addition, Mrs. Pura acted as the Consumer Representative for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) National Mammography Quality Assurance Advisory Committee, where she advised the FDA in the development of quality standards for mammography facilities and accrediting bodies, and developed procedures to monitor compliance with standards and mechanisms to investigate consumer complaints.

A tireless advocate for women's breast health, Linda co-founded the Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County affiliate, an organization that provides funding for breast cancer education and outreach, and breast health services in the Los Angeles County communities. Linda has participated in multiple aspects of the organization, including serving as Board President, Race for the Cure Chairperson, and on the Education and Grants Committees, and is currently a member of their speakers' bureau, their metastatic breast cancer committee and the Race for the Cure committee. One of Mrs. Pura's major achievements was the design and organization of breast cancer diagnostic centers funded by Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County for symptomatic women and men. For her efforts, Linda received the national organization's Jill Ireland Award for Volunteerism.

Linda and her husband, Marshall Pura, have been Los Feliz residents for almost fifty years. Married for nearly half a century, they have one daughter and two granddaughters.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Linda S. Pura, for her extraordinary service to the community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HENRIETTA LACKS

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate Mrs. Henrietta Lacks, whose family knew her as a phenomenal woman. Decades after her death, the world now knows her phenomenal life-giving contributions.

Mrs. Lacks could hardly have known the impact her life would have. She grew up humbly in rural Virginia, moving as a young mother with her husband Day to find opportunity in Baltimore. The Lacks family continued to grow until she received her fateful diagnosis. The doctors at Johns Hopkins attempted to treat her cervical cancer, but were unable to save her life.

Of course, that is not the end of the story. In fact, her story is still being told through her immortal cells, the first to replicate indefinitely, providing clinicians with an invaluable resource for their medical research.

In her lifetime, Henrietta Lacks never witnessed a man land on the moon. She could have hardly imagined that her cells would travel in space to help determine the effects of zero gravity.

Mrs. Lacks died decades before the discovery of AIDS. And still, her cells have contributed to treatments for those living with HIV.

That is immortality. This woman, who gave so much to her family in life, continues to give in her death.

As we celebrate her contributions, we must also acknowledge that they were not freely given. As an African-American woman of few means, she was not afforded in life the respect that she deserved. Her cells were used without her knowledge or her consent.

In fact, Henrietta Lacks' family did not know that her cells had been cultivated until researchers contacted them 25 years after her death requesting additional genetic material.

How could they have known the lengths her cells had traveled? Or the fortunes they had made?

It is tragic that the gift that Henrietta Lacks gave the world was really not a gift at all.

Still, the Lacks family continues to give. They have not shared in the riches that the HeLa cells have made possible. But they have reclaimed their privacy rights, working in cooperation with the National Institutes of Health to control access to their family's genetic code. Today, their experience informs discussions of bioethics and patient consent.

Truly, there will never be another Henrietta Lacks. This phenomenal woman left a legacy of generosity and humility in her remarkable family. I am proud to introduce a resolution today in the House of Representatives to honor Mrs. Henrietta Lacks.

This Women's History Month, I am honored to recognize Mrs. Henrietta Lacks, her life, and her remarkable place in history. On behalf of a grateful nation, thank you to the Lacks family for the countless ways you have enriched our lives.

HONORING LILLIE KAY MITCHELL

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lillie Kay Mitchell on being named the 2016 Germantown, Tennessee Lions Club Citizen of the Year. This award is indeed a fitting tribute for all the time and sacrifice that Ms. Mitchell has made on behalf of the people of Germantown and all of Shelby County, Tennessee.

After graduating from Leadership Germantown in 2004, Ms. Mitchell has become an active member of the Alumni Association, including serving as the organization's secretary in 2010. She has spearheaded multiple projects including the annual Neighborhood Association Seminar, thus putting her experience of founding the Neshoba North Neighborhood Association to practical use for the betterment of our community.

For the last 10 years, Ms. Mitchell has been a member of Germantown Public Safety Education Commission, including serving as Chair for five years. Along with completing both her CPR and CERT training, she launched Germantown's Safety City while volunteering in that capacity. Ms. Mitchell is also an energetic leader in the annual Germantown Charity Horse Show, her church, Germantown United Methodist Church, and many more philanthropic endeavors.

Indeed, the Germantown Lions Club could not have made a better selection for their Citizen of the Year than Ms. Lillie Kay Mitchell. On behalf of Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, I would like to congratulate Ms. Mitchell and wish her the best of luck in the future.

HONORING JIM WATSON OF BEDFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Jim Watson of Bedford, New Hampshire.

Mr. Watson served his country honorably in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He later started his own business in 1981, Watson Insurance Agency, and remained a well-known and respected businessman in New Hampshire until his retirement in 2011. Jim continued to stay engaged in causes in the community after his retirement, such as the Boy Scouts of America, and was an active member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and active in local party politics.

I know that Jim will be best remembered for his kindness and willingness to help others in the community. New Hampshire lost a true friend to the community and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and many contributions over the years.

HONORING HARRY CHARLES

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Harry Charles.

I met Harry Charles in the mid-1980s at Trinity Episcopal Church. Harry was a gentleman, a gentle man, in every sense. Brilliant, soft-spoken, and dignified with a shock of white hair and a sparkle in his eye, I liked him instantly. He and his wife, Jane, were loving, giving people. They were very involved in the community. The best compliment I can give them, or anyone, is that they were full of God's grace. They were graceful.

Folks often came to Harry after he'd retired for legal advice. Many of those, Harry would send to me, which meant a lot to a young lawyer.

I understate to say Harry and I were friends, and he was a great influence to me. But I want to share one aspect: He came by my office one day, looked me in the eye, and asked about my community involvement. When he deemed my answers inadequate, he said ''I guess we'll have to put you to work.'' Over the next 20 years, Harry appointed me to a commission to study emergency services, then to 6 years on the Board of Zoning Appeals (ouch), then to 2 terms on Ocean View Foundation. Harry made sure my civic duties were fulfilled.

I may have complained once or twice along the way, but I have no doubt that the people I met, and the lessons I learned carrying out Harry's assignments vastly broadened my perspective and eventually led me to the United States Congress.

Harry will be greatly missed.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF OLIVE CECELIA BELLMORE OLDFIELD

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the birthday of Olive Cecelia Bellmore Oldfield. She will turn 100 on March 18th.

Olive was born in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on March 18th, 1916. She was the third of four children of Jesse and Laura Trudell Bellmore. Early in her life, Olive's family relocated to Detroit, Michigan where her family ran a confectionery store.

She attended Blessed Sacrament Grade School in Detroit and went on to graduate from Visitation High School. After completion of school, she was engaged to her brother's friend, Alfred ''Al'' Oldfield, a new American citizen from Canada. They were married at Visitation Parish on November 16, 1935.

After World War II, Olive gave birth to four children, John, Janine, Jerome and Mary. At this time, the family decided to venture into business for themselves and began Ecko Beer Distributorship.

Olive and her late husband, Al, have 16 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Olive has spoiled each one of them with love and chocolate. She has survived breast cancer twice, both in the late 1960s and again in 2007. She was able to celebrate 59 years of marriage with her husband before his passing.

Olive is young at heart and an inspiration. She still lives alone and never misses her favorite program, ''Jeopardy''. She always does for others before herself, and taught her four children to do the same. She is a patriot and thankful to be an American citizen of French ancestry.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life and achievements of Olive Cecelia Bellmore Oldfield and wishing her a happy 100th birthday.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON AFTER HER PASSING ON FEBRUARY 27, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Merrimack High School graduate Ashley Guindon, a police officer who lost her life in the line of duty on February 27, 2016.

Ashley grew up in New Hampshire in the First Congressional District. Following in her father's footsteps, she joined the Marine Corps Reserve, winning the National Defense Service Medal and Marine Corps Reserve Medal.

Her love of public service brought her back to the nation's capital, where she gained a forensic science degree. She graduated from the Prince William County, Virginia, police academy last year and served her first day on the job on February 27th. That same night, her compassion for others drew her into a deadly situation, which cost Ashley her young life. A suspect shot two more officers and fatally wounded another victim.

Merrimack, New Hampshire, where Ashley's family still lives, mourns her loss. It takes a remarkable individual like Ashley Guindon to risk their life daily to keep us safe and protect us from harm. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life and valor of Officer Guindon. She died trying to protect her fellow citizens and we will all miss her contributions.

CONGRATULATING REVEREND DR. JARVIS L. COLLIER

HON. KEVIN YODER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send my congratulations to Reverend Dr. Jarvis L. Collier on his 15th Anniversary at Pleasant Green Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas.

I've known Reverend Collier for several years now. I met him when I was a brand new Member of Congress representing Wyandotte County in Washington.

The Reverend has always been very kind to me and has welcomed me to Pleasant Green on more than one occasion, including having my wife Brooke and I join the United Prayer Movement to serve meals on Thanksgiving.

His stated goal is ''to glorify God as a yielded instrument for preaching/teaching/modeling the redemptive love of God through Jesus Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit.''

I've seen how he lives out this goal firsthand. Visiting Pleasant Green Baptist Church I've seen the fruits of his labor for his congregation and community through spreading the good word, working on education initiatives and more.

His leadership is truly an asset to Wyandotte County and the greater Kansas City area.

Reverend Collier, thanks for your dedication and service these past 15 years and I look forward to celebrating many more milestones with you and the wonderful people at Pleasant Green Baptist Church.

HONORING COL. FRED VANN CHERRY

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the life and legacy of Col. Fred Vann Cherry, an Air Force fighter pilot who spent seven years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. Colonel Cherry passed away recently at the age of 87 while living in Maryland.

A native of Suffolk, Virginia, Colonel Cherry was born to farmers on March 24, 1928. He attended the racially segregated schools of the Jim Crow South and graduated in 1951 from Virginia Union University, a historically black college in Richmond. He then joined the Air Force.

Colonel Cherry was a Major who had served more than 100 combat missions in Korea and Vietnam when his bomber was hit by enemy fire in October 1965. He suffered significant injuries while ejecting and was captured immediately upon landing. He spent 702 days in solitary confinement and endured torture at the hands of our enemies. Colonel Cherry was the first and highest-ranking black officer to become a prisoner in Vietnam.

Colonel Cherry credited his survival to a fellow POW who, in turn, credited Colonel Cherry with his. The two wrote a book about their friendship and gave joint talks at military institutions and colleges. Colonel Cherry was also featured in a documentary narrated by Tom Hanks about Vietnam fighter pilots held as POWs.

Colonel Cherry later attended the National War College and the Defense Intelligence School in Washington. After more than 30 years of service, he retired from the Air Force in 1981 as a decorated joint staff officer assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency. He then started his own engineering company.

While too numerous to mention in their entirety, Colonel Cherry's awards and accolades include two Purple Hearts, the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and the Air Force Cross, which recognizes ''extraordinary heroism,'' ''personal fortitude'' in the face of severe enemy harassment and torture and suffering critical injuries. A scholarship in his name is given annually by the Suffolk Foundation.

Colonel Cherry has remained a dedicated father to his five children, three of which also enlisted in our Armed Forces. He died as a grandfather to 14 and a great-grandfather to six.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to acknowledge the service and sacrifice of Colonel Cherry and that of his family. I humbly express my condolences to his family and wish them peace and comfort in the days ahead.

HONORING REVEREND FRANCIS CRANDALL IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Reverend Francis Crandall in celebration of his reaching his 100th birthday.

As he reflects on the great memories and milestones that have highlighted the past hundred years, I know he will think fondly on all that he's accomplished and the positive impact he's had on his family and the communities he's served in New Hampshire. In addition to his fine work in ministry, Reverend Crandall has been a staunch advocate for feeding homeless and needy children around the world, and created the International Concern for Children Foundation (ICCF) to help raise awareness and much needed funds for children at orphanages in thirteen countries.

Rev. Crandall's care for others and focus on helping those most in need has created a strong legacy that will not soon be forgotten. It is with great admiration that I congratulate him on achieving this wonderful milestone, and wish him the best in all future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANN ARBOR CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living on their 40th anniversary. The accomplishment of this long-standing non-profit agency exemplifies the importance and strength of public-private partnerships in our communities.

Founded in February of 1976, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living has worked to improve the lives of those living with disabilities in our community. The group was launched to provide help for individuals with disabilities, by people with disabilities. It sought to move beyond the low expectations of people in the disabled community, and worked diligently to help them achieve full participation and access to opportunities that able-bodied people take for granted. At the time of its inception, it was just the fourth Center for Independent Living in the country, and the first in the State of Michigan. The Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living provides the most basic life needs to people: housing, transportation, and access to resources. Their work has now expanded to positively impact the lives of over 4,000 people in Southeast Michigan each year.

The center offers individualized counseling, advocacy efforts, skill-building classes, recreation, arts programming, and other tools that build a sense of community and belonging for

all. For 40 years, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living has held itself to the highest standards of excellence to ensure that our residents continue to have a place to turn for support in good times and in bad times.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living on their 40th Anniversary and to wish them many more years of continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PAISANO

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 35th anniversary of The Paisano, the independent student newspaper at the University of San Antonio (UTSA). For three and a half decades, dedicated, talented students have run every aspect of the paper's publication. From reporting, to editing, to managing the paper's budget, it's the driven young people at UTSA who have made The Paisano's success over the years possible.

Each week, 7,000 copies of The Paisano circulate on campus, expanding students' horizons, challenging their thinking, and enriching campus life. Thanks to The Paisano, learning at UTSA doesn't end when students leave the classroom.

A vibrant, free press plays a vital role in American society, and The Paisano fosters a welcoming community where the next generation of journalists can cut their teeth and hone their craft. Enthusiasm and a desire to learn are the only prerequisites for joining the paper's staff. Even for alumni of The Paisano's team who pursue careers in fields other than journalism, the lessons in leadership, teamwork, and entrepreneurship learned during their time with the paper serve them well.

I applaud the members of The Paisano's staff, past and present. Their legacy lives on at UTSA, and will continue to do so for years to come as future classes take up the torch—and pen—at The Paisano.

HONORING KEITH BRYAR JR. OF LACONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Keith Bryar of Moultonborough, New Hampshire.

Mr. Bryar was an active member of the Lakes Region community where he was born and raised. After spending time in Alaska to gain experience in the construction industry, he returned to New Hampshire to start his own business, Bryar Enterprises, which he owned and operated for thirty years. During this time he was an active member of the community and became known for his professionalism and strong work ethic.

Keith's other passion in life, following his great love for his family, was his involvement in racing sled dogs, a tradition he carried on from his parents. His love of sled dogs and racing them pushed him to compete across the U.S. and Canada, earning him many titles along the way and the respect of many involved in the sport.

New Hampshire and the Lakes Region lost a true friend, and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and commitment to the community he held so dear.

HONORING JACK PLUCKHAHN

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Frederick John Pluckhahn. Jack was a prominent and instrumental leader in the consumer electronics industry and he will be dearly missed by his many colleagues and friends across the nation.

As a young man, Jack earned a Bachelor's of Science at the University of Wisconsin—Madison and served in the United States Navy from 1955 to 1957. After beginning his entrepreneurial career in Minneapolis, Minnesota as a buyer for Dayton's Department Store, he relocated with his family in 1968 to New Jersey to join Matsushita Electric Industrial Corporation, known today as Panasonic Corporation. During his tenure at Panasonic, he served as Vice President of the Southern Group of Matsushita Electric Corporation of America (MECA) from 1972 to 1982 before becoming President of MECA's Quasar Division in Chicago, Illinois. From 1989 to 1994, as Vice President of MECA, he was responsible for operations and headquarters functions at the company.

From 1986 to 1994, Jack volunteered for several leadership positions with the Consumer Electronics Group, known today as the Consumer Technology Association. As Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Video Chair, he played a key role in the nation's switch to digital and high-definition television, and in the words of CTA President Gary Shapiro, ''Television as we know it today . . . would not be possible without the contributions of Jack and his colleagues.''

In addition to his accomplishments in the consumer electronics industry, Jack was actively involved in his community, both as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for the Planning Commission in Morgan County, Georgia and as the County's Habitat for Humanity Executive Director from 1996 to 2008. It was his honor to carry the Olympic Torch for the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996.

Jack passed away on February 11, 2016 from Parkinson's disease and is survived by Nancy, his wife of fifty-six years, and their children: Susan and Felix Vizurraga, Jill and Mat Morgan, Scott Pluckhahn and Keith Crosby, Thomas Pluckhahn and Becky Zarger, and Michael Pluckhahn. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

IN MEMORY OF BRIGADIER GENERAL RUFUS C. LAZZELL

HON. THOMAS J. ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rufus C. Lazzell, retired Brigadier General and former mayor of Punta Gorda, Florida, who sadly passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at the age of 86.

Rufus Lazzell served as an officer in the United States Army for thirty years during which time he fought and commanded valiantly in two of our nation's wars, Korea and Vietnam. He commanded the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment (Ranger) during the first battle of Prek Klok in 1967 and then went on to hold multiple staff positions throughout the Army, including working for the Army Chief of Staff. He retired from military service in 1981, earning the rank of Brigadier General. His service awards include: the Army Distinguished Service Medal, two awards of the Silver Star for gallantry in combat, three awards of the Legion of Merit, three awards of the Bronze Star Medal (including one for valor), Defense Superior Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, four awards of the Air Medal, two awards of the Army Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart.

Although retired from military service, Rufus continued to serve the people of the United States. He served on the Punta Gorda City Council for eight years including four years as mayor. He was a strong supporter of preserving the Charlotte County Court House, a founding member of the Military Heritage Museum, was the museum's first inductee on their ''Wall of Warrior'', and was the president of the Cultural Center of Charlotte County. Although he held high positions of power, Rufus' magnanimous character is to be admired and was highlighted when he worked as a sales clerk in a local hardware store because he ''wanted to learn the hardware business and find out how to fix things.''

Rufus was more than a pillar in the community, he was an intricate member of the community's foundation. Rufus is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Jo Jac, daughters Victoria and Linda, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I speak for all of Charlotte County in saying that our thoughts and prayers are with Brigadier General Lazzell's family, as well as his friends, co-workers and the entire community as they mourn his passing. He will be missed.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RxIMPACT DAY

HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Eighth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we recognize pharmacy's contribution

to the American healthcare system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place on March 16–17. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy association representatives and pharmacy company leaders—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.

Advocates from over 40 states have travelled to Washington to talk about the pharmacy community's contributions in over 40,000 community pharmacies nationwide. These important healthcare providers are here to educate Congress about the value of pharmacy and the important access provided by community pharmacies in the nation's healthcare delivery system. And just as these providers travelled to meet with us, Members of Congress and their staff have toured retail chain pharmacies in our own communities more than 400 times since 2009.

Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their healthcare needs. The local pharmacist is a trusted, highly accessible healthcare provider deeply committed to providing the highest quality care in the most efficient manner possible.

As demand for healthcare services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded their role in healthcare delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve patient healthcare. Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as healthcare affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the nation's most accessible healthcare providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to healthcare. Eighty-six percent of Americans reside within a five-mile radius of a community pharmacy. Pharmacists are one of our nation's most trusted healthcare professionals. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, healthcare screenings, and other healthcare services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) and medical homes.

The pharmacy advocates of NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill are promoting legislation, H.R. 592/S. 314, the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act, to allow Medicare Part B to utilize pharmacists to their full capability by providing underserved beneficiaries with services, subject to state scope of practice laws. They are also working to ensure that the TRICARE pharmacy program keeps prescription copays affordable for beneficiaries as well as preserving their ability to choose to fill their prescriptions at their community pharmacy. They also are promoting measures, such as H.R. 793/S. 1190, the Ensuring Seniors Access to Local Pharmacies Act of 2015 to guarantee Medicare Part D access and transparency.

I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care, increase access and lower costs. In recognition of the Eighth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I would like to congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and the entire pharmacy community represented by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, for their contributions to the health and wellness of the American people.

IN HONOR OF MR. MARTY MCVEY

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2016

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a respected business and community leader, Marty McVey.

Mr. McVey proudly served the American people for over four years, from 2011 to 2015. In 2011, he was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as a Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD). USAID plays a critical role in our nation's efforts to stabilize regions and build responsive local governance. The agency addresses many of the same problems as military interventions, but uses a different set of tools.

Mr. McVey's responsibilities with the agency included providing guidance to the federal government regarding investments in training, research, and technology transfer to developing countries. As part of these responsibilities, Mr. McVey served as Chairman for the Haitian Reconstruction Task Force, as well as Chairman of the BIFAD Budget Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of a friend who has served our President and our country well, the Honorable Marty McVey.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2658, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, S. 2644, to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, and a routine list in the Coast Guard.

SR–253

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, focusing on policies and projects.

SD–406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 1455, to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, S. 2256, to establish programs for health care provider training in Federal health care and medical facilities, to establish Federal co-prescribing guidelines, to establish a grant program with respect to naloxone, S. 480, to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act, an original bill entitled, ''Mental Health Reform Act of 2016'', and an original bill entitled, ''Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act''.

SD–106

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest

To hold hearings to examine the impact of immigration on United States workers.

SD–226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD–G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Guard and Reserve.

SD–192

2 p.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine Department of Homeland Security management and acquisition reform.
SD–342
Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine preventing a fiscal crisis in America, focusing on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.
SD–226
2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Nuclear Security Administration.
SD–138
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Army Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle and Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Enterprises in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold closed hearings to examine the Department of Defense's global counterterrorism strategy.
SVC–217

MARCH 17

9 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management
To hold hearings to examine agency use of deference.
SD–342
9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–G50
9:45 a.m.
Special Committee on Aging
To hold hearings to examine sudden price spikes in decades-old Rx drugs.
SD–562
10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Labor.
SD–138
Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine HealthCare.gov, focusing on a review of operations and enrollment.
SD–215
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the Administration's nuclear agenda.
SD–419
Committee on the Judiciary
Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.
SD–226
2 p.m.
Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219
3 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on National Parks
To hold hearings to examine S. 2177 and H.R. 959, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Medgar Evers House, located in Jackson, Mississippi, S. 651 and H.R. 1289, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain land in Martinez, California, for inclusion in the John Muir National Historic Site, H.R. 1949, to provide for the consideration and submission of site and design proposals for the National Liberty Memorial approved for establishment in the District of Columbia, S. 1329 and H.R. 2288, bills to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, H.R. 2880, to redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, S. 1930 and H.R. 3371, bills to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, S. 119, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 718, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, S. 770, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1577, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of East Rosebud Creek in Carbon County, Montana, as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 1943, to modify the boundary of the Shiloh National Military Park located in the State of Tennessee and Mississippi, to establish Parker's Crossroads Battlefield as an affiliated area of the National Park System, S. 1975, to establish the Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System, S. 1982, to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance, S. 1993, to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, S. 2039, to designate the mountain at the Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming, as Devils Tower, S. 2061, to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, S. 2309, to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, S. 2608, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the ''American Discovery Trail'', S. 2620, to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, S. 2628, to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
SD–366

APRIL 5

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the effects of consumer finance regulations.
SD–538

APRIL 6

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 7

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.
SD–538

APRIL 13

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 14

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.
SD–538

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''
SD–628

SENATE—*Tuesday, March 15, 2016*

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Merciful God, You alone have brought us to this moment. Help us to hear Your whispers and to follow Your leading. Speak to our lawmakers about the difficult issues of our time, reassuring them that You continue to take control of our destinies. Teach them to count their blessings, cultivating an attitude of gratitude. Give us the wisdom to shut out yesterday's disappointments and tomorrow's fears. Lord, show us how to live in day-tight compartments with total dependence on Your mercy and grace. Help us to cherish the freedom of this land as You continue to emancipate us from sin's slavery.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD LABELING BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in the last national election, the American people elected a Republican Senate. Since then, we have accomplished a lot of important things for our country—landmark education reform, permanent tax relief for families and small businesses, significant action to repair America's roads and bridges—and, just last week, decisive steps to address the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic. The Republican Senate has been able to lead on many important issues because we focused on areas where both sides can agree, rather than just fight about issues where we don't.

Everyone knows one issue where we don't agree; that is, whether the American people deserve a voice in filling the current Supreme Court vacancy. Republicans think the people deserve a voice in this important vacancy. The President and Senate Democrats do not.

Whoever is chosen to fill the Supreme Court vacancy could radically change the direction of the Court for a generation. The American people obviously deserve a voice in such an important conversation. They can continue making their voices heard, and we can continue doing our work in the Senate to move America forward on important issues.

Americans elected this Republican Senate to serve as a check-and-balance to the President. It is natural that both parties will disagree in some areas. It is natural we will find common ground in others. Let's keep focused on those areas of common ground.

For instance, today I hope colleagues across the aisle will join us in working to protect middle-class families from unnecessary and unfair increases in their food and grocery bills. Vermont passed food-labeling legislation that will be implemented soon and could increase annual food costs across America by more than $1,000 per family. It is one State's decision, but it could negatively affect families—especially lower and middle-income families—in other States. Now we see other States following in Vermont's footsteps, which could lead to a patchwork of State laws. We should work to protect America's middle class from the unfair higher food prices that could result, and that is just what the Senate is working to do now.

We know this may be the last chance to stop this economic blow to the middle class, but we can't act if colleagues block us from helping the middle class. As our Democratic colleagues know, we are eager to continue working toward a solution. I would encourage our colleagues across the aisle to work with the bill managers to offer the amendments or alternative proposals they may have.

The commonsense, bipartisan legislation offered by Chairman PAT ROBERTS of the Agriculture Committee would set clear, science-based standards in order to prevent families from being unfairly hurt by a patchwork of conflicting State and local labeling laws passed in places where they don't even live. This bipartisan bill would help meet consumer interest for information about how food is made, while keeping costs from rising at every level of production. It has earned the support of more than 650 groups nationally, including farmers and small businesses. As Kentucky's agriculture commissioner put it, this bipartisan bill would ''allow for a more efficient flow of food to consumers everywhere and would cut down on production costs.''

We know this is not a safety or health issue. It is a market issue. Officials at both USDA and the FDA—the two agencies charged with ensuring the safety and delivery of our Nation's food supply—have found there are no health, safety, or nutritional risks associated with bioengineered crops and products. At the same time, we recognize that many families have a desire to know what is in the food they are purchasing. That is why the legislation Chairman ROBERTS is working on would offer incentives for the marketplace to provide more information to consumers while also addressing many of the unintended consequences of a patchwork of State laws. I thank Senator ROBERTS for his continued work with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to move to a solution this week.

The Agriculture Committee recently passed the chairman's mark by a bipartisan vote, and the House passed its own legislation last summer. Now it is time for the full Senate to act so we can protect the middle class from higher food costs, and with continued cooperation from across the aisle, that is just what we can do.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD LABELING BILL AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 90 percent of Americans want to know what is in their food. All of Europe, China, Russia, they know what is in their food. We should know what is in our food. Senator STABENOW, the ranking member of the Agriculture Committee, has been trying to work to come up with some reasonable approach, but what she has gotten is not much help from the chair of the committee. There are no discussions going on right now that are meaningful. The Republican leader has offered an amendment that is a purely voluntary scheme, which is a quasi-Roberts proposal and would leave consumers actually in the dark, and that is the truth. But this is just another case of where Republicans in the Senate are trying to create an appearance of doing something without really doing anything at all. It happens so

often. This has happened so often during the past year. Things that my friend the Republican leader comes to the floor and boasts about are things we tried to do and we were blocked by Republican filibusters. We have been happy in the minority to be responsible and work with the Republicans to get things done, and we continue to do that. It is the right thing for the country. We are not trying to block everything, as they in fact did. We are trying to get things done.

One of the things we need to get done that belies the fact of this great Senate Republican majority is the fact that we think there should be a Supreme Court Justice. There should be 9, not 8.

One hundred years ago today, this very day, this Senate concluded the confirmation hearing of Justice Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice ever. Prior to his nomination, it was not a custom for the Senate to hold public confirmation hearings to set up Supreme Court nominations, but over the last century these hearings have become a vital part of the Senate's constitutional duty to provide its advice and consent. For 100 years, the Senate has had open hearings to deal with controversies—real or imagined—surrounding Supreme Court vacancies and nominees.

It is disappointing that Republicans are now willing to throw away a century of transparency and deliberation just to block President Obama's Supreme Court nominee. Republicans will not even meet with this man or this woman. Republicans will not allow a hearing for this man or this woman. Republicans will not allow a vote on this man or this woman, and that is wrong. We want transparency on what is going on here with the Supreme Court. We want transparency on the food we eat.

They are adamant that President Obama's nominee will have nothing—no opening hearing, no public hearing, no hearing at all. It is further evidence of how far Republicans will go to avoid their constitutional duties.

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor to speak, so I ask the Chair to announce the schedule of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator is recognized.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD LABELING BILL

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, many of you know that in my real life I am a farmer. I know where my food comes from and how it is made. Unfortunately, that is not true for most Americans.

We will be dealing with a bill called the DARK Act shortly, and quite frankly the DARK Act does not empower America's consumers. It does not tell them what is in the packaged food they purchase, and it doesn't give them any information when we are dealing with genetically modified ingredients.

I was told that the customer is always right. If you are a good businessman, you listen to your customers. In this particular case, the customer has a right to know what is in their food. In fact, they expect it because 9 out of 10 consumers say they want labeling for genetically engineered foods. Some of the folks in this body are not listening to the customers. They are not listening to their constituents. Instead, they are listening to the big corporations that want to keep consumers in the dark, and we cannot allow that to happen in this body today. The Senate is above that.

Transparency in everything leaves better accountability and gives more power to average Americans, and that is also true when we talk about food. Free markets work when consumers have access to information. The U.S. Senate should not be in the business of hiding information from consumers.

Let's be clear. What the new DARK Act, which is sponsored by the Senator from Kansas, does is it tells the American people: We in the Senate know what is best for you, and quite frankly, whether you want this information or not, you are not going to get it.

How does this DARK Act do this? First of all, it blocks the States from enforcing their own laws, so we can throw States' rights out the window. Second, this ''compromise'' would hide the information behind 800 numbers and QR codes.

Let me tell you, if you think this is labeling, if you think this is giving the consumer a right to know what is in their food, you are wrong. This is a game. And for the mom who wants to know what is in her child's cereal or soup or bread, there may be a bunch of different 800 numbers out there, and I don't know about you, but when it comes to phone numbers, especially the older I get, the harder it is for me to remember. Or you will stand in a grocery store aisle and scan each individual product with a smartphone, if you have a smartphone and if you have cell phone coverage at that location, because, quite frankly, in rural America, we don't in a lot of places. And that is going to be the labeling. Unbelievable.

The fact is, if folks are so proud of the GMOs, they should label them. What they are saying is you can voluntarily do it. Frankly, voluntary standards are no standards at all. If they were standards, we would say to the super PACs: Tell us who you get your money from. Tell us what you are spending it on, why you are spending it. We don't know that. We don't know that in our elections, by the way, which puts our democracy at risk, and we won't know about our food if this DARK Act passes.

There are 64 countries out there that require GMO labeling. China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia are not exactly transparent countries, but they are requiring GMO labeling. Vermont passed a GMO labeling law that would go in effect in July. Maine and Connecticut have passed mandatory labeling laws. There are numerous States that require things like farm-raised or wild-caught. FDA, in fact, even regulates terms such as ''fresh'' and ''fresh frozen.''

Some of the proponents of the DARK Act will say: Well, you know, folks from California and Washington defeated it when it was on the ballot.

Yes, they did. Let me give you some figures. In Washington, more than $20 million was spent in opposition to the labeling law—more than $20 million. By the way, about $600 of that came from Washington residents, according to the Washington Post. About $7 million was in support of that campaign, with at least $1.6 million of that $7 million coming from Washington residents.

In California, the opponents to labeling our food with GMOs spent about $45 million to defeat it. Monsanto alone spent $8 million of that $45 million. Supporters of the labeling spent about $7 million.

So let's be clear. When people have a choice to vote and get the facts, they want their food labeled. This DARK Act does exactly the opposite. It is bad legislation. It does not empower consumers. It does not empower the American people. In fact, it does what the title of this bill says: Keep them in the dark. That is not what the U.S. Senate should be about. We need to defeat this bill, whether it is through the cloture process or later on. This is bad, bad, bad policy.

I yield my time to the Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, will my colleague from Montana yield for a question?

Mr. TESTER. Yes, I will.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you. I appreciate the Senator's presentation.

This Monsanto DARK Act 2.0—this new version—says to the States that they no longer have the right to respond to consumers' interest in providing a consumer-friendly label that alerts them to genetically engineered ingredients, but it does not replace that with a federal consumer-friendly label?

Mr. TESTER. Correct.

Mr. MERKLEY. Is it right that the Federal Government takes away this power from States, which are, if you will, our places of experimentation and creativity, and then does nothing at the national level? Is this an overreach of the Federal Government?

Mr. TESTER. Absolutely. The Senator came out of the State Legislature in Oregon. I came out of the State Legislature in Montana. Quite frankly, much of the work is done at the State level. We follow their lead. This bill does exactly the opposite. It prevents States from labeling for genetically modified foods, and it replaces it with a voluntary labeling system basically or QR codes that nobody is going to have the technology, quite frankly, or the time to be able to investigate. So the Senator is right. This tells folks in Vermont and Maine and Connecticut and many other States—as I said, 9 out of 10 consumers want genetically modified foods labeled, and this replaces it basically with nothing.

The proponents will walk out here and say: No, no, no, there is going to be a QR code or 800 number. That simply does not give the consumers the ability to know what is in their food. We live in a very fast-paced society. I can tell you, it happened just this weekend when I was home. I pulled up in a pickup. My wife ran in the grocery store, grabbed what she needed, came out, and we zipped home. People don't have the time to look unless it is sitting right there and they can see it. And that is what your bill does, I say to Senator MERKLEY. Your bill gives the consumer the ability to simply look at the package and know what is in it, and that is what we should be fighting for in this body. We shouldn't be fighting to keep people in the dark; we should fight to let people know so they can make good decisions. If you have good information—and it is true here and it is true amongst the American public—if you have good information, you can make good decisions. When parents buy food for their kids, they ought to have the information so they can make good decisions. It is simply a right to know what is in your food.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleague from Montana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I will use these papers as examples of food products. I have three different bags of rice, and I want to look. I can scan the ingredients list of these three products to see what they contain. Well, in about 5 seconds—if what is required of me is to pull out my phone, call up an 800 number, work my way through a phone tree, proceed to talk to someone who may or may not even know what I am calling about—and maybe I will get a busy signal or a message that says: I am sorry, our phone lines are very busy, but we will get to you in 25 minutes. How long am I going to have to stand there versus the 5 seconds that it takes if there is a symbol or an indication on the ingredients panel for these three products? While standing in the aisle of the grocery store, how long is it going to take me to try to find out if these three products have genetically engineered ingredients?

Mr. TESTER. Well, you said it. For the people who heard you explain the process you would go through, that is not labeling. That is not transparency. That isn't telling folks what is in their food.

Needless to say, I have to tell you, I think these are a pain in the neck. If I wasn't in this body, I don't think I would even have one, and there are a lot of people who feel that way. So now I am going to have to spend money and get a plan so I can determine what is in my food? Not everybody has the resources to have one of these. What does this do to folks who are poor? They deserve to have the food that they want to eat. They deserve to know what is in it. And they are not going to have that capacity. Then what about folks in places such as eastern Washington or all of Montana that isn't where a lot of people live? Oftentimes there is not that service. So it just does not make any sense. You are trying to replace what Vermont is doing with nothing, and that is not fair. It is not fair to the consumers.

As I said in my remarks, the consumer is always right. They are. It is a fact of business. We ought to be listening to folks. That is why we have single-digit approval ratings in this body. We need to listen. And we are not listening with the DARK Act.

Mr. MERKLEY. Is the Senator saying the whole idea presented in the Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 about putting a phone number on the package so someone can call a company is a sham?

Mr. TESTER. Bogus.

Mr. MERKLEY. Bogus.

Mr. TESTER. Yes. It is worse than nothing. At least if you had nothing, you know what you have.

Mr. MERKLEY. There is a second option put into the Monsanto DARK Act, which is the quick response code. You have to have a smartphone that can take a picture of that quick response code, take you to a Web site to get information—information, by the way, written by the very company that controls the product you are looking at. It is not some third party. I picture that as taking just as much time and being just as complex for the ordinary person as the 1–800 number. The QR code requires first that you actually have a data plan to be able to get to a Web site, that you have a smartphone instead of an ordinary cell phone, and furthermore it reveals information about you when you go to that Web site, so you are giving up your privacy.

So is the QR code option being discussed also a sham?

Mr. TESTER. Absolutely. It is just as bogus as the 800 number, quite frankly, if not more, for all the same reasons. First of all, you have to have a phone. You have to have service. Oftentimes that isn't the case.

Quite frankly, what we need is what your bill does, and that is, just tell folks what is in the package—parentheses, three letters, or an asterisk that says what it is, very simple. People can understand and they don't have to jump through all these hoops.

I know proponents of this DARK Act will say: Well, you know, that is going to cost a lot of money.

Look, Budweiser makes a beer labeled for every NFL football team in the country. At Christmastime, they put Santa Claus on, and then they make the ones in the blue cans too. It is standard stuff. It is all the same price. Companies change their labels all the time.

So the fact that we are replacing what would be common sense—the Senator's bill, which is what we should be taking up and passing here on the floor because it makes sense, it gives consumers the right to know what is in their food—with something that has an 800 number or QR code is crazy. It is crazy. And the arguments that folks are using for keeping people in the dark simply are not factual.

Mr. MERKLEY. Well, in this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 that has been put on the floor, there is a third option beyond the voluntary labeling and beyond the 1–800 numbers and QR code, and the third option—door No. 3, if you will—is that the company can put something on social media, which means, I assume, Instagram, Facebook, or who knows what. So if I am a customer and I am in the store and I see these three products and I want to find out if they have GE ingredients and there is no 800 number and there is no QR code because the company has chosen door No. 3, how am I to know that?

Mr. TESTER. You don't. And by the way, there are three doors here, and it is kind of like ''Let's Make a Deal.'' The problem is, what is behind No. 1, 2,

and 3 are all zonks for the American consumers.

I say to Senator MERKLEY, this makes no sense to me whatsoever because it is confusing. It absolutely keeps the consumers in the dark. And we are actually going to try to promote something like that in the Senate? It doesn't make any sense to me.

Mr. MERKLEY. The majority leader has put this bill on the floor, and it has not even gone through a committee hearing because this is a new creation that we have just seen for the first time last night. Furthermore, it has been put on the floor the night before one of the most important primary days in the Presidential election, strategically scheduled, if you will, so that the news networks are busy with Florida and Ohio and Illinois and two other States, and they are not paying attention to this egregious proposal to take away States' rights and consumers' rights.

We had a pledge from the majority leader coming into here that due process—things would be considered in committee and things would be fairly considered on the floor with an open amendment process. Has this Monsanto DARK Act 2.0 gone through a committee process, and is it getting a full opportunity to be heard on the floor? In fact, the motion to close debate was filed within seconds of it being put on the floor last night. Is this a true opportunity for the American people to wrestle with a major policy decision taking away States' rights and consumers' rights?

Mr. TESTER. No. In a word, no. And of all the choices that we have out there, that we do every day, food is one of the most important choices we make. That is what we put in our bodies. It gives us power. It gives us intellect. It gives us the ability to do our daily jobs, to work, to be successful, to support our family. Quite frankly, this bill—and the timing of it is curious—this bill does none of those things to help move families and the people and society forward. It just keeps them in the dark, which is disturbing.

As I said in my opening statement, the Senate should be above this. We should be empowering people, not taking away their right to know.

Mr. MERKLEY. Well, this taking away the right to know—it isn't like the right to know some detail about how your car was manufactured. As the Senator put it, this is about the food you put into your mouth. This is about the food we feed our families. This is about what our children consume.

I was very surprised to read this from a scientific study: Two-thirds of the air and rainfall samples tested in Mississippi and Iowa in 2007 and 2008 contain glyphosate, which is the herbicide being applied in massive quantities because of the genetically engineered resistance of key crops, including corn and soybeans and sugar beets. So the herbicide is very prevalent in the rainfall samples and it is very prevalent in the air samples, or at least two-thirds of the air samples.

Then, a recent study published in the Journal of Environmental & Analytical Toxicology found that humans who consume glyphosate-treated GMO foods have relatively high levels of glyphosate in their urine. So, actually, residuals are finding their way into our bodies.

There are other effects. Glyphosate is a known carcinogen. It has been defined as a known carcinogen. But this herbicide is also running into the streams. Study after study is showing big impacts on the microbial population, and that is at the base of the food chain, so it is affecting the food chain inside our rivers and our streams. There is gene transfer to relatives—weeds that are relatives of the growing crops. There is an impact on the evolution of bugs; specifically, the western corn root worm which is evolving, if you will, to become resistant to the pesticide that is in the plant because of the genetic—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you, Mr. President. I ask unanimous consent to continue for another 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank the Chair.

So we have these affects that scientific documents are showing.

So when people come to this floor and say that it is OK to suppress the consumers' right to know because consumers have no legitimate concerns, that there are no scientific studies that show any legitimate concerns about the impacts of genetically engineered plants, are they telling the truth? Is that accurate?

Mr. TESTER. Well, I think that is up to the consumer to find out, and the consumer never knows if it is not on the label. I think we put a lot of things on labels. I bought some orange juice last night. It was not from frozen concentrate; it was fresh squeezed. That is a consumer choice that I have. I buy that because I like it. I think it is better. I think it is better for you. That is what I choose to do.

I think what this DARK Act does is it doesn't allow consumers to make the choices they want. They can do the research. Once they see what is in it and make the decision whether they—some people may want to eat it. It may be a positive thing: This is good. It has GMO in it. I want to buy that. For other folks, they may say: No, I don't want to buy that. That is their choice. That is what this country is about. It is about freedom. Now we are stopping that. That is what this debate is about. It is about labeling of food. It is about letting consumers know what they are eating and letting them make the decision as to what is best for their family.

Mr. MERKLEY. I think my colleague summed it all up in the word ''freedom''—the freedom to choose. And that freedom to choose—if it is between wild fish and farmed fish, we facilitate that by giving the information on the package. If it is the freedom to choose between juice from concentrate versus fresh squeezed—juice from concentrate or fresh juice—that, in fact, is a freedom of the consumer, and they can exercise it from the package.

If someone decides they want to have a product that is vitamin A enriched, such as golden rice which has been done by GE engineering—maybe they need more vitamin A—they should have the freedom to choose it.

In fact, my point here is that there are scientific studies that show benefits in a variety of circumstances from genetic engineering, and there are studies that show legitimate concerns. On the benefits side we have cases—for example, sweet potatoes—in which they have been made to resist viruses that kill. In South Africa, that has been very important to the growth of sweet potatoes and the provision of that as part of a significant source of food in parts of that country. Then there is golden rice being enriched with vitamin A in regions of the world where people eat primarily rice, but they really lack vitamin A. But there are also studies that show concern.

Shouldn't we as consumers have freedom? Why is it that we have on the floor a bill which not only takes away States' rights to respond to consumers' interests in freedom, but proceed to squash, for all time and in all geographic areas, the freedom of an individual to make that decision? And then they put up a sham which says that somehow, the consumer could inquire by guessing at a social media outlet or going to a phone bank that is somewhere overseas in the Philippines to find out whether or not there is a GE ingredient or having to give up their privacy and go to a Web site sponsored by the company that made the food. That is not information that allows the consumer to make a choice.

What if a consumer had to go to a phone company operating overseas to find out—I don't know—the calories that are in the food or the vitamins that are in the food? That would be ridiculous. It is absurd. It is a sham and a scam. It is a theft of individual freedoms in this country. And shouldn't we all in the Senate be standing up for freedom for American citizens who, by the way, when asked in a nationwide poll, 9 to 1 say they want this information on the package; 9 to 1 say that. Here we are in this deeply divided country where we have this huge spectrum of ideologies that we are seeing in the Presidential campaign. Yet, on this

issue, Independents, Republicans, and Democrats, 9 to 1—I am rounding off slightly, but very close—9 to 1 in all three categories say they want this information on the package, and 7 out of 10 said they feel very strongly about this. So that is the desire of the American people. That is the ''We the People'' that is in our Constitution that we are pledged to support.

Here we have a bill on the floor that is designed in the dark of night while people are paying attention to Presidential primaries, the press is paying attention to that, and in the dark of night they are trying to take away that freedom. Isn't that just completely wrong?

Mr. TESTER. Well, absolutely. The Senator from Oregon hit the nail on the head. We need to defeat cloture. We need to defeat this bill. If we want to take up a labeling bill, we ought to take up the Merkley bill and pass it. That would empower consumers. It would give them freedom. It would live up to what our forefathers had in mind for this country. Instead, in my opinion, they are doing exactly the opposite.

This is a bad piece of legislation. The Senator is right. The polls do show that across the parties, we are all Americans on this one, 9 to 1. We have to listen.

If folks are having a hard time hearing what people are saying, they should just read their emails. Hear what the folks out in front of our offices are saying, because folks are talking and we need to listen. Read the editorial pages. Folks are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. They just want to know so they can make decisions.

So I hope this body will defeat this bill, put it to bed, and then we can talk about a labeling bill that makes sense for this country.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank so much my colleague from Montana for being such a clear and powerful voice on this issue of freedom, of American consumers' rights, of States' rights, and for his solid opposition to this Monsanto DARK Act—Deny Americans the Right to Know—2.0. Thank you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Arkansas.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I grew up on a cattle farm in Dardanelle, where I started helping my dad around the farm when I was just a little boy. In fact, I was kicking hay bales off the truck when I was barely bigger than those hay bales. Growing up, most people I knew had some connection to farming, and I am proud to say that in Arkansas, that is still mostly the case today.

In honor of National Agricultural Day, I wish to say a few words about Arkansas' agriculture and what it means to our State.

Agriculture is Arkansas' largest industry. It accounts for over $20 billion in value added to our State economy each year and contributes to thousands and thousands of jobs. Arkansas is a top 25 producer in 23 different agricultural commodities, and we rank first in the Nation in rice production, producing close to 50 percent of the rice in the United States.

It doesn't end there. We are also a major exporter of crops like soybeans, cotton, poultry, and feed grains. Our catfish and timber industries are booming and our cattle inventory exceeds 1.7 million head. Our agriculture industry is also expanding by the day. We have recently become a big player in the peanut industry.

For Arkansas, agriculture is more than just a business; it is a passion and a way of life. We have nearly 50,000 farms in Arkansas, and 97 percent of them are owned by families. Neighborly chats in Arkansas often tend to focus on planting seasons and beef prices. And in towns like Dardanelle, kids don't have to worry about farm chores keeping them from playing with their friends on a Saturday because those friends are likely busy helping on their farms too.

Agriculture is who we are. I have certainly taken the lessons I learned growing up on a farm with me into the Army, the Congress, and now fatherhood.

So, today, and every day, let's remember Arkansas' and America's farmers and ranchers. Happy National Agriculture Day.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor once again with a simple message for Senate Republican leaders: Do your job and let me do mine.

When President Obama sends us a nominee to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court, Republican leaders need to stop playing politics, stop pandering to the tea party, and fulfill their responsibility to their constituents, their country, and the Constitution. That is what people across the country are demanding.

But the hearing Republicans on the Judiciary Committee held this morning makes it clear they are not getting the message, because while the Republicans on that committee say they won't take up their time to do their most important actual job, they were happy to spend their time this morning on their favorite hobby—doing everything they can to turn back the clock on women's health care. While they say they won't even hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities, they were eager to hold the hearing this morning to attack women's constitutional rights.

Mr. President, I wish I were surprised by this, but, unfortunately, this is just the latest example of Republican leaders playing political games with the rights of women across the country and pandering to their extreme tea party base.

Republicans love to say they want to keep government out of people's lives, unless of course we are talking about women's health care and their choices. They love to talk about the Constitution, unless we are talking about a woman's constitutional right to make decisions about her own body or the part that lays out the Senate's responsibility when it comes to filling Supreme Court vacancies.

But people across the country are sick of the partisanship, sick of the gridlock, and sick of the games. They want Republicans to do their jobs, and they are not buying their excuses for inaction.

For the last few weeks, Republican leaders have been desperately trying to convince people that there is a precedent for their extreme obstruction in this election year. Well, first of all, their arguments have run up against the facts. They simply are not true. The Democratic Senate confirmed President Reagan's Supreme Court nominee in his last year in office. And that is just one example of many.

But in case the facts weren't enough, last week the Republicans' message facade began to crumble, and the truth began to come out. First, one Republican leader warned that any potential nominee should be aware that he or she will be treated like a pinata. Republicans say they will refuse to even meet with the nominee. But they and their special interest groups are clearly getting ready to drag him or her through the mud.

Also, speaking to his constituents back home, another Senator made it clear that Republicans' refusal to do their jobs right now is nothing more than partisan politics. He said: If this President were a Republican, it would be ''a different situation,'' and there would be ''more accommodation.''

We all knew this Republican obstruction had nothing to do with what is actually right and everything to do with the fact they do not like that President Obama is President right now, but it was nice to hear a Republican Senator actually admit that out loud.

Another Republican, the senior Senator from South Carolina, admitted last week that this kind of blind obstruction, this refusal to even meet with a Supreme Court nominee or hold hearings, is absolutely unprecedented. He said Republicans wanted to create a new rule—right now—limiting President Obama's constitutional authority and responsibility. Well, I am glad he made clear that what Republican leaders have been saying about their obstruction being based on precedent isn't true, but creating this new partisan precedent for Supreme Court nominations would be absolutely wrong too.

Republicans may not like to hear this, but the American people spoke. They elected President Obama twice, and they entrusted him with the powers and responsibilities laid out in the Constitution. Those responsibilities don't just last for 3 years. They last a full term, and people across the country are making it very clear they expect Republicans to work with the President, to meet with the nominee, to hold hearings, and to do their job.

But if Republicans are open to new election-year precedents, I have one I would like to offer for their consideration that would actually be helpful. I propose that Republicans stop using attacks on women's health care to rally their tea party base, that they stop using women's rights as an election-year political football. That would be unprecedented for sure, but it sure would be a step in the right direction, and women across this country would really appreciate it.

So when President Obama sends us a nominee, I hope Senate Republican leaders will move out of the partisan corner they are in now, will stop focusing on throwing red meat to the tea party, and will do their jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Washington for her remarks and for her passion for women's health and also for doing our job—for doing our job.

The Senator from Washington is right. The Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee have vowed not to hold a single hearing on a Supreme Court nominee when the President does his job and sends us down his nomination. They refuse to do their job. And I would say that if every American just got up in the morning one day and said: You know what, I don't feel like doing my job, they would be fired. They would be fired.

But do our Republican colleagues have time to do other things with their time? Oh yes. What are they doing right now? My colleague pointed this out. They are holding a hearing today on legislation that, if passed, would threaten the health and the lives of women.

This is about using women's health as a political football once again. It is about reopening debates we have already settled, including the debate over Roe vs. Wade itself. That case was decided in 1973. Before that, women died from back-alley abortions. Women received no respect for private personal decisions they made with their doctor, they made with their God. Oh no, they have to keep challenging Roe v. Wade.

That is what Republicans are doing today in the Judiciary Committee, after they decided, well, they just don't have time enough or will enough to hold a hearing on the President's nominee for the Supreme Court.

Now, the decision in Roe was very clear. It said that in the early stages of a pregnancy, a woman has the right to decide whether to continue her pregnancy. Later decisions confirmed that, yes, she still has that right. Roe also affirmed that later in the pregnancy, the health and the life of the mother must always be protected. Let me say that again. The health and the life of the mother must always be protected. That is the law of this land.

Now, the major problems with the bills the Judiciary Committee is hearing today is they have no respect for the health and the life of the mother and they have no respect for doctors.

The first bill, the 20-week abortion ban, is a direct violation of Roe v. Wade and a grave threat to women. And, by the way, the Senate has already rejected that bill. They are bringing it back again. No matter what Roe says—that you can't threaten the health and life of a woman—they have brought it back. That bill—that 20-week abortion ban—offers no health exception for a woman facing cancer, facing kidney failure, facing blood clots, or other tragic complications during the pregnancy. And it would throw doctors in jail for doing nothing more than helping a woman who is at risk for paralysis or infertility or who has cancer and whose life would be in danger if the pregnancy continued.

That bill—that bill they say is going to help women—harms women. It also revictimizes survivors of rape and incest by assuming they are lying—lying—and creating unconscionable barriers to care.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which represents thousands of physicians nationwide—physicians who help women with their first line of health care in many cases—said: These restrictions are ''dangerous to patients' safety and health.''

So that is the first bill they are hearing today—a bill that has already been rejected, a bill that will hurt women and their families.

The Judiciary Committee is also wasting precious time debating a second bill this morning because we already have a law that we voted for called the Born-Alive Infant Protections Act. That bill, which I supported, says that a fetus that is alive at birth has the same protections as every other human being. We voted on it, I say to my friend, in 2002.

So what they are doing over in the Judiciary Committee is rehearing a bill we already voted on, and they are rehearing a bill that passed, and then they are rehearing a bill that we voted down. This is politics, pure and simple.

Our job is to improve the health and lives of the people, not to undermine it. Our job is to act when there is a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

You know, the Republicans always quote Ronald Reagan. Some of us do as well, but he is definitely a Republican hero. Let's see what President Ronald Reagan said when there was an opening in an election year during his Presidency and he nominated Justice Kennedy. What did he say? Ronald Reagan said: ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

That is not BARBARA BOXER. That is not PATTY MURRAY. That is not President Obama. That is not Vice President BIDEN. That is not HARRY REID. That is not CHUCK SCHUMER. And I could go on. That is Ronald Reagan. So let me say it again. ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

You know what. We had a Democratic-controlled Senate, and we voted on Justice Kennedy in an election year, and we didn't give speeches and say: Well, let's wait for the American people to decide the next election. You know why we didn't say that? Because that would be laughable. Ronald Reagan got elected twice, just like Barack Obama got elected twice. He deserves respect. He needs to do his job, and we need to do our job.

So when you say you are not even going to hold a hearing on the President's nomination, you are showing disrespect for the Constitution—and let's see what the Constitution says—and disrespect to Ronald Reagan, I would argue. Look at what the Constitution says: The President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and Judges of the supreme Court.''

My friends are saying that the Constitution should be obeyed, that they are strict constructionists. Where are these people? They are hiding in the

corner not doing their job. Look at what it says: The President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.'' It doesn't say: P.S., unless you don't like who is President. It doesn't say that.

So I say to everyone on the other side of the aisle who says they are strict constructionists—and most of them do—read the Constitution and read what Ronald Reagan said.

The American people have three words for Republicans: Do your job. Stop disrespecting the Constitution. Stop disrespecting our President and stop threatening to create a manmade crisis at the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has to do its job. This isn't some ideological discussion in a salon somewhere, because every day the Court considers cases with profound impacts for the American people—like whether States can have voter identification laws that put an unfair burden on voters or whether the American people have the right to organize and fight for fair pay. I could go on, because almost every issue that American families face eventually winds its way to the Court. So regardless of your political position or your personal position on any individual case, we have to fill the vacancy because Americans deserve a full functioning Supreme Court.

In closing, I want to quote Sandra Day O'Connor. Now, here is a woman—the first woman on the Supreme Court, appointed by Ronald Reagan—who made history. She says this to us in the clearest of terms: ''I think we need somebody there now to do the job, and let's get on with it.'' So if you don't want to listen to the Constitution, and you don't want to listen to Ronald Reagan, how about giving some respect to a woman who made history and understands how the Court functions. We have to get on with it.

Every one of us has to do our job. The Judiciary Committee should stop holding hearings to hurt women, and they should instead go down to the White House and advise and consent with the President on this nomination. They should stop playing politics. We should all come together. We see such division in the country. It is making a lot of our people afraid because there is no respect. How about we start off with respecting the Constitution and working together to fill this vacancy and showing the public that we can come together to have a fully functioning Supreme Court. The American people deserve nothing else.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak on two topics. The first is the piece of legislation that I introduced last year, along with the senior Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, right after the anniversary of the September 11 attacks. This bill is entitled the ''Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act,'' or JASTA for short. It makes minor adjustments to our laws that would clarify the ability of Americans attacked on U.S. soil to get justice from those who have sponsored that terrorist attack.

The Senate Judiciary Committee considered this bill last month and reported it to the floor without any objection, so now it is my hope that we can soon take up this legislation because this is important to the victims of the 9/11 attacks. Actually, that is an understatement. This bill, if signed into law, will hopefully help victims and their families achieve the closure that they so terribly need from this horrific tragedy. But this legislation is more than that. As our Nation confronts new and expanding terror networks that are targeting our citizens, stopping the funding source for terrorists grows even more important. So I hope Senators can work together to get this critical bipartisan bill done soon.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on another note, I come to the floor to make a few remarks about the Supreme Court vacancy left by the death of Justice Scalia.

It is pretty clear that our colleagues across the aisle do not believe that the American people deserve a voice in the process by which the successor to Justice Scalia is selected. We have made our position pretty clear that there will not be a new Justice confirmed until the American people, in the elections that come up in November, make their preferences known about who will make that appointment.

Instead of following the rule book of the minority leader, the senior Senator from New York, and our current Vice President—the ones that they advocated for under a Republican administration—our Democratic friends now argue that a lameduck President should be able to nominate someone to a lifetime appointment to our Nation's highest Court, which will upset the ideological balance on that Court for a generation. As I have mentioned before, the last time a Supreme Court nominee was nominated and confirmed during an election year was 1932, and we have to go back much earlier, to 1888, to find a similar situation in divided government, which we have now.

When Vice President BIDEN was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he made perfectly clear that a Supreme Court nominee should not be considered until after a Presidential election has concluded. As we all know, both Democrats and Republicans are well down the road to making their selection for their nominee for President, and obviously we will have that election in the coming November. But our friends across the aisle continue to contradict themselves and their previous statements, insisting that this decision is somehow unprecedented. Well, we know it is not, because if the shoe were on the other foot, they have made clear what they would do.

I thought I might share with my friends across the aisle what so many of my constituents in Texas have told me about our decision to let them have a voice in the selection of the next lifetime appointment to the Court.

Killeen, TX, is the home of Fort Hood, one of the largest military installations in the world. Last Friday, the town decorated a memorial to honor those who lost their lives in the terrorist attack of 2009, when MAJ Nidal Hasan went on his violent rampage. But John from Killeen wrote:

> President Obama is free to make any nomination he wants under the Constitution. The Senate, under the same Constitution, has no obligation to hold hearings on or confirm that nomination. The Judiciary Committee's decision to observe the so-called Biden Rule is absolutely correct. The replacement for Justice Scalia should be nominated by the next president.

I agree with the letter writer, and the minority leader agreed with him in 2005 as well. That is basically what Senator REID said in 2005 during the Bush 43 administration. While the President could nominate anybody he wanted, the Senate was not obligated under the Constitution to vote on that nominee.

At the end of the letter, John asked me to ''hold the line'' on this decision. He, like many Americans, is passionate about having a say in the selection of the next Supreme Court nominee. I intend to do everything I can to make sure they do have that voice.

Another constituent from Plano—just north of Dallas—was emphatic that the Senate should ''Give We The People a say.'' I couldn't agree with him more.

The American people made clear they wanted a check on the Obama administration in November of 2014 when they put Republicans in the majority of the Senate. Now we have an obligation to use that mandate from the people for issues that matter most to our country, and that includes the direction of the Supreme Court.

My constituents are right to care deeply about this because there is so much at stake. As I said, the next Supreme Court Justice could well change

the balance of the Supreme Court for a generation and fundamentally reshape American society in the process. So the people should have a chance for input and should have a voice. I am proud to stand alongside my Republican colleagues and make sure their voice is heard in the next selection of a lifetime appointment to the Court.

RECESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess, as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:18 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill with McConnell (for Roberts) amendment No. 3450 (to the House amendment to the bill), in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell motion to refer the bill to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I suspect a quorum call has been initiated. If so, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is not in a quorum call.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, today is National Agriculture Day, and I wish to thank the farmers and ranchers of America. The Senate is considering legislation on an issue that is critically important to our Nation's food supply. It affects everyone from our producers in the fields to our consumers in the aisles of grocery stores. Without Senate action, this country will be hit with a wrecking ball—an apt description—that will disrupt the entire food chain. We need to act now to pass my amendment to S. 764. This is a compromised approach that provides a permanent solution to the patchwork of biotechnology labeling laws that will soon be wreaking havoc on the flow of interstate commerce, agriculture, and food products in our Nation's marketplace, and that is exactly what this is about. Let me repeat that. This is about the marketplace. It is not about safety. It is not about health or nutrition. It is about marketing. Science has proven again and again and again that the use of agriculture biotechnology is 100 percent safe.

In fact, last year the Agriculture Committee heard from three Federal agencies tasked with regulating agriculture biotechnology: the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the Environmental Protection Agency—yes, the EPA—and the Food and Drug Administration, the FDA. Their work is based on sound science and is the gold standard for policymaking, including this policy we are debating today—one of the most important food and agriculture decisions in recent decades.

At our hearing, the Federal Government expert witnesses highlighted the steps their agencies have already taken to ensure that agriculture biotechnology is safe—safe to other plants, safe to the environment, and safe to our food supply. It was clear our regulatory system ensures biotechnology crops are among the most tested in the history of agriculture in any country. At the conclusion of the hearing, virtually all Senate Agriculture Committee members were in agreement. What happened? When did sound science go out the window? Since that hearing, the U.S. Government reinforced their decisions on the safety of these products.

In November, the FDA took several steps based on sound science regarding food produced from biotech plants, including issuing final guidance for manufacturers that wish to voluntarily label their products as containing ingredients from biotech or exclusively nonbiotech plants.

More important, the Food and Drug Administration denied a petition that would have required the mandatory labeling of biotech foods. The FDA stated that the petitioner failed to provide the evidence needed for the agency to put such a requirement in place because there is no health safety or nutritional difference between biotech crops and their nonbiotech varieties, regardless of some of the rhetoric we have heard on the floor of the Senate.

Thus, it is clear that what we are facing today is not a safety or health issue, despite claims by my colleagues on the Senate floor; it is a market issue. This is about a conversation about a few States dictating to every other State the way food moves from farmers to consumers in the value chain. We have a responsibility to ensure that the national market can work for everyone, including farmers, manufacturers, retailers, and, yes, consumers.

This patchwork approach of mandates adds costs to national food prices. In fact, requiring changes in the production or labeling of most of the Nation's food supply for a single State would impact citizens in our home States. A recent study estimates that the cost to consumers could total as much as—get this—$82 billion annually, which comes to approximately $1,050 per hard-working American family. This Vermont law, which is supposed to go into effect in July, will cost each hard-working family $1,050. Let me repeat that. If we fail to act, the cost to consumers could total as much as $82 billion annually and will cost each hard-working American family just over $1,000. Now is not the time for Congress to make food more expensive for anybody—not the consumer or the farmer.

Today's farmers are being asked to produce more safe and affordable food to meet the growing demands at home and around a troubled and very hungry world. At the same time, they are facing increased challenges to production, including limited land and water resources, uncertain weather patterns, and pest and disease issues. Agriculture biotechnology has become a valuable tool in ensuring the success of the American farmer and meeting the challenge of increasing their yields in a more efficient, safe, and responsible manner. Any threat to the technology hurts the entire value chain—from the farmer to the consumer and all those who are involved.

I also hear—and I do understand the concern from some of my colleagues about consumers and available information about our food. Some consumers want to know more about ingredients. This is a good thing. Consumers should take an interest in their food, where it comes from, and the farmers and ranchers who also produce their food. I can assure you the most effective tool consumers have to influence our food system or to know more about food is by voting with their pocketbooks in the grocery stores and supermarkets. This legislation puts forward policies that will help all consumers not only find information but also demand consistent information from food manufacturers. However, it is important, as with any Federal legislation on this topic, for Congress to consider scientific fact and unintended consequences.

The committee-passed bill created a voluntary national standard for biotechnology labeling claims of food. I have heard concerns that a voluntary-only standard would not provide consumers with enough information, even though there is no health, safety, or nutritional concern with this biotechnology. So we worked out a compromise to address these concerns by

providing an incentive for the marketplace to provide more information.

This legislation will allow the markets to work. However, if they do not live up to their commitments and information is not made available to consumers, then this legislation holds the market accountable. Under this proposal, a mandatory labeling program would go into effect only if a voluntary program does not provide significant information after several years. The marketplace would then have adequate time to adjust and utilize a variety of options—a menu of options—to disclose information about ingredients, along with a wealth of other information about the food on the shelves.

Simply put, the legislation before us provides an immediate comprehensive solution to the unworkable State-by-State patchwork of labeling laws. Preemption doesn't extend to State consumer protection laws or anything beyond the wrecking ball that we see related to biotechnology labeling mandates, and we do ensure that the solution to the State patchwork, the one thing we all agree upon, is effective. It sets national uniformity that allows for the free flow of interstate commerce, a power granted to Congress in the U.S. Constitution. This labeling uniformity is based on science and allows the value chain from farmer to processor, to shipper, to retailer, to consumer to continue as the free market intended. This ensures uniformity in claims made by manufacturers and will enhance clarity for our consumers.

Increasingly, many Americans have taken an interest in where their food comes from and how it is made. Let's keep in mind this is a good thing. We want consumers informed about food and farming practices, but at the same time we must also not demonize food with unnecessary labels.

This debate is about more than catchy slogans and made-up names for bills. It is about the role of the Federal Government to ensure the free flow of commerce, to make decisions based upon sound science, all the while providing opportunity for the market to meet the demands of consumers.

This is not the first time this body has addressed this issue. In 2012 and 2013, Members of the Senate soundly rejected the idea of mandatory labeling for biotechnology. That is right. Both times more than 70 Members voted to reject mandatory labeling. This body then stood up for sound science and common sense, and I trust my colleagues will continue to stand up and defend sound science again.

Time is of the essence for not only agriculture in the food value chain but also consumers who work together, face the wrecking ball of this patchwork of State-by-State mandates. This legislation has the support of more than 650 organizations. We never had 650 organizations contact the Agriculture Committee about any other bill, any other piece of legislation—more than 650. My staff now tells me that number is over 700, large and small, representing the entire food chain, and that number continues to grow every day. That is quite a coalition. They are here in Washington trying to say: Look, this is not going to work with regard to State-by-State regulation.

As I have said, never before in the Agriculture Committee have we seen such a coalition of constituents all united behind such effort. Their message is clear: It is time for us to act. It is time for us to provide certainty in the marketplace.

I appreciate the bipartisan support of those on the committee who joined me to vote out our committee bill. The vote was 14 to 6. We made significant changes to address the concerns of others. Now we must carry this across the finish line. I urge my colleagues to support this compromising approach and protect the safest, most abundant, and affordable food supply in the world.

I yield the floor.

Upon close inspection, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a very important issue for the American people—what they feed their families. Here is a photo of a dad—a pretty typical photo of a dad taking his two kids shopping. You can see he has one toddler there and he has one infant in the cart. How well I remember doing this with my own kids and then watching my kids with their kids. It is kind of a tradition.

So we have a couple of questions we have to ask ourselves when we look at a photo like this. If this dad wants to know what ingredients are in the food that he gives his kids, he should have a right to know that. That is my deep belief. He has a right to know that, just as they do in so many countries all over the world.

The bill that is going to come before us, called the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, is anything but that. I would call it the ''no label'' act. It is a ''no label.'' There is no label required. It is a totally voluntary system. It is a ''no label'' label. Even if in 3 years Senator ROBERTS' mandatory labeling kicked in, you still would not have a true label. I think it is an embarrassment. I think it is an insult to consumers, and it is a sham. The goal of the bill—and I hope we vote it down—is to hide the information from consumers. It is going to make it harder, not easier, for consumers to know if they are feeding their families genetically modified organisms, or GMOs.

So here again is our typical dad, and he has his kids in the cart. They are shopping, they have had their outing, and he picks up a product. He wants to see the ingredients, including whether it has been genetically modified. Guess what. There is no GMO label.

So what are his options? Well, in 3 years, maybe he will have an option. But before then, the voluntary program is going to make it literally impossible for him to know what is in his food. It is either going to be a QR code—so he will have to have a smartphone, and even when he puts the smartphone up against the code, they don't really have to tell you easily whether it is GMO, and it is going to have a whole bunch of other information—or he is going to have to call a 1–800 number.

Can you believe this? The man is going through the grocery store. He has 50 products in his cart. He is saying: Wait a minute, kids—just a minute. Here, have some chips. Then he calls 1–800 and he tries to find out, and he gets probably some person answering him in India, which is usually what you get, and you go around the mulberry bush. How embarrassing is this?

Now, if he is lucky, he gets some products from companies that really are being fair about this, such as Campbell Soup Company. They are doing a really smart, voluntary label. It says: ''Partially produced with genetic engineering. For information visit . . .'' and they have a site. Campbell's, if he is lucky, has enough products in here that have a label. He may find out more information, but it is totally voluntary. It is totally voluntary. I want to say thank you to Campbell's for being upfront and putting the information right on the label.

As a mom and as a grandma, I want to know what is in my food. Because of work we have done before, you do have to list how much sugar is in the product, which is so critical as we combat diabetes and other things. Sometimes you read that sugar content, and you think: Oh my God, I am going to get something else. And you can see how many carbs, how much fat. Why can't you find out if the product is genetically modified? Seems to me, this is fair.

So while I call the Roberts proposal the ''no-label label,'' because it makes believe you are going to have a label, but there is no label—the groups, the consumer groups call it the DARK Act, because the label is voluntary. There is not going to be a label, at least for 3 years after that, if not longer. They will figure out another way to put it off indefinitely. Even if, after 3 years USDA decides they have to make something mandatory, information will be

hidden behind Web sites or phone numbers or these QR codes that are so problematic.

So this busy dad that we have here, he is going to have to stop shopping for every item on his list. He would have to pull out his phone to make a call or go to a Web site or scan a code. You don't have to live too long to know this is not going to happen. This dad is not going to do that because he has two kids. By now they are screaming: Get me out of here; I am hungry, and where is mommy? So as to all of this notion that this dad is now going to deal with all of this—I don't care how much of a super dad you are, you are not going to make 50 phone calls to 1–800 numbers. You are not going to go look at 50 QR codes and find out whether the product has GMO. You are just not going to do it. It is not going to happen. The kids are going to be melting down. Even if he doesn't have kids with him, he has other things to do, by the way, like live his life outside the supermarket. He is going to want to get back home or get back to work. It makes no sense at all.

By the way, this dad—and I ask Senator REID to take a look at this picture, if it doesn't remind him of one of his kids taking his grandkids shopping—is going to be expected—if he has 50 products and he wants to find out—either to have a smartphone and to put it up against the code and then find a whole bunch of information—

Mr. REID. Or call the 1–800 number.

Mrs. BOXER. Or he could call the 1–800 number, and we know what happens then. He will be transferred around the world.

So Americans should not have to run through hoops. Life is difficult enough already not to have to do that. This thing is a sham. It is an insult. It is a joke.

Why are they doing it on the other side of the aisle? Because they are beholden to the special interests that don't want to label GMOs, that are afraid if people know the food is genetically modified, they won't buy it, even though there is no proof of that at all.

Mr. President, 64 countries require labels. Some 64 countries today require simple labels, and many of our products are sold in those 64 countries. Let me tell you some of these countries.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of the 64 countries that require GMO labeling.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COUNTRIES WITH GMO LABELS

1. Australia, 2. Austria, 3. Belarus, 4. Belgium, 5. Bolivia, 6. Bosnia and Herzegovina, 7. Brazil, 8. Bulgaria, 9. Cameroon, 10. China, 11. Croatia, 12. Cyprus, 13. Czech Republic, 14. Denmark, 15. Ecuador, 16. El Salvador, 17. Estonia, 18. Ethiopia, 19. Finland, 20. France; 21. Germany, 22. Greece, 23. Hungary, 24. Iceland, 25. India, 26. Indonesia, 27. Ireland, 28. Italy, 29. Japan, 30. Jordan, 31. Kazakhstan, 32. Kenya, 33. Latvia, 34. Lithuania, 35. Luxembourg, 36. Malaysia, 37. Mali, 38. Malta, 39. Mauritius, 40. Netherlands;

41. New Zealand, 42. Norway, 43. Peru, 44. Poland, 45. Portugal, 46. Romania, 47. Russia, 48. Saudi Arabia, 49. Senegal, 50. Slovakia, 51. Slovenia, 52. South Africa, 53. South Korea, 54. Spain, 55. Sri Lanka, 56. Sweden, 57. Switzerland, 58. Taiwan, 59. Thailand, 60. Tunisia, 61. Turkey, 62. Ukraine, 63. United Kingdom, and 64. Vietnam.

Mrs. BOXER. I am going to name some of these countries that require the labels. So in other words, our companies have to put the label on if they want to sell there, letting people know if their food is genetically modified: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Mali, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Vietnam. I left some out, but they will be in the RECORD if anyone wants to see them.

Why is it that consumers in Russia have more information than our consumers do—the greatest country in the world? This makes no sense at all. Why is it that our companies are up in arms, since they have to put the label on in these other countries? They could put the label on here.

Now, if we care at all about what the public thinks, we should vote no on the Roberts bill. Some 90 percent of Americans want to know if the food they buy has been genetically engineered—90 percent. That is a majority of Republicans. That is a majority of Democrats. That is a majority of Independents. I think the other 10 percent are working for the big food companies, which don't seem to want to share this. Millions of Americans have filed comments with the FDA urging the agency to label genetically engineered food so they can have this information at their fingertips.

The bill also preempts any State in the Union from doing a label. Now, I don't like the notion of every State doing a label. That is why I support my bill—which has about 14 sponsors and simply says to the FDA to write a label and make this the law—or the Merkley bill, which comes up with four labels. Senator MERKLEY will talk about this. We say that would, in fact, be enough so that States wouldn't be able to act.

Meanwhile, this says no State action, and we are going to keep the status quo for at least 3 years—no labeling. Even after those 3 years, there may be no labeling at all. It is going to be barcodes, which are confusing, and 1–800 numbers, which probably take you to India to try and figure your way through it all.

Now, I have long believed in the power to give consumers information. I think you are all familiar with the dolphin-safe tuna labeling law. I am proud to say that I wrote that law. That law has been in effect since the 1990s, and people like it. But guess what. They see a smiling dolphin on the tuna can, and they know that tuna was caught in a way that does not harm the dolphins. We found out so many years ago that the tuna schools swim under the dolphins, and the tuna companies were purse seining on dolphins. They were putting nets over the dolphins, pulling them away and then catching the tuna, and the dolphins would die by the tens of thousands. So the schoolkids in those years said—at that time I was a House Member: Congresswoman BOXER, we don't want to have tuna that resulted in the death of all these dolphins. So we created the label, and the tuna companies were very helpful, just like Campbell Soup Company has been very helpful in labeling their products. When you have the companies come forward, it is very helpful. So we passed the bill. Everybody said: Oh, this is going to be terrible; no one will buy tuna. Actually, people started buying the tuna because they changed the way they fish for the tuna. The dolphins weren't harmed. We have saved literally hundreds of thousands of dolphins over the period of time that label has been in effect.

Now, as to this label, all we are saying is to let us know. Let us know. What we do know is that many of these genetically engineered products, as they are growing in the ground, require huge amounts of pesticides. Senator HEINRICH talked about that. That is one issue which has grown in importance to parents because they don't want to give their kids food that is covered in pesticides if they have an option.

So the power we give the consumers is critical—the power to simply know the truth. And, to me, knowledge is power. To me, it is respect. You tell people the truth; you don't give them a sham bill and say: Well, we won't require anything for 3 years, but then we may have a barcode, and then we may have a 1–800 number. No. It is pretty simple: Require a label. Require a label. A label is simple. A label works.

I see Senator MERKLEY on the floor, and I am finishing up. We have various ways we can do the label. One way is to give it to the FDA and tell them to come up with it, and another way is the way Senator MERKLEY has proceeded in a way to attract more support. He has given four options, all of which are very good and all of which would immediately give consumers the information they need.

In 2000, when I introduced the first Senate bill concerning the labeling of

GE foods, my legislation had one supporter, and it was me. I had no other supporters back then. It was so long ago. It was in 2000. Now 14 Senators are cosponsoring the bill. I am so proud to cosponsor Senator MERKLEY's bill, the Biotechnology Food Labeling and Uniformity Act, which, again, will put forward four options for companies.

There are reasons people want this information, and not one of us here should decry what our people want, even if they want to know if the foods contain GMOs because of the prevalence of herbicide-resistant crops. We know from the USGS that growers sprayed 280 million pounds of Roundup in 2012—a pound of herbicide for every person in the country. That is what they spray on these foods that contain GMOs. Whatever the reason, Americans deserve to know what is in the food they are eating. Some want to know it just to have the information.

Some in the food and chemical industry say that adding this very small piece of information would confuse or alarm consumers. This is an old and familiar argument raised by virtually every industry when they want to avoid giving consumers basic facts. In fact, a 2014 study from the Journal of Food Policy shows there is little evidence that mandatory labeling of GE foods signals consumers to avoid the product. There is no proof of that.

The FDA requires the labeling of more than 3,000 ingredients, additives, and processes. Orange juice from concentrate must be labeled. Consumers should be able to choose the product they prefer. If they like it from concentrate, fine. If they prefer it in a different fashion, fine. There is no reason they can't also have the knowledge that the food they are buying is genetically engineered.

The world certainly has moved ahead of us. The Roberts bill would take us way back into the dark, and that is why consumer groups call it the DARK Act. It is a sham. It is an embarrassment. It is time for us to shelve the DARK Act, to listen to 90 percent of the American people. For God's sake, if we do nothing else, we ought to listen to 90 percent of the American people, and we ought to pass a real bill to help Americans make informed choices about the foods they eat.

Again, I wish to thank Senator MERKLEY for really delving into this issue and coming up with another alternative that will be very acceptable not only to me but to, I believe, the 90 percent of the people who are crying out for this information.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, this debate on the Monsanto DARK Act, which stands for Denying Americans the Right to Know, centers around two basic propositions. The first proposition is that it would be chaotic to have 50 States with 50 different labeling standards. How could a food company possibly always get the right label to the right store if there are 50 different State standards? This is not a problem we actually have yet because we have no States that have adopted a standard for GE labeling. We have one State—I should say no States have implemented it. One State has adopted a standard, and that won't be implemented until July. So we are far away from having any issue over conflicting standards. But I acknowledge the basic point. This makes sense. It makes sense that we don't want to have a world in which every State has a different approach: In this State you do X, Y, and Z, and in this State you do A, B, and C, and what the exemptions are differ, and the formats differ, and so on and so forth. So let's just concede that at this point, it makes sense to have a single standard for the country. But a single standard about what?

That brings us to the second basic proposition, which is that there be a consumer-friendly alert that there are GE ingredients in a product. That is all. If a State says they want to have a simple, consumer-friendly alert that there are GE ingredients, then they should be able to do that.

If we don't want 50 standards, then we need to have the replacement be a national standard that provides the same thing, that is a consumer-friendly alert that there are GE ingredients. Then the individual can do more investigation. They can go to the company's Web site and find out the details, including what type of genetic engineering it is, what is its impact, and so on and so forth.

Right now there is a coalition of individuals in this Chamber who don't believe in Americans' right to know. They want to take it away. They want to support a bill, which is currently on the floor right now, that denies Americans the right to know because they are getting pressure from Monsanto and friends, and they are not willing to stand up for the American citizen, their constituents. They don't believe in a ''we the people'' America; they believe in ''we the titans,'' that we are here simply on the end of a puppet string. But we are not here for that purpose. That is not the vision of our Constitution. The vision of our Constitution is that we are an ''of the people, for the people, and by the people'' world. That is what makes America beautiful, not that a few powerful groups can control what happens here in this Chamber, this honored and revered Chamber where it is our responsibility to hold up our ''we the people'' vision of the Constitution.

So this bill, this Monsanto Deny Americans the Right to Know Act 2.0, has a few shams and scams placed in it to pretend that it is a labeling law.

The first scam that it has in it—or sham—is an 800 number. I as a consumer can go to a grocery shelf and in 5 seconds I can check three products for an ingredient by looking at the label; 1 second, 2 seconds, 3 seconds—well, less than 5 seconds. In 3 seconds I can check and see whatever I want to find out. If I want to check the calorie count or check for vitamin A or what percentage of the daily recommended amount is in the food or if I want to see if it contains peanuts because I am allergic to peanuts, I can do it for three products in 3 seconds. That is consumer-friendly. That is why we put it on the label. That is why we say: Oh gosh, we are going to give people the information they want so they can exercise their freedom when they buy things to support what they want. That is integrity between the producer and the consumer.

But do we know what the opposite of integrity is? That is the DARK Act. Deny Americans the right to know and ban States from providing this basic information. It is the complete absence of responsibility to the citizen.

Well, there is a 1–800 number. How would that work? First of all, I have to find the 800 number. Then I have to make sure I have a phone with me. Then I have to make sure I have good cell phone coverage. Then I have to go to a phone tree. You know how these work. You go to the phone tree, you listen to eight options, you pick the option, it takes you to another list, you pick another option, and then finally, after about five levels, they connect you. They say: If you want an operator, press this, and you press it and you go to some call center in the Philippines. They don't know what you are talking about. This is not consumer-friendly.

Looking at the ingredient list takes 1 second. It is 10 minutes or more when you call that 800 number, and maybe you get a message: I am sorry, we have a large call volume right now, and we will be able to answer your call in 20 minutes. That is not consumer information; that is a scam and a sham.

That is not the only one that is in this DARK bill. The second sham is this idea of a quick response code, like this one in the picture, this square code. Again, as a consumer you can't look at the ingredients and see the answer, if there are GE ingredients, no. Now you have to have not just a phone but a smartphone. You have to hope it has a battery, that it has a photo appliance with it. You have to take a picture of that code, and then that code takes you to some Web site written by the very producer who gives you the answer, maybe, or maybe they lay out a whole architecture of stuff that obfuscates it, confuses you, and you don't really get the answer, when all you needed was a little tiny symbol on the package that indicated whether it had

GE ingredients. So, again, how long does that take? Ten minutes per product? Thirty minutes for the first item on your shopping list as you compare three products? That is not consumer-friendly—3 seconds versus 30 minutes—and that is just the first item on your shopping list. There is not one person in this Chamber who truly believes this is a fair substitute for consumer-friendly information. This is a sham and scam No. 2.

If this QR code had a message on it and this message right here written on the back said ''There are GE ingredients, and for details, scan this code,'' that is consumer-friendly. That is all the consumer wants to know. That is all we are asking for—a consumer-friendly alert. Then that QR code for more information is fine. That is perfectly fine. But without it, nobody even knows why it is there. What is it there for? Is this where you find out information about the company? Is this where you find out information about the new products they are going to be putting out? Is this where you find information about special sales that are going on? Nobody has any idea.

Well, the DARK bill doesn't stop with sham No. 1 and sham No. 2. No, it gives us even more fake labeling because we see it says that a form of labeling is to have no label but to put the information on your Web site. Well, to call that a label is simply a misrepresentation—and ''misrepresentation'' is a fancy word for ''lie''—because there is not any information that even appears on the product. None.

So we say: Well, I was told there would be an 800 number. I am not finding it. I was told there might be a box, and I think it is for finding out if there are GE ingredients. But I don't find that computer code box, no, because they have adopted door No. 3, and door No. 3 is to put something on some form of social media. But what social media? Are you supposed to go to Instagram or Facebook or Twitter? Nobody has any idea.

So now there is nothing—let me repeat: nothing—on the product. So what could be learned in 1 second by a consumer, now the consumer has fully no idea. And because this whole thing is voluntary, lots of products may just choose to put nothing up.

The proponents of the DARK Act say: No, we have a pathway to more information. If companies don't put up information in the form of a barcode or a phone number or something on a social media Web site, well then we will require something in one of those three areas. That requirement down the road still provides no consumer-friendly information. It is a pathway through a hall of mirrors that leads to a hall of mirrors. It never leads to concrete, simple information.

Don't you know that if you told consumers they would have to go to a Web site to find out if there is vitamin D in the product, that would be ridiculous? It should just be printed on the package.

Don't you know if someone were interested in high fructose corn syrup and they were told they had to dial a call center in the Philippines to find out that information, consumers would say that is absurd? We all know that is the case.

Ninety percent of Americans strongly believe—or believe when given the choice—that there should be this information directly on the label. I am rounding up from 89 percent. Let's round it off. When questioned as to whether there should be information on the label to say whether there are genetically engineered ingredients, 9 out of 10 Americans say yes, there should be, and 70 percent say they feel very strongly about this. So here are our constituents, and 9 to 1, they want us to provide information. But up here on Capitol Hill we have Senator after Senator who does not care what their constituents think. They care only what big Monsanto and friends want, which is to deny Americans the right to know. That is irresponsible. That is wrong.

When we look at this number, you can see by how high it is that this is not partisan because it would be impossible to have a big difference—100 percent of one party and 80 percent of another might round off to 90 percent. But that is not the way it is. Whether you are an Independent, Democrat, or Republican, in all 3 groups, 9 out of 10 individuals, plus or minus a few percentage points, say they want this information on the package.

So here we are with this vast difference in ideologies being displayed by the Presidential debate, from the tea party right to the far left and everything in between. There is disagreement on all kinds of things, but on this, all the citizens agree—the right, left, middle, far left, far right—because it is a fundamental freedom in America to use your dollars based on basic, accurate information. That is a basic freedom that a bunch of Senators on this floor want to take away. It is just wrong to take away the States' rights to answer that request, that need, that desire for information on GE ingredients and not to replace it with a national standard. That is just wrong.

There are folks who say: Wait, I want to be on the side of science, and I don't think there is any kind of scientific information that there is any kind of disadvantage to GE products. Well, that is fundamentally wrong. If you think there are no disadvantages, it is because you don't want to know.

There are benefits, and there are disadvantages. For example, recognize that this tool can be used in ways that produce some good results and some not so good results. That is why it is up to the consumer to decide how they want to use their dollars.

On the good side, we can talk about golden rice. There are parts of the world that primarily eat rice. If they have a vitamin A deficiency, there is rice that can be grown that has been genetically modified to supply more vitamin A and makes for a healthier community. That is a positive.

For example, sweet potatoes grown in South Africa are vulnerable to certain viruses, but they have been genetically modified to resist those viruses so there is more substantive food available to the community. As far as we know, there are no particular side effects, so that is a positive.

There are some interesting ideas that occur about edible vaccine technology. This is an alternative to traditional vaccines, and they are working to have transgenic plants used for the production of vaccines that stimulate the human body's natural immune response. Wouldn't that be amazing if we could essentially inoculate against major diseases in the world through some type of GE, as long as there weren't side effects? Who knows, that may end up being a major benefit.

Just as there are scientifically documented positives, there are scientifically documented negatives. For example, let's talk about our waterways. I put up a chart which shows that since the presentation or production of herbicide-resistant crops, the amount of herbicides put on crops in America has soared. We have gone from 7.4 million pounds in 1994 to 160 million pounds by 2012. It has gone up since. All of that glyphosate is basically being sprayed multiple times a year. It gets into the air, it gets into the plants, it gets into the runoff from the fields, and it goes into our waterways. It has an impact because it is a plant killer. That is what an herbicide is. It kills plants. If you put millions of pounds of herbicide into our rivers, it does a lot of damage.

I will not go through all the studies that have noted this damage. Let me just explain that when you kill things at the base of the food chain, you change the entire food chain. This is true for micro-organisms in sea water, which we refer to as marine systems, and it is very true in micro-organisms in freshwater systems.

Micro-organisms form the basis of food chains and provide ecological services. There are a bunch of studies that show the impact of all this plant-killing herbicide running into our rivers. It affects the soil too. Quite frankly, it even creates some potential for an impact on human health.

Let me explain. Two-thirds of the air and rainfall samples tested in Mississippi and Iowa in 2007 and 2008 contain glyphosate. Those are rain samples and air samples, two-thirds of which contained this herbicide. Well, what we know is that not only do humans absorb some therefrom, but they

also absorb some because of residuals in the food. A study published in the Journal of Environmental & Analytical Toxicology found that humans who consumed glyphosate-treated GMO foods have relatively high levels of glyphosate in their urine because it is in their bodies. We also know that glyphosate has been classified as a probable human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organization.

Here we have a probable carcinogen present in such vast quantities—present in the rain, present in the air, present in the residuals on the food. That is a legitimate concern to citizens. Does that mean that it is causing rampant outbreaks of cancer? No, I am not saying that. I am just saying there is a legitimate foundation for individual citizens to say: I am concerned about the runoff into our streams. I am concerned about the heavy application and its impact on local plants and animals. I am concerned about the possibility of absorption of anything that might contribute to cancer. That is the citizens' freedom to have those opinions.

This is not a situation where Members of this body should say: We are smarter than they are, and we don't care that they have scientific concerns because, quite frankly, we want to suppress that information. We don't want to give them a choice. We don't want to let them know. It is just wrong. It is wrong to take away States' rights to provide such basic information and not have a consumer-friendly version at a national level. I will absolutely support a 50-State standard so there is no confusion and no cost of overlapping standards or difficulties in what food goes from what warehouse to what grocery store—absolutely support that—but don't strip States from doing something 9 out of 10 Americans care about and then proceed to bury that and not provide that information in the U.S. Senate.

I encourage my colleagues: Simply say no to this Monsanto Deny Americans the Right to Know Act, the DARK Act. Simply say no. Stand up. Have some respect for this institution.

This is a bill that never went through committee. Not a single phrase of this bill went to committee. This is a new creation put on the floor without juris, without consideration on committee, and no open amendment process. How many colleagues across the aisle cried foul over the past years when Democrats were in charge and didn't allow an amendment process? They insisted they would never vote for cloture unless there was a full amendment process that honored the ideas presented by different Senators. But there is no open amendment process here. So there we are—a bad process, mega influence by Monsanto and friends oppressing and stripping the freedom of American citizens. Let's not let that happen.

I have a host of letters I was planning to read, but I see my colleague from Ohio is wanting to speak to this issue, and in fairness to all sides of this debate or ideas that he might want to present, I am going to stop here. If there is an opening later, I would like to return to the floor because of the calls and letters overwhelmingly from citizens stating they resent the Senators in this body trying to strip them of their right to know.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Oregon, and I am sure he will be back on the floor again to talk about this issue.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. President, I want to address a couple of other issues quickly. One is the last act that this Senate took last week, which was passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I didn't have a chance to speak on it because the Senate adjourned at that point, but I just want to congratulate my colleagues for coming together as Republicans and Democrats. It was a vote of 94 to 1. That never happens around this place. It is because people understand the significance of the challenge of heroin and prescription drug abuse and addiction back in our States and wanted to stand up and put forward Federal legislation that would help make the Federal Government a better partner with State and local governments and nonprofits that are out there in the trenches doing their best, with law enforcement who are trying their darnedest, and others in the emergency medical response community who are trying to deal with this issue.

While traveling the State of Ohio the last 3 days, this Senator heard about it constantly. Before I would give a speech, people would come up and say thank you for dealing with this issue because my daughter, my cousin, or my friend is affected. Today, I was with a group of young people talking about other issues, and one said that his cousin at 23 years old had just succumbed to an overdose—died from an overdose of heroin.

This a problem in all of our States. It is a problem where we can help make a difference. I want to congratulate my colleagues, Senator WHITEHOUSE and others, for working with me to put this bill forward. We worked on it over 3 years in a comprehensive way, using the best expertise from around the country.

Now I am urging my colleagues in the House of Representatives to follow suit. Let's pass this legislation. Let's send it to the President's desk for his signature. Let's get this bill working to be able to help our constituents all over this country to better deal with a very real epidemic in our communities.

Now the No. 1 cause of death in my State is overdoses—from these deaths that are occurring from overdoses of heroin and prescription drugs. Again, I congratulate the Senate for acting on that on a bipartisan basis and having thoughtful legislation that is going to make a difference.

READ ALOUD MONTH

Mr. President, I also rise today to speak about something that also affects our young people, which is literacy and learning. This happens to be Read Aloud Month. This U.S. Senate has established the month of March as being the month that we hold up those who read aloud to their kids, because we found it is incredibly important for a child's development—particularly for the ability of a child to become adept at other subjects at school by just being read to and the literacy that results from that.

There is a campaign called the Read Aloud campaign. I congratulate them for the good work they do around the country. They started in my hometown of Cincinnati, OH, so I am very proud of them, but now it is a national effort. In libraries and schools across the country, March is held up as Read Aloud Month, where we encourage parents and other family members to get into the habit of reading to their children, if only for 15 minutes a day. That is all the Read Aloud campaign is asking for. If parents and other caregivers read at least 15 minutes a day to their kids, what an incredible difference it would make.

There is one study that is now quite well known that shows, on average, by the time a child born into poverty reaches age 3, he or she will have heard 30 million fewer words than his or her peers who are not in poverty. What does that mean, 30 million fewer words? It means that those children born into poverty are at a severe disadvantage. It means they can have a lifetime of consequences that are negative for them. The more we learn about the way the brain develops, the more clear it is that verbal skills—like other skills—develop as they are used and atrophy as they are neglected. The younger the children are, the more important this is. So reading to children, particularly younger children, is incredibly important to their development.

Even though this information is now out there and the Read Aloud campaign is doing a great job of getting the education out there, even with all this information we are told that in 40 percent of families in America today parents and other caregivers are not reading to their kids.

There is a doctor at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Dr. Tzipi Horowitz-Kraus, who is a real expert on this topic. She stated: ''The more you read

to your child, the more you help the neurons in the brain to grow and connect.'' So that is the physiological change that occurs.

We also know a child's vocabulary is largely reflective of the vocabulary at home from their parents and caregivers. There is a 2003 study by Elizabeth Hart and Todd Risley studying the impact of this 30 million word gap we talked about between households in poverty and those of their peers. They found that by age 3 the effects were already apparent. Even at that young age, ''trends in the amount of talk, vocabulary growth, and style of interaction were well established and clearly suggested widening gaps to come.'' That is another study out there about what the impact of this is.

There are a lot of adults who might not know how important reading aloud is and don't feel they have enough to do it, but, again, 15 minutes a day is all they are asking. It adds up quickly and can help close this word gap. As parents, it may be the most important single thing we can do to help our children to be able to learn.

Illiteracy or even what is called functional illiteracy—not being illiterate but not being able to read with proficiency—makes it so much harder to do everything, to earn a living, obviously to get a job, and to participate fully in society. It hurts self-esteem. It hurts personal autonomy. Millions of our friends and neighbors are struggling with these consequences every single day. According to the Department of Education, there are about 32 million adults in the United States who can't read. Nearly one out of every five adults reads below a fifth grade level. Nearly the same percentage of high school graduates cannot read. So one out of every five high school graduates not being able to read is an embarrassment for us as a country, our school system, and certainly what is not going on in our families, which again can help to get these kids off to the right start. For these adults who are functionally illiterate or illiterate, they all started with this disadvantage we are talking about, not having this opportunity at home.

Some parents may say: OK, ROB. How do we afford this, because children's books aren't inexpensive. How do you get the online resources you might want to be able to read to your kids, if not books? I have one simple answer for that, which is get a library card. Our libraries in Ohio and around the country are all into this effort. They have all rallied behind it, and they are all eager to be a part of this.

My wife Jane and I made it a priority to read to our kids when they were growing up, and a lot of that came from books we took out of the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Libraries. It also had the consequence of introducing our kids to the libraries and helped them to become lifelong readers and learners. That is one way for those who are wondering how to begin. Get a library card, go to your library, and get started there.

I am proud Ohio has led the way in this effort. This campaign began in Cincinnati and is now becoming a national movement.

We do talk a lot in this body about education. On a bipartisan basis, we recently passed legislation that had to do with K–12 education reform. I think it was an important step, but one thing it did is it returned more power back to the States and back to our families, which I think is a good thing.

The new law also authorized grant funding for State comprehensive literacy plans, including targeted grants for early childhood education programs—what we are talking about here, early childhood. It made sure those grants are prioritized for areas with disproportionate numbers of low-income families. We also authorized professional development opportunities for teachers, literacy coaches, literacy specialists, and English as a Second Language specialists. These grants will be helpful in empowering our teachers to do their part to help our young people to learn to read. Clearly, our wonderful teachers have a role to play.

To my colleagues, while this is all fine, there is no substitute for the family. There is no substitute for what can happen in a family before the child even goes to school and then while the child is starting school to be able to give that child the advantage of being able to learn more easily. Although I supported that legislation—there are some good things in there—let's not forget the fundamental role all of us play as parents or aunts or uncles or grandparents or other caregivers.

Washington may be the only place on Earth where 30 million words—which is this word gap we talked about, which is less than the length of our Tax Code and regulations—doesn't sound like a lot, but it is a lot, and there is no government substitute to close that 30 million word gap. Ultimately, it is going to be closed by parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, other caregivers, and brothers and sisters with the help of librarians, teachers, and others. We need to call attention to this issue to let parents know that this 15 minutes a day can make a huge difference. Every little bit counts. Every time you read to the child, you are giving him or her an educational advantage, you are making it easier for them to learn, helping to instill in them a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

Again, I thank the Read Aloud campaign. I am proud of their roots in my hometown and in Ohio. I thank them for all they are doing every day for our kids and for our future.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I wish to continue sharing some information about Monsanto and the Deny Americans the Right to Know Act that is on the Senate floor being debated right now.

The reason I want to turn to this is this is such an egregious overreach of the Federal Government, stripping States of the right to respond to their citizens' desire for clear information, consumer-friendly information, on GE—genetically engineered—ingredients and stripping American citizens of the right to know.

I have already gone through a number of the points that are important in this debate; that if you are going to eliminate the ability of States to provide consumer-friendly information on their label—which can be as simple as a tiny symbol or a letter such as Brazil uses—then there has to be a national standard that provides consumer-friendly information. Certainly, the hall of mirrors embedded in the DARK Act, which says consumers have to call call centers somewhere around the world and maybe they will eventually get an answer to their question about GE ingredients or they have to own a smartphone and have a data plan and take a picture of a computer code and give up some of their privacy in the process in order to try to find out this information or they have to guess where on social media the company has posted some information about the ingredients they have in their product—those three sets of components are completely unworkable, 100 percent unworkable.

Ask yourself if that would be a logical remedy to people trying to find out about the calories in a product. Instead of finding out in one second, it could take them 10 minutes or, for that matter, an hour or they may never even get an answer on the end of that call center because the call center is too busy.

The point is that 9 out of 10 Americans believe this information should be easily available on the label. I went through those numbers before. The numbers are basically the same for Republicans, basically the same for Democrats and Independents—slight variations. Throughout the ideological spectrum, this is something American citizens agree on. Along comes the Monsanto DARK Act and its proponents to say: We don't care that the American people have finally found something to agree on that goes to their core values about the right to know. We are going to stomp out their right to know because we simply don't work for the American people. We don't work for our constituents. We work for some powerful special interest.

That is wrong. I hope the American citizens will let their Senators know it

is wrong. They are certainly letting me know how they feel, and I thought I would share some of those with you, but before I do that, I had some inquiries about this situation of basically all citizens throughout the ideological spectrum sharing this same point of view—9 out of 10. Is it also true for gender and age? Let me share that. Specifically, there was a followup question which asked: Does a barcode work to provide information on the label or do you want a physical label stating that there are GE ingredients? Physical label versus this barcode—which people don't even know where it is on the package.

It turns out again it is 90 percent. It is 88 percent of Democrats, 88 percent of Republicans, and 90 percent of Independents say: No, we want the physical label, not some mysterious label that we have to use our smartphone to interpret and give up some of our privacy.

How about men and women—87 percent of men, 97 percent of women.

How about younger and older—those who are less than 50 years old, 86 percent; those who are over 50 years old, 90 percent. Again, basically 9 out of 10 Americans, regardless of gender, regardless of age, regardless of ideology, say: No, this is a fundamental issue of American freedom, my freedom to exercise my choices based on basic information that should be on the label.

Let's turn to some real constituents and some real letters so we are not just talking numbers.

Bertha from Springfield writes:

I urge you to vote against SB 2609 concerning labeling of foods that contain GMOs. Every American has the right to know what they are putting in their bodies. You were elected to represent all Oregonians and protect our rights, be assured I will check yours and every other representatives' voting records before I cast my votes in the future.

Let's turn to Eli from Medford, OR:

I want to hear you come out publicly against S. 2609. Please lead the fight to get GMOs clearly labeled without delay.

Well, Eli, that is exactly what I am doing. I hadn't read your letter before I started speaking out strongly because I fundamentally believe we are here to represent our citizens—not to bow down to special interests—and this is as clear as it gets. This is as straightforward as it could possibly be.

Let's turn to Ms. JC in Salem, OR:

Please, I am requesting you NOT to support (S. 2609) (referred by some as the Dark Act) when it comes up for a vote in the Senate. I know the Senate Agricultural Committee voted 14–6 to pass the Dark Act S. 2609 last week. I believe the government should protect OUR RIGHT TO KNOW what's in our food. Please DO NOT VOTE to block GMO labeling.

She goes on:

Most European nations do not allow these types of food to be grown or sold in their countries. This should give you some information about how people in other countries view genetically modified foods.

Please do not support this legislation. Your constituents will appreciate your support for their right to know what's in the foods we put on our plates to feed to our families.

That is a very personal issue: what you are putting in your mouth, what you are putting on your family's table for your partner and your children. That is a very powerful issue, and here we have Senators who do not care and want to take away that right for something so close to people's hearts.

Let's turn to Sheila in Pendleton, OR:

I want to urge Senator MERKLEY to vote against the S. 2609, which would block mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods. I urge the Senator to stand up for states' rights and individual rights to know. We have a right to know what is in our food so that we can make educated decisions about the food we eat.

She continues:

The free market can only work when consumers have the information they need to make informed choices. Contrary to what you hear from industry, GMO food labeling will not increase food prices. Companies frequently change labels for all sorts of reasons, without passing those costs on to consumers.

Let me dwell on that point for a moment. It is completely reasonable not to have 50 different State standards that are conflicting, but what is unreasonable is to say that putting simple information on the label—consumer-friendly information—costs a dime because that label is printed at the same cost whether or not it includes a symbol that says ''This food contains GE ingredients.'' It doesn't cost any more to print the calories on the label, doesn't cost any more to put the vitamin D content, doesn't cost any more to print a symbol or a phrase or an asterisk indicating there are GE ingredients. So let's just be through with that argument that somehow there is a cost issue.

Ronald from Medford writes:

Oppose S. 2609, the anti-GMO labeling bill. Allow States to enact their own GMO labeling laws.

And that is a point—States' rights. I hear all the time from colleagues here on this floor about States' rights, that the Federal Government should treat States as a laboratory to experiment with ideas, to see if they work, to perfect ideas that might be considered for national adoption. And isn't that exactly what Vermont is—a State laboratory that is implementing a bill on July 1? And we could all watch and see whether it works.

On July 1, there will be no conflicting State standards because there is only one State involved—Vermont. So we don't have to have confusing labels going from different warehouses to different States because there is just one State putting forward a standard. So it is an opportunity for us to view that as a laboratory and see how it works. Other States might want to copy if it works well, or they might want a different version. Then the Senate could say: You know what, now we have conflicting State standards, and let's address the core issue, which is a consumer-friendly indication on the package, and get rid of the conflicting State standards. That would be a fair and appropriate role for this Senate to play.

But to crush the only State laboratory that is about to come into existence in exchange for nothing but a hall of mirrors that does not give any reasonable opportunity for the consumer as a shopper to find out the information they need—the information they can get in 1 second by looking on the label but would instead take 10 minutes or 30 minutes or they may not even be able to get it at all while standing there in the grocery store looking at the very first product on their list.

Joshua of Eugene says:

Please support the public's right to know what food has GMO contained in it and work to defeat the DARK Act.

Additionally, I fully support also the public's right to know where their food comes from, the country of origin, as well as what nutritional content is in all food eaten in restaurants.

So he is suggesting that we should expand this conversation to restaurants. For now, let's talk about packaged foods. And he is also commenting on country of origin.

I want to live in a nation where, if I choose to buy the produce grown in America, I get to buy the produce grown in America. I want to live in a nation where, if I choose to buy the meat raised in America and support American ranchers, I get to support American ranchers. It may simply be because I want to help out my fellow countrymen. It may be because I think they have superior produce or make a superior product, a type of meat. It may just be patriotism. But it should be my right to know where that food is grown.

We have a law, country-of-origin labeling, that does exactly that because consumers want to know. It isn't about what steak to put in your mouth; it is about where the food was grown.

It so happens that we are part of a trade agreement—the World Trade Organization—that says our labeling of where pork and beef are grown is a trade impediment. I couldn't disagree more. We have lost case after case in the WTO over this topic. Finally, we had to take country-of-origin labeling off of our beef and off of our pork. We haven't had to take it off our other meats, other produce. I hope we get to the point where we can fully restore our country-of-origin labeling because it matters to Americans.

What kind of country are we when we don't even have the right to buy our fellow citizens' produce and our fellow citizens' meat? Talk about stripping

away freedom. Yet here comes a group of Senators on this floor who want to further strip the rights of consumers. No wonder American citizens are angry with their government. No wonder they are angry specifically with Congress, that they rate us so unfavorably, below 10 percent. No wonder they are cynical because of things like this, where we ignore the fundamental desires of citizens and instead cave in to a powerful special interest. That is not the way it is supposed to be in the United States of America.

Terry of Lake Oswego writes:

GMO free food is information we need to have. I need the right to decide what to eat and feed my family. If the food industry want[s] to produce foods without meeting certain standards, using whatever they want to make their product, sell foods to us, what protection do we have? Do we really know the long term effects of altered food ingredients?

Well, Terry, no, we don't know all the effects, but we do know there is a series of potential benefits and a series of problems. Those problems are the massive runoff of herbicide—which is a name for plant-killing chemicals—massive runoff of plant-killing chemicals into our streams. There are plants in our streams—algae, microorganisms—that are the fundamental basis of the food chain, and that makes a difference. We do know this herbicide is classified as a potential human carcinogen by the World Health Organization. We also know those who eat GMO food end up with more glyphosate—that is herbicide—in their body.

But it is up to you, Terry, to decide whether you have concerns about this. You should get to decide. No Senator can come to this floor, Terry, and say: I know better. I want to strip your ability to make a decision because I know everything. And you know what. I don't care about the scientific research; I just want to serve these powerful ad companies that don't want you to know. So too bad, Terry, and too bad to the 90 percent of Americans, 90 percent of Democrats, 90 percent of Republicans, 90 percent of Independents, 90 percent of women, 90 percent of men—I am rounding off but pretty close—90 percent of the young. Too bad for all of that because Senators here want to deny you the information on which to make the decision you are asking for.

Gail of Portland, OR, says:

Please do all you can to defeat S. 2609. It is my understanding that under this bill, it would be illegal for States to require GMO labeling, even though polls show that 93 percent of Americans support labeling efforts.

Well, Gail, I don't have the poll you have that says 93 percent of Americans support labeling, but I do have this poll done in November 2015 by a reputable pollster that says 89 percent. So let's take your 93 percent and let's take this poll's 89 percent and just agree that basically 9 out of 10 Americans want this information on the product. And when asked if they want it in the form of a mysterious barcode that compromises their privacy if they use it—they don't even know why it is on the product—or they want it in terms of a simple statement or symbol, they want the simple statement or symbol.

So, Gail, thank you for your letter.

William of Chemult, OR, said:

I was distressed to learn that the Senate Agriculture Committee last week approved the voluntary GMO labeling. . . . This would be a disaster if it became law. As your constituent, I'm writing to ask you to oppose this and any other scheme that would make GMO labeling voluntary.

William, I am sorry to report that it is even worse than voluntary because an actual label is banned by this bill. A State cannot put a real label or symbol on the product. Instead, this is the anti-label bill. It says you have to put on things so the customer can't see there are GE ingredients. It has banned putting clear, simple, consumer-friendly information on the product. Instead, it proposes a wild goose chase where you have to call some call center somewhere, some 800 number somewhere and hope that you can get through the phone tree; hope that eventually they will stop saying: Because of call volume, it will be another 30 minutes before we can talk to you; hope that somehow when you get to that call center, it is not staffed by folks who speak the English language with such an accent that you don't even understand what they are saying or they do not understand what you are saying.

It is even worse, William, because they want to put a barcode on as a substitute, with no indication for the purpose of this barcode, so that it is just a mystery. Why is this there? I don't know. Does this tell you about their upcoming products? Does this tell you about advertisements for discounts if you take your smartphone and you snap on this? Because the only way that barcode has value—and every Senator in this room knows this fact—it only has value if you tell the consumer why that barcode is on the package. If it says ''This product has GE ingredients. For details, scan this bar code,'' then that is a valuable contribution, but without that indication, this is just another wild goose chase taking customers on a crazy adventure with no real information when they could have had a symbol that in 1 second answered their question.

And, William, it gets worse. If you can believe it, it gets worse, because under this voluntary standard, what counts as a nonlabel—not only a 1–800 number or a barcode or a computer code of some sort—what also counts is putting something in social media somewhere. Well, what social media? There are a hundred different social media companies. How are you possibly supposed to discover, even if you wanted to, what the information is on that product?

All of this is designed, William, to prevent you from getting the information you want right on the package with a simple little symbol—not a symbol that is pejorative, not a symbol that is scary—chosen by the FDA just to give you the information. Brazil uses a ''t'' in a triangle. That would be fine. It doesn't really matter what the symbol is because citizens who want to know can find out that indicates there are GE ingredients. But, no, that would be giving you information, and the goal of the Monsanto Deny Americans the Right to Know Act is to prevent you from getting information.

I want to turn to Anna in Beaverton, OR. Anna says:

I wanted to ask that you share with your colleagues that this bill is insulting to the intelligence of Americans, limits citizens the right to make safe choices when purchasing food; hamstrings diet and medical professionals who treat, among other things, food allergies and therefore could result in an allergic person ingesting a food fraction that could result in a serious, even fatal, allergic reaction.

Here is the point: This bill is an insult to the intelligence of Americans. Anna, you have this right. This is about Senators who do not respect your intelligence, who do not honor your right to make a decision as a consumer. They know that this is an incredibly popular idea to put a symbol or phrase on a package to indicate it has key ingredients because citizens want to know. The Members here know this, and they don't care because they want to make the decision for you. They do not want to allow you freedom to make your own choices. They do not consider you to be an adult. They want to treat you like a child who is fed only the information they want to give you.

So, Anna, I am deeply disturbed about this insulting legislation that tears down the intelligence of our American citizens, that says to the 9 out of 10 Americans in every State in this Union that we want to strip away your ability to make your own choice.

Keri from Eugene writes: ''Why are we protecting large conglomerates and processed food companies instead of protecting the American people and the land?''

Well, that is a good question, Keri. I suppose it is because these companies make huge donations under the constitutional decisions of our Supreme Court.

It is a very interesting story about the evolution of our country. When our forefathers got together to draft the Constitution, they had a vision of citizens having an equal voice. That decision was somewhat flawed, as we all know—flaws we corrected over time related to race, related to gender. But the fundamental principle was that citizens got to have an equal voice.

What they pictured was this: They pictured a town commons, which cost nothing to participate in, and each citizen could get up and share their view

in that town commons, could share their view before the town voted, or could share that view equally with the person representing them in Congress. This is what Thomas Jefferson called the mother principle—that we are only a republic to the degree that the decisions we make reflect the will of the people. He said for that to happen, the citizens have to have an equal voice. Those are the words he used: ''equal voice'' and ''mother principle.'' Lincoln talked about the same thing: equal voice as the foundation of our Nation.

So when you ask the question, Keri, about why are we protecting large conglomerates at the expense of where the American people stand, you have to go back 40 years ago to a case called Buckley v. Valeo. In Buckley v. Valeo, the Supreme Court stood this principle—the mother principle of equal voice—on its head because now we have a commons that is for sale. The commons is the television. The commons is the radio. The commons is the information on Web sites.

They basically said that Americans could buy as much of that commons as they want. So instead of an equal voice, Jefferson's mother principle, we instead have a completely unequal voice. Those with fabulous wealth have the equivalent of a stadium sound system, and they use it to drown out the voice of ordinary Americans.

Then a couple of years ago, on a 5-to-4 decision of the Supreme Court, they doubled down on the destruction of our ''We the People'' Nation. They tore those three words out of the start of our Constitution, and they did so by saying: You know what. We are going to allow the board members of a corporation to utilize their owners' money for the political purposes that the board wants to use, and they don't have to even inform the owners of the company that they are using their money for these political purposes. So we have this vast concentration of power in corporations because corporations are large. If they have a small board, the board says: We want to influence politics in this fashion, and we don't even have to tell the owners about it. So that is a hugely additional destructive force on top of Buckley v. Valeo. There is nothing in the Constitution that comes close to saying that corporations are people, and there certainly is nothing that says a few people who sit in the decisionmaking capacity should be able to take other people's money and spend it for their own political purposes. It was never envisioned.

Between these decisions over several decades, we have destroyed the very premise of our Constitution, Thomas Jefferson's mother principle, that we are only a republic to the degree that we reflect the will of the people.

That is the best I can do, Keri, to explain how it is possible that this bill, which flies in the face of 9 out of 10 Americans, has made it to this floor. This bill didn't go through committee. We have leadership in this body that pledged regular order. They were going to put things through committee and bring bills to the floor that had been passed by committee. But this hasn't been. That is how much, as Keri put it, ''large conglomerates'' are influencing what happens here in this Senate.

Judith of Grants Pass says:

> Please do NOT support [this bill] that would block states from requiring labels on genetically modified foods. People have a right to know [whether or not they are considered safe].

She is right. She is absolutely right. It is whether or not they are considered safe. This isn't a scientific debate. There is science of concerns—science that I have laid out here on the floor. There is also science about benefits. But that is not the issue. The issue is a citizen's right to make their own decision. If they are concerned about the massive increase in herbicides and the destruction it does to the soil, they have a right to exercise that in the marketplace. If they are concerned about the massive amount of runoff of herbicides affecting the basic food chains in our streams and rivers, they have that right. If they are concerned about the fact that there has been some movement of genes from crops to related weeds that then become resistant to herbicides, that is their business. If they are concerned that Bt corn is producing superbugs resistant to the pesticide, that is their business.

These are not phantom ideas or phantom concerns. These are scientifically documented concerns. None of this says it is unsafe to put in your mouth. I hear that all the time: Well, it is not unsafe to put these GE things in your mouth. But here is the thing: That isn't the basis on which we label. We label things people care about, and there are implications to how things are grown and their impact.

For example, we have a Federal law that says grocery stores have to label the difference between wild fish and farmed fish. Why is that? Well, there are implications to what happens in different types of farms, and citizens are given a heads-up by this law, and they can decide. They can look into it and see if it is a concern. They may not be at all concerned about how catfish are raised in a farm setting, but they may be very concerned about how salmon are raised in farm settings because we find there are some bad effects of salmon raised in pens in the ocean that transfer disease to wild salmon. That is their right. They get to look into that. We give them that ability by requiring this information be on the package.

I don't hear anyone in this Chamber standing up right now and saying they want to strip our packages of the information of wild fish versus farmed fish. We have basic information on packages regarding whether juice is fresh or whether it is created from concentrate because citizens care about the difference. So we give them this basic information to facilitate their choice. And that is the point: We facilitate their choice.

Kimberly writes in:

> I am writing you today to urge you to vote no on . . . [anything that would] block Vermont's . . . [bill].
>
> The right to know what we eat is critical.

Richard from Portland writes: ''I urge you to filibuster, if need be, to stop the 'Dark Act.' ''

Well, I would like to do that, RICHARD. I would like to do anything I can to slow this down so the American people know what is going on. But here is the level of cynicism in this Chamber: Last night, when the majority leader filed this bill, which has never gone through committee, he simultaneously filed a petition to close debate. Under the rules of the Senate, that means, after an intervening day, there is going to be a vote, and there is no way that my speaking here day and night can stop it because it is embedded in the basic rules.

However, I can try to come to this floor several times and lay out these basic arguments and hope to wake up America to what is being plotted and planned in this Chamber right now. So that is what I am trying to do. I hope that it will have an impact. I hope that when the vote comes tomorrow morning after this intervening day—Tuesday being the intervening day—that my colleagues will say this is just wrong—stripping from Americans the right to know something 9 out of 10 Americans want, stripping States of the ability to respond to their citizens' desires, shutting down a single State laboratory in Vermont when there is no conflict on labels at this point because only one State is implementing a law.

I hope that they will say: You know what. This should be properly considered in committee. This bill should be in committee. It should be given full opportunity when it does come to the floor—and I assume it would—to be openly amended so that anyone who wants to put forward an amendment would be able to do so. That is the way the Senate used to work.

When I was here as an intern in 1976, I was asked to staff the Tax Reform Act of that year. I sat up in the staff gallery. At that point there was no television on this floor; therefore, nobody outside this room could track what was going on. There were no cell phones. There was no other way to convey what was occurring. So the staff sat up in the staff gallery, and when a vote was called, you would go down the staircase to the elevator just outside here. You would meet your Senator, and you

would brief your Senator on the debate that was happening on that amendment. That is what I did—amendment after amendment, day after day. Then, as soon as that amendment was voted on, there would be a group of Senators seeking recognition of the Presiding Officer, and you would hear everyone simultaneously go, ''Mr. President,'' because the rule is that the Presiding Officer is supposed to recognize the very first person he or she hears, and so everyone tried to be first the moment that an amendment was done, the moment the vote was announced. Well, with all those people simultaneously seeking the attention of the Chair, it is really impossible for the Chair to sort out exactly who is speaking first. So they call on someone on the left side of the Chamber, and then, when that amendment was done an hour later—because they would debate it for an hour and hold the vote; when the vote was done, they called on somebody on the right side of the Chamber. They worked it back and forth so that everyone got to have their amendment heard. That is an open amendment process.

I have heard many of my colleagues across the aisle call for that kind of process when the Democrats were in charge, and I support that kind of process. I supported it when I was in the majority; I support it when I am in the minority. Everything I have proposed or talked about to make this Senate Chamber work better as a legislative body I have supported consistently, whether I am in the majority or whether I am in the minority.

So here is the thing. We have the opposite of that right now. We don't have the Senate of the 1970s, where Senators honor their right to debate and have an open amendment process. That would really change this. That would provide an opportunity for all viewpoints to be heard. We would never have had a cloture motion filed within seconds of the bill first being put on the floor, and it would have been incredibly rare for a bill that had not gone through committee to be put on the floor.

We have to reclaim the legislative process, and right now we don't have it. So that is a great reason to vote no tomorrow morning. Voting no tomorrow morning is the right vote if you believe in States' rights. It is the right vote if you believe in the consumers' right to know, the citizens' right to know. And it is the right vote if you believe we shouldn't have a process in this Chamber that just jams through something for a powerful special interest at the expense of the 9 or 10 Americans who want this information.

So tomorrow, colleagues, let's turn down this insult to the intelligence of Americans, this assault on States' rights, this deprivation, this attack on the freedom of our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the next Supreme Court Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court. And the majority of this body believes the American people shouldn't be denied the opportunity to weigh in on this question. We believe there should be a debate about the role of Supreme Court Justices in our constitutional system.

With that in mind, I wanted to spend a few minutes discussing the appropriate role of the Court. Before I turn to that, I wish to note that the minority leader continues his daily missives on the Supreme Court vacancy.

Most of us around here take what he says with a grain of salt. So, I am not going to waste time responding to everything he says. I will note that this is what he said in 2005 when the other side was filibustering a number of circuit court nominations, and a few months before they filibustered the Alito nomination to the Supreme Court:

> The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is very different than saying every nominee receives a vote.

With that, I will turn to the appropriate role of a Justice under our Constitution. Part of what makes America an exceptional Nation is our founding document. It is the oldest written Constitution in the world. It created a functioning republic, provided stability, protected individual rights, and was structured so that different branches and levels of government can resist encroachment into their areas of responsibility. A written Constitution contains words with fixed meanings. The Constitution, and in many ways the Nation, has survived because we have remained true to those words. And our constitutional republic is ultimately safeguarded by a Supreme Court that enforces the Constitution and its text.

Our Constitution creates a republic where the people decide who will govern them, and by what rules. The Supreme Court can override the people's wishes only where the Constitution prohibits what the people's elected officials have enacted. Otherwise, the Court's rulings are improper. Stated differently, the Justices aren't entitled to displace the democratic process with their own views. Where the Constitution is silent, the people decide how they will be governed.

This fundamental feature of our republic is critical to preserving liberty. The temptation to apply their own views rather than the Constitution has always lurked among the Justices. This led to the Dred Scott decision. It led to striking down many economic regulations early in the last century. And Americans know all too well in recent decades that the Supreme Court has done this regularly. Justice Scalia believed that to ensure objectivity rather than subjectivity in judicial decision-making, the Constitution must be read according to its text and its original meaning as understood at the time those words were written.

The Constitution is law, and it has meaning. Otherwise, what the Court offers is merely politics, masquerading as constitutional law. Justice Scalia wrote that the rule of law is a law of rules. Law is not Justices reading their own policy preferences into the Constitution. It is not a multifactor balancing test untethered to the text. We all know that Justices apply these balancing tests to reach their preferred policy results.

The Court is not, and should not, be engaged in a continuing Constitutional Convention designed to update our founding document to conform with the Justices' personal policy preference. The Constitution is not a living document. The danger with any Justice who believes they are entitled to ''update'' the Constitution is that they will always update it to conform with their own views. That is not the appropriate role of a Justice. As Justice Scalia put it, ''The-times-they-are-a-changin' is a feeble excuse for disregard of duty.''

Now, when conservatives say the role of Justices is to interpret the Constitution and not to legislate from the bench, we are stating a view as old as the Constitution itself. The Framers separated the powers of the Federal Government.

In Federalist 78, Hamilton wrote, ''The interpretation of the laws is the proper and peculiar province of the courts.'' It is up to elected representatives, who are accountable to the people, to make the law. It is up to the courts to interpret it.

These views of the judicial role under the Constitution were once widely held. But beginning with the Warren Court of the 1960s, the concept took hold that the Justices were change agents for society. Democracy was messy and slow. It was much easier for Justices to impose their will on society in the guise of constitutional interpretation.

Acting as a superlegislature was so much more powerful than deciding cases by reading the legal text and the record. The view took hold that a Justice could vote on a legal question just as he or she would vote as a legislator. Perhaps the Framers underestimated what Federalist 78 called the ''least dangerous branch,'' one that ''can take no active resolution whatever.'' Since the days of the Warren Court, this activist approach has been common:

striking down as unconstitutional laws that the Constitution doesn't even address.

Now, to his credit, President Obama has been explicit in his view that Justices aren't bound by the law. While he usually pays lip service to the traditional, limited, and proper role of the Court to decide cases based on law and facts, he is always quick to add that on the tough cases, a judge should look to her heart or rely on empathy.

The President's empathy standard is completely inconsistent with the judicial duty to be impartial. Asking a Justice to consider empathy in deciding cases is asking a Justice to rule based on his or her own personal notion of right and wrong, rather than law.

As I have said, everyone knows this President won't be filling the current vacancy. Nonetheless, the President has indicated he intends to submit a nomination. That is ok. He is constitutionally empowered to make the nomination. And the Senate holds the constitutional power to withhold consent, as we will. But as we debate the proper role of the Court, and what type of Justice the next President should nominate, it is instructive to examine what the President says he is looking for in a nominee.

The President made clear his nominee, whoever it is, won't decide cases only on the law or the Constitution. He wrote that in ''cases that reach the Supreme Court in which the law is not clear,'' the Justice should apply his or her ''life experience.''

This, of course, is just an updated version of the same standard we have heard from this President before. It is the empathy standard. Of course, a Justice who reaches decisions based on empathy or life experience has a powerful incentive to read every case as unclear, so they have a free hand to rely on their life experiences to reach just outcomes.

The President also said any Justice he would nominate would consider ''the way [the law] affects the daily reality of people's lives in a big, complicated democracy, and in rapidly changing times. That, I believe, is an essential element for arriving at just decisions and fair outcomes.''

With all respect to the President, any nominee who supports this approach is advocating an illegitimate role for the Court. It is flatly not legitimate for any Justice to apply his or her own personal views of justice and fairness.

Perhaps most troubling is the President's statement that any nominee of his must ''arrive[ ] at just decisions and fair outcomes.'' That is the very definition of results-oriented judging. And it flies in the face of a judge as a fair, neutral, and totally objective decisionmaker in any particular case. A Justice is to question assumptions and apply rigorous scrutiny to the arguments the parties advance, as did Justice Scalia.

Under the President's approach, a Justice will always arrive where he or she started. That isn't judging. That is a super-legislator in a black robe. In our history, regrettably, we have had Justices who embraced this conception. Chief Justice Warren was infamous for asking, ''Is it just? Is it fair?'' without any reference to law, when he voted.

Justice Scalia's entire tenure on the Court was devoted to ending this misplaced and improper approach. In reality, a Justice is no more entitled to force another American to adhere to his or her own moral views or life experiences than any other ordinary American.

Imposition of such personal biases subjects citizens to decrees from on high that they can't change, except through constitutional amendment. And those decrees are imposed by officials they can't vote out of office.

This is not the constitutional republic the Framers created. The American people deserve the opportunity during this election year to weigh in on whether our next Justice should apply the text of the Constitution, or alternatively, whether a Justice should rely on his or her own life experiences and personal sense of right and wrong to arrive at just decisions and fair outcomes. Senate Republicans will ensure the American people aren't denied this unique and historic opportunity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I listened to what my good friend from Iowa said about the standards that he is afraid an Obama nominee would utilize. I note that in the dozens and dozens of cases—probably hundreds—that Obama nominees have been voted on, my friend from Iowa did not mention a single case where they applied it to anything but the law, and I suspect that standard would apply to anybody the President would nominate.

Now, Mr. President, on another matter, I want to set the record straight. Contrary to the remarks of the Senate majority leader yesterday, Vermont has not recently passed a GE food-labeling law. I mention that because I am old-fashioned enough to like to have things clear and accurate in this Chamber.

It was in May 2014—nearly 2 years ago—that after 2 years of debate, more than 50 committee hearings featuring testimony from more than 130 representatives on all sides of the issue, the Vermont Legislature passed and the Governor of Vermont signed into law a disclosure requirement for genetically engineered ingredients in foods.

Now, in this body: After one hearing 5 months ago that was only tangentially related to the issue, and without any open debate on the floor, the Republican leadership has decided that it knows better than the State of Vermont. Today we are being asked to tell Vermonters and constituents in other States with similar laws that their opinion, their views, and their own legislative process simply doesn't matter because we can decide on a whim to ignore them. We are actually being asked to tell consumers that their right to know isn't, frankly, theirs at all.

I think in my State, in the Presiding Officer's State, and all the other Senators' States, consumers think they have a right to know. Now we are telling them: Not so much.

I hear from Vermonters regularly and with growing frequency that they are proud of Vermont's Act 120. It is a law that simply requires food manufacturers to disclose when the ingredients they use are genetically engineered. It doesn't tell them they can't use those ingredients; it simply says: Consumers have a right to know. Tell us what you are doing.

Vermonters are concerned and some are actually outraged that the Congress is trying to roll back their right to know what is in the food that they give their families. Vermont is not the only State whose laws are under attack; we just happen to be the State with the fastest approaching deadline for implementation.

The bill we are considering today is a hasty reaction—a reaction with no real, open hearing—in response to a 2-year-old law that is set to finally take effect and doesn't fully take effect until the end of this year. Instead of protecting consumers and trying to find a true compromise, this bill continues the status quo and tells the public: We don't want you to have simple access to information about the foods you consume. You don't need to know what is in the food. Trust us. We know better. We, Members of the Senate, know better than you do, so we are not going to let you know what is going on. It is no wonder that people get concerned.

Vermont's law and others like it around the country are not an attack on biotechnology. Vermont's law and others like it merely require factual labeling intended to inform consumers. All we are saying is, if you are going to buy something, you ought to know what you are getting. If you want to buy it, go ahead. Nobody is stopping you. But you ought to be able to know what is in it.

Producers of food with GE products have nothing to hide. Let's take Campbell's, which is a multibillion-dollar brand. It is certainly one of the biggest brands in this country. They are already taking steps to label their products. They have to do that to comply with similar laws in other countries. They said: Sure, we will comply, and we will label our packages.

Our ranking member on the Agriculture Committee, Senator STABENOW,

has had commitments from other CEOs in the food industry who are ready and able to move ahead with labeling and national disclosure. They actually know that consumers really care about what they are getting. Now the U.S. Senate wants to tell those millions of consumers ''You have no right to know. We are going to block your chance to know, and we are going to keep you from knowing what is in your food.'' And some of these large companies are saying that they agree with the consumer. An asterisk, a symbol, a factual notation on a product label is not going to send our economy into a tailspin and cause food prices to spiral out of control.

Again, let's get rid of the rhetoric. I heard some on the floor in this Chamber argue that Vermont's labeling law will cost consumers an average of $1,000 more per year on food purchases. Wow. The second smallest State in the Nation passed a law that simply tells companies to disclose the ingredients in the food consumers are buying, and somehow that law is going to cost consumers $1,000 more per year in food purchases? If the claim wasn't so laughable, we might be able to ignore it. But we found out where that cost estimate came from. It came directly from a study paid for by the Corn Refiners Association and is based on every single food manufacturer in the United States eliminating GE ingredients from their food. We are not asking anybody to eliminate anything—this is not what anyone is asking companies or farmers to do. We are just saying: If I buy something and I am going to feed it to my children—or in my case, my grandchildren—or my wife and I are going to eat it, I would kind of like to know what is in it. All we are asking for is a simple label.

At a time when too much of the national discourse is hyperbolic at best, why don't we set an example for the rest of the country? Try a little truth in this Chamber. GE labeling should be the least of our woes.

In fact, the bill before us today is an attack on another Vermont law. That law has been on the books for only, well, 10 years. Oh my God, the sky is falling. It is actually similar to a law that is on the books in Virginia these are genetically engineered seed labeling laws. Farmers in both Vermont and Virginia have benefited from this law, and those selling seed to other States have complied with it. Why preempt State laws that have worked well for 10 years and with which companies are already complying? Are we going to do that because one or two companies that are willing to spend a great deal of money feel otherwise?

GE labeling is about disclosure. It gives consumers more information, more choices, and more control on what they feed themselves and their families. If we hide information from the consumers, we limit a measure of accountability for producers and marketers.

I don't know what people are trying to hide. Our producers and marketers in Vermont are proud to showcase not just the quality of their products but the methods by which they are produced. We are not blocking our markets to anybody, whether it is GE foods or otherwise. If it works, we ought to give people a choice. Why have 100 people here say: Oh no, we know better than all of you.

I am a proud cosponsor of Senator MERKLEY's bill. It provides for a strong national disclosure standard. It would give manufacturers a whole variety of options to disclose the presence of GE ingredients in their food, and they can pick and choose how they do it.

I am equally grateful to Senator STABENOW. She has fought hard to negotiate a pathway toward a national disclosure standard. We should not move forward with this bill without an open and full debate. We shouldn't just say to consumers throughout the country: We know better than you.

I am not going to support any bill that takes away the right of Vermont or any State to legislate in a way that advances consumer awareness. If we don't want to have a patchwork of State disclosure laws, then let's move in the direction of setting a national mandatory standard. Some of the biggest food companies in this country are moving forward and complying with Vermont's law.

This week is Sunshine Week, so let's hope the Senate rejects efforts to close doors and not let the American public know what is in their food. I hope they will oppose advancing this hastily crafted legislation and work towards a solution that actually lets the consumers in Texas, Iowa, Vermont, or anywhere else know what is in their food.

I see the distinguished majority deputy leader on the floor. I have more to say, but I will save it for later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FOIA IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last week, when the Senate passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, I spoke on this floor about the good work that is getting done in the Senate since Republicans took over. Time and again, we have seen both sides of the aisle come together to find practical solutions to real problems facing the American people.

That is the way the Senate is supposed to work, and we need to keep that momentum as we move forward to tackle other critical issues.

As chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I continue to be proud of the role we have played in getting work done in a bipartisan manner.

Today, on the floor of the Senate, we are doing that once again. We are passing another Judiciary Committee bill that carries strong, bipartisan support. We are passing another Judiciary Committee bill that solves real issues and is supported by folks on all ends of the political spectrum.

Don't get me wrong. Finding agreement on both sides of the aisle is no easy task. Even the most well-intentioned efforts can get bogged in the details.

But the fact that we are here today is a testament to good-faith negotiations and a commitment to make government work for the American people. And it is another indication of what this institution can be and what it was meant to be.

The FOIA Improvement Act makes much-needed improvements to the Freedom of Information Act, and its passage marks a critically important step in the right direction toward fulfilling FOIA's promise of open government.

I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of the FOIA Improvement Act, and I want to thank Senator CORNYN and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY, for their tireless, bipartisan work to advance this bill through the Senate.

I am especially proud that the bill's passage occurs during this year's Sunshine Week, an annual nationwide initiative highlighting the importance of openness and transparency in government.

Every year, Sunshine Week falls around the birthday of James Madison, the father of our Constitution. This isn't by mistake.

Madison's focus on ensuring that government answers to the people is embodied in the spirit of FOIA, so passing the FOIA Improvement Act this week is a fitting tribute to his commitment to accountable government and the protection of individual liberty. And it is an opportunity for us all to recommit ourselves to these same higher principles.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of FOIA's enactment. For over five decades, FOIA has worked to help folks stay in the know about what their government is up to. The Supreme Court said it best when it declared: ''The basic purpose of FOIA is to ensure an informed citizenry, vital to the functioning of a democratic society, needed to check against corruption and to hold the governors accountable to the governed.''

To put it simply, FOIA was created to ensure government transparency, and transparency yields accountability.

After all, a government that operates in the dark, without fear of exposure or scrutiny, is one that enables misdeeds by those who govern and fosters distrust among the governed. By peeling

back the curtains and allowing the sunlight to shine in, however, FOIA helps fight back against waste, fraud, and abuse of the taxpayer's dollar.

No doubt, FOIA has successfully brought to light numerous stories of government's shortcomings. Through FOIA, folks have learned about public health and safety concerns, mistreatment of our Nation's veterans, and countless other matters that without FOIA would not have come to light.

But despite its successes, a continued culture of government secrecy has served to undermine FOIA's fundamental promise.

For example, we have seen dramatic increases in the number of backlogged FOIA requests. Folks are waiting longer than ever to get a response from agencies. Sometimes, they simply hear nothing back at all. And we have seen a record-setting number of FOIA lawsuits filed to challenge an agency's refusal to disclose information.

More and more, agencies are simply finding ways to avoid their duties under FOIA altogether. They are failing to proactively disclose information, and they are abusing exemptions to withhold information that should be released to the public.

Problems with FOIA have persisted under both Republican and Democrat administrations, but under President Obama, things have only worsened, and his commitment to a ''new era of openness'' has proven illusory at best.

In January, the Des Moines Register published a scathing editorial, outlining the breakdowns in the FOIA system and calling on Congress to tackle the issue head-on.

The editorial described: ''In the Obama administration, federal agencies that supposedly work for the people have repeatedly shown themselves to be flat-out unwilling to comply with the most basic requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.''

It continued: ''At some federal agencies, FOIA requests are simply ignored, despite statutory deadlines for responses. Requesters are often forced to wait months or years for a response, only to be denied access and be told they have just 14 days to file an appeal.''

According to the editorial: ''Other administrations have engaged in these same practices, but Obama's penchant for secrecy is almost unparalleled in recent history.''

These are serious allegations, and no doubt, there are serious problems needing fixed.

So reforms are necessary to address the breakdowns in the FOIA system, to tackle an immense and growing backlog of requests, to modernize the way folks engage in the FOIA process, and to ultimately help change the culture in government toward openness and transparency.

What we have accomplished with this bill—in a bipartisan manner—is a strong step in the right direction.

First, the bill makes much-needed improvements to one of the most overused FOIA exemptions. It places a 25-year sunset on the government's ability to withhold certain documents that demonstrate how the government reaches decisions. Currently, many of these documents can be withheld from the public forever, but this bill helps bring them into the sunlight, providing an important and historical perspective on how our government works.

Second, the bill increases proactive disclosure of information. It requires agencies to make publicly available any documents that have been requested and released three or more times under FOIA. This will go a long way toward easing the backlog of requests.

Third, the bill gives more independence to the Office of Government Information Services. OGIS, as it is known, acts as the public's FOIA ombudsman and helps Congress better understand where breakdowns in the FOIA system are occurring. OGIS serves as a key resource for the public and Congress, and this bill strengthens OGIS's ability to carry out its vital role.

Fourth, through improved technology, the bill makes it easier for folks to submit FOIA requests to the government. It requires the development of a single, consolidated online portal through which folks can file a request. But let me be clear: it is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Agencies will still be able to rely on request-processing systems they have already built into their operations.

Most importantly, the bill codifies a presumption of openness for agencies to follow when they respond to FOIA requests. Instead of knee-jerk secrecy, the presumption of openness tells agencies to make openness and transparency their default setting.

These are all timely and important reforms to the FOIA process, and they will help ensure a more informed citizenry and a more accountable government.

So I am pleased to see this bill move through the Senate. President Obama has an opportunity to join with Congress in securing some of the most substantive and necessary improvements to FOIA since its enactment.

On July 4 of this year, FOIA turns 50. Let's continue this strong, bipartisan effort to send a bill to the President's desk before then. Let's work together to help fulfill FOIA's promise.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the senior Senator from Iowa for his remarks. As he knows, I have worked for years on improving FOIA along with my friend, the senior Senator from Texas. We are celebrating Sunshine Week, a time to pay tribute to one of our Nation's most basic values—the public's right to know. Our very democracy is built on the idea that our government should not operate in secret. James Madison, a staunch defender of open government and whose birthday we celebrate each year during Sunshine Week, wisely noted that for our democracy to succeed, people ''must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives.'' It is only through transparency and access to information that the American people can arm themselves with the information they need to hold our government accountable.

We are also celebrating the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, our Nation's premier transparency law. I was actually at the National Archives yesterday, and I looked at the actual bill signed into law in 1966 by then-President Johnson, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and Speaker John McCormack, all who were here long before I was. I was thinking that, 50 years ago, the Freedom of Information Act became the foundation on which all our sunshine and transparency policies rest, so I can think of no better way to celebrate both Sunshine Week and the 50th Anniversary of FOIA than by passing the FOIA Improvement Act.

This bipartisan bill, which I coauthored with Senator CORNYN, codifies the principle that President Obama laid out in his 2009 executive order. He asked all Federal agencies to adopt a ''presumption of openness'' when considering the release of government information under FOIA. That follows the spirit of FOIA put into place by President Clinton, repealed by President Bush, and reinstated as one of President Obama's first acts in office, but I think all of us felt we should put the force of law behind the presumption of openness so that the next President, whomever he or she might be, cannot change that without going back to Congress. Congress must establish a transparency standard that will remain for future administrations to follow—and that is what our bill does. We should not leave it to the next President to decide how open the government should be. We have to hold all Presidents and their administrations accountable to the highest standard. I do not think my friend, the senior Senator from Texas, will object if I mention that in our discussions we have both said words to the effect that we need FOIA, whether it is a Democratic or Republican administration. I do not care who controls the administration. When they do things they think are great, they will release a sheath of press releases about them. However, it is FOIA that lets us know when they are not doing things so well. The government works better if every administration is held to the same standard.

The FOIA Improvement Act also provides the Office of Government Information Services, OGIS, with additional

independence and authority to carry out its work. The Office of Government and Information Services, created by the Leahy-Cornyn OPEN Government Act in 2007, serves as the FOIA ombudsman to the public and helps mediate disputes between FOIA requesters and agencies. Our bill will provide OGIS with new tools to help carry out its mission and ensure that OGIS can communicate freely with Congress so we can better evaluate and improve FOIA going forward. The FOIA Improvement Act will also make FOIA easier to use by establishing an online portal through which the American people can submit FOIA requests, and it will ensure more information is available to the public by requiring that frequently requested records be made available online.

Last Congress, the FOIA Improvement Act, which Senator CORNYN and I wrote, passed the Senate unanimously. The House failed to take it up. So as the new Congress came in, to show we are bipartisan with a change from Democratic leadership to Republican leadership, Senator CORNYN and I moved quickly to reintroduce our legislation in the new Congress. The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approved our bill in February 2015. Sometimes it is hard for the Senate Judiciary Committee to unanimously agree that the sun rises in the east, but on this issue, we came together. Our bill has been awaiting Senate action for over a year. I urge its swift passage today. I want the House to take it up. I want the President to sign it into law. I am proud to stand here with my good friend, the senior Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I want to thank my colleague, the Senator from Vermont, for being together with me on what some people would regard as the Senate's odd couple—people with very different views on a lot of different things but who try to work together on legislation such as this, freedom of information reform legislation, but I can think of others that we worked on as well, such as patent reform and criminal justice reform.

I think most people are a little bit surprised when they see us fighting like cats and dogs on various topics, which we will—and those fights are important when they are based on principle—I think they are a little bit surprised when they see us then come together and try to find common cause, common ground on things such as this, but this is the sort of thing that makes the Senate work. This is the sort of thing that the American people deserve, when Republicans and Democrats, people all along the ideological spectrum, work together to find common ground.

I couldn't agree with the Senator more about, really, a statement of human nature. It is only human nature to try to hide your failures and to trumpet your successes. It is nothing more, nothing less than that. But what the Freedom of Information Act is premised on is the public's right to know what their government is doing on their behalf.

I know some people might think, well, for somebody who is a conservative, this is a little bit of an odd position. Actually, I think it is a natural fit. If you are a conservative like me, you think that the government doesn't have the answer to all the challenges that face our country, that sometimes, as Justice Brandeis said, sunlight is the best disinfectant.

Indeed, I know something else about human nature: that people act differently when they know others are watching than they do when they think they are in private and no one can see what they are doing. It is just human nature.

So I have worked together with Mr. LEAHY, the Senator from Vermont, repeatedly to try to advance reforms of our freedom of information laws, and I am glad to say that today we will have another milestone in that very productive, bipartisan relationship on such an important topic. This is Sunshine Week, a week created to highlight the need for more transparent and open government.

Let me mention a couple of things this bill does. It will, of course, as we said, strengthen the existing Freedom of Information Act by creating a presumption of openness. It shouldn't be incumbent on an American citizen asking for information from their own government—information generated and maintained at taxpayer expense—they shouldn't have to come in and prove something to be able to get access to something that is theirs in the first place. Now, there may be good reason—classified information necessary to fight our Nation's adversaries, maybe personally private information that is really not the business of government, but if it is, in fact, government information bought for and maintained by the taxpayer, then there ought to be a presumption of openness. This legislation will, in other words, build on what our Founding Fathers recognized hundreds of years ago: that a truly democratic system depends on an informed citizenry to hold their leaders accountable. And in a form of government that depends for its very legitimacy on the consent of the governed, the simple point is, if the public doesn't know what government is doing, how can they consent? So this is also about adding additional legitimacy to what government is doing on behalf of the American people.

I just want to again thank the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. We had a pretty productive couple of weeks with passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which the Presiding Officer was very involved in, and now passage of this legislation by, I hope, unanimous consent.

PRESUMPTION OF OPENNESS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Senator CORNYN and I have worked together to improve and protect the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA—our Nation's premiere transparency law—for many years and look forward to continuing this partnership.

The bill we passed today codifies the principle that President Obama laid out in his 2009 Executive order in which he asked all Federal agencies to adopt a ''presumption of openness'' when considering the release of government information under FOIA. This policy embodies the very spirit of FOIA. By putting the force of law behind the presumption of openness, Congress can establish a transparency standard that will remain for generations to come. Importantly, codifying the presumption of openness will help reduce the perfunctory withholding of documents through the overuse of FOIA's exemptions. It requires agencies to consider whether the release of particular documents will cause any foreseeable harm to an interest the applicable exemption is meant to protect. If it will not, the documents should be released.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank Senator LEAHY for his remarks and for working together on this important bill. This bill is a good example of the bipartisan work the Senate can accomplish when we work together toward a common goal. I agree with Senator LEAHY that the crux of our bill is to promote disclosure of government information and not to bolster new arguments in favor of withholding documents under FOIA's statutory exemptions.

I want to clarify a key aspect of this legislation. The FOIA Improvement Act makes an important change to exemption (b)(5). Exemption (b)(5) permits agencies to withhold documents covered by litigation privileges, such as the attorney-client privilege, attorney work product, and the deliberative process privilege, from disclosure. Our bill amends exemption (b)(5) to impose a 25-year sunset for documents withheld under the deliberative process privilege. This should not be read to raise an inference that the deliberative process privilege is somehow heightened or strengthened as a basis for withholding before the 25-year sunset. This provision of the bill is simply meant to effectuate the release of documents withheld under the deliberative process privilege after 25 years when passage of time undoubtedly dulls the rationale for withholding information under this exemption.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank Senator CORNYN for his comments, and I agree with his characterization of the intent behind the 25-year sunset and the deliberative

process privilege. This new sunset should not form the basis for agencies to argue that the deliberative process privilege somehow has heightened protection before the 25-year sunset takes effect. Similarly, the deliberative process privilege sunset is not intended to create an inference that the other privileges—including attorney-client and attorney work product, just to name a few—are somehow heightened in strength or scope because they lack a statutory sunset or that we believe they should not be released after 25 years. Courts should not read the absence of a sunset for these other privileges as Congress's intent to strengthen or expand them in any way.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank Senator LEAHY for that clarification and agree with his remarks. If there is any doubt as to how to interpret the provisions of this bill, they should be interpreted to promote, not detract, from the central purpose of the bill which is to promote the disclosure of government information to the American people.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 17, S. 337.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 337) to improve the Freedom of Information Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Cornyn substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3452) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The bill (S. 337), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Again, let me express my gratitude to my partner in this longstanding effort. Since I have been in the Senate, Senator LEAHY has worked tirelessly, together with me and my office and really the whole Senate, to try to advance the public's right to know by reforming and expanding our freedom of information laws.

Thank you.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished senior Senator from Texas. He has worked tirelessly on this, and I think we both agree that the best government is one where you know what they are doing.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015—Continued

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, on another matter—and I thank the distinguished Senator from Florida for not seeking recognition immediately. I ask unanimous consent that as soon as I finish, I can yield to the Senator from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BERTA CACERES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the woman in the photograph next to me is Berta Caceres, an indigenous Honduran environmental activist who was murdered in her home on March 3.

Ms. Caceres was internationally admired, and in the 12 days since her death and since my remarks on the morning after and on the day of her funeral on March 5, there has been an outpouring of grief, outrage, remembrances, denunciations, and declarations from people in Honduras and around the world.

Among the appalling facts that few people may have been aware of before this atrocity is that more than 100 environmental activists have reportedly been killed in Honduras just since 2010. It is an astonishing number that previously received little attention. One might ask, therefore, why Ms. Caceres' death has caused such a visceral, explosive reaction.

Berta Caceres, the founder and general coordinator of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras, COPINH, was an extraordinary leader whose courage and commitment, in the face of constant threats against her life, inspired countless people. For that she was awarded the prestigious 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize.

Her death is a huge loss for her family, her community, and for environmental justice in Honduras. As her family and organization have said, it illustrates ''the grave danger that human rights defenders face, especially those who defend the rights of indigenous people and the environment against the exploitation of [their] territories.''

This is by no means unique to Honduras. It is a global reality. Indigenous people are the frequent targets of threats, persecution, and criminalization by state and non-state actors in scores of countries.

Why is this? Why are the world's most vulnerable people who traditionally live harmoniously with the natural environment so often the victims of such abuse and violence?

There are multiple reasons, including racism and other forms of prejudice, but I put greed at the top of the list. It is greed that drives governments and private companies, as well as criminal organizations, to recklessly pillage natural resources above and below the surface of land inhabited by indigenous people, whether it is timber, oil, coal, gold, diamonds, or other valuable minerals. Acquiring and exploiting these resources requires either the acquiescence or the forcible removal of the people who live there.

In Berta Caceres' case, the threats and violence against her and other members of her organization were well documented and widely known, but calls by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for protective measures were largely ignored.

This was particularly so because the Honduran Government and the company that was constructing the hydroelectric project that Ms. Caceres and COPINH had long opposed were complicit in condoning and encouraging the lawlessness that Ms. Caceres and her community faced every day.

The perpetrators of this horrific crime have not been identified. Since March 3, there has been a great deal of legitimate concern expressed about the treatment of Gustavo Castro, the Mexican citizen who was wounded and is an eyewitness, and who has ample reason to fear for his life in a country where witnesses to crime are often stalked and killed. In the meantime, for reasons as yet unexplained, the Honduran Government suspended, for 15 days, Castro's lawyer's license to practice.

That concern extends to the initial actions of the Honduran police who seemed predisposed to pin the attack on associates of Ms. Caceres. This surprised no one who is familiar with Honduras's ignominious police force.

The fact is we do not yet know who is responsible, but a professional, comprehensive investigation is essential, and the Honduran Government has neither the competence nor the reputation for integrity to conduct it themselves.

There have been countless demands for such an investigation. Like her family, I have urged that the investigation be independent, including the participation of international experts. With rare exception, criminal investigations in Honduras are incompetently performed and incomplete.

They almost never result in anyone being punished for homicide. As Ms. Caceres's family has requested, the Inter-American Commission is well suited to provide that independence and expertise, but the Honduran authorities have not sought that assistance just as they refused the family's request for an independent expert to observe the autopsy.

The family has also asked that independent forensic experts be used to analyze the ballistics and other evidence. The internationally respected Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, which has received funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development for many years, would be an obvious option, but the Honduran Government has so far rejected this request, too.

Like Ms. Caceres's family, I have also urged that the concession granted to the company for the Agua Zarca hydroelectric project be cancelled. It has caused far too much controversy, divisiveness, and suffering within the Lenca community and the members of Ms. Caceres's family and organization. It clearly cannot coexist with the indigenous people of Rio Blanco who see it as a ''permanent danger'' to their safety and way of life. It is no wonder that two of the original funders of the project have abandoned it. The Dutch, Finnish, and German funders should follow their example.

This whole episode exemplifies the irresponsibility of undertaking such projects without the free, prior, and informed consent of indigenous inhabitants who are affected by them. Instead, a common practice of extractive industries, energy companies, and governments has been to divide local communities by buying off one faction, calling it ''consultation,'' and insisting that it justifies ignoring the opposing views of those who refuse to be bought.

When a majority of local inhabitants continue to protest against the project as a violation of their longstanding territorial rights, the company and its government benefactors often respond with threats and provocations, and community leaders are vilified, arrested, and even killed. Then representatives of the company and government officials profess to be shocked and saddened and determined to find the perpetrators, and years later, the crime remains unsolved and is all but forgotten.

Last year, President Hernandez, Minister of Security Corrales, and other top Honduran officials made multiple trips to Washington to lobby for Honduras' share of a U.S. contribution to the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity of the Northern Triangle of Central America. Among other things, they voiced their commitment to human rights and their respect for civil society, although not surprisingly they had neglected to consult with representatives of Honduran civil society about the contents of the plan.

The fiscal year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations Act includes $750 million to support the plan, of which a significant portion is slated for Honduras. I supported those funds. In fact I argued for an amount exceeding the levels approved by the House and Senate appropriations committees because I recognize the immense challenges that widespread poverty, corruption, violence, and impunity pose for those countries.

Some of these deeply rooted problems are the result of centuries of self-inflicted inequality and brutality perpetrated by an elite class against masses of impoverished people. But the United States also had a role in supporting and profiting from that corruption and injustice, just as today the market for illegal drugs in our country fuels the social disintegration and violence that is causing the people of Central America to flee north.

I also had a central role in delineating the conditions attached to U.S. funding for the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity, and there is strong, bipartisan support in Congress for those conditions. They are fully consistent with what the Northern Triangle leaders pledged to do and what the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development agree is necessary if the plan is to succeed.

I mention this because the assassination of Berta Caceres brings U.S. support for the plan sharply into focus. That support is far from a guarantee.

It is why a credible, thorough investigation is so important.

It is why those responsible for her death and the killers of other Honduran social activists and journalists must be brought to justice.

It is why Agua Zarca and other such projects that do not have the support of the local population should be abandoned.

And it is why the Honduran Government must finally take seriously its responsibility to protect the rights of journalists, human rights defenders, other social activists, COPINH, and civil society organizations that peacefully advocate for equitable economic development and access to justice.

Only then should we have confidence that the Honduran Government is a partner the United States can work with in addressing the needs and protecting the rights of all the people of Honduras and particularly those who have borne the brunt of official neglect and malfeasance for so many years.

Madam President, I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I would just add to Senator LEAHY's comments that a year ago, unfortunately, Honduras was known as the murder capital of the world, with the highest number of per capita murders per 100,000 people. That has improved somewhat. But that little, poor nation, under its new President, is struggling to overcome the drug lords, the crime bosses who prey on a country that is ravaged by poverty. It is such a tempting thing when all kinds of dollars are put in front of their noses in order to tempt them to get involved in these crime syndicates that have a distribution network of whatever it is—drugs, trafficking, human trafficking, other criminal elements—a distribution that goes from south to north on up into the United States.

So I join Senator LEAHY in his expression of grief and condolences for the lady who was murdered.

DRILLING OFF THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD

Madam President, this Senator has conferred with the administration on its proposal for the drilling off the Atlantic seaboard. At least the administration listened to this Senator and kept the Atlantic area off of my State of Florida from proposed drilling leases for this next 5-year lease period. They did that last year. We are grateful they did that for the reasons for which we have fought for years to keep drilling off of the coast of Florida, not only because of what we immediately anticipate—tourism, the environment—but also our military training and testing areas.

So this Senator made the argument to the Obama administration that if you are coming out there with leases off the Atlantic seaboard, don't put it off of Florida. We have military and intelligence rockets coming out of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. We have the rockets coming out of the Kennedy Space Center for NASA. Obviously, we can't have oil rigs out there when we are dropping the first stages of these rockets. And the administration complied.

But the administration then went on to offer for lease tracks of the Atlantic Ocean from the Georgia line all the way through the Carolinas, including up to the northern end of Virginia—very interesting. Just this morning the administration has walked back the offering of those leases off the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Now, it is certainly good news not only for the fact that they never did it in the first place off of Florida, but it is good news for the Atlantic coast residents who then fought so hard to keep the drilling off their coast. They first released this draft plan in January of 2015, a year ago, and the Department of the Interior had suggested opening up these new areas of the Mid-Atlantic. As we would expect, communities up and down the Atlantic seaboard voiced their objection, and they did it in a bipartisan way. From Atlantic City to Myrtle Beach, cities and towns along the coast passed resolutions to make clear their opposition to the drilling off their shores. Obviously, they weren't the only ones because—surprise, surprise—just this week the Pentagon weighed in and voiced its concerns, having been just corroborated in the Senate Armed Services Committee when I asked the question of the Secretary of the Navy about the concerns that drilling in the Mid-Atlantic region would impact the military's ability to maintain offshore readiness because of the testing and training areas.

The Pentagon had voiced this concern two administrations ago with regard to drilling in the gulf off of Florida, which is the largest testing and training area for our U.S. military in the world. So today, there is the Interior Department's decision to remove the Atlantic from the 5-year plan. Well, what about the next 5-year plan? And

what about the rigs already operating in other areas off of our coast, such as off of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas in the gulf.

We have carried on this fight now for four decades, and today we still have a renewed push to allow drilling off of these sensitive areas for the reasons I have mentioned. Some of our own colleagues are offering an amendment to a little energy bill that is about energy efficiency. It is a nongermane amendment. But what they want to do is to sweeten the pot with all of the revenues for offshore drilling that would normally go to the Federal Government instead to go to the States—another incentive to do that drilling by the oil industry. But what we saw was that the coastal communities—in this case the Mid-Atlantic seaboard—rise up and voice objections, regardless of their partisan affiliation.

We have seen again today that the Pentagon raised its objection, and, unfortunately, we have found a Federal safety regulator asleep at the switch. It has been nearly 6 years since we faced one of the greatest natural disasters that our country has ever seen, and that was the gulf oilspill. Yet, according to the GAO report released just last week, we are no better off now than we were before that tragic accident. As a reaction to that accident, the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion that, I remind my colleagues, killed 11 men and sent up to almost 5 million barrels—not gallons, barrels—of oil gushing into the gulf, there were a number of questions that were asked: How could this happen? Where were the safety inspectors?

Well, it soon became clear that the agency in charge—a subdivision of the Department of the Interior, the Minerals Management Service—was so cozy with the oil and gas industry that the Interior Department's own inspector general considered it a conflict of interest. And in response to the IG's findings, the Interior Department decided to reorganize, and it split that agency—the Minerals Management Service—into two, one in charge of leasing and the other in charge of safety.

Last Friday, the GAO—what is the GAO? It is the General Accounting Office. It is the independent, nonpartisan research arm of Congress. The GAO released a report that found that the ongoing restructuring—that splitting into—actually ''reverses actions taken to address the post-Deepwater Horizon concerns, weakening its oversight.''

The report goes on to say that the Interior Department's newly created agency in charge of safety—one of the two that were split—the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, suffers—this is the report's words—''a lack of coherent leadership'' and ''inconsistent guidance.''

So here we are 6 years after the gulf oilspill, and we are weakening oversight—the very words of the report—6 years later. Obviously, this is inexcusable. That is why a number of us have asked the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to hold a hearing on this troubling report to get to the bottom of it.

Now, at some point, the objections of the vast majority of people who live along the coast and the economies that depend on those environments and those white sandy beaches and crystal blue water and the military bases that are utilizing the testing and training areas over those waters have to be heard. Their concerns have to be addressed. We can't continue to keep having a fight every time this comes up every 5 years. There is too much at stake. Yet the fight goes on. Now there is the new evidence mounted just last Friday and—lo and behold—the results of that new evidence this morning—pulling the plug on the leasing off the eastern coast of the United States.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I come to the floor today in support of the biotechnology labeling solutions bill.

This legislation will avoid a patchwork of State labeling regulations and in so doing will save families thousands of dollars a year to protect American jobs and provide consumers with accurate, transparent information about their food.

First of all, I wish to thank Chairman PAT ROBERTS for his leadership on the issue of bioengineered food and for bringing forward his chairman's mark. Specifically, the biotechnology labeling solutions bill does three things. It immediately ends the problem of having a patchwork of inconsistent State GMO labeling programs. Second, it creates a voluntary bioengineered labeling program within 1 year. So USDA would set up a voluntary program within a year, and then within 3 years, it requires the Department of Agriculture to create a mandatory bioengineering labeling program if there is insufficient information available on products' bioengineered content.

So it makes sure that we don't have a patchwork of 50 State labeling laws. It sets up a voluntary program within 1 year. Then, if the information isn't out there sufficient for consumers, it makes sure that USDA follows up and ensures that the information is provided and that it is provided in a variety of ways that work for consumers but also work for our farmers and ranchers and for the food industry so that we don't raise costs for our consumers.

This bill will ensure that the Vermont GE labeling law, which goes into effect on July 1 of this year, does not end up costing American families billions of dollars when they fill up their grocery carts. If we don't act soon, food companies will have one of three options for complying with the Vermont law. No. 1, they can order new packaging for products going to each individual State with a labeling law; No. 2, they could reformulate products so that no labeling is required; or No. 3, they can stop selling to States with mandatory labeling laws. Of course, all of these options or any of these options would not only increase the cost of food to consumers but could result in job losses in our ag communities.

For millions of Americans, the GMO or bioengineered food labeling issue will impact the affordability of their food. Testimony provided by the USDA, FDA, and the EPA to the Senate Agriculture Committee last fall made clear that foods produced with the benefit of biotechnology are safe. Nobody is disputing that the food is safe. The real risk is if we don't address the Vermont GMO law, real families will have a tougher time making ends meet, they will face higher costs, and they are going to have more challenges getting the foods they want.

In fact, if food companies have to apply Vermont's standards to all products nationwide, it will result in an estimated increase of over $1,050 per year per household. For families having a tough time paying bills, this is in essence a regressive tax. It will hurt people of low incomes more than it will hurt people with substantial means.

From a jobs perspective, the story is also concerning. It has been calculated that if Vermont's law is applied nationwide, it will cost over $80 billion a year to switch products over to non-GMO supplies. Those billions of dollars a year in additional costs will hurt our ag and food industry that creates more than 17 million jobs nationwide. In my home State of North Dakota alone, 94,000 jobs or 38 percent of our State's economy rely on the ag and food industry.

This is a bad time to make it more expensive to do business in the ag sector. Recently, an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City testified that net farm income in 2015 is more than 50 percent less than it was in 2013, and it is expected to go down again in 2016. So this is an issue that affects our family farms directly across the country.

If Vermont's law goes forward, many farmers who rely on biotech crops to increase productivity will be deprived of that critical tool. This Senator knows how hard our farmers work and how much they put on the line every year when they have to take out an operating loan for crops that may or may not materialize. We shouldn't ask them to feed the Nation with one hand tied behind their backs by taking away biotechnology.

More than just overcoming the problems associated with having a patchwork of State regulations, I think it is

important for Americans to know this legislation ensures that consumers have consistent, accurate information about the bioengineered content of their food. The biotechnology labeling solutions bill creates greater transparency for consumers by putting in place, within 1 year, a new voluntary bioengineered food labeling program to ensure products labeled as having been produced with biotechnology meet a uniform national standard.

As I mentioned, food produced with the aid of bioengineering are, according to the FDA, EPA, and USDA, safe. However, many consumers want to know if the food they are buying is produced using biotechnology, which is why this legislation's national voluntary bioengineering standard makes so much sense. The voluntary program in this legislation will ensure that a consumer who buys a food product with a bioengineering smart label in North Dakota is purchasing a product that is held at the same disclosure standards as food sold in New York, California, or North Carolina.

This voluntary program will let the marketplace respond to consumer demand for information. You can look at the USDA organic food program, a voluntary label many consumers look for in our grocery stores. Yet this bill goes further to create a mandatory bioengineered food disclosure program if the Secretary of Agriculture finds that there is insufficient consumer access to information about bioengineered foods.

We need a solution, and this bill helps keep our Nation's food affordable, it supports jobs, and it provides consumers consistent information about bioengineered foods. I urge my colleagues to work together to support this bipartisan measure.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

Madam President, I would like to take just a minute to acknowledge, recognize, and thank our Nation's farmers on National Agriculture Day.

Today on National Agriculture Day, I want to celebrate and thank America's ag producers. That includes those in my home State of North Dakota who provide us with the lowest cost, highest quality food supply not just in the world but in the history of the world. America's grocery stores abound with fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats. Our dinner tables are able to offer our families a greater variety of nutritious, flavorful foods than ever before. They are a testament to the hard work, commitment, and innovation of our Nation's agricultural producers. Agriculture and ag-related industries is also an important part of the American economy, contributing $835 billion to our Gross Domestic Problem in 2014.

Further, our America's food and ag sector provides jobs for 16 million people and contributes billions of dollars to the national economy. Agriculture also has a positive balance of trade and produces a financial surplus for our country.

I especially want to thank the men and women of North Dakota who farm and ranch. They made agriculture North Dakota's largest industry with nearly $11 billion in sales last year. I am proud to say North Dakota leads the Nation in the production of 9 important commodities and is first or second in 15. This includes half of all the duram and spring wheat, more than 90 percent of the Nation's flax, and more than 85 percent of the Nation's canola.

America's farmers and ranchers work through drought and floods, crop disease, hail, and other challenges year in and year out. Yet they still get up every morning, put on their boots, and go out in the field and pastures for our country. Our farmers and ranchers built America, and today they sustain it. On National Agriculture Day, we acknowledge the enormous debt of gratitude we owe them.

Thank you, Madam President, and with that I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Thank you, Madam President.

I thank the distinguished Senator from North Dakota for his comments, and I would like to be associated with all of them, in fact, particularly recognizing our farmers in North Carolina. The Senator from North Dakota and I have had discussions about the friendly competition among the agriculture States and the hard work they are doing to feed America and the world, but today I rise to express my support for Chairman ROBERTS' bill for the biotechnology labeling legislation.

I am supporting Chairman ROBERTS' effort because it addresses a real problem. The problem is that a small portion of the food industry is trying to impose their policy preferences onto the entire food supply chain in the United States. We are where we are because the Vermont law is not written in a way that merely impacts the citizens of Vermont. It is astonishing to hear the misleading claim that the Vermont law is about the right to know. If the Vermont law is about the right to know, why is it that the law exempts so many products?

Here are some examples of the absurdity of the Vermont law. Vegetable cheese lasagna would be labeled, but meat lasagna wouldn't. Soy milk would need to be labeled, but cow's milk would not. Frozen pizza would need to be labeled, but delivered pizza would not. Chocolate syrup would need to be labeled, but maple syrup would not. Vegetable soup would need to be labeled, but vegetable beef soup would not. Food at a restaurant would be totally exempt, but not food at a grocery store. Vegetarian chili would need to be labeled, but meat chili would not. Veggie burgers made with soy would need to be labeled, but cheeseburgers would not.

By my way of thinking, it is a patchwork that doesn't make sense if you are trying to come up with a consistent way to communicate to consumers what is in the food they are eating. The Vermont law is a classic case of the government picking winners and losers and putting the burden of those decisions on the backs of hard-working Americans.

I had this slide up to begin with, but this is something we have to continue to be focused on. If you were to take the Vermont law and have a couple dozen States create their own variance and have all the complexity added, it is estimated the added cost of compliance would result in a cost of some 1,000 additional dollars per household. In this economy, how many families can afford another $1,000 a year for food?

I am surprised that number is not higher. It most likely will be and here is why: Manufacturers are subject to a $1,000 fine if one of their products is mistakenly or inadvertently found for sale in Vermont on a store shelf. The food industry will have over 100,000 items in the State of Vermont—a State that has roughly 625,000 residents. If only 5 percent to 10 percent of those products are even unintentionally mislabeled, that means fines of as much as $10 million per day, in addition to the millions per year companies will have to pay to actually change their supply chains to comply with the law to serve a population of 625,000.

We are often told in this Chamber we need to be more cognizant of the science. Those who are irresponsibly scaring the American people to defend the Vermont mandatory labeling law need to understand the science is against them. Late last year, the FDA rejected a petition calling for mandatory labeling of foods from genetically engineered products stating that ''the simple fact that a plant is produced by one method over another does not necessarily mean that there will be a difference in the safety or other characteristics of the resulting foods. . . . To date, we have completed over 155 consultations for GE plant varieties. The numbers of consultations completed, coupled with the rigor of the evaluations, demonstrate that foods from GE plants can be as safe as comparable foods produced using conventional plant breeding.''

During a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing last week, USDA Secretary Vilsack responded to questions regarding GMOs by emphasizing that the mandatory labeling efforts are not about food safety, nutritional benefits, or sound science. Two weeks ago, the Secretary was quoted at a conference referring to genetically modified products saying, ''I am here to unequivocally say they are safe to consumers.''

Chairman ROBERTS' language does exactly what Congress should be doing with regard to marketing standards; that is, setting rules of engagement that are consistent, balanced, and fair for all players in the industry by providing consistent information to consumers about the content of their food. With the chairman's bill, the marketplace has an opportunity to find the best approaches to getting consumers the information they want without imposing new regulations that add costs to our food supply, complexity, and no more real information or clarity.

If we as a nation are going to have a discussion on the necessity of labeling biotechnology products, fine, but the Vermont law is not the catalyst for that debate, and that conversation should be with the American people, not one State with roughly 625,000 people dictating to the market of more than 317 million people.

I encourage my colleagues to recognize that we should do everything we can to inform consumers about the content of their food. There is a right way to do it and there is a wrong way to do it. There is a more costly way to do it as proposed by the Vermont law or there is a more straightforward, effective, and consistent way, and that is what Chairman ROBERTS is trying to accomplish with this bill. I encourage everyone to support it.

Thank you, Madam President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss Presidential nominations. I think most people in this body know I am probably one of the least partisan people—looking at the issues, working across the aisle, always reaching out to my friends and colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I don't look at the barrier a lot of people look at here.

I know we are able to debate and we are able to advise and consent on nominations because we just did it. I have a tremendous problem in my State, and I think in all of our States—Colorado and all across the country—with opioid addiction and drug abuse. With that being said, I truly believe that for us to fight this war, we have to have a cultural change within the FDA. The President of the United States nominated Dr. Robert Califf, a very good man, but a person who came from within the industry and who I did not think would bring a cultural change. Still, he was the recommendation of the President.

The majority leader from Kentucky basically brought that to the floor for a vote. I thought it was the wrong person, even though this was a nomination from a President of my party, and me being a Democrat. So I think it is a misnomer for us to believe we are going to hold hard to party lines.

I have said that I didn't think Dr. Califf would bring the cultural change. I hope he proves me wrong. I am willing to work with him on that, and I will fight to make sure we rid this country of the scourge of legal prescription drug abuse that is ruining families and destroying lives. I think we have proved the President can bring people up, which is his responsibility, and we can look at that person and agree. In this case, I had only four votes on my side. The majority of all the Republicans but one—yes, all the Republicans but one—voted for him. I still think it was wrong, but we are going to make the best of it that we can.

The bottom line is we did our job. We truly did our job, and I can live with that decision. I look at the Constitution, and it is very clear. It says the President ''shall.'' It doesn't say ''may.'' Being in the legislature—and the Presiding Officer has been in the legislature as well—the words ''shall'' and ''may'' are worlds apart. It says ''shall,'' and we know he will nominate.

Why are we not willing to go through this process? I am as likely to find someone he might recommend who I will not vote for as maybe the Chair and maybe our other colleagues. I saw what happened when I first got here. We got condemned for not voting at all. We weren't getting any votes because there was protection going on. Basically, for whoever is up in the cycle, tough votes make it very difficult for people to get reelected. We proved that to be wrong because basically we saw a big switch in the Senate from the majority to the minority and the minority to the majority.

I have said very strongly that no vote is worse than a tough vote. A no vote in this body is worse than a tough vote. If you are saying that you would rather not vote at all because it might cause a problem back home, I think we have more problems if we don't do our job. That is why I can't figure this out.

If the President brings a person up, there is going to be 2 or 3 months, and if we can't find someone we can agree on—60 of us—that means it will take at least 14 Republicans to find someone they can agree on and they think is good for the country and move forward. If not, then it will run right into the next administration, whoever that may be. But basically we would be doing our job.

I just have a hard time on this one. I am going to evaluate that nominee based on their legal qualifications and judicial philosophy. I am going to look and basically see what type of jurist they have been, what types of decisions they have made, what types of social media they have been on, and what they have talked about. I will look at all of that, which is what we should be doing, to find out as much about that person as I can and to see how they will govern and rule in the future. Hopefully we will find someone who will look at the issues, look at the rule of law, and look at who we are as a country. I think we all can do that. I know very well the Chair can. I know very well every one of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle is able to do that.

I don't believe the President can count on all Democrats, just because he is a Democrat, falling in line. If that were the case, we wouldn't have had Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts, DICK BLUMENTHAL, and I voting against Robert Califf, who was the President's nominee.

So we are going to have to find that right person. But if we never get the chance to evaluate the person, I don't know how we can do that. Again, it truly gets down to the fact that this is the job we are supposed to do. We talk about orderly business. We are getting things done. I have heard people say: Oh, yes, we are getting things done now that the Republicans are in the majority. The Chair has been here long enough to understand that the majority might set the agenda, but it is the minority that drives the train as to whether we get on something or not. So we have to work together.

We have proved the old game plan didn't work. The new game plan is fine. Let's have an open amendment process, let's go through it and debate it, and then let it go up or down on its merits. That is what we are asking for on this. Let it go to committee. When the nomination comes, let it go to the committee and look at the nomination. I mean dissect it in every way, shape, or form, whoever that person may be—he or she. I am willing to live with whatever the committee comes out with, and I am going to do my own research. When it comes to the floor, there is no guarantee that I am going to vote for that person—absolutely not. And I have already proved that. All of us have proved that we haven't just blindly followed party lines, nor should we. We aren't expected to. Our constituents don't expect us to do that. They do not want us to do it, that is for sure.

Again, the Constitution states that the President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint. . . .'' He can appoint only if we have the advice and consent of the Senate. There is no other way this President or any other President can make that decision. We make the final decision.

Again, we are to the point now where the rhetoric is back and forth and it

gets a little harsher and everybody gets ingrained, entrenched: By golly, we are not going to take anybody up; we don't care who that person will be. And I just hate to see that. We are all friends. We all know each other, and we all truly, I believe, are here for the right reasons and want to do the best job we can. But we are still expected to do our job.

At the end of the day, did you do your job? Yes, we looked; the President gave us somebody; we didn't think that person was qualified; we didn't think they were centrist enough; they didn't have the background or a record that we could extract what we felt their performance would be in the future; and for those reasons, we voted against that person. Or the President gave us somebody who basically we found did not have political ties to either side, who basically ruled on the law—the best interpretation of the law—and with the Constitution always at the forefront. That is the person he gave us, and that is the person we would support. But if we never get a chance to look at whoever is given to us, there is no way we can move forward.

When I was Governor of my great State of West Virginia, I had to do the job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every minute of every day, every day of every week, every week of every month, every month of every year. It was expected. That was my job, and I tried to do the best I could. There were some times when I had to make some tough decisions. There were times I drew people together and times when there was so much division that we had to basically let it cool off and then move forward. But we always kept trying to do a better job for the people of West Virginia.

I think the American people expect us to do a better job. I really do. I don't care who gets credit for it—Republicans, Democrats. Basically, it should be all of us because the way this body works, it takes 60 votes to get on something, if we want to make that the criteria.

With that being said, I can assure you there will not be a person the President of the United States gives us—whether it is this President or the next administration and the next President—who will be the perfect jurist. We are not going to find that perfect jurist. We are not going to find someone slanted too far to the left or too far to the right so that we can't get 60 votes. We are going to have to find somebody who has shown some common sense and has some civility about them, basically using the Constitution as the basis and framework for the decisions they made as a jurist, and show that is how they are going to govern in the highest Court in the land and be a model for the rest of the world, reflecting that we are still a government of rules. We are a body where the rule of law means everything. It is hard for us to do that if we can't find someone who we feel is qualified to do the job.

So, Mr. President, I urge all my colleagues—all of my colleagues in this great body and all of my dear Republican friends—to look and think about this. If the right person is not there, don't vote for them. As a matter of fact, I would probably vote against them too. I have before. I think I am the most centrist Member of this body, and I am going to vote for what I think is good for my country and for the State of West Virginia. I think the people of West Virginia expect me to do that, and they expect me to do my job too.

With that, I hope we have another opportunity to think this over. The President probably will be giving us somebody in very short order. I would hope we are able to move to where the Judiciary Committee is able to look at that person, give us their findings on that person, and either tell us why we should not advise the President we are going to consent or find a person we can all agree upon and move forward.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEVADA PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to honor the 75th anniversary of the Nevada Parent Teacher Association. The Nevada PTA will formally celebrate 75 years of advocacy and work for and on behalf of the children of Nevada, at various events in the State during the last week of April.

Since 1941, the Nevada PTA has been part of the Nation's largest volunteer child advocacy association. The organization promotes education, health, safety, and the arts to the children of Nevada and has been instrumental in fostering the growth of countless students. The Nevada PTA takes pride in ensuring that schools are a central part of the communities in which they reside. The organization has led efforts to curb childhood obesity, foster connections between children and the important men in their lives, and promote volunteering in innovative ways.

Since its inception, they have also been a strong supporter of art programs that allow children to grow as students and people. Working with the national association, the Nevada PTA has participated in art programs that allow children to create original works of art in categories such as photography, film, and music composition. These programs not only encourage students to be creative, but also allow connections with fellow classmates that share common interests.

Nevada PTA exemplifies the broader objective of the National PTA, advocacy for all children. Multiple schools in Nevada have been recognized by the National PTA for the School of Excellence Awards which are granted to institutions that promote diversity, demonstrate clarity in academic standards, and establish meaningful connections with their local parent teacher association.

I applaud President David Flatt and his team for his strong leadership in one of the most important organizations for children in the State of Nevada. I am pleased that, through yours and other's selfless efforts, incalculable numbers of students, teachers, and parents have been positively affected by the Nevada PTA. This organization is an invaluable part of communities throughout the State, and I would like to extend my best wishes for continued success.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, due to a prior commitment, I regret I was not present to vote on the nomination of Dr. John B. King to be Secretary of the Department of Education. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of his confirmation. I look forward to working closely with him as the Department of Education continues implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

● Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I congratulate Casey Family Programs for 50 years of public service to help vulnerable children and families in the child welfare system. Founded in 1966 by Jim Casey, the founder of United Parcel Service, UPS, this private operating foundation has been working quietly and effectively on behalf of our most vulnerable children and families.

At the beginning, Casey Family Programs started with a specific focus on

providing quality foster care. After gaining considerable experience in providing direct services, Casey Family Programs recognized that it could help more families and children by working to support long-lasting improvements across entire child welfare systems. Today the foundation provides strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research and evaluation at no cost to all 50 states. It also serves county and tribal child welfare jurisdictions across the Nation, including my State of Colorado.

Casey Family Programs seeks a unique partnership with the States by asking what jurisdictions hope to achieve as it relates to the foundation's mission.

In my State of Colorado, this means helping State leaders implement Colorado's Federal waiver program. It means developing initiatives to reduce reliance on congregate care, if other options may be more appropriate for the child and family. It means working with our Denver courts with a judicial engagement team to enhance collaboration among the courts, agencies, and families. Casey Family Programs also has a specific team based in Denver dedicated to Indian Child Welfare.

At the Federal level, Casey Family Programs offers its experience, research, and data to help policymakers understand and address the complicated issues of child welfare and foster care. Over the years I have been proud to work with Casey Family Programs, and I appreciate their dedication and commitment to the original vision of their founder, Jim Casey.

I believe we all share this vision of helping children find a safe and stable home, but achieving it is more challenging than it seems. I congratulate Casey Family Programs on 50 years of public service, and I look forward to continue working with the foundation in Colorado and in Congress for years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:59 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2426. An act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1268. An act to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2080. An act to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

H.R. 2984. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

H.R. 4411. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4412. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4427. An act to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

H.R. 4721. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

H. Con. Res. 121. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, March 15, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1268. An act to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2984. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4411. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4412. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4427. An act to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The following concurrent resolutions were read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religions and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H. Con. Res. 121. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2080. An act to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2686. A bill to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 15, 2016, she had

presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1492. A bill to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska (Rept. No. 114–228).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2133. A bill to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments (Rept. No. 114–229).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1252. A bill to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2512. A bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2677. A bill to make college more affordable, reduce student debt, and provide greater access to higher education for all students of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2678. A bill to direct the NIH to intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research with respect to the understanding of pain, the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain, and the development of alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2679. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2680. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide comprehensive mental health reform, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 2681. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to retire coal preference right lease applications for which the Secretary has made an affirmative commercial quantities determination, to substitute certain land selections of the Navajo Nation, to designate certain wilderness areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2682. A bill to provide territories of the United States with bankruptcy protection; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2683. A bill to include disabled veteran leave in the personnel management system of the Federal Aviation Administration; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 2684. A bill to provide for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems by owners and operators of critical infrastructure; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2685. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve mental and behavioral health services on campuses of institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BURR, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2686. A bill to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act; read the first time.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2687. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to improve plans of safe care for infants affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 399. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Professional Social Work Month''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 400. A resolution designating March 25, 2016, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 207

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 207, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use existing authorities to furnish health care at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities to veterans who live more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest medical facility of the Department that furnishes the care sought by the veteran, and for other purposes.

S. 262

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 262, a bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

S. 480

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 480, a bill to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act.

S. 586

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 586, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to foster more effective implementation and coordination of clinical care for people with pre-diabetes, diabetes, and the chronic diseases and conditions that result from diabetes.

S. 764

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, his name and the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were withdrawn as cosponsors of S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 1538

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1538, a bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes.

S. 1714

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1785

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1785, a bill to repeal the wage rate requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act.

S. 1830

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1830, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2055

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2055, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2151, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for volunteer practitioners at health centers under section 330 of such Act.

S. 2166

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2166, a bill to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2512, a bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

S. 2550

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2550, a bill to repeal the jury duty exemption for elected officials of the legislative branch.

S. 2577

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2577, a bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner offices, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes.

S. 2630

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2630, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to require certain disclosures be included on employee pay stubs, and for other purposes.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 199

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, her name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. Res. 199, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding establishing a National Strategic Agenda.

S. RES. 340

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 340, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or Dáesh) is committing genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, and calling upon the President to work with foreign governments and the United Nations to provide physical protection for ISIS' targets, to support the creation of an international criminal tribunal with jurisdiction to punish these crimes, and to use every reasonable means, including sanctions, to destroy ISIS and disrupt its support networks.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2677. A bill to make college more affordable, reduce student debt, and provide greater access to higher education for all students of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an issue that is of the utmost importance to me, Marylanders, and American families—college affordability.

I have said this often, but we in this country enjoy many freedoms: the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, and the freedom of religion. But there is an implicit freedom our Constitution does not lay out in writing, but its promise has excited the passions, hopes, and dreams of people in this country since its founding. It is the freedom to take whatever talents God has given you, to fill whatever passion is in your heart, to learn so you can earn and make a contribution to society—the freedom to achieve.

The freedom to achieve should never be stifled in this country because of economic reasons. Your freedom to achieve should never be determined by the zip code you live in, by the color of your skin, or by the size of your family's wallet. It should be, in a democratic country, that everyone has access to be able to do that. That means affordable education. That means access to the opportunity ladder that students and families can count on, because we know a degree is something that no one can ever take away from you.

When I was a young girl at a Catholic all-girls school, my Mom and Dad made it very clear that they wanted me to go to college. But, right around graduation, my family was going through a rough time because my father's grocery store had suffered a terrible fire. I offered to put off college and work at the grocery store until the business got back on its feet. My Dad said, ''BARB, you have to go. Your mother and I will find a way, because no matter what happens to you, no one can ever take that degree away from you. The best way I can protect you is to make sure you can earn a living all of your life.'' My father gave me the freedom to achieve.

When it comes to higher education, I believe in choice and opportunity. Anyone willing to work hard has a right to learn so you can get a college degree or certificate. Millions of American students are graduating colleges and universities, but as they are handed their diplomas, they are being handed a lifetime of debt.

More than 58 percent of Maryland college students have taken on an average debt of $27,000 or more. Having this debt is like a first mortgage, making it hard to buy a home, start a business, or a family. I am worried about them, as should the rest of us, and what it means for their future. College is a part of the American dream; it should not be a part of the American financial nightmare.

That is why, over the last several months, I embarked on a college affordability tour across the state of Maryland. I wanted to find out what were some of the challenges students faced when it came to college. I wanted to know how the Federal Government can help them be successful. The stories I heard were poignant, and were likely ones that everyone in this chamber has heard time and time again.

I met a bright young woman last year. She had the financial support of her parents to attend college. Unfortunately, during her sophomore year, her mother—who was a nurse—lost her job. To make sure she could still go to college, her family made the decision to dip into their retirement savings to help pay. This goes to show that her family knew how important it was that she continue her education. Even with this additional financial support, she still had to rely on Federal financial aid to pay for books.

Or the young man who is the first in his family to go to college. He hopes he is not the last. He would not be where he is today had it not been for a strong support system in high school through participation in a college bound program that gave him the opportunity to be exposed to college classes. While he came to college academically prepared, he still needed help navigating our complex Federal financial aid system.

This is just a small sample of the stories I heard. But they all say the same thing: ''We need help.'' Many students and families are stressed and stretched, having to work and save to pay for college. They want to know what Congress is doing for them. They need a Federal Government that is on their side.

Student loan debt is more than $1.3 trillion, exceeding total credit card and car loan debt, and eclipsed only by mortgage debt. Family incomes are not keeping pace with inflation, which means they are less able to help with the costs of higher education.

Getting a college education is the core of the American dream. Let us continue to fight to make sure that every student in America, whether you are in rural Eastern Shore or in big cities like Los Angeles, has access to that dream. Let us work together to make sure that when students graduate, their first mortgage is not their student debt. Carrying the burden of student loans drags down young people's financial future, making it harder to buy a home, start a family, or save for retirement.

It is my belief that this bill—the In The Red Act—will make college a reality for millions of Americans. I am pleased to see that provisions in this bill would allow eligible student borrowers the opportunity to refinance their Federal loans. I believe that if you can refinance a yacht, you should be able to refinance your student loans. This will help more than 24 million students in the United States, including more than 800,000 student borrowers in Maryland.

I am also pleased to see that this bill increases Pell Grants to keep pace with rising costs. This will ensure that college students, who rely on Pell Grants,

can pay for tuition, books, room and board, and other living expenses like child care.

The In The Red Act is absolutely a great bill for students, and it is a great bill for America. It gives our students access to the American dream. It gives our young people access to the freedom to achieve, to be able to follow their talents, and to be able to achieve higher education in whatever field they will be able to serve this country. It is my hope that we come together to pass this bill in a swift, expeditious, and uncluttered way.

While our work is not done when it comes to ensuring access to affordable higher education, this bill helps us get there. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to move this issue forward.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2685. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve mental and behavioral health services on campuses of institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2685

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The 2014 Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors Survey found that the average ratio of counselors to students on campus is nearly 1 to 1,833 and is often far higher on large campuses. The International Association of Counseling Services accreditation standards recommends 1 counselor per 1,000 to 1,500 students.

(2) College counselors report that 10 percent of enrolled students sought counseling in 2014.

(3) More than 90 percent of counseling directors believe there is an increase in the number of students coming to campus with severe psychological problems; today, 44 percent of the students who visit campus counseling centers are dealing with severe mental illness, up from 16 percent in 2000, and 24 percent are on psychiatric medication, up from 17 percent in 2000.

(4) The majority of campus counseling directors report that the demand for services and the severity of student needs are growing without an increase in resources.

(5) Many students who need help never receive it. Only 15 percent of college and university students who commit suicide received campus counseling. Of students who seriously consider suicide each year, only 52 percent of them seek any professional help at all.

(6) A 2015 American College Health Association survey of more than 93,000 college and university students revealed that, within the last 12 months, 57 percent of students report having felt overwhelming anxiety, 35 percent felt so depressed it was difficult to function, and 48 percent felt hopeless. However, only 12 percent of students reported receiving professional treatment for anxiety within the past 12 months, and 11 percent reported receiving treatment for depression within the past 12 months.

(7) The 2015 American College Health Association survey also found that 9 percent of students have seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months, a 20 percent increase compared to 2012.

(8) Research conducted between 1997 and 2009, and presented at the 118th annual convention of the American Psychological Association found that more students are grappling with depression and anxiety disorders than were a decade ago. The study found that of students who sought college or university counseling, 41 percent had moderate to severe depression in 2009, that number was 34 percent in 1997.

(9) A survey conducted by the student counseling center at the University of Idaho in 2000 found that 77 percent of students who responded reported that they were more likely to stay in school because of counseling and that their school performance would have declined without counseling.

(10) Students with psychological issues often struggle academically and are at risk for dropping out of school. Counseling has been shown to address these issues while having a positive impact on students remaining in school. A 6-year longitudinal study found college and university students receiving counseling to have a 11.4 percent higher retention rate than the general college and university population.

(11) A national survey of college and university students living with mental health conditions, conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, found that 64 percent of students who experience mental health problems in college or university and withdraw from school do so because of their mental health issues. The survey also found that 50 percent of that group never accessed mental health services and supports.

SEC. 3. IMPROVING MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES.

Title V of the Public Health Service Act is amended by inserting after section 520E–2 (42 U.S.C. 290bb–36b) the following:

''SEC. 520E–3. GRANTS TO IMPROVE MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES.

''(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section, with respect to settings at institutions of higher education, to—

''(1) increase access to mental and behavioral health services;

''(2) foster and improve the prevention of mental and behavioral health disorders, and the promotion of mental health;

''(3) improve the identification and treatment for students at risk;

''(4) improve collaboration and the development of appropriate levels of mental and behavioral health care;

''(5) reduce the stigma for students with mental health disorders and enhance their access to mental health services; and

''(6) improve the efficacy of outreach efforts.

''(b) GRANTS.—The Secretary, acting through the Administrator and in consultation with the Secretary of Education, shall award competitive grants to eligible entities to improve mental and behavioral health services and outreach on campuses of institutions of higher education.

''(c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (b), an entity shall—

''(1) be an institution of higher education; and

''(2) submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including the information required under subsection (d).

''(d) APPLICATION.—An application for a grant under this section shall include—

''(1) a description of the population to be targeted by the program carried out under the grant, including the particular mental and behavioral health needs of the students involved;

''(2) a description of the Federal, State, local, private, and institutional resources available for meeting the needs of such students at the time the application is submitted;

''(3) an outline of the objectives of the program carried out under the grant;

''(4) a description of activities, services, and training to be provided under the program, including planned outreach strategies to reach students not currently seeking services;

''(5) a plan to seek input from community mental health providers, when available, community groups, and other public and private entities in carrying out the program;

''(6) a plan, when applicable, to meet the specific mental and behavioral health needs of veterans attending institutions of higher education;

''(7) a description of the methods to be used to evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of the program; and

''(8) an assurance that grant funds will be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other Federal, State, or local funds available to carry out activities of the type carried out under the grant.

''(e) SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give special consideration to applications that describe programs to be carried out under the grant that—

''(1) demonstrate the greatest need for new or additional mental and behavioral health services, in part by providing information on current ratios of students to mental and behavioral health professionals;

''(2) propose effective approaches for initiating or expanding campus services and supports using evidence-based practices, including peer support strategies;

''(3) target traditionally underserved populations and populations most at risk;

''(4) where possible, demonstrate an awareness of, and a willingness to, coordinate with a community mental health center or other mental health resource in the community, to support screening and referral of students requiring intensive services;

''(5) identify how the institution of higher education will address psychiatric emergencies, including how information will be communicated with families or other appropriate parties;

''(6) propose innovative practices that will improve efficiencies in clinical care, broaden collaborations with primary care, or improve prevention programs; and

''(7) demonstrate the greatest potential for replication and dissemination.

''(f) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received under a grant under this section may be used to—

''(1) provide mental and behavioral health services to students, including prevention, promotion of mental health, voluntary

screening, early intervention, voluntary assessment, treatment, management, and education services relating to the mental and behavioral health of students;

''(2) conduct research through a counseling or health center at the institution of higher education involved regarding improving the mental and behavioral health of students through clinical services, outreach, prevention, or academic success, in a manner that is in compliance with the health privacy and security rules promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note);

''(3) provide outreach services to notify students about the existence of mental and behavioral health services;

''(4) educate students, families, faculty, staff, and communities to increase awareness of mental health issues;

''(5) support student groups on campus, including athletic teams, that engage in activities to educate students, including activities to reduce stigma surrounding mental and behavioral disorders, and promote mental health wellness;

''(6) employ appropriately trained staff;

''(7) provide training to students, faculty, and staff to respond effectively to students with mental and behavioral health issues;

''(8) expand mental health training through internship, post-doctorate, and residency programs;

''(9) develop and support evidence-based and emerging best practices, including a focus on culturally and linguistically appropriate best practices; and

''(10) evaluate and disseminate best practices to other institutions of higher education.

''(g) DURATION OF GRANTS.—A grant under this section shall be awarded for a period not to exceed 3 years.

''(h) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—

''(1) EVALUATION.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which a grant is received under this section, the eligible entity involved shall submit to the Secretary the results of an evaluation to be conducted by the entity (or by another party under contract with the entity) concerning the effectiveness of the activities carried out under the grant and plans for the sustainability of such efforts.

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report concerning the results of—

''(A) the evaluations conducted under paragraph (1); and

''(B) an evaluation conducted by the Secretary to analyze the effectiveness and efficacy of the activities conducted with grants under this section.

''(i) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to grantees in carrying out this section.

''(j) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given such term in 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

''(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

''SEC. 520E–4. MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OUTREACH AND EDUCATION ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES.

''(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to increase access to, and reduce the stigma associated with, mental health services to ensure that students at institutions of higher education have the support necessary to successfully complete their studies.

''(b) NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.—The Secretary, acting through the Administrator and in collaboration with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall convene an interagency, public-private sector working group to plan, establish, and begin coordinating and evaluating a targeted public education campaign that is designed to focus on mental and behavioral health on the campuses of institutions of higher education. Such campaign shall be designed to—

''(1) improve the general understanding of mental health and mental health disorders;

''(2) encourage help-seeking behaviors relating to the promotion of mental health, prevention of mental health disorders, and treatment of such disorders;

''(3) make the connection between mental and behavioral health and academic success; and

''(4) assist the general public in identifying the early warning signs and reducing the stigma of mental illness.

''(c) COMPOSITION.—The working group convened under subsection (b) shall include—

''(1) mental health consumers, including students and family members;

''(2) representatives of institutions of higher education;

''(3) representatives of national mental and behavioral health associations and associations of institutions of higher education;

''(4) representatives of health promotion and prevention organizations at institutions of higher education;

''(5) representatives of mental health providers, including community mental health centers; and

''(6) representatives of private- and public-sector groups with experience in the development of effective public health education campaigns.

''(d) PLAN.—The working group under subsection (b) shall develop a plan that—

''(1) targets promotional and educational efforts to the age population of students at institutions of higher education and individuals who are employed in settings of institutions of higher education, including through the use of roundtables;

''(2) develops and proposes the implementation of research-based public health messages and activities;

''(3) provides support for local efforts to reduce stigma by using the National Health Information Center as a primary point of contact for information, publications, and service program referrals; and

''(4) develops and proposes the implementation of a social marketing campaign that is targeted at the population of students attending institutions of higher education and individuals who are employed in settings of institutions of higher education.

''(e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given such term in 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.''.

SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP ON COLLEGE MENTAL HEALTH.

(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to provide for the establishment of a College Campus Task Force to discuss mental and behavioral health concerns on campuses of institutions of higher education.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') shall establish a College Campus Task Force (referred to in this section as the ''Task Force'') to discuss mental and behavioral health concerns on campuses of institutions of higher education.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Task Force shall be composed of a representative from each Federal agency (as appointed by the head of the agency) that has jurisdiction over, or is affected by, mental health and education policies and projects, including—

(1) the Department of Education;

(2) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(3) the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(4) such other Federal agencies as the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in consultation with the Secretary, determines to be appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The Task Force shall—

(1) serve as a centralized mechanism to coordinate a national effort—

(A) to discuss and evaluate evidence and knowledge on mental and behavioral health services available to, and the prevalence of mental health illness among, the age population of students attending institutions of higher education in the United States;

(B) to determine the range of effective, feasible, and comprehensive actions to improve mental and behavioral health on campuses of institutions of higher education;

(C) to examine and better address the needs of the age population of students attending institutions of higher education dealing with mental illness;

(D) to survey Federal agencies to determine which policies are effective in encouraging, and how best to facilitate outreach without duplicating, efforts relating to mental and behavioral health promotion;

(E) to establish specific goals within and across Federal agencies for mental health promotion, including determinations of accountability for reaching those goals;

(F) to develop a strategy for allocating responsibilities and ensuring participation in mental and behavioral health promotions, particularly in the case of competing agency priorities;

(G) to coordinate plans to communicate research results relating to mental and behavioral health amongst the age population of students attending institutions of higher education to enable reporting and outreach activities to produce more useful and timely information;

(H) to provide a description of evidence-based best practices, model programs, effective guidelines, and other strategies for promoting mental and behavioral health on campuses of institutions of higher education;

(I) to make recommendations to improve Federal efforts relating to mental and behavioral health promotion on campuses of institutions of higher education and to ensure Federal efforts are consistent with available standards and evidence and other programs in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act; and

(J) to monitor Federal progress in meeting specific mental and behavioral health promotion goals as they relate to settings of institutions of higher education;

(2) consult with national organizations with expertise in mental and behavioral health, especially those organizations working with the age population of students attending institutions of higher education; and

(3) consult with and seek input from mental health professionals working on campuses of institutions of higher education as appropriate.

(e) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall meet not less than 3 times each year.

(2) ANNUAL CONFERENCE.—The Secretary shall sponsor an annual conference on mental and behavioral health in settings of institutions of higher education to enhance coordination, build partnerships, and share best practices in mental and behavioral health promotion, data collection, analysis, and services.

(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 399—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF ''NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH''

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 399

Whereas the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, especially the most vulnerable in society;

Whereas social work is one of the fastest growing careers in the United States with more than 640,000 members of the profession;

Whereas social workers work in all areas of our society to improve happiness, health and prosperity, including in government, schools, universities, social service agencies, communities, the military, and mental health and health care facilities;

Whereas social workers daily embody this year's ''National Professional Social Work Month'' theme, ''Forging Solutions Out of Challenges'', by helping individuals, communities and the larger society tackle and solve issues that confront them;

Whereas social workers have helped the Nation live up to its ideals by successfully pushing for equal rights for all, including women, African Americans, Latinos, people who are LGBTQ, and various ethnic, cultural, and religious groups;

Whereas social workers have helped people in the Nation overcome racial strife and economic and health care uncertainty by successfully advocating for initiatives such as the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act, unemployment insurance, workplace safety initiatives, benefits under the Social Security Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act;

Whereas social workers are the largest group of mental health care providers in the United States and work daily to help people overcome depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other disorders so they can lead more fulfilling lives;

Whereas the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs employs more than 12,000 professional social workers and social workers help bolster the Nation's security by providing support to active duty military personnel, veterans and their families;

Whereas thousands of child, family, and school social workers across the country provide assistance to protect children and improve the social and psychological functioning of children and their families;

Whereas social workers help children find loving homes and create new families through adoption;

Whereas social workers in schools work with families and schools to foster future generations by ensuring students reach their full academic and personal potential;

Whereas social workers work with older adults and their families to improve their quality of life and ability to live independently as long as possible and get access to high-quality mental health and health care; and

Whereas social workers have helped the United States and other nations overcome earthquakes, floods, wars, and other disasters by helping survivors get services such as food, shelter, and health care, and mental health care to address stress and anxiety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of ''National Professional Social Work Month'';

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of individuals and groups who promote the importance of social work and observe ''National Professional Social Work Month'';

(3) encourages the people of the United States to engage in appropriate ceremonies and activities to promote further awareness of the life-changing role that social workers play; and

(4) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the hundreds of thousands of caring individuals who have chosen to serve their communities through social work.

SENATE RESOLUTION 400—DESIGNATING MARCH 25, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY''

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 400

Whereas a group of permanent disorders of the development of movement and posture that are attributed to nonprogressive disturbances that occur in the developing brain is referred to as ''cerebral palsy'';

Whereas cerebral palsy, the most common motor disability in children, is caused by damage to 1 or more specific areas of the developing brain, which usually occurs during fetal development before, during, or after birth;

Whereas the majority of children who have cerebral palsy are born with cerebral palsy, but cerebral palsy may be undetected for months or years;

Whereas 75 percent of individuals with cerebral palsy also have 1 or more developmental disabilities, including epilepsy, intellectual disability, autism, visual impairment, or blindness;

Whereas according to information released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—

(1) the prevalence of cerebral palsy is not decreasing; and

(2) an estimated 1 in 323 children has cerebral palsy;

Whereas approximately 800,000 individuals in the United States are affected by cerebral palsy;

Whereas although there is no cure for cerebral palsy, treatment often improves the capabilities of a child with cerebral palsy;

Whereas scientists and researchers are hopeful for breakthroughs in cerebral palsy research;

Whereas researchers across the United States conduct important research projects involving cerebral palsy; and

Whereas the Senate can raise awareness of cerebral palsy in the public and the medical community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 25, 2016, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day'';

(2) encourages each individual in the United States to become better informed about and aware of cerebral palsy; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Executive Director of Reaching for the Stars: A Foundation of Hope for Children with Cerebral Palsy.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3451. Mr. MCCONNELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3452. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 337, to improve the Freedom of Information Act.

SA 3453. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3454. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3451. Mr. MCCONNELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following.

''This Act shall take effect 1 day after the date of enactment.''

SA 3452. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 337, to improve the Freedom of Information Act; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''FOIA Improvement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO FOIA.

Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''for public inspection and copying'' and inserting ''for public inspection in an electronic format'';

(ii) by striking subparagraph (D) and inserting the following:

''(D) copies of all records, regardless of form or format—

''(i) that have been released to any person under paragraph (3); and

''(ii)(I) that because of the nature of their subject matter, the agency determines have become or are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records; or

''(II) that have been requested 3 or more times; and''; and

(iii) in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (E), by striking ''public inspection and copying current'' and inserting ''public inspection in an electronic format current'';

(B) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking clause (viii) and inserting the following:

''(viii)(I) Except as provided in subclause (II), an agency shall not assess any search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees) under this subparagraph if the agency has failed to comply with any time limit under paragraph (6).

''(II)(aa) If an agency has determined that unusual circumstances apply (as the term is defined in paragraph (6)(B)) and the agency provided a timely written notice to the requester in accordance with paragraph (6)(B), a failure described in subclause (I) is excused for an additional 10 days. If the agency fails to comply with the extended time limit, the agency may not assess any search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees).

''(bb) If an agency has determined that unusual circumstances apply and more than 5,000 pages are necessary to respond to the request, an agency may charge search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees) if the agency has provided a timely written notice to the requester in accordance with paragraph (6)(B) and the agency has discussed with the requester via written mail, electronic mail, or telephone (or made not less than 3 good-faith attempts to do so) how the requester could effectively limit the scope of the request in accordance with paragraph (6)(B)(ii).

''(cc) If a court has determined that exceptional circumstances exist (as that term is defined in paragraph (6)(C)), a failure described in subclause (I) shall be excused for the length of time provided by the court order.'';

(C) in paragraph (6)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking ''making such request'' and all that follows through ''determination; and'' and inserting the following: ''making such request of—

''(I) such determination and the reasons therefor;

''(II) the right of such person to seek assistance from the FOIA Public Liaison of the agency; and

''(III) in the case of an adverse determination—

''(aa) the right of such person to appeal to the head of the agency, within a period determined by the head of the agency that is not less than 90 days after the date of such adverse determination; and

''(bb) the right of such person to seek dispute resolution services from the FOIA Public Liaison of the agency or the Office of Government Information Services; and''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''the agency.'' and inserting ''the agency, and notify the requester of the right of the requester to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services.''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(8)(A) An agency shall—

''(i) withhold information under this section only if—

''(I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or

''(II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and

''(ii)(I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and

''(II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information; and

''(B) Nothing in this paragraph requires disclosure of information that is otherwise prohibited from disclosure by law, or otherwise exempted from disclosure under subsection (b)(3).'';

(2) in subsection (b), by amending paragraph (5) to read as follows:

''(5) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters that would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency, provided that the deliberative process privilege shall not apply to records created 25 years or more before the date on which the records were requested;''; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and to the Director of the Office of Government Information Services'' after ''United States'';

(ii) in subparagraph (N), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (O), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(P) the number of times the agency denied a request for records under subsection (c); and

''(Q) the number of records that were made available for public inspection in an electronic format under subsection (a)(2).'';

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) Each agency shall make each such report available for public inspection in an electronic format. In addition, each agency shall make the raw statistical data used in each report available in a timely manner for public inspection in an electronic format, which shall be made available—

''(A) without charge, license, or registration requirement;

''(B) in an aggregated, searchable format; and

''(C) in a format that may be downloaded in bulk.'';

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking ''Government Reform and Oversight'' and inserting ''Oversight and Government Reform'';

(ii) by inserting ''Homeland Security and'' before ''Governmental Affairs''; and

(iii) by striking ''April'' and inserting ''March''; and

(D) by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6)(A) The Attorney General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the President a report on or before March 1 of each calendar year, which shall include for the prior calendar year—

''(i) a listing of the number of cases arising under this section;

''(ii) a listing of—

''(I) each subsection, and any exemption, if applicable, involved in each case arising under this section;

''(II) the disposition of each case arising under this section; and

''(III) the cost, fees, and penalties assessed under subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of subsection (a)(4); and

''(iii) a description of the efforts undertaken by the Department of Justice to encourage agency compliance with this section.

''(B) The Attorney General of the United States shall make—

''(i) each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format; and

''(ii) the raw statistical data used in each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format, which shall be made available—

''(I) without charge, license, or registration requirement;

''(II) in an aggregated, searchable format; and

''(III) in a format that may be downloaded in bulk.'';

(4) in subsection (g), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''publicly available upon request'' and inserting ''available for public inspection in an electronic format'';

(5) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following: ''The head of the Office shall be the Director of the Office of Government Information Services.'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) identify procedures and methods for improving compliance under this section.'';

(C) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) The Office of Government Information Services shall offer mediation services to resolve disputes between persons making requests under this section and administrative agencies as a nonexclusive alternative to litigation and may issue advisory opinions at the discretion of the Office or upon request of any party to a dispute.''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(4)(A) Not less frequently than annually, the Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the President—

''(i) a report on the findings of the information reviewed and identified under paragraph (2);

''(ii) a summary of the activities of the Office of Government Information Services under paragraph (3), including—

''(I) any advisory opinions issued; and

''(II) the number of times each agency engaged in dispute resolution with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison; and

''(iii) legislative and regulatory recommendations, if any, to improve the administration of this section.

''(B) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall make each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format.

''(C) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall not be required to obtain the prior approval, comment, or review of any officer or agency of the United States, including the Department of Justice, the Archivist of the United States, or the Office of Management and Budget before submitting to Congress, or any committee or subcommittee thereof, any reports, recommendations, testimony, or comments, if such submissions include a statement indicating that the views expressed therein are those of the Director and do not necessarily represent the views of the President.

''(5) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services may directly submit additional information to Congress and the President as the Director determines to be appropriate.

''(6) Not less frequently than annually, the Office of Government Information Services shall conduct a meeting that is open to the public on the review and reports by the Office and shall allow interested persons to appear and present oral or written statements at the meeting.'';

(6) by striking subsections (j) and (k), and inserting the following:

''(j)(1) Each agency shall designate a Chief FOIA Officer who shall be a senior official of such agency (at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level).

''(2) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall, subject to the authority of the head of the agency—

''(A) have agency-wide responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with this section;

''(B) monitor implementation of this section throughout the agency and keep the head of the agency, the chief legal officer of the agency, and the Attorney General appropriately informed of the agency's performance in implementing this section;

''(C) recommend to the head of the agency such adjustments to agency practices, policies, personnel, and funding as may be necessary to improve its implementation of this section;

''(D) review and report to the Attorney General, through the head of the agency, at such times and in such formats as the Attorney General may direct, on the agency's performance in implementing this section;

''(E) facilitate public understanding of the purposes of the statutory exemptions of this section by including concise descriptions of the exemptions in both the agency's handbook issued under subsection (g), and the agency's annual report on this section, and by providing an overview, where appropriate, of certain general categories of agency records to which those exemptions apply;

''(F) offer training to agency staff regarding their responsibilities under this section;

''(G) serve as the primary agency liaison with the Office of Government Information Services and the Office of Information Policy; and

''(H) designate 1 or more FOIA Public Liaisons.

''(3) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall review, not less frequently than annually, all aspects of the administration of this section by the agency to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section, including—

''(A) agency regulations;

''(B) disclosure of records required under paragraphs (2) and (8) of subsection (a);

''(C) assessment of fees and determination of eligibility for fee waivers;

''(D) the timely processing of requests for information under this section;

''(E) the use of exemptions under subsection (b); and

''(F) dispute resolution services with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison.

''(k)(1) There is established in the executive branch the Chief FOIA Officers Council (referred to in this subsection as the 'Council').

''(2) The Council shall be comprised of the following members:

''(A) The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(B) The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice.

''(C) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services.

''(D) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency.

''(E) Any other officer or employee of the United States as designated by the Co-Chairs.

''(3) The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice and the Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall be the Co-Chairs of the Council.

''(4) The Administrator of General Services shall provide administrative and other support for the Council.

''(5)(A) The duties of the Council shall include the following:

''(i) Develop recommendations for increasing compliance and efficiency under this section.

''(ii) Disseminate information about agency experiences, ideas, best practices, and innovative approaches related to this section.

''(iii) Identify, develop, and coordinate initiatives to increase transparency and compliance with this section.

''(iv) Promote the development and use of common performance measures for agency compliance with this section.

''(B) In performing the duties described in subparagraph (A), the Council shall consult on a regular basis with members of the public who make requests under this section.

''(6)(A) The Council shall meet regularly and such meetings shall be open to the public unless the Council determines to close the meeting for reasons of national security or to discuss information exempt under subsection (b).

''(B) Not less frequently than annually, the Council shall hold a meeting that shall be open to the public and permit interested persons to appear and present oral and written statements to the Council.

''(C) Not later than 10 business days before a meeting of the Council, notice of such meeting shall be published in the Federal Register.

''(D) Except as provided in subsection (b), the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendices, working papers, drafts, studies, agenda, or other documents that were made available to or prepared for or by the Council shall be made publicly available.

''(E) Detailed minutes of each meeting of the Council shall be kept and shall contain a record of the persons present, a complete and accurate description of matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received, issued, or approved by the Council. The minutes shall be redacted as necessary and made publicly available.''; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

''(m)(1) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall ensure the operation of a consolidated online request portal that allows a member of the public to submit a request for records under subsection (a) to any agency from a single website. The portal may include any additional tools the Director of the Office of Management and Budget finds will improve the implementation of this section.

''(2) This subsection shall not be construed to alter the power of any other agency to create or maintain an independent online portal for the submission of a request for records under this section. The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish standards for interoperability between the portal required under paragraph (1) and other request processing software used by agencies subject to this section.''.

SEC. 3. REVIEW AND ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the head of each agency (as defined in section 551 of title 5, United States Code) shall review the regulations of such agency and shall issue regulations on procedures for the disclosure of records under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, in accordance with the amendments made by section 2.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations of each agency shall include procedures for engaging in dispute resolution through the FOIA Public Liaison and the Office of Government Information Services.

SEC. 4. PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE THROUGH RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

Section 3102 of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) procedures for identifying records of general interest or use to the public that are appropriate for public disclosure, and for posting such records in a publicly accessible electronic format;''.

SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act or the amendments made by this Act. The requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized or appropriated.

SEC. 6. APPLICABILITY.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any request for records under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, made after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3453. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____. REPEAL OF DUPLICATIVE MANDATORY INSPECTION PROGRAM.

(a) FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008.—Effective June 18, 2008, section 11016 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 2130) is repealed.

(b) AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014.—Effective February 7, 2014, section 12106 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79; 128 Stat. 981) is repealed.

(c) APPLICATION.—The Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) shall be applied and administered as if the provisions of law struck by this section had not been enacted.

SA 3454. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. _____. REPEAL OF DUPLICATIVE MANDATORY INSPECTION PROGRAM.

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(c) APPLICATION.—The Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) shall be applied and administered as if the provisions of law struck by this section had not been enacted.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Hands Off: The Future of Self-Driving Cars.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Ukrainian Reforms Two Years after the Maidan Revolution and the Russian Invasion.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Security of U.S. Visa Programs.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Late-Term Abortion: Protecting Babies Born Alive and Capable of Feeling Pain.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 400, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 400) designating March 25, 2016, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 400) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2686

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2686) to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2016

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:15 a.m., Wednesday, March 16; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of the message to accompany S. 764; further, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote on the motion to concur with further amendment occur at 11:45 a.m.; finally, that the time following leader remarks until 11:45 a.m.

be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BLUMENTHAL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Without objection, it is so ordered.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD LABELING BILL

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, an important consumer right is under attack, under siege today in the United States Senate. It is the right to know what is in your food. A lot of consumers take for granted that they will read the ingredients on a package and they will know what is in their food. The right to know what you are putting in your body is a basic right, especially what your children are putting in their bodies.

I understand that the Agriculture Committee has reported—and the majority leader has indicated that he will bring to the floor—a misguided anti-consumer measure that will not only dilute but decimate an essential aspect of that right to know. It is not the name of the bill its proponents are using, but I agree with Members of the House and this body who have called this bill the DARK Act. Why? Because it denies Americans the right to know. Unfortunately, that is essentially what the bill does. It denies Americans the right to know.

I hold a pretty simple belief that labels on the food we buy should accurately reflect what is in the food. Whether it is the nutritional content, the ingredients—whether something is organic or not—consumers should know what they are paying for and what they are putting in their bodies. That is how we keep the large corporations that make most of our food from using ingredients that are unhealthful—unhealthful and, essentially, potentially deceptive.

Like the overwhelming majority of people in this country—and by the way, a poll released in December said it was about 90 percent—I support mandatory on-package labeling of food containing genetically modified organisms, GMOs. This support cuts across geographic lines and party lines because it is such a commonsense position. Leave it up to consumers—you and me—to decide when we buy food products and when we consume them. If they want to buy a particular product, let them do so, but make sure they know what they are getting. This issue is of particular importance to my constituents.

I am proud that Connecticut was the first State to enact legislation that would require mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods. And as attorney general of Connecticut, I championed this measure, and it is a consummate example of consumer protection and consumer education.

The DARK Act, by contrast, would strip my State of its ability to protect our own people. It would prevent States, including Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont, which have already done so, from enacting laws requiring the labeling of GMO foods. It would take away from States their right to pass laws to ensure their citizens have access to basic information about their food, and it would preempt long-standing State consumer protection laws in all 50 States. These laws pertain to false advertising, consumer protection, fraud, breach of warranty, or unfair trade practices.

This measure is a sweeping and draconian proposal, and that would be bad enough, but the DARK Act actually goes further. It would also bar States and local communities from enacting any kind of law overseeing genetically modified crops. Several counties in California and Oregon, as well as the States of Washington and Hawaii, have restricted planting of GMO crops, citing the health effects of the seeds and economic effects of megacompanies that produce these seeds on local farmers and the unknown long-term environmental consequences. But this bill would stop all of those efforts, State and local efforts. It would stop them dead in their tracks.

In addition to keeping information from consumers, the DARK Act would affect hard-working farmers who will have no way of knowing if the seed they purchased is genetically engineered, and that is true even if the seeds are altered in any way that prevents crops from reproducing, forcing farmers to buy new seeds every season from the GMO company.

I don't mean to cast aspersions on the biotechnology industry. There is enormous potential in research on this front, and scientists have made many, many contributions to our food supply. There may be scientific efforts under way in this area that have healthful and economically beneficial results, but keeping consumers in the dark is harmful, and the rule ought to be first do no harm.

If there is scientific support for the health or environmental benefits, why not let consumers know? Let consumers make knowledgeable and informed choices. Consumers are capable of those kinds of choices, and I am shocked that this deliberative body is considering a measure that is crafted so purposefully and intentionally to, in effect, deceive the American public and actively deny them the accurate information they deserve.

There is no question that this bill is nothing more than a carve-out for big businesses and mega-GMO seed corporations. My view is that this body ought to facilitate transparency. The Federal legislation should promote information and education, not inhibit or prevent it. That is why I have endorsed a bill that Senator MERKLEY and others of us are proposing and advocating that in a very commonsense way allows manufacturers to choose from a menu of options to indicate to consumers whether a product includes genetically engineered ingredients.

I want to make clear and emphasize we are not calling for some kind of skull and crossbones logo or black box warning label. In fact, we are not talking about a warning; we are talking about information. The options on the menu that would be offered to food producers are nonjudgmental, clear, concise, and accurate. This information is impartial and objective, allowing consumers to make informed decisions.

Last month, the Secretary of Agriculture convened a series of meetings in an attempt to broker a compromise between industry and labeling advocates, and I want to take a moment to commend the unflagging leadership of a number of groups in my State and one of my constituents, Tara Cook-Littman, who by coincidence was the only woman at these meetings. She is the cofounder of Citizens for GMO Labeling. She led the grassroots effort in Connecticut to pass the first-in-the-Nation GMO labeling law. She is also the mother of three children whom I have met. Like most Americans, she cares deeply about what she and her family are eating.

As part of their innovation cycle, food companies often redesign and relaunch products, adding new attributes to existing products, such as flavors and new ingredients, so they can handle the normal course of relabeling and repackaging.

One of the most important points Tara has raised is that the industry's proposed solution to include QR codes on GMO products is really no solution at all. QR codes, which let customers use a smartphone to scan a product to be linked to a Web page with information, are no substitute for clear, explicit labels that all consumers can see with the transparency and objectivity they deserve and need. Relying on QR codes discriminates against people who

are unable to afford a smartphone or a data plan. It threatens privacy by allowing industry to keep track of who is scanning what product—information that many of us might not want to be in the hands of companies and used to market to us—and, from a very practical standpoint, may not be usable where reception is weak or nonexistent.

As anyone who has ever shopped with a baby or a child knows, shopping is hard enough under some circumstances, and forcing consumers to try to get the right scan of a product when information could simply appear on the label is absurd. What is the reason for the QR code other than to make it more difficult for a consumer to know? What rationale could there be other than creating a hurdle for that consumer to learn that information?

So I urge my colleagues, do not be fooled or tricked by the DARK Act claims that food prices will rise with GMO labeling—not so. Food processors regularly make changes to these labels to meet changing consumer demands or for other marketing or regulatory reasons. In fact, Ben & Jerry's cofounder, Jerry Greenfield, confirmed: ''It's a normal course of business to be going through changes on your labels.'' And other responsible food companies have joined Ben & Jerry's, most prominently Campbell's Soup. I commend their leadership. My constituents and all consumers should be aware that there are companies like Campbell's that have stepped forward and want consumers to be more informed, not less.

We are on the brink of potentially passing legislation as early as tomorrow morning that would ban States such as Connecticut from requiring GMO labeling. That is a violation of the very essence of States' rights to protect their citizens. It may well be that some States would want to be stronger in protecting their citizens than others, and they should have the right to do so. Preempting all State legislation in this area infringes on that fundamental sovereignty and right of States to protect their citizens.

As the American Association for Justice has stated, this legislation will unjustly preempt State consumer protection laws. I know the importance of that preemption doctrine as a former attorney general who has fought consistently to allow States to set standards for consumer protection and enforce those standards, both Federal and State.

I commend those manufacturers that have realized that now is the time to embrace GMO labeling, including Campbell's, Ben & Jerry's, Amy's Kitchen, and Nature's Path. I hope we can work together with food manufacturers to give American consumers, like consumers in 63 countries around the world—63 countries around the world—a more transparent food system by approving a mandatory on-package GMO labeling system and rejecting this anti-consumer effort.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:15 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:15 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:44 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at 10:15 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

WALTER DAVID COUNTS, III, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE ROBERT A. JUNELL, RETIRED .

E. SCOTT FROST, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE SAM R. CUMMINGS, RETIRED.

REBECCA ROSS HAYWOOD, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT, VICE MARJORIE O. RENDELL, RETIRED.

JAMES WESLEY HENDRIX, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE JORGE A. SOLIS, RETIRING.

IRMA CARRILLO RAMIREZ, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE TERRY R. MEANS, RETIRED.

UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION

DANNY C. REEVES, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 31, 2019, VICE RICARDO H. HINOJOSA, TERM EXPIRED.

THE JUDICIARY

KAREN GREN SCHOLER, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE RICHARD A. SCHELL, RETIRED.

KATHLEEN MARIE SWEET, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VICE WILLIAM M. SKRETNY, RETIRED.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) PAUL J. VERRASTRO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) WILLIAM J. GALINIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) CHRISTIAN D. BECKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) TIMOTHY J. WHITE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) BRUCE L. GILLINGHAM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) KYLE J. COZAD
REAR ADM. (LH) LISA M. FRANCHETTI
REAR ADM. (LH) ROY J. KELLEY
REAR ADM. (LH) DAVID M. KRIETE
REAR ADM. (LH) BRUCE H. LINDSEY
REAR ADM. (LH) JAMES T. LOEBLEIN
REAR ADM. (LH) WILLIAM R. MERZ
REAR ADM. (LH) DEE L. MEWBOURNE
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL T. MORAN
REAR ADM. (LH) STUART B. MUNSCH
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN B. NOWELL, JR.
REAR ADM. (LH) TIMOTHY G. SZYMANSKI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. TROY M. MCCLELLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. PHILLIP E. LEE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ALAN J. REYES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. MARY C. RIGGS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. CAROL M. LYNCH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. MARK E. BIPES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. BRIAN R. GULDBEK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. LOUIS C. TRIPOLI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ROBERT T. DURAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. JON C. KREITZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. SHAWN E. DUANE
CAPT. SCOTT D. JONES
CAPT. WILLIAM G. MAGER
CAPT. JOHN B. MUSTIN
CAPT. MATTHEW P. O'KEEFE
CAPT. JOHN A. SCHOMMER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) THOMAS W. LUSCHER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) BRIAN S. PECHA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) DEBORAH P. HAVEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MARK J. FUNG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) RUSSELL E. ALLEN
REAR ADM. (LH) WILLIAM M. CRANE
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL J. DUMONT

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

RIAN HARKER HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
TIMOTHY MEADE RICHARDSON, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 18, 2016:

HUGO YUE YON, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, AND CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

GREG A. SHERMAN, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

SUEMAYAH M. ABU–DOULEH, OF ILLINOIS
KATIE M. ADAMSON, OF COLORADO
ANI A. AKINBIYI, OF FLORIDA
HANNAH M. E. AKINBIYI, OF FLORIDA
KHARMIKA T. ALSTON, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JONATHAN R. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
PAULINE W. ANDERSON, OF NEVADA
BENJAMIN D. ARTERBURN, OF TENNESSEE
JASON P. AZEVEDO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
OSCAR A. BAEZ, OF MASSACHUSETTS
DREW D. BAZIL, OF COLORADO
JAMES J. BOYDEN, OF WASHINGTON
COURTNEY J. BRASIER, OF FLORIDA
DIANA F. E. BRAUNSCHWEIG, OF CALIFORNIA
HECTOR RODRIGUEZ BROWN, OF TEXAS
KETURA D. BROWN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SHANNON S. BROWN, OF FLORIDA
ELISE B. BRUMBACH, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SEAN T. BUCKLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DAVID S. BURNSTEIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PATRICIA A. BURROWS, OF MAINE
CAROLYN KRUMME CALDERON, OF TEXAS
HANNAH CHA, OF OHIO
LAP NGUYEN CHANG, OF WASHINGTON
PETER H. CHRISTIANSEN, OF ALASKA
ERIN E. CONCORS, OF ARIZONA
TAVON H. COOKE, OF NEW JERSEY
JAMES T. CORE, OF WYOMING
MERCEDES L. CROSBY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
THOMAS L. CZERWINSKI, OF TEXAS
RANYA M. DAHER, OF VIRGINIA
EION M. DANDO, OF MINNESOTA
QUAZI RUMMAN DASTGIR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN K. DE LANCIE, OF CALIFORNIA
ALEXANDER FAIRBANKS DOUGLAS, OF VIRGINIA
SAMUEL C. DOWNING, OF WASHINGTON
PATRICK R. ELLIOT, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
LANCE C. ERICKSON, OF OHIO
CHRISTOPHER F. ESTOCH, OF FLORIDA
DOUGLAS SOMERVILLE EVANS, OF VIRGINIA
EVAN M. FRITZ, OF TEXAS
KATHERINE D. GARRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CARRIE A. GIARDINO, OF FLORIDA
SARAH D. GLASSBURNER–MOEN, OF OREGON
GAYSHIEL F. GRANDISON, OF FLORIDA
THOMAS E. GRIFFITH, OF VIRGINIA
JULIA M. GROEBLACHER, OF KANSAS
MATHEW L. HAGENGRUBER, OF MONTANA
KATHERINE E. HALL, OF COLORADO
CHRISTINA E. D. HARDAWAY, OF GEORGIA
CAITLIN B. HARTFORD, OF WASHINGTON
JENNIFER A. HENGSTENBERG, OF GEORGIA
MARK J. HITCHCOCK, OF CALIFORNIA
KATHERINE L. HO, OF TEXAS
GREGORY HOLLIDAY, OF MINNESOTA
NINA E. HOROWITZ, OF VIRGINIA
PHILLIP C. HUGHEY, OF VIRGINIA
LAUREN N. HUOT, OF FLORIDA
IRINA ITKIN, OF INDIANA
ADAM J. JAGELSKI, OF WASHINGTON
SURIYA C. JAYANTI, OF CALIFORNIA
ANTON P. JONGENEEL, OF CALIFORNIA
HELENA U. JOYCE, OF CALIFORNIA
NATHAN D. KATO-WALLACE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JEHAN M. KHALEELI, OF NEW YORK
DANIEL E. KIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
ERIN L. KIMSEY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
COURTNEY E. KLINE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KRISTINE M. KNAPP, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
JOSEPH R. KNUPP, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SHEELA E. KRISHNAN, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER LANDAU-CARTER, OF OREGON
ADRIAN J. LANSPEARY, OF NEW YORK
JON R. LARSON, OF FLORIDA
YALE H. LAYTON, OF WYOMING
ANDREW L. LEAHY, OF OREGON
JUDITH K. LEPUSCHITZ, OF CALIFORNIA
KELLI S. LONG, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
MERIDETH S. MANELLA, OF NEW JERSEY
JAMES S. MANLOWE, OF NEW MEXICO
MICHAEL A. MARCOUS, OF FLORIDA
STEPHEN L. MARTELLI, OF DELAWARE
DWAYNE THOMAS MCDAVID, OF NEVADA
SHAUN M. MCGUIRE, OF LOUISIANA
SEAN P. MCKEATING, OF TEXAS
BENJAMIN W. MEDINA, OF TEXAS
LUKE E. MEINZEN, OF MISSOURI
PARINAZ KERMANI MENDEZ, OF FLORIDA
SCOTT E. MILGROOM, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ROLAND P. MINEZ, OF WASHINGTON
ANGELA C. MIZEUR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ROBYN B. MOFSOWITZ, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KEITH W. MURPHY, OF TEXAS
KHANH P. NGUYEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ADAM R. OLSZOWKA, OF ILLINOIS
KATIE A. OSTERLOH, OF FLORIDA
BENJAMIN J. PARISI, OF FLORIDA
STRADER PAYTON, OF MISSOURI
KIMBERLY A. PEASE, OF WISCONSIN
HILARY J. PETERS, OF WASHINGTON
DREW N. PETERSON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
ELLIOT M. REPKO, OF FLORIDA
RONALD S. RHINEHART, OF WASHINGTON
DANIEL C. RHODES, OF VIRGINIA
AMANDA S. ROBERSON, OF ARIZONA
GREGORY L. ROBINSON, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN A. ROWOLD, OF MISSOURI
SUJOYA S. ROY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLAIRE E. RUFFING, OF NEW YORK
KATHLEEN M. RYAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MEGAN M. SALMON, OF ILLINOIS
STEPHEN V. SASS, OF NEW JERSEY
BRYAN SCOTT SCHILLER, OF FLORIDA
SHILOH A. SCHLUNG, OF ALASKA
LYNN MARIE SEGAS, OF CALIFORNIA
TAU N. SHANKLIN-ROBERTS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DIVIYA SHARMA, OF FLORIDA
SHANA Y. SHERRY, OF CALIFORNIA
SHAN SHI, OF WISCONSIN
TAMARA R. SHIE, OF FLORIDA
COLLEEN E. SMITH, OF WASHINGTON
CARLA ELENA SNYDER, OF FLORIDA
JORGE E. SOLARES, OF TEXAS
JOIA A. STARKS, OF VIRGINIA
ADAM J. STECKLER, OF TEXAS
EMILY MARIE STOLL, OF VIRGINIA
ELIZABETH A. STREETT, OF WASHINGTON
BRUCE W. SULLIVAN, OF NEW JERSEY
CHRISTOPHER E. TEJIRIAN, OF NEW YORK
TRACI DENISE THIESSEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BAXTER J. THOMASON, OF TENNESSEE
JERAD S. TIETZ, OF NEW YORK
VICKI S. TING, OF CALIFORNIA
THAO ANH N. TRAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL R. TRIPP, OF FLORIDA
DAVID L. WAGNER, OF MASSACHUSETTS
LISA M. WILKINSON, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN P. WILLIAMS, OF FLORIDA
JAMES S. WILSON, OF VIRGINIA
DUDEN YEGENOGLU, OF GEORGIA
SYLVIE YOUNG, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSON FOR APPOINTMENT AS A MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE A CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, EFFECTIVE MAY 30, 2015:

JENNIFER MARIE SCHUETT, OF NEW MEXICO

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MELINDA L. CROWLEY, OF MARYLAND
BOOTS POLIQUIN, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSON FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

SARAH E. EVANS, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE A CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PAUL J. ANDERSEN, OF VIRGINIA
BERNIE SARFO ANNOR, OF VIRGINIA
KENDRA MICHELLE ARBAIZA-SUNDAL, OF WISCONSIN
KENT M. ARGANBRIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
RAINA T. ARMSTRONG, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH HART ASHBY, OF TEXAS
CLAIRE JUMANNA ASHCRAFT, OF CALIFORNIA
KATHERINE ANN AVONDET, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN THOMAS AVRETT II, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFERY C. BAMBERG, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN BANFIELD, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH JANE BANNISTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SAPTARSHI BASU, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADAM WADDELL BENTLEY, OF CALIFORNIA
CHELSEA ROSE BERGESEN, OF WASHINGTON
DANIEL MARK BINGHAM-PANKRATZ, OF WISCONSIN
CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH BODINGTON, OF OHIO
ANDREW MICHAEL BOLAND, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW CARL BOWLBY, OF MINNESOTA
SUSAN SILSBY BOYLE, OF MARYLAND
ALEX BRANIGAN, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN BRUNO, OF VIRGINIA
ANNE BURKETT, OF VIRGINIA
MARGARET J. CADENA, OF VIRGINIA
KENDALL MERLE CALKINS, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELE C. CALVERT, OF VIRGINIA
NORTH KEENEY CHARLES, OF KANSAS
GRACE CHENG, OF VIRGINIA
BRANDON D. CHIN, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN CHING, OF ILLINOIS
AIMEE NICOLE CHIU, OF VIRGINIA
TASHINA ETTER COOPER, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXANDRE JULES COTTIN, OF NEW MEXICO
DAVID PATRICK COUGHRAN, JR., OF WASHINGTON
WILLIAM LYNWOOD COX, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER ANN CROOK, OF VIRGINIA
STEPHANIE CURTIS SCHMITT, OF VIRGINIA
DENNIS DAME, OF MARYLAND
DANIEL ALLAN DARBY, OF VIRGINIA
GREGORY DAVID, OF CALIFORNIA
CLAIRE YERKE DESJARDINS, OF OHIO
MICHAEL H. DING, OF MASSACHUSETTS
JEFFREY D. DIRKS, OF WASHINGTON
JOHN R. DOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RAISA NICOLE ELLENBERG DUKAS, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC CONRAD EIKMEIER, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC SPENCER ELLIOTT, OF NEW MEXICO
JULIE ANN ESPINOSA, OF MARYLAND
PAUL ESTRADA, OF CALIFORNIA
GERALD EURICE, OF VIRGINIA
CRAIG LOUIS FINKELSTEIN, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN TIMOTHY FOJUT, OF NEW JERSEY
ROBERT S. FRANCIS, OF VIRGINIA
NATHANAEL LAWRENCE GIBSON, OF VIRGINIA
TIJR AIIRE GILLIAM, OF VIRGINIA
GLENN CHAPMAN GODBEY, OF FLORIDA
SAMUEL C. GOELLER, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL ANTHONY GONZALEZ, OF FLORIDA
LUIS L. GONZALEZ III, OF TEXAS
CARA BRICKWEG GREENO, OF MISSOURI
EMILY RAE HALL, OF VIRGINIA
TARYN KATHLEEN HANLEY, OF VIRGINIA
JORDAN T. HARDENBERGH, OF VIRGINIA
CHERYL ANN HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
HOUSTON RANDALL HARRIS, OF TEXAS
RYAN D. HARVEY, OF VIRGINIA
FREDERICK HAWKINS, OF VIRGINIA
AARON MICHEAL HAYMAN, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID C. HONG, OF VIRGINIA
HYE JIK HONG, OF VIRGINIA
ILDIKO ANG HRUBOS, OF HAWAII
DARYL L. HUMES, OF VIRGINIA
JASON INSLEE, OF COLORADO
BARRY ALAN JOHNSON, OF MICHIGAN
DAVID HOWARD JOHNSON, OF WISCONSIN
LAUREN AMANDA JOHNSON, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALBERT BERTRAND KAFKA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SYDNEY KELLY, OF NEVADA
SENG JAE KIM, OF NEW YORK
PAUL KOPECKI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LAURI A. KRANIG, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL JAMIE KRIS, OF VIRGINIA
ERJON KRUJA, OF VIRGINIA
MAUREEN KUMAR, OF TEXAS
WILLIAM SETH LACY, OF VIRGINIA
NEAL BRIAN LARKINS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
JOHN DANIEL LATHERS II, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BRIGID A. LAUGHLIN, OF NEW JERSEY
DELLA P. LEACH, OF VIRGINIA
HYE RI LEE, OF VIRGINIA
STACY LEMERY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ERICA PAIGE LENGYEL, OF VIRGINIA
AVA G. LEONE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JARED AMI LEVANT, OF VIRGINIA
LENECIA HELENA LEWIS-KIRKWOOD, OF NEW YORK
JAKOB KANE LOUKAS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANN R. MANGOLD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JENNIFER D. MARSH, OF VIRGINIA
JUAN ERNESTO MAUNEZ, OF VIRGINIA
JAY R. MCCANN, OF MARYLAND
KATHLEEN M. MEILAHN, OF TEXAS
NICOLE E. MELLSTROM, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT DANIEL MERVINE, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID MESSENGER, OF VIRGINIA
JILL MARGARET MESSINGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
STEPHANIE E. C. MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
HENRI SCOTT MINION, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN R. MIRANDA, OF VIRGINIA
BRANDICE P. MITHAIWALA, OF VIRGINIA
IAN LOUIS MORELLO, OF VIRGINIA
SEAN CHRISTIAN MURRAY, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT MUTCHLER, OF VIRGINIA
MAUREEN F. O'CONNELL, OF CALIFORNIA
CHELSEA DE VITA OPPENHEIM, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID DANIEL OSWALD, OF VIRGINIA
GEORGE OTTERBACHER, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW J. PAGETT, OF FLORIDA
DONALD R. PARRISH III, OF VIRGINIA
CAROLINE LAHEY PLATT, OF VIRGINIA
GORDON ALMA PLATT, OF OREGON
ZACHARY T. PONCHERI, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT ERLE POULSON-HOUSER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SANJIN PRASTALO, OF VIRGINIA
RICHARD PRATT RALEY, OF VIRGINIA

BRIDGET ELIZABETH ROCHESTER, OF VIRGINIA
KARL ROGERS, OF NEW YORK
JASON RUBIN, OF FLORIDA
REBECCA SATTERFIELD, OF TEXAS
MIKEL LEWIS SAVIDES, OF CALIFORNIA
CECELIA A. SAVOY-CHASE, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW LOUIS SCHUMANN, OF VIRGINIA
COLIN M. SEALS, OF ILLINOIS
MICHELLE F. SEGAL, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIECLAIRE BOND SHEPPARD, OF CALIFORNIA
CHIMERE MELODY SHERROD, OF VIRGINIA
SHAHTAJ SIDDIQUI, OF CALIFORNIA
ASHLEY MARTINA SIMMONS, OF FLORIDA
HEATHER ANN SIZEMORE, OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA K. SLATTERY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SHANNON SMALL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MELANIE JO SMITH, OF WASHINGTON
BRIAN E. SMYSER, OF NEW YORK
SUMIT K. SOOD, OF VIRGINIA
ROBYN JANELLE SOTOLOV, OF VIRGINIA
PHILLIP WESLEY STARKWEATHER, OF CONNECTICUT
CATHERINE SWANSON, OF TEXAS
ALLEN R. TACKETT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LUKE TATEOKA, OF HAWAII
ERIN K. THOMAS, OF VIRGINIA
LARRY ANTOINE THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW STEPHEN THORNHILL, OF VIRGINIA
MARCUS WILLIAM THORNTON, OF MISSOURI
NATHANIEL GRAY TISHMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
PETER E. TRAVIA, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA JENNIFER TRUGLIO, OF VIRGINIA
MARY KAY TRUONG, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN H. USTICK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILLIAM R. VAN DE BERG, OF NORTH CAROLINA
STAVROS VASILIADIS, OF VIRGINIA
NATHAN CORY VOELKER, OF WASHINGTON
JERRY WANG, OF TEXAS
KENNETH DAVID WILCOX, OF MARYLAND
KELLY MARIE WINCK, OF TENNESSEE
ALAN BRYCE WINDSOR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MATTHEW D. WINSLOW, OF WYOMING
JOSHUA DAVID WODA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MICHAEL TSENG WU, OF VIRGINIA
JOANNA CHRISTINE WULFSBERG, OF ARIZONA
TAO ZENG, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JULIE ELIZABETH ZINAMON, OF VIRGINIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Tuesday, March 15, 2016*

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARDY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 15, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CRESENT HARDY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

NEW MEXICO'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago in my home State of New Mexico, our behavioral health system was thrown into crisis when the State froze payments to 15 New Mexico behavioral health providers, resulting in the eventual closure of some and replacement by 5 Arizona providers.

This transition and turmoil caused many New Mexicans to fall through the cracks. As a result, too many families are hurting, too many people are suffering, and too many New Mexicans have been unable to access the care they need.

To date, 13 behavioral health providers have been exonerated of fraud, the charges leveled by the State of New Mexico as the reason to cut off funding. But the damage has been done. That is why, along with my colleagues, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM in the House and Senators TOM UDALL and MARTIN HEINRICH, I have called for a Federal investigation into this unwarranted and reckless disruption of services to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

I am also working with the delegation on legislation to prevent something like this from ever happening again. I am working to strengthen a behavioral health system that is currently in shambles through legislation that will provide enhanced funding to States that prioritize behavioral health infrastructure, data, and access. If we want States to build and maintain strong behavioral health systems, then we must provide States with the necessary support.

During our many conversations with CMS on the crisis and its impact on New Mexicans, it has been clear there is a lack of meaningful data that is needed to hold policymakers accountable. It is unacceptable that after months and months of requesting State-provided data on the behavioral health system in New Mexico, CMS would simply determine this data to have ''significant limitations.''

A report from New Mexico's Legislative Finance Committee identified similar concerns. The report stated that the amount and quality of utilization data collected by the State of New Mexico had ''deteriorated, leaving the question of whether enrollees are receiving more or less care.''

Without access to meaningful data, we cannot determine how best to invest to strengthen our behavioral health system, and we cannot possibly know if we are doing enough to ensure that the most vulnerable are being protected. What we do know is New Mexico's behavioral health system has been needlessly broken and that a full accounting is necessary to rebuild it and ensure that this will never happen again.

AMERICA MUST LEARN FROM VENEZUELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America has led the world culturally, scientifically, militarily, in freedom, and in many other ways, but if America does not stop its overspending and binge borrowing, then we are doomed to follow the footsteps of countries that chose to be financially irresponsible and are condemned to suffer the same dire consequences.

America need not speculate on our fate. Rather, America must learn from bad example countries, such as Venezuela, a socialist country that has already walked the financially irresponsible path America, unfortunately, is on.

Venezuela suffered the world's highest inflation rate, at 275 percent, in 2015. According to the International Monetary Fund, Venezuela's 2016 inflation rate will be 720 percent. Compare that to America, where 3 to 5 percent inflation causes concern.

To put Venezuela's inflation rate in everyday terms, let's apply it to things we buy. If a gallon of milk costs you $3 today, it will cost you $21 a year from now. If a pound of ground beef costs you $4 today, it will cost you $28 a year from now. A new car that costs you $25,000 today will cost you $175,000 a year from now.

But the damage and danger does not end with hyperinflation. The International Monetary Fund reports Venezuela is experiencing ''widespread shortages of essential goods, including food, exacting a tragic toll.'' Grocery stores have rows and rows of empty shelves. Venezuelans can't find food to feed their families and form long lines outside of stores, hoping to buy whatever is in stock, from sugar to shampoo.

In response, Socialist President Maduro has ordered police to limit consumers to two shopping days per week at government-owned food stores. One frustrated Venezuelan shopper noted: ''It is exasperating, but it is the only way to get food in Venezuela.''

Inflation and food shortages are only the tip of the iceberg. When supplies run out, when jobs can't be found, violence erupts. In just 1 month in 2014, violent street riots killed 43 Venezuelans, blocking citizens from accessing food, transportation, and medical services. Occupied buildings were torched, injuring hundreds.

Venezuela is now one of the most violent countries in the world, with a chilling 82 homicides per 100,000 population, roughly 20 times worse than America's homicide rate. Caracas, Venezuela's capital, is the world's most violent city, with a war-zone-like 120 murders per 100,000 citizens.

Venezuela's insolvency has forced it to slash defense spending by 34 percent, putting Venezuelan citizens at even more heightened risk of loss of life.

Venezuela's tragedy is not because it is a resource-poor country. To the contrary, Venezuela has more proven oil reserves than any country on Earth, even more than the entire oil-rich North American continent.

Venezuela's collapse is because of two things. First, Venezuela decided to experiment with socialism, an economic model that has failed every country that has tried it. Second, Venezuela's politicians were seduced by the lure of out-of-control spending financed by more borrowing and higher debt, the same temptation Washington politicians have succumbed to for decades.

America must learn from Venezuela and every other country that has been financially irresponsible. Mr. Speaker, time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control. America cannot wait until our financial crisis is lost and it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

I pray the American people will be good stewards of our Republic in 2016 and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits and debt and have the backbone to fix it. Mr. Speaker, America's future depends on it.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS HURTS REAL PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about a crisis in my home State of New Mexico, a crisis that has hurt real people who rely on the Medicaid program for lifesaving care.

Mr. Speaker, almost 3 years ago, the New Mexico Human Services Department, with the support of Governor Susana Martinez, claimed that it had credible allegations of fraud and suspended Medicaid payments to 15 behavioral health providers. This move wiped out the behavioral health system in a State where there are already significant provider shortages.

I want to take a minute to talk about what that really means. That means if you are a person who struggles with schizophrenia but manages it effectively with regular treatment, that regular treatment stops and you go back to square one. That means that if you are someone who has been diagnosed as bipolar, who has finally found a trusted provider, someone who has brought some stability and comfort to your care plan, you no longer have access to that person.

The loss of services is devastating, and I have seen it firsthand. There is a constituent who typically calls my office every day, multiple times a day. He calls my office. He calls other members of the delegation, the mayor's office, and the chief of police. But from time to time the calls stop. They stop because this individual, who can be the most warm-hearted person I know, is in jail. He has a mental illness and a substance abuse problem and can be belligerent when he feels threatened, so he sometimes has run-ins with local law enforcement, and he ends up in jail because the system is failing him. He is not receiving the services he needs.

Our jails and sometimes our emergency rooms have become the de facto behavioral health system in our State because, when you don't have the infrastructure to care for individuals with behavioral health issues, that is where people end up.

Mr. Speaker, I am, frankly, appalled that people in my home State are being treated in this way, but if you can believe it, it gets worse.

Last month, the New Mexico attorney general completed his review of the allegations and found that there did not appear to be a pattern of fraud. Thirteen of the 15 providers accused of fraud have now been cleared, and the people of New Mexico are left to wonder why, why a whole State's behavioral health system was wiped out and a large population of vulnerable individuals left to fend for themselves. I think they deserve answers.

I have been working with my colleagues in the New Mexico delegation, pushing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to exercise Federal oversight and ensure accountability since the payment suspension was announced. We have sent multiple letters, made phone calls, held in-person meetings with officials at every level at CMS and HHS, and I have to say I am extremely disappointed by their lack of engagement.

We sent another letter to CMS in February sharing the attorney general's report and asking that they conduct a Federal investigation, and we are going to continue pushing for accountability and working to make sure this never happens again.

I plan to introduce legislation that would ensure network adequacy and continuity of care in a State's Medicaid program, and I know my colleagues have legislation in the works as well.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent my entire career fighting for vulnerable New Mexicans, people who are voiceless in the political process. It would be easy to ignore them, as so many have done, because they are too busy struggling to survive to engage in the political process. It would be easy, but it would be wrong.

This is the most egregious abuse of power I have seen in my decades of government service, and I will not sit idly by while the most vulnerable among us suffer. We must have action. We must have accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in calling for a long overdue Federal investigation of the behavioral health provider suspension in New Mexico.

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND THE FARC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak against the ongoing negotiations in Havana between the Government of Colombia and the terrorist group known as the FARC.

This draft agreement contains alarming provisions that could empower the ringleaders of the world's largest cocaine cartel and undermine America's security interests in the region.

It would also make American taxpayers foot the bill, through their tax dollars, in support of this bad agreement that effectively whitewashes human rights abuses while the administration of President Obama seeks more than $70 million to help implement this proposal.

This agreement diminishes the FARC's responsibility for its role in drug trafficking as well as the thousands of murders and kidnappings and other innumerable crimes that the FARC has perpetrated against the Colombian people by allowing the soldiers and the leaders of the FARC to avoid any jail time for all of those crimes.

To make matters worse, this agreement creates an equivalency between the FARC and innocent civilians, categorizing both as actors in the conflict, when it has been civilians who have been the victims of the FARC's narcoterror and the FARC's brutality.

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As if that were not awful enough, Mr. Speaker, to equate innocent victims with the FARC in the courts of law, the draft agreement goes even further by allowing those very same violent drug dealers and insurgent leaders to not only stand for election to public office, but also to use the proceeds of the drug trade, the kidnappings, and all of the other illicit sources to fund their campaigns. This is incredible.

But the flaws in this deal don't end there, Mr. Speaker. This agreement will prevent the United States from extraditing any FARC members who have been accused of crimes against American citizens. This is especially troubling when we consider that many of the FARC members may receive immunity.

It would not surprise me if the Obama administration uses this deal as an excuse to drop the FARC from our list that designates the FARC as a foreign terrorist organization.

The Obama administration has never met a bad deal that it did not want to say yes to, especially if the deal empowers tyrants or acquiesces to terrorist demands. This puts our credibility and our national security at risk.

But what is really driving these requests is the Obama administration's

continued quest to appease the Castro regime. This is the same Castro regime whose weapons systems from China to Cuba was intercepted by the Colombian Government just last March and which were suspected of being intended for the FARC.

While negotiations were taking place, they were doing this illicit arms shipment. Incredible. It is the same Castro regime that, for decades, has supported the FARC and trained many of its leaders in the terror camps.

Mr. Speaker, Cuba has no interest in a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Colombia. The Castro regime is only interested in leveraging a strengthened and legitimized FARC as a dominant player in Colombia.

The proposed deal as well as those requests by Colombia of the U.S. Government are not only dangerous to our Colombian partners, but they are also dangerous to our national security and our interests in the region.

I urge my fellow Members of Congress to speak out against this terrorist group, the FARC, as well as to block any attempts by our administration to go soft in these negotiations because this weak position could threaten our safety and block American citizens from receiving their rightful justice.

I urge my colleagues to block attempts by the Obama administration to use U.S. taxpayer dollars for this agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC.

A reinforced FARC with established political legitimacy sets a dangerous precedent for other organizations with similar dangerous aspirations and anti-American objectives in the region.

Let's not force our constituents to pay for this flawed and dangerous deal with terrorist groups.

GUN CONTROL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, on February 25, in Hesston, Kansas, a disgruntled coworker killed Renee Benjamin, 30; Josh Higbee, 31; and Brian Sadowsky, 44, with an imported Serbian AK–47-type assault weapon.

ATF has the power to ban these weapons. President George H.W. Bush demanded a ban in 1989. Ironically, his son, President George W. Bush, was pressured by the NRA when he took office to repeal the importation of the assault weapon ban.

Today I am introducing the Imported Assault Weapons Ban, a bill that would ban the importation of these assault weapons once and for all. This continued bloodshed must stop. But, somehow, my colleagues continue to accept outrageous violence as part of everyday life.

In February 2016—just last month—there were 35 mass shootings, which is to say 35 acts of violence where four or more people were wounded or killed. That is more than one per day.

Here are the real people who died because of gun violence in February. Sadly, I don't have time on the floor today to name those who were injured, but those who died include the following:

Marvin Douglass Lancaster, III, age 21, was killed while in an adult club on February 6 in Tampa, Florida. Christopher Houston, 20, was also shot there and died later.

Carlos Doroteo, 49, was killed while walking in his neighborhood on February 6 in Los Angeles, California.

Jennifer Jacques, 42; Arthur Norton, 58; and Phinny Norton, 60, were killed by Jennifer's 19-year-old son Dylan in their home on February 6 in Uvalde, Texas.

Ernesto Ayber, 29, was killed on February 7 in Rochester, New York.

Joseph Villalobos, 22, and Jonathan Avila Rojas, 33, were killed inside a nightclub on February 7 in Orlando, Florida.

Carlos Bates, 29, and Isaiah Major, III, 43, were killed at a Mardi Gras parade on February 7 in Pass Christian, Mississippi.

Dwight Hughes, Jr., 21, was killed on February 7 in Chicago, Illinois.

Trisha Nelson, 28, was killed by her fiance, who was angry about parking, as she fled their car on February 12 in Plymouth, Minnesota. Her fiance was later killed in a shootout with police.

Armando Curiel, 17; Raul Lopez, 19; and his brother Angel Lopez, 20, were killed in an SUV on February 18 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Michael Broadnax, 41, was killed in a driveway on February 19 in Vallejo, California. His son, Bomani Broadnax, 22, died later of his injuries.

Officer James Lee Tartt, 44, was killed in a shootout on February 20 in Iuka, Mississippi. His family had just moved into their new home just a month earlier.

Manual Ortiz, 28, was killed at a bar on February 20 in Tampa, Florida. He had a month-old son.

Mary Lou Nye, 62; Mary Jo Nye, 60; Dorothy Brown, 74; and Barbara Hawthorne, 68, were killed in a parking lot on February 21 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The gunman then killed Rich Smith, 53, and son Tyler Smith, 17.

Emma Wallace, 37, was killed in a car on February 21 in Hazelwood, Missouri.

The Buckner family, including mother Kimberly, father Vic, 18-year-old daughter Kaitlin, and 6-year-old daughter Emma, were killed at their family home on February 23 in Phoenix, Arizona. Their son, the shooter, was killed by police.

A deputy sheriff, Corporal Nate Carrigan, 35, was killed while serving an eviction notice on February 24 in Bailey, Colorado.

Lana Carlson, 49, and her sons Quinn, 16, and Tory, 18, as well as their neighbor, Donna Reed, 68, were killed at their home by Lana's husband on February 25 in Belfair, Washington.

Crystal Hamilton, 29, was killed by her husband on February 27 in Woodbridge, Virginia. Officer Ashley Guindon, also 29, was killed while responding to the scene. It was her first shift as a police officer.

An unidentified man was killed in a parking lot on February 28 in Riverside, California.

May the dead rest in peace, the wounded recover quickly and completely, and the bereaved receive comfort. These are the faces of Americans gunned down because we lack the guts to do anything about gun violence.

WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I came back to Washington, as my colleagues did, and I saw the headlines in Politico that said: Hill GOP on the Hot Seat Ahead of Recess. It was a piece about the leadership's effort to pass a $1.7 trillion budget.

Mr. Speaker, we are headed off a fiscal cliff, with over $19 trillion in debt. Yet, Congress keeps driving toward that cliff.

Like most Members of Congress, I go home every weekend. I live in eastern North Carolina. I am very active in my district. I talk to many people, from the grocery store to church. Many times the conversation is: Why can't you in Congress wake up before it is too late?

We just heard Congressman BROOKS from Alabama talk about Venezuela. We are headed right there just as quick as we can.

The waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan is a prime example of Congress not doing its job. When I tell people back home that it was reported recently by John Sopko, Inspector General of Afghanistan Reconstruction, that the Pentagon spent $6 million to buy nine goats from Italy, some laugh and some are just disgusted.

How in the world could we keep funding the Pentagon when they waste money buying goats for $6 million? The waste of American taxpayer dollars in Afghanistan never ends.

The Wall Street Journal recently ran a story titled: ''Afghan Police Force Struggling to Maintain Membership,'' by Jessica Donati, in which she reports that more than 36,000 Afghanistan policemen left the force last year because of Taliban attacks and poor leadership.

We have spent $18 billion on training the Afghan police force and, here again, we lost 36,000. The poor taxpayer. We keep funding this waste in Afghanistan like we have got plenty of

money. What we are doing in the Congress is absolute madness.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the RECORD a NBC News report titled: ''12 Ways Your Tax Dollars Were Squandered in Afghanistan.''

[From www.nbcnews.com, March 5, 2016]

12 WAYS YOUR TAX DOLLARS WERE SQUANDERED IN AFGHANISTAN

(By Alexander Smith)

The United States has now spent more money reconstructing Afghanistan than it did rebuilding Europe at the end of World War II, according to a government watchdog.

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in a statement to Congress last week that when adjusted for inflation the $113.1 billion plowed into the chaos-riven country outstripped the post-WWII spend by at least $10 billion.

Billions have been squandered on projects that were either useless or sub-standard, or lost to waste, corruption, and systemic abuse, according to SIGAR's reports.

NBC News spoke to SIGAR's Special Inspector General John F. Sopko about 12 of the most bizarre and baffling cases highlighted by his team's investigations.

Paraphrasing Albert Einstein, Sopko said the U.S.'s profligate spending in Afghanistan is ''the definition of insanity—doing the same things over and over again, expecting a different result.''

1. $486 MILLION FOR 'DEATHTRAP' AIRCRAFT THAT WERE LATER SOLD FOR $32,000

Two of the G222 aircraft in a corner of Kabul International Airport in November 2013. SIGAR

The Pentagon spent close to half a billion dollars on 20 Italian-made cargo planes that it eventually scrapped and sold for just $32,000, according to SIGAR.

''These planes were the wrong planes for Afghanistan,'' Sopko told NBC News. ''The U.S. had difficulty getting the Afghans to fly them, and our pilots called them deathtraps. One pilot said parts started falling off while he was coming into land.''

After being taken out of use in March 2013, the G222 aircraft, which are also referred to as the C–27A Spartan, were towed to a corner of Kabul International Airport where they were visible from the civilian terminal. They had ''trees and bushes growing around them,'' the inspector general said.

Sixteen of the planes were scrapped and sold to a local construction company for 6 cents a pound, SIGAR said. The other four remained unused at a U.S. base in Germany.

Sopko called the planes ''one of the biggest single programs in Afghanistan that was a total failure.''

2. $335 MILLION ON A POWER PLANT THAT USED JUST 1 PERCENT OF ITS CAPACITY

Tarakhil Power Plant pictured in October 2009. SIGAR

The Tarakhil Power Plant was fired up in 2009 to ''provide more reliable power'' to blackout-plagued Kabul, according to the United States Agency for International Development, which built the facility.

However, the ''modern'' diesel plant exported just 8,846 megawatt hours of power between February 2014 and April 2015, SIGAR said in a letter to USAID last August. This output was less than 1 percent of the plant's capacity and provided just 0.35 percent of power to Kabul, a city of 4.6 million people.

Furthermore, the plants ''frequent starts and stops . . . place greater wear and tear on the engines and electrical components,'' which could result in its ''catastrophic failure,'' the watchdog said.

USAID responded to SIGAR's report in June 2015, saying: ''We have no indication that [Afghan state-run utility company] Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), failed to operate Tarakhil as was alleged in your letter.''

3. ALMOST $500,000 ON BUILDINGS THAT 'MELTED' IN THE RAIN

The dry-fire range in Wardak is pictured in February 2013. SIGAR

U.S. officials directed and oversaw the construction of an Afghan police training facility in 2012 that was so poorly built that its walls actually fell apart in the rain. The $456,669 dry-fire range in Wardak province was ''not only an embarrassment, but, more significantly, a waste of U.S. taxpayers' money,'' SIGAR's report said in January 2015.

It was overseen by the U.S. Central Command's Joint Theater Support Contracting Command and contracted out to an Afghan firm, the Qesmatullah Nasrat Construction Company.

SIGAR said this ''melting'' started just four months after the building was finished in October 2012. It blamed U.S. officials' bad planning and failure to hold to account the Afghan construction firm, which used poor-quality materials. The U.S. subsequently contracted another firm to rebuild the facility.

Sopko called the incident ''baffling.''

4. $34.4 MILLION ON A SOYBEAN PROGRAM FOR A COUNTRY THAT DOESN'T EAT SOYBEANS

Some of the remaining soybean inventory in March 2014 after it was imported from the U.S. to Afghanistan. SIGAR

''Afghans apparently have never grown or eaten soybeans before,'' SIGAR said in its June 2014 report. This did not stop the U.S. Department of Agriculture funding a $34.4 million program by the American Soybean Association to try to introduce the foodstuff into the country in 2010.

The project ''did not meet expectations,'' the USDA confirmed to SIGAR, largely owing to inappropriate farming conditions in Afghanistan and the fact no one wanted to buy a product they had never eaten.

''They didn't grow them, they didn't eat them, there was no market for them, and yet we thought it was a good Idea,'' Sopko told NBC News.

''What is troubling about this particular project is that it appears that many of these problems could reasonably have been foreseen and, therefore, possibly avoided,'' the inspector general wrote in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in June 2014.

5. ONE GENERAL'S EXPLANATION WHY 1,600 FIRE-PRONE BUILDINGS WEREN'T A PROBLEM

Fire breaks out at an arch-span building at the Afghan National Army's Camp Sayer in October 2012. SIGAR

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built some 2,000 buildings to be used as barracks, medical clinics and fire stations by the Afghan National Army as part of a $1.57-billion program. When two fires in October and December 2012 revealed that around 80 percent of these structures did not meet international building regulations for fire safety, Sopko said he was ''troubled'' by the ''arrogant'' response from a senior USACE chief.

Major General Michael R. Eyre, commanding general of USACE's Transatlantic Division, said the risk of fire was acceptable because ''the typical occupant populations for these facilities are young, fit Afghan soldiers.'' Writing in a January 2014 memo published by SIGAR, Eyre said these recruits ''have the physical ability to make a hasty retreat during a developing situation.''

Sopko told NBC News that Eyre's comments ''showed a really poor attitude toward our allies.'' He added: ''It was an unbelievable arrogance, and I'm sorry to say that about a senior officer.''

6. A $600,000 HOSPITAL WHERE INFANTS WERE WASHED IN DIRTY RIVER WATER

A room in Salang hospital in January 2004. SIGAR

Despite the Department of Defense spending $597,929 on Salang Hospital in Afghanistan's Parwan province, the 20-bed facility has been forced to resort to startling medical practices.

''Because there was no clean water, staff at the hospital were washing newborns with untreated river water,'' SIGAR's report said in January 2014. It added that the ''poorly constructed'' building was also at increased ''risk of structural collapse during an earthquake.''

NBC News visited the hospital in January 2014 and witnessed some disturbing practices: a doctor poking around a dental patient's mouth with a pair of unsterilized scissors before yanking out another's tooth with a pair of pliers.

The United States Forces-Afghanistan responded to SIGAR's report in January 2014 saying it would investigate why the building was not constructed to standard.

In a separate report, SIGAR said that USAID reimbursed the International Organization for Migration for spiraling costs while building Gardez Hospital, in Paktia province.

The IOM's ''weak internal controls'' meant it paid $300,000 for just 600 gallons of diesel fuel—a price of $500 per gallon when market prices should not have exceeded $5, SIGAR said.

7. $36 MILLION ON A MILITARY FACILITY THAT SEVERAL GENERALS DIDN'T WANT

An unused room at the so-called ''64K'' facility. SIGAR

The so-called ''64K'' command-and-control facility at Afghanistan's Camp Leatherneck cost $36 million and was ''a total waste of U.S. taxpayer funds,'' SIGAR's report said in May 2015.

The facility in Helmand province—named because it measured 64,000 square feet—was intended to support the U.S. troop surge of 2010.

However, a year before its construction, the very general in charge of the surge asked that it not be built because the existing facilities were ''more than sufficient,'' the watchdog said. But another general denied this cancellation request, according to SIGAR, because he said it would not be ''prudent'' to quit a project for which funds had already been appropriated by Congress.

Ultimately, construction did not begin until May 2011, two months before the drawdown of the troops involved in surge. Sopko found the ''well-built and newly furnished'' building totally untouched in June 2013, with plastic sheets still covering the furniture.

''Again, nobody was held to account,'' Sopko told NBC News, adding it was a ''gross . . . really wasteful, extremely wasteful amount of money.''

He added: ''We have thrown too much money at the country. We pour in money not really thinking about it.''

8. $39.6 MILLION THAT CREATED AN AWKWARD CONVERSATION FOR THE U.S. AMBASSADOR

A now-defunct Pentagon task force spent almost $40 million on Afghanistan's oil, mining and gas industry—but no one remembered to tell America's diplomats in Kabul,

according to SIGAR, citing a senior official at the U.S. embassy in the city.

In fact, the first the U.S. ambassador knew about the multi-billion-dollar spend was when Afghan government officials thanked him for his country's support, SIGAR said.

The project, administered by the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO), was part of a wider $488 million investment that also included the State Department and USAID. These organizations ''failed to coordinate and prioritize'' their work, which created ''poor working relationships, and . . . potential sustainability problems,'' according to SIGAR.

It was, according to Sopko, ''a real disaster.''

One USAID official told the watchdog it would take the U.S. ''100 years'' to complete the necessary infrastructure and training Afghanistan needs to completely develop these industries.

9. $3 MILLION FOR THE PURCHASE—AND THEN MYSTERY CANCELLATION—OF EIGHT BOATS

One of the eight boats sitting in a Virginia warehouse in June 2014. SIGAR

SIGAR said the U.S. military has been unable to provide records answering ''the most basic questions'' surrounding the mystery purchase and cancellation of eight patrol boats for landlocked Afghanistan.

The scant facts SIGAR were able to find indicated the boats were bought in 2010 to be used by the Afghan National Police, and that they were intended to be deployed along the country's northern river border with Uzbekistan.

''The order was cancelled—without explanation—nine months later,'' SIGAR said. The boats were still sitting unused at a Navy warehouse in Yorktown, Virginia, as of 2014.

''We bought in a navy for a landlocked country,'' Sopko said.

10. $7.8 BILLION FIGHTING DRUGS—WHILE AFGHANS GROW MORE OPIUM THAN EVER

Afghan farmers harvest opium sap from a poppy field in Nangarhar province in May 2015. NOORULLAH SHIRZADA/AFP—Getty Images, file

Despite the U.S. plowing some $7.8 billion into stopping Afghanistan's drug trade, ''Afghan farmers are growing more opium than ever before,'' SIGAR reported in December 2014.

''Poppy-growing provinces that were once declared 'poppy free' have seen a resurgence in cultivation,'' it said, noting that internationally funded irrigation projects may have actually increased poppy growth in recent years.

The ''fragile gains'' the U.S. has made on Afghan health, education and rule of law were being put in ''jeopardy or wiped out by the narcotics trade, which not only supports the insurgency, but also feeds organized crime and corruption,'' Sopko told U.S. lawmakers in January 2014.

Afghanistan is the world's leader in the production of opium. In 2013, the value of Afghan opium was $3 billion—equivalent to 15 percent of the country's GDP—according to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.

Sopko told NBC News the picture is no more optimistic today. ''No matter which metric you use, this effort has been a real failure,'' he said.

11. $7.8 MILLION ON A NEARLY-EMPTY BUSINESS PARK

The entrance to Shorandam Industrial Park in June 2014. SIGAR

The USAID-funded Shorandam industrial Park in Kandahar province was transferred to the Afghan government in September 2010 with the intention of accommodating 48 business and hundreds of local employees. Four years later, SIGAR inspectors found just one active company operating there.

This was due to the U.S. military building a power plant on one-third of the industrial park to provide electricity to nearby Kandahar City, causing ''entrepreneurs to shy away from setting up businesses'' at the site, SIGAR said in its report of April 2015.

After the military withdrew in mid-2014, the investigators were told that at least four Afghan businesses had moved into the industrial park. However, SIGAR said that it could not complete a thorough inspection because USAID's contract files were ''missing important documentation.''

12. $81.9 MILLION ON INCINERATORS THAT EITHER WEREN'T USED OR HARMED TROOPS

The DOD spent nearly $82 million on nine incineration facilities in Afghanistan—yet four of them never fired their furnaces, SIGAR said in February 2015. These four dormant facilities had eight incinerators between them and the wastage cost $20.1 million.

In addition, SIGAR inspectors said it was ''disturbing'' that ''prohibited items,'' such as tires and batteries, continued to be burned in Afghanistan's 251 burn pits. U.S. military personnel were also exposed to emissions from these pits ''that could have lasting negative health consequences,'' the watchdog said.

The Department of Defense said it was ''vitally interested in exploring all possible ways to save taxpayer dollars and ensure we are good stewards of government resources.''

A spokesman added: ''We'll continue to work with SIGAR, and other agencies, to help get to the bottom of any reported issues or concerns.''

A spokesman for Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani declined to comment on this story.

Mr. JONES. Some of the most egregious examples of waste in this list are the $486 million the Pentagon paid for deathtrap aircraft that were scrapped and sold for $32,000. You spend $486 million and what you get back is scrap. It costs $32,000. Also, $500,000 on training facilities for Afghan police that melted in the rain. The poor American taxpayer.

John Sopko, the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, has told Congress on many occasions to look at the waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan. Yet, every year we will pass appropriations bills on the floor of the House to continue to spend billions of dollars in Afghanistan. I do not understand it.

It is time for America to wake up. It is time for the Congress to wake up and bring our troops home from Afghanistan. It is time to say to Afghanistan: Fight it out, if you want to. It is your country.

Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires. There is a headstone in that graveyard that says: America, I am waiting for you. You are headed for this graveyard.

ZIKA VIRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address a serious public health issue facing our country.

As a physician, I am very concerned over the recent spread of the Zika virus in the Americas, particularly given the potential long-term effects that are now being linked to the virus.

Zika was first discovered in 1948 in Uganda. Until recently, little research or attention was paid to the virus. It was not thought to have any lasting effects until recently. Because of this, there is no vaccine, no drug treatment, and testing is not readily available.

It is important to note that four out of five individuals who contract Zika are unaware that they have it because they do not ever show any symptoms. For those that do, symptoms are generally mild.

However, as the virus continues to spread, researchers are identifying a link between Zika and infants being born with congenital microcephaly as well as a link between Zika and Guillain-Barre syndrome.

There are still many questions, and scientists are searching for answers. For example, can Zika be transmitted sexually? If so, for how long is it transmittable? What are the long-term health and economic effects of this infection?

While at this time there have been no reported cases of mosquito transmission within the U.S., there have been over 150 travel-related cases reported. Most recently a Zika case was found in Orange County, not too far from my district.

□ 1030

The CDC is currently advising pregnant women to postpone travel to Zika-affected areas, and if they must travel, to first consult with their physician and take all necessary precautions to avoid mosquitos.

Last month, the administration submitted a supplemental appropriations request for emergency funding to help fight the Zika virus. And my physician-scientist colleagues at the CDC and NIH have echoed the need for funding.

As we enter mosquito season and families start to travel for summer vacation, it is important that we do not delay this funding and work to ensure that we contain the damage the virus could cause if left unchecked. Timing is of the essence and emergency funding needs to be appropriated immediately to mitigate any potentially destructive effects.

This is why I sent a bipartisan letter, along with 61 of my colleagues, urging Speaker RYAN to bring to the floor legislation that would appropriate emergency funding to help fight the Zika virus.

This is not a Democratic issue. This is not a Republican issue. It is a public health and health security issue. The cost of not acting is just too high.

SHENANDOAH AREA COUNCIL BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA'S 2016 DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an outstanding member of my community in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia's Second Congressional District, Ed Wilson.

This afternoon in Martinsburg, Ed Wilson is being named the Shenandoah Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America's 2016 Distinguished Citizen of the Year. This award is given to exceptional members of the community who have ''noteworthy and extraordinary leadership.''

Past honorees include Senators Robert Byrd, Jay Rockefeller, SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, and JOE MANCHIN, as well as Brigadier General V. Wayne Lloyd, the former head of the 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg.

My friend, Ed Wilson, also truly personifies all that this award embodies. Born in Woodbridge, New Jersey, Ed's journey of faith and service included a very early milestone.

At the age of 10, he joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society. This Catholic charitable organization, whose local chapter was founded by his wife, Midge, offers not a handout, but a hand up. This same ethic lies behind the mission of the Boy Scouts, who Ed has worked with for so many years.

Ed served in the Navy for 3 years before earning a position with the intelligence community as a linguist and analyst. Ed worked for the CIA for 31 years, 24 of which were overseas. He was stationed around the globe, in Europe, the Middle East, Central America, and Asia.

Finally, in 1977, Ed and his wife, Midge, moved to Falling Waters, in Berkeley County, West Virginia, where they have been committed to serving our community and its needs ever since.

Ed's work for our community has been called legendary by some, and I couldn't agree more. He has served with 16 agencies, charitable organizations, and community projects, including Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Eastern Panhandle, Catholic Charities, March of Dimes, Martinsburg-Berkeley County Chamber of Commerce, Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival, and the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle.

Ed likes to say that life is too important to be taken seriously. I do agree, but I must add this. One of the serious reasons why the Boy Scouts honors Ed is the importance of his lifetime of service.

Ed provides an important role model for young men about the importance of commitment, virtue, culture, and just basic decency. With that in mind, I not only congratulate, but also thank my friend, Ed Wilson, for all he has done for our country and community.

WE NEED AN ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY POLICY.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment on a recent statement made by the leading Democrat candidate for President and former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, who just on Sunday night on CNN was asked about her policies.

She said, ''I am the only candidate which has a policy about bringing economic opportunity, using clean, renewable energy as the key into coal country because we are going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business.''

Mr. Speaker, we need a President who has an all-of-the-above energy policy, not one who so blatantly discriminates against coal. This attack and war on coal that Hillary Clinton plans to continue, just like our current President, has devastated our State. We are in a recession in West Virginia. We need a President who will fight for our coal miners, promote the all-of-the-above energy policy, and utilize our country's natural resources, including coal.

This is important to West Virginia and everyone in the country, so I call upon all of us to look at the importance of this upcoming discussion on this issue.

PENN STATE STUDENTS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING THE NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to laud the efforts of a student organization at Penn State University, located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

These students are participating, Mr. Speaker, in a nationwide competition called Up to Us. The goal is raising awareness of the national debt and the impact it will have on the leaders of tomorrow and generations to come, especially in terms of their future economic opportunities. The winning team will be recognized later this year and will receive $10,000.

The national debt isn't something you often hear much about from men and women in their late teens and early twenties, which is why I was so impressed by this.

These are signatures of more than 1,500 students seeking to raise awareness among the men and women who represent them in such places as the United States House of Representatives and the Senate.

I was happy to share some of the work we have done over the past few years in lowering the debt and pledge to continue that effort.

Spending has been reduced to historic levels under the Republican-led Congress. These fiscally responsible reductions are greater than those achieved under President Reagan and greater than those under former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich.

This has been a challenge, given that before Republicans took charge of the House, total spending to gross domestic production had skyrocketed from 21 to 24 percent. Discretionary spending alone went from 7 percent to 10 percent. We were drowning in debt.

One of the first measures in restoring financial common sense advanced by Republicans was the Budget Control Act that decreased government spending by more than $2 trillion over 10 years. By flexing the power of the purse, the Republican-led House reduced spending from 9.1 to 6.5 percent of gross domestic product.

The second significant and successful debt reduction measure came in the form of the Ryan-Murray deal. This extended the Budget Control Act savings an additional 2 years.

Newly hired Federal employees are now required to contribute more to pension plans, and taxpayers contribute less. The spending reductions that were impacting mandatory spending for the first time resulted in faster and greater debt reduction.

The very first meaningful entitlement reform that provided even greater debt reduction came from the Republican-led Medicare reform legislation that has been enacted, known as the doc fix.

Now, while this legislation provided a permanent patch of the Medicare outpatient payment system, securing access to care, health care for America's older adults, the reforms are estimated to save $2.9 trillion over 10 years in Medicare's unfunded liabilities. This leadership reduced the debt and supported the Medicare program's sustainability.

While the Republican-led Congress has taken action on debt reduction, much work remains. Raising awareness of the threats that debt creates for fiscal health, individual opportunity, upward mobility, and national security is a critical step.

I want to say thank you to the students at Penn State University who are involved in leading the Up to Us project for their work in this effort. I wish them the best of luck as they continue to work to bring attention to this very important issue.

I look forward to working with them as we continue to work at eliminating the debt that threatens their future and the future of our Nation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 39 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Tyrone M. Thomas, Charity Church, Baltimore, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name on all the Earth. We come before You today, first thanking You for another day You have allowed us to see and partake in.

We thank You for Your grace, mercy, and loving kindness you have extended to us on this day. God, we thank You for allowing us to arrive at destinations free from hurt, harm, or danger.

We ask You now, God, that You would allow our day to be a productive, purposeful, and peaceful day. Creator and God, we ask that You allow us to remain focused and on task as we go about our day-to-day responsibilities.

We ask Your continued blessings upon every Member of the House of Representatives who are represented here today. We ask that You would lead, guide, and strengthen their ability to make sound decisions for Your people.

God, as we conclude our day, we want to hear You say: Well done, thy good and faithful servant. We ask all these things in the name of the God who created all and who made all things.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. BEATTY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today is National Agriculture Day, where we recognize and celebrate the important role that agriculture plays in the United States.

As a lifelong farmer—on a small scale at times—and a longtime Christmas tree grower, I am committed to actively engaging in the creation of responsible farm policies that honor taxpayers while protecting the way of life of North Carolina's farming families.

The Fifth District of North Carolina has a rich agricultural tradition, and it is a privilege to work with local farmers to ensure they have the tools they need to continue producing their outstanding commodities.

I will keep looking for legislative innovations that ensure North Carolina's farmers are free to compete, adapt, and seize opportunities to safely maximize production and meet the needs of America and the world.

RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the young women of Girl Scout Daisy Troop 1944, ages 6 to almost 8 years of age, who recently visited my office.

After meeting with them, I was truly inspired. Mr. Speaker, they alerted me to all their great work, from volunteering in a local animal shelter to hosting a birthday party for homeless children. We also discussed the importance of civic engagement and honoring our Nation's veterans.

The members of this impressive troop are Roxanne Dion, Kirsten Wilson, Harley Craig, Cecelia Rodriguez, Aubree Meyerin, Kileigh Solberg, Brooklyn Cress, DeLana Windnagel, Lily Denovo, Georgia Woodward, Allison Helser, Kaylee Thompson, and Isabelle Jones.

During Women's History Month, let us pay tribute to the next generation of women leaders, like the young women of Daisy Troop 1944.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the works of the 1.9 million girl members of the Girl Scouts as well as the individuals who volunteer to help them as troop leaders, their parents, and Girl Scouts CEO Anna Maria Chavez, all who strive to make the world a much better place.

I say to you, Daisy troops: Job well done.

MINNESOTA'S FIRST FEMALE BRIGADIER GENERAL

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I rise today to celebrate an inspiring woman who now has a permanent spot in Minnesota's history books. Last week Sandra Best became the first female Brigadier General in the Minnesota National Guard.

General Best was a 20-year-old college student when she joined the Air National Guard in 1984. During her 32 years of service, Best has proven her dedication to this Nation and to Minnesota through a variety of leadership positions.

In her new position as Brigadier General, Best will serve as the chief of staff for the Minnesota National Guard and will be in charge of the 133rd Airlift Wing and the 148th Fighter Wing.

General Best is a true trailblazer. She has broken down barriers and forged a path that other women are sure to follow. It is with great respect and great pride that I recognize her today.

HONORING DR. JUAN FRANCISCO LARA

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Dr. Juan Francisco Lara.

Dr. Lara passionately advocated for access to the University of California system for all students. For over 35 years, he was involved at UCLA and the University of California, Irvine, in many roles, including dean, professor, and assistant vice chancellor.

At UCI, Dr. Lara played a pivotal role in the Santa Ana Partnership, an educational partnership between UCI, Cal State Fullerton, Santa Ana College, and the Santa Ana Unified School District, which is now a national model in collaborative education.

Dr. Lara was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather known for his commitment to community and love for his family. I counted him as my friend. He believed that, with the power of knowledge, kindness, and education, we could change the world.

On behalf of the people of California's 46th Congressional District, I am proud

to honor this inspiring and incredible man.

RETIREMENT OF MIKE BROWN

(Mr. MCCLINTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express the heartfelt gratitude of the people of the Tahoe Basin for Chief Mike Brown of the North Lake Tahoe Fire Department.

On March 18, Chief Brown will close a distinguished career of 26 years with that department, including 9 years as its chief, and a total of 37 years as a firefighter.

The greatest environmental threat to the Tahoe Basin is catastrophic wildfire. Chief Brown has led the fight to develop community wildfire protection plans, promote best practices for fire management, and educate the public on maintaining defensible space.

His success is measured not only in the fires he has extinguished but, far more important and far less appreciated, the fires he has prevented.

Chief Brown has been a tireless advocate for restoring sound management to our public lands to protect our communities, and Tahoe has been most fortunate to have had him.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RODERICK ''ROD'' DURHAM

(Ms. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to mourn the loss of Roderick ''Rod'' Durham, a Tallahassee teacher, actor, community leader, role model, and dear friend.

Rod was born in Maryland in 1964 and moved to Tallahassee in his teens. He graduated from Leon High School in 1982 with my sister, Cissy, and then returned to teach there in 1997.

However, Rod was far, far more than a teacher. He was a role model. His students knew they could trust to confide in him or look to him for inspiration in difficult times.

His personality was larger than life. He embodied joy and happiness. His positive energy would fill any room with smiles, love, and laughter.

His loss is heartbreaking for so many in north Florida, but I am blessed to have called him my friend. Our community will be forever grateful for his service and spirit.

Rest in peace, dear friend. Rest in peace.

PENN HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Penn High School girls basketball team for winning the Class 4A Girls Basketball State Championship on Saturday, February 27. This impressive achievement is the program's first State title.

The Kingsmen team entered the game ranked fourth in the division, but didn't let that deter them. They took a 31–30 lead at the beginning of the third quarter. The momentum continued when, after a pair of big runs, the team opened a 19-point lead early in the fourth quarter.

The Kingsmen rolled past the defending champs, the Columbus North Bulldogs, to win the championship 68–48. They finished the night shooting 52 percent from the floor and, after getting out-rebounded in the first half, topped the Bulldogs over the final 16 minutes.

This is truly an exciting victory, and it is because of the dedication of Coach Kristi Ulrich and the hard work of these student athletes that this honor has been earned.

Mr. Speaker, the names of the student athletes are: Kaitlyn Marenyi, Amber Smith, Makenzie Kilmer, Sara Doi, Chloe Foley, Delaney Jarrett, Tia Chambers, Claire Carlton, Camryn Buhr, Lindsay Chrise, Lindsy Kline, Kamra Solomon, and Janessa Chesnic. Also, Coach Kristi Kaniewski Ulrich.

On behalf of the people of Indiana's Second Congressional District, I applaud Kristi for building this team, thank the student athletes for their determination, and congratulate them all on an amazing season.

HONORING SOON-TO-BE BRIGADIER GENERAL JEANNIE LEAVITT

(Mr. HARDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, every day is a good day to honor the achievements of strong women in our lives, but March is a special time of year to highlight the stories of trailblazing women who serve as leaders in our communities and around the Nation.

This Women's History Month, I would like to recognize Colonel and soon-to-be Brigadier General Jeannie Leavitt, a woman who knows a thing or two about breaking through glass ceilings. In fact, as the Air Force's first female fighter pilot, the sky has always been her limit.

Colonel Leavitt will soon take command of the 57th Wing at Nellis Air Force Base back in my district, becoming the first woman to ever do so. This will make her the highest ranking female officer ever at Nellis and will place her in charge of our military's most important air combat testing and training assets.

While Colonel Leavitt's distinguished career in the United States Air Force has been filled with many firsts for women, it is important to remember that her achievements are a result of her being the best officer and commander for the job, man or woman.

FIX THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the time to fix our broken immigration system is now. This is the time to make sure that families are unified and children aren't taken from their parents, the time to make sure we secure our southern border to prevent the illegal flow of people and drugs, the time to make sure that we know who is in our country and to make sure that they don't represent a security threat to American citizens.

The time is long overdue. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle appreciate that we need to work together to restore the rule of law, secure our border, and make sure there is a path to legalization for the 11 million people who work hard every day and contribute to make our country even greater.

In doing immigration reform, we can reduce our deficit by over $200 billion. That is an estimate of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Part of those savings go to securing our southern border and enforcing our laws, which remain completely unenforced because they are unenforceable.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work together to finally fix our broken immigration system with one that works, restore the rule of law, and recognize that we are a Nation of laws and a Nation of immigrants.

□ 1215

ANTI-TRUMP DEMONSTRATORS

(Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, WMAL Radio in Washington reported yesterday that a group affiliated with Senator BERNIE SANDERS tweeted out a congratulations to those who forced the cancellation of the Trump rally in Chicago this past Friday, calling it a great victory.

This morning, Willie Geist, a co-host of the Morning Joe television program, said that one poll showed that 88 percent said Mr. Trump had actually been helped by the extremism of the anti-Trump demonstrators in Chicago.

Then Joe Scarborough reported that Mr. Trump had gone up 6 points in one poll in Florida since the Chicago protests, despite having $25 million in negative ads against him.

It was sad to see such hateful intolerance on public display this past Friday, and I am pleased that no conservatives are doing things like this to Clinton or Sanders rallies.

I have not endorsed anyone in this Presidential campaign, but these anti-free speech thugs and their leftist supporters should realize that all they did was make Donald Trump more popular.

RECOGNIZING RUNNING START

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as the first Hispanic woman elected to serve in Congress and as the 2016 Republican co-chair of Running Start, I am proud to recognize the great work that Running Start does to empower young women to become engaged in elective office.

Since its inception almost 10 years ago, Running Start has trained over 10,000 young ladies, many of whom are currently assisting in our congressional offices throughout the Star Fellowship program.

I have seen firsthand the level of commitment and professionalism that these young women possess. My office was introduced to Whitney Holliday, our first Start fellow, in 2009. Since then we have hosted a number of remarkable young women, including Lucinda Borque, Alexandra Curtis, Sarah Fink, and Shannon Carney. One of my staffers, Taylor Johnson, is also a proud alumna of this wonderful Running Start program.

They have all proven to be resilient young women with the skills necessary to thrive and become the leaders of tomorrow.

RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR TOMMIE WILLIAMS

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Senator Tommie Williams and his retirement from the Georgia State Senate.

Since first being elected to office in 1998, Senator Williams has spent the last 18 years representing his South Georgia constituents in extraordinary fashion.

Through the years, Senator Williams' hard work and passion has flourished as he has moved through the ranks from majority leader to President pro tempore, always working to keep Georgia's economy growing.

As a true conservative from Lyons, Georgia, a great friend, and a passionate lawmaker, Senator Williams' service to the State of Georgia will be missed. I wish my friend the best of luck in his future endeavors.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

(Mr. BENISHEK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of National Agriculture Day. Today we celebrate the farmers and ranchers who literally work to put the food on our dinner tables.

Last week I was in Posen, Michigan, and met the Styma family. They are growing hundreds of thousands of potatoes each year that families across the country will enjoy.

The next time you put a cherry on your ice cream sundae, think of Glen and Ben LaCross, who not only work full time raising cherries in northern Michigan, but also manage a fruit processing business to make delicious products, like maraschino cherries and pie fillings, available in Michigan and around the country.

Farmers, ranchers, and agribusiness owners and workers don't just provide food and fiber for the Nation; they are an important part of our economy.

In Michigan alone, the agriculture industry contributes over $100 billion annually to the economy, accounting for a quarter of Michigan's workforce.

As a member of the House Committee on Agriculture, I want to thank the farmers, producers, and agribusiness workers who feed and clothe America's families.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 15, 2016 at 9:29 a.m.:

Appointment:

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4596, SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3797, SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 640 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 640

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; (2) the further amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered

on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Committee on Rules met and reported out a rule for H.R. 4596, the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act, and H.R. 3797, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act. House Resolution 640 provides a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 4596 and H.R. 3797.

The resolution provides each bill 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Additionally, the resolution provides for the consideration of five amendments offered to H.R. 3797, as well as one amendment offered to H.R. 4596.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the resolution provides for a motion to recommit for each bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the resolution and the underlying legislation. The SENSE Act would modify the EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and Mercury and Air Toxics Standards as they apply to coal refuse-to-energy power plants, while still requiring those facilities to reduce their emissions.

There are only 19 coal refuse-to-energy facilities in the United States, but they provide an estimated 1,200 direct and 4,000 indirect jobs, many of them in economically depressed areas.

In addition to providing well-paying jobs and generating affordable energy, these power plants also address issues presented by coal refuse at no cost to the taxpayer.

Coal refuse is a waste product of coal mining found near many abandoned coal mines, and they present environmental and safety hazards to communities around the country.

They are a source of major fires. They pollute waters. They are eyesores that threaten economic development in the surrounding areas. In Pennsylvania alone, the cost of addressing coal refuse is estimated to be $2 billion.

Coal refuse-to-energy plants use coal refuse as an energy to generate affordable and reliable electricity, and it is estimated that these facilities have removed 214 million tons of coal refuse from the environment, again, at no cost to the taxpayer, and they also generate electricity, in addition to removing this coal refuse.

However, only a few of the most recently built coal refuse-to-energy plants can comply with the EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and their Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, neither of which took the unique characteristics of these facilities into account.

Because coal refuse is a waste product containing varying levels of sulfur and other regulated contaminants, the plants using it need rules that reflect this variability. The EPA refused to provide any flexibility, placing the continued operation of these coal refuse-to-energy plants in doubt.

One way the SENSE Act would correct this is by making adjustments to sulfur dioxide allowances for these plants, without lowering the overall cap on emissions.

Forcing these plants to close would harm our communities, it would actually hurt jobs, it would make our environmental problems worse, not better, and it would cost our taxpayers more money.

The other bill under consideration is the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act, and it would exempt Internet service providers with 250,000 subscribers or fewer from having to implement the FCC's enhanced transparency requirements under the 2015 Open Internet Order.

Under this legislation, the exemption would remain in effect for 5 years, enabling these small Internet service providers to focus on expanding their networks and improving connectivity.

This is a major issue for my congressional district, which includes a lot of rural communities, and they are in need of faster Internet. Many of the communities I serve in rural southeast and southwest Ohio do not have a 4G-like connection.

I know that this is an issue that is shared by many districts across the country, many Members across the country, from both sides of the aisle. So I am hopeful that this measure will pass with strong bipartisan support.

It is also important to note that the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act does not prevent consumers from accessing information, as the disclosure requirements from the 2010 Open Internet Order remain in effect.

I look forward to debating these bills with my colleagues. I urge support for the rule and the underlying pieces of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1230

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this rule and the first of the two underlying bills. The second one is largely uncontroversial. The first, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment bill—so-called Saving the Environment bill—the SENSE Act, actually leads to greater risks and more contaminations I will discuss; and then the second, the noncontroversial bill, is called the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act.

I'm a little curious as to why we are going through this particular rule process. This could be scheduled for a suspension vote. We could have possibly even done it with unanimous consent and probably finished it yesterday. But apparently the Republicans don't find that there is anything important that America wants Congress to address, so they have us debating bills that are largely not controversial that we could get done in a matter of minutes and, instead, are spending several hours debating these bills, one of which will go nowhere, the other of which we could have done very quickly to avoid this Congress having the real discussions that I believe the American people want us to undertake.

When I go back home and have townhalls and hear from constituents, I hear people crying out for a Congress that will do something about our Federal budget deficit and that will actually pass a budget. You will see later in my remarks I will mention that our previous question motion will be one that would require Congress to stay in session until we pass a budget, because there has been discussion—I hope it is not true—that the Republicans are thinking of giving up on passing a budget in the House and simply sending all of Congress home for a vacation.

I think, already, Congress is scheduled to finish Wednesday of next week. Most Americans have to work Thursday and Friday of next week. I don't know why Congress only has to work 2½ days. But that is what they are telling us. If we can't even accomplish a budget during those 2½ days, I don't know what we expect the American people to think we are doing.

So we should be talking about the tough decisions we need to make: How do we reduce the deficit and make the necessary investments in growth? How do we pass a budget? How do we fix our broken immigration system with one that works, one that secures our borders, unites families, and has a pathway to citizenship for those who work hard and contribute to our country? How do we make sure that we can improve and build upon the successes of the Affordable Care Act, recognize its shortcomings, and make the improvements necessary to move it forward?

But, no, instead, we are not doing that. We are taking up a controversial

bill, the SENSE Act, that won't become law. It has a misleading title. It won't do anything to satisfy American energy needs and certainly will not help the environment, which is why it is opposed by many environmental groups. The SENSE Act makes anything but sense.

What would make sense, of course, is discussing and voting on a budget. What would make sense is passing immigration reform. What would make sense is making progress towards balancing our budget. What would make sense is investing in research to cure cancer. What would make sense is doing our best to make America secure.

But, no, instead, we are discussing something that the Republicans have given the title the SENSE bill to, perhaps to overcompensate for the fact that it simply doesn't make sense.

Now, Republicans know the SENSE Act won't become law. Instead, we are spending, I don't know, half a day, three-quarters of a day bringing up yet another partisan attack on the Environmental Protection Agency, whose job it is to protect our air. We all breathe the air. Democrats, Republicans, Independents, animals, and plants all breathe the air. What we need is common sense to improve our air quality and move forward. What we need are solutions to break through congressional gridlock.

Again, this set of rules in this bill—which I call upon my colleagues to vote down—is clear that the Republicans are not serious. They are either unable or unwilling to bring forward fresh ideas or address the issues that our constituents are crying out that we need to deal with. This bill is simply another form of pandering when we should be taking advantage of the few remaining weeks we have of session to address the real problems of our Nation.

Now, these two bills under one rule are completely unrelated. When the Speaker came into office, he promised we would move bills with regular order. I don't understand why we can't pass the noncontroversial one. I would have gotten it done already and then had more of an open process. We did an amendment in Rules Committee to allow for an open amendment process on the SENSE Act, but it was voted down on a partisan vote. Unfortunately, the two were combined under one rule, and I am very disappointed it is not an open rule.

We need to move forward on FAA reform, making sure that we reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration to keep our skies that we rely on for commerce and tourism safe and open. We face an imminent expiration of that. We need to reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act, the Higher Education Act, find a solution to the affordable housing crisis. And, yes, we need to pass a budget. All of those things should be done before Congress gives itself another vacation. I think that is common sense.

We wonder why, in poll after poll, Congress has an approval rating of 12 percent or 14 percent. I sometimes wonder who those 12 percent are. I wonder who those 12 percent are, because I haven't met any of my constituents that have said: ''Congress is doing great. Keep on doing what you are doing.'' I think they misunderstand the question and they are probably answering in the negative, because I don't understand how any American could be satisfied with a United States Congress that punts and punts and punts on issue after issue and instead spends its entire days and weeks, on the rare occasion when it is in session, debating bills that won't go anywhere and won't be signed into law and then promptly give themselves additional vacation time as an extra bonus while patting themselves on the back. That is not the Congress that the American people want.

First, let me talk about the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act. Again, it is a bipartisan bill. I think we could have done it on suspension or unanimous consent on Monday. We could have finished it.

I come from the private sector. I operated several businesses, grew them over time and played various roles. Do you know what? In the private sector, when you can get something done quickly, the last thing you want to do is draw it out, to spend a couple of days on it. So if we have something that Congress could have finished Monday evening so that we could get moving and discussing and debating the important issues that the American people are crying out for Congress to address, why didn't we do it then? Why didn't we do it then? If they are drawing out something and having us spend half a day on something, then I think, because of the hard work of many Members who collaborated on this, we could probably complete it in 10 or 15 minutes.

This legislation is important, of course. I think we can pass it. The bill would make the temporary exemption that the FCC granted to ISPs with 100,000 or fewer subscribers and extend and expand the cap to ISPs with 250,000 or fewer subscribers that addresses bipartisan concerns about speeds and costs and gives regulatory certainty to Internet service providers, keeps the exemption level at a level that protects consumers, keeps the Internet free and open, doesn't allow large Internet service providers to act as gatekeepers that favor some content over others; and Congress should take notice of the administration's statement on this legislation, which cautions about bills that move towards threatening the open Internet. But on this exemption, specifically, I don't think we have enough information to know whether it needs to be made permanent, so I support the efforts of this bill to spur the FCC to provide needed information.

Again, I think there are a lot of Democrats and Republicans who have worked hard on this bill. We probably could have dispensed with it on Monday. But, hey, here we are. We are dealing with it under this rule. I thought, if we are going through the rulemaking process, we should at least offer an open rule. Every piece of legislation, even if it is passable, ought to encourage ideas from Democrats and Republicans in amendments to make it better. But, no, under this rule, the Rules Committee shut down the open amendment process and is not allowing Democrats or Republicans to offer germane, relevant amendments on the floor to the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act.

Now, moving on to the SENSE Act—or the non-SENSE act, as I like to call it—it won't become law. We spend a lot of time debating bills that won't become law. In fact, this House, apparently for lack of anything more important to do, has voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act over 60 times. The good news is we are not doing that again today. I thank the Speaker for not having us repeal the Affordable Care Act for the 65th time this week. That would have been a waste of time.

Instead, the Republicans are being creative about how we are going to waste our time. This is a new way to waste our time. Rather than discussing the budget or the FAA reauthorization or childhood nutrition or balancing our budget or fixing our broken immigration system, rather than doing any of those important things, we found a new and clever way to waste the time of the United States Congress in debate of a bill that will not become law.

Now, thank goodness it won't become law because the non-SENSE act is bad for Americans and poor for our health. It is a convoluted, senseless manner going after the Environmental Protection Agency's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which is called CSAPR, and going after the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, which is called MATS. Specifically, this bill would change the requirements for plants that use coal refuse.

Now, there are about 20 of these coal refuse plants in the entire country. What this bill would do is it would abandon the market-based approach for sulfur dioxide emission allowances in favor of a one-size-fits-all Federal Government approach. So this bill is effectively a Federal takeover of the regulatory structure around our coal refuse plants.

Again, it is a particularly creative way to waste Congress' time, and it is ironic because the Republicans often attack efforts to take away control

from the States. They say: How dare you Democrats suggest that anything can be done better at the national level. How dare you suggest that. How dare you suggest something that contravenes the 10th Amendment.

Do you know what? In this bill, the Republicans are proposing taking away State authority and a Federal takeover, because currently States have control over the incentives and work with coal refuse plants, but this simply says the Federal Government should override that work.

Now, that seems hypocritical. It seems against the philosophy that many Republicans have come here arguing, and it leads me to believe that many proponents of this bill seem to value their special interest pork over their philosophical integrity.

Now, this bill would create a system that the government picks winners and losers rather than markets. CSAPR has a trading program that allows plants to conform to emissions standards in different ways, like trading emission allowances; and that program, that market-based program, would be thrown out of the window with this legislation and the keys would be handed over to the Federal Government. Even more astonishing is allowing coal refuse plants to slip through loopholes in order to balance our credits actually makes it harder for regular coal plants to meet their pollution reduction goals.

I honestly don't know if the Republicans have thought about the impact of this bill or what it would do.

Now, again, knowing that it won't become law is simply a creative way for Congress to waste its time as congressional approval sinks even lower. I know that the Republicans have often accused some Democrats of engaging in a war on coal, but with this particular bill, they are the ones attacking the coal industry.

The Republicans claim that this legislation is needed to allow coal refuse plants to be able to meet various air quality standards under the MATS rule, yet throughout the entire rulemaking process there hasn't been any evidence that they can't meet the standards that are already in place. That was recently confirmed by the D.C. circuit court.

Now, it is apparent that both CSAPR and MATS are workable, smart rules that approximately 20 coal refuse plants in our country can abide by in flexible, market-oriented ways. I want to be clear. Leaving coal refuse to spontaneously combust or seep into the ground via acid rain is simply unacceptable, and we need to be cleaning it up; but allowing the plants that are processing it to do so with a weak compliance system is harmful to our health, our homes, our communities, and the environment.

Simply put, this bill is an unnecessary, imprudent bill that does nothing to help our environment or put our country on the right track. I oppose the rule, in addition to H.R. 3797.

Today we could have shown the American people that Congress can come together and do something to solve important issues in a bipartisan manner, to keep our skies safe and open, protecting commerce, by reauthorizing the FAA to pass a bipartisan budget which balances our budget and deals with our deficit; to improve the Child Nutrition Act, the Higher Education Act, any of the myriad challenges that I hear about and, frankly, I believe my Republicans hear about in their townhalls.

I don't think when we are home and hearing from our constituents—by the way, I haven't received a single letter about this coal refuse bill. I haven't heard it in any of my townhalls or gotten calls from any of my constituents. They want us dealing with the pressing issues facing the American people.

We have 84 days of session left in this Congress. By the way, Congress works 84 days. Most Americans have at least 145 days that they go to work. As an example of that, Congress is scheduled to leave town next Wednesday, will have 2 days off that week, then 2 weeks off, then another day off. So that is the type of schedule we are running here.

People wonder what Congress is doing. The answer is we are not doing anything. When we are here, we are spending more time than necessary on uncontroversial bills and we are debating bills that won't become law, and then we all go home and take a vacation. That is the Republican Congress. That is the image of what the Republican Congress is and how they are running this institution. It spends a lot of time debating something that you don't even need to. It spends other time debating things that aren't going to become law, like repealing the Affordable Care Act over 60 times and like this non-SENSE Act, and then gives Congress much greater vacation time than the American people enjoy because, apparently, Republicans think this Congress is doing so well that we all deserve a lot of vacation.

Democrats want to stay here and work on the budget. That is going to be our previous question. We believe we should get a budget done. We would like it to be a bipartisan budget. It certainly is a governing majority. We encourage Republicans to pass a budget, but if they don't have the votes, then, by all means, let's do a bipartisan budget that makes sense for our country.

□ 1245

You will find us willing to roll up our sleeves and get to work, stay here this weekend, stay here next Thursday and Friday, stay here the following week. Let's get this done. This is the work the American people want to see done.

They want to see a budget. They want to see competence. We need to show people that Congress and competence are not mutually exclusive; yet, we continue to do the exact opposite by this course under this rule of debating a bill—and wasting a day—that won't even become law.

Now, look, we have an opportunity here. A vote on this rule is an important vote for that reason. If we defeat this rule—and I call upon my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do so—we can truly send the message that we want to spend time debating the issues that the American people care about.

We want to fix the budget, the deficit, immigration, health care. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work rather than continue to blame the President for this or that or blame the Democrats for this or that.

I am honestly curious. If we can't blame the President because he was on time with his budget and you can't blame the Democrats because we are willing to roll up our sleeves and work with you on a budget deal, who are the Republicans going to blame if they can't deliver a budget?

I remember the Republicans assailing the Democrats for not delivering budgets. I am sure my colleague will remind me of that yet again. But, again, that is something that you criticized us on.

If you can't deliver a budget yourself, what is the use of the American people even having the Republicans here? What use was that criticism of the Democrats for not delivering budgets on time if the Republicans themselves don't have the ability to deliver a budget?

Now, look, we can deliver a budget with you. If the Republicans are unable to because there is freedom this or liberty that or all these different buzzwords out there for people who don't want to vote for a budget, we are happy to work with the Republicans on a budget.

Ultimately, what comes out of this process between the House and the Senate is usually some bipartisan buy-in into the budget, anyway.

We are happy to start here with you. The perfect time to do that is now. The perfect time to do that is next Thursday and Friday and the following week. I think we owe the American people a budget rather than an enormous vacation, a paid vacation, for Members of Congress.

Look, we can do better by voting down this rule. I promise you we will do better.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to clear up some misconceptions about the calendar, the budget, the rule, and the SENSE Act.

With regard to the calendar, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how the gentleman from Colorado manages his calendar. But when I go home to my district—and I won't speak for every Member of Congress—it is certainly not a vacation.

I am home meeting with constituents, touring businesses, and letting my constituents talk to me so that I know what they think so that I can do my job of representing them. That is how most of the 435 Members of this Chamber treat the district workweeks.

To assume that we are only working when we are in Washington, the other side of the aisle might love Washington, but I prefer to be home in my district working with people and then come back to Washington to represent them.

With regard to things we have done, the gentleman talked about the Affordable Care Act, but he ignored the fact that I believe—and I may get this wrong, but I am close—seven of the changes to the Affordable Care Act were signed into law.

The gentleman talked about a budget. He did finally acknowledge that, when the Democrats were in charge, Mr. Speaker, they didn't pass a budget.

I have been here since 2011, when we took over the majority, and we have passed a budget every year and have passed a budget that balances.

I believe we are going to pass a budget this year. I hope not to be proved wrong, Mr. Speaker, but we are working hard at it.

With regard to the rule, the gentleman seems to want to have it both ways. He says that the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act should have been done on suspension, on the one hand, and then he wants an open rule that would eat up even more time, on the other hand. I am not sure which it is he wants here, but let's have it one way or the other.

And then, finally, on the SENSE Act, the gentleman from Colorado ignores the fact that this bill does not change the overall emissions cap. He wants to talk about how it loosens the overall emissions cap. It does not.

Let's be clear. It does not change the overall emissions cap. It provides flexibility for only 19 refuse-to-power plants across this country, and it saves money because it would cost $2 billion in Pennsylvania alone just to clean up that refuse around these coal mines.

It is dangerous and it is bad for the environment. Providing this flexibility does not change our overall emissions, but it does help get those reclamation sites cleaned up cheaper, not as a cost to the taxpayer, and provides an additional benefit of jobs in energy. That sounds pretty American to me.

I think it is time to end this war on coal that some people in this administration and the other side of the aisle have. That is what the SENSE Act would do.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman from Ohio talked about what we do when we are back home. Of course we tour businesses, meet with people, and do all of those wonderful things. What I hear from them is: Why aren't you back in Washington solving problems?

Look, I represent one of the most beautiful districts in the entire country: Winter Park, Vail, the beautiful Flatirons near Boulder, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, the great Arts Center in Loveland, and Fort Collins. I love nothing more than going home.

But when we got elected to this position, Mr. Speaker, we promised our constituents that we will make a sacrifice. Part of that sacrifice is saying: You know what. We are going to take some time away, leave our friends and family, to work for the good of the country, to roll up our sleeves and actually solve problems.

As much as I would like to be back in Colorado, in my beautiful district, right now and I would rather personally be hiking in the hills above our home in north Boulder than I would be debating the finer points of coal refuse policy with the gentleman from Ohio, that is what I signed up for.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that that is what he signed up for, too. We signed up to do work. We owe the American people a budget. We should stay here until we complete that budget, even if it means canceling the vacation that we have scheduled.

And, yes, that vacation—when we are back home, we can't do legislative work. Sure, we can put on an apron and visit a local kitchen. We do, and I do. And you know what, it is part of the job. I am happy to do it.

But we can't pass a single law while we are back home. It is impossible, Mr. Speaker, to pass a budget while we are all back home and Congress is not in session. It is not possible if Congress is not in session.

The gentleman asked: What is a better way to proceed with this noncontroversial bill and the controversial bill? Look, either way is fine if we had an open rulemaking process, an open rule.

At least there would be some point to these discussions on the floor. There would be Republicans and Democrats who might have ideas to make these bills better that would be bringing them forward. At least there would be some point to it.

But, no, there is no point to it. Because we are debating it, we know the outcome, and Republicans and Democrats can't even offer their bills to enhance it.

We are prohibited during all of this time debating one bill that is largely noncontroversial and one bill that isn't going anywhere and won't become law.

We are spending the entire week debating these bills—or most of the week. I know we will be back to discuss another court case relating to immigration later this week.

But the bulk of the week is debating this rather than the budget, securing our border, keeping the American people safe, growing the economy, creating jobs, investing in infrastructure, FAA authorization, any of those issues.

But when I am back home and visiting businesses, I hear about it from my constituents. You would think that, with all the time we spend back home that the gentleman from Ohio calls nonvacation time because we are always listening to people, we would listen more and actually do what the American people say.

Are the American people saying to address the miniscule aspects of the coal refuse plant and CSAPR and MATS?

Let me be honest, Mr. Speaker. Until this debate, I thought CSAPR was just a friendly ghost, because the American people back in my district are not really about CSAPR and MATS.

In fact, once I understood them, I thought they sounded good. They are market-based approaches. I don't think this Federal takeover that the Republicans are proposing is a good idea.

Instead, if we are spending all this time listening back home, which we certainly are because Congress is hardly working here, then at least let's listen to what the American people say.

I believe they are speaking strongly with one voice, whether they are Republican or Democratic. I hear the same things from my constituents, the unaffiliated constituents, the Republicans, the Democrats, the Greens, the Libertarians. What they all tend to say, what they all say, is: Go do your job. Pass a budget. Pass a budget.

Democrats believe that. Republicans believe that. Unaffiliated voters believe that. Greens, Libertarians, and the American Constitution Party believe that. If I have left out any other parties, I am pretty sure in saying that they also think that Americans should have a budget.

We have budgets for our households. I have a budget for my household. We have budgets for our States. Doesn't the American Congress owe the American people a budget?

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to prohibit the House from going on recess next week until we do our job and pass a budget.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with the extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to remind the gentleman from Colorado that, when the Democrats were in charge of Congress, they went on—I will use his word—vacation 4 years in a row without passing a single budget, not a single budget.

We have passed a budget every year, and I believe we are going to pass a budget this year, just as a reminder to the gentleman of what happened. I think he wants to have it both ways again, and I would just like to remind him, Mr. Speaker.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), who listened to his constituents to deal with an issue that is very important to him. I will let him address it.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

In addition to listening to my constituents, I have been listening to my good friend from Colorado about wanting to come here to solve problems. Well, the SENSE Act is about solving a problem.

I, too, have a beautiful district. I consider it the most beautiful district in the country. You get on top of some of those mountain vistas and it is breathtaking.

But unlike the gentleman from Colorado, there are some scars when you look up at some of those vistas. The scars are a vestige of ages-ago mining.

That is why the SENSE Act, Mr. Speaker, is a smart and important legislative fix to ensure that the coal refuse-to-energy facilities can be held to strict, but achievable, standards.

Coal refuse, as some of you may know—and perhaps this is an educational moment for people in this country to learn more about what we have up there in Pennsylvania—is a byproduct of historic coal-mining operations. Anyone who has driven through coal country has seen the towering black mounds of this material that loom beside cities and towns and countrysides.

These mounds catch fire, burning uncontrollably and sending hazardous smoke into the air. Rainwater leaches terrible chemicals from those mounds, polluting nearby rivers and streams.

The coal refuse-to-energy industry turns this material into energy and uses the profits and beneficial residual material to remediate these formerly polluted sites at no cost to the taxpayer. It is really the only feasible solution to this massive environmental problem.

I have seen the tremendous work done by the hardworking men and women in this industry firsthand. I have stood on coal refuse piles in the process of remediation. I have walked on the restored sites. Parks and meadows now are regarded as community assets rather than liabilities.

Despite all the good that this industry does for Pennsylvania, coal refuse-to-energy facilities are under attack from the EPA. The people of my State and other coal States expect us to stand up for them as their environment and livelihoods come under threat from Washington.

As we debate the rule for this legislation and prepare for general and amendment debate, I want to share a few stories from the people in this industry. These are people who are proud of the great work they have done for their communities. Unfortunately, their way of life is currently endangered.

Bill Turner is a shift supervisor at the A/C Colver coal refuse facility in Cambria County. Bill has served at Colver for 22 years. He is a long-term resident of western Pennsylvania and has lived alongside coal refuse piles for many years.

Bill and his colleagues are proud of the reclamation work that his plant and others in the area have been able to complete over the years.

He was able to put three kids through college, thanks to his job at Colver, and I should mention that these kids grew up playing soccer on a field reclaimed from a coal refuse site.

□ 1300

When I asked him about the prospect that his industry might be destroyed by the EPA, he remarked, ''To see it disappear would be a travesty.''

Tim is an operations shift supervisor—a younger man, in his early thirties, with a wife and two small kids. Wages at his plant are well above the area average, and he is planning on building a new house near the plant for his young family.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these plants are in economically challenged areas. These jobs that these individuals have are not replaceable. Allowing inflexible EPA orthodoxy to shutter his plant, a plant that supports family-sustaining jobs and that repairs the local environment, would be a disaster for Tim and his family.

At least 5,200 jobs are at stake, and each one of those jobs is more than just a number. Each job lost is a Tim or a Bill. Each job lost represents a major hardship for an American family.

As we debate the SENSE Act, please keep in mind what the bill's supporters are fighting for. The SENSE Act is about protecting family-sustaining jobs and is about ensuring the continuation of the environmental success story of the coal refuse-to-energy industry.

I urge all Members to support this rule and the SENSE Act today so that we can begin to solve problems.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would, of course, like to remind the gentleman from Pennsylvania that my mountains are higher than his mountains. I also want to let the gentleman know that my district is no stranger to coal mining as well. Coal mines in northern Colorado existed throughout my district and near my district in Marshall, Superior, Louisville, Lafayette, Erie, Dacono, Frederick, and Firestone. The mines employ thousands of people.

Just 2 years ago, we observed the 100th anniversary of the Ludlow Massacre, which was an attack by the Colorado National Guard and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company guards on a tent colony of 1,200 striking coal miners and their families in Ludlow, Colorado, on April 20, 1914.

Unfortunately, in that tragedy, two-dozen people were killed in that black mark on our Nation's labor history. I would like to think how far the United Mine Workers have come and how far we have come in protecting workers' rights.

Certainly we understand the legacy of not just coal mining in my district. The gentleman mentioned abandoned mines in the mountain territory of our district. We have many abandoned silver and gold mines. We have an active molybdenum mine right near my district. Many workers live in my district and, of course, mining remains an important part of the West and, of course, of the East as well.

Again, I would certainly advance the argument that even coming from a mining district, Congress spending an entire week, basically, debating these two bills is not something that justifies our time here.

The gentleman from Ohio rightly mentioned that Democrats did not produce a budget, and yes, that might have been one of the reasons the American people said, ''Okay. Republicans, we will give you a chance. You guys produce a budget.''

Do you know what?

If you guys don't produce a budget, you guys are blowing that opportunity, Mr. Speaker. If the Republicans can't deliver a budget, I think the Democrats have learned from experience.

I certainly will go out and campaign on—and I think many of my colleagues will say—''Look. The Republicans could not deliver a budget.''

Most Democrats have learned our lesson. We are going to get back in the majority and we are going to deliver a budget to the American people. I certainly will work very hard to do that.

I am proud to be one of about 16 Democrats and a similar number of Republicans who voted for a bipartisan budget in the last Congress. It didn't pass. It was the only budget that had Democrats and Republicans supporting it. Of course, it also had Democrats and Republicans opposing it in greater numbers, unfortunately; but that is at

least the spark—the kind of idea we need to pursue—to be able to work together to govern this country.

Rather than spinning our wheels and spending a lot of time debating a bill that isn't controversial and a lot of time debating a bill that isn't going anywhere, we should take up important legislation. We should address comprehensive immigration reform; securing our borders, making sure that workers who are important to our country have a way out of the shadows; uniting families; and protecting the security of the American people rather than wasting time in trying to change commonsense rules for 20 coal refuse plants—rules that are working and that have been affirmed by the district court.

We could be addressing the Nation's pressing issues like climate change and carbon emissions and out-of-control student debt or how we can improve opportunities for the struggling middle class.

Rather than wasting the American people's time and taxpayer dollars on debating a special interest provision, we could take up the Email Privacy Act, which would protect the American people's privacy and which has 312 cosponsors—more than any other bill in this Congress and which has a solid veto-proof majority.

We could take up criminal justice reform, which I know many people on both sides of the aisle feel very strongly about and which I strongly support, which could improve our economy, reduce crime, reduce costs, and is a moral imperative; or as I mentioned, we could take up our budget, as is the duty and responsibility of Congress, rather than all go back to our districts and put on aprons and serve lattes and meet people in our local diners.

I urge the House majority to take up these important pieces of legislation, which are supported by a majority of Americans, that are critical to our economy and align with our values rather than to debate stale, unnecessary miner bills that won't even become law.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to remind the gentleman from Colorado that it is not a ''minor'' bill for the 5,200 people whose jobs are on the line every day right now.

Mr. POLIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STIVERS. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. It is a ''miner'' bill. I was spelling ''miner'' a different way than you.

Mr. STIVERS. Okay. That kind of ''miner'' I am good with. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), an esteemed member of both the Rules and Budget Committees.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend from Ohio for yielding the time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I had not planned on coming down here. I know we are on a clock and we are trying to get some things done, but I heard the passionate words of my friend from Colorado—and he is my friend from Colorado.

I think about what is, sadly, the sometimes short list of folks who are on the other side of the aisle with whom you can grapple with the really difficult issues of the day in this institution.

Mr. POLIS is one of those folks to whom you can always go and have a very candid and serious conversation about things, even those things on which you disagree, which I think is why it has so distressed me to hear some of the words that he had to share today.

Now, I confess that this is sometimes part of the show down here on Rules Committee day, and sometimes folks have the talking points, and they are obligated to go through those talking points. Yet, as a member of the Budget Committee and as a relatively young Member in this institution, I would say to my friend from Colorado that the reason approval ratings in this institution are so low is that you and I stand up here and we tell our constituents that they are supposed to be so low.

Instead of telling our constituents that we have been working on a budget the way we are supposed to work on a budget—line by line, word by word because it is a serious challenge that deserves a serious solution—we tell folks we have just thrown up our hands and quit. Not true.

I sit on the Budget Committee. Tomorrow, from dawn until dusk, we will be in that hearing room doing nothing but budgeting. We will hear every single idea, every single alternative. Every choice that can be made, we are going to make tomorrow. Now, that is not just one day of budgeting; that is the culmination of days, weeks, and months of working together, trying to get this budget done.

My friend is right. When I hear constructive criticism about how Republicans ought to work to pass budgets, I know that doesn't come from this decade, because Democrats have not passed a budget this decade. This House has. Together we have, and I am very proud of that.

Every year since I have come to this institution—5 years ago—we have come together and we have passed a budget. Last year, we came together and we passed a budget for the entire United States of America. For the first time in a long time, we got the Senate to move.

This is a cooperative exercise, and I am proud to be in it; but we can't tell people that we are letting them down when, in fact, we are delivering.

I look at my friend from Pennsylvania who is delivering on the SENSE Act. I think the non-SENSE Act is a clever term, but the truth is the ''nonsense'' is suggesting that he is doing anything except the job his constituents sent him to do. He has facilities in his district that are closing down. He has families in his district who are losing their jobs. He has people who are depending on him, his bosses back home in the district depending on him to come and make a difference for them.

I get it. Folks over here might not like it, folks over here might not like it, folks over there might not like it, but it is what he gets paid to do. To suggest that bringing his ideas down here is a waste of time is something I reject in the most forceful terms. He is doing what he is supposed to do.

I would tell you that, if we all spent less time being focused on being good Republicans and less time on being good Democrats and more on being good servants to the people who sent us here, those approval ratings would take care of themselves.

These campaign seasons drive me crazy. Folks spend 18 months not doing their jobs and 6 months raising money, trying to convince people they were. I believe if we do our jobs, we are going to get rewarded for it; and if we don't do our jobs, we are going to be punished for it; but we have got to be clear about what our job is.

KEITH ROTHFUS' job is not to make anybody in the great State of Georgia happy or anybody in the great State of Colorado happy. His job is to stand up for families who can't stand up for themselves in Pennsylvania, and I applaud him for it. His job is to do the things that nobody else in this institution is going to do, because he works for them.

This is not a waste of time today. This is exactly what we are supposed to be doing. Don't you worry about that budget. Your Budget Committee is going to deliver for you, and you are going to be proud of the work product that we do; but we have got to tell folks that representative government still works. We have got to tell folks that Congress still works. We have got to tell folks that they are still the boss of the United States of America.

You look at this Bernie Sanders phenomenon and this Donald Trump phenomenon. Folks think they are no longer the boss. I look at KEITH ROTHFUS' State, and I know of the good men and women of Pennsylvania who sent him here to stand up in the face of attacks from all sides. He is delivering for his people back home. Vote ''yes'' or vote ''no.'' It is your voting card—do what you want to with it—but let's never impugn one of our colleagues for doing exactly what he was sent here to

do, and that is to stand up for the men and women we represent back home.

Again, I say to my friend from Colorado, when it comes to the really hard issues of the day, there is no one who I am more comfortable working with. There is no one who is more willing to reach across the aisle, and I admire that vote on the bipartisan budget that he took. That was the very first year that I arrived here. Yet we can't let these political seasons turn into telling each other why everybody up here is a scoundrel and a cheat. There are some good men and women up here. The gentleman from Colorado is one, the gentleman from Ohio is one, and the gentleman who brings the SENSE Act here before us today is absolutely one. I am proud to serve with each of you.

Mr. POLIS. Does the gentleman from Ohio have any remaining speakers?

Mr. STIVERS. I am prepared to close.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his thoughtful remarks. Certainly there is no one in this debate who has called anybody a scoundrel or anything of the sort.

The specific concerns of Mr. ROTHFUS would best be addressed in Harrisburg. For the Republicans, that is the capital of Pennsylvania. Don't worry. I had to ask as well. That is where this could best be addressed. The Republicans have talked a lot about empowering the States to solve problems rather than always coming to Washington to solve our problems for us.

Guess what?

Harrisburg is empowered to deal with this issue today, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania would be best served in spending time with his Governor, the State regulators, and the State legislature to address the very issues for which he is trying to do this end run in coming to Congress to spend our time here, debating.

The gentleman from Georgia also mentioned that they are hard at work on the Budget Committee. I hope so. I mean, I trust the gentleman. I am sure they are. They are working. I hope that this Congress will stay in session long enough to see the results of that and to pass a budget. That is what our ''previous question'' motion would do. It would simply say that we prohibit the House from going into recess until we do our job and pass a budget. It is entirely consistent with the work that the Budget Committee is doing that will ultimately have to then be reflected in the rank-and-file membership on both sides being a part of that process as well, and we owe it to the American people to let that process be completed and to pass a budget.

I urge the Republicans to take up these important pieces of legislation that I have talked about—a budget, the FAA reauthorization, the Child Nutrition Act, securing our border and fixing our broken immigration system, balancing our budget, investing in infrastructure, tax reform. These are actions that I hear about back home every day I am back, and I think it is important that we act on them. They are important to our economy and they are important to our values as Americans—rather than debating bills that might feel good but won't become law and ultimately are not the right way to solve our problems.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, before I close, I would like to urge my colleague from Colorado to use his 5 legislative days to ensure the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD does appropriately say it is a miner act—M-I-N-E-R instead of M-I-N-O-R act—where he said it was a minor act. I think that is a very important distinction, and it is a distinction with a difference. He made the statement earlier, so I hope he does use his 5 legislative days to correct the RECORD on that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 640 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 3. It shall not be in order to consider a motion that the House adjourn on the legislative day of March 23, 2016, unless the House has adopted a concurrent resolution establishing the budget for the United States government for fiscal year 2017.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1331

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia) at 1 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 640;

Adopting House Resolution 640, if ordered;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 2081; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3447.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4596, SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3797, SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 640) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 177, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 114]

YEAS—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—177

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—21

Babin
Becerra
Beyer
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Capuano
Carter (TX)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Takai
Thornberry
Wenstrup

□ 1353

Messrs. TED LIEU of California, GRAYSON, and ASHFORD changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 235, noes 176, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 115]

AYES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold

Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—176

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—22

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Cole
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Rogers (AL)
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Takai
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Watson Coleman
Wenstrup

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1400

Ms. CLARKE of New York changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2081) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 410, nays 2, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 116]

YEAS—410

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan

Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—2

Amash
Watson Coleman

NOT VOTING—21

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hardy
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Takai
Thornberry
Waters, Maxine
Wenstrup
Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1408

Mr. RANGEL changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12642

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3447) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 3, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 117]

YEAS—406

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
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Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
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Scott, Austin
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Sensenbrenner
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Shuster
Simpson
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Slaughter
Smith (MO)
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Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
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Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
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Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
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Van Hollen
Vargas
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Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
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Walorski
Walters, Mimi
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Weber (TX)
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Brady (PA)
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Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Poliquin
Roskam
Rush
Salmon
Smith (WA)
Takai
Thornberry
Turner
Wenstrup
Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1415

Mr. TAKANO changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 117, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 3797.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 640 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3797.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1417

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, with Mr. WESTMORELAND in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is not often that Congress has the opportunity to help an industry that creates both jobs and energy while also improving the environment, and it is especially rare when we can do that at no cost to the taxpayer. H.R. 3797, the SENSE Act, accomplishes all this. That is why we are here today, and that is why I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the author of the legislation.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the chairman for yielding, and I thank him for the support that he and the Energy and Commerce Committee have expressed for H.R. 3797, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act, also known as the SENSE Act.

Mr. Chair, the SENSE Act is a vitally important effort that I have championed in various forms for my nearly 3 years in Congress. This bill recognizes the overwhelming success of the endangered coal refuse-to-energy industry in making my district in western Pennsylvania and others across coal country healthier and cleaner places to work and live.

Without the SENSE Act, coal refuse-to-energy facilities will close, and their environmental mediation efforts will end. Contrary to the claims of this legislation's supposedly environmentalist opponents, the SENSE Act is a pro-environment bill.

As many of you know, the coal industry has been an important part of the economy in Pennsylvania for many generations. Historic mining activity unfortunately left behind large piles of coal refuse. These piles consist of lower quality coal mixed with rock and dirt. For a long time, we did not have the technology to use this material, so it accumulated in large piles in cities and towns, close to schools and neighborhoods, and in fields across the countryside. This has led to a number of environmental problems that diminish the quality of life for many people in the surrounding areas. Vegetation and wildlife have been harmed, the air has been polluted, and acid mine drainage has impaired nearby rivers and streams.

I have been to many of these sites and seen firsthand the environmental danger they pose. Coal refuse piles can catch fire, causing dangerous and uncontrolled air pollution. Runoff from these sites can turn rivers orange and leave them devoid of life.

The cost to clean all this up is astronomical. Pennsylvania's environmental regulator estimates that fixing abandoned mine lands could take over $16 billion, $2 billion of which would be needed for coal refuse piles alone.

We needed an innovative solution to this tough challenge. A commonsense compromise was necessary to get the job done and protect the environment. That is where the coal refuse-to-energy industry comes in. Using advanced technology, this industry has been able to use this previously worthless material to generate electricity. This activity powers remediation efforts that have so far been successful in removing over 200 million tons of coal refuse and repairing formerly polluted sites across the Commonwealth and other historic coal regions.

Thanks to the hard work of the dedicated people in this industry, landscapes have been restored, rivers and streams have been brought back to life, and towns across coal country have been relieved of unsafe and unsightly waste coal piles.

They do say that a picture paints a thousand words, and that is what I have here. In the foreground you have a waste coal pile that is under the process of remediation. In the background, the green hillside used to look just like the black foreground that you see here. This has been reclaimed. This is what is happening across Pennsylvania as we restore these hillsides.

It is important to note that private sector leadership on this issue has saved taxpayers millions of dollars in cleanup costs. That is why Pennsylvania's abandoned mine reclamation groups have endorsed my bill, and that is why we have also earned the support of clean water advocates.

Unfortunately, intensifying and inflexible EPA regulations threaten to bring much of the coal refuse industry's activity to a halt. This would leave billions of dollars of vital cleanup unfinished, lead to thousands of job losses, and endanger our energy security.

The SENSE Act addresses challenges arising from the implementation of two existing rules: MATS, the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, and CSAPR, known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule.

Though all coal refuse-fired power generators can meet—can meet—the mercury standard under MATS, many facilities will be unable to meet the rule's new hydrogen chloride or sulfur dioxide standards. Contrary to what critics allege, the SENSE Act simply provides operators with alternative MATS compliance standards that are strict but achievable.

Similarly, although coal refuse-fired power generators were provided sufficient sulfur dioxide allocations in phase 1 of CSAPR's implementation, these facilities were allocated insufficient credits in phase 2, which is set to begin in 2017. The SENSE Act seeks to provide coal refuse-fired power generators with the same allocations levels in phase 2 as in phase 1.

My bill also contains provisions to ensure that this change does not simply create a profit center for the industry. Credits allocated as a result of the SENSE Act's implementation must go to covered plants, specifically those that use bituminous coal refuse, and they cannot be sold off to other operators.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman from Pennsylvania an additional 1 minute.

Mr. ROTHFUS. In the last Congress, I merely attempted to exempt these facilities from MATS compliance with SO_2 and HCl. Building upon my efforts, Senators TOOMEY and CASEY from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania offered a bipartisan amendment providing similar treatment for these plants within the context of both MATS and CSAPR. While this proposal was supported by a bipartisan majority of Senators, it failed to achieve the supermajority necessary to pass.

What we are looking to achieve today is much narrower and far more limited than our effort in the last Congress,

which received bipartisan support. This should not be a controversial or bipartisan issue. We want to hold this industry to high standards, but standards they can actually achieve.

My bill will help keep the coal refuse industry in business so that the local community, economy, and environment will continue to reap the benefits. The people who live near coal refuse piles and all of the communities downstream of these hazards expect us to find a solution.

I thank the chairman for his time and cooperation with this vital piece of legislation.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3797. Once again, this House is using valuable time to consider a bill that has no chance of becoming law.

H.R. 3797, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act, or the SENSE Act, is an unnecessary bill that undermines public health and the environment. Unfortunately, this is no surprise. Throughout this Congress and the previous one, House Republicans have brought many bills to the floor that undermine the Clean Air Act, which also undermines public health and environmental protection. But this bill deserves special recognition because it also undermines States' authorities and picks winners and losers in the emission reduction effort.

H.R. 3797 denies a State's right to decide which tradeoffs to make in allocating emission credits among different facilities in its jurisdiction. It allows waste coal-burning facilities to generate more pollution, forcing other facilities, including traditional coal-fired utilities, to find greater emission reductions.

The legislation undermines two important public health rules issued under the Clean Air Act. The first is the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, or CSAPR, and the second is the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, or MATS, rule. These rules will help reduce toxic air emissions, including sulfur dioxide, hydrochloric acid, and mercury, which makes the air cleaner and safer to breathe for all of us.

CSAPR uses an emissions trading mechanism to incentivize utilities and other facilities to reduce harmful air pollutants. These market-based mechanisms have been very successful at reducing pollution at the lowest cost. Facilities that become cleaner, either by becoming more efficient, installing pollution control equipment, or by switching to another fuel, generate valuable pollution credits, and they can use these credits or sell them to other facilities.

Unfortunately, this legislation undermines the proven market mechanism used in CSAPR. If the SENSE Act were to become law, there would be far less incentive to reduce pollution because the bill effectively reduces the value of making emission control investments.

With respect to the second rule, the MATS rule, the bill's advocates claim that waste coal plants deserve special consideration due to the nature of the fuel that they burn. They argue that these plants are being used to clean up waste coal piles, the coal refuse and other materials that were left over from past coal mining operations. This waste causes land and water pollution problems in many former coal mining areas.

While there may be benefits to burning waste coal to generate electricity, it can and should be done in a manner that avoids undue air pollution. Otherwise, the problems that now exist on land and in the water will simply be transferred to the air and spread out over a larger area. Mercury, in particular, is a highly toxic substance that does not break down. It is associated with serious health impacts, including neurotoxicity and cancer.

The operators of waste coal facilities asked EPA to consider their facilities separately from other coal plants, but EPA found these facilities are able to comply with these rules and there is no justification for treating waste coal facilities differently from other coal-fired generation facilities—and the courts agreed. These are coal-burning utilities, and they can use existing pollution control technologies to reduce their emissions.

So, Mr. Chairman, under the conditions of CSAPR, States have the authority to design their own emission allocation. Today, a State can allow waste coal facilities to emit higher levels of pollution and impose stricter pollution limits on other facilities if they choose to do so, but this legislation eliminates the State's flexibility and imposes a one-size-fits-all solution on the States. This legislation is essentially coming to the floor to benefit fewer than 20 facilities that exist in a handful of States, with most of the facilities located in Pennsylvania.

The States already have the ability to provide waste coal facilities with additional emission credits or other assistance if they choose to do so. So the SENSE Act creates more problems than it solves. It is unnecessary. It undermines the incentive to produce cleaner air, which is essential to improving public health and the environment, and it undermines State authority.

The White House strongly opposes the bill and has issued a veto threat saying that it would threaten the health of Americans. I agree, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3797, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act, or the SENSE Act.

Mr. Chairman, coal refuse is an aboveground waste product of coal mining that can pose a number of environmental and safety threats to our country. To address these threats, specialized power plants, known as coal refuse-to-energy plants, were developed to recycle their waste product while generating affordable, reliable electricity to the American people.

□ 1430

Yet, the EPA has continually written rules and regulations that will ultimately shut down these specialized plants.

The Agency's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and their Mercury and Air Toxics Standards include certain emission limits that are just not achievable for coal refuse-to-energy plants.

These EPA regulations will cost and result in billions of dollars in environmental cleanup. This could all be prevented by refuse-to-energy plants.

That is why H.R. 3797 is so important. It will provide targeted modifications to the EPA rules as they apply to coal refuse-to-energy plants.

There are no major initiatives. There are no new laws being created. We are only making target modifications to EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and their Mercury and Air Toxics Standards so Americans can receive safe, affordable energy, keep their jobs, and have a cleaner environment.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3797 so that we can make sure that we continue to create more jobs while making our environment cleaner.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE), my colleague.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my ranking member, Mr. PALLONE, for the time.

I rise in opposition to the SENSE Act.

This bill, introduced by Congressman ROTHFUS from my home State, is an effort to help coal refuse plants, most of which are located in the State of Pennsylvania.

Industry estimates that coal waste piles cover approximately 170,000 acres of Pennsylvania, left over from coal-mining operations that stopped decades ago.

Coal refuse plants then turn this coal waste into a small portion of Pennsylvania's energy portfolio and play an important part in remediating and rehabilitating the environment.

Left alone, these waste coal fields can pollute the groundwater and contaminate other water sources. They

can also, if sparked by an ATV, lightning, or other occurrences, burn unabated and release dangerous pollutants at eye level.

For years, these waste coal plants have provided an important service, turning environmental hazards into energy. Accordingly, they have enjoyed many years of bipartisan support in my home State.

I want to say at the outset I appreciate what Mr. ROTHFUS is trying to do. This is an important issue in our State, and it needs to be addressed. The problem is it is his solution that I can't support.

This bill seeks to make it easier for these plants to comply with two regulations, CSAPR and MATS. It does this not by funding new technology to make plants cleaner or more efficient, reducing costs of operation, or changing electricity contracts.

Instead, what the SENSE Act does is two things. It fundamentally changes CSAPR by playing favorites with power sources and then rolls back important standards under MATS.

By extending phase 1 implementation standards for SO_2 for only these plants, but not increasing the overall cap, the SENSE Act prioritizes coal refuse plants over all other sources of electricity.

All other sources in my home State have to make up for the extra credits coal refuse plants get to keep. This is bad policy and bad practice. You can't rob Peter to pay Paul in complying with regulations.

The SENSE Act would significantly increase the proportion of SO_2 credits allocated to coal refuse plants. I have seen estimates that the percentage of SO_2 credits allocated to these plants would actually double. Again, all other plants in my State would then have to make up the difference.

The SENSE Act also removes an important option provided to States under CSAPR: the ability to draft and submit their own compliance plan.

At this point, our State has chosen not to take this option, but we shouldn't remove Pennsylvania's and other States' abilities to craft their own implementation plans. The SENSE Act just creates alternative implementation standards for coal refuse plants under MATS that are weaker on protecting our air.

What comes next? I know we have implementation dates for NO_X standards that could be tough across the coal industry in my own State. Are coal refuse plants going to come back and say they need another carveout, another exception? This just sets a bad precedent.

But it is not just a bad precedent. It is a dangerous precedent. CSAPR and MATS protect the air we breath and help mitigate the impact that we have on our climate. If every single source of power was allowed to make exceptions to rules and regulations, we would be in deep trouble.

There are coal refuse plants that burn both bituminous and anthracite waste coal that have said they will be able to comply with CSAPR and MATS. There are only 19 of these facilities in the entire country.

Fourteen of them are in Pennsylvania, and five of those plants say they can comply with CSAPR and MATS as currently written. They may need to add some new technology and improve their processes, but that is the nature of the power industry in the 21st century.

It is changing. We have to adapt. Bills that roll back or modify these regulations I just don't believe are the right way forward. I think there may be alternative ways forward on this tough issue.

Like I said earlier, these plants provide an important environmental benefit to my home State, and I would like to see it continue.

We should look at all available options, whether it is States drafting their own implementation plants, whether it is providing a tax credit for the processing of this coal based on its environmental benefit, incentivizing other plants to co-fire with waste coal, or adding new fuel sources at existing waste coal plants.

I want to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take a hard look at this and try to come up with a solution that we can all agree to because this is a critical issue.

I want to thank my colleague from Pennsylvania for bringing much-needed attention to waste coal. I hope that we are able to work together on this issue in the future. But, for now, the SENSE Act is not the right solution to the problem, and I must oppose it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to commend Mr. ROTHFUS once again for introducing this important legislation.

We find ourselves here today because the EPA in the Obama administration has been more aggressive than any EPA in history.

I might say that the Supreme Court recently issued a stay on the clean energy plan because it was so extreme, so unprecedented, that even legal scholars like Professor Larry Tribe at Harvard University said that the clean energy plan was like tearing up the Constitution of the U.S., that what they are doing under that plan is so extreme.

What we are talking about here is we are talking about 19 coal refuse-to-energy facilities operating in America. They employ about 1,200 people directly, about 4,000 people indirectly, and they have a payroll of about $84 million a year. Each one of these plants, on average, is less than 100 megawatts.

The amount of emissions is very small. But the fact that they are able to use coal refuse that has been accumulating for years and years and years as America burned coal to produce electricity—we have a lot of waste refuse out there. These plants are cleaning it up. We know that, without this kind of cleanup, taxpayer dollars would be used to do it.

It is true that they have some emissions. It is also true that there is a tremendous environmental benefit by cleaning it up, not to mention the jobs that are created.

Now, people always say: Well, if you change this rule at all, if you adjust what EPA has done at all, you are going to make it more harmful to Americans who are breathing the air.

In our hearings about this particular issue, the Mercury and Air Toxics rule, I want to point out that the EPA admitted that its own Mercury and Air Toxics rule would not generate significant mercury reduction benefits and, in fact, attributes nearly all of that rule's benefits to the indirect reductions in fine particulate matter that is regulated in another part of the Clean Air Act.

EPA itself has admitted that allowing these plants to operate and the adjustments to be made is not a significant issue.

If you consider the fact that—actually, the U.S. Court of Appeals rendered a decision because a lawsuit was brought about EPA not forming a special subcategory for these coal refuse plants and they said it was not a violation of the Clean Air Act, that a subcategory was not set up by EPA.

But if you read the opinion, EPA certainly could have set up a special category for these coal refuse plants and decided not to do it.

The reason we are here today is because we have a job. We are the party, we are the body, that wrote the Clean Air Act, and we disagree with the EPA on this particular issue.

We are saying 19 plants, 14 in one State, 1,200 jobs directly, 4,000 jobs indirectly, $84 million in a payroll, and EPA itself says this is not a major environmental issue.

We make the argument that the benefits of cleaning up these abandoned sites would offset the minute lack of reduction in the MATS rule and the SOx rule.

For those reasons, I respectfully would say that I think, overall, the benefits are much greater by adopting the SENSE Act as authored by Mr. ROTHFUS.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to respond to some of the Republican claims regarding the MATS rule.

The Energy and Commerce Committee held a legislative hearing on the

SENSE Act on February 3 of this year. At that hearing, we heard testimony regarding the ability of waste coal units to meet the requirements of the MATS rule.

As Mr. Walke testified, when waste coal plants owners filed lawsuits challenging the MATS rule, claiming it was ''virtually impossible to meet the acid gas and sulfur dioxide limits,'' the court had little trouble rejecting these arguments unanimously.

The judge pointed to the evidence and data submitted to EPA showing that many of the waste coal units could already meet the rule's acid gas standard or alternative sulfur dioxide standard.

The court also noted that some of these already-compliant plants are among the best performers in reducing hydrogen chloride emissions among all coal-burning power plants around the country.

If the majority, along with the bill's proponents, are trying to say that the bill is needed because all of the currently operating waste coal units can't meet the MATS standards, that is not how the Clean Air Act works.

The Clean Air Act's use of maximum achievable control technology for setting air pollution standards takes a reasonable approach.

It says that EPA should set emission limits based on the emission levels already being achieved by similar facilities in the real world.

For existing sources, EPA bases the emission standards for each pollutant on the average emissions achieved by the best performing 12 percent of facilities.

Congress, in setting up its program, did not want to merely maintain the status quo. They wanted all facilities within an industrial sector to make the necessary upgrades to reduce their emissions in line with the best performing units.

The advocates of this bill claim that coal refuse facilities should be treated differently from other coal fuel-generation facilities and that the technology and fuel used would prevent these facilities from meeting the MATS standards for acid gases and sulfur dioxide, but that is simply not true.

First, under the MATS rule, facilities have a choice of meeting either the acid gas standard or the sulfur dioxide standard. They don't have to meet both.

But, second, there is emission control technology available today that can bring these waste coal facilities into compliance with the rule.

I see no justification for allowing these facilities to emit more pollutants than other similar facilities.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to point out, once again, that we are here because Congress wants to make the decision that the EPA should set up subcategories in this particular instance. Both the Clean Air Act and the EPA regulations promulgated under it, on a routine basis, divide regulated entities into separate categories, but the EPA was unwilling to do it in this case primarily because coal was involved. It is no secret that when the President was running, in an editorial interview in San Francisco, he made the comment publicly that he would bankrupt the coal industry; and that actually is happening.

Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the author of this bill.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, there are only 19 plants we are talking about here and four States that are involved. There are some plants out there that can comply—there is not a question about that—but there are only a few of them, and we are looking at a number of plants that do not have the capacity to comply with these one-size-fits-all standards.

While the State should be looking at this, the SENSE Act does what the EPA should have done in creating these categories. It could take up to 2 years, Mr. Chairman, for the EPA to get back as to any kind of modification. The State could propose a change, but then it has to wait and wait and wait, and while it waits, we will see power plants close that do not have this technology.

There is something called a ''margin'' in business, Mr. Chairman. You take a look at the expense of doing things, you look at the cost of things, and you look at the income. Once the expense or the cost exceeds the income, plants' businesses go out of business. People lose jobs. That is what we are talking about. In this case, not only do people lose jobs, but the tremendous environmental cleanup stops that is taking place.

Pennsylvania estimates it would take $2 billion to clean up these waste coal sites. I have walked the fields where they have been cleaned up in Allegheny County and in Cambria County. I have seen hillsides on which deer now graze where it used to be just a martian landscape, and I have seen rivers that used to be orange that now have fish in them. This is an industry that has been cleaning up these sites without the taxpayers picking up the tabs.

Every State in this country is having budget issues and is trying to find resources to address critical things like environmental cleanup. This is something that is working. When you have one size fits all, where the EPA refuses to make an accommodation because it does not recognize the tremendous benefit that these facilities are bringing to Pennsylvania, that is what this legislation seeks to change.

There is no free pass here for these plants. They will still be measured and they will still have to comply, but this is a customization to something that is achievable, and it is a customization that I would argue is what the EPA should have been doing all along.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE).

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say to my friend from Pennsylvania that I agree with a lot of what he said as far as the value of these coal refuse sites. No one is debating that. Certainly I am not. This is almost a Pennsylvania exclusive piece of legislation given the fact that 14 of the 19 sites are in our State, and I believe about five of those can comply at this point.

The problem I have with the gentleman's proposal is that when one takes emission credits and gives them to the coal refuse plants in excess of what they get, it is coming out of somebody else's allocation. In western Pennsylvania, where we are both from, most of our electricity is from coal-fired utilities. What one is doing, in effect, is taking those emission credits from other coal-fired utilities to give them to this small number of coal refuse plants, and that is going to cost others' margins on those utility sites. It will affect their margins because now they have to work harder to clean up their emissions because they don't have these credits because they have gone to the coal refuse plants. That is a big problem I see, especially in a State like ours that still has a lot of coal-fired electricity generation.

I think there are better ways forward. I think we would be better served in our State to push our State legislature and the Governor's office, too, to come up with a State implementation plan that allows for some flexibility and takes into account what goes on at these plants, because this is primarily a Pennsylvania issue. As I said in my remarks before, there are other ways, I think, to solve this problem.

Look, the President has issued a SAP. He is going to veto this bill. So this piece of legislation isn't going to become law. Yet I am not standing here to say that I think we should stop our efforts to do something to keep this resource, because it is cleaning up a lot of sites in Pennsylvania, and there is a benefit to the environment. There is a lot of water pollution potential for leaving these sites as they are.

I want to work with the gentleman, and I say to him that, while this piece of legislation may not ever become law, I extend my offer to work with the

gentleman in constructive ways, both with our Governor and State legislature, and in alternative ways to attack this problem that doesn't take emission credits from other coal-fired utilities in our State.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the author of the legislation.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, it would be great for Pennsylvania to come up with a customization on its own, but that would take a couple of years for approval from the EPA. In the meantime, these plants will be closed.

Few, if any, conventional coal plant owners have expressed concerns about the SENSE Act. Bear in mind, we are talking about an overall allocation for SO_2 and a reconfiguring within that overall allocation. So there is not going to be an increase in SO_2; it will be a mere customization and allocation, and it should have been done and should have been allowed by the EPA.

While the President may have issued a veto threat, my hope is, before the President would follow through on such a veto threat, that he would come to western Pennsylvania, that he would walk the hills with me, that he would see the streams that have come back to life, that he would talk to Tim and talk to Bill and talk to the men and women at these plants who are taking care of their families, so they can say, ''Mr. President, we need some help here. Our communities have been economically distressed. We are sustaining our communities with these jobs. We are raising our kids with these jobs. What we don't like, Mr. President, are these one-size-fits-all edicts coming out of Washington, D.C., that give our States and communities the burden of complying—totally excluding the benefits that have been happening on the ground.''

Again, to see these places that have been reclaimed is remarkable. It is my hope that the President would visit those places before he follows through on any kind of veto threat.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE).

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. I will not consume any more time after this. I don't want to play Chip and Dale with the gentleman all day.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say that our President has been to Pittsburgh probably more than to any city in the country, and I have been with him many times when he has been there. I have walked on these sites, too. I have one up in Harmar Township. I have seen them. I know what the gentleman is talking about, and I think it is a problem we need to address. The SENSE Act is really a one-size-fits-all kind of solution, not current law. Current law gives States flexibility, and I think that is what is important.

I would just say to my friend that this is a real problem and a real concern in our home State, and I reiterate my willingness to work with him on a solution.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, there are no additional speakers on my side of the aisle.

I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 3797—SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT (SENSE) ACT—REP. ROTHFUS, R–PA, AND SIX COSPONSORS

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 3797, which would threaten the health of Americans by requiring changes to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) for electric generating units (EGUs) that use coal refuse as their main fuel source. Specifically, H.R. 3797 would restrict the market-based approach currently used to allocate sulfur dioxide emission allowances issued under the CSAPR, thereby raising the costs of achieving the pollution reduction required by the rule. The bill also would undermine the emissions limits for hazardous acid gases from those established under the MATS, leading to increased health and environmental impacts from increased emissions of hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, other harmful acid gases, and sulfur dioxide.

CSAPR and MATS protect the health of millions of Americans by requiring the reduction of harmful power plant emissions, including air toxics and emissions that contribute to smog and fine particle pollution. The pollution reductions from CSAPR and MATS will prevent thousands of premature deaths, asthma attacks, and heart attacks. An important feature of the CSAPR is its trading program which allows power plants to meet emission budgets in different ways, including by trading emissions allowances between emission sources within a State and some trading across States. This market-based approach reduces the cost of compliance while ensuring reductions in air pollution for citizens across the CSAPR region.

H.R. 3797 would create an uneven playing field by picking winners and losers in CSAPR compliance. The bill establishes a special market of CSAPR allowances for EGUs that burn coal refuse and prohibits the trading of allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs, which would interfere with and manipulate market conditions. By doing so, H.R. 3797 would: (1) economically advantage coal refuse EGUs over other EGUs by giving them allowances that would otherwise have been allocated to others; (2) reduce compliance choices for other State units; and (3) distort the economic incentives of coal refuse EGUs to reduce emissions. Further, the allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs would be unavailable for use by any other sources, resulting, in the aggregate, in less efficient and more costly CSAPR compliance. Additionally, H.R. 3797 would interfere with existing opportunities under the CSAPR for each State to control the allocation of allowances among its EGUs.

If the President were presented with H.R. 3797, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. PALLONE. The sponsor of the legislation mentioned the President's coming to visit, but I think if you look at the Statement of Administration Policy, it is quite clear that what the President is essentially saying is that he doesn't want the Congress to pick the winners and the losers. He wants the States—in this case, Pennsylvania—to have the flexibility to make their own decisions.

It is not a question of what the President decides. It is clear that he is vetoing this legislation or would veto this legislation because he thinks that the flexibility is already there under the law and that the States should make those decisions rather than having Congress pick the winners and losers.

I am not going to read the whole thing, Mr. Chairman, but I did want to just read the section that relates to that, if I could, from the Statement of Administration Policy.

It reads:

''H.R. 3797 would create an uneven playing field by picking winners and losers in CSAPR compliance. The bill establishes a special market of CSAPR allowances for EGUs that burn coal refuse and prohibits the trading of allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs, which would interfere with and manipulate market conditions. By doing so, H.R. 3797 would: (1) economically advantage coal refuse EGUs over other EGUs by giving them allowances that would otherwise have been allocated to others; (2) reduce compliance choices for other State units; and (3) distort the economic incentives of coal refuse EGUs to reduce emissions. Further, the allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs would be unavailable for use by any other sources, resulting, in the aggregate, in less efficient and more costly CSAPR compliance. Additionally, H.R. 3797 would interfere with existing opportunities under the CSAPR for each State to control the allocation of allowances among its EGUs.''

Again, I think the Statement of Administration Policy is based on the idea that there is flexibility under the law and that States are in the best positions to make these decisions. I think it is quite clear, and I agree with everything that is in this veto message as being the basis for why we oppose the legislation; so I urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just reiterate, once again, far from undercutting States, the SENSE Act offers the best solution for States. The EPA, in these two regulations, is

dictating to the States what can and cannot be done. Even if the States wanted to take additional action, they would have to meet the requirements of those regulations. The SENSE Act makes minor modifications to the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and to the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, and it does not raise the cap of the emissions.

I have a great deal of respect for both of the gentlemen on the other side of the aisle who have different views on this subject; but I can tell you the generating plants that are burning coal to produce electricity have not talked to us at all about being concerned about the SENSE Act. They are overwhelmingly concerned about the clean energy plan, which is basically going to change every aspect of the way they do business if the courts do not rule it in violation of the Clean Air Act.

In closing, as a Member of Congress and as Congresspeople, we do have the responsibility to step in and change some parts of the Clean Air Act if we view it as being in the best interest of the American people. Because these coal refuse plants have already cleaned up, recycled, over 200 million tons of coal refuse by combusting it to produce electricity and because the overall caps are not going to be raised, there are going to be minor modifications, we are going to continue to clean up these refuse piles. We are going to continue to protect 1,200 direct jobs, 4,000 indirect jobs, $84 million in payroll.

It seems to me that the benefits far outweigh the negative aspects of this legislation. For that reason, I would respectfully request my colleagues to support H.R. 3797 and pass this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of legislation that's important to my part of Pennsylvania, and to all of the coal-producing regions of this country.

The SENSE Act, offered by my colleague from western Pennsylvania, Mr. ROTHFUS.

This bill is a long time coming.

In my part of the country, we are familiar with ''coal refuse''—a mixture of low-quality coal, rock, and dirt, which is left behind after mining.

This coal refuse has a much lower energy content, and for years it could not be processed efficiently or economically.

As a result, piles of it were left behind, which led to a variety of detrimental results: loss of vegetation and wildlife, and concentrated levels of acid drainage into local streams and ponds.

But the technology has advanced, and we can now reclaim that waste—the private sector can use the coal waste product to burn and generate electricity.

What's left over after that can be used to restore the natural landscape, or refill abandoned mines.

But, once again, the Environmental Protection Agency couldn't stand this type of progress.

They came up with the MATS Rule—the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule.

This sets certain unattainable levels for the industry.

The SENSE Act provides relief from these unrealistic limits.

It seeks to establish an alternative compliance standard for coal refuse facilities based upon the removal and control of Sulfur Dioxide.

Now, in some parts of the country, and in some speeches on the campaign trail, it has become fashionable to attack the coal industry, and make its people out to be the bad guys.

As a candidate, our current president promised to bankrupt the coal industry.

And he has made a tremendous effort to do just that—including this MATS Rule from his EPA.

Just in the last few days, the frontrunner on the Democratic side promised that as president, she would put coal mines and coal miners out of work.

Now, all of that might sound pretty good in certain focus groups, or around the cocktail party circuit, but let me tell you . . . where I come from, it sounds pretty devastating.

The coal industry—in no small part—helped build this country and make it a world leader.

It generates cheap electricity for millions of people.

And for many tens of thousands of people back home in Pennsylvania, it still provides a good living, and it puts food on the table.

This bill makes sense—common sense.

It provides a use for coal refuse, generates electricity, and protects jobs.

And it will allow us to reclaim land previously mined, which means it has a positive impact on the environment.

And when that land is reclaimed, it can again be put to use, and placed back on the tax rolls, making it good for local government.

I urge support for the SENSE Act.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chair, today we have another opportunity to say yes to energy and protect jobs with H.R. 3797, the SENSE Act. This sensible bill will help coal refuse-to-energy facilities continue their work producing energy while addressing the nation's coal refuse problem.

Vast mounds of coal refuse sit near many abandoned coal mines throughout coal country, and they pose a serious threat to air and water quality as well as to public safety. But through American ingenuity, coal refuse-to-energy plants have been developed that actually use this harmful waste product to generate electricity. The end product is ash, which is environmentally safe and used to reclaim the land.

There are 19 such plants in operation today that are producing energy and jobs while providing a practical solution to the coal refuse problem that would otherwise cost billions of dollars to address.

Unfortunately, there are two EPA rules targeting all coal-fired power plants that are causing some problems. Coal refuse-to-electricity plants are very different than conventional coal-fired plants and may not be able to meet these EPA rules which are geared toward the conventional plants. As a result, the future of these facilities and their environmental and economic benefits is now in danger.

Thankfully, Mr. ROTHFUS of Pennsylvania has spearheaded a solution. The SENSE Act still requires coal refuse-energy-plants to reduce their emissions, but creates new compliance methods more appropriate for this technology. This would allow these plants to continue operating, to the great benefit to the communities where these facilities are located.

The SENSE Act is about as commonsense as they get. I urge all my colleagues to support this pro-energy, pro-jobs, and strongly pro-environment bill.

□ 1500

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3797

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act'' or the ''SENSE Act''.

SEC. 2. STANDARDS FOR COAL REFUSE POWER PLANTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) BOILER OPERATING DAY.—The term ''boiler operating day'' has the meaning given such term in section 63.10042 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(3) COAL REFUSE.—The term ''coal refuse'' means any byproduct of coal mining, physical coal cleaning, or coal preparation operation that contains coal, matrix material, clay, and other organic and inorganic material.

(4) COAL REFUSE ELECTRIC UTILITY STEAM GENERATING UNIT.—The term ''coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit'' means an electric utility steam generating unit that—

(A) is in operation as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(B) uses fluidized bed combustion technology to convert coal refuse into energy; and

(C) uses coal refuse as at least 75 percent of the annual fuel consumed, by heat input, of the unit.

(5) COAL REFUSE-FIRED FACILITY.—The term ''coal refuse-fired facility'' means all coal refuse electric utility steam generating units that are—

(A) located on one or more contiguous or adjacent properties;

(B) specified within the same Major Group (2-digit code), as described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual (1987); and

(C) under common control of the same person (or persons under common control).

(6) CROSS-STATE AIR POLLUTION RULE.—The terms ''Cross-State Air Pollution Rule'' and ''CSAPR'' mean the regulatory program promulgated by the Administrator to address the interstate transport of air pollution in parts 51, 52, and 97 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, including any subsequent or successor regulation.

(7) ELECTRIC UTILITY STEAM GENERATING UNIT.—The term ''electric utility steam generating unit'' means either or both—

(A) an electric utility steam generating unit, as such term is defined in section 63.10042 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation; or

(B) an electricity generating unit or electric generating unit, as such terms are used in CSAPR.

(8) PHASE I.—The term ''Phase I'' means, with respect to CSAPR, the initial compliance period under CSAPR, identified for the 2015 and 2016 annual compliance periods.

(b) APPLICATION OF CSAPR TO CERTAIN COAL REFUSE ELECTRIC UTILITY STEAM GENERATING UNITS.—

(1) COAL REFUSE ELECTRIC UTILITY STEAM GENERATING UNITS COMBUSTING BITUMINOUS COAL REFUSE.—

(A) APPLICABILITY.—This paragraph applies with respect to any coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit that—

(i) combusts coal refuse derived from the mining and processing of bituminous coal; and

(ii) is subject to sulfur dioxide allowance surrender provisions pursuant to CSAPR.

(B) CONTINUED APPLICABILITY OF PHASE I ALLOWANCE ALLOCATIONS.—In carrying out CSAPR, the Administrator shall provide that, for any compliance period, the allocation (whether through a Federal implementation plan or State implementation plan) of sulfur dioxide allowances for a coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit described in subparagraph (A) is equivalent to the allocation of the unit-specific sulfur dioxide allowance allocation identified for such unit for Phase I, as referenced in the notice entitled ''Availability of Data on Allocations of Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Allowances to Existing Electricity Generating Units'' (79 Fed. Reg. 71674 (December 3, 2014)).

(C) RULES FOR ALLOWANCE ALLOCATIONS.—For any compliance period under CSAPR that commences on or after January 1, 2017, any sulfur dioxide allowance allocation provided by the Administrator to a coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit described in subparagraph (A)—

(i) shall not be transferable for use by any other source not located at the same coal refuse-fired facility as the relevant coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit;

(ii) may be transferable for use by another source located at the same coal refuse-fired facility as the relevant coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit;

(iii) may be banked for application to compliance obligations in future compliance periods under CSAPR; and

(iv) shall be surrendered upon the permanent cessation of operation of such coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit.

(2) OTHER SOURCES.—

(A) NO INCREASE IN OVERALL STATE BUDGET OF SULFUR DIOXIDE ALLOWANCE ALLOCATIONS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the Administrator may not, for any compliance period under CSAPR, increase the total budget of sulfur dioxide allowance allocations for a State in which a unit described in paragraph (1)(A) is located.

(B) COMPLIANCE PERIODS 2017 THROUGH 2020.—For any compliance period under CSAPR that commences on or after January 1, 2017, but before December 31, 2020, the Administrator shall carry out subparagraph (A) by proportionally reducing, as necessary, the unit-specific sulfur dioxide allowance allocations from each source that—

(i) is located in a State in which a unit described in paragraph (1)(A) is located;

(ii) permanently ceases operation, or converts its primary fuel source from coal to natural gas, prior to the relevant compliance period; and

(iii) otherwise receives an allocation of sulfur dioxide allowances under CSAPR for such period.

(c) EMISSION LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS HYDROGEN CHLORIDE AND SULFUR DIOXIDE AS HAZARDOUS AIR POLLUTANTS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY.—For purposes of regulating emissions of hydrogen chloride or sulfur dioxide from a coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit under section 112 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7412), the Administrator—

(A) shall authorize the operator of such unit to elect that such unit comply with either—

(i) an emissions standard for emissions of hydrogen chloride that meets the requirements of paragraph (2); or

(ii) an emission standard for emissions of sulfur dioxide that meets the requirements of paragraph (2); and

(B) may not require that such unit comply with both an emission standard for emissions of hydrogen chloride and an emission standard for emissions of sulfur dioxide.

(2) RULES FOR EMISSION LIMITATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall require an operator of a coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit to comply, at the election of the operator, with no more than one of the following emission standards:

(i) An emission standard for emissions of hydrogen chloride from such unit that is no more stringent than an emission rate of 0.002 pounds per million British thermal units of heat input.

(ii) An emission standard for emissions of hydrogen chloride from such unit that is no more stringent than an emission rate of 0.02 pounds per megawatt-hour.

(iii) An emission standard for emissions of sulfur dioxide from such unit that is no more stringent than an emission rate of 0.20 pounds per million British thermal units of heat input.

(iv) An emission standard for emissions of sulfur dioxide from such unit that is no more stringent than an emission rate of 1.5 pounds per megawatt-hour.

(v) An emission standard for emissions of sulfur dioxide from such unit that is no more stringent than capture and control of 93 percent of sulfur dioxide across the generating unit or group of generating units, as determined by comparing—

(I) the expected sulfur dioxide generated from combustion of fuels emissions calculated based upon as-fired fuel samples; to

(II) the actual sulfur dioxide emissions as measured by a sulfur dioxide continuous emission monitoring system.

(B) MEASUREMENT.—An emission standard described in subparagraph (A) shall be measured as a 30 boiler operating day rolling average per coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit or group of coal refuse electric utility steam generating units located at a single coal refuse-fired facility.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 114–453. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. PALLONE

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 114–453.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I offer my amendment.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike sections 2(a)(6), 2(a)(8), and 2(b) and redesignate accordingly.

Amend section 2(a)(7) to read as follows:

(7) ELECTRIC UTILITY STEAM GENERATING UNIT.—The term ''electric utility steam generating unit'' means an electric utility steam generating unit, as such term is defined in section 63.10042 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume in support of my amendment.

This is a targeted amendment that strikes section 2(b) from the bill. This section deals with EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, also known as CSAPR. This is one of the most important Clean Air Act rules in recent years. It protects the health of millions of Americans by requiring upwind States in the eastern and central United States to reduce power plant emissions that cause air quality problems in downward States.

As I have mentioned before during general debate, an important feature of CSAPR is the trading program that allows sources in each State to meet emission budgets in many different ways, including trading of emission allowances. This approach reduces the overall cost of compliance, while ensuring reduction in air pollution.

I mentioned previously during general debate that the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a legislative hearing on this bill on February 3. At that hearing, the EPA and John Walke from the Natural Resources Defense Council provided testimony that described a number of policy and technical issues with this section of the bill, and I just want to touch on a few of them now.

First, by allocating emission allowances to waste coal units that cannot be traded, the SENSE Act would eliminate economic incentives to reduce toxic air pollution at these waste coal units.

Second, by reallocating allowances from other sources within the State to waste coal units and then limiting the ability to transfer or trade these additional allowances to other facilities, the bill would choose winners—that is,

the waste coal plants—and losers—that is, all other coal plants in a given State.

Third, by interfering with the conditions of the CSAPR market, compliance costs would increase for covered facilities.

Now, the SENSE Act would also remove a State's right to determine the appropriate method of compliance with CSAPR. To be more specific, currently, under the Clean Air Act, an individual State may choose to reduce emissions from power plants based on EPA's CSAPR framework, or they can choose to comply with the rule by reducing emissions based on a framework the State develops and the EPA approves.

One of the most egregious aspects of the bill's CSAPR provision—and it is one that I am surprised my Republican colleagues would support—is that, if the bill were to become law, it would actually take this power away from the States and give it to the EPA. Or, to put it another way, the SENSE Act would wrest control away from States to make these basic decisions for the first time in the 39-year history of the Clean Air Act's interstate air pollution program.

EPA also pointed out that the SENSE Act would deny States control over allocations of allowances by rendering any submitted State plan with a different allocation to these units unapprovable. So why supporters of this bill would want to change a successful EPA program to make it less flexible and more costly is beyond me. The CSAPR provisions of the bill make unnecessary changes to the rule since States already have the power to help out waste coal plants if they want to.

So, again, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment to strike the CSAPR portion of this SENSE Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is not warranted because any change in a State's compliance cost will be very low. There are only 19 coal refuse-to-energy facilities in the United States, mostly small, under 100 megawatts, and only a subset will avail themselves of the bill's provisions. We are only talking about four States: West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Montana.

The bill merely reallocates emission allowances under the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule from other plants to coal refuse-to-energy facilities. This will help ensure the continued operation of these plants but is unlikely to have much of a cost impact.

As was stated in an earlier debate, this bill does what the EPA should have done. It creates provisions that are realistic and achievable for coal refuse-to-energy facilities. Both the Clean Air Act and the EPA regulations promulgated under it routinely divide regulated entities into separate categories that are treated differently based on their unique characteristics.

Coal refuse-to-energy facilities have many such unique characteristics and should have been treated as a separate category in EPA rulemakings. It was discretionary for them not to, the Court held, but that doesn't mean they should not have. And it is the policymaking branch of this government, this Congress, this Article I branch, where the people should have a say in how they are governed. They were not accommodated in the EPA rulemakings, and the SENSE Act addresses that omission.

Any modest costs, Mr. Chairman, are more than offset by the jobs, energy, and especially the environmental benefits of keeping the coal refuse-to-energy fleet in operation. States' environmental regulators estimate the cost of addressing coal refuse to be approximately $2 billion in Pennsylvania alone, and that is just for cleanup.

When one of these coal piles catches fire and the damage that is done—and when they are on fire, there is no control, Mr. Chairman. There is no control. Nothing is being eliminated as these waste coal piles burn. When the waste coal is being used by the energy industry in these plants, there are controls in place.

Finally, with respect to giving States flexibility, everything has to be approved by the EPA, Mr. Chairman. That is illusory. It could take 2 years for the EPA to approve a State plan. In the meantime, the plants close, the progress stops, and the people lose their jobs.

I would urge a ''no'' vote on this amendment.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I urge support for the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PALLONE

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 114–453.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), I offer amendment No. 2.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, after line 23, insert the following new paragraph:

(3) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall not apply with respect to a State if the Governor of the State, or the head of the authority that implements CSAPR for the State, makes a determination, and notifies the Administrator, that implementation of this subsection will increase the State's overall compliance costs for CSAPR.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last month, the Energy and Power Subcommittee held a hearing that identified numerous flaws in the SENSE Act, and this amendment is designed to correct two of them.

If the SENSE Act were to become law, waste coal facilities would be able to emit more than their fair share of pollution under the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, known as CSAPR. Specifically, section 2(b) of the SENSE Act would reserve emission credits for waste coal plants, thereby prohibiting them from being traded under the CSAPR trading system.

According to Janet McCabe, the Acting Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation at EPA, this would remove the economic incentives to reduce emissions and ultimately increase the cost of compliance. Section 2(b) would also interfere with the State's right to determine how to best comply with the rule, instead putting those decisions in the hands of the EPA Administrator. Not only are these changes harmful, but they are also unnecessary because the State that wishes to give a break to waste coal units can already do so under the rule.

So this bill, as written, would take longstanding State authority, transfer it to the Federal Government, and then use that authority to pick winners and losers; and it does all of this while increasing the cost of compliance. This amendment would allow a State to opt out of section 2(b) of the SENSE Act if it determines that implementation of the subsection would increase the State's overall compliance cost.

I urge my colleagues to protect the integrity of the CSAPR rule and support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I would just point out that what we are

looking at here is that the SENSE Act seeks to accomplish what the EPA should have done in creating special categories.

Again, if you are looking at compliance costs, any costs are going to be low. And then when you combine that with the requirement to seek EPA approval and the delays that that would incur, these plants will be closed, the environmental progress will stop, and challenged communities will be further challenged.

These are solid, good-paying, family-sustaining jobs in these plants. We know that while some plants are in compliance, others are not.

So, again, this SENSE Act seeks to do what the EPA should have done from the very beginning and create appropriate categorization.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill but in support of the Engel amendment. It is perfect, good sense giving the Governor of a State the ability to opt out of the section of the bill that modifies the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule if the Governor determines that implementing those provisions would increase the overall cost of complying with the rule.

There goes, if you will, the underlying problem of this bill. There has been no determination as to the burden of this particular bill, and I oppose it.

I oppose it in particular because the bill would undermine the emissions limits for hazardous acid gasses from those established under the MATS, leading to increased health and environmental impacts from increased emissions of hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, and other harmful acid gasses and sulfur dioxide.

Specifically, the CSAPR and MATS protect the health of millions of Americans by requiring the reduction of harmful power plant emissions, including the air toxics and emissions that contribute to smog and fine particle pollution. The pollution reduction from CSAPR and MATS have real-life impacts: prevention of thousands of premature deaths, asthmatic attacks, and heart attacks.

I would offer to say, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, we are always dealing with toxics as it relates to chemical plants and protecting the homeland in the area of security, but we also need to protect them in the area of good quality health care.

I would argue that this bill would economically advantage coal refuse EGUs over other EGUs, reduce compliance choices for other State units, and distort the economic incentives of coal refuse EGUs to reduce emissions. Also, the allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs would be unavailable for use by any other sources.

I ask my colleagues to oppose this legislation. I don't believe that this bill will be considered in the Senate. I don't believe that it will be considered for signature by the White House.

I would offer to say that, besides the budget and the appropriations process that is ongoing, we in this Congress need to deal with the restoration of the Voting Rights Act and provide for section 5. Let's get to work on things impacting the American people, creating more jobs, as opposed to providing poor quality of life, poor quality of air for our citizens throughout this Nation.

Once again, I support the Engel amendment.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3797—Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act.

I oppose this unwise and unnecessary legislation for several reasons.

H.R. 3797 would threaten the health of Americans by requiring changes to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) for electric generating units (EGUs) that use coal refuse as their main fuel source.

In doing this, H.R. 3797 would restrict the market-based approach currently used to allocate sulfur dioxide emission allowances issued under the CSAPR, thereby raising the costs of achieving the pollution reduction required by the rule.

This bill also would undermine the emissions limits for hazardous acid gases from those established under the MATS, leading to increased health and environmental impacts from increased emissions of hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, other harmful acid gases, and sulfur dioxide.

Specifically, CSAPR and MATS protect the health of millions of Americans by requiring the reduction of harmful power plant emissions, including air toxics and emissions that contribute to smog and fine particle pollution.

The pollution reductions from CSAPR and MATS have real life impacts: prevention of thousands of premature deaths, asthma attacks, and heart attacks.

Let me also underscore that an important feature of the CSAPR is its trading program which allows power plants to meet emission budgets in different ways, including by trading emissions allowances between emission sources within a State and some trading across States.

This market-based approach reduces the cost of compliance while ensuring reductions in air pollution for citizens across the CSAPR region.

I oppose H.R. 3797 because it would create an uneven playing field by picking winners and losers in CSAPR compliance.

Indeed, this bill establishes a special market of CSAPR allowances for EGUs that burn coal refuse and prohibits the trading of allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs, which would interfere with and manipulate market conditions.

Specifically, H.R. 3797 would: economically advantage coal refuse EGUs over other EGUs by giving them allowances that would otherwise have been allocated to others; reduce compliance choices for other State units; and distort the economic incentives of coal refuse EGUs to reduce emissions.

Also, the allowances allocated to coal refuse EGUs would be unavailable for use by any other sources.

This will result in the aggregate, in less efficient and more costly CSAPR compliance.

Finally, I oppose H.R. 3797 because it would interfere with existing opportunities under the CSAPR for each State to control the allocation of allowances among its EGUs.

Instead of wasting time supporting this bill, I urge my colleagues to join me in focusing on more important issues affecting our nation: more jobs for Americans in the energy and other sectors, energy security and independence and utilization of innovation in energy to solve some of the contemporary issues we face in our country.

□ 1515

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I would just respond to the gentlewoman from Texas. She mentioned the word ''burdensome.'' What is really burdensome is the way that these rules are being applied. When the EPA had a chance to do a customized approach, they chose not to.

Why is it burdensome? It is burdensome because there are plants that will not be able to comply, which means the environmental progress that we have seen will stop, which means that their jobs will be lost.

I do note that there is bipartisan support for this initiative. Both Senators CASEY and TOOMEY, on the other side of this Capitol, from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania—one a Republican, one a Democrat—recognize the practicality of this approach. They recognize that the legislation makes sense.

For that reason, Mr. Chairman, I urge a ''no'' vote on the amendment.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

The underlying bill is another unnecessary special interest bill that undermines Clean Air Act regulations. The bill, if it were to reach the President's desk, will be vetoed.

We should be using our time to move forward with the many other issues that need to be addressed in this Congress. Our water infrastructure is in dire need of repair and maintenance. We have Superfund and brownfield sites that need to be cleaned up and returned to productive use. States need

support for modernizing and hardening the electricity grid, and there are still many Americans who are unemployed or underpaid for the work that they are doing. All of these things, especially the infrastructure issues, must be addressed by Congress. They impact every person, every State, and every industry in the country.

Instead of wasting time on bills like the SENSE Act, we should get to work on these important issues that will support economic growth and job creation throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BERA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 114–453.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 11, after line 17, insert the following new section:

SEC. 3. GAO REPORT.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall issue a report detailing the increase in emissions of sulfur dioxide and other air pollutants that will result from implementation of this Act and the effect of such emissions on public health.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is simple. It would require the Government Accountability Office, a nonpartisan government watchdog, to complete a report on the impact this legislation would have on public health.

I look at this from the perspective of a doctor and public health expert, and one of my guiding principles as a doctor is to make sure we protect the public health.

Coal refuse plants not only increase the amount of pollution in our air, they also use a power source which is less efficient than normal coal and contains higher levels of mercury. Exposure to sulfur dioxide and other pollutants such as mercury have been known to increase risks of cardiovascular disease and respiratory illnesses, including aggravated asthma, bronchitis, and heart attacks.

My amendment would require the GAO to investigate whether this legislation would increase emissions of sulfur dioxide and other pollutants.

I strongly believe the EPA plays an important role in protecting the health of our families and our environment from dangerous pollutants. While we should be mindful about the impact of regulations on our economy, we have a responsibility to address urgent threats to the planet, such as climate change, and we have a responsibility to make sure legislation that is being passed protects our public health.

This legislation before us today would hamper the EPA's ability to limit dangerous pollution and protect public health, and it will also slow down our transition to clean energy. That is why I introduced my amendment today, to ensure that we know the true impact this bill would have on public health and on our environment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to this amendment. This amendment would require a GAO report detailing an increase, if any, in sulfur dioxide and other emissions and the effect of implementing the legislation on public health.

Now, this legislation has come about because of two EPA rules—the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule—and I might say that the SENSE Act does not change in any way the caps on sulfur dioxide. That would basically remain the same. Coal refuse-to-energy plants are negligible emitters of mercury. In fact, EPA testified that by closing down the coal refuse plants, there would not be any significant benefit on the mercury side. All of the benefits come from the reduction in fine particulate matter, and we are not addressing that.

I would point out once again that 214 million tons of this refuse have already been cleaned up. If we allow these regulations to go into effect and these plants close down, those refuse piles will not be cleaned up, 1,200 people will lose their jobs, 4,000 indirect people will lose their jobs, and $84 million in payroll will be lost.

EPA has admitted that there is no significant environmental benefit, and they had the opportunity to set up a special category for these coal refuse plants, all of which are less than 100-megawatt plants. They are very small. There are only 19 in the country, 14 in one State.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania and others from Pennsylvania have asked Congress to intervene to help them on this matter. For that reason, I would respectfully oppose the gentleman's amendment and ask that the amendment be defeated.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. It is a no-nonsense amendment that will allow us to know the impact on public health.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. PETERS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 114–453.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 11, after line 17, insert the following new section:

SEC. 3. PUBLIC NOTICE.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall give notice of the anticipated effects of this Act on air quality to all States, municipalities, towns, tribal governments, or other governmental entities in areas that—

(1) include or are adjacent to a coal refuse electric utility steam generating unit to which this Act applies; or

(2) are likely to be affected by air emissions from such a unit.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, the existing Cross-State Air Pollution Rule set new standards for the emission of sulfur dioxide based on public health risks.

Under this rule, States can choose to comply by adapting new technologies or employing cleaner energy sources. Today's bill would raise the acceptable levels threshold for sulfur dioxide emissions from one source, coal waste plants, allowing them to pour more of these pollutants into our air.

It props up coal waste plants, thereby undermining flexibility for States to meet public health targets. It also distorts the ability of the market to determine which energy sources are most sustainable, cost effective, and meet the public's need.

The underlying bill would pick winners and losers by favoring waste coal-

burning power plants at the expense of other power sources. If coal waste plants can adapt and reduce their emissions to help States meet these targets, then they should do so; but short of that, the market is determining that there are more efficient ways to produce energy.

Congress should not subsidize any energy source that does not compete with innovative and cleaner options that also better protect our children's health; but if this bill is going to raise these limits and allow more pollutants to be emitted, we should be honest with the communities that will be affected. My amendment requires the EPA to inform the general public and municipalities adjacent to waste coal plants about the anticipated effects of this bill on air quality not later than 90 days after its enactment.

According to the American Lung Association, sulfur dioxide can cause breathing problems, exacerbate asthma symptoms, and reduce lung function. Exposure to sulfur dioxide has been connected to an increased risk of hospital admissions, especially among children, seniors, and people with asthma. This puts families' health at risk in the communities downwind and nearby.

Last month I visited Flint, Michigan, with my colleagues, where we saw the devastating effects of keeping the public in the dark.

Americans have a right to know how this legislation is going to affect the quality of the air they breathe.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, if we could take a look at this amendment, this amendment would require the EPA Administrator to notify affected States and localities of any anticipated effects of the legislation on air quality.

The issue is the SENSE Act prohibits any increase in covered emissions, so any impact on air quality will be very limited. The SENSE Act mandates that sulfur dioxide emissions stay within the EPA-approved caps so there can be no increase above approved levels.

Coal refuse-to-energy plants are negligible emitters of mercury, and the bill requires emissions reductions of hydrogen chloride and other compounds only at a rate achievable for this type of facility.

The proposed amendment is one-sided, as it ignores the air and water quality benefits from reducing the coal refuse problem, including reducing the risk of heavily polluting coal refuse fires that can affect many State and local governments. For example, this amendment would not require the EPA Administrator to notify affected communities of what happens when a coal refuse pile catches on fire and there is an uncontrolled release of pollutants into the environment.

We should be focused on ensuring that these innovative refuse-to-energy facilities can continue to operate and reduce the serious water and air quality problems posed by coal refuse.

I urge a ''no'' vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. VEASEY

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 114–453.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following new section:

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act may not go into effect until the Administrator certifies that implementation of this Act will not cause or result in an increase of emissions of air pollutants that adversely affect public health, including by increasing incidents of respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses and deaths, such as cases of heart attacks, asthma attacks, and bronchitis.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment to H.R. 3797, the so-called Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act. This bill is anything but that.

What this bill does do is that it gives special breaks under two very important Clean Air Act rules and allows certain power plants to spew out as much nasty pollution as they wish to. These power plants, which use waste coal, still emit all the toxic substances a regular coal plant does, and they absolutely should not get a pass.

If the SENSE Act passes, it will significantly affect air quality. This is not some radical assertion, and it has stood up to the scrutiny of the courts. These rules, the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule, are two important rules for protecting public health from toxic air pollutants like mercury and sulfur dioxide.

If this bill were to become law, waste coal facilities would be able to pollute at a higher rate than any other power plants. There are many pieces of particulate matter emitted by coal plants, such as sulfur dioxide, mercury, and others, and science has clearly shown that air pollutants such as these cause severity when it comes to asthma, bronchitis, and even can contribute to heart attack risk. My amendment protects the most vulnerable from these adverse health effects.

□ 1530

My amendment today would ensure that public health is front and center in this conversation, which it needs to be. Air quality is an issue that affects the most vulnerable among us.

When you think about it, children, pregnant women, and the elderly are some of the members of our society that are most at risk when it comes to respiratory diseases from toxic emissions, such as sulfur dioxide. My amendment ensures that the effects of air quality are taken into account before enactment of the SENSE Act.

Mr. Chairman, I know a thing or two about this. I don't know how often you get to Dallas-Fort Worth, but when you come to our area, despite all the jobs and prosperity that we have, we have some of the absolute worst smog in the entire country.

This amendment would serve to protect vulnerable populations by ensuring their health is not in danger if this bill becomes law.

Also, only after their health has been deemed safe may the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency allow this law to go into effect.

There are so many different economic costs when it comes to asthma, Mr. Chairman. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention alone estimates that asthma costs the United States $56 billion each year when it comes to treating people for asthma, particularly our young children with asthma.

So at the end of the day, what I want to do, Mr. Chairman, is make sure that the least that we do in this House is to make sure that everybody can breathe clean air. I don't think that that is asking for too much.

If my Republican colleagues truly believe the public health of our Nation will not be affected by this bill, they will have no problem voting for my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

I would remind everyone that we are talking about 19 coal refuse plants around the country. They have already cleaned up 214 million tons of coal refuse that are creating significant environmental problems.

The SENSE Act does not change or increase in any way the sulfur dioxide

emission caps. So it does not have any impact on that.

The EPA itself said that the only benefit from their Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and their sulfur dioxide emission rule would be the reduction in particulate matter, which is regulated in another aspect of the Clean Air Act, and the SENSE Act does not affect or have any impacts on that.

So even the EPA has said that this is not really an issue of polluting or endangering the clean air. They simply made a decision that they were not going to have a subcategory to deal with these plans.

The gentleman's amendment would require the EPA Administrator to certify that the act would not result in the increase in emission of air pollutants. They have already basically said that.

One thing that he does not look at in his amendment is the tremendous benefits that the public is receiving by the cleaning up of these coal refuse piles around the country.

So, for those reasons, we respectfully oppose the gentleman's amendment. I would remind everyone once again that the SENSE Act is designed to clean up these environmental problems, protect 1,200 direct jobs and 4,000 indirect jobs and an $84 million payroll, all doing so without increasing any emission toxics to the American people.

For that reason, I would respectfully oppose the gentleman's amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 114–453 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. PALLONE of New Jersey.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. PALLONE of New Jersey.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. BERA of California.

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. VEASEY of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. PALLONE

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 166, noes 224, not voting 43, as follows:

[Roll No. 118]

AYES—166

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Poliquin
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—224

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Gosar
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—43

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Butterfield
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellmers (NC)
Frankel (FL)
Garamendi
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Hartzler
Herrera Beutler
Johnson (GA)
Joyce
King (IA)
Lipinski
Marino
Matsui
Payne
Polis
Roskam
Rush
Scott, David
Sessions
Sinema
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Takai
Thompson (MS)
Turner
Visclosky
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wenstrup
Zinke

□ 1555

Messrs. MESSER, WESTERMAN, Mrs. BLACK, Messrs. HUELSKAMP, HANNA, PEARCE, JORDAN, FITZPATRICK, and GENE GREEN of Texas changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Chair, during rollcall vote No. 118 on H.R. 3797, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Chair, during rollcall vote No. 118 on H.R. 3797, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 118, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PALLONE

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 175, noes 233, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 119]

AYES—175

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Poliquin
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—233

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—25

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Garamendi
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
McNerney
Meadows
Polis
Ribble
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Takai
Velázquez
Wenstrup
Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1559

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BERA

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 235, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 120]

AYES—179

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)

Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—19

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Takai
Waters, Maxine
Wenstrup

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1604

Mr. HIMES changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. VEASEY

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 182, noes 234, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 121]

AYES—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Poliquin
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)	Wittman	Young (IA)
Westerman	Womack	Young (IN)
Westmoreland	Woodall	Zeldin
Whitfield	Yoder	Zinke
Williams	Yoho	
Wilson (SC)	Young (AK)	

NOT VOTING—17

Babin	Ellmers (NC)	Roskam
Becerra	Graves (MO)	Rush
Blackburn	Gutiérrez	Smith (WA)
Brady (PA)	Herrera Beutler	Takai
Davis, Danny	Joyce	Wenstrup
Duckworth	Lipinski	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1608

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) having assumed the chair, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, pursuant to House Resolution 640, reported the bill back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to the bill in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Adams moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3797 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

At the end, add the following new section:

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall not take effect until the Administrator certifies that implementation of this Act will not result in an increase in air emissions that—

(1) harms brain development or causes learning disabilities in infants or children; or

(2) increases mercury deposition to lakes, rivers, streams, and other bodies of water, that are used as a source of public drinking water.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment is a critical improvement that would help protect American children in our most vulnerable communities.

This unnecessary bill would weaken both the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards by allowing waste coal plants to emit more sulfur dioxide. Health risks from exposure to sulfur dioxide can cause breathing problems, reduced lung function, and asthma exacerbations.

I think about the children in Mecklenburg County that I represent who are already suffering from high asthma rates. This bill would further put their health at risk as well as the communities both near waste coal plants and downwind.

Communities with limited resources and political clout are often low-income communities and communities of color. We must ensure, together, that these communities and their unique needs have a voice when it comes to environmental health policy so that we bolster their resilience and reduce the impacts of future disasters.

As representatives of the people, only negligence and apathy could lead us to ignore the risks that this bill poses to human health and the environment.

If my amendment passes, it would make sure that an increase in emissions will not harm brain development or cause learning disabilities in infants or children and will protect our Nation's sources of public drinking water from mercury pollution.

Research shows that babies and children who are exposed to mercury may suffer damage to their developing nervous systems, hurting their ability to think, to learn, and to speak.

Have we not been paying attention?

Just look at North Carolina. It took a disastrous spill of coal ash into the Dan River to make it clear that we were not doing a good enough job to protect our communities and our waterways.

Look at the children and the families in Flint who will never be the same because we failed to protect their basic human right of access to clean water.

How could this be a 21st century issue in America? And what has this body done to help?

Not much.

When will it stop?

Republicans and Democrats, alike, voted in 1990 to strengthen the Clean Air Act to require dozens of industry sectors to install modern pollution controls on their facilities. Since then, EPA has set emissions standards that simply require facilities to use pollution controls that others in their industry are already using. But a few major industrial sources so far have escaped regulation, and the Republicans appear to be on a mission to help them continue to evade emissions limits on toxic air pollution.

This bill is just another Republican handout: weakening the rule and allowing more toxic air pollution and more of these types of health hazards. It favors polluting industries at the expense of Americans and air quality.

Moreover, the bill sets a very dangerous precedent that could open the floodgates to other special treatment bills, creating loopholes and lax treatment that may cause additional health hazards that the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards now prevent. This bill is toxic, and it will be the knife in our children's back.

My amendment will improve the bill by putting the health and safety of our Nation's children first instead of allowing Republicans to continue their assault on the health of our Nation. I urge my colleagues to support it.

□ 1615

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, as the father of six children, I, too, am very concerned about environmental risk to our kids, and I am very concerned about the ending of the environmental progress of what we have seen in the refuse-to-energy industry to date.

Let me be clear. There is no change because of the SENSE Act in overall changes on SO_2, and there is no issue with mercury because these plants already comply with the mercury requirements.

We need to consider the health of our communities if these facilities close. This is a reasonable, balanced, and commonsense approach. Let's not circle the wagons and say no to continued cleanup on the hillsides of Pennsylvania. Let's not say no to restoring streams. Let's not say no to the jobs that these plants represent.

Mr. Speaker, my district is in danger and my constituents are at risk unless this bill passes. Coal refuse piles that have persisted for generations catch fire and burn uncontrollably, spewing toxic pollutants into the air.

Acid mine drainage leaches into rivers and streams, turning them orange and destroying wildlife. Great mountains of coal refuse reminiscent of moonscapes feature prominently in the countryside, looming over towns, school yards, and farms.

Without the hard work of the men and women of the coal refuse-to-energy industry, work that includes painstaking remediation, this problem

would be far worse. Yet, EPA regulations that are blind to this industry's unique circumstances threaten to bring their work to an end.

You would think our environmental regulatory agencies and conservation-minded Members of Congress would be eager to find a viable solution to addressing this environmental problem and protecting vulnerable communities across coal country.

Some Members of this body, it seems, choose not to acknowledge the challenges faced by the coal refuse-to-energy industry. They look past the overwhelming good done by these plants as they seek to impose their environmental orthodoxy.

It would seem, based on this afternoon's debate, that preventing uncontrolled coal refuse fires, ruined waterways, and environmental degradation is outweighed by an unflinching attachment to inflexible and unfair Washington environmentalist dogma.

Contrary to what the SENSE Act's opponents claim, these facilities will be forced to close if we fail to provide them with reasonable and achievable emissions limits.

It may interest some in this Chamber that the SENSE Act has typically been a bipartisan proposal. In fact, both of Pennsylvania's Senators—Republican PAT TOOMEY and Democrat BOB CASEY—previously introduced an amendment that was much broader than the conservative and restrained bill on the House floor today. Despite it being a far more aggressive proposal, the Casey-Toomey amendment earned the support of a majority of Senators.

Back home, organizations that work to actually address Pennsylvania's environmental issues have rallied to the SENSE Act. Both the Western and Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation have endorsed my bill. Watershed groups have also issued letters of support.

Some today have wrongly argued that the SENSE Act picks winners and losers, that it somehow advantages small, endangered coal refuse-to-energy facilities.

Somehow, in the minds of the bill's opponents, David became Goliath. They fail to see that the issue at hand concerns a small socially beneficial industry unfairly battered by an all-powerful regulatory giant and fighting for survival.

What is most striking about the opposition's mischaracterization is that the EPA has created winners and losers through its inflexible implementation of these rules in which they refuse to treat these plants as a separate category.

The SENSE Act merely recognizes what the EPA should have acknowledged a long time ago, that coal refuse facilities are different from traditional coal-fired power plants.

This bill eliminates the EPA's unfairness by giving these facilitates a realistic chance of complying with air quality rules.

Some today have suggested that the States could simply address this issue on their own, that my bill gets in the way of State autonomy. In fact, States have little to no autonomy in administering CSAPR, since any requested change must be approved by the EPA.

According to the SENSE Act's opponents, the EPA, which has thus far refused to provide flexibility for these plants, would somehow have a change of heart and decide to approve State-requested policy changes. I find that hard to imagine.

Some have also charged that the SENSE Act would threaten air quality, forgetting that this legislation specifically avoids causing any increase in State SO_2 allocations.

More importantly, without the remediation work fueled by this industry, the uncontrolled and environmentally catastrophic coal refuse pile fires that are far too common will only continue. The unregulated emissions from these fires are a greater concern to public health.

It is unfair that some in Washington have pursued an unfair and uncompromising orthodoxy on this issue and have derided in their zeal an overwhelmingly successful private sector solution to a pressing environmental challenge.

The SENSE Act is about protecting vulnerable coal country communities from pollution and environmental degradation. It is about standing up for over 5,200 family-sustaining jobs, many of which are in areas that have experienced economic hardship. These jobs come with names: Robert, John, Tim, James, Pat.

I urge approval of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 173, noes 236, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 122]

AYES—173

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)

Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—24

Babin
Bass
Becerra
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Engel
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Hoyer
Joyce
Lipinski
Pelosi
Rice (NY)
Roskam
Rush
Smith (WA)
Stivers
Takai
Welch
Wenstrup

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1626

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 231, noes 183, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 123]

AYES—231

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—183

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Poliquin
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Graves (MO)
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Joyce
Lipinski
Rice (NY)
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Smith (WA)
Takai
Wenstrup

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1631

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING PENN STATE UNIVERSITY'S BIG TEN WRESTLING TITLE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Penn State Nittany Lion wrestling team on earning its fifth Big Ten wrestling title in the past 6 years.

The Lions scored 150.5 points to win the title over Iowa earlier this month, which was just one-half point shy of its school record. Beyond the title itself, Penn State wrestler Zain Retherford was named Big Ten Wrestler of the Year, and Jason Nolf won the conference's Freshman of the Year award. Penn State coach Cael Sanderson was also named Coach of the Year.

With a Big Ten title on the books, the focus shifts this week to the NCAA

National Championships in New York City. Nine members of the team will compete for the university's fifth national title in 6 years, mirroring their Big Ten success.

I wish these young men the best of luck as they compete in New York City this week, and I congratulate them on their achievement in securing the Big Ten title.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Mountain, Alabama, November 16, 2015: Pamela Oshel, 49 years old.

Tyrone, Missouri, November 18, 2015: Darrell Dean Shriver, 68 years old; Garold Dee Aldridge, 52; Harold Wayne Aldridge, 50; Janell Arlisa Aldridge, 48; Julie Ann Aldridge, 47; Carey Dean Shriver, 46; Valirea Love Shriver, 44.

Manchester, Connecticut, December 8, 2013: Artara Benson, 46 years old; Brittany Mills, 28; Kamesha Mills, 23 years old.

Manson, Washington, March 10, 2015: Jose Rodriguez, 58 years old; Maria Sedano, 50; Edgar Costumbre, 24.

Glade Spring, Virginia, February 25, 2014: Terry Griffin, 75 years old; Nancy Griffin, 74; Kristin Palmer, 46; Kevin Palmer, 44; Griffin Palmer, 17.

Fontana, California, December 31, 2013: Silvia Miranda, 34 years old; Rayna Miranda, 10; Ramon Miranda, Jr., 12 years old.

GOVERNMENT SPIES ON CITIZENS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in a secret court, the FBI quietly revised its privacy policy for searching through data that is collected on Americans by the NSA. The NSA, which I call the National Surveillance Agency, gives the FBI access to not only the data it collects but to the content of personal communications, like emails, texts, and phone calls.

What the intelligence agencies have been doing is lawfully collecting information on foreign terrorists but, at the same time, creating large databases of information that also contains information on American citizens. This identifying information is then used for what the FBI calls routine searches that are unrelated to national security.

Mr. Speaker, the FBI does not obtain a court-approved Fourth Amendment warrant for these searches. This leeway by the NSA and the FBI allows for a backdoor to spy on Americans. Thus, the FBI is ignoring the U.S. Constitution.

The NSA and the FBI will continue to violate the constitutional protections that are guaranteed to all Americans unless Congress intervenes and protects and upholds the right of privacy of all Americans.

And that is just the way it is.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate Women's History Month.

As one of the 108 women in Congress today, I am thankful to follow the trail blazed by so many American women who demanded the right to vote and participate in our democracy.

I am inspired by recent historic milestones, for example, of the first women ever who are graduating from the Army's elite Ranger school and of the Department of Defense, which is finally expanding all combat roles to qualified servicewomen. These achievements are further proof that women can break any barrier if they are given the chance, if they are willing to, and if they are given the support and opportunity to do so.

Unfortunately, today's widespread social and economic inequalities disproportionately hurt American women. In 2016, a typical woman in America earns only 79 cents to the dollar that a man earns. Over a lifetime, that is $400,000 of wages lost, and she risks losing her job if she needs to care for her children or sick family members.

So we take this month to thank America's women, but there is a lot more to do.

CONGRATULATING DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Dunbar High School for its recent advancement to the UIL 5A Texas State basketball tournament.

Dunbar High School has been recognized throughout the years for both its academic and athletic achievements, with the fine Wildcats' basketball success being the latest. The Wildcats were led by Coach Robert Hughes, Jr., and they fought their way all the way to the State tournament in San Antonio, Texas. The team entered unranked and as one of only two qualifiers that were unranked.

Dunbar, a three-time champion, is no stranger to big games, with their last trip being in 2007. They won the UIL State Basketball Championship in 1963, 1965, 1967, 1993, 2003, and 2006. Back in the sixties and early nineties, they were under the leadership of Coach Robert Hughes, Sr.

Today I am proud to recognize the success of Dunbar High School's basketball team and their outstanding 23–12 record. They have made Fort Worth very proud, and I wish the program continued success.

VETERANS WHO RETURN HOME WITH THE MENTAL WOUNDS OF WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise on behalf of our veterans who return home with the mental wounds of war.

For generations, we have sent our sons and daughters into harm's way. For generations, they have served this country honorably. They don't come home in the same way they left. There were generations who came back to the United States who didn't even receive a ''thank you.'' There was not even a handshake or a hug waiting for them.

For our Vietnam veterans who are watching at home, we say to this day, ''welcome home,'' because when they first came home, they were spat on. Fortunately, we have learned a lesson from that generation. For me and my generation, as we return from Iraq and Afghanistan, there is a ''thank you,'' but there is so much more that needs to be done.

That is why we are here tonight for this Special Order. It is on behalf of our veterans who return home with the mental wounds of war.

Each and every one of our congressional districts is home to these veterans. For me, I represent Suffolk County, New York, on the east end of Long Island. We are proud of not only having the highest veterans' population of any county in New York, but of having the second highest veterans' population of any county in the country.

We have veterans who come home to family, to friends, and to people with whom they work who don't understand what it is their loved one or colleague is going through. Isolated and alone, too many of our veterans are losing their struggles with posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, and there is so much more that each and every one of us can do on their behalf.

Tonight is a bipartisan Special Order. We are joined by my colleague from

Arizona, who has led the fight on a national level on behalf of men and women from all corners of this country who are struggling with recoveries from suicide attempts, and who has led in the effort to prevent that attempt in the first place.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA).

□ 1645

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for organizing this Special Order hour and for bringing attention to this important issue.

An estimated 22 American veterans die by suicide every day. These men and women are our neighbors and our friends, our sons and our daughters, our mothers and our fathers.

Veteran suicide is too important an issue to be overshadowed by bipartisan politics. It is why we have come together tonight to show our commitment to veterans who have given so much to keep America safe.

We must do more—Congress, the VA, the American public—to end the epidemic of veteran suicide and to ensure veterans and their families have access to the best possible mental health care. This is a responsibility we all share.

That is why I support Congressman ZELDIN's legislation, the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support program, to expand access to peer-to-peer counseling for veterans.

A battle buddy can open the door to the care and support a veteran needs, and we must support efforts to expand the availability and accessibility of mental health care. No one who returns home from serving our country should ever feel like he or she has nowhere to turn.

I have often shared this story of a young veteran in my district, Sergeant Daniel Somers. Sergeant Somers was an Army veteran with two tours in Iraq.

Diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder, Sergeant Somers ultimately took his own life after struggling with the VA bureaucracy and not getting the help he needed in time.

Together with the Somers family, we have worked to develop legislation to ensure that all veterans, including those with classified experiences, get immediate access to mental health services in the appropriate care setting.

The Daniel Somers Act was combined with Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY's Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act and passed unanimously by the House of Representatives.

Senator JON TESTER introduced companion legislation in the Senate, and we continue to work to get this bill signed into law.

I pledge to continue working with my colleagues to ensure that no veteran feels trapped like Sergeant Somers did and that all of our veterans have access to appropriate mental health care.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ZELDIN for his work on behalf of our veterans and for hosting this bipartisan Special Order on veterans mental health care.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I commend Representative SINEMA for her efforts on behalf of the Somers family.

We lose a lot of our sons and daughters in harm's way, and there is reflection for that family as to what that sacrifice accomplished. I guess it depends on the year, the place, the circumstances.

But the Somers family knows that they have a champion here fighting on their behalf so that the sacrifice was not for naught. A legacy is left behind that those who struggle moving forward might have a helping hand.

I thank Ms. SINEMA for her advocacy not just on behalf of the Somers family in her district, but for all of our veterans who need more help all across America.

At this time, I would like to recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) and thank him for his efforts in his home State and for joining this cause tonight on behalf of our veterans who not only are going to benefit from the immediate effort of this Chamber with all the different ideas that are before it now, but really for the decades and generations still to serve ahead.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for his service to this country, having himself put on the uniform prior to his coming to this Congress.

He is one of the greatest assets we have in this Chamber. It is just a real pleasure to have gotten to know him over the last year and a half and to call him a friend.

When this country makes a decision to send people to war, we need to understand that the people own that decision. What does that mean?

It means, when we put people out in harm's way, our servicemen and servicewomen, we better be there when they come home. It is the principle of solidarity. They stand for us. We have to stand for them.

I am joining this Special Order today because I want to again bring attention to this serious issue that should trouble everyone's conscience.

We have been made painfully aware in the past several years that the VA has failed in a number of ways to adequately serve our Nation's veterans. As I understand it, while most Americans are patriotic, too few have taken the time to develop empathy for what our veterans go through, especially in combat.

Mr. Speaker, everyone in America needs to be engaging our veterans. This is all hands on deck. We all know veterans. It is good to ask them about their service and to walk with them.

As I have talked to veterans across my district, I asked for some emails from them because I knew I was going to be coming to have this Special Order.

''The United States isn't united in purpose,'' one veteran explained to me. ''We're divided, fighting a global war with a peacetime mindset. Americans have never been farther away from our Nation's veterans . . . from what it takes to defend our Nation's freedom. The true cost of war is lost on most.''

The failure to understand what veterans have gone through is not just characteristic of the broader population, but it is also a problem at the VA, an agency that should strive to fully understand the experience of our servicemen and -women so that they can better serve them.

Many veterans suffering with mental health issues as a result of traumas experienced during their service have too often been left to fend for themselves.

In fact, the VA has come up short so often it has risen to the level of a scandal, with an estimated 22 veteran deaths per day, or over 8,000 annually, as a result of mental health issues.

One young veteran told me about the condescending and patronizing language used by some—let me emphasize some—VA staff.

There are VA staff on the front lines who are very dedicated and very committed to serving our veterans. It is disturbing that we would have some who don't see it that way.

He told me that one staff stooped so low as to call veterans bums when they were seeking financial assistance during hard times.

It is outrageous and painful to think that men and women who are willing to die for this country are not being treated with the utmost dignity and respect. But that is the tragic reality, and it is unacceptable.

The good news is that we can and must do better. I have heard directly from veterans in my district about what they believe can be done to improve this startling trend.

I have been working to reform the VA throughout my time in Congress to improve its standards and ensure quality service for our veterans by increasing accountability within the agency. Beyond this, however, there are commonsense and innovative ways we can help veterans.

One of them is to facilitate veteran peer support programs. Veterans want to help each other. Because while many VA employees may have never served in the military, the men and women of our Armed Forces have experiences in common that civilians do not share.

Less than 1 percent of Americans serve in the military and fewer still see combat. They truly understand each

other. They speak each other's language, so to speak. The VA should not be an obstacle to veterans coming to each others' aid.

Another veteran told me this: ''Peer-to-peer counseling for combat veterans is a critical aspect of a multifaceted approach to healing an invisible wound that lacks a universal fix.

''The universal nature of recognizing that the veteran is not alone: acknowledgement other veterans have faced the same problems and situations, and hope from their stories of triumph over their demons, enables the combat veteran to take the critical steps of admitting to themselves they have a problem.''

It helps them take the ''seemingly hardest step of admitting they are not in a hopeless situation,'' this veteran told me.

He also told me, ''Peer-to-peer counseling helps the counselor as much as the counseled via preservation of camaraderie and the fulfillment of helping their own.''

Far too many veterans experience hopelessness and isolation even though they do not have to. This needs to change, and I am sure that we can do better for the men and women who risked everything to protect our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, the VA's inadequacies are unacceptable, and the agency should embrace commonsense solutions to provide veterans with higher quality, effective treatment and opportunities for healing.

I laud my colleague, Representative ZELDIN, for his PFC Joseph Dwyer Veterans Peer Support program. As I looked at this legislation, inevitably, you go look at who Joseph Dwyer was.

I would encourage this country to look at that and to look for the other Joseph Dwyers, to look and reach out to those who have served empathetically.

To our veterans who may be watching today, you are not alone. Thank you for your service.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative ZELDIN for his service and for his work on this important piece of legislation. I look forward to further consideration by this House.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman literally for every single word and for his passion and advocacy on behalf of all the veterans not only in his district, but in mine and elsewhere.

It is so incredibly important for the words that we just heard to be echoed throughout this Chamber and inspiration to be found for some of what are great ideas to actually come into effect.

Because while there is one Joseph Dwyer who served our country, as the gentleman just pointed out, there are numerous Joseph Dwyers all around America who have not yet lost their struggles.

Now, it is interesting because we so often call those who lose their bouts with the mental wounds of war—we call it suicide. Joseph Dwyer's last words were, ''I don't want to die.'' He was huffing, trying to get temporary relief from his pain.

The struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder led to him losing his life, and he left behind a young widow and a 2-year-old daughter.

There are Joseph Dwyers all around America who have not yet left behind young children and young widows. It is our duty in this House to fight for them with whatever energy and inspiration that we can find within us to ensure that what starts as a good idea becomes law.

The PFC Joseph Dwyer Veterans Peer Support program is not a new idea. It may be a new idea for this Chamber. We created it in New York State back in 2012. At that time, I was in the New York State Senate, and we created it as part of the 2012–2013 State budget.

As we just heard from the gentleman from Pennsylvania, veteran-to-veteran peer support, veterans helping veterans, is the key.

We started the program in four counties in New York: Suffolk County, which is my home county; Jefferson County, home of the 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum; Rensselaer County; and Saratoga County.

The program was so successful in these four counties and, by the way, operating at just $200,000 per county. Here in Washington, we talk about programs in the billions, the trillions, and the hundreds of millions.

In my home county, we helped hundreds of veterans in just that first year. Hundreds of veterans were helped, over 400, and $200,000.

We know firsthand how many lives were saved as a result. It was so successful. It started in four counties and expanded to over a dozen. In New York State, we are so proud of the Dwyer program.

I just came to Congress. This is my first term. I was sworn in January of 2015. There may be no other mission during my time here in this Chamber that will be more satisfying for me personally than to do my part to hopefully save at least one veteran's life. But there are so many more that can be saved if this Chamber takes up this bill and makes it law.

It doesn't matter whether you live in one of the most populated counties in America of veterans, like Suffolk, or if you live in a county that might not be that well populated overall anywhere else in this country.

If you raised your hand and you are willing to lay down your life in protection of our freedoms and liberties for that flag, for everything that makes our country great, to protect it and defend it, when you come home, you should have shoes on your feet.

□ 1700

There should be food on your table. There should be a roof over your head. Some come home with the physical wounds of war; others come home with the mental wounds of war.

Our veterans are fighting for us, all of us—not just for their family or friends, but for strangers, too. Isn't it our duty while we are here, as elected representatives, to be fighting for not just those veterans with the mental wounds of war whom we know, but the countless others who are under the radar right now? They are under the radar because they don't know where to go for help.

Within our communities, we have veterans. We have veterans service organizations—you know, like the VFW, the American Legion, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the list goes on—and we have mental health professionals who want to offer their services. We have others who may want to provide a venue for a meeting, others who may want to provide food.

The setting is not that hard to put into place. For someone from our community who may live around the block from any Member of this Chamber, the setting is not that hard to put together for that veteran to go to that room and be with maybe 8, 10 veterans, understanding the struggles that they are going through so that they can share each other's stories and help each other cope with what are the mental wounds of war. It is our duty; it is our opportunity to be able to bring these veterans together and to save lives.

As was noted earlier, the statistics are staggering: an estimated 22 veteran deaths per day—22. That is 8,000 in a year. It was just about a month ago when the Department of Veterans Affairs indicated that 17 of these 22 individuals weren't even in the VA system.

Some don't go for help because they don't know where to go; others might fear the consequences. What is so important is, with the Dwyer program, maintaining confidentiality so our veterans won't fear that they might lose their job because they are going for help. That is incredibly important as well.

A recent New York University Medical Center report indicated over 270,000 Vietnam-era veterans still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. These figures are alarming. They are disturbing. The VA doesn't currently offer what we are talking about. This is different.

We are hearing about how some of our veterans are being helped because of pets—dogs, horses—fishing, other activities. Let's think outside the box. Let's not think of just the same way of doing things that have not worked inside the Department of Veterans Affairs. Let's do something different. We are not starting from scratch.

I would encourage any Member of this House to look at what we are

doing in my home county of Suffolk. I am proud to say that we are leading the way in America, and there is a model there that works and should be replicated everywhere.

Staffing shortages, untrained support staff, lacking family support services and access to services during nonbusiness hours are just some of the problems that have been reported at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I recently introduced legislation, H.R. 4513, which would expand nationally the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support program. PFC Joseph Dwyer was from my district. His home was Mount Sinai, New York.

A lot of people know Joseph Dwyer because of an iconic photo from the start of the Iraq war. This picture was on national news. It was on the front cover of magazines. It was that iconic picture of that American soldier post-9/11 at the start of the war holding a wounded Iraqi boy as his unit was fighting its way up to Baghdad.

It looked like Joseph came home in one piece, a hero. While it may have seemed that he came home in one piece because he didn't have some of the physical wounds of war that we unfortunately see from other heroes, he came back with post-traumatic stress disorder.

PFC Dwyer died in 2008. Matina, his young widow, was left behind. Meaghan, his 2-year-old daughter, was left behind.

This was an effort that was launched in his honor, the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support program. It is for our veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. It provides a safe, confidential, and educational platform where all veterans are welcome to meet with other veterans to build vet-to-vet relationships in support of one another's successful transition from military life to post-service life.

We were able to conduct 148 group sessions, serving 450 veterans in my home county of Suffolk, just in the first year. Since 2013, the program has helped, now, into the thousands, as we count veterans from across New York with PTSD and TBI.

Through my bill, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be authorized to make grants to State and local entities to carry out peer-to-peer mental health programs. The bill would secure $25 million over a 3-year period to establish a grant program at the VA that will provide up to $250,000 in funding for all selected entities, such as nonprofits, congressionally chartered VSOs, or State or local agencies to implement the peer-to-peer program.

Let's think about that—$250,000. The Denver VA Hospital construction project, originally budgeted for just over $600 million, is operating $800 million to $900 million over budget—$800 million to $900 million over budget.

The Department of Veterans Affairs came to a Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearing, which I am proud to serve on that committee, and they said that they are operating off what they referred to as an artificial budget. Has anyone ever heard of an artificial budget?

I had one colleague who was asking for when she was going to get a timeline of when we would have an actual budget. Unable to get an answer, she asked the follow-up question, not trying to embarrass the Department. She ended up asking the follow-up question of when she was going to get a timeline of when she was going to get a timeline of when we were going to have an actual budget.

When $800 million to $900 million ends up getting spent over budget, think of the hundreds of veterans in one county alone who could be helped for just $200,000. The money is there.

When the Secretary of the VA, when the Department of Veterans Affairs signs off on a relocation and incentive bonus for one of their own, whose position is in Washington, D.C., and she wants to go to Philadelphia, where her family is, and take over a position in charge of their Veterans Affairs hospital, she arranges a move to get the person, the gentleman in charge of the Philly VA hospital moved to Los Angeles. So now she gets the job she wanted. She is closer to family, and she gets herself a relocation and incentive bonus over $200,000.

The Office of Inspector General was outraged. They made a report recommending that this gets referred to the Department of Justice. The Department of Veterans Affairs was so outraged at this report from the inspector general that they ended up turning on their own inspector general, not referring anything to the Department of Justice.

One of the responsibilities of this House is oversight. You look at our Constitution. Article I is long, all the powers granted to Congress. Look at the powers of the President and the executive. It is short. Within that article, it talks about the oversight of this body, oversight to make sure that money is being spent appropriately, wisely, efficiently, and that people are held accountable when they are not doing the right thing on behalf of our veterans.

My bill would effectively and efficiently, as it has proven, provide 24/7 peer-to-peer mental health services by trained peer specialists for veterans, Reservists, and National Guardsmen wherever and whenever they are needed.

In addition, the Dwyer program will provide group and individual meetings to help foster a greater sense of inclusion and community amongst our veterans and, as I mentioned earlier, the program also addresses the many privacy concerns that veterans and other servicemembers have, as the Dwyer program representatives themselves will be veterans and would not be responsible to the Department of Veterans Affairs, therefore easing reporting concerns.

This is a bill that I have been working on since I took office in January 2015, working closely with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs that I serve on, the American Legion, other VSOs, the National Disability Rights Network, various healthcare providers on Long Island, as well as my Veterans Advisory Panel, which is made up of representatives from veterans groups and veterans themselves.

I want to thank the Dwyer family for all the inspiration the sacrifice of Joseph has provided to so many in our community and our country, and for me included. There would not be a Dwyer program in the State of New York without the sacrifice of Joseph Dwyer.

I want to thank the county of Suffolk and specifically Tom Ronayne, who runs the Veterans Service Office, for the countless hours and the love that he and his team have put into this effort that we talk about here tonight on the House floor; to Chris Delaney, Joseph's friend, who has served our country as well as Tom has and has done so much through his work with 9/11 Veterans and also serving on my Veterans Advisory Panel.

I think of so many individuals who have given so much of their personal time to make this work. It is an honor to be here on behalf of that team advocating for this cause.

I unapologetically love my country. I believe that we live in the greatest Nation in the world. I will say that the highlight of my day during my time in Iraq was going back to my tent at the end of the day. There would be care packages waiting for us from strangers—8-year-olds, 9-year-olds from other corners of the country—with pictures of tanks and flags and soldiers, cards saying, ''Thank you for your service.'' The generation that came before me didn't get that treatment.

Just think. Right now we have servicemembers in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere who were 4 years old on 9/11. Their entire generation, it is all they know. They went through their entire life, from 4 years old to today, knowing exactly what they were signing up for; and actually knowing what they were signing up for gave them all the motivation and inspiration in the world they needed to put on that uniform.

It is a great feeling the first time you get to put on our Nation's uniform. For me, it wasn't a feeling that I had about myself when I looked in the mirror and I saw myself wearing a uniform. It was thinking of those generations who came before us, like our Nation's Greatest Generation. It is a challenge

for our generation to earn the title of our Nation's next Greatest Generation. Maybe that generation is now serving here in this Chamber where 31 Members of the House are under the age of 40, including new Members who have come in who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

□ 1715

As I think about that 8-year-old and 9-year-old who wrote that card to that stranger they did not know and as we stand here today enjoying our freedoms, we think of those who are in harm's way—strangers—we don't know them—they are going to come back after seeing things none of us would ever want to see in our lives. And will we be there for them?

Mr. Speaker, there is one other bill that was filed in this Chamber called the Fairness for Veterans Act. An Iraq veteran from Long Island, Kristofer Goldsmith, received a general discharge, which is a less-than-honorable discharge.

As a result, he doesn't have the same veterans benefits that someone who is separated with an honorable discharge would receive. He came back with post-traumatic stress disorder. He attempted to take his own life.

When your post-traumatic stress disorder ends up leading to a discharge with a less-than-honorable discharge, isn't it our responsibility to ensure that they have the ability to diagnose and treat their post-traumatic stress disorder?

What if they are applying for an upgrade of their discharge status? Should we put the burden on that veteran to prove that the circumstances that led to their discharge is connected to their post-traumatic stress disorder? No.

This bill addresses that by putting the burden on the government to show that the circumstances weren't connected to what led to that discharge.

We must fight for all our veterans who are willing to fight for us. My bills will bring much-needed support—the Dwyer Program and the Fairness for Veterans Act—to millions of veterans, if you think of all those not only serving now, but in the future, and their families.

Passing these bills and others to address veterans' mental health is of the highest priority for many of us in this Chamber. I will work every day in Congress to spread awareness of these two bills and gather cosponsors and the support of veterans groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we pass this bill as soon as possible.

One last word about our families. We often say thank you to our veterans, as we should. We say thank you to our first responders, our law enforcement, our volunteer firefighters, our EMTs.

There are so many people who try to give back and who believe in service because they love their community, their State, their country. They want to give back. They want to leave this place better than they found it.

When I was in Iraq this past Christmas, I met the Command Sergeant Major for the 82nd Airborne Division. He is on his 11th deployment. I spoke earlier about that veteran who was 4 years old on 9/11. We also have that Command Sergeant Major of the 82nd Airborne Division who was on his 11th deployment.

My daughters were born 14½ weeks early. They were less than a pound and a half when they were born. They spent their first 3½ months in the hospital. After they came out of the hospital—I was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, at the time—I came across this woman who had three sets of triplets. She lost one from each set. All six of her kids had special needs.

Her shopping cart was full. Her husband was on another deployment to Iraq. With a smile on her face, with a very positive attitude, she is telling my wife and I all the resources that were available to us at Fort Bragg so that we could be better parents.

That was the last time my wife or I would ever have the nerve to feel sorry for ourselves for what we were going through with our daughters. They came home with about a dozen medications and heart monitors. They were going through a hard time.

But this woman, with her husband on another deployment, her shopping cart full, with six special needs kids with her as she is walking through the Fort Bragg commissary, with that positive attitude and a smile on her face, helping us be better parents, I realized that, when she was going to go home, no one was going to be waiting with an outstretched hand and a hug and say: Thank you for your service.

These bills and this effort tonight are for our veterans and their families in need, and it is the way that we give back. This is how to say a proper thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last year, Congress took an important step towards improving mental health services for our veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act was a landmark, bipartisan effort that improved suicide prevention programs and mental health care at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). I was proud to cosponsor and to vote in support of that legislation, but more needs to be done.

You do not have to look hard to see the need for critical mental health care and services for our veterans. Among servicemembers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, nearly 20% suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression, and during deployment, 18.5% report experiencing a traumatic brain injury (TBI). However, only 50% of servicemembers seek treatment. As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am working tirelessly to help those returning from the battlefield who face these mental health challenges.

Mr. Speaker, Congress can combat PTSD and TBI through greater awareness, prevention, and research. We can work with the VA and interested stakeholders to take commonsense steps to address staffing shortages, improve family support services, and increase access to services during non-business hours.

Likewise, we need to allow our veterans the freedom to receive mental health care at non-VA facilities. We cannot allow bureaucracy to stand in the way of veterans receiving the critical treatment and services they need. H.R. 1604, the Veterans Mental Health Care Access Act, introduced by Congressman MACARTHUR, would do just that. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation.

Congressman ZELDIN has introduced H.R. 4513, the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support Program, to provide 24/7 peer-to-peer mental health services for veterans, reservists, and National Guardsmen. Our men and women in uniform deserve a strong support system, and this is one way we can ensure they have a trusted sense of community whenever they need it.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIALS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2016.

Re Communication from the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Section 3(h) of House Resolution 5 requires the concurrent resolution on the budget to include a section related to means-tested and non-means-tested direct spending programs. It also requires the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to submit a statement in the Congressional Record defining those terms prior to the consideration of such concurrent resolution on the budget.

Enclosed please find two tables prepared in order to fulfill this requirement. I have also included a communication and associated tables from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, with whom I have consulted in the preparation of this material. While the non-means-tested list is not exhaustive, all programs not considered means-tested can be considered non-means-tested direct spending.

Sincerely,

TOM PRICE, M.D.,
Chairman,
Committee on the Budget.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, February 16, 2016.

Re Spending for Means-Tested Programs in CBO's Baseline, 2016–2026.

Hon. TOM PRICE, M.D.,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR CHAIRMAN: As you requested, enclosed are two tables that show federal spending for the government's major mandatory spending programs and tax credits that are primarily means-tested (that is, spending programs and tax credits that provide cash payments or other forms of assistance to people with relatively low income or few assets):

Table 1 shows CBO's January 2016 baseline projections for the 2016–2026 period.

Table 2 shows historical spending data from 2006 through 2015 along with CBO's estimates for 2016.

Each table also includes a line showing total spending for mandatory programs that are not primarily means-tested. (Some of those programs—the student loan programs, for example—have means-tested components, however.) The tables exclude means-tested programs that are discretionary (such as the Section 8 housing assistance programs and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program). However, each table shows discretionary spending for the Federal Pell Grant Program as a memorandum item because that program has discretionary and mandatory components and because the amount of the mandatory component depends in part on the amount of discretionary funding.

In The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2016 to 2026, which CBO published in January 2016, mandatory outlays for means-tested programs are projected to grow over the next decade at an average annual rate of 4.3 percent, compared with an average rate of 5.5 percent for non-means-tested programs, such as Social Security, most of Medicare, and civilian and military retirement programs (see Table 1). Mandatory outlays in 2016 will be boosted by an estimated shift of $39 billion in payments from fiscal year 2017 to 2016 (because October 1, 2016, falls on a weekend). If not for that shift, mandatory outlays for means-tested programs would grow over the next decade at an average annual rate of 4.4 percent, compared with 5.7 percent for non-means-tested programs. Compared with growth from 2007 through 2016, projected growth from 2017 to 2026 (adjusted for shifts in the timing of payments) is much lower for means-tested programs (which will have grown at an average rate of 7.2 percent from 2007 to 2016, by CBO's estimate). In contrast, projected growth for non-means-tested programs (which will have grown at an average rate of 4.8 percent from 2007 to 2016, CBO estimates) is almost one percentage point higher per year, in part because of the aging of the population (see Table 2).

Overall, the growth rates projected for total mandatory spending over the coming decade are slower than those of the past 10 years—by about one-half of a percentage point per year, on average. However, most of that difference results from the shift of some payments from 2017 to 2016. If not for that shift, the average growth rate projected for total mandatory spending over the coming decade would be 5.4 percent, equal to the rate recorded for the past 10 years.

A number of programs shown in Tables 1 and 2 have been or are scheduled to be significantly affected by changes in law. The most recent recession and the continuing recovery also exert an influence. As a result, important aspects of the programs in the future may differ significantly from experience over the past decade, and those differences may be the source of some of the variation between the growth rates in the past 10 years and those in the coming decade. For example, spending for several programs—Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), subsidies for health insurance purchased through an exchange, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the refundable portions of the earned income and child tax credits—has been or will be significantly affected by program changes that unfold over time:

Medicaid spending shot up by 35 percent from 2008 to 2010, during the most recent recession, both because of enrollment growth and as a result of a temporary increase in the federal matching rate. After dropping off a bit subsequently, that spending has been boosted by the expansion of Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act. As that expansion has been phased in, spending for the program increased by 32 percent from 2013 to 2015 and is projected to rise by 9 percent in 2016. Under current law, the rate of growth in Medicaid spending would decline through 2019, CBO projects, after which it would largely level off at a rate of roughly 5 percent per year through the end of the projection period.

Under current law, spending authority for CHIP will expire at the end of fiscal year 2017. Consistent with statutory guidelines, CBO assumes in its baseline spending projections that annual funding for the program after 2017 will continue at $5.7 billion.[1] As a result, in CBO's baseline, spending for CHIP is projected to drop to $11 billion in 2018 and to about $6 billion in subsequent years; it had grown from $5 billion to $13 billion from 2006 to 2016.

Payments of subsidies for health insurance purchased through an exchange began in January 2014 and totaled $27 billion in fiscal year 2015. They are projected to continue to grow rapidly between 2016 and 2018, largely as a result of significant growth in enrollment. CBO and the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation project annual growth averaging about 4 percent between 2019 and 2026.

SNAP spending increased markedly during the most recent recession—roughly doubling between 2008 and 2011—as more people became eligible for those benefits. In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) temporarily raised the maximum benefit under that program. The combination of higher enrollment and an increased benefit caused outlays to peak at $83 billion in 2013. Spending has fallen since then because subsequent legislation eliminated the increase in the maximum benefit (as of October 31, 2013) and because the program's caseload (which peaked in 2014) has declined. CBO expects that enrollment will continue to fall in each year of the projection period as the economy continues to improve. As a result, spending for SNAP is projected to decline slightly over the next several years, after growing by an average of 8 percent per year over the 2007–2016 period.

Outlays for the earned income and child tax credits rose by almost 40 percent from 2007 to 2008 and have grown slowly since then. Provisions expanding the refundability of those credits originally enacted in ARRA (and subsequently extended) recently were made permanent.[2] As a result, those outlays are projected to continue to grow slowly—by an average of about 2 percent per year—over the projection period.

Finally, because of the unusual budgetary treatment of the Pell grant program—which has mandatory and discretionary components—the growth rates for the mandatory portions of that program give incomplete information. The bulk of the funding is provided annually in appropriation acts and thus is discretionary. In recent years, spending for the program also has included two mandatory components that have allowed the discretionary budget authority provided by the regular appropriation acts to remain well below the full cost of the program.

In keeping with procedures that govern CBO's baseline, the projection for the discretionary portion of the Pell grant program is based on the budget authority appropriated for fiscal year 2016, adjusted for inflation. (That projection of discretionary spending is shown as a memorandum item in both tables.) Thus, the baseline projection for both discretionary and mandatory spending for Pell grants does not represent an estimate of the expected future costs of the program; such a projection also would account for such factors as award amounts, eligibility, and enrollment.

I hope that you find this information helpful. If you have any further questions, please contact me or my staff. The primary staff contact is Barry Blom.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Enclosures.

ENDNOTES

1. Under current law, funding for the program in 2017 consists of two semiannual allotments of $2.85 billion—amounts that are much smaller than the allotments made in the past. (The first semiannual allotment in 2017 will be supplemented by $14.7 billion in one-time funding for the program.) Following the rules prescribed by the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, CBO extrapolates the $2.85 billion provided for the second half of the year to arrive at projected annual funding of $5.7 billion.

2. Refundable tax credits reduce a filer's overall income tax liability; if the credit exceeds the rest of the filer's income tax liability, the government pays all or some portion of that excess to the taxpayer. Those tax credits also affect the budget, to a lesser extent, by reducing tax revenues; those revenue effects are not shown in the tables.

TABLE 1—MANDATORY OUTLAYS IN CBO'S 2016 BASELINE

[Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average Annual Growth (Percent) 2017–2026
Means-Tested Programs:												
Health Care Programs:												
Medicaid	381	401	420	439	460	484	509	536	564	593	642	5.4
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	28	28	27	32	34	37	44	44	45	53	57	7.4
Health insurance subsidies[a, b]	39	57	67	70	71	74	79	82	86	89	93	9.1
Children's Health Insurance Program	13	13	11	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	−7.6
Subtotal	460	499	525	546	571	601	637	668	700	740	798	5.7

TABLE 1—MANDATORY OUTLAYS IN CBO'S 2016 BASELINE—Continued

[Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average Annual Growth (Percent) 2017–2026
Income Security:												
Earned income and child tax credits [b, c]	83	82	82	84	86	88	91	93	95	97	99	1.8
SNAP	75	74	73	73	72	72	72	72	72	73	74	−0.1
Supplemental Security Income	59	56	53	60	61	63	70	67	64	71	74	2.2
Family support and foster care [d]	31	32	32	33	33	33	34	34	34	35	35	1.1
Child nutrition	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	4.2
Subtotal	271	267	265	274	280	285	296	296	297	309	317	1.6
Veterans' pensions	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	7	7	8	8	2.9
Pell Grants [e]	7	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	2.3
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	744	778	804	835	865	901	948	979	1,012	1,065	1,130	4.3
Non-Means-Tested Programs [f]	1,959	2,018	2,076	2,238	2,377	2,519	2,720	2,829	2,933	3,156	3,362	5.5
Total Mandatory Outlays [g]	2,703	2,796	2,880	3,073	3,243	3,419	3,669	3,808	3,944	4,221	4,492	5.2
Memorandum:												
Pell Grants (Discretionary) [h]	23	25	28	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	1.8
Means-Tested Programs Adjusted for Timing Shifts	737	778	811	835	865	901	939	979	1,021	1,065	1,130	4.4
Non-Means-Tested Programs Adjusted for Timing Shifts	1,927	2,015	2,111	2,238	2,377	2,519	2,669	2,825	2,988	3,156	3,362	5.7

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

The projections shown here are the same as those reported in Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2026 (January 2016).

The average annual growth rate over the 2017–2026 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount projected for 2016 through the amount projected for 2026.

Projections of spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs that are classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Because October 1 will fall on a weekend in 2016, 2017, 2022, and 2023, certain federal payments that are due on those dates will instead be made at the end of the preceding September and thus be shifted into the previous fiscal year. Those shifts primarily affect outlays for Supplemental Security Income, veterans' compensation benefits and pensions, and Medicare.

[a] Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3–2 in The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2026 in that it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll people with high health care costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

[b] Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

[c] Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3–2 in The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2026 in that it does not include other tax credits that were included in that table.

[d] Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

[e] Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award amount set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

[f] Does not include offsetting receipts.

[g] Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments.

[h] The discretionary baseline does not represent a projection of expected costs for the discretionary portion of the Federal Pell Grant Program. As with all other discretionary programs, the budget authority is calculated by inflating the budget authority appropriated for fiscal year 2016. Outlays for future years are based on those amounts of budget authority and also reflect a temporary surplus of budget authority provided in 2016.

TABLE 2—MANDATORY OUTLAYS SINCE 2006

[Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Est., 2016	Annual Growth (Percent) 2007–2016
Means-Tested Programs:												
Health Care Programs:												
Medicaid	181	191	201	251	273	275	251	265	301	350	381	7.7
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	11	17	17	19	21	24	20	22	22	24	28	9.6
Health insurance subsidies [a,b]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	27	39	n.a.
Children's Health Insurance Program	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	13	8.7
Subtotal	197	213	225	277	302	308	279	297	346	411	460	8.8
Income Security:												
Earned income and child tax credits [b]	52	54	75	67	77	78	77	79	82	81	83	4.8
SNAP	35	35	39	56	70	77	80	83	76	76	75	8.1
Supplemental Security Income	37	36	41	45	47	53	47	53	54	55	59	4.8
Family support and foster care [c]	30	31	32	33	35	33	30	32	31	31	31	0.3
Child nutrition	14	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	22	23	5.1
Subtotal	168	170	202	217	247	260	254	266	263	264	271	4.9
Veterans Pensions	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	5	6	5.5
Pell Grants [d]	0	0	1	2	4	14	12	16	8	10	7	n.a.
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	369	386	431	501	557	587	550	584	623	690	744	7.3
Non-Means-Tested Programs [e]	1,188	1,242	1,349	1,787	1,553	1,648	1,710	1,752	1,753	1,865	1,959	5.1
Total Mandatory Outlays [f]	1,556	1,628	1,780	2,288	2,110	2,236	2,260	2,336	2,376	2,555	2,703	5.7
Memorandum:												
Pell Grants (Discretionary)	13	13	15	13	20	21	21	17	23	20	23	5.8
Means-Tested Programs Adjusted for Timing Shifts	368	389	431	501	557	581	556	584	623	690	737	7.2
Non-Means-Tested Programs Adjusted for Timing Shifts	1,202	1,241	1,349	1,787	1,553	1,627	1,731	1,752	1,753	1,865	1,927	4.8

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

The average annual growth rate over the 2007–2016 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount recorded in 2006 through the amount projected for 2016.

Data on spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs that are classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; n.a. = not applicable.

Because October 1 fell on a weekend in 2006, 2007, and 2012, certain federal payments that were due on those dates were instead made at the end of the preceding September and thus shifted into the previous fiscal year.

[a] Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3–2 in The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2026 in that it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll people with high health care costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

[b] Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

[c] Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

[d] Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award amount set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

[e] Does not include offsetting receipts.

[f] Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4648. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Chemical Demilitarization Program Semi-Annual Report to Congress for March 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1521(j); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4649. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Community First Choice: Final Report to Congress'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1396n(k)(5)(C)(ii); Public Law 111-148, Sec. 2401; (124 Stat. 300); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4650. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's delegation of authority — Announcement of the Delegation of Partial Administrative Authority for Implementation of Federal Implementation Plan for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation [EPA-R10-OAR-2015-0847; FRL-9943-54-Region 10] received March 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4651. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Office of Refugee Resettlement Annual Report to Congress FY 2014'', pursuant to Sec. 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4652. A letter from the Executive Director, National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum, transmitting the Museum's 2014 Report and Audit, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 152112; Public Law 105-225, 152112; (112 Stat. 1412) and 36 U.S.C. 10101(b)(1); Public Law 105-225, 10101(b)(1); (112 Stat. 1283); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4653. A letter from the Director, National Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting a financial statement and independent audit of The American Legion, and proceedings of the 97th Annual National Convention of the American Legion, held in Baltimore, Maryland from September 1-3, 2015, and a report on the organization's activities for the year preceding the convention, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 10101(b)(1); Public Law 105-225, 10101(b)(1); (112 Stat. 1283) (H. Doc. No. 114—116); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4654. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program Eleventh Report to Congress'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 611(b); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title IV, Sec. 411 (as added by Public Law 104-193, Sec. 103 (a)(1)); (110 Stat. 2148); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4655. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Guidance and Transition Relief [Notice 2016-22] received March 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4656. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Evaluation of the Medicare Patient Intravenous Immunoglobulin Demonstration Project: Interim Report to Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 13951 note; Public Law 112-242, Sec. 101(f)(1); (126 Stat. 2375); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. STEWART, Mr. HARDY, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. COOK, and Mr. CHAFFETZ):

H.R. 4739. A bill to provide for the conservation and preservation of the Greater Sage Grouse by facilitating State recovery plans; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 4740. A bill to direct the Attorney General to make grants to States and units of local government for the prevention, enforcement, and prosecution of cybercrimes against individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 4741. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for modular open system architecture in major defense acquisition programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 4742. A bill to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4743. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a National Cybersecurity Preparedness Consortium, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 4744. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a 5-year demonstration program to provide grants to eligible Indian tribes for the construction of tribal schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4745. A bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to authorize the Secretary of Energy to enter into contracts for the storage of certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel and take title to certain high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4746. A bill to provide that no additional Federal funds may be made available for National Heritage Areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. ALLEN):

H.R. 4747. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6691 Church Street in Riverdale, Georgia, as the ''Major Gregory E. Barney Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. LEE, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 4748. A bill to ban the importation of semiautomatic assault weapons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California:

H. Res. 643. A resolution honoring women who have served, and who are currently serving, as members of the Armed Forces and recognizing the recently expanded service opportunities available to female members of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. JONES, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H. Res. 644. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the First Aero Squadron's participation as the first aviation unit to take part in military operations, and the group's contribution to the Nation's airpower heritage; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. WALORSKI (for herself, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. ZINKE):

H. Res. 645. A resolution expressing the sense of the House that individuals captured by the United States for supporting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant should be detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

178. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of New Mexico, relative to Senate Joint Memorial 15, stating that the State of New Mexico stands in support of the passage of the Dine College Act of 2015 and urges the New Mexico Congressional Delegation to work to ensure its passage into Federal Law; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 4739.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 provides authority to Congress to provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; as well as to make provisions and regulations for the military forces of the United States. Since proposed Sage Grouse habitat negatively impacts several military installations and training facilities, the Congress has authority under Section 8 to act to mitigate those impacts in order to preserve national defense readiness, while at the same time, empowering the States which have conservation plans for preservation and recovery of the Sage Grouse species.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 4740.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Secton 8

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 4741.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. ESTY:

H.R. 4742.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

article I, section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 4743.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 18 THE U.S. CONSTITUTION ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS CLAUSE 18

The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 4744.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 (18) To make all Laws which shall be necessary and power for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vest by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4745.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. ''The Congress shall have Power To . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States . . .''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. ''To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4746.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 4747.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 7 of the Constitution, giving Congress the power to ''Establish Post Offices and Post Roads''.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 4748.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 153: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 242: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 244: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 303: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 465: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 494: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 546: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 556: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 619: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 649: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 711: Mr. MESSER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 748: Mr. GRIJALVA and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 759: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 845: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 913: Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 953: Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 986: Mr. ZELDIN and Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 1116: Mr. RUSH and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 1130: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 1185: Mr. TROTT, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1193: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 1220: Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. HULTGREN, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 1221: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 1336: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 1397: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 1427: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1515: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 1631: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 1655: Mr. JOLLY and Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 1671: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 1707: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 1797: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1996: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 2170: Mr. RENACCI and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2205: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 2237: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 2254: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 2260: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 2264: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 2293: Mr. TROTT and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 2313: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 2404: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 2483: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 2567: Mr. WALKER and Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H.R. 2711: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 2712: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 2726: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 2775: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2802: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 2826: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 2844: Mr. LANGEVIN and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 2874: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 2896: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.

H.R. 2902: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 3048: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 3084: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 3099: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 3180: Mr. MOOLENAAR and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 3209: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 3235: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3326: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 3399: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 3411: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3546: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 3648: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 3713: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 3747: Mr. COHEN and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 3765: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 3779: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 3799: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 3804: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 3808: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 3817: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. HASTINGS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3849: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3851: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 3974: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 3982: Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 4016: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 4043: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 4062: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 4073: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 4126: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 4133: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama and Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 4144: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 4177: Mr. HARDY and Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 4197: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4229: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 4247: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4249: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.
H.R. 4262: Mr. TROTT and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 4277: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4293: Mr. OLSON, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4301: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 4336: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. HARDY, Mr. JOLLY, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 4352: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 4375: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 4400: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 4420: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4428: Mr. ABRAHAM and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4442: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 4447: Mr. WELCH, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4469: Mr. GIBBS.
H.R. 4472: Mr. REICHERT, Mr. NUNES, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 4481: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 4490: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 4511: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4514: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. COLE, and Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4553: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4570: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4622: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4626: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 4651: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 4653: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4662: Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 4664: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 4668: Mr. CICILLINE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 4678: Mr. COOK and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 4681: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4690: Mr. HILL.
H.R. 4700: Mr. TAKAI and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 4712: Ms. LEE, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 4720: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 4723: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 4730: Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 4731: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H.J. Res. 12: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. RENACCI.
H.J. Res. 85: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. COSTA.
H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H. Con. Res. 56: Mr. DESANTIS.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. WALBERG.
H. Con. Res. 122: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H. Res. 12: Mr. LATTA.
H. Res. 28: Mr. LATTA.
H. Res. 207: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. BENISHEK.
H. Res. 220: Ms. MATSUI and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H. Res. 294: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H. Res. 343: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H. Res. 374: Mr. KILMER.
H. Res. 419: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. MCCAUL.
H. Res. 432: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H. Res. 541: Mr. DESAULNIER and Miss RICE of New York.
H. Res. 631: Mr. TAKAI.
H. Res. 641: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 642: Mr. POCAN.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT LOUIS CRISIS NURSERY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Saint Louis Crisis Nursery, which will celebrate its 30th Anniversary on April 2, 2016. In 1986, Saint Louis Crisis Nursery opened its doors to provide twenty-four-hour shelter and special care for children whose families have faced an emergency or crisis. Numerous areas are served by Saint Louis Crisis Nursery including St. Louis City, St. Charles, and Wentzville. For over 30 years, Saint Louis Crisis Nursery has provided protection for more than 98,000 children who were at risk of abuse and neglect. With the month of April being National Child Abuse Prevention Month, this recognition is well deserved for an organization that is working to prevent child abuse.

The mission of Saint Louis Crisis Nursery is to keep Missouri's most vulnerable citizens safe from harm. Supporting and strengthening the fragile and the under-resourced is key to overcoming the cycle of neglect and abuse.

In addition to providing shelter during emergencies, Saint Louis Crisis Nursery offers a variety of programs: parent education groups, home visits, teen parenting groups, art and play therapy, holiday hearts campaign, training institute, school supply drive, community outreach, and family emergency fund. These programs enrich the families in the community, which in turn encourages children to be raised in a healthy environment.

Saint Louis Crisis Nursery started out with one crisis nursery location and has grown to five crisis nursery locations during the past 30 years. They have also established seven community outreach centers and a regional administrative office. The staff has grown from 12 to more than 100, and counseling/support services that started with assisting 435 families now touches over 6,000 lives.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Saint Louis Crisis Nursery on their 30th Anniversary of serving the citizens of their community.

CONGRATULATING MR. JIM BROWN ON BEING ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Jim Brown of Hollidaysburg, PA, on being elected 2016 President of the Pennsylvania Builders Association (PBA).

Chartered in 1952, PBA is a statewide nonprofit affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders. The guiding voice for the state's home building industry and housing consumers, PBA provides an admirable service to countless people, especially as in one way or another, we all have a fundamental need for shelter. At the core of this herculean task, PBA works to enhance and improve the ability of our state's building professionals to provide the best quality homes at the most affordable prices for all Pennsylvanians. Given these significant responsibilities, it's easy to see why the organization needs strong and experienced leadership. That's why I am proud to highlight Jim's election.

As president of J.R. Brown Construction, Inc., a member of the board of the National Association of Home Builders, and a member of the Blair-Bedford Builders Association, where he has served as president, vice president, builder director, chairman of the Scholarship and Social Committees, and co-chair of the Home and Garden Show Committee, Jim undoubtedly has the experience and service-minded approach necessary to lead PBA in its noble mission. I am also pleased to highlight that Jim is the first Blair County builder to be elected to this office since 1972, a fact that our communities can take pride in. I have complete faith that Jim will put his 26 years of building experience to work in representing this critical industry and all those who rely on affordable housing to pursue their version of the American Dream.

On behalf of the citizens of the Ninth District of Pennsylvania, I want to thank Mr. Jim Brown for continuing his service to our community and congratulate him for being elected President of the PBA.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN BARNETT—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Karen Barnett, of Atwater Village, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

A Los Angeles native, Karen has lived in Atwater Village for the past 14 years. In pursuing her education, Karen chose to stay local and attended Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. Today, her experience as a designer provides a unique perspective on improving her community and neighborhood.

Currently, Karen Barnett is a member of the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council. She serves as Chair of the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council River Committee, which she initiated because of her concerns regarding the present and possible future uses of the Los Angeles River. In this capacity, Karen has dedicated many hours finding ways to get the community involved in possible projects along Atwater Village's four mile section of the Los Angeles River.

Ms. Barnett has been a steadfast advocate for the environment and for the Los Angeles River. Under Karen's direction and with the approval of the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council Board, the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council River Committee applied for a National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program technical service grant. As a result of the Committee's hard work and dedication, Atwater Village was awarded the Atwater Village East Bank River Way grant, which will help map the area and identify locations for possible projects.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Karen Barnett, for her extraordinary service to the community.

THE CONTINUING ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE VOTING RIGHTS MOVEMENT

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, in honor of Restoration Tuesday and March being Women's History month; I rise to acknowledge the role of women in the continuing battle for protecting our constitutional right to vote.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was only made possible because of the brave men and women who marched,—and were willing to die for voting equality as they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday. Moreover, the narrative of the battle for voting rights in America is incomplete without the story of the strong contributions of the women who helped to advance these efforts. Nearly a decade has passed since Congress reauthorized the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in July 2006. This reauthorization not only continued to guarantee protections against modern day voting barriers, it elevated three mothers of the civil rights movement in its title: Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King. Honoring these great women who fought for equality and justice, this reauthorization stamped a day in time where both parties

were able to come together and show overwhelming support for the most essential right on which this great democracy was founded, the right to vote.

However, when the Supreme Court struck down Section 4 pre-clearance and federal protection for vulnerable communities in 2013, a number of states, including Alabama, passed restrictive laws designed to suppress the vote. It is imperative that we remain ever vigilant in upholding the legacy, not only of the historic women for which the reauthorization of the Act was named, but of the three women who sat on the Supreme Court bench and gave dissenting opinions following the tragic Section 4 strike down.

Whether protesting from the streets or the Supreme Court bench, women have long played a vital role in the movement for voting rights in America's history. As we celebrate the rich history of women in politics during Women's History Month, we honor the conviction and determination of women like Susan B. Anthony and Amelia Boynton Robinson who fought relentlessly for equality for the ultimate benefit of our country as a whole. When women succeed, America succeeds and Congress should honor the fight and sacrifice by passing the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2016.

Fannie Lou Hamer is famous for stating what so many were feeling then and still feel now when she said—"I am sick and tired of being sick and tired." Like the brave women of our past, we all need to be sick and tired of injustice and inequality. On this Restoration Tuesday, we honor the women who championed the cause of protection of our sacred and fundamental right to the polls.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY COMMEMORATION

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, our Nation's Vietnam War Commemoration gives us the opportunity for all Americans to recognize, honor, and thank our Vietnam Veterans and their families for their service and sacrifices during the Vietnam War from November 1, 1955 through May 15, 1975.

Over 9,000 organizations across America have joined with the Department of Defense as a Commemorative Partner to honor our Nation's Vietnam Veterans, including Benjamin Mills Chapter, NSDAR; the Illinois State Organization, NSDAR; and the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

This year's commemoration includes nine million Americans, approximately 7.2 million of them living today, and makes no distinction as to who served in-country, in-theater, or was stationed elsewhere during those 20 years—all answered the call of duty.

Veterans' Affairs Secretary Robert A. McDonald has designated March 29, 2016, the last day that U.S. troops were on the ground in Vietnam, as a day to honor those who have "borne the battle", and to extend gratitude and appreciation to them and their families.

Alan Gaffner, the Mayor of the City of Greenville, has also proclaimed March 29, 2016 as: WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY in Greenville, Illinois. I stand with Major Gaffner and my constituents in Greenville as we humbly thank our Vietnam Veterans for their service and sacrifice.

CONGRATULATING LOGAN MORIARITY FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Logan Moriarity for his first place win in the 2016 Class 4, 170 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Logan and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Jefferson City High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Logan for a job well done.

CONGRATULATING MRS. PEGGY J. BOSMA-LaMASCUS ON A SUCCESSFUL 34-YEAR CAREER AT PATRIOT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mrs. Peggy J. Bosma-LaMascus, the former President and CEO of Patriot Federal Credit Union, on a distinguished career and a well-deserved retirement.

Mrs. Bosma-LaMascus began her career with Letterkenny Federal Credit Union, the predecessor to Patriot Federal Credit Union, in 1982. Under Peggy's subsequent leadership, the credit union grew from $26 million in assets to over $520 million, which has put Patriot in the top 5 percent of all credit unions in the country in terms of assets. In addition to implementing beneficial mortgage, lending, and wealth management programs and processes, Peggy always made sure to keep the credit union's focus on member service and convenience. What is possibly even more impressive than her tremendous accomplishments is the way she remained committed to having a positive impact on people's lives and the lives of their families. I believe her trust in the credit union philosophy "Not for Profit, Not for Charity, But for Service" is truly worth highlighting and celebrating.

Additionally, many know that Peggy played a significant role in the 1990s to save jobs at the Letterkenny Army Depot, as the Department of Defense pursued a Base Realignment and Closure. It was to acknowledge the Letterkenny Army Depot's missile repair capabilities that Peggy urged the credit union to change its name to Patriot Federal Credit Union.

What's more, Peggy has also made time to serve several community boards and organizations like the Downtown Chambersburg and Chambersburg United Way, and the Greater Chambersburg Area Chamber of Commerce. It was in 2006 that the Greater Chambersburg Area Chamber of Commerce named her Businessperson of the Year. Peggy has additionally played a notable role in advancing credit unions by serving many state and federal level organizations.

On behalf of the Ninth District of Pennsylvania, I want to thank Mrs. Peggy J. Bosma-LaMascus for her dedication to making our communities not only stronger financially but also richer in personal service and community spirit. Her leadership and dedication to Pennsylvanians is to be commended, and her retirement is well-deserved.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL AG DAY

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on March 15th, in honor of National Ag Day and the hardworking farmers in the First District of Iowa.

Iowa continues to make enormous contributions to the U.S. Our farmers feed our nation, fuel our cars, and nourish our livestock.

With ninety percent of the available land used for agriculture, Iowa is the number one producer of soy and corn in the country and continues to rank high in the production of many more commodities, including beef and pork, and trails behind only California in terms of total value for agricultural production.

I commend and thank the hardworking farmers of Iowa who continue to produce record crops and embrace new technologies and practices.

I encourage everyone to thank a farmer today for their contributions to our nation and look forward to the advancement of agriculture across the U.S.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS J. KEENEY, THE 2016 GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas J. Keeney, who was named 2016 Man of the Year from the Greater Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick. Tom received his award from the Friendly Sons on Friday, March 11.

Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Tom's family traveled a great deal throughout his youth, as a result of Tom's father, Donald, serving as a Major in the U.S. Army. In 1964, Tom graduated from Coughlin High School and served in the U.S. Air Force from 1965 to 1969. While in the Air Force, Tom was an aircraft mechanic and maintained the F100D/F fighter aircraft. After leaving the service, Tom entered the Plumber Apprentice training program offered by Plumbers Local 147 and began working as a contractor in the construction industry. Tom also served as a Reserve member of the U.S. Army, while working as a plumber, pipefitter, and welder. He served a variety of units as a Combat Medic 91B. He remained in the Army serving for 27 years, achieving the rank of Master Sergeant E8.

Today, Tom resides in Plains, Pennsylvania and is a retired master plumbing and heating contractor. He is the father of two children, Patrick and Maurita, and has three grandchildren. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 302 and served the organization in many capacities, from Grand Knight to Faithful Navigator. He is also the past Commander of Alhamar Caravan Number 4 Order of the Alhambra and is an active member of Ancient Order of Hibernians, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and remains active in many other community organizations.

It is an honor to recognize Thomas Keeney for receiving the Greater Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons Man of the Year Award for 2016. I am grateful for his extensive service to our nation. I wish him the best as he and the Friendly Sons celebrate his many civic achievements.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF ROBERT J. HAND

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and recognize the service of Mr. Robert J. Hand's thirty year career dedicated to public service. Until his recent retirement, Mr. Hand served as the Executive Director for Resources for Independence, Central Valley (RICV) for the past ten years. RICV is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ''encourage people with disabilities to be in control of their lives and to live more independently through a diverse range of choices and opportunities.'' Bob dedicated his forty-year career to public service, and his efforts will continue to impact the community and be felt by all who have had the opportunity to work with him along the way.

Bob has been very active in many organizations and has held countless leadership roles over the course of his career. Through his role with RICV, Bob aided in the establishment of Inspiration Park, California's first universally accessible public park. The eight-acre park features several basketball courts, a fully accessible playground, a sensory garden, fitness cluster, Dog Park, and so much more. While there are many parks in California that feature some disabled friendly features, Inspiration Park is the only one that serves these needs one hundred percent. Additionally, since the park's recent opening in late 2015, Bob and his team at RICV, along with their other partners, have committed to providing funding for the general development along with maintenance of the park.

In addition to his time at RICV, Bob also served as the former Chairman of the Board of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, California State Rehabilitation Council, and the City of Fresno Disability Advisory Commission. He is also the founder and facilitator of the Central Valley Coalition for Human Services. Bob received his Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from California State University, Fresno and later returned as an adjunct instructor to teach leadership development for people suffering from disabilities. He has shared countless presentations in California, Kansas, South Carolina, and South Korea aimed to supplement the ''Leaders without Limits'' training manuals which he co-authored. While Bob's career has been filled with many personal accomplishments, it is without a doubt that his life's goal was not to improve upon his own successes, but rather to improve the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating a man who has dedicated his entire career to public service. Bob's many accomplishments within the community are a direct reflection of his strong dedication and perseverance. Through these accomplishments, Bob has improved the lives of many, and even upon his retirement, will undeniably continue to do so for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF MRS. INEZ POWELL DADE

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary life of Mrs. Inez Powell Dade who was born in my hometown of Wilson, North Carolina on November 7, 1912. Sadly, Mrs. Dade passed away on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at the age of 103.

Inez Powell was the fourth of seven children born to Mr. James Powell and Mrs. Martha Hageans Powell. Inez and her siblings grew up on a farm where they milked cows and picked cotton and tobacco. In 1937, following her husband John Battle, Inez moved to Washington, DC. She would remain in the Nation's Capital for more than 70 years. Later in life, Inez married World War II veteran and federal government employee Mr. James Dade.

Inez would go on to work for the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) where she would spend 23 years. Assigned to the United States Senate, Inez worked the overnight shift ensuring the Senate buildings and offices were ready for the next day's business. She retired from the AOC in 1970.

After her retirement, Inez purchased the Tiny Tot Preschool and Nursery, Inc. in Washington, DC which went on to become a well-known child development center in the city. She understood the anxiety parents felt when they had to leave their children in someone's care so she made it her mission to provide the kind of environment where parents could feel that their children were safe.

She committed herself to providing quality care at a reasonable cost for more than 40 years. In May of 2012, Mrs. Dade retired for a second time and ushered in the next generation of childcare providers.

On November 7, 2012 Inez celebrated her 100th birthday. Her family and friends celebrated her life and accomplishments with a ''Centennial Celebration'' on November 4, 2012 at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC. The celebration featured remarks from Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, then-DC Mayor Vincent Gray, and then-City Councilwoman Muriel Bowser. She also received commendation from President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

Sadly, Mrs. Inez Dade passed away on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at the age of 103. Mrs. Dade is survived by her four daughters, Helen, Peggy, Rose Marie, and Shirley; her youngest sister, Vanilla Beane; and grandchildren and great-grandchildren too numerous to name. Her immediate family as well as her family from First Baptist Church of Annapolis where she was a member for 49 years will cherish her memory.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing condolences to Mrs. Dade's family, friends, and all those who were touched by her amazing life.

CONGRATULATING JOSH MCCLURE FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Josh McClure for his first place win in the 2016 Class 2, 145 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Josh and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Fulton High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Josh for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Monday, March 14, 2016. I would like to show that, had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on roll call votes 111, 112, and 113.

ISIS IN THE WORLD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Caleb Leachman attends Needville High School in Needville, Texas. The essay topic is: ISIS in the world.

ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) has become a serious issue for the entire world lately. The terrorist attack ISIS performed on Paris, France, was a serious warning for the United States. ISIS executed seven different terrorist attacks all in Paris. The first attacks were launched almost simultaneously, as two explosions went off around 9:20 p.m. near Stade de France. Many men then shot up a restaurant in Paris called Petit Cambodge and the Le Carillon bar. These shooters killed fifteen innocent civilians. These same shooters then drove five hundred yards to the Casa Nostra Pizzeria and killed at least five people. These militants then drove a mile southeast to attack La Belle Equipe. They killed nineteen civilians at this location. Then the Bataclan concert venue was attacked. This was the deadliest as eighty nine people lost their lives. The last attack was set off at 9:50 p.m. as another bomb exploded near Stade de France. Before these events happened, President Barack Obama believed that the United States had already contained the Islamic state. This attack shows that us as Americans can never forget about the Islamic terrorists. The Paris attacks increased the growing awareness of the terrorist group called ISIS. Originally, ISIS was warning the world through videos and social media. Their attack shows that they mean business and that they will do anything they want until they are stopped. The attack creates a sense of frightfulness to the American public. This puts pressure on the government to do something about ISIS and other terrorist groups. As an American citizen, I know my family and I are extremely worried about ISIS. My family is certainly not the only one who feels this way. When they attacked Paris, most Americans asked one question. What stops ISIS from attacking the United States in this way? The answer is clear, nothing. This is a major political issue for the next presidential race. This attack in Paris can have an outcome on who the Americans select as their next president. The way the candidates respond to ISIS can decide who will be the next leader of our great country. This attack put ISIS at the top of the list for American issues and they will continue to be a focal point for the American government for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO ABBE LAND—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Abbe Land, of West Hollywood, California.

Abbe arrived in California in the late 1970s and has since dedicated her life to public service. Drawn into public life by possible eviction, she joined the Coalition for Economic Survival, a tenants' rights group to build the City of West Hollywood with LGBTQ activists, renters, and immigrants. After her appointment to the city's very first planning commission, Abbe was elected Councilmember for the City of West Hollywood and served for 23 years including serving as Mayor five times.

For much of her time on the council, she served as the sole woman, and she was instrumental in the creation of the Women's Advisory Board, Disabilities Advisory Board, and the city's domestic violence prevention program for same-sex couples. For more than two decades, she has influenced policy at the local, state, and federal levels. In 1993, she led the effort for West Hollywood to declare itself the nation's first "pro-choice city." In 1996, she led her city in enacting an important gun control ordinance which paved the way for the state of California to ban the sale of certain handguns.

Abbe is currently the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Trevor Project, a nationally recognized nonprofit providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention to LGBTQ youth. Under her leadership, the Trevor Project continues to save the lives of youth around the country. Prior to the Trevor Project, Abbe served as Co-CEO of the Saban Free Clinic, in Los Angeles, where she led the clinic's growth from a budget of $6 million to one of $16 million.

From Abbe's work protecting our environment to fighting for civil and reproductive rights, from her support for inclusionary housing to her efforts to combat homelessness, the people of the 28th District have benefited from her voice and steady leadership. Throughout her life's work, Abbe has been an inspiration to all who fight injustice.

Abbe continues to live in West Hollywood with her husband, artist Martin Gantman.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Abbe Land, for her extraordinary service to the community.

CELEBRATING COLUMBIA STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S 50TH YEAR

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Columbia State Community College's 50th year of excellence in education and ask my colleagues to join with me in celebrating their success.

Columbia State is Tennessee's first community college. Their vision has been to build on its heritage of excellence through innovation in education and services that foster success and bring distinction and recognition for the quality and effectiveness of the college. At the college's convocation on September 26, 1966, former Tennessee Governor Frank G. Clement said, "Because of this school, young people who otherwise would have to terminate their academic career at the high school level will find a way into the world of higher education."

Today, Columbia State has grown and expanded into five different campus locations including Columbia, Franklin, Lawrenceburg, Lewisburg, and Clifton. They also serve in nine of the Seventh District's counties. The college is home to thousands of alumni who have gone on to make an impact in all different sectors of society and industries.

I honor Columbia State Community College for serving and empowering people for the last 50 years to achieve their educational aspirations and go farther than they ever thought possible and I join with them in their celebration of achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, on March 14, 2016, I missed a vote on S. 2426, directing the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the international Criminal Police Organization. However, I would like to reflect that had I been present for this vote I would have voted "yea".

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAMTRANS

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor SamTrans, a core provider of public transit and allied services in San Mateo County and for all of Silicon Valley, upon its 40th Anniversary. This is the story of a government agency that sees mountains as molehills, and that believes that challenges are merely potholes to be filled.

In one of its many roles, SamTrans operates buses in San Mateo County. In its second role, it administers Caltrain service linking

San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties—the heart of Silicon Valley. Finally, the staff of SamTrans also manage the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. This trifecta of public agencies—all operated via SamTrans—have become the backbone of mobility across three counties over the past forty years.

In 1976, SamTrans was formed through the consolidation of 11 municipal bus systems in San Mateo County. The following year, it began what was to become a decades-long effort at inclusion of our entire population in transit services with the commencement of Redi-Wheels service. Redi-Wheels offers mobility to the disabled. My mother-in-law regularly used Redi-Wheels, linking her to doctor's appointments, trips to the grocery store, and bridge club gatherings throughout the community. SamTrans is not simply a bus or train or road construction organization. It offers all of our residents dignity through mobility, an offer accepted by over 300,000 disabled residents in 2015 alone.

The success of SamTrans is evident in its expanding scope of operations during these past four decades. From operating bus service starting in 1976, SamTrans was made the managing agency of our local transportation authority—the body that funds roads—in 1988. While the board of the transportation authority sets priorities, the SamTrans staff plans and carries out those directives.

This spirit of flexibility and frugalness was recognized as invaluable when, in 1992, SamTrans was made the managing partner of the newly-created Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board. While the Board of Directors of the joint powers board oversees Caltrain service, the staff of SamTrans makes important contributions to the planning and operating backbone of Caltrain. Baby Bullet Caltrain service, launched in 2004 and promising to cut travel times between San Francisco and San Jose by up to 50 percent, sparked a renaissance in Caltrain ridership which today is over 60,000 passengers every weekday. SamTrans and Caltrain have since worked together so that trains, buses and shuttles support these commuters throughout the week and throughout San Mateo County.

In 1992, the SamTrans board also provided 25 percent of the construction costs of the Colma BART station, bringing BART service further into northern San Mateo County. Eventually, BART arrived at San Francisco International Airport, bus service was modified to account for emerging travel patterns, and roadways were constructed, all with the participation of SamTrans staff and its board.

Mr. Speaker, you might ask why voters repeatedly approved sales tax measures to create this web of mobility. Approval arises from the confidence that voters have in the staff of SamTrans in its multiple roles serving bus riders, train travelers and motorists. Unlike some transportation agencies, there is no drama at SamTrans, only reliable delivery—of bus service, train service or road construction.

Today, the bus service that is at the core of the operations of SamTrans continues to evolve. Service has been consolidated along the El Camino corridor and increased in frequency to once every fifteen minutes. Bus service on weekends has been extended south into Santa Clara County and northward to Devil's Slide to serve weekend visitors to our new county park. Over the years, SamTrans set records for miles travelled between major repairs, miles driven without accidents, courtesy towards customers, participation in community events, and as a great place to work. In fiscal year 2015, 13.1 million rides were taken on SamTrans buses, and 2016 is destined to be an even greater year.

Mr. Speaker, this is an agency that struggles to keep up with the expectations of the public, but this is the opposite of the image of some government agencies which are, sadly, viewed as unresponsive to public needs. SamTrans, with a board that welcomes challenges and a staff which multi-tasks across three counties and tens of millions of dollars of annual obligations, has a bright future. Forty years ago, no one could foresee that the consolidation of several bus lines would lead to serving over 13 million bus riders annually. No one could foresee the multiple roles that this organization would come to play. However, at 40 years and thriving, SamTrans has become the mobility master of Silicon Valley. We honor its past, welcome its future, and celebrate its spirit. Thank you, SamTrans, for all of your roles and activities. SamTrans moves Silicon Valley.

POLICE BRUTALITY EVENTS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Alexa Keller attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

Several well-publicized police brutality events near the end of 2014 created a new wave of race discrimination discussions across America. After the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, protestors held up signs exclaiming, ''Hands up, don't shoot'', and after the choking death of Eric Garner in New York City, the cry of ''I can't breathe'' by protestors demonstrated their outrage. Social media furthered the causes, and during the 2015 presidential debates, most candidates took a stance on whether ''Black Lives Matter'' or ''All Lives Matter.'' Specifically, the death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Maryland, in April of 2015, and the consequences of his death will shape the future of America with respect to race relations and law enforcement.

In April, 25-year-old Freddie Gray died while in police custody, which led to weeks of protests and unrest. Stores were looted and a CVS pharmacy was burned to ground, after thieves took off with all the prescription drugs they could get their hands on. Baltimore found itself in a predicament because it was unprepared for this kind of mass protest, and law enforcement certainly didn't expect it to go on for weeks.

Once the rioting was finished, the city of Baltimore was left in a state of flux. There was an ''Us vs. Them'' relationship between police and citizens. To make matters worse, the number of homicides in Baltimore in 2015 hit 344, the highest total since 1993 when Baltimore had 100,000 more people living in it (Baltimore Sun). In addition, there were more than 900 shootings in Baltimore last year, which was up 75% over the prior year. During the weeks of unrest in April and May, over 150 police officers were injured. The general feeling of unease between officers and citizens is assumed to be the main reason that now the police force in Baltimore is down by 200 officers.

The city of Baltimore needs to make significant progress toward fixing the situation, but at what cost? Recently, over $2 million was spent on new civil disturbance equipment which includes protective gear, shields, and helmets. (www.nytimes.com) The Maryland State Assembly is working toward a new law enforcement bill of rights to provide police with extra legal protection that is not afforded to the general public. But, will these measures fix the anti-cop rhetoric which likely makes it difficult for police officers to do their jobs correctly and effectively? The fact that the ''Black Lives Matter'' leader DeRay Mckesson is planning to run for mayor of Baltimore is proof that relations are still dicey. Baltimore will likely prove to be a microcosm for the rest of the country, and how it handled the events that occurred in 2015 has and has the potential to impact the United States as a whole.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. DANA LOUISE RAPHAEL

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Dr. Dana Louise Raphael, who passed away on February 2, 2016, at the age of 90. Dr. Raphael will be remembered as someone who lived her life with dedication to her community, family, and to her career in the field of medical anthropology.

Dr. Raphael was born on January 5, 1926, in New Britain, Connecticut, to Louis Raphael and Naomi Kaplan. From a very young age, education was of great importance to Dr. Raphael. She attended Columbia University, where she earned both her bachelor's and doctorate degrees. While at Columbia University, Dr. Raphael was a protégée of cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead and became one of the first scientists that challenged milk formula manufacturers.

In 1953, Dr. Raphael married the love of her life, Howard Boone Jacobson, and as a newlywed, completed her initial field work in India. Dr. Raphael soon became a respected medical anthropologist, writer, and lecturer. She is

well-known for her global work in supporting breast feeding and is credited for launching the Doula movement in the United States. Dr. Raphael first used the term doula in her 1969 anthropological study to describe women caregivers during labor and childbirth whose function was associated with the success of breastfeeding.

In 1975, Dr. Raphael and Margaret Mead co-founded the Human Lactation Center (HLC). The HLC researches lactation patterns around the world and is also an NGO with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Her advocacy allowed her to take on companies like Nestle in the 1980s pushing them to become more aware of the role producers of formula played in infant mortality in developing countries. Dr. Raphael's contributions to these projects resulted in the implementation of education programs for young mothers to prevent unnecessary deaths of newborns. Her willingness to help people was conveyed in her book Tender Gift: Breastfeeding, which was published in 1973. The book was a product of Dr. Raphael's own sadness of not being able to breastfeed her son and outlined a number of tools for women to assist with successful breastfeeding. The book went on to be known as the breastfeeding bible by many in the midwife and doula community.

During the last 20 years of her life, Dr. Raphael served on the U.S. Board of the Club of Rome where she committed herself to educating world leaders on the impacts of climate change.

She also served as an Adjunct Professor at Yale University, was an invited lecturer in the U.S., China, India, and Japan, and was a recipient of two Fulbright awards. Throughout her career, Dr. Raphael recognized the importance of serving her community and expressed a profound love for it. Her contributions to women around the world will be her legacy. She is survived by her sons, Seth Jacobson and Brett Raphael, daughter, Jessa Murnin, and her six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Dr. Dana Louise Raphael. Dr. Raphael touched and aided many people throughout her life. Her advocacy, deep commitment, and positive attitude will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

CONGRATULATING DAVID PRINGLE

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of admiration that we congratulate Mr. David Pringle, Senior Vice President of Aflac, on his retirement on behalf of the citizens of our districts.

As you know, Aflac is one of Georgia's most renowned and respected companies. The company has repeatedly found its name on prestigious lists such as Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For and Ethisphere's list of World's Most Ethical Companies. In addition, Aflac has generously provided the opportunity for more than 5,000 skilled individuals to demonstrate the spirit that has made the company a household name and has helped make Georgia a highly desirable place to live and raise a family.

What makes a company like Aflac so successful are the employees and leaders, like David, who work tirelessly behind the scenes. As Senior Vice President, David serves as a role model, as his career is a veritable road map for young ambitious people to follow and emulate. However, his recent decision to retire from Aflac and departure from Washington certainly will be a source of sadness among members of Congress and staff so accustomed to reaching out to David whenever in need of counsel. It is not only the institutional knowledge of the insurance industry's most complex issues that will be missed, but the friendship David has provided to us over the years.

We wish David and Linell all the best in their next chapter, and hope that it includes the rewards and the leisure he has so richly earned.

CONGRATULATING JARRETT JACQUES FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jarrett Jacques for his first place win in the 2016 Class 2, 138 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Jarrett and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Owensville High school and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Jarrett for a job well done.

IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES McNULTY, 26TH MAYOR OF SCRANTON

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Jim McNulty, former Mayor of Scranton, who passed away on March 2, 2016 after battling cancer and heart problems. Jim was a champion for the Electric City and will be remembered for his service to his community.

Born in Scranton on February 27, 1945 to Henry and Eloise McNulty, he was the eldest of six siblings. Jim graduated from the University of Scranton in 1966, with a degree in Political Science. In 1981, Jim entered his name in Scranton's mayoral election, and his campaign was centered on reviving Scranton's economy. The rose became an iconic image of Jim's candidacy, as he handed out thousands to voters and wore one on his lapel.

Jim assumed office in 1982. During his time as mayor, he took on several projects that revitalized city's infrastructure, attracted tourism, and reclaimed pride in Scranton's history as a railroad hub. Jim worked with the National Park Service to establish Steamtown National Historic Site. Through Jim's efforts, Scranton was also able to rehabilitate the historic Erie-Lackawanna train station on Jefferson Avenue and convert it into hotel. His administration committed the funding needed to finish Montage Mountain Road, which allowed for the development of Montage Mountain Ski Resort. He also attracted a heavyweight championship fight between Larry Holmes and Lucien Rodriguez.

After his term ended in 1986, Jim went on to become a local media personality. He hosted a radio talk show on WARM, billed as ''the Mayor of WARMland.'' He also covered politics on WYOU–TV's ''Sunday Live with Jim McNulty.'' Outside of the media, Jim worked as a political consultant to other candidates and campaigns. In 1991, Jim married Evie Rafalko, and the couple recently celebrated their 25th anniversary.

It is an honor to recognize the life of this talented public servant. Jim's legacy will not be soon forgotten by the Electric City. His passing is deeply saddening, and he will be greatly missed by the people of Scranton.

REMEMBERING BEATRICE ''BEA'' JAIVEN HEINE

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life of Beatrice ''Bea'' Jaiven Heine who passed away peacefully at her home on March 1, 2016 at the age of 94.

The daughter of Russian immigrants, Mrs. Heine grew up in Connecticut where she graduated from Stamford High School. She went on to receive a Bachelor's degree at Southern Connecticut State Teachers College and later a Masters degree from Columbia University followed by her Doctoral degree in education from Temple University. She is best known professionally for decades as an educator in elementary school primarily for Haddon Township's fifth grade and later at the college level for teacher education with a focus on mathematics. Long before the importance of math education was widely acknowledged, Mrs. Heine creatively engaged students and future teachers to learn math with logic and showed that ''Math can be fun.''

She was an avid traveler and met her husband, the late Joseph Heine, on a cruise. They were blessed with two daughters and shared nearly 34 years of happy marriage.

While her list of educational, career and personal accomplishments are no doubt impressive, her family notes that she was modest about her successes. It is fitting that March is

designated as Women's History Month—a time to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of women, like Mrs. Heine, both in our nation and in our communities, who have made a positive impact.

Remembered for her sparkling eyes, winning dimples, auburn hair, radiant smile, and warm laugh, Mrs. Heine formed rewarding relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. To those who knew her, there is little doubt that the world is a better place because of Bea.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on March 14, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''YEA'' on Numbers 111, 112, and 113.

HONORING CARL JUNCTION HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL DAVID PYLE ON BEING NAMED THE MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' 2016 PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carl Junction High School Principal David Pyle on being named the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals' 2016 Principal of the year.

As Principal of Carl Junction High School, Pyle has worked diligently to ensure that students receive a high-value education and expand their learning opportunities. Going beyond the call of duty, he also takes time to familiarize himself with students by name and interacts with them on a personal level.

Namely, Principal Pyle was awarded this decoration based on his positive impact in the areas of collaborative leadership; curriculum, instruction and assessment; and his personalization of this learning environment.

Mr. Speaker, David Pyle's committed leadership in Carl Junction, Missouri, has set an essential example of how to maintain a standard of academic excellence for students. I am honored to congratulate him on his achievements as Principal of Carl Junction High School, and know that—with people like Principal Pyle in place—its students will be well prepared to achieve their future goals and achieve the American Dream.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF FRESNO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the historic Rotary Club of Fresno, California—an institution that has brought families and communities together since its establishment.

The Rotary Club of Fresno was first organized as provisional Rotary Club on December 13, 1915, and three months later, a group of 23 Fresno business leaders chartered the organization on March 1, 1916. At the time, the Fresno Rotary Club was the first rotary club in Central California, the ninth in the State of California and the 203rd club in the world. The Fresno club held its first meeting in Downtown Fresno in the Hotel Fresno Ballroom, and held its first District Conference in Rotary by 1916. In 1919, the club implemented their first community project, firmly establishing their organization in Fresno by the act of planting 1,000 olive trees along Golden State Highway, otherwise known as State Highway 99.

Since its establishment, the Fresno Rotary Club has supported hundreds of community projects and organizations in the local community, including: the water tower in downtown Fresno, building the 3,500 seat Rotary Amphitheater at Woodward Park, contributing to the construction of Playland at Roeding Park, providing mentorship programs through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, donating to the Salvation Army, Schools, and our local hospitals.

The Rotary Club of Fresno has been dedicated to numerous causes that have contributed over $3.7 million throughout its existence to many local and international projects which support local issues and international humanitarian efforts. The club's Wheelchair project has delivered over 4,200 wheelchairs to Central American and African nations since 2003. Project Nino has provided medical services and treatment to children over the last 30 years in the small village of Santiago de Tautla, Mexico, and has treated over 100,000 patients since 1985. The ''WAPI'' Water Purification project has delivered countless solar cookers and water treatment devices throughout the world. The Rotary Club of Fresno has also contributed over $1.2 million to the Rotary International Foundation in support of its worldwide humanitarian efforts to eradicate polio, and improve people's lives.

Members of the Fresno Rotary continue to dedicate themselves to community development and involvement. Whether it's organizing a city wide Boy Scout Council, or holding an annual Christmas party at the senior citizens home, or providing scholarships for students to pay for college. The Fresno Rotary has made a strong impact in our community, and has enriched the quality of life for many residents throughout the Central Valley.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the Rotary Club of Fresno as they celebrate its 100th anniversary and prepare to continue to provide outstanding leadership through the Central Valley, the State of California, and our Nation.

THE RISE OF ISIS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Cameron Kallina attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: The rise of ISIS.

The rise of ISIS in the past year has taken a toll on the perception of the terroristic group from a blatant ''JV team'', the words of our Commander in Chief, to a threat even greater than Al Qaeda. They have demonstrated time and time again that they are serious and are here to stay. From Paris to the shooting down of a Russian commercial airline, the actions of these attacks have shaken sense of security of everyday normal life.

ISIS is a terrorist militant group, disowned by Al Qaeda in early 2014 due to their brutal tactics, which has risen to power through the massive land they have conquered from Northern Syria to Central Iraq. They are the richest terror group in the world due to owning over half of Syria's oil assets and those profits from the oil help independently fund their regime.

Their actions have had an impact on not only the United States, but abroad as well. ISIS has become a focus of the 2016 Presidential election. Where prior to the attacks of late 2015 the focus of the debates centered on the economy, there has been a shift to national security, especially how to implement measures and how to maintain it. According to a Gallup poll which was published on December 14, 2015, 16% of Americans think terrorism is now the number one issue in the election, up from 3% in early November. (http://www.gallup.com/poll/187655/americans-name-terrorism-noproblem.aspx) The candidates differ on how to handle the rising situation. The candidates all have their theory on how to defeat this group. One idea from Hillary Clinton states we should shut down every terrorist account on social media, Donald Trump has made statements that we should ban all Muslims from entering the country, Ted Cruz says we must stand with our Allies against the terror threat, and there are many other ideas from other candidates that have their own strategy for facing ISIS.

Our sense of security has also been shaken. The ruthless terrorist attacks on Paris, France left the world in a shocked state of disbelief. 130 people were massacred and 368

were wounded that night at Stade de France, cafes, restaurants, and a concert hall. It left a scar on France they'll never forget. It seemed nowhere was safe; any place could now be a target. And citizens around the world were aware of this, tensions were high as everyone waited with the anticipation of another attack happening. Cities in Europe and the United States were on a heightened alert in the days and weeks following.

These acts of violence has shown the true colors and motivation of this radical regime. They show no intentions of letting up and have become a threat, not just to the U.S.A., but to all of the Western Civilized world. America must lead the fight against these monsters with the help of our Allies to secure victory and peace worldwide.

CONGRATULATING JACKSON BERCK FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jackson Berck for his first place win in the 2016 Class 4, 195 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Jackson and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Francis Howell Central High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Jackson for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I missed three votes on March 14. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 111: On Passage of S. 2426, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 112: On Passage of H. Con. Res. 75, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 113: On Passage of H. Con. Res. 121, ''yea.''

IN RECOGNITION OF HOPE WENG, THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM 2016 HONOREE

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hope Weng, a young student from my district who is one of two students to receive national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in her community. Ms. Weng of Tempe has just been named the 2016 Middle Level State Honoree by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on the most impressive student volunteers in each state and the District of Columbia.

Ms. Weng, an eighth-grade student at Tempe Preparatory Academy, delivered 100 care packages containing cookies, thank-you cards and self-penned essays to residents of a veterans home to honor their service. After writing an essay about veterans and having met with a veteran at a local VFW post, Ms. Weng was inspired to initiate a project that would honor and show appreciation to our veterans. Ms. Weng achieved her goal by creating a budget and then raising the funds through the sale of Girl Scout cookies, hosting a garage sale, winning a writing contest, saving her Chinese New Year gift money and soliciting donations. She engaged the community by having individuals write messages of gratitude in her thank-you cards.

Thanks to Ms. Weng's dedication to service, 100 Arizona veterans received thoughtful care packages. Members, please join me in congratulating Ms. Weng for being named one of the top honorees in Arizona by The 2016 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. Ms. Weng, congratulations on all of your accomplishments and thank you for recognizing and honoring our veterans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call vote number 111, 112 and 113 on S. 2426, H. Con. Res. 75, H. Con. Res. 121, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea. My flight, JetBlue 2224, was delayed by 1 hour and 20 minutes.

CHALLENGES WITHIN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Arjun Luthra attends Clear Springs High School in League City, Texas. The essay topic is: Challenges within the political process.

Within the US political system, there is an iron triangle which defines the spheres of influence and relationship between the United States Congress, the bureaucracy and the interest groups. Along with these groups, the executive branch influences the appointments of justices and bureaucratic officials. Concerns regarding public policy are placed on the shoulders of numerous institutions. What makes the political process so challenging is to ensure there is reconciliation of the political interests of these numerous institutions like Congress, which represents individual districts and states, and the President, which represents the overall nation.

The President, Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Budget Office, agencies and interest groups are all involved in the budgeting process. The President bears responsibility of presenting the Budget to Congress while the Congressional Budget Office advises Congress of potential consequences of budget decisions. Within the process, the agencies provide projection of budgetary needs. The complexity of the process and shared roles among the institution often require adaptation or reconciliation. For example, in 1973, President Nixon refused to disburse appropriated funds of Congress. This lead to the Budget Impoundment Act which transferred power of President to Congress. This particular historical example not only demonstrates a check and balance system, but also exemplifies the challenges in the political process.

In addition to budget, legislation becomes difficult to enact either due to political gridlock due to divided government or party polarization. This gridlock has led to a restricted number of bills that pass through the congressional committees. Only 4 percent of bills introduced to Congress become law and only about 6 percent of bills reach floor debate. Furthermore, discussion of bill is restricted by the closed rule in the House, which places time limit for debate and restricts amendments. While in the Senate, senators can request for a filibuster, which extends time of debate. This allows members of the Senate to push their interests forward and often prevent discussion of other legislation proposed.

In essence, the political process is challenging especially in creating the political agenda and reaching specific goals set by the numerous governmental institutions. Today, hot topics in the political agenda include gun control, education and immigration policies. Although pushing for funds and legislation that yields long-term benefits for the constituents is challenging, the political process requires purposeful rather than reckless action that is advantageous to the United States. The political process ensures recognition of the Constitution as a governing document and also ensures a check on the abuse of political power.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,124,286,688,944.60. We've added $8,497,409,640,031.52 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO DR. FRIEDA JORDAN—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dr. Frieda Jordan, of Glendale, California.

After graduating from high school in Tehran, Iran, Frieda Jordan moved to England, where she received a BSc and a PhD in Biochemistry from King's College London. She also became a Certified Histocompatibility Specialist with the American Board of Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics. Dr. Jordan is currently the Director of DNA Molecular Typing at Foundation Laboratory, and is a laboratory inspector with the European Federation for Immunogenetics representing Armenia. Prior to her work at Foundation Laboratory, Dr. Jordan was Associate Director of the Human Leukocyte Antigen and Immunogenetics Laboratory at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Dr. Jordan has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and energy in serving her community through her medical and scientific expertise. She is co-founder and president of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR), as well as chair of its ''Support Group'' for patients and their family members. ABMDR, which was founded in 1999, recruits and provides matched unrelated donors for stem cell or bone marrow transplantation to patients who are facing life-threatening blood disorders. ABMDR has identified more than 3531 potential matches for patients all around the world, and has facilitated 26 stem cell transplants. This organization has also brought new medical technology to Armenia, where it established a Stem Cell Harvesting Center in 2009.

Dr. Jordan is an active member and participant of various medical organizations including the Armenian Medical Association, the World Marrow Donor Association, the National Marrow Donor Program, and the European Federation for Immunogenetics. An accomplished speaker, Dr. Jordan has given presentations at numerous conferences and workshops in the United States and around the world.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Dr. Frieda Jordan, for her extraordinary service to the community.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH HEFFERS, THE 2016 GREATER PITTSTON FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joseph Heffers, who was named Man of the Year by the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick for the year 2016.

Joseph is the son of the late John Heffers and Mary Golden Heffers. He was born and raised in Pittston, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Pittston High School. He attended Wilkes-Barre Business College and earned a degree in Business and Accounting. He served in the Army from 1964 to 1967 in the Special Troops United at Fort Dix, New Jersey and was named Soldier of the Month during 1966. He worked at Eberhard Faber in Mountain Top, Pennsylvania as Project Manager for 21 years, receiving the President's Award from Eberhard Faber in 1986. He later worked at Cooper Industries in Weatherly as a Production Specialist and retired from InterMetro Industries in Wilkes-Barre. Joseph then managed the Metro Wire Federal Credit Union in Plains from 2001–2010.

He is a former President of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and received the Achievement Award in 2010. He was the historical speaker at the 100th anniversary banquet at the Friendly Sons in 2015. He is on the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army in West Pittston. And, finally, Mr. Heffers is a former financial secretary of President John F. Kennedy Council Number 372 Knights of Columbus, council Choir and Trustee of the 4th Degree Assembly.

Mr. Heffers coached several youth teams: Stoners Soccer, Jenkins Township and girls' softball and girls' Varsity Basketball at St. Mary's Assumption in Pittston. He is a member of St. John the Evangelist Church where he also serves as a Senior Altar Server.

Mr. Heffers resides in Port Griffith with his wife of 44 years, the former Mary Catherine Shea. They are the parents of two children, Joseph and Mary Elizabeth Gregor. Joseph and Mary Heffers have two grandchildren, Maxwell Wallace Gregor and Declan Joseph Gregor.

It is an honor to recognize Joseph for all of his accomplishments, and I am grateful for his lifetime of service to our community and country.

CONGRATULATING JARED RENNICK FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jared Rennick for his first place win in the 2016 Class 3, 195 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Jared and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Washington High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Jared for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call vote numbers 111, 112 and 113 on S. 2426, H. Con. Res. 75, H. Con. Res. 121, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

TRIBUTE TO C. MARSHALL KIBLER

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, sadly, South Carolina has lost a native son, C. Marshall Kibler, who was one of our state's most respected and admired business leaders. He fulfilled a rewarding life as a Southern Gentleman. He co-founded one of South Carolina's leading commercial real estate firms with Jeremy Wilson, now associated with Newmark Grubb. I especially appreciate his ability to select and mentor young professionals to achieve success.

The following obituary is from The State of Columbia, S.C. on March 15, 2016:

COLUMBIA.—C. Marshall Kibler passed away unexpectedly, Sunday, March 13, 2016, after a brief illness. He was predeceased by his parents, Clarence Marshall Kibler and Eleanor VanBenthuysen Roman Kibler.

A lifelong resident of Columbia, Marshall was a graduate of A.C. Flora High School, where he played football and was a member of the Dark Horseman Club. Mr. Kibler was a graduate of The University of South Carolina. He was cofounder and president of Wilson Kibler, Inc., a statewide commercial real estate firm with offices in Columbia, Charleston, Myrtle Beach and Greenville. Mr. Kibler was a founding member of The Capital Rotary Club, where he served as President and was a Paul Harris Fellow. His real estate designations include the Society of Industrial and Office Realtor (SIOR) and Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM). He was also actively involved with the Executives' Association of Greater Columbia (EAGC). Marshall served as president of The Palmetto Little League in 1992, the year the Wilson Kibler team was the league champions. He also served on the board of Cooperative Ministry. Mr. Kibler was a member of Forest Lake Club, the Pine Tree Hunt Club, the Columbia Cotillion Club, the Centurion Society, the Quadrille Club, the Flamenco Club and the Palmetto Club. He had an interest in history and was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution.

He is survived by his beloved best friend and wife of 40 years, Anna Belle Heyward Kibler; his children, Heyward Haskell Kibler (Rula), Sarah Rhett Kibler Brewer (Brooks), and Anna Belle ''Boo'' Kibler Moca (Steven). He was affectionately known as ''Kib'' by his seven adoring grandchildren, Jones Emile Kibler, Heyward Julian Kibler, Sarah Taylor Rhett Brewer, Townes Brooks Brewer, Anna Belle Heyward Brewer, Henry Marshall Moca, and William Rhett Moca. Also surviving are his sister, Eleanor Kibler ''Cis'' Ellison (Hagood) and brother, E. Robertson ''Bud'' Kibler (Beth). Marshall enjoyed his second home in Little Switzerland, NC where he loved time with his grandchildren, relaxing and otherwise doing very little.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held 11 o'clock, Thursday, March 17th, at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 3600 Devine Street, Columbia, with The Rev. Msgr. Richard D. Harris officiating. Final Commendation and Farewell Prayers will follow at Elmwood Cemetery. The family will receive friends at the home, 8 Ashley Court, Columbia, from 4 until 6 o'clock, Wednesday evening. Shives Funeral Home, Trenholm Road Chapel, is assisting the family. In lieu of flowers, for the benefit of St. Joseph Catholic School, memorials may be made to The Central Carolina Community Foundation, Kibler Scholarship Fund, 2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 213, Columbia, SC 29204.

In temper he was frank, manly and sincere, an elegant gentleman. In deportment, dignified and courteous, and in all the domestic relations of life, exemplary and irreproachable. Memories and condolences may be shared at ShivesFuneralHome.com.

IN HONOR OF THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN FOUNDATION 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize the 75th Anniversary of the activation of the U.S. Army Air Corps 99th Pursuit Squadron. The first black combat aviation unit comprised of pilots and support personnel trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field.

Tuskegee Airman Foundation is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to continue to build on the successes of the past, highlight the role models of today and develop the workforce of tomorrow.

In 1940, the military selected Tuskegee Institute to train pilots because of its commitment to aeronautical training; its facilities, engineering and technical instructors as well as a suitable climate for year-round flying.

In May of 1940, the first Civilian Pilot Training Program students completed their training. ''The Tuskegee Experience'' later grew to become a center for African-American aviation during World War II.

These brave airmen overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most respected fighter groups of WWII paving the way for full integration of the U.S. military. These men and women of the Tuskegee Airmen exemplify the State of Alabama's priority of Public Service Excellence.

This commemoration of their legacy comes directly from the efforts and determination of over 16,000 courageous men and women and recognizes the fortitude of these individuals to stand strong in the face of adversity.

Their accomplishments gave way to the continuation on a grand scale through the introduction of American youth to the world of aviation, technology, engineering and math through local and national programs and activities.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing today, March 22, 2016, as Tuskegee Airmen Foundation Day in honor of the Tuskegee Airmen Foundation 75th Anniversary.

RELIGION, RIGHTS, AND REFUGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Bushra Hamid attends Manvel High School in Manvel, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

Religion, rights, refuge—this past year has shaped our country like no other. From Pope Francis's historic visit to the United States, to the Supreme Court's new ruling on marriage equality, 2015 has marked, no doubt, a memorable year that has been etched in history. And yet, one of the most unfortunate highlights of 2015 was the refugee crisis that has taken the world by storm. The worst humanitarian crisis of the year has roiled this country, causing doubt and confusion for leaders across the nation.

The failure of the President's administration to stand behind its so called ''red lines'' that were imposed upon the Assad regime during the years of the Syrian Civil War quickly allowed the cruel Syrian dictator to gain comfort as he continued carrying out his brutal atrocities against innocent civilians. Our shortcomings undoubtedly contributed to the refugee crisis. Although our influence in the region did not lead to the instability of the nation, as the strongest and leading democratic nation of the world, we needed—but failed—to take required actions and stand ground by the promising words that we first declared, thus unfortunately giving Bashar Al-Assad a leeway.

Eventually, conflicting messages faced our country. As Russia began to heavily intervene in the troubling Arab nation, our country began to scramble for a settled negotiation. In the mean time, lives were still being lost, homes were still being destroyed, and futures were still being gambled with. Yet, there remained a big elephant questioning his stance in the room: what shall be done with the millions of citizens-turned-refugees who had no where else to go? Thus, the issue of whether or not to accept Syrian refugees swiftly took America by storm. History began to repeat itself as state governors sought to ban refugees from their lands, striking a similar response to that of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, when, in the time of World War II, refused to let Jewish refugees in America. It was evident that we needed to take measures to help the lives of those who were forced to flee from Syria to foreign lands with nothing left, while at the same time, to not risk minimizing our national security.

Logistics aside, it is clear that the Syrian refugee crisis has been a sad burden that, as a leading nation, we needed to face head-on. Failure to unite and stand strong with any decisions that we as a nation decide upon unfortunately leads to a disruption of tranquility. We must unite as a country and come to decisive actions in our future international encounters.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14, I was unavoidably detained. As a result, I missed three recorded votes:

On rollcall Number 113, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 121. As a strong supporter, had I been present I would have voted ''yes.''

On rollcall Number 112, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 175. As a cosponsor, had I been present I would have voted ''yes.''

On rollcall Number 111, passage of S. 2426, had I been present I would have voted ''yes.''

CONGRATULATING ALEC HAGAN FOR HIS FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE 2016 MISSOURI STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Alec Hagan for his first place win in the 2016 Class 4, 138 pound weight class, Missouri State Wrestling Championship.

Alec and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to Eureka High School and their local community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Alec for a job well done.

HONORING RON JIBSON

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ron Jibson who, on April 12, 2016, will be honored as the 37th ''Giant in our City.'' This award honors those individuals with exceptional and distinguished service and extraordinary professional achievement. Ron is an incredibly deserving recipient.

Ron's contributions to the Utah business community have been transformative, and his work to solve important issues has transformed our state. Ron currently serves as President and CEO of Questar Corporation, a natural gas and energy company. Not only is Ron an industry leader, he has contributed countless hours of service to our community. He currently serves as a trustee for Utah State University and serves on the boards of the Utah Symphony/Opera and the Women's Leadership Institute. Countless Utahns have, and continue to be, impacted by Ron's work.

I am honored to recognize Ron Jibson as a true ''giant'' in Utah's community today. I thank him for his commitment to bettering Utah, and his influence in effecting change.

IN RECOGNITION OF BILL BURKE, RECIPIENT OF THE GREATER PITTSTON FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK SWINGLE AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Burke, who on March 17, 2016 will receive the Swingle Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick. For nearly three decades, Bill's dedication and service to the community has produced many ambitious pupils and hardworking students.

Born in Pittston, Pennsylvania and son of William P. Burke and Nora Barrett Burke, Bill is married to the former Maripat Seitzinger of Scranton. They have four children: William, Jack, Peter, and Maeve.

Bill is a graduate of Scranton Preparatory School, the University of Scranton, and the University of Notre Dame. He has been employed as a history teacher at Scranton Prep since 1990. In recognition of his contributions in teaching, he received The Rochelle Olifson Teacher of Impact Award from the University of Southern California, the Rose Kelly Award from the University of Scranton, and has been a finalist for the Disney Teacher of the Year. He has also served Scranton Prep as Director of Admissions and Assistant Director of the Richmond Summer Service Program.

Under Bill's direction, the Scranton Prep cross-country team has won four PIAA State championships and twelve PIAA District II Championships. In his sixteen years at the helm of both cross-country and track, Prep has produced 18 all-state athletes and three state champions, and three athletes have garnered regional and national honors.

As an all-state performer himself, Bill was elected to Scranton Prep's Athletic Honor Roll. He is also a member of the University of Scranton's Wall of Fame, and was elected to the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, North Eastern Pennsylvania Division, in 2008. Bill was included in the Scranton Times Tribune's Top 25 Coaches of All Time list in 2005.

Bill is a member of the John F. Kennedy Council Number 372 Knights of Columbus, Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, and the AOH Wolf Tone Division Pittston. He has been a coaching instructor for Special Olympics. He is a founding member of the Diocese of Scranton Cross-Country League and is on the staff of the North Pocono football team as the speed and conditioning coach. He is currently the cross-country coach at the University of Scranton.

It is an honor to recognize Bill for all of his community contributions, and I congratulate him for receiving the Swingle Award. I am grateful for his efforts to develop young people into leaders.

WHAT MAKES THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN CONGRESS SO CHALLENGING?

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Ann Johnson attends Kempner High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: In your opinion, what makes the political process in Congress so challenging?

I used to think that Congress was largely ineffective. However, after taking a semester of AP Government, I realized that the legislative body was supposed to be that way. Congress isn't supposed to react quickly, rather, it is supposed to take its time and deliberate over the best course of action. The large number of political checkpoints a bill must pass naturally complicates the process. These checkpoints ensure that the bill is the best version it can be and brings the greatest good to the greatest number of people.

However, there are many extraneous factors that make the political process more challenging. One is the very apparent political divide in Congress. When Democrats only support bills created by Democrats and vice versa, the political process becomes nearly impossible to maneuver. Many great ideas and proposals for our country get lost in the partisan struggle or passed bills, heavy with compromises, never amount to any real change. Too often, politicians are more concerned with party approval instead of the needs of the American people. The deep divide in Congress and unwillingness to engage in across the aisle collaboration makes the political process extremely challenging.

Another factor in the political process is the influence of wealthier Americans in the decision-making process. In recent times, Americans of higher socioeconomic have been able to contribute heavily to elections and legislation. After the Citizens United vs FEC ruling, corporations and unions were able to spend unlimited sums of money on campaigns. This allows wealthier Americans to yield more power in the election and legislative fronts. They are able to influence lawmakers to vote their way, instead of voting for the benefit of all Americans. When lawmakers are forced to vote for their own personal benefit or for the benefit of their financial contributors, it makes the political process incredibly challenging.

Lastly, lack of interest in the political process by the public is a challenge. As Americans, we have been blessed with the right to participate in our democratic process. From voting for candidates to speaking out about different laws, Americans are able to influence the political process in many ways. However, too few Americans take advantage of these privileges. When all Americans unite for a cause, true change is certainly possible. Leading America in the right direction requires the participation of all Americans and politicians working together hand in hand.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 2016 STATE REPRESENTATIVE DAVID FLYNN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2016 State Representative David Flynn Scholarship Fund and to honor the man for whom it was named: David Flynn, loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, friend, neighbor, and former Dean of the Massachusetts State House.

The 2016 State Representative David Flynn Scholarship Fund, awarded to one student from the Plymouth campus at Quincy College this year, will make higher education more accessible to the most deserving student. This Scholarship Fund was established to honor David's dedication to Plymouth County residents and his lifelong passion for education.

Still a student at Bridgewater State College, David Flynn began his first political step as Bridgewater Parks Commissioner in 1957. He would go on to never lose a campaign in his political career, which included serving as the Representative of the 8th Plymouth District in the Massachusetts State House. In addition to his tenure in the State House and as an advisor in the Dukakis and King Administrations, David is remembered for his instrumental work in the expansion and success of Bridgewater State University in the decades after his graduation. He was crucial in securing funding for every campus building built since 1965 and

played a decisive role in changing the name of the institution.

After retiring from political life in 2010, David returned to his home in Bridgewater to spend time with his wife Barbara, nine children, thirty grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. On December 10, 2015 at the age of 82, surrounded by his loving family and friends, David peacefully left this world—but his memory and legacy will live on in the lives of the thousands of Massachusetts students and residents who directly benefited from his commitment and dedication to public service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the life of an extraordinary public servant. David Flynn epitomized the meaning of civic responsibility, and I celebrate the great work that the scholarship fund in his name will continue to do.

HONORING FLORIDA'S TEACHERS

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of outstanding public school teachers in Florida's 16th Congressional District.

I was once told that children are 25 percent of the population, but they are 100 percent of the future.

And it's true. The education of a child is an investment, not only in that student, but in the future of our country.

Therefore, I established the Congressional Teacher Awards to honor educators for their ability to teach and inspire students.

An independent panel has chosen the following teachers for Florida's 16th District 2016 Congressional Teacher Award for their accomplishments as educators:

Mr. Lorenzo Browner, for his accomplishments as an ESE teacher at Florine Abel Elementary School in Sarasota.

Ms. Charlotte Latham, for her accomplishments as a fifth grade teacher at BD Gullett Elementary School in Bradenton.

Mr. Todd Brown, for his accomplishments as a civics teacher at Sarasota Military Academy Prep in Sarasota.

Dr. Jennifer Jaso, for her accomplishments as a social studies teacher at Sarasota Middle School in Sarasota.

Ms. Judith Black, for her accomplishments as a French teacher at Pine View School in Osprey.

Ms. Stacie Cratty for her accomplishments as a dance teacher at Manatee School for the Arts in Palmetto.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District I congratulate each of these outstanding teachers and offer my sincere appreciation for their service and dedication.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHRISTOPHER L. MARKWOOD

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, in a world riddled with self-service and promotion, true public servants are hard to come by. But in Georgia's higher education system, we are fortunate to have selfless and strong men and women to inspire our next generation. It is in the defense of hard work and promotion of academic excellence that Georgia's students recognize a true leader. And with great honor, I would like to recognize a new leader in Georgia and my friend, Dr. Christopher L. Markwood.

On March 31, 2016, President Markwood will be formally inaugurated as the fifth president of Columbus State University. His confirmation comes without doubt, as his roles at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the University of Wisconsin-Superior proved his ability to lead.

President Markwood has already made a strong impact on both Columbus State University and the Columbus community. Since President Markwood was hired in June of 2015, Columbus State University has seen a spike in enrollment, and now serves 8,440 students from across the state and nation. The university recorded one of its largest fundraising years ever, bringing them close to their $106 million comprehensive goal. Columbus State University is now the home of the ''TSYS Center for Cybersecurity'', which trains our students in the growing and in-demand field of computer science and network security. Much of this would not have been possible without President Markwood's passion for the university's success.

It has been a privilege to work with President Markwood during my last term in Congress and I look forward to watching Columbus State University continue to excel under his leadership. I wish President Markwood, his wife Bridget, and their daughter all the best as they continue to serve Cougar Nation.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM KIRKMAN FOR BEING AWARDED THE SPRINGFIELD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 2016 SPRINGFIELDIAN AWARD

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize business leader William Kirkman for recently being named winner of the 2016 Springfieldian Award at the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting.

As the Springfield Chamber of Commerce's most acclaimed decoration for more than 50 years, the annual Springfieldian Award honors an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and dedication to the Springfield, Missouri, community.

As the first in his family to attend college, Kirkman graduated from Missouri State University in 1969. He was hired by Baird, Kurtz & Dobson (BKD) accounting firm out of college and rose through their ranks; He climbed from associate to partner and eventually became the firm's Chief Operating Officer in 2004.

Described as a man with a heart of gold, Kirkman was admired and respected by his peers. He demonstrated a passion for helping those who worked under him to blossom professionally, and is considered to have been an early pioneer in helping women to break into the accounting profession.

In addition to his impressive professional career, Kirkman has served in numerous leadership roles for Springfield area organizations. Currently, he holds the Chair position of the Board of Directors of City Utilities of Springfield but, in the past, he served at the Chair positions of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce board of directors, the Springfield/Branson National Airport board of directors, and Springfield's Center City Development Corporation. He also served as President of the Springfield Business Development Corporation in 1995, and received the Outstanding Alumni Award from Missouri State University in 2004. Lastly though, and certainly not the least of his accomplishments, Kirkman also achieved the rank of Captain while serving in the Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, William Kirkman—who I consider a personal friend—is not only a pillar of the Springfield community, but has been a mentor and inspiration for countless individuals that he has interacted with along his storied career. I urge my colleagues to join me as I extend my appreciation for his service to Missouri's Seventh Congressional District.

WOMEN ONCE AGAIN MADE HISTORY IN 2015

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Alesondra Cruz attends George Ranch High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: Women Once Again Made History in 2015.

Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver became the first women to graduate from the Army Ranger School in August 2015, the first year it was open to women. The course is a notoriously difficult feat in

army training and has proven impossible to copious soldiers in the past. It results in strong leaders, pushing soldiers to not only their physical, but mental threshold. The sixty-one day long course includes brutal obstacles and a 12 mile march to be completed in three hours. Ninety-four men and 2 women beat the grueling course.

It has long been established that women can play an efficacious role in the military. The extent of that role, however, is still debated. In November 2012, the American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of four service women and the Service Women's Action Network. They stated that plaintiff, Maj. Mary Jennings Hegar, an Air National Guard helicopter pilot, served her country with the utmost strength and honor, yet was unable to obtain a leadership position. In 2013, then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that the army would lift its ban on women serving in combat roles. This announcement was strongly pushed by the armed service chiefs themselves and led to evaluation by the armed forces. When the two women completed the course, the 75th Ranger Regiment had not opened its doors to women or changed its policy. Consequently, Griest and Haver could not enter the 75th Ranger Regiment with their fellow graduates. However, their completion of the course and inability to serve with their peers sparked discussion over whether women should serve at this level or solely have the pride of wearing their well-earned Ranger Tabs. This discussion may have been a factor in Defense Secretary Ash Carter's recent announcement that all combat jobs are now open to women.

Whether a person believes that women should be fully integrated or not, this accomplishment has opened conversation in an unprecedented way. Many people defend their stance on integrating women due to women's perceived physical limitation; however, Griest and Haver have proven just as capable as their male counterparts. As an eighteen year old, my thoughts immediately go to the Selective Service Act and what role integration of women may have on it. If women are fully active in the military, will we be asked to register? Regardless of the final decision for the Ranger Regiment or Selective Service Act, there is no doubt that this event has left an imprint on how Americans see the role of women in our military.

When asked about her accomplishment, Griest said, ''We felt like we were contributing as much as the men, and we felt that they felt that way, too.'' There is no doubt that these women have a desire to serve our country with pride and strength. Their dedication to America has inspired women and men alike, and positions women to serve their country for many years to come.

IN CELEBRATION OF MABELLE M. SELLAND'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of Ms. Mabelle M. Selland, a wonderful friend and loving community member.

Mabelle Maasen Selland was born on March 7, 1926, in Chicago, Illinois, and lived there until the first grade when her family moved to Omaha, Nebraska. Mabelle graduated from Bensen High School in 1944, and later moved to California with her mother where she settled in Pasadena. Mabelle then moved to the Bay Area at the age of 19 to become a keypunch operator. Mabelle later came to Fresno at the invitation of friends to work as an operator for Pacific Gas and Electric and saved enough money to enroll at Fresno State College. It was at Fresno State where Mabelle met Harold ''Bud'' Selland. Mabelle and Bud fell in love and were married in 1951. They raised three children, Julie, Eric, and Bethany and were married for 55 years until Bud's passing in 2006.

Mabelle was an accomplished young lady who always displayed a strong passion for preserving, and improving her community, and that passion has continued throughout her life. She has dedicated her entire life to involving herself in various community activities. She worked as a Social Worker for Fresno County from 1950–1955, served as the People to People president, and as chairwoman for the Fresno Moulmein, Burma Sister City, where she received two awards for outstanding service from the National Sister City Conference in Washington D.C.

In 1972, Mabelle received her Master's Degree in Asian History from Fresno State, and continued her work in the community. From 1973 to 1979, Mabelle served as the Executive Director for the Fresno City and County Historical Society. She worked diligently to successfully enter Kearney Mansion on the National Register of Historic Places. She received a state Historic Preservation Grant to restore Kearney Mansion, and created seven ethnic history exhibits, restored costume collection and exhibited over 200 pieces.

In 1973, Mabelle became an instrumental force behind starting a movement to save the Old Administration building on the campus of Fresno City College. Mabelle and her friend, Ephraim Smith, saved the building from the planned demolition. After 38 years from her initial suggestion that the community should save the landmark, the building was finally restored and re-opened in 2011.

In the 1980's, Mabelle served as the Cultural Arts Manager for the City of Fresno Cultural Arts office, where she eventually retired from in 1994. After her retirement from the City of Fresno, Mabelle traveled the world with her family and friends and continued to serve on the County Historic Records and Landmarks Commission. She wrote about Southeast Asian history and coordinated performances and village festivals at the Southeast Asian Business Conference.

Furthermore, Mabelle founded the Heritage Fresno, a historic preservation organization in 2003, and served on the County Tourism Committee in 2004.

It goes without saying that Mabelle continues to be a force to be reckoned with, even at the young age of 90. Throughout the many roads she has traveled, we thank Mabelle for the many lives that she has touched along the way. It is for these reasons that we join Mabelle Selland's family and friends in wishing her a blessed 90th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating a woman who has dedicated her life to public service. Mabelle's many accomplishments within the community are a direct reflection of her strong dedication and perseverance. We wish her continued health and happiness in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS F. QUINNAN, RECIPIENT OF THE 2016 GREATER PITTSTON FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas F. Quinnan, who will receive the 2016 Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick Achievement Award on March 17. Thomas has had a diverse career that has stretched over several decades, while still finding time to participate in the community.

Thomas F. Quinnan was born in Pittston, Pennsylvania and is the son of the late Edward and Clare Gunning Quinnan. Tom received his early education at St. Mary's Assumption School and graduated from St. John the Evangelist's High School, Pittston, and Penn State University, Wilkes-Barre. He later received training in Air Navigation Systems and Equipment at The FAA Academy, and management training at the Management Training School and the Center for Management Development. He attended the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York, majoring in Electrical Engineering Technology.

Mr. Quinnan was employed by the Federal Aviation Administration for over 33 years and retired as the Field Office Manager, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton sector. His career started at the New York International Airport, and he advanced to a Navigational Aid Specialist assigned to the Newark, New Jersey sector office. During his time in Newark, he was assigned to most of the facilities in the state of New Jersey including the Teterboro, Newark, Trenton, Morristown, and Atlantic City airports. In 1975, Tom was selected to be Chief of Navaids And Communications Unit at the Rochester International Airport, where he served until his selection as manager at Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. During his career, Tom obtained FAA Certification credentials on Instrument Landing Systems, Vhf Omnirange, Tactical Air Navigation, Air Traffic Control Towers, and several other air traffic control systems.

Quinnan was a member of the Manville, New Jersey Volunteer Fire Company No. 3 serving as Recording Secretary and was a Fire Inspector for the Borough of Manville. He is a former President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Neil McLaughlin Division, Avoca, Pennsylvania and a former President of the Airport Management Association. Tom is a member of the Queen of Apostles Parish in Avoca, and a long-standing member of the Friendly Sons.

Tom resides in Avoca with his wife, the former Barbara Ann Grace. They are the parents of three sons: Thomas, Shawn, and Robert, with daughters-in-law, Ann, Denise, and

Kara. Tom and Barbara also have six grandchildren: Melissa, Kaleigh, Patrick, Brady, Collin, and Ryan.

It is an honor to recognize Thomas F. Quinnan for his service in the community and his extraordinary career.

IMMIGRATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Ann Marie Ramas attends Ridge Point High School in Missouri City, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

In the past year, immigration has become a prevalent and controversial topic in social and political discussions. President Obama made some changes to immigration policies, prompting the case United States v. Texas (2015) where a Texas judge blocked President Obama's executive action on immigration known as Deferred Actions for Parents of Americans (DAPA). This executive order, along with the Catch and Release Act, epitomizes President Obama's position on immigrants. He believes that implementing lenient rules on illegal immigrants is fair, that we should not deport illegal immigrants under certain circumstances—if they have children who are American citizens or legal residents, if they pass a criminal background check, or if they are willing to pay their fair share of taxes.

Like most things nowadays, this has sparked some controversy. In addition to the rising notoriety and outrageous deeds of ISIS, the Syrian refugees seeking protection, and the increasing frequency of terrorists' attacks all over the world, United States v. Texas not only exemplifies but also enlarges the heated issue of immigration.

America is a compassionate nation, but it is a compassionate and fearful nation. We know that it is morally right to help those in need, especially considering the fact that Americans have all traveled to this great nation in search for a better life. However, the terrorist attacks and ISIS have embedded fear in Americans eliciting questions and doubts like whether to choose ethics over their own security. President Obama justifies his stance stating that, ''We are born of immigrants. Immigration is our origin story . . . our oldest tradition. Immigrants and refugees revitalize and renew America''. Advocates agree and applaud this statement while the opposing side wonders whether this is still true at the cost of our safety. However, one thing that both sides can agree on is the fact that the American immigration system is broken. So how do we fix it? That is the debate.

The United States v. Texas case and the whole immigration matter distinctly divide the American people. Depending how far we are from the first of our family to move to the United States or how compassionate or cautious we are, we view this concern from different perspectives. This issue has changed and shaped our nation in that nowadays, the word ''immigrant'' has a negative connotation. It is used as an insult to imply that ''you don't belong here''. Illegal immigration has also demeaned our country and opening ourselves up to help refugees has allowed us to be vulnerable to ISIS, eager to use our generosity as a chance to infiltrate us. The American public now has an impaired opinion of immigrants, forgetting that they are of immigration descent as well. As President Obama said, the United States is a country of immigrants. Immigration molded this nation. It is the foundation of our people. People from all over the world immigrated to America to escape hardships and oppression. Therefore, it is quite ironic that centuries after its establishment, America is being divided by immigration.

SENATE—*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

The Senate met at 10:15 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Sovereign Lord, You are our strong shelter and hiding place. We praise You for Your love and wisdom. Lord, You are too wise to make a mistake, too loving to be unkind, and too powerful for Your providence not to prevail. We are grateful that You have the final word about what happens in our Nation and world, so teach us to patiently wait for Your will to be done. Guide our lawmakers, giving them a clear comprehension of Your plans for our Nation. As they depend upon Your wisdom, fill them with the courage to accomplish those things that will unite rather than divide us. Inspire us all to experience the constancy of Your presence.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD LABELING BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as we all know, the President will be making an announcement this morning on the Supreme Court. I will have more to say about that later this morning.

As for the legislation currently before the Senate, the Senate will resume its consideration of bipartisan legislation aimed at protecting middle-class families from unfair higher food prices. It is a commonsense solution founded on science-based standards. Let's advance it together. If colleagues have other ideas on the issue, I would again encourage them to work with the bill managers to process any alternative solutions they may have.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2686

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2686) to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

PRESIDENT'S NOMINEE TO THE SUPREME COURT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in just a few minutes President Obama will officially announce his nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court. In considering a nomination to the highest Court in the Nation, the President has said he would adhere to three important principles: First, the nominee must possess impeccable credentials. That means an outstanding education, critical judicial experience, and an expert understanding of the law. Second, the nominee should have a keen awareness of the judiciary's role. That means understanding the Court's constitutional place in our government, and its limitations; third, and finally, life experience. A qualified Supreme Court Justice is someone with an understanding of the realities that Americans face each and every day.

I have no doubt how hard this must have been for the President. I have no doubt President Obama's nominee will possess these important attributes just outlined. Once President Obama has done his constitutional duty and announced publicly this nominee, it will then fall upon the Senate to provide its advice and consent. For 100 years we have had these hearings in public, going back to during Justice Brandeis' hearing.

The Republican leader has made it clear that he and his caucus have no intention of considering the nominee. It is hard to comprehend but that is what he said, and it appears at this stage, basically, all Republicans have fallen in line with this. I hope President Obama's nomination of an exceptionally qualified and consensus nominee will persuade Senate Republicans to change course. I do hope they will do their constitutional duty and give President Obama's nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. He is doing his job this morning. Republicans should do theirs this morning too.

Mr. President, will the Presiding Officer announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill with McConnell (for Roberts) amendment No. 3450 (to the House amendment to the bill), in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell motion to refer the bill to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:45 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise to express my disappointment that we have not yet been able to come to an agreement on the issue of GMO labeling. Senator ROBERTS and I have a

long history of friendship and of working together. We have both worked very hard to come to an agreement on an extremely difficult and emotional issue. I thank him for his continual work, and I am forever the optimist that we will get there, even though we are not there yet. We have continued to work, and my team and I have continued to work, to find common ground, all the way until very late last night. If we at this point do not proceed but can have some more time, I believe it is possible for us to come together in a bipartisan solution.

While this debate has been difficult, there are some important areas where Senator ROBERTS and I agree. For instance, Senator ROBERTS and I agree that the science has shown us that biotechnology is safe.

In fact, leading health organizations like the American Medical Association, the National Academy of Sciences, the FDA, and the World Health Organization all say there is no evidence that GMOs aren't safe. We agree that biotechnology is an important tool for farmers and ranchers, particularly as we tackle the challenges of climate change—which, by the way, science also tells us is real. I believe in science, and I would love if we would all come together around the science on both of these issues.

We have to tackle the need to feed a growing, hungry world. We agree that a 50-State patchwork of labeling laws is not a workable long-term solution. In fact, I don't know any Member on any side of this issue in the Senate who doesn't agree with that, that we have to have a national approach, not 50 different States. But we also know, as we have frequently debated States' rights, the importance of States making decisions, that when we preempt States, whether it is on fuel efficiency standards for automobiles or whether it is on food labeling, the approach has always been to go from 50 different States doing 50 different things to having a national standard and a national approach. As it was with CAFE standards, in which I was very involved, it is important that it work from an industry standpoint. I know it can be done, and it is our job to get to that point.

We also recognize, though, that a growing number of American consumers want to know more about the food they eat, and they have the right to know. They have the right to know what is in their food.

I was very proud of the fact that we came together on the last farm bill to recognize all parts of agriculture. The fastest growing part of agriculture is the organic sector. We gave more opportunities to support the organic sector, the local food movement.

People should have choices in deciding what food they eat, how it is grown, how it is processed, and that is something we have said in national policy that we support through our agricultural policies. Unfortunately, the Senate is poised to vote on a bill that I do not support, that does not fully answer this demand from consumers. Consumers want information about the food they eat, it is as simple as that. In fact, the bill continues the status quo on providing information to consumers. It lists a number of things, many of which are already being done, 1–800 numbers and so on. Look at the back of the pack; it lists things, but they are things that are already being done—not all but many, enough—and then says: We will keep the status quo nationally, but we will preempt the States and citizens around the country from taking individual action. I don't support that. That is not good enough. It doesn't reflect what we do when we are talking about Federal policy. That is one reason I think the approach put forward in the bill is the wrong path.

Unfortunately, we have seen a lot of emotion around this issue on both sides—a lot of emotion. Frankly, there is a lot of confusion about GMOs and their safety, which is why I think this approach is the wrong approach. We should be telling the story, as should farmers, of biotechnology and the importance that it plays in our food production and in food security. We should not be taking action that further appears to stop consumers from getting the information they want and feeds into the idea that there is something wrong, that there is a reason to hide, because there is not. We should embrace this opportunity to share with the public what is in our food, talk about it, why we use these crops, why they are deemed safe.

That is why, during the last several months of negotiations with Chairman ROBERTS, I offered several proposals that would shed light on this issue and do it in a way that is eminently workable for those involved in the food industry. While those proposals were not ultimately accepted, I still believe we need and can achieve a policy that creates a uniform national system of disclosure for the use of GMO ingredients and do it in a way that has common sense and works for everybody. The national disclosure system needs to provide real options for disclosing information about GMOs that work for both consumers and food companies.

I believe we must create a system that provides certainty as well to our food companies and all of our companies—national, organic, traditional companies. Everyone knows that a 50-State system with 50 different definitions, 50 different laws, and 50 different ways to do packaging doesn't work, so we all have a need to come together and to fix this. I also believe that a system must work for all companies—very small companies, medium-sized companies, and large companies as well.

I believe we must not harm the important work being done by our organic producers. Again, we made great strides in the farm bill, and we need to keep the choices that are in the marketplace now available to consumers and not pass something that will infringe on any of the choices consumers have.

I am disappointed that we have not yet been able to come to a clear consensus on the issue of GMO labeling. I know this issue is contentious. As I said, it is very emotional on all sides. As far as I am concerned, it is time for us to come together on a thoughtful, commonsense approach that is best for consumers, for farmers, for families, and for our country.

We have the most successful agricultural system, food economy in the world. We are the envy of the world. We want to make sure that whatever we do, we maintain that position. But part of who we are in America is a country that believes in people's right to know information and be able to make their own individual choices. I believe there is a way to do that, to make sure we continue to have the strongest, most vibrant, most successful and robust agricultural economy and food economy in the world—we are literally feeding the world—and at the same time be able to provide basic information that American consumers are asking to have provided.

I will not be supporting Senator ROBERTS' amendment. I think this may be the first time in the years we have worked together—both with me as chair and now with him as chair—that we have not come to the floor united. It is not for lack of trying. We have been working very hard, and there are differences, but I believe that if we have the opportunity to keep working, we will be able to get to that spot where we can come together.

As I urge colleagues to oppose this proposal and moving forward on cloture without having an agreement, I also commit to continue working to get there because we have to take action to solve this problem and it has to be done in a bipartisan way. That is how we get things done, and I am committed to continuing to work with our chairman and with Members on both sides of the aisle so we can do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise this morning to discuss an issue that is pretty near and dear to my heart and I think to the hearts of many throughout the State of Alaska, and that is—I will call it an aberration, an aberration in the fish world. What I am talking about is genetically engineered salmon, GE salmon.

We just heard from the ranking member on the Senate Committee on Agriculture. I appreciate the work she has done, along with the Senator from

Kansas, to try to forge a path forward as it relates to GMO, but when we are talking about genetically engineered salmon, let me make it very clear that we are talking about two very distinct and different issues here. This is separate from the larger GMO debate.

Genetically engineered animals are not crops, and GE salmon is a genetically engineered animal. This is something that is entirely new. This is a new species. This is a new species that will potentially be introduced into our markets, into our homes, and quite possibly, contrary to what any environmental analysis claims, enters into our ecosystem.

When we are talking about the GMO, the broader GMO debate here on the floor, keep in mind that when I stand up, when the other Senator from Alaska stands up, when Alaskans stand up to talk about genetically engineered salmon, we are talking about an entirely different issue.

I get pretty wound up about this issue. I just came from a meeting of about 20 young Alaskans from around the State.

I said: I am sorry, I have to leave because I have to go to the floor to speak to this issue that is so important to us in Alaska. Do you all know what genetically engineered salmon is?

They said: Yeah. It is kind of that fake fish.

It is Frankenfish, is what we call it because it is so unnatural. It is so unnatural that it is something that, as Alaskans, we need to stand up and defend against.

I grew up in the State of Alaska. I was born there. I know well that escaping from pens occurs in hatcheries, and it can occur in facilities where fish are grown. I also well know the immense value of our fisheries and the potential for havoc that something like this Frankenfish could wreak upon our wild sustainable stocks.

I am standing here this morning saying that I will not be supporting cloture on this bill, as it is an issue which is too important to so many and has not yet been adequately addressed. I have attempted to work with the chairman and the committee to offer sensible and what we believe are reasonable fixes, but there is no solution as of yet.

I am standing today demanding, asking that the voices of Alaskans, who have stood with me in solidarity on this issue, be heard because we will not accept that genetically engineered salmon or Frankenfish—whatever it is you want to call it—we will not accept that it will be allowed to be sold without clear labeling because I don't want to make any mistakes; I don't want to find that what I have served my family is a genetically engineered fish, and I use ''fish'' lightly.

We talk about Frankenfish and some people kind of snicker nervously, but it is not a joke to Alaskans. This new species could pose a serious threat to the livelihoods of Alaskan fishermen, and I will stand to support the livelihood of Alaskan fishermen. Alaska's fisheries are world-renowned for their high quality and for their sustainability. The Alaska seafood industry supports more than 63,000 direct jobs and contributes over $4.6 billion to the State's economy. Nearly one in seven Alaskans is employed in the commercial seafood industry.

That is how my boys put themselves through college—working in the commercial fishing industry. We know about fish. For generations, my family has been involved in one way, shape, or form with the fishing business.

Salmon is a major part of Alaska's seafood economy, and commercial fishermen around the State harvested more than 265 million salmon this past season, including chinook, sockeye, coho, chum, pinks—all wild.

As we all know, wild salmon is loaded with all of the good things in it that God has placed there: tremendous health benefits, lean protein, source of omega-3s, B–6, B–12, Niacin—everything good, all in that natural wild package.

More than 1.5 million people wrote to the FDA opposing approval of genetically engineered salmon. So you have a groundswell of support around the country—this is not just from Alaskans weighing in. People are saying: No, we don't think this should be approved.

The FDA went ahead anyway. Then you have a growing number of grocery stores—Safeway, Kroger, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, and Target—that have all announced they are not going to sell this. They are not going to sell this genetically engineered species in their stores.

Yet, despite this immense opposition, in November of last year, the FDA approved AquaBounty Technologies' application for its genetically engineered AquAdvantage salmon. So for those of you who are not fully informed on what this genetically engineered fish is—how it comes about—GE salmon start from a transgenic Atlantic salmon egg. This is an ocean pout. It is a type of an eel. As you can see, it doesn't look anything like a salmon, even if you don't know your salmon very well. This is a bottom-dwelling ocean pout eel.

They take a slice of DNA from this, a slice of DNA from a magnificent Chinook salmon, and splice it into an Atlantic salmon egg. That egg is meant to produce a fish that will grow to full size twice as fast as a normal Atlantic salmon. So this is the push here—to push Mother Nature, which creates a perfectly beautiful fabulous salmon, and to take a slice of DNA here and a slice of DNA there and put it in an Atlantic salmon, which is a farmed fish, and grow it so that it grows twice as fast as a normal fish, but growing it in penned condition, theoretically, so that there is no way for escape. But are we guaranteed that there is no way for escape? I don't know. Show me that.

But what we have here, I think, is a fair question as to whether or not this GE salmon can even be called a salmon. So the FDA signed off on this last November. But they made no mandatory labeling requirement. Instead, they said: Labels can be voluntary. So, in other words, if you want to say that this piece of fish that is in front of you in the grocery store is genetically engineered—or not real—you can voluntarily put that on your label. Nobody is going to do that. Nobody is going to voluntarily say this is genetically engineered.

So what we have done—what I have done—is to fight to secure a mandatory labeling requirement both before approval of AquaBounty's application and since its approval. So we have been working hard on this issue. We have made some significant headway. But what we are dealing with on the floor right now—this legislation—would wipe that work clean, instead of using legislative tools at our disposal to effectively and precisely amend this legislation in order to address the issue of GE salmon.

So what we did is that we got some language in the Omnibus appropriations bill that requires the FDA not to allow the introduction of any food that contains GE salmon until it publishes final labeling guidelines that inform consumers of that content. So what this did is that this kind of forced the FDA to issue an import alert, which effectively bans all imports of genetically engineered salmon for 1 year.

But it also directs the FDA to spend funds—significant funds—of no less than $150,000 to develop labeling guidelines and to implement a program to disclose to consumers whether salmon offered for sale to consumers is genetically engineered.

Again, what we want to be able to do is to let consumers know whether this fish is genetically engineered or not. So we thought that was a pretty clear labeling mandate to the FDA. But the FDA then later came back to us and said they felt that there was still clarifying legislation that we needed to do. So I have worked with Senator SULLIVAN, my colleague from Alaska, as well as Senators CANTWELL, MERKLEY, and HEINRICH, and we introduced S. 738, which is the Genetically Engineered Salmon Risk Reduction Act.

We also introduced a separate piece of legislation to respond to the FDA's November approval. We introduced S. 2640, the Genetically Engineered Salmon Labeling Act. What that bill would do is kind of to build on last year's omnibus provisions and would require labeling of genetically engineered salmon through language that I received

through technical assistance working with the FDA on this.

Additionally, we would mandate a third-party scientific review of the FDA's environmental assessment of AquAdvantage salmon and the effects that these GE salmon would have on wild stocks and ecosystems, which, in my opinion—and I think, in the opinion of many others—were insufficiently addressed during the FDA's environmental assessment.

So we have been working with the FDA on this, to develop this language to mandate labeling. The FDA has been cooperative at this point working on this issue. That really is a significant step forward.

But it required me to do something that maybe others are perhaps a little more active on—to place a hold on a nominee. I placed a hold on the FDA Commissioner, Dr. Robert Califf. This is not something that I do lightly. I have not placed a hold on a nominee before. I don't take this action lightly. But it was necessary. It was necessary to bring to the attention of the FDA the significance of this issue and the seriousness of what we were dealing with.

So we got FDA to the table. We have been working with them. They have been listening. They have been helpful. We are so close to resolving this. Now we are on the floor with GMO legislation. Again, as I said at the outset, GMO is different than what we are dealing with in this genetically engineered species, a new species designed for human consumption here.

My concern is that with the GMO bill before us now, it really does threaten the good progress we have made at this point in time. It is not just the progress that the Alaska delegation made but really the work of so many Alaskans, the bipartisan hard-working efforts of so many around the country who share the same concerns.

I think we have offered some pretty sensible solutions. I will continue to offer them. I will continue my efforts to work with the chairman, for whom I have great respect. Know that, while it is not opposition to the overall bill or its underpinnings, where my concern remains is mistakenly allowing genetically engineered salmon into our homes, mislabeled as salmon.

This is something that we will continue to raise awareness on and raise the issue until we have finally and fully resolved it.

IDITAROD SLED DOG RACE

Mr. President, if I still have a few minutes more this morning, I would like to switch topics and speak about the last great race—the last great race in Alaska and really around the world, which is the Iditarod sled dog race, a 1,049-mile race from south central Alaska to Nome, AK, where man-and-dog teams are up against Mother Nature, improbably one of the most incredible human and animal endeavors that are out there.

Yesterday, we saw the conclusion. We greeted the front runner to the 44th Iditarod sled dog race. So for 44 years now, it is an amazing race from Willow to Nome. Again, when you think about man and dog out on the ice, out in the raw wilderness for 1,000 miles, this race has been described as the equivalent of an attempt at Mount Everest.

When you think about all that is Alaska and the open spaces, the independent people, and just man against nature or woman against nature, it is really the Iditarod that epitomizes so much of it. It demands not only the most out of our athletes but mental conditioning as well. It requires exceptional endurance, courage, and sound judgment as you navigate these amazing places. But it is not just the men or women who are the physical athletes. It is not just their judgment that guides this race. It is that of the teams—the dogs themselves.

When you think about the amazing teamwork that goes on between a musher and his or her animals—the communication and the will to go 1,000-plus miles in extraordinary conditions—it really is something that just stirs the greatest imagination. We have had Iditarods where teams have literally buried into the wind coming at them at 50 miles an hour and 30 below, in the dark, attacked by moose on the trail, losing the trail, with accidents, disasters.

I was going to say it is like a reality TV show. Only it is not a reality TV show. It is what Alaskans and many around the world engage in. The mushers themselves are remarkable. I could stand here on the floor and talk all morning about them, but I won't.

I will highlight just a few of them. DeeDee Jonrowe, is a longtime friend of mine. She ran her 34th Iditarod this year—talk about bravery and perseverance. This is a woman who the year before last lost her father. This summer she and her husband lost everything they owned in a wildfire out in Willow, AK. The only thing that was saved were her dogs.

But she lost her sleds, her harnesses, her home, her everything. Then, just shortly after, she lost her mother. Her comment to me was this: I am going to go back on the trail so that I can just focus. That is one tough woman.

Brent Sass is a guy who captured the lead for much of the race. He is one of these guys who came to Alaska to be a homesteader, a wilderness guy. He was champion of the Yukon Quest. He rescued mushers along the way—an amazing guy. He was actually in front position last year and was disqualified because he had an iPod and was listening to music.

Along the trail, there are no electronic devices. There are pretty tough rules in the Iditarod. Can you imagine being out on a 1,000-mile trail with nobody else, and no device, no electronics for you?

Jeff King is an amazing guy, whose grit and determination has been at the forefront of this race and so many others—a multiple winner. But he was involved with a horribly tragic accident when a snow machiner, a drunk individual, literally attacked his team, killed one of his dogs and injured a couple of others.

It was extraordinarily difficult to handle that challenge—the emotion of losing a dog but also just the real tragedy and calamity of an accident like that. Jeff has finished the race in the top 10, which is remarkable.

Another remarkable feat, though, is Aly Zirkle, who finished third, and was also subject to an extreme scare by this same snow machiner—a horribly tragic side to this year's Iditarod. But there was the fact that Aly, one tough lady, came in third and persevered all the way, just getting her head into the game.

There are so many stories about these amazing men and women, but the winner of this year's Iditarod is a young man named Dallas Seavey, 29 years old. He crossed the finish line into Nome at 9:30 p.m. last night. Dallas finished in 8 days 11 hours 20 minutes 16 seconds. This is his fourth overall win, and his third consecutive win. He is only one victory away from matching the ''king'' of the Iditarod, five-time champion Rick Swenson.

Guess who was No. 2 in the Iditarod, trailing Dallas by about 45 minutes. It was his dad. Father and son finished No. 1 and No. 2 in the Iditarod. What other sport can you think of where you have a father and son competing against one another and coming in first and second? You have to go back a ways to come up with an answer to that. It was absolutely an amazing story and Alaskans watched it play out.

I had an opportunity to visit with the father of Mitch Seavey and the grandfather of Dallas Seavey. I asked: Dan, who do you predict is going to win the Iditarod this year? His response was: I don't care as long as it is a Seavey. He was right and certainly got his wish. Alaskans are proud of the men and women who take on these extraordinary challenges, capture the attention and the fascination of the world with their feats of physical and mental endurance. The men and women of the 44th Iditarod race are to be commended and congratulated.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to express my opposition to the legislation introduced by Senator ROBERTS to preempt State labeling laws for genetically modified organisms, also known as GMOs.

The Mellman Group released a poll last year that found that 89 percent of

Americans support mandatory labeling of GMOs. The calls and letters I receive from California constituents confirm widespread support for this policy. Since 2015, I have received more than 90,000 letters and emails from constituents who want a mandatory labeling standard. Since the beginning of this year, my office has received nearly 2,000 calls in favor of mandatory labeling.

Clearly, the public wants their food to be labeled in a consistent and transparent manner. However, Senator ROBERTS' proposal would preempt voter-passed mandatory GMO labeling laws in Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont. Overriding these State laws would be a step backward for consumer knowledge.

I recognize that the food industry cannot comply with 50 different State labeling laws. That is why I have cosponsored legislation introduced by Senator JEFF MERKLEY to create a consistent, transparent Federal standard on how to label foods that contain GMO ingredients. This legislation would require food producers to add a statement or symbol after the ingredient list to state that the product contains GMO ingredients. Companies would be given four options to meet the requirement.

In contrast, Senator ROBERTS' bill makes it more difficult for consumers to find out what is in their food. It requires the Department of Agriculture to create new, voluntary labeling guidance, despite the fact that the Food and Drug Administration already created voluntary guidance.

Furthermore, Senator ROBERTS' bill allows a confusing array of options for disclosure beyond labeling. This includes 1–800 numbers, Web sites, smartphone applications, and social media posts.

In my view, the only fair and consistent way to label food is on the package in a clear, straightforward, and consistent manner. Consumers do not have time to scan barcodes on food packages or to call 1–800 numbers. Consumers want the information they need to make the best choices for them and their families readily available on packaging. And I believe they deserve to have that information.

I want to make it clear that I recognize that the Federal Government and scientists agree that GMO products are safe. I also realize that California farmers may need to rely on genetic engineering to address challenges such as climate change and disease. But I do not understand why industry is so opposed to informing consumers of how their food was produced. The industry says it should only be required to label foods when there is a human health reason to do so.

However, the Federal Government has always had labeling requirements for food that aren't due to a human health reason. These requirements exist because they allow consumers to make informed choices in the marketplace. For example, the Federal Government requires juice that was made from concentrate to be labeled ''made from concentrate.'' The Federal Government requires foods processed with irradiation to be labeled as such. The Federal Government has a specific labeling requirement for what constitutes ground beef based on what parts of a cow is used, the fat content, and how it is processed.

During this election season, many Americans have expressed a view that Washington is out of touch with the rest of the country. So I want to ask, does Washington really want to overrule consumers who want GMO labeling? Does Congress know better than the majority of American consumers?

In my view, we should trust consumers and make sure they have the information they want on the food they buy. As such, I urge my colleagues to oppose Senator ROBERTS' preemption legislation. Instead, I ask my colleagues to engage in a meaningful discussion for how we can create a mandatory standard that is flexible for industry but gives consumers the information they want.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I wish to start off my remarks with regard to the bill that is before us. There is an article from The Hill newspaper, and it is quoting Julie Borlaug, who is the granddaughter of Norman Borlaug, a University of Minnesota graduate who helped to spark the green revolution in agriculture technology that is credited with saving more than 1 billion people from dying of hunger.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article from The Hill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From The Hill, Mar. 16, 2016]

SAFE, PROVEN BIOTECHNOLOGY DESERVES NON-STIGMATIZING NATIONAL LABELING STANDARD

(By Julie Borlaug)

Global hunger is one of the most pressing challenges of the 21st century and the problem will only get worse if the U.S. Senate fails to take action and prevent a costly state-by-state patchwork of labeling mandates for food containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In a Senate Agriculture Committee markup last week, Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) correctly noted that ''science is an essential piece of the puzzle in addressing food insecurity.'' The senator also praised the legacy of my grandfather, Dr. Norman Borlaug, a University of Minnesota graduate who helped spark the green revolution in agricultural technology that is credited with saving more than 1 billion people from dying of hunger.

I am glad to see my grandfather's work praised. And, as an associate director for the Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture, I want to see his work, and the work of his fellow agricultural scientists, protected. That means ensuring that innovations in agricultural biotechnology aren't sent to the dustbin of history, leaving future generations asking why good solutions were abandoned.

It really comes down to a simple label. In July, Vermont is set to become the first state to begin enforcing a GMO labeling mandate. The impacts will be felt on store shelves and in science labs around this country. Make no mistake—these state labeling efforts are not about a so-called 'right to know' but are about enabling activists to drive GMOs out of the marketplace. Leaders in the labeling movement acknowledge this, with one saying ''If we have it labeled, then we can organize people not to buy it.''

These dangerous efforts undermine the critical importance of biotechnology and the role it plays in feeding the world. With the help of modern science and GMOs, farmers now have the ability to produce crops that better withstand droughts and require fewer pesticides. They can adapt genetic codes to acclimate to new environments, and ensure that crops grow well despite inhospitable climates.

You cannot be anti-hunger and be anti-GMO. GMOs not only make farming more sustainable, they directly impact national and global food security at a time when warming temperatures and rising populations mean that those living in poverty will face increasingly unstable supplies of food.

The safety of GMOs is as clear as their benefits. Every major scientific organization that has examined this issue has concluded that they are safe as any other food. Those denying their safety are denying the science.

By allowing state-mandated on package labeling of GMO foods, Congress would be turning its back on decades of advancements in biotechnology and allowing a small group of activists to deny millions of people the tools that will prevent starvation and death. We cannot allow that to happen.

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R–Kan.) has put forward a bipartisan proposal that would establish national standards for food made with genetically-engineered ingredients. The Biotech Labeling Solutions Act would prevent a costly state-by-state patchwork of labeling mandates. It would also help ensure that providing greater information could go hand-in-hand with providing greater education at a national level about the safety and importance of GMO crops. The Senate Agriculture Committee supported moving his bill to the full Senate by a 14–6 bipartisan vote.

Now, we need senators of both parties to come together to support this common-sense approach.

Sixteen years ago, my grandfather wrote that the world would soon have the agricultural technologies available to feed the 8.3 billion people anticipated in the next quarter of a century. The more pertinent question is whether farmers and ranchers will be permitted to use these technologies.

The members of the Senate will decide that very question in their votes on the Biotech Labeling Solutions Act. For the sake of science and the world, the answer needs to be yes.

Mr. ROBERTS. Quoting from the article, Ms. Borlaug said:

I am glad to see my grandfather's work praised. . . . Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts . . . has put forward a bipartisan proposal that would establish national standards for food made with genetically-engineered ingredients. The Biotech

Labeling Solutions Act would prevent a costly state-by-state patchwork of labeling mandates. It would also help ensure that providing greater information could go hand-in-hand with providing greater education at a national level about the safety and importance of GMO crops. . . . Sixteen years ago, my grandfather wrote that the world would soon have the agriculture technologies available to feed the 8.3 billion people anticipated in the next quarter of a century. The more pertinent question is whether farmers and ranchers will be permitted to use these technologies.

I rise again to discuss my amendment numbered 3450 on biotechnology labeling solutions. There has been a lot of discussion about this amendment and this topic in general. That is a good thing. We should be talking about our food, we should be talking about our farmers and producers, and we should be talking about our consumers as well. It is important—extremely important—to have an honest discussion and an open exchange with dialogue. After all, that is what we do in the Senate or at least that is what we are supposed to do. We are here to discuss difficult issues, craft compromised solutions, and finally vote in the best interest of our constituents. That is what we are doing here today: exercising our responsibility to cast a vote for what is in the best interest of those who sent us here.

Let's start with discussing difficult issues. The basic issue at hand is agriculture biotechnology labeling. If you have heard any of my previous remarks, you have heard me say time and time and time again that biotechnology products are safe, but you don't have to take my word for it. The Agriculture Committee held a hearing late last year where all three agencies in charge of reviewing biotechnology testified before our members. Over and over again the EPA, the FDA, and the USDA told us that these products are safe—safe for the environment, safe for other plants, and safe for our food supply. This is the gold standard on what is safe with regard to agriculture biotechnology. Not only are these products safe, but they also provide benefits to the entire value chain from producer to consumer. Through biotechnology, our farmers are able to grow more on less land using less water, less fuel, and less fertilizer, but the difficult issue we are debating today is about more than recognizing the fact that biotechnology is safe. No, today our decision is about whether to prevent a wrecking ball from hitting our entire food supply chain. The difficult issue for us to address is what to do about the patchwork of biotechnology labeling laws that will soon wreak havoc on the flow of interstate commerce, agriculture, and food products in every supermarket and every grocery store up and down Main Street of every community in America. That is what this is about. It is not about safety, it is not about health, and it is not about nutrition. It is all about marketing.

What we face today is a handful of States that have chosen to enact labeling requirements on information that has nothing to do with health, safety, or nutrition. Unfortunately, the impact of these decisions will be felt all across the country. Those decisions impact the farmers in the fields who would be pressured to grow less efficient crops so manufacturers could avoid these demonizing labels. Those labeling laws will impact distributors who have to spend more money to sort different labels for different States. Those labeling laws will ultimately impact consumers who will suffer from higher priced food. It will cost $1,050 per year for an average family of four. That is right. If we do nothing, it is not manufacturers that will pay the ultimate price, it is the consumer.

A study released this year found that changes in the production or labeling of most of the Nation's food supply for a single State would impact citizens in each of our home States. The total annual increased cost of doing nothing today, such as not voting for cloture, could be as much as $82 billion every year. That is a pretty costly cloture vote. That is 1,050 bucks tacked onto each family's grocery bill, and that is a direct hit to their pocketbooks. Let me repeat that. If we fail to act today—if we do not have cloture and get to this compromise bill—the cost to consumers would total as much as $82 billion a year or 1,050 bucks for hard-working American families. I don't think that is what my colleagues want. I don't think they want to be responsible for that: a cloture vote with an $82 billion price tag? Come on.

This is the difficult issue we must address and the question is, How do we fix it? That is why we have crafted a compromise solution and put it on the floor for debate and action. The amendment before us today stops this wrecking ball before any more damage can be done.

Two weeks ago, the Agriculture Committee passed a bill with a bipartisan vote of 14 to 6. I am very proud of that legislation. It stopped the State-by-State patchwork and provided a national voluntary standard for biotechnology food products. For the first time, the Federal Government would set a science-based standard allowing consumers to demand the marketplace provide more information. Consumers are growing more and more interested in their food, and that is a good thing. We, as consumers, should learn more about where our food comes from and what it takes to keep our food supply the safest, the most abundant, and the most affordable in the world. However, the role of government in this space is to ensure that information regarding safety, health, and nutritional value are expressed directly to consumers, but the information in question today has nothing to do with safety or health or nutrition, so the responsibility and opportunity to inform the consumers falls on the marketplace. If consumers want more information, they demand it by voting with their pocketbooks in the aisles of the grocery store.

As our bipartisan bill has come to the floor, I have heard concerns that this voluntary standard is not enough for our consumers. Yet again we worked with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. The legislation before us goes further than the committee-passed bill. This legislation addresses concerns with a voluntary-only approach by providing an incentive for the marketplace to provide consumers with more information.

To my friends on this side of the aisle, this legislation allows the market to work. To my friends on that side of the aisle, if the marketplace does not live up to their commitments, if information is not made available to consumers, then this legislation holds the markets accountable by instituting a mandatory standard. It is not just any mandatory standard, it is a standard that provides the same options and mechanisms for compliance as outlined and stated publicly by our Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack.

Simply put, the legislation before us provides us an immediate and comprehensive solution to the unworkable State-by-State patchwork labeling laws. As chairman of the sometimes powerful Senate Agriculture Committee, I believe this is a true compromise. Like any bill, it is not perfect, and I know that, but to those who criticize this legislation in one breath and say they want a compromise in the next breath, I ask: Where is your plan? Where is your solution? We have heard the distinguished Senator from Oregon many times on this floor—not a stranger to this floor—criticizing this compromise. I appreciate, and I am sure we all appreciate, his passion. I disagree with his views, but I appreciate that he did put his plan into a bill and put it out for public debate. What I don't understand is why he doesn't want to vote on it. Why would you put a bill out there and decide not to vote on it? Why would you not vote for cloture so you can get to a vote on your bill? We could have voted on his legislation today. Yet when he was presented with the option to take a vote, he declined. I have read the press release where he described the compromise as maintaining the status quo.

If the truth be known, this compromise achieves just the opposite. In fact, voting no today is the only way that maintains the status quo. Voting no today does nothing to stop the wrecking ball. Voting no today ensures that the instability in the marketplace

continues. Voting no today puts farmers and all of agriculture at risk. Voting no today negatively impacts the daily lives of everybody in the food chain from the farmer who will be forced to plant fence row to fence row of a crop that is less efficient to the grain elevator that will have to adjust storage options to separate the types of grain, to the manufacturer that will need different labels for different States, to the distributor that will need expanded storage for sorting, and to the retailer who may be unable to afford offering low-cost, private-label products, and, finally, to the consumer who will be forced to pay for all this additional cost to the tune of $82 billion.

Now we come to our final task as elected officials of this body taking a vote. But before we do, we should all know that never before—never before in my experience as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee and all the years I have had the privilege to serve on both committees—we have never seen a bill in the Agricultural Committee with so much support, never. Over 800 organizations all across the food and agriculture perspective have a stake in this bill. It is at the national and State and local levels. They all support the bill. The bill has the support of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the American Farm Bureau, and many, many more.

Virtually every farm group is in town. I just talked to the American Soybean Association this past week. One farmer said: Hey, if I cannot have agriculture biological crops with regard to increasing the yield that I plant, what am I going to do? Am I going to plant fence row to fence row? Am I going to lose in this situation when farming income is declining and farm credit is getting tighter?

The fundamental role of the Agriculture Committee is to protect American farmers and ranchers who provide a safe, abundant, and affordable food supply to a very troubled and hungry world. So I will be voting yes to do just that, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same. Voting no today means telling your constituents next week that you are raising their grocery bill by over $1,000. Good luck with that.

It is a pretty simple vote. You are either for agriculture or you are not.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, later this morning we continue to work on whether to consider a food labeling bill here in the Senate. As a dad, I know this bill is about much more than just words or symbols or a label. It is about the confidence we have in the food we eat and the food we feed our children. As a Hoosier, I also know this bill is about preserving confidence in a long and proud Indiana tradition of growing the food that feeds our communities and provides a safe and reliable food supply for the world. Whether you are a parent or a farmer, a Republican or a Democrat, our objectives in this debate should be the same: to provide consumers with access to accurate information about the food we eat and to do so in a way that does not mislead consumers into falsely thinking their food is unsafe.

I believe strongly that consumers, our families, our kids, moms and dads, brothers and sisters deserve to feel confident in the food we feed our families. I want to know how much sugar is in my ice cream and how many calories are in that roast beef sandwich that I love so much. It is clear from this debate that many Americans want to know even more about where and how our food is produced. I believe we should have that information, and it should be easy to find.

It is also common sense. This information should be delivered in a way that is fair, that is objective, and that is based in sound science. I have heard from many Hoosier farmers who are very concerned that some labels or symbols on packages would amount, in consumers' minds, to warning labels and could send a misleading message that the safe and healthy products our farmers grow—think of sweet corn in our fields—are somehow unhealthy or even dangerous.

This morning, my good friend, Senator TOM CARPER from Delaware, and I filed an amendment that builds off the framework of the proposal before us today. A framework I first suggested in the Agriculture Committee markup of this very bill. It creates a national voluntary bioengineered food labeling standard. It stipulates that if food companies fail to make sufficient information available, then a national food labeling standard for bioengineering becomes mandatory.

Our amendment works for farmers, it works for manufacturers, and it works for our families. It establishes ambitious goals for the availability of information related to bioengineering by requiring that after 3 years, 80 percent of the food products covered by the legislation would provide direct access to information. If the food industry does not meet this threshold, then the labeling requirement becomes mandatory.

Our amendment also requires clear and direct access to information on bioengineering. This could include explicit disclosures, such as organic or GMO-free, or voluntarily disclosing bioengineering on the box. Or companies choosing to participate in the voluntary program could use various electronic methods of disclosure, such as a Web site or a QR code in conjunction with a phone number that clearly indicates to consumers—to our families—where they can find more information and provides direct access to that information. This is important because our shared goal is to provide direct access to information about the contents of our food to everyone, whether you have access to the Internet or a smartphone or a regular phone. So let me repeat: Our amendment allows for electronic disclosure to be used only in conjunction with a phone number, and both methods would have to provide direct access to information on the product's contents.

Finally, our amendment preserves State consumer protection laws and remedies. States write laws to protect our citizens from mislabeled products and to provide for remedies in case of false or misleading statements. Our amendment preserves those laws.

Consumers, our families, farmers, and food producers are looking to the Senate for leadership. After months of discussion, we have been unable to agree yet on a proposal that gives consumers the information they want in a responsible way, but the issue remains. This will be another week of uncertainty for producers, for manufacturers, for our families who do not have the information they want, and for the producers and manufacturers I mentioned who don't know what is expected.

I am going to continue to work on this issue with Senator ROBERTS and Senator STABENOW. I strongly encourage all my colleagues to consider the ideas that Senator CARPER and I have put forward and to try to work with us to find a solution that works for America.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I am rising to speak to this issue from a simple American citizen point of view. The American citizen wants the right to know what is in their food. They want to know how many calories; they want to know what the minerals and the vitamins are and what the ingredients are. It is a simple standard because it is important to an individual to know what you are putting in your mouth, what you are putting on the table for your families and your children.

This is a principle that we have honored time and again on our packages. We proceeded to put on our packages whether fish is farm raised or wild caught because citizens wanted to know. It makes a difference to them. It is their choice. It is their judgment. We put on our packages whether juice is from concentrate or is fresh because citizens wanted to know. It is important to them. It is their right to know.

We put the list of ingredients on the package in a simple format, not so that

someone can spend an hour trying to research what is in it. No, we have a simple 1-second test. You pick up the food off the counter, you turn it over, you look at the list of ingredients and you say, this has the vitamin C I wanted; this has the calories I wanted—the 1-second test.

That is what is at stake because the bill that is before us right now kills the 1-second test. It kills immediate access to information for consumers. It says we are going to eviscerate States' rights to respond to this desire of citizens to know what is in their food. This is a desire that stretches all across the United States, all genders, all ages, all parties. In fact, 9 out of 10 Americans say they want this simple information on the package to meet this 1-second test just like calories.

Now here we are in this deeply divided Nation, this Nation in which we see in this Presidential campaign extremes to the left and the right and everything in between, and we wonder what is happening. Isn't there anything we can agree on?

Well, the fascinating thing is that here is something we can agree on: 80-plus percent in every category—Republicans, Democrats, Independents—almost all of them near the 9-out-of-10 factor, women over 80 percent, men over 80 percent, young over 80 percent, old over 80 percent. In other words, all of those are between 80 and 90 percent no matter who you are, where you are, what your gender is, or how old you are. Nine out of ten Americans want to know what is in their food, and they want it easily accessible on the package.

My colleague talked about direct access to information. In this case, ''direct access'' is somewhat of a term subject to interpretation because to the consumer, direct access is the 1-second test. I pick up the package, I flip it over, 390 calories, thank you very much. Done. But the term today is being used for indirect access.

Let's look at these different hall-of-mirrors proposals that are being put forward. OK. Sham No. 1 is the 800 number, an 800 number on the package. What is the purpose of that 800 number? The package doesn't say. There are 800 numbers on all kinds of packages. You call up the company and complain because there is contamination in your frozen peas. What is the purpose of it? Is it so you can call the company and ask about new products coming out? Without any information around it, it is just a number. And citizens don't just go to a product and call a number. Why? Because they are busy. They are going down the grocery store aisle. They have a supermarket cart. They have a child in there. They want the 1-second test. They don't want to be told they have to call a call center and get in a phone tree and press a bunch of buttons, and then a message comes on and says: I am sorry, due to high call volume, we will get to you in maybe 20 minutes, but stay on the line and we will play sweet music for you. And maybe—if you stay on the line long enough—maybe it is not 20 minutes; maybe it is an hour. You get someone in a call center overseas who is saying things in an accent you can't understand. Citizens hate that. And they hate pretend, false solutions. This does not mean direct access to information. This is direct: It is in my hand, 1 second. I see it. That is direct.

Now there is another idea. It is called a QR code, or quick response code—quick response, computer code. Why is this on the package? No explanation. So is putting something with no explanation on a package helpful to consumers? No. Is it there so you can scan it when you check out to see what the price is? Is it there to find out about new products that are coming out from this company? Is it there because you might possibly find out information about discounts? You have no idea. There is no explanation. And when you use that code, you give up personal information. So you have to have a phone. You have to have a smartphone. You have to have a data plan. You have to give up your privacy. And there is no explanation why you would even bother to go to it. That is completely misleading. That is why I call it the hall of mirrors. It is like you are at a circus. We have an 800 number, we have a QR code, no real information, no direct access to information.

Let's be honest with the American public. Nine out of ten Americans want this information presented in a simple format. A nationwide poll that was done in November did a followup question: Would you prefer for it to be simply stated on the package or have a QR code? Again, 9 out of 10 said they wanted a direct statement on the package.

Look how much room this takes up. Isn't it a lot simpler just to put a little symbol on there? That is all people want. They are not asking for anything that takes up room or costs anything, just like it doesn't cost anything to put another ingredient on your package if you add it to your ingredient list. Labels are changed all the time.

I met with industry, and they said: Here are our top three priorities.

Priority No. 1 is, we want a single national standard so we don't have conflicting State standards.

OK. That is understandable. We are on the verge of having that. In July we would have one State with a standard. There is nothing on the horizon for two States. There are several States that have said: If a whole bunch of States sign up, we will do something collectively. But certainly we are not at risk in the months ahead of more than one State standard, so there is no emergency here. But I agree with the underlying principle that, indeed, when it comes to labels, a warehouse shouldn't have to worry about whether it is shipping product to one subdivision of the State or another subdivision of the State or one State versus another State. So one standard is reasonable.

The second thing they said is, we don't want anything on the front of the package because that might imply there is something wrong with the food.

OK. Fair enough.

The third thing they said is, we don't want anything pejorative.

Fair enough. Have the FDA select a symbol to put on the package.

We could solve this whole debate immediately for those who want to put on a QR code and just say: Scan this code for GE ingredients in this product. OK. Now the consumer gets the 1-second test. They look at it and see there are GE ingredients, and that is all they want to know. They don't want to scan it and give up their privacy, and they don't want to have to go to the Web site and look up the product, where information would probably be misleading anyway. So that is fair enough.

Now, there is a third idea that has been put forward, a third thing that is supposed to count as answering customer inquiries, and that is in this bill—to put information on social media. This triples the size of the house of mirrors. A consumer goes to look at the product to see if it has a code. No. Does it have an 800 number? No. Oh, there is this social media thing. Well, we all know there are over 100 companies doing different types of social media. We know the famous ones. We know Facebook and Instagram and Twitter. So where on their social media did this company put that information? Well, now you really have to be a detective. You could spend hundreds of hours trying to figure out the answer to that.

So the 800 number is phony, the QR code is a scam, and this whole social media thing is a sham.

All citizens want is for us to be honest with them about the ingredients. That is all they are asking for. It is not very much. Scientific studies point to the benefits of some genetic engineering, and they point to problems that have arisen from some genetic engineering. It should be up to the citizen. The citizen has the right to know.

In this age where we are so divided, we have one thing in common, and that is that 90 percent of our citizens—whether from the Presiding Officer's State or any of the States represented by Senators in this distinguished Hall, 90 percent of the citizens want a simple indication on the package. So why today are so many Senators coming to this floor saying they don't care about what their citizens feel? They don't care about their citizens' rights, and they don't care about States' rights.

I have heard so many colleagues who are planning to vote for this sham and

scam today come to this floor and talk about the beauty of States as a laboratory for ideas. Well, now, here is Vermont. Vermont has said: We will step up. We will be the laboratory. We will be the first standard and experiment in putting simple information on the package.

Before we make any decision, the rest of the Nation gets the advantage to observe that State laboratory and then to say: Is it working or is it not working? Are there problems being created? How can it be improved? Do we want this as a model for the Nation for a single standard, or do we say that we absolutely don't want it as a model for the Nation?

Well, many of my colleagues here plan to crush the State laboratory. They have given fancy speeches about States' rights, but they are coming down today to vote to crush States' rights to respond to a fundamental concern of their citizens.

I must say I like the idea of the State laboratory and to see what one State does, but I also understand the underlying concern that in short order there might be multiple States and conflicting standards, and that is not a functioning situation for interstate commerce.

So if we take away the right for a State to give the 1-second test for direct information—1 second—turn over the package; there are 880 calories. That is the test. Turn over the package. GE ingredients are present. Thank you. That is the 1-second test. If we are going to crush the ability of a State to respond to a fundamental concern of its citizens, then we need to provide the same basic provision not in a scary fashion and not in a fashion that takes up space on the package, not on the front of the package; one standard for the entire United States, but it has to meet that test. That is all. It is a simple, fair exchange.

So today I urge my colleagues to vote against cloture because this bill is among the worst bills I have ever seen on the floor of the Senate. It is without good justification, without resolving the issue at hand, crushing States' rights, taking away citizens' right to know, and putting out three phony scam, sham alternatives. That is a very sad state of affairs.

Another sad state of affairs is that this bill is on this floor having not gone through committee. We have heard a lot of pontificating about good process in the Senate and how we were going to have good process, but here is a bill written entirely outside the halls of the committee, never considered in the committee, and here it is on the floor. Such an important issue would merit substantial debate. Such an important issue would merit a full and free amendment process.

But two things happened immediately after this bill was introduced. The first is that the majority leader immediately filed cloture; that is, to close debate. So before one word—not one word had been said on this bill because no one was able to speak between the bill being put on the floor and cloture. Oh, hey, I just filed the bill, and I am closing debate. That is not a fair and open process. Then the tree was filled, so no one can put an amendment forward. On such an important issue, that is not a situation that is acceptable.

Furthermore, this was deftly timed to occur simultaneously with the five big primaries yesterday. So this is a moment where the American people are paying attention to Florida, they are paying attention to Illinois, and they want to know what happened in Missouri. They want to know what occurred in these five States. The press is paying attention to that. That is the one day of debate allowed before this cloture motion is voted on.

So let's take this bill and put it in committee and actually have a committee process to consider it. Then bring it back to the floor with whatever changes the committee makes, and hopefully the committee would honor the fundamental right to know by consumers. Bring the bill back to the floor and have a full and open amendment process on something so important to citizens. But do not crush States' rights. Do not steal consumers' right to know and try to do it in the dark of night while the Nation is distracted by major primaries. It is wrong on policy, it is wrong on process, and it is an injustice to every citizen in our Nation.

Here is the situation: The Nation is very cynical about this body. This body here, they say, isn't responding to the concerns of the American citizens. Is there any single bill that has been more an example to justify that cynicism than this bill which is before us right now? When 9 out of 10 Americans say this is important to them, the majority of this body says: We don't care. When 9 out of 10—or roughly that number—Democrats and Republicans and Independents all agree on something, this body says: We don't care. Isn't the cynicism of the American citizens justified?

Here is the thing: Our Nation was founded on a simple principle. That principle is embodied by three beautiful words in the beginning of our Constitution: ''We the People.'' Well, we the people want simple information on the package. So if we are here to honor that principle, why is this bill before us, I ask my colleagues. Why a bill that says the interests of a few titans in crushing a State laboratory is more important than the views of 90 percent of Americans? And when those Americans are asked, more than 7 out of 10 say this is very important to them, so this isn't one of those casual issues. Why is it so important? Because this is food they put in their mouths and on their table, and even if they have no concerns about the GE product itself, they feel they have a right to know.

So let's return to the principles on which this Nation was founded. Let's quit feeding the cynicism of citizens across this Nation who see these powerful special interests doing the opposite of what citizens ask for. Let's be a Chamber that honors our relationship with our constituents, not one that tries to stomp out their rights. Let's not allow debate to close on this bill. Let's send it back to committee. Let's have a committee process. Let's have a floor debate in the future, with full and free amendments, on an issue so important to our States and so important to our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am going to proceed on my leader time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the next Justice could fundamentally alter the direction of the Supreme Court and have a profound impact on our country, so of course—of course the American people should have a say in the Court's direction.

It is a President's constitutional right to nominate a Supreme Court Justice, and it is the Senate's constitutional right to act as a check on a President and withhold its consent.

As Chairman GRASSLEY and I declared weeks ago and reiterated personally to President Obama, the Senate will continue to observe the Biden rule so that the American people have a voice in this momentous decision. The American people may well elect a President who decides to nominate Judge Garland for Senate consideration. The next President may also nominate somebody very different. Either way, our view is this: Give the people a voice in filling this vacancy.

Let me remind colleagues of what Vice President BIDEN said when he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee here in the Senate. Here is what he said:

> It would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me . . . we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

Chairman BIDEN went on.

> Others may fret that this approach would leave the Court with only eight members for some time, but as I see it . . . the cost of such a result—the need to reargue three or four cases that will divide the Justices four to four—are quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for

what would assuredly be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President.

That was Chairman JOE BIDEN.

Consider that last part. Then-Senator BIDEN said that the cost to the Nation would be too great no matter who the President nominates. President Obama and his allies may now try to pretend this disagreement is about a person, but as I just noted, his own Vice President made clear it is not. The Biden rule reminds us that the decision the Senate announced weeks ago remains about a principle and not a person—about a principle and not a person.

It seems clear that President Obama made this nomination not with the intent of seeing the nominee confirmed but in order to politicize it for purposes of the election—which is the type of thing then-Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman BIDEN was concerned about. It is the exact same thing Chairman BIDEN was concerned about. The Biden rule underlines that what the President has done with this nomination would be unfair to any nominee, and, more importantly, the rule warns of the great costs the President's action could carry for our Nation.

Americans are certain to hear a lot of rhetoric from the other side in the coming days, but here are the facts they should keep in mind. The current Democratic leader said the Senate is not a rubberstamp, and he noted that the Constitution does not require the Senate to give Presidential nominees a vote. That is the current Democratic leader. The incoming Democratic leader did not even wait until the final year of George W. Bush's term to essentially tell the Senate not to consider any Supreme Court nominee the President sent. The Biden rule supports what the Senate is doing today, underlining that what we are talking about is a principle and not a person.

So here is our view. Instead of spending more time debating an issue where we can't agree, let's keep working to address the issues where we can. We just passed critical bipartisan legislation to help address the heroin and prescription opioid crisis in our country. Let's build on that success. Let's keep working together to get our economy moving again and to make our country safer, rather than endlessly debating an issue where we don't agree. As we continue working on issues like these, the American people are perfectly capable of having their say on this issue. So let's give them a voice. Let's let the American people decide. The Senate will appropriately revisit the matter when it considers the qualifications of the nominee the next President nominates, whoever that might be.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment with an amendment to S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, Orrin G. Hatch, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Jeff Flake, Tim Scott, Cory Gardner, Shelley Moore Capito.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 764, with amendment No. 3450, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. MCCONNELL, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Are there any Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 48, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 37 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Alexander	Donnelly	McCain
Ayotte	Enzi	Moran
Barrasso	Ernst	Perdue
Blunt	Fischer	Portman
Boozman	Flake	Risch
Burr	Gardner	Roberts
Capito	Graham	Rounds
Carper	Grassley	Sasse
Cassidy	Hatch	Scott
Coats	Heitkamp	Sessions
Cochran	Hoeven	Shelby
Corker	Inhofe	Thune
Cornyn	Isakson	Tillis
Cotton	Johnson	Toomey
Crapo	Kirk	Vitter
Daines	Lankford	Wicker

NAYS—49

Baldwin	Hirono	Paul
Bennet	Kaine	Peters
Blumenthal	King	Reed
Booker	Klobuchar	Reid
Boxer	Leahy	Schatz
Brown	Lee	Schumer
Cantwell	Manchin	Shaheen
Cardin	Markey	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Sullivan
Collins	McConnell	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murphy	Wyden
Heinrich	Murray	
Heller	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Rubio	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 49.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

The Senator from Texas.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, as the world now knows, this morning President Obama nominated his choice to fill the vacant seat created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. In doing so, the President exercised his unquestioned authority under the Constitution to nominate somebody to this vacancy, but that same Constitution reserves to the U.S. Senate—and the U.S. Senate alone—the right to either grant or withhold consent to that nominee. It is the same Constitution. They can't argue that the President somehow has an unquestioned right to see his nominee rubberstamped by the Senate and still show fidelity and honor to the same Constitution that gives him that authority to make that nomination.

At this time, I reaffirm my commitment to share with other members of our conference that the President—this President—will not fill this vacancy. The Senate will not confirm this nominee to this vacancy. In so doing, we will follow the same rule book that Democrats have advocated for in the past. It can't be that one set of rules apply to a Democratic President and a second set of rules apply when there is a Republican President. This isn't just about speculating what Democrats might do were the shoe on the other foot and we had a Republican President because they have told us what they would do—they have done this since 1992—and in many ways they have kept their promise.

There is a lot at stake. Justice Scalia served for 30 years on the U.S. Supreme Court. The next Justice could well change the ideological makeup and the balance of the Supreme Court for a generation to come and fundamentally reshape America as we know it.

At this critical juncture in our Nation's history, and particularly with regard to the judiciary and the highest Court in the land, the American people deserve a chance to have a say in the selection of the next lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court, and the only way to empower the American people and ensure they have that voice is for the next President to fill the nomination created by this vacancy.

I have heard some people say that we had that election in 2012, when President Obama was elected, but I would say that you are half right. We also had

another election in 2014, where the American people gave Republicans a majority in the U.S. Senate because they saw what happened when this President didn't have any checks and balances. We saw this during the beginning of his term of office when ObamaCare was passed by a purely partisan vote. We saw it when Dodd-Frank was passed—again, by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote. So, in 2014, the American people said to President Obama: We want an effective check on Presidential power—and that is what the American people got.

We can't just look at the one side of the equation—the President's authority under the Constitution—and the fact that the President was reelected in 2012. We have to look at what happened in 2014 and the constitutional prerogative of the U.S. Senate either to grant or to withhold the confirmation.

OUR NATIONAL DEBT

Madam President, later today the Judiciary Committee will be holding a hearing addressing America's impending fiscal crisis, including some potential solutions to help reverse the unsustainable course we are on. I know we don't hear very much about it here in Washington. This seems to be ''people walking by the graveyard,'' so to speak, regarding the fact that our national debt hit $19 trillion for the first time ever. This means our debt climbed more than $1 trillion in a little over a year. In fact, this is a shocking statistic that we will not read about in most of the mainstream media. The national debt has roughly doubled—roughly doubled—since President Obama took office a little over 7 years ago.

The Congressional Budget Office projects that for the fiscal year 2016, spending will reach $3.9 trillion, an increase of $232 billion from the previous year. I know that when we are talking about trillions and billions of dollars, it boggles the imagination. Most of us can't even conceive of numbers that large, but the fact is, when you borrow money, you have to pay it back at some point. Frankly, what I worry most about is that my generation is not going to be the one to repay the money we borrow. It is going to be the next generation. I know a lot of parents and grandparents worry about whether the American dream will still be alive and available to the next generation and beyond. This is a huge moral lapse on the part of the current generation, to not pay our own debts and to not come up with a system or a framework by which to begin that process.

Rather than addressing this problem head on, government spending is set to remain high over the coming decade, even with the discretionary spending caps and sequester put in place by the Budget Control Act. Inside the beltway, people talk a lot about sequester and the Budget Control Act, but that is only 30 percent of Federal spending. Seventy percent of Federal spending is on autopilot, growing in some cases by a rate of 70 percent or more a year. Not addressing this is irresponsible, it is dangerous, and it also limits the choices available were our country to become embroiled in another fiscal crisis like we saw in 2008.

If we ask our national security experts—former Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff ADM Mike Mullen said the No. 1 security threat to the United States was the debt. That shocked me a little bit when I heard him say that, but what he meant—and I know it to be true—is that more and more of the tax dollars the Federal Government receives are going to be paid to the bondholders who own that debt—the Chinese and other people around the world. We have to pay the interest on the debt if we are going to borrow the money, but more and more the spending decisions will be taken out of the hands of the elected representatives of the American people and simply be left up to the accountants who say: OK. You have accrued this much debt. Here is the interest that needs to be paid on that debt to the bondholders, and there is not going to be enough money left over to protect the national security of the United States of America.

We have already seen our military on a dangerous trajectory potentially leading to the smallest Army since World War II. We tried to deal with some of that just last fall, to begin to reverse some of this, because frankly this was no longer a matter of just cutting superficial cuts. These were into the muscle and the bone of what makes up our national security structure, and we know what happened too. Our friends on the other side said: If you want to spend more money to protect this country with national security spending, then we are going to demand dollar-for-dollar more spending on nondefense, discretionary spending. That is why we ended up with the deal we ended up with.

I have found it very frustrating in my time in the Senate how many of our colleagues will talk about this issue, but I have to be honest, the ones who frustrate me the most are the ones who will not talk about it at all, to even acknowledge the fact. We need to have a conversation, and more than that we need to have a commitment and we need to have a goal when it comes to dealing with this national debt and runaway spending.

Our Democratic friends apparently share the same philosophy as the current President to create a tax-and-spend agenda without considering the long-term ramifications to job creation, the economy, not to mention our children and grandchildren. I am glad to say this side of the aisle has tried to do what I described earlier, which is to take a responsible position on embracing a policy which would help us to pay down the debt, deal with this in a fiscally responsible way, and allow us to get our books back in good order.

We are going to take up this matter before the Senate Judiciary Committee today. We will be discussing reining in spending and making progress on the debt, including an amendment to the United States Constitution that would require a balanced budget.

I can hear it now—because I have heard it before—some of our colleagues across the aisle saying: Heaven forbid. We can't amend the Constitution. Well, we have done it 27 times. Now, we don't do it willy-nilly. We don't do it for small things, but for something like this, it may well be required. Frankly, this is one of the most important lessons of economics that all of us who have children have tried to teach our children, which is you don't spend money that you don't have—well, I guess, unless you are the Federal Government and you can print it or you can borrow it, but at some point the birds come home to roost.

Of course, our commitment to commonsense spending goes far beyond today's hearing on the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Many will recall that folks on this side of the aisle highlighted gimmicks in the discretionary budget process that only hide the real cost and don't actually reduce spending. There are a lot of shell games that go on here in Washington, DC. I am glad our budget amendment last year focused on bringing stunts like those to an end and placed a limit on their use in the appropriations process.

Most recently, we used reconciliation through the budget process to keep our promise to vote to repeal ObamaCare—a law that has been burdening American families and businesses with higher taxes and mandates, while failing to contain premiums and financial losses on the exchanges. But instead of offering solutions to our growing debt, many of our Democratic colleagues are content to sit back and criticize those of us who are trying to come up with a solution to address this problem: how to safeguard our Nation's fiscal health. They argue that a balanced budget amendment isn't feasible or that certain government programs are so essential that we have to up their funding at the expense of the taxpayer, or they act as if the debt isn't a problem, or if it is a problem, that all they will do is raise taxes enough to try to balance the budget. You can't do that. You cannot raise taxes high enough on the American people to pay off $19 trillion in debt. Those aren't solutions; those are talking points. They don't help the American people make ends meet, and they don't help the U.S. Government live within its means.

So I would like to ask, what are the Democratic solutions to our national

debt? We are going to ask that question this afternoon. We are going to have some expert witnesses offer a number of suggestions. Then we are going to ask our friends across the aisle, what is your solution? I hope we hear more than just crickets or criticism that what we are proposing simply will not work.

I know my colleagues and I would welcome constructive input and serious, good-faith proposals to stem the burgeoning national debt, but until then, our friends across the aisle need to do more than sit on their hands or just whistle past the graveyard of this impending national disaster.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I appreciate the comments of my distinguished colleague from Texas. As usual, he is right on and one of the great leaders on trying to balance the budget through a constitutional amendment. I personally appreciate his efforts and his expertise in doing that.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Madam President, on a different subject, I rise today to speak about the need for the Senate to do its job regarding the Supreme Court vacancy created by the untimely death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

The Constitution gives to the President the power to nominate Supreme Court Justices, and President Obama has exercised that power by nominating Judge Merrick Garland. The Constitution gives to the Senate the power of advice and consent, and it is time for the Senate to do its job.

The sound bite ''do your job'' is catchy, quotable, and short enough to fit in very large letters on a large chart that Democratic Senators bring to this floor. Rarely, however, have so few words been so misleading for so many. This cliché begs but does not answer the most important question: What is the Senate's job regarding the Scalia vacancy? When Democrats and their liberal allies say ''Do your job,'' they really mean ''Do as we say now, not as we did then.'' Saying that would be more honest, but then no one else would be persuaded by it. So they say that the Constitution provides the Senate's job description, requiring a prompt Judiciary Committee hearing and a timely floor vote. There may be a constitution somewhere that says such a thing, but it is certainly not in our Constitution—the Constitution of the United States—that each of us has sworn an oath to support and defend.

In a way, I am not surprised that liberals would use a made-up, fictional constitution to pursue their political goal. After all, they favor judges who do the same thing. From the time he was a Senator serving in this body, President Obama has said that judges decide cases based on their personal empathy, core concerns, and vision of how the world works. My goodness. If that were the case, any philosopher could be a Supreme Court Justice. He has nominated men and women who believe that judges may change the Constitution's meaning based on things such as cultural understandings and evolving social norms. Give me a break.

The kinds of judges liberals favor see unwritten things in our written Constitution. They discover things between the lines of our written charter that come not from those who drafted and ratified the Constitution, not from the American people, but from the judges' own imaginations.

If the Constitution we have—the one our fellow citizens can read—suits them, then activist judges will use it. If not, then activist judges will make up a new constitution that is more useful to their purposes. America's Founders fashioned a system of government with built-in limits, including a defined role for unelected judges. The Supreme Court observed in the famous case of Marbury v. Madison that the Constitution is written down so that these limits will be neither mistaken nor forgotten and is intended to govern courts as much as legislatures. The activist judges whom liberals favor reject those limits. They look at written law such as the Constitution and statutes merely as a starting point, as words without any real meaning. Their oath to support and defend the Constitution is really an oath to support and defend themselves, since in the long run their constitution is one of their own making.

So I am hardly surprised that today Democrats and their leftwing allies turn to a fictional constitution when telling the Senate to do its job. That constitution, however, simply does not exist. The real Constitution leaves to the President and to the Senate the decision about how to exercise their respective powers in the appointment process.

What is the Senate's job regarding the Scalia vacancy? The Senate's job is to determine the best way to exercise its advice and consent power under the circumstances we face today. Thankfully, we are not without guidance in deciding the best way to exercise our advice and consent power regarding the Scalia vacancy. We can, for example, look at precedent.

It hardly takes a law degree to know that a precedent is more legitimate if it is more similar to the situation before us. Comparing apples and apples is more helpful than, say, comparing apples and rocks. That is just a matter of common sense.

Candidly, the fictional claims offered in recent days suggest that some of the lawyers among us could benefit from even more common sense. Over the years, the Senate has considered nominations in different ways at different times, depending on the circumstances. Consider these precedents with great bearing on the current circumstances: The Senate has never confirmed a nominee to a Supreme Court vacancy that opened up this late in a term-limited President's time in office. This is only the third vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting in a Presidential election, and in the previous two instances—in 1956 and 1968—the Senate did not confirm a nominee until the following year. And the only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after voting began in a Presidential election year was in 1916, and that vacancy arose only because Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned his seat on the Court to run against incumbent President Woodrow Wilson.

There is also another precedent that has received little attention but is worth considering. President John Quincy Adams nominated John Crittenden to the Supreme Court in December 1828, after Andrew Jackson won the Presidential election. The Senate, by voice vote, rejected an amendment to a resolution regarding the Crittenden nomination that asserted it is the duty of the Senate to confirm or reject a President's nominees. In one of its reports on the confirmation process, the Congressional Research Service discussed this vote and concluded: ''By this action, the early Senate declined to endorse the principle that proper practice required it to consider and proceed to a final vote on every nomination.''

I believe the precedents, such as they are, support the principle that the Senate must decide for itself how to exercise its power of advice and consent in each situation.

We have another source of guidance for how to exercise the advice and consent power in the particular circumstances of the Scalia vacancy. In 1992—another Presidential election year during divided government—then-Judiciary Committee Chairman JOSEPH BIDEN, now our Vice President, addressed this very issue. Senator BIDEN recommended that if a Supreme Court vacancy occurred that year, the entire appointment process—both nomination and confirmation—should be deferred until the election season was over. Here is what he said in a lengthy interview with the Washington Post:

> If someone steps down, I would highly recommend the president not name someone, not send a name up. If [the president] did send someone up, I would ask the Senate to seriously consider not having a hearing on that nominee.

Chairman BIDEN also explained the reasons for this recommendation. He said, for example, that an election-year nominee would be caught up in a

''power struggle'' over control of the Supreme Court.

He was prescient.

In that interview, Chairman BIDEN also said:

> Can you imagine dropping a nominee, after the . . . decisions that are about to be made by the Supreme Court, into that fight, into that cauldron in the middle of a presidential year? . . . The environment within which such a hearing would be held would be so supercharged and so prone to be able to be distorted.

A week later, Chairman BIDEN addressed the Senate about the confirmation process and further explained his recommendation for deferring the appointment process should a Supreme Court vacancy occur. He repeated his recommendation regarding how to handle a Supreme Court nomination occurring that year. Let me refer to this chart and read it:

> President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not—and not—name a nominee until after the November election is completed. . . . [I]f the President . . . presses an election-year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.

Chairman BIDEN again explained the reasons for this recommendation. The confirmation process had degraded in the wake of controversial nominations, and the Presidential campaign that year looked to be particularly bitter. As a result, he said, partisan bickering and political posturing would overwhelm the serious evaluation required. In addition, the Presidential election season was already well underway, and different parties controlled the nomination and confirmation phases of the appointment process.

Chairman BIDEN could have been talking about 2016 instead of 1992. In fact, each of the factors leading to his recommendation for deferring the appointment process in 1992 exists in the same or greater measure today.

Not a single Democrat objected to Chairman BIDEN's recommendation to defer the appointment process. Not one. Not one Democrat. If what Democrats say today is true—that the Constitution requires a prompt hearing and a timely floor vote for every nomination—surely someone, anyone would have said so in 1992. Not so. My colleagues will search the 1992 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in vain for the slogan ''do your job.'' It appears that a different Constitution was in force in 1992 because no Democratic Senator or leftist organization insisted that the Constitution required a prompt hearing and timely floor vote. No one claimed that the Senate would be shirking its constitutional duty by following Chairman BIDEN's recommendation.

The first step in exercising our power of advice and consent regarding the Scalia vacancy then is to decide how best to do so in the circumstances we face today. Precedent generally, and guidance from past Senate leaders specifically, counsel strongly in favor of deferring the confirmation process until after the Presidential election season is over. That is clearly the best course for the Senate, the judiciary, and, of course, the Nation. That conclusion is reinforced by another important factor: Elections have consequences. Democrats and their left-wing allies also use that axiom but want people to believe that 2012 was the only election relevant to the Scalia vacancy. They want people to believe that because President Obama was re-elected in 2012, he should be able to appoint whomever, whenever, and however he likes. That idea must appear in another provision of the Democrats' fictional constitution because, once again, the real one says no such thing.

The 2012 election did give the President the power to nominate, and he can exercise that power however he chooses until his final minutes in office next January, and I will uphold that right. He has exercised that power by nominating Judge Merrick Garland.

The 2012 election, however, was not the only one with consequences. The 2014 election, for example, had tremendous significance for the Senate's power of advice and consent. The American people gave control of the Senate, and therefore control of the confirmation process, to Republicans. Here, too, we may find some guidance from our friends on the left in addressing this circumstance. President Ronald Reagan nominated Judge Robert Bork to the Supreme Court in 1987. This was 3 years after his reelection and a year after the Senate majority changed hands.

Here is how the New York Times addressed the argument that elections have consequences:

> The President's supporters insist vehemently that, having won the 1984 election, he has every right to try to change the Court's direction. Yes, but the Democrats won the 1986 election, regaining control of the Senate, and they have every right to resist.

The same circumstances obviously exist today. By the way, no one should waste time wondering if the New York Times has applied the same principle today. It, of course, hasn't.

In addition to 2012 and 2014, the 2016 election will have tremendous consequences for the American people and the courts. It will give the American people a unique opportunity to express their opinion about the direction of the courts by electing the President who nominates and the Senate that gives advice and consent. Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, have very different views about the kind of judge that America needs. Justice Scalia represented a defined, modest approach to judging while, as I mentioned earlier, President Obama has advocated an expansive and activist approach.

I have served on the Judiciary Committee longer than all but one Senator since the committee was created 200 years ago. One thing is clear to me: The conflict over judicial appointments is a conflict over judicial power. The two models of judicial power or judicial job descriptions that I have described have radically different consequences and implications for our Nation and our liberty.

The American people have expressed increasing concern about the Supreme Court's direction since President Obama was elected. Most Americans, for example, believe that Supreme Court Justices decide cases based on their personal views and object to their doing so. With Justice Scalia's untimely passing, the American people now have a unique opportunity to have a voice in charting a path forward.

I cannot conclude today without addressing what is widely understood to be part of the President's strategy in nominating Judge Garland to the Scalia vacancy. The Senate confirmed Judge Garland to the U.S. Court of Appeals by a vote of 76 to 23 in 1997. This, I take it, is supposed to suggest that the Senate should do likewise regarding Judge Garland's nomination to the Supreme Court.

So there is no mistake, I will say this as clearly as I can: The confirmation process regarding the Scalia vacancy will be deferred until after the election season is over for the reasons I have explained. That decision has nothing whatsoever to do with the identity of the nominee, and Republicans made our decision known weeks ago, before the President had chosen anyone.

I think highly of Judge Garland. But his nomination doesn't in any way change current circumstances. I remain convinced that the best way for the Senate to do its job is to conduct the confirmation process after this toxic Presidential election season is over. Doing so is the only way to ensure fairness to the nominee and preserve the integrity of the Supreme Court.

I also want to emphasize that the considerations relevant to an individual's nomination to one position do not necessarily lead to the same conclusion regarding his nomination to another position, especially the Supreme Court. Here, too, I want my colleagues to be aware of guidance we can draw on from the past.

In 1990, then-Chairman JOSEPH BIDEN presided over the hearing on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. He said: ''[T]here is a fundamental distinction between what is required of and should be sought of a circuit court judge and a district court judge and a Supreme Court Justice.'' He was right then, and he is right today.

Democratic Senators made the same point in 2005 when they sought to distinguish their earlier support for John Roberts' appeals court nomination from their intention to oppose his Supreme Court nomination. Mr. SCHUMER, our distinguished Senator from New York, for example, called it a whole new ball game. He said, ''you've got to start from scratch.'' Senator LEAHY agreed, saying that the Supreme Court is different from the lower courts. I couldn't agree more. Add this to the list of standards that my Democratic colleagues have reversed now that the partisan shoe is on the other foot. Senate Republicans have explained repeatedly and in detail why the best way to exercise our advice-and-consent power in this situation is to defer the confirmation process. That conclusion is completely unrelated to whether the President chooses a nominee, or if he does so, who that nominee is.

President Obama could have followed Vice President BIDEN's 1992 advice and deferred a nomination to fill the Scalia vacancy. He chose not to do so. For the reasons I have discussed—precedent, past guidance, and the consequences of elections—the Senate should follow that advice and defer the confirmation process for the good of the Senate, the Judiciary, and the American people.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court in light of President Obama's announcement that he has nominated Chief Judge Merrick Garland to replace Justice Scalia.

Replacing Justice Antonin Scalia, who was one of our Nation's strongest defenders of our Constitution, will be difficult. For almost 30 years, with his brilliant legal mind and animated character, he fiercely fought against judicial activism from the bench. He will be greatly missed by not only his family and loved ones but by all Americans who shared his core conservative values and beliefs.

Under the Constitution, the President shall nominate a replacement, as he did today, and the Senate has a constitutional role of advice and consent. This is a constitutional responsibility that I take very seriously.

The decisions the Supreme Court makes often have long-lasting ramifications that—with one-vote margins—can dramatically alter the course of our country. At a time when the current administration has stretched the limits of the law and attempted to circumvent Congress and the Federal court system, choosing the right candidate with the aptitude for this lifetime appointment is as important as ever.

I have determined that my benchmark for the next Supreme Court Justice will be Justice Scalia himself. Scalia's strict interpretation of the Constitution and deference to States' rights set a gold standard by which his replacement should be measured.

As we all know, every Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL expressing their firm belief that the people of the United States deserve to have a voice in determining the next Supreme Court Justice. In their letter, they wrote:

> Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution is clear. The President may nominate judges of the Supreme Court. But the power to grant—or withhold—consent to such nominees rests exclusively with the United States Senate.

As a result, the committee does not plan on holding any hearings related to this issue until after a new President has taken office. This decision will allow the American people to have a voice in the next Supreme Court Justice based upon who they elect as the President this November.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have argued that the American people did have a voice when they elected President Obama in 2012, but that election was nearly 3½ years ago. Since that time, a lot has changed in our country, signaling a shift in America's views of our President and his philosophy of government. We don't need to look any further than the 2014 elections for proof. In the 2014 elections, the Senate switched from Democratic-controlled to Republican-controlled. In fact, I am one of those Republican Senators who replaced a Democrat in the last election. Many of us who ran were not supporting the President's policies. In fact, we ran because we wanted to change the direction the President was moving our country.

At the State level, in 2012, the last time President Obama was elected, there were 29 Republican Governors and 20 Democratic Governors. In 2014, the number of Republican Governors rose from 29 to 31, while the number of Democratic Governors decreased from 20 to 18. We saw similar results in State legislative races across the country.

In 2012, Republicans held a majority in both chambers of 26 State legislatures. In 2014, that number rose to 30. And if we take into account the conservative-leaning but officially nonpartisan legislature of Nebraska, that number jumps even higher—to 31.

In 2012, Democrats held the majority of both chambers in 15 States. In 2014, that number was reduced to 11.

So in the years since the President's last election, Republicans not only held a strong majority in the House of Representatives, but they took back control of the Senate and increased their numbers at the State level as well.

There is no doubt that there has been a clear shift in the minds of the American people since President Obama's last election.

I believe, just as many of my colleagues do, that the Republican victories of 2014 should be taken into consideration and, therefore, we should wait to confirm the next Supreme Court Justice until after a new President takes office. Overwhelmingly, South Dakotans who have contacted my office agree with this decision.

One gentleman from Lemmon, SD, wrote to me saying: ''Our country hangs in the balance as to what the future of this great country will look like. . . . This decision is too crucial and the next Supreme Court nominee should be nominated by the next President of the United States.''

Another South Dakotan from Brandon noted: ''This is a rare opportunity for the American voter to actually have a voice in how the Court will be structured for many years to come. Please help preserve that opportunity for us all.''

In another example, a woman from Estelline wrote saying: ''Hearing of the passing of Justice Scalia was heartbreaking news. I ask that you do your part to allow the people to have a say in who the next Justice of the Supreme Court will be.''

These are just a few examples of the numerous South Dakotans who have contacted my office who agree that the American people have a voice in the direction our country will take in the decades to come. As much as my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like to see the Senate confirm a nominee from our current President, the reality is that when the tables are turned, they agree with our position. In fact, it was Vice President JOE BIDEN who, when he served as the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said on this very floor in 1992: ''It is my view that if a President goes the way of Presidents Fillmore and Johnson and presses for an election-year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.''

It was minority leader HARRY REID who said in 2005: ''The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote.''

And the Senate Democrats' next leader, Senator SCHUMER, said in 2007, close to 2 years before President Bush's

term ended: ''We should not confirm any Bush nominee to the Supreme Court except in extraordinary circumstances.''

Whoever is confirmed to fill the open seat on the Supreme Court will be serving a lifetime appointment. Keeping in mind the current political makeup of the Court, the man or woman who will replace Justice Scalia has the potential to hold incredible influence over the ideological direction of the Court for a generation to come.

It is critically important that the next Justice be committed to upholding the principles of the Constitution. We owe it to Justice Scalia, our judicial system, and the Constitution to uphold the highest standards when determining our next Supreme Court Justice. We also owe it to the American people to make certain that their voice is heard in this election.

For these reasons, I agree with my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee and in the Senate leadership that we should not hold hearings on a Supreme Court nominee until after our new President takes office.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I am once again on the floor for my 37th edition of ''Waste of the Week'' speech, where I disclose wasteful spending, fraud, and abuse of taxpayers' dollars. It seems it is never ending because after 37 weeks I feel as if I am just scratching the surface.

Last week, as some will remember, I talked about how the National Science Foundation spent $331,000 of hard-earned tax dollars by giving a grant to researchers to study whether or not being ''hangry'' is a real thing. Most people have not heard about the word ''hangry.'' Last week I suppose people ran to the dictionary to see what the description was. ''Hangry''—I think among the younger people—means that you are both hungry and angry, and you are angrier than you normally would be in a situation because you are hungry.

I wasn't hungry last week when I was talking about ''hangry,'' but I was angry. I was angry over the fact that $331,000 of taxpayers' money was being used to offer a grant from the National Science Foundation to study whether this exists. They came up with this crazy situation of giving voodoo dolls to husbands and wives. Every time a husband was angry with his wife, he would take a pin and stick it into the voodoo doll or if she was angry with him, she would take a pin and stick it into the voodoo doll. I don't know who ended up with the most pins. Probably the wife had more pins in the voodoo doll than the husband did. Nonetheless, then a glucose test was taken to see if they were actually a little short on glucose in the bloodstream, meaning they were hungry. Well, the conclusion was that, yes, if you were hungry, you tended to be a little more on edge, a little more testy.

That might have been a fun study to be engaged in just for laughs, but this was paid for with taxpayer dollars. This was a grant issued by the National Science Foundation. We tell people about the National Science Foundation, and they must think, oh, that is probably one of the better government agencies.

So that was last week, and I wasn't sure that anything could top last week. Because I was quoted as saying—who could make up stuff like this? Do people sit around and say: Let's see if we can get a grant to do some kind of research project that is nothing but crazy? The amazing thing is someone over at the National Science Foundation looked at this study and thought: Hey, this is a good idea. Let's give them a $331,000 grant. And so we added it to the chart.

Now we are here this week, and I want to talk about something that is maybe even scarier than sticking pins in voodoo dolls, and it is called the Master Death File. This is not the name of a new novel on the New York Time's best seller list. This is not the name of a new movie coming out. The Master Death File is something, folks, you don't want to be on.

The Federal Government, by law—the Social Security Administration—has to maintain the Master Death File. Obviously, those of us on Social Security or who are of Social Security age don't want to see our name on that list. If your name is on that list, you are no longer eligible for Social Security payments because it is a death list; you have died.

So as sinister as it sounds, it is probably necessary that we do this—that we have at least some list that lets the Social Security Administration know that it is time to stop sending Social Security checks to dead people. The beneficiary or the recipient has died, and, therefore, procedures are made so that the next check doesn't keep rolling out and rolling out and rolling out.

A lot of us here in the Senate get on different kinds of lists—voter records, awards for standing up for certain issues and policies that people respect—and I have found myself on a number of those. One list I don't want to be on, but know that as a human being I am sort of careening toward, is the Master Death File. So we thought, well, let's dig into this and see how it works. So we went to the Government Accountability Office and said: What about this Master Death File?

So we did some investigation on that. Out of that investigation came an example of one agency the General Accountability Office had examined, and it is the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture sends out checks—payments for conservation, disaster relief and crop subsidies. Well, we found that between 2008 and 2012, $27.6 million in payments for conservation, disaster relief, and crop subsidies were made to people who had died. What is more disturbing is that many of those recipients had been dead for more than 2 years.

This is just one department out of all the hundreds of Federal agencies that issue checks for all kinds of different purposes. So it is important to have a Master Death File because what we want these agencies to do—in fact, they are obligated to do under the law—is to check the master death list to make sure the checks aren't going to people who are on that list.

Obviously, with this one agency—the Department of Agriculture—one of two things happened: Either names did not get on that list, or names were on the list, but they didn't check it. Either way, there is a responsibility here for the Federal Government in handling taxpayer dollars to make sure that for those who are deceased, their names get on the Master Death File—as scary as that is—and/or, if they are on the list, they do not receive the payments.

In this digital age, it shouldn't be too hard to keep that Master Death File updated. Every State has records that have to be kept—sent by the coroner or authorized by the hospital or whatever. There are a number of sources of finding out. Particularly in the digital age, it is pretty easy to enter a name when you get the certificate of death. You enter the name, it goes onto the master death list, and it ought to be relatively easy for agencies sending out checks to coordinate with that by either pushing a button or going into an app or whatever and finding out that John Jones or Bill Smith still qualifies for his Social Security payments. That check ought to be pretty automatic.

Unfortunately, it isn't, particularly when you find people have been receiving these checks even 2 years after they have died. So something is amiss here. It is not like in the old days, where you probably had to call Farmer Bob out in rural America and say: Do you know if Farmer Joe down the road is still living? Have you seen him in town lately? What is happening? Did you go to the funeral? We don't have to do all that anymore. This stuff is all digitized and all very accessible.

So here we are with the Social Security Administration needing to do what

it needs to do to make sure that list is kept up-to-date. And, as I say, none of us are anxious to get on that list. I see all the young pages down here thinking: I have a long time to go. They are looking at this aging Senator thinking: You are a lot closer to that list than we are. I hope they are not thinking that. Some of them are smiling. Nonetheless, the agencies that are issuing the checks also have to do their job because, in a serious way, this is taking money from hard-working taxpayers. It is hard-earned money taken from those who have to pay the bills at the end of the week, who have to cover their mortgage and provide for the education of their children and who have to buy food at the grocery store and gas at the gas pump. People are scraping by, and when they see this kind of thing or hear about this kind of thing, they are outraged.

We are seeing this being played out in the nomination process on both sides—the Republicans and the Democrats. People are frustrated with the inefficiency and the ineffectiveness of the Federal Government in the use of their tax dollars. So I am here to illustrate that—not to spur continued anger and outrage but to get people seriously focused on the fact their dollars are not being wisely spent. They need to call their Congressmen and Senators, and they need to say: You need to do a better job of managing our money we are sending you to protect this Nation, to provide for roads, bridges, health care, and so forth.

There are some essential things government needs to do, but surely it doesn't need to put out $331,000 for a ''hanger'' study with voodoo dolls, and it doesn't need to waste $27.6 million of checks going to people who are deceased and who are no longer eligible for receiving that.

So we continue to add money to our total—another $27.6 million to our $157,619,142,953. These numbers get up there. So we are at $157,619,142,953, and we will be back next week with the next edition of ''Waste of the Week.''

I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

METHANE EMISSIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last week the Prime Minister of Canada came for a visit. President Obama used that opportunity to take yet another cheap shot at American energy producers. The administration has made a deal with Canada to cut methane emissions from oil and gas production facilities.

They want tough new restrictions to cut emissions almost in half over the next decade. The very same day, the Environmental Protection Agency said that it plans to come up with more regulations for methane.

The Obama administration is already trying to limit the methane that gets released from new oil and gas wells as they get put into production. Now the administration wants to go back and impose those limits on existing wells—ones that were built to actually comply with the current rules on the books.

Here is what I find most interesting about this. This was an official state visit by a foreign leader to the United States. It was the first trip for the new Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau. So President Obama decided that the most important thing the two countries could talk about was methane—not Syria, not trying to stop radical Islamist terrorists, not dealing with ISIS, not the hostile regimes of North Korea, Iran, or Russia, not what we could do to actually help our economies grow—no. Instead, President Obama chose to focus on methane.

Why is President Obama so fixated on this? Let me tell you. The President is bitter—bitter that the Supreme Court is blocking his Clean Power Plan. He is pouting and he is pandering. He has gone after coal, he has gone after oil, and now he is going after natural gas. It is a vendetta against American energy producers.

The President and other Democrats are pandering to radical environmental extremists and to their billionaire donors.

We all want to make sure that we have a clean environment. My goal is to make American energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, and to do it in ways that don't raise costs for American families. That is why the people I talk with in Wyoming believe that this new regulation is the wrong approach.

My local newspaper, the Casper Star Tribune, had a front-page article about it on Friday. The headline was this: ''Cuts to methane emissions proposed.'' The article quotes John Robitaille. He is from the Petroleum Association of Wyoming. He says the Environmental Protection Agency ''has failed to recognize the economic burden placed on replacing equipment on existing wells as opposed to new wells''—ones that are still to be built.

John Robitaille may say ''failed to recognize.'' I say the administration deliberately refuses to recognize—refuses. For Washington to come in and demand expensive new equipment for all of these oil and gas wells would be a huge cost. It would drive up prices for consumers, and it would mean that some of these wells wouldn't be economically worthwhile anymore. The oil and gas would stay in the ground where it does nothing to help power our economy or power our country.

States are already doing their part. States are trying to limit methane leaks where they find a problem. Colorado has a leak detection and repair program that will help keep ozone and methane from escaping. Wyoming, my home State, is looking for ways to get more up-to-date equipment on new wells as they get going.

So the States are already taking the lead, and they are already coming up with solutions where they are needed. This is not a one-size-fits-all regulation coming from unelected, unaccountable Washington bureaucrats. But that is what we are having to deal with now in this administration.

What we prefer are State solutions. What I just described are State solutions that strike a commonsense balance between a strong economy and a very healthy environment. It is not just the States that are taking action. Oil and gas producers also want to reduce how much methane escapes from these wells.

When you think about it, producers would prefer to capture that gas and then to sell it so it can be used. That is why the industry reduced methane emissions by 13 percent between 2008 and 2013. Over the same years, U.S. shale gas production grew by 400 percent. So the industry actually cut emissions even while gas production went way up. This happened because of the action that the producers in the States have already been taking, not because of more regulations coming out of Washington, DC. Energy producers need the flexibility to tackle these emissions when and how it makes sense.

There are already too many rules on the books. The Bureau of Land Management has another methane rule in the works. More duplicative regulations will just raise costs for Americans at a time when our economy is weak and emissions actually are already dropping.

This new redtape could add hundreds of millions of dollars every year onto the cost of producing American red, white, and blue energy. If the Obama administration really wants to reduce emissions from oil and gas wells, it should help the industry to capture this gas and to use it.

This was the subject of bipartisan legislation that Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP of North Dakota and I offered last month. It was an amendment to the energy legislation. Our bipartisan amendment would have expedited the permit process for natural gas gathering lines—the lines that gather

this gas on the Federal land, on Indian land and then help take it to market.

Gas gathering lines are essentially pipelines that collect unprocessed gas from oil and gas wells and then ship it to a processing plant. At the plant, different kinds of gases—methane, propane—are separated from one another. They are then shipped out again to locations where they can be sold and used by people.

That is what the producers want to do. The problem is that we don't have enough of these pipelines now to gather up the gas and to send it to the processing plants. A lot of times there is only one option if you don't have the gathering lines, and that is to flare or vent the excess natural gas at the well. If there were more gathering lines, we would have a lot less waste of energy. We would have a lot less of these methane emissions that President Obama claims to be so worried about. So Senator HEITKAMP and I offered a better way to deal with the problem, and 43 Democrats here in the Senate blocked our amendment.

At a hearing of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee last month, I actually asked Interior Secretary Jewell about the idea. Even she had to concede that speeding up the permits was something that they should be looking into.

This doesn't have to be a fight. We all agree there is too much of this gas that has been vented or burned off at the oil and gas wells. Republicans know it. Democrats know it. Energy producers know it. So why can't we agree to let the industry build the gathering lines to help them capture the gas where it makes sense and how it makes sense? Why do we need more Washington regulations that impose higher costs?

America's energy producers have increased production while reducing emissions. They have provided what may be the only bright spot in our economy over the past 7 years. We should be doing all that we can to help and to encourage them. We should be looking for voluntary, cost-effective ways to make sure that we can make American energy as clean as we can and as fast as we can without raising costs on American families. The Obama administration is going in the wrong direction.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO KYLE RUCKERT

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my longest serving staff member, my chief of staff, campaign manager, and close friend Kyle Ruckert, who is departing the Senate at the end of this week to start an exciting new career. Kyle was one of my very first hires when I was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1999. He started as my legislative director in the House under the wonderful tutelage of my first chief of staff, Marty Driesler. And I know Kyle and I are both indebted to Marty, who is now unfortunately deceased, for getting us started on a wonderful footing in Congress. Then Kyle became my chief of staff upon Marty's retirement in 2002.

I guess I would sum up the bottom line in a very simple but important way: There has not been one moment during these 17 years when I have regretted placing my complete trust in Kyle to lead our office and serve the people of Louisiana—not one. From day one, Kyle set the office standard of service to constituents and set it as a top priority. He established offices throughout the State. One of his most memorable decisions instituted a mobile office on wheels so that we could reach out to those hit hard by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008—folks who could not otherwise reach our permanent offices. I say ''memorable'' because for the staffers who actually had to man and woman that vehicle, it was an adventurous ride.

Of course, Kyle's leadership style and commitment to service comes from his wonderful parents, and I take a moment to thank his parents, John and Ellen Ruckert, who are with us in the Gallery and whom I have also come to know and respect.

I also think a big part of Kyle's commitment to serve others comes from his time at Jesuit High School in New Orleans, where the motto is ''Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam''—''For the Greater Glory of God''—and where all students are expected to accept the challenge of becoming a ''man for others'' as part of the Ignatius tradition. Kyle is probably one of the best ambassadors for Jesuits, and he even played a role in my son Jack going there. Go, Blue Jays.

In 2004, Kyle moved down to Louisiana to manage my first Senate campaign. He quickly earned the respect of national political prognosticators on the campaign side who quite frankly belittled our chances from the beginning. Kyle reacted to the conventional wisdom that we couldn't win a runoff against our so-called moderate Democratic opponent in a pretty straightforward way: He simply made sure we got more than 50 percent of the vote in the open primary, so we never went to a runoff. Problem solved. Kyle's discipline and strategic thinking are largely to thank for that win, and after that he immediately returned to manage our Senate office as chief of staff. Unfortunately, our first major test in the Senate was a tragic one. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated Louisiana and was followed very shortly by Hurricane Rita. Constituent service, always a top priority, took on an even greater urgency and seriousness, and Kyle led our team to help, console, and serve all ''For the Greater Glory of God,'' acting as a ''man for others.''

Kyle led our staff managing an effective operation, first and foremost, assisting constituents on the ground, and in Congress, helping to put together emergency assistance legislation, making sure people in real need received what they absolutely needed. This was one of the most chaotic times for all of us from Louisiana, but Kyle was always calm and methodical, always steering the ship with a steady hand.

Kyle's leadership is contagious. His expectations are very high—be at work, get it over 100 percent, and get the job done. If that means working at night and on weekends, he would expect that out of everyone on the team and, unlike some other so-called leaders, he would be right there leading the way in that regard. Our staff has become stronger because of that leadership by example and that contagious work ethic.

Besides his calm, disciplined, methodical leadership style, Kyle's strongest attribute is his loyalty and trust he places in those he works with. He always encourages staff to take chances, to be bold in pushing new reforms, in negotiating amendment votes, in pushing important stories with the press. When staff would run ideas by him and ask him what he thought, he would say: If you think it is the right thing to do, go for it. Just don't—bleep—it up.

His leadership was tested again on the campaign side in our 2010 reelection race, where again the political commentators largely bet against us, and again Kyle made sure they were wrong in a big way. We won that race by 19 points. Since then I have had the real fortune of serving in leadership positions in the Senate, as the ranking Republican in the EPW Committee in 2013 and 2014 and currently as chair of the Small Business Committee.

Aside from our many legislative accomplishments under Kyle's leadership, what I am perhaps most proud of is the close-knit team we built together. We call it Team Vitter, and those are more than just words in our office. We both look at our staff as an extension of our immediate families. Certainly my wife Wendy and our kids and I definitely think of Kyle and his family as part of ours.

Kyle sets a gold standard for thinking of staff as family—for treating them that way. Perhaps, in part, because he married another one of my former staffers, Lynnel. Lynnel started working in my office on the House side early on in 2002. She worked there until

2004 and also joined that first winning Senate campaign. It is interesting, Kyle and Lynnel started dating secretly, not telling anyone in the office—certainly not me. I think they were first discovered when my first chief of staff, Marty Driesler, got a call from her daughter who had witnessed them being weekend tourists in Philadelphia together. Of course, I was still kept in the dark for months after that, even though Marty discovered their courtship.

Lynnel, too, always stressed constituent service and is a brilliant political strategist. They truly were meant for each other in all sorts of ways. Lynnel has continued her extremely successful career, most recently serving as chief of staff to House majority whip STEVE SCALISE.

In 2005, Kyle and Lynnel got married, and since then our office has had three other couples from Team Vitter get married. Perhaps there is more to those late work nights than I had imagined originally.

Kyle and Lynnel and their two kids, Jack, who is now 9, and Mary Kyle, who is now 6, are getting settled in Baton Rouge as part of a new, exciting chapter of their lives. It is going to be fun. We are going to miss them, but it is going to be fun to see this new chapter for Kyle and Lynnel and their family develop, especially when we get to see Kyle, as a New Orleans native and an avid Tulane Green Wave alumn, having to start wearing purple and gold around Baton Rouge at the urging of their son Jack.

Who knows, maybe he will even develop a superstition before LSU games. Something a lot of folks don't know about Kyle is he is incredibly superstitious—knock on wood. He will detour his Monday morning drive in New Orleans to pass by the Superdome if the Saints won on Sunday. He will sip the same type of bourbon for good luck or wear his lucky green polo if we need a win in sports, politically, or anything in between.

I will tell a quick story related to that about his green polo. On election day in 2004, Kyle was wearing a campaign T-shirt, but he wasn't going to be able to go to the polls that way to vote and do some poll watching, so he asked around the office if he could borrow a different shirt. Mac Abrams, who is now DEAN HELLER's chief of staff—and who was a key staff member in my office in my campaign at the time—loaned him his green polo. Well, we won that race big, and Kyle hasn't returned the green polo yet. He wears it every election day, although we are not sure if it is superstition or also because he is so darn cheap.

While Kyle will now be living in Louisiana, his impact will remain strong in our work and our office and our culture. He will be able to see it in legislation which helps Louisiana and the country, in thousands and thousands of constituents whom he and our team effectively reached out to, and in the great example he set for so many staffers and interns and others on our team.

So let me end really where I began, by paying him the highest compliment possible, repeating that there hasn't been one moment in these great 17 years where I regretted placing my complete trust in Kyle Ruckert to lead our team, to lead our office, to help lead us in serving the people of Louisiana—not one.

Kyle, thank you for your service to Louisiana, for the countless hours you have spent helping me, for the fun memories and laughs we have shared, and most importantly for your friendship. You truly are part of my family. I have the greatest confidence that you will continue on ''Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam''—''For the Greater Glory of God''—truly a ''man for others.''

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona

IMPRISONMENT OF NADIYA SAVCHENKO

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, it has been 2 years since Nadiya Savchenko, the first female military pilot in post-Soviet Ukraine and an Iraq war veteran, was abducted from Ukrainian territory by pro-Russian separatists and smuggled across the border to Russia where she faces false charges and illegal imprisonment.

She is accused by Russia of having directed artillery fire that killed two Russian state television journalists in Eastern Ukraine in June of 2014 and then illegally crossing into Russian territory without proper paperwork. This is despite clear evidence provided by her lawyers that she was captured by separatists before this incident occurred and then hauled across the border in handcuffs with a sack over her head.

Following her capture, Nadiya has reportedly endured interrogations, solitary confinement, and was subjected to a psychiatric evaluation at the infamous Russian Serbsky Institute, where Soviet authorities were once known to torture political dissidents. Further media reports suggest that she is gravely ill and near death.

There are international laws that govern treatment of prisoners of war, but Russia continues to deny it is fighting a war in Ukraine and is therefore treating Nadiya as a common criminal. While there are also international laws that govern the treatment of common criminals, Russia has shown as much regard for those laws as for Ukraine's sovereignty or the rights of Russians such as Boris Nemtsov.

This is a picture of Nadiya standing trial in a cage. From her prison cell in Russia, Nadiya said:

> If I am found guilty, I will not appeal. I want the entire democratic world to understand that Russia is a Third World country with a totalitarian regime and a petty tyrant for a dictator and it spits on international law and human rights.

In her last appearance in court, Ms. Savchenko said:

> The trial proves the guilt of Russian authorities; they are to blame for seizing Ukrainian lands, capturing Crimea and starting a war in the Donbass region. They are to blame for trying to establish—through their foul undeclared wars all over the world—a totalitarian regime dominated by Russia.

She ended her court appearance by saying:

> Russia will return me to Ukraine yet. Whether I am dead or alive, it will return me.

Nadiya's captivity represents just the latest example of Russia's brazen aggression and disregard for the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Last summer another brave Ukrainian and film director from Crimea, Oleg Sentsov, faced a similar fate. A Russian court sentenced Mr. Sentsov to 20 years in prison based on charges that he was planning a terrorist attack against Russian forces after the peninsula was annexed by Russia. Despite strong evidence that Mr. Sentsov was innocent and despite international condemnation of his case, he remains in a Russian prison serving out his 20-year sentence. As Mr. Sentsov said in remarks following his sentence: ''A court of occupiers can never be just.''

Nadiya is just one of President Putin's countless victims. Her show trial—a throwback to the Stalinist Soviet era—is intended not to establish innocence or guilt, but to punish dissent, evoke fear, and remind citizens of what happens to people who dare defy the former KGB officer, Vladimir Putin.

Her trial illustrates just how far President Putin is willing to go to humiliate Ukraine for its pursuit of freedom and punish Ukrainians for refusing to accept its illegal occupation. It is just one more way that Putin is trying to bully free peoples and free nations into submission. He is sending the message that anyone who dares to challenge him will end up in a cage just like her—or worse.

Putin's efforts are failing. The Ukrainian people have shown that they will not be intimidated, they will not

be silenced, and they will not give into fear. They have shown that they will continue to fight for a free and democratic future for Ukraine with or without the international support they need and deserve.

One of the more shameful chapters in American history will be the fact that we still refuse to give Ukrainians defensive weapons with which to defend themselves. This President has made a lot of grievous errors, but it is outrageous, as we watch Ukrainians slaughtered by Russian tanks, that we will not even give them the weapons to defend themselves.

The Ukrainian Government has urged Moscow to release Nadiya in accordance with the Minsk II agreement that provides for the release of all illegally held persons. International leaders have echoed this call, but her illegal imprisonment continues. It is time to move past meaningless condemnations and expressions of concern and respond to Putin's shameful and blatant breach of international law by sanctioning—I emphasize sanctioning—those responsible for the kidnapping and illegal, unjust imprisonment of Ms. Savchenko, as well as the officials involved in the fabrication of false charges against her.

A clear message must be sent to Moscow: Release Nadiya or face sanctions. Release her or face sanctions.

The United States has a critical role to play in the preservation of freedom and democracy throughout the world, and it is a role that we suppress at our own peril. I know this is not a popular cause in the United States right now, but nothing will relieve us of the responsibility to stand up for those whose fundamental human rights are being violated and to defend the values that America and our allies have sacrificed so much to preserve.

How we respond to each and every attempt by Putin to suppress democracy and freedom will have far-reaching repercussions. The United States and the entire international community must respond to this latest outrage in a way that demonstrates the inevitability of the values which Nadiya so clearly represents. Nadiya's fight—and that of all Ukrainians who rose up peacefully against tyranny in their quest for freedom—must also be the world's fight. We must continue to show Putin that he cannot halt the march to freedom and democracy. The Ukrainian people—and the Russian people, too—deserve no less.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUBA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, as the President prepares to go to Cuba, I rise in memory of all of those Cuban dissidents who have given their lives in the hope that Cuba one day would be free from the yoke of the Castro regime. It is that freedom I had hoped President Obama was referencing when he said:

> What I've said to the Cuban government is—if we're seeing more progress in the liberty and freedom and possibilities of ordinary Cubans, I'd love to use a visit as a way of highlighting that progress. . . . If we're going backwards, then there's not much reason for me to be there.

But that is obviously not the case, which is why the Boston Globe's headline on February 25 says it all: ''Obama Breaks Pledge, Will Visit Cuba Despite Worsening Human Rights.'' Instead of having the free world's leader honor Latin America's only dictatorship with a visit, he could have visited one of 150 countries that he has not visited, including several in Latin America that are democracies.

The President has negotiated a deal with the Castros—and I understand his desire to make this his legacy issue—but there is still a fundamental issue of freedom and democracy at stake that goes to the underlying atmosphere in Cuba and whether or not the Cuban people will still be repressed and still be imprisoned or will they benefit from the President's legacy or will it be the Castro regime that reaps those benefits?

Unless the Castros are compelled to change their dictatorship—the way they govern the island and the way they exploit its people—the answer to this won't be much different than the last 50-some-odd years. The Castro regime will be the beneficiary.

At the very least, the President's first stops should be meetings with internationally recognized dissidents: U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom winner Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet and the European Union's Sakharov prize recipients Guillermo Farinas and Rosa Maria Paya, in respect for her murdered father, Oswaldo Paya, who was leading the Varela Project, advocating for civil liberties, and collecting thousands of signatures petitioning the Castro regime for democratic change—as permitted, by the way, under the Cuban Constitution. So threatening was his peaceful petition drive that he was assassinated by Castro security agents.

The President should meet with Berta Soler at her home, in her neighborhood, with the Ladies in White, and with dissidents and democracy advocates in Havana. That should be the front-page photograph we see next week. Only then will the message that the United States will not give in or give up on our commitment to a free and democratic Cuba be clear to the world and to the Cuban people.

To leave a truly honorable mark in history would mean the President leaving Castro's cordoned-off tourist zone and seeking Berta Soler and her Ladies in White at their headquarters in the Lawton neighborhood of Havana, where poverty, Castro-style—not opportunity, not freedom, not democracy but poverty created by a Stalinist state—is the umbrella under which they live.

The President should witness their bravery, listen to their stories, feel their despair, see the fear under which they live, and stand up with them and for them. If he did, he could learn of the story of Aliuska Gomez, one of the Ladies in White, who was arrested this past Sunday for marching peacefully.

Basically, the Ladies in White dress in white as a form of a symbol. They march with a gladiolus to church every Sunday in protest for their sons and husbands who are arrested simply for their political dissent, and they are beaten savagely—savagely.

The President could learn of the story of Aliuska Gomez, one of the Ladies in White, who was arrested this past Sunday for marching peacefully. I am reading from an article in Diario de Cuba where she told her story:

> ''We were subjected to a lot of violence today,'' said Aliuska Gomez. ''Many of us were dragged and beaten,'' she added, pointing out that this has taken place only one week before President Obama's visit. Aliuska related how she was taken to a police station in Marianao where she was forcibly undressed by several uniformed officers in plain view of some males. . . . ''After they had taken away all of my belongings,'' she said, ''they told me to strip naked, and I refused, so they threw me down on the floor and took off all of my clothing, right in front of two men, and they dragged me completely naked into a jail cell.'' Aliuska was then handcuffed and thrown on the cell's floor naked and left alone.

Or how about the young Cuban dissident who met with Ben Rhodes and was arrested in Havana. This is from a report dated March 14:

> Yesterday the Castro regime arrested Carlos Amel Oliva, head of the youth wing of the Cuban Patriotic Union, a major dissident organization. He is being accused of antisocial behavior. On Friday, Amel Oliva had participated in a meeting in Miami with Ben Rhodes, President Obama's Deputy National Security Advisor. He returned to Havana on Sunday.

I guess that is what Raul Castro thinks and does to those who meet with the President's Deputy National Security Advisor.

Notwithstanding their true stories and the stories of thousands like them, the President first announced sweeping changes to America's strategic approach to the Castro regime in December 2014. In broad strokes, we learned of the forthcoming reestablishment of diplomatic relations—an exchange of symbols, with the American flag flying over a U.S. Embassy in Havana and the Cuban flag flying over a Cuban Embassy in Washington. We learned about

the process by which Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism would be lifted. We learned about the forthcoming transformative effects of a unilateral easing of sanctions to increase travel, commerce, and currency.

But for those of us who understand this regime, we cautioned for nuance and urged against those broad strokes. We asked that the administration at least require the Castros to reciprocate with certain concessions of their own, which would be as good for U.S. national interests as for the Cuban people and for U.S.-Cuba relations.

For example, before the President ever traveled to Burma—a country with notorious human rights abuses and with which this administration began to engage—the United States first demanded and received action by the Burmese to address their human rights record. To be sure, the Burmese Government agreed to meet nearly a dozen benchmarks—a dozen benchmarks—as a part of this action-for-action engagement, including granting the Red Cross access to prisons, establishing a U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights office, release of political prisoners, conclusion of a ceasefire in Kachin State, and ensuring international access to conflict areas.

We asked, as the President's Cuban policy unfolded, that they push for changes that put Cubans in control of their own future, their political process, economic opportunities, civil society, and governance. We didn't get a single one.

We asked for changes that would honor America's legacy as a champion for human rights. We didn't get those either.

We suggested changes that would ultimately bring Cuba into the community of nations, contributing to, rather than detracting from, the overall prosperity of the hemisphere. And there were none.

Most importantly, we asked that they remember that it is a lack of resources, not a change of heart, that slowed the Castros' adventurism and instability-inducing support for those who would pose threats to our national interests within the Western Hemisphere.

In essence, we were thinking strategically. Instead, we traded strategy for tactics. Leading Cuban human rights and democracy activists have criticized U.S. policies—those languishing inside of Cuba who risk their lives and their liberty every day.

The simple truth is that deals with the Devil require the Devil to deal. Opening channels of communications controlled by the regime means nothing unless we are going to communicate our values. It means nothing if we do not champion the material changes the Cuban people seek. It means nothing if we do not speak the language the Castros understand—that the Communist revolution has failed miserably and it is time to let the Cuban people decide their future.

The Castros know it, but it is the antiquated hallmark of the revolution and the iron-fisted rule that came from it that keeps them in power. We talk about being in the past. Well, that is in the past, but no one challenges that past. Until that power is truly challenged, we can expect to witness the further weakening of our leverage on behalf of democracy and human rights.

In the meantime, the regime is already moving forward, already breathing new life into its existing repressive state systems. Cubans are being beaten, arrested, and otherwise muzzled at higher rates—higher rates—than ever before. The Cuban Commission for Human Rights, which is within Cuba, has documented 1,141 political arrests by the Castro regime in Cuba during the short month of February 2016. In January 2016 the commission documented 1,447 political arrests. As such, these 2,588 political arrests in the first 2½ months of this year represent the highest tally to begin a year in decades. This is what happens when President Obama first announces he will not visit Cuba until there are tangible improvements in the respect for human rights, and then he crosses his own red lines—nearly 2,600 arrests in 2½ months, and these are only political arrests that have been thoroughly documented. Many more are suspected.

U.S. fugitives and members of foreign terrorist organizations, such as Joanne Chesimard, the convicted killer of New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster, or Charlie Hill, who killed New Mexico State Trooper Robert Rosenbloom, still enjoy safe harbor on the island. Not a penny of the $6 billion in outstanding claims by American citizens and businesses for properties confiscated by the Castros has been repaid.

Unrelenting censorship and oppression of Cuban journalists continues unscathed, and the Cuban path to liberty doesn't even include the U.S. Embassy.

So what do we learn? We learn that, despite the Obama administration's engagement with the Castro dictatorship and increased travel to the island, repression on the island is rising exponentially. Why? Because the Castro regime, one of the most astute observers of the American political system, is rushing to take advantage of the permissive environment created by the President's hunger for legacy and the relaxation of restrictions. But legacy is not more important than lives.

For years we have heard how an improvement in U.S.-Cuba relations, an easing of sanctions, and an increase in travel to the island would benefit the Cuban people—a benefit not realized despite the visits and investments of millions of Europeans, Canadians, Mexicans, and South Americans. There is not one iota of better life or greater democracy for the Cuban people. These assumptions are wrong. And since December 17, 2014, the President has engaged the regime, offering unilateral concessions that the Castros are more than happy to accept. If that is not enough for us to at least question our Cuba policy, we are now facing an unfolding Cuban migration crisis.

The United States is faced with the largest migration of Cuban immigrants since the rafters of 1994. The number of Cubans entering the United States in 2015 was nearly twice that of 2014—some 51,000—and tens of thousands more are desperately trying to make the journey via South and Central America. I ask: Why would Cubans flee if the promise of a better life in Cuba is just on the horizon? When President Obama took office, those numbers were less than 7,000 annually—51,000.

We hear that ''self-employment,'' such as it is in Cuba, is growing. But the number of ''self-employed'' workers in Cuba has actually decreased. The Cuban government today is licensing 10,000 fewer ''self-employed'' workers than it did in 2014. In contrast, Castro's military monopolies are expanding at record pace. Even the limited spaces in which ''self-employed'' workers previously operated are being squeezed as the Cuban military expands its control of the island's travel, retail, and financial sectors of the economy.

While speaking recently to a business gathering in Washington, here in the Nation's Capital, President Obama argued how he believes this new policy is ''creating the environment in which a generational change and transition will take place in [Cuba].'' But the key question is, A ''generational change and transition'' toward what and by whom?

Cuban democracy leader, Antonio Rodiles, has concisely expressed this concern. He said ''legitimizing the [Castro] regime is the path contrary to a transition.''

CNN has revealed that the Cuban delegation in the secret talks that began in mid-2013 with U.S. officials in Ottawa, Toronto, and Rome, and which led to the December 17 policy announcement, were headed by Colonel Alejandro Castro Espin. Colonel Castro Espin is the 49-year-old son of Cuban dictator Raul Castro.

In both face-to-face meetings between President Obama and Raul Castro this year—first at April's Summit of the Americas in Panama City and just recently at the United Nation's General Assembly in New York—Alejandro was seated, with a wide grin, next to his father. Alejandro holds the rank of colonel in Cuba's Ministry of the Interior, with his hand on the pulse and trigger of the island's intelligence services and repressive ordinances. It is no secret that Raul Castro is grooming Alejandro for a position of power.

Sadly, his role as interlocutor with the Obama administration seeks to further their goal of an intrafamily generational transition within the Castro clan, similar to the Assads in Syria and the Kims in North Korea. And we know how well those have worked out.

To give an idea of how Colonel Alejandro Castro views the United States, he has described its leaders as ''those who seek to subjugate humanity to satisfy their interests and hegemonic goals.'' This is who is being readied to be the next leader of Cuba, with whom we have been negotiating.

Of course, it also takes money to run a totalitarian dictatorship, which is why Raul Castro named his son-in-law, General Luis Alberto Rodriguez Lopez Callejas, as head of GAESA, which stands for Grupo de Administracion Empresarial S.A., or translated, Business Administrative Group.

GAESA is the holding company of Cuba's Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, Cuba's military. It is the dominant driving force of the island's economy. Established in the 1990s by Raul Castro, it controls tourism companies, ranging from the very profitable Gaviota S.A., which runs Cuba's hotels, restaurants, car rentals, and nightclubs, to TRD Caribe S.A., which runs the island's retail stores. GAESA controls virtually all economic transactions in Cuba.

According to Hotels Magazine, a leading industry publication, GAESA—through its subsidiaries—is by far the largest regional hotel conglomerate in Latin America. It controls more hotel rooms than the Walt Disney Company.

As McClatchy News explained a few years back:

> Tourists who sleep in some of Cuba's hotels, drive rental cars, fill up their gas tanks, and even those riding in taxis have something in common: They are contributing to the [Cuban] Revolutionary Armed Forces' bottom line.

In essence, Cuba's military and its repressive system.

GAESA became this business powerhouse, thanks to the millions of Canadians and European tourists that have and continue to visit Cuba each year. The Cuban military-owned tourism company, Gaviota Tourism Group S.A., averaged 12 percent growth in 2015 and expects to double its hotel business this year.

These tourists have done absolutely nothing to promote freedom and democracy in Cuba. To the contrary, they have directly financed a system of control and repression over the Cuban people, all while enjoying cigars by Cuban workers paid in worthless pesos and having a Cuba Libre, which is an oxymoron, on the beaches Varadero. Yet, despite the clear evidence, President Obama wants American tourists to now double GAESA's bonanza and, through GAESA, strengthen the regime.

An insightful report by Bloomberg Business also explained:

> [Raul's son-in-law, General Rodriguez] is the gatekeeper for most foreign investors, requiring them to do business with his organization if they wish to set up shop on the island. If and when the U.S. finally removes its half-century embargo on Cuba, it will be this man who decides which investors get the best deals.

Again, he is part of the Cuban military. So this is not about people to people. This is about us helping the very entities that help fund the Cuban military and security agencies. In other words, all of the talking points about how lifting the embargo and tourism restrictions would somehow benefit the Cuban people are empty and misleading rhetoric.

In addition, Internet ''connectivity ranking'' has dropped in Cuba. The International Telecommunication Union's ''Measuring the Information Society Report'' for 2015, the most reliable source of data and analysis on global access to information and communication, dropped Cuba's ranking to 129, down from 119. Cuba fares much worse than some of the world's most infamous suppressors, including Syria, Iran, China, and Venezuela—worse.

In Cuba, religious freedom violations have also increased. According to the London-based NGO, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, last year, 2,000 churches in Cuba were declared illegal and 100 were designated for demolition by the Castro regime. Altogether, they documented 2,300 separate violations of religious freedom in 2015, compared to 220 in 2014—2,300 versus 220. So religious oppression is on the rise. And if that is not enough, Castro reneged on the release of political prisoners and visits by international monitors. Most of the 53 political prisoners released in the months prior and after the President's December 2014 announcement have since been rearrested on multiple occasions. Five have been handed new long-term prison sentences. Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch noted in its new 2016 report that ''Cuba has yet to allow visits to the island by the International Committee of the Red Cross or by the United Nations human rights monitors, as stipulated in the December 2014 agreement with the United States.''

These were the conditions that prompted Congress, over the course of our long history with Cuba, to pass successive laws to build on—not detract from—Executive orders that created the embargo. So I stand with thousands of Cuba's civil society leaders, dissidents, journalists and everyday men and women who long for the day when the freedom we enjoy in our great country extends to theirs. As long as I have a voice, they will have an ally to speak truth to power against this dictatorship and against any effort to legitimize it or reward it.

We must realize the nature of the Castro regime will not be altered by capitulating on our demands for basic human and civil rights. If the United States is to give away its leverage, it should be in exchange for one thing, and one thing only: a true transition in Cuba.

Finally, as for the latest announcements from the administration, I stand against any rollback of the statutory provisions that codify Cuba sanctions. We learned this week that the administration has cleared the way for individual travel to Cuba outside the auspices of a group or organization, and that is tourism, plain and simple.

We learned this week that the administration has cleared the way for Cubans—athletes, artists, performers, and others—to earn salaries in the United States, which, in and of itself would be a good thing, except that, unfortunately, much if not all of those salaries will go back to the regime, as they must pay the regime most of what they make abroad.

We learned that Americans may purchase Cuban-origin products and services in third countries—cigars, alcohol, and basic products produced by a system of slave labor that funnels proceeds to one place: the regime's pockets.

When it comes to banking and financial services, we will now permit the U.S. financial system to facilitate the flow of these and other proceeds directly to the regime. The administration will allow the Cuban Government, which profits from the sale of intelligence—as when they had our Hellfire missile—to export Cuban-origin software to the United States. Never mind that the Cuban Government aggressively monitors the Internet activity of Cuban dissidents and sensors users on the island. And then we are going to permit direct shipping by Cuban vessels. These ''significant amendments'' to the Cuban Assets Control Regulations and the Export Administration Regulations, cornerstones of implementation of United States sanctions against the Castro regime announced on Tuesday, create new opportunities for abuse of permitted travel. They authorize trade and commerce with Castro monopolies and permit the regime to use U.S. dollars to conduct its business. They are unilateral concessions, requiring no changes from the Castro regime to the political and economic system under which the Castros exploit lives and labor of Cuban nationals.

In a meeting late last week, I warned officials at the Department of Treasury that these changes ''come up to the line and in some cases cross it,'' with respect to statutory authority. Their actions are inconsistent with existing statutes and incompatible with the intent of Congress as expressed through those statutes. I should know, as I was one of the authors of the Libertad Act when I served in the House of Representatives.

In my view, at the end of the day, this is a unilateral transfer of the little remaining leverage that the administration hadn't given away prior to this week's announcement. With these steps, I believe Commerce and Treasury have set the stage for legal action against the administration. Congress has authorized categories of travel to Cuba, but none of these categories were tourism or commerce for commerce's sake with the regime. The President has said his Cuba policy ''helps promote the people's independence from Cuban authorities,'' but it is clear that it does not. Yet, this week, in what would seem to contravene not only the letter but the spirit of the law, the administration will reportedly allow the regime to use U.S. dollars in international financial transactions and a U.S. hotel company to partner with a Cuban military conglomerate run by the Castro family.

Let's be clear. It is not the Cuban people who are eager and willing to shuffle dollars through BNP Paribas, INB Group, or HSBC Bank; only the regime is willing and eager to do so.

As for the reports that Starwood-Marriott is looking for an arrangement with the regime, with the blessing of the administration, it would be an agreement with a subsidiary of GAESA, the Cuban military conglomerate run by Raul Castro's son-in-law, General Luis Alberto Rodriguez Lopez-Callejas. So how does that help the Cuban people when you are working and helping the regime? It would be an agreement to manage a hotel for the Cuban military. Among those considered is Havana's swanky hotel Saratoga, which has been confiscated twice by the Castro regime—an agreement by which employees are also hired by the regime's state employment agency instead of directly by a company, in violation of international labor laws.

So I ask, how does allowing U.S. companies to do business with the regime, let alone the Castro family itself, ''promote the Cuban people's independence from the authorities,'' as the President has said?

This breathes new life into the Castro's repressive state systems, and that new life means one thing: The repressive system will continue without changes.

Next week, when we anticipate we will see a photograph of the President of the United States laughing and shaking hands with the only dictator in the Western Hemisphere, I will be thinking of Berta Soler of the Ladies in White and her fellow human rights and democracy advocates. She testified before Congress last year and said: ''Our demands are quite concrete; freedom for political prisoners, recognition of civil society, the elimination of criminal dispositions that penalize freedom of expression and association and the right of the Cuban people to choose their future through free, multiparty elections.'' It is not an overwhelming ask. What American would be willing to not have those basic fundamental freedoms?

What are we willing to do to impose on another country—to say: We will deal with you even though you repress your people and deny them those freedoms.

Those are the words of freedom Berta Soler spoke on her behalf and all of those who risk their lives and liberty every day inside of Cuba to create that possibility. That is the legacy we should work toward until the Cuban people are finally freed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, early this morning I got a telephone call from a White House staffer who told me that the President was going to announce his choice to fill the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court occasioned by the passing of Antonin Scalia. This morning I was invited to the Rose Garden to witness that ceremony, and I thought it was one of the President's best deliveries of a message to the American people about a critically important issue.

I applaud President Obama for his nomination of Chief Judge Merrick Garland to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. No one questions that Judge Garland is an outstanding attorney and has been an exceptional judge during his 19 years on the DC Circuit Court. No one questions his qualifications and experience to serve with distinction on the Supreme Court. I congratulate him, his wife Lynn, whom I just met, and his daughters, Becky and Jessie, on this nomination.

Judge Garland is a proud son of Illinois. He is the grandson of immigrants who fled anti-Semitic persecution. He was born in Chicago to parents who ran a small business and volunteered in their community. He graduated at the top of his class from Niles West High School, received his undergraduate and law degree from Harvard, and clerked for the legendary Judge Henry Friendly of the Second Circuit and Justice William Brennan of the U.S. Supreme Court. He has an incredible legal resume. He served in the Justice Department and worked in private practice before he was nominated to the DC Circuit Court.

Today President Obama told the story of how Merrick Garland in the U.S. Department of Justice was sent down after the Oklahoma City bombing to handle the prosecution and how he carefully, deftly, and professionally handled that prosecution in a way that it would stick and it wouldn't be overturned because of legal mistakes. He personally felt an attachment and obligation to the victims and their families, and he carried with him the memorial service bulletin that was given out with the names of each one of the victims. He brought it with him to the courtroom each day. He is that kind of person—a prosecutor but with empathy to the victims and a determination to make sure he followed the law. He did.

President Obama has fulfilled his constitutional responsibility, and now the Senate must do the same. Article II, section 2, of the Constitution provides the requirement that the President shall appoint a nominee to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, and the President did that today.

That same section of the Constitution goes on to say that it is the responsibility of the Senate—this Senate—to advise and consent to that nominee. There is no requirement that we approve the President's nominee. He wants us to. I hope we do. But what it says is we have a responsibility under the Constitution—the same Constitution we swore to uphold and defend.

So the President is using his authority and constitutional responsibility by naming Merrick Garland. Now what will happen? The Republican leadership in the Senate has said: End of story; we are not going to do anything. Some Senators have gone so far as to say they will not even meet with this man, will not even meet with the President's nominee for the Supreme Court. In the history of the United States of America, there has never—underline ''never''—been a situation where the President sent a nominee to the Supreme Court to the Senate and there was not a hearing. Never. And now the Republican majority here has said: Ignore history. Ignore the Constitution. We are not going to let this President fill this vacancy.

Their argument is this: Let the American people decide. There is an election coming. It will be in November. Let them pick a President, who will then choose that Supreme Court nominee.

Well, that is an interesting approach. It might make some sense had President Barack Obama been reelected in 2012 to a term of 3 years and 2 months. He was reelected to a 4-year term by a 5 million-vote plurality. He is the President. And to argue that in his last year in office, he should have no authority or power in the Constitution to exercise what is required of him is to ignore the obvious.

By what right do we, in the closing year of a Senator's term, vote on the floor of the Senate if we are disqualified from making important decisions in our last year in office in each term? It is a ludicrous position, a ridiculous position. It is a position which I find offensive.

This system of government gives to the American people the last word about who the President will be. There

have been times when I have applauded that decision and times when I didn't. But if you are respectful of this Constitution and this government, then you follow the will of the people of this great Nation, and they made a decision by a plurality of 5 million votes that Barack Obama would have this power for 4 years, until January of 2017. So the President has sent this name, and now it is up to the Senate.

The Judiciary Committee plays an important role in this decision, and I am honored to serve on it. In 2001, then-chairman of the committee PATRICK LEAHY, Democrat of Vermont, joined with Ranking Republican Member ORRIN HATCH of Utah and they sent a letter to the Senate about this issue of filling Supreme Court vacancies—a bipartisan letter, LEAHY and HATCH. Here is what it said: We both recognize and have every intention of following the practices and precedents of the committee and the Senate when considering Supreme Court nominees.

We should hold a hearing without delay. If this letter was the case 15 years ago and Senator HATCH, who was then the ranking Republican, joined with Senator LEAHY, the Democratic chairman, what has changed? The only thing that has changed is we have a President named Barack Obama.

You see, in 1987 there was a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Ronald Reagan was President. In 1988 he sent the name Anthony Kennedy to this Chamber to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. The Senate at that time was under the control of the Democrats. Ronald Reagan, a Republican President, sent his nominee to the Democratic Senate, and what happened? Did they announce: We are not going to fill this; we will wait until after the election. No, no. The Democratic-controlled Senate held a hearing for Anthony Kennedy, brought him up for a vote, and passed him unanimously to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Now look at what we are facing—Republican colleagues who refuse to do their job under the Constitution. For what reason? Obviously for political reasons.

My Republican colleagues say they are standing behind a principle that the President should not get to name the Supreme Court Justice in his final year. That principle has no history, no precedent, and is virtually impossible to defend.

I would suggest a different principle to my Republican colleagues. Since Judge Merrick Garland is unquestionably qualified and you clearly would vote to confirm him under the next President, why wait? Why not vote to confirm him under this President? Failing to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court means there will be over 1 year from the death of Justice Antonin Scalia until a successor is chosen. The only time in history when the Senate left a vacancy on the Supreme Court for that period of time—1 year or more—was during the Civil War when we were literally at war with one another in the United States. If that is the only time that ever happened, there is no excuse for us to let it happen again at this moment in our history.

To my friends on the Republican side of the aisle, do your job. Fill this vacancy. Meet your constitutional responsibility.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. President, on Friday the Department of Education released its latest proposals for new regulations on borrower relief when a school engages in unfair, deceptive, or abusive conduct. The proposals will be debated this week at the third negotiated rulemaking session as part of the formal rulemaking process.

I want to speak about one of the issues addressed in the latest proposal from the Department of Education—the use of mandatory arbitration in enrollment contracts by institutions of higher education. These clauses, which for-profit colleges and universities often bury in fine print, prevent students from bringing suit against a school in court as an individual and often as part of a class action. It means, for example, that if a student applying to a school is deceived and misled by that school as to the degree they will receive or the job they will qualify for, they can't bring a legal action in court against the school. Instead, the student is forced into a secret proceeding where the deck is stacked against him. It allows schools to avoid accountability for their misconduct and prevents misconduct from coming to the attention of Federal regulators.

While nearly unheard of in not-for-profit institutions—think about public universities and private, not-for-profit colleges—mandatory arbitration has now become virtually standard in for-profit colleges and is used by all of the majors, such as the University of Phoenix, ITT Tech, and DeVry University, just to name a few. It was also used by Corinthian. Corinthian, another for-profit college, made sure that if their students signed up for a contract with the school, they signed this arbitration clause which eliminated the student's day in court.

I was pleased when the Department, in its latest proposal for current rulemaking, included an option for banning the use of mandatory arbitration by all institutions receiving Federal title IV dollars. I thank the Department for including it in its proposal.

I also want to take a moment to discuss ITT Tech. ITT Tech is another for-profit college that is under scrutiny by Federal and State regulators. Last year the Department of Education found that the company, ITT, failed to meet its fiduciary duty to the Department and failed to meet the standards of administrative capability required of institutions under title IV, and they placed restrictions on ITT. The Department then required ITT Tech to pay nearly $80 million to be kept in escrow to guard against the potential collapse of this for-profit school. The company is under investigation by 18 State attorneys general related to deceptive marketing. This is deceptive marketing of college students who are being misled into signing expensive tuition contracts with this school.

The New Mexico attorney general found that ITT Tech placed students into loans without the knowledge of the students, falsely stated the number of credits a student had to take in order to push them into more debt, failed to issue refunds of tuition and fees in compliance with Federal law, and a variety of other deceptive practices. If that wasn't enough, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is also suing the company for predatory lending.

This is the exploitation of college students. This is piling up debt.

We have to frequently remind ourselves of the basics. Ten percent of the students in college are in for-profit colleges and universities. Among those are the University of Phoenix, DeVry, Kaplan, and ITT Tech. Out of that 10 percent, 40 percent of all student loan defaults are from students in the for-profit colleges and universities.

How is it that 10 percent of the students in for-profit schools account for 40 percent of all student loan defaults?

First, the students go too deep in debt. These for-profit schools are way too expensive. Second, when the students can't keep up with the debt they are accumulating, they drop out, and when they drop out, it is the worst of both worlds. They don't even have a diploma from the for-profit school, and they still have a debt. Third, if they hang around long enough and finish and get a diploma from these for-profit schools, they find out many times they are worthless. Forty percent of the loan defaults are from students who attended for-profit colleges and universities. These schools are coercing students into high-cost loans with interest rates as high as 16 percent and more, and they misrepresent future job prospects to them.

Finally, the Securities and Exchange Commission is suing the company, ITT, and two of its executives, Kevin Modany, its CEO, and Daniel Fitzpatrick, its CFO, personally for concealing the poor performance of private institutional student loans from investors.

Behind all of this scrutiny by Federal and State regulators are students who have been harmed irreparably. According to a recent Brookings study, ITT Tech students cumulatively owe more than $4.6 billion in Federal student loans.

How much is being paid back on this cumulative debt? According to the study, negative 1 percent of the balance has been repaid in 2014. What does it mean? How can it be a negative number? Simple—the interest on this accumulative debt is occurring faster than it can be paid off by the students. Individual students often have no chance of paying back this personal debt when they have taken out a loan and end up with a worthless degree from ITT Tech.

What responsibility do we have as a government when it comes to these schools that are deceiving students, dragging them into debt, and then watching as they default? We have a major responsibility. For-profit colleges and universities are the most heavily subsidized private businesses in America today. We have all heard the term ''crony capitalism.'' It couldn't apply more aptly to for-profit colleges and universities. Most of their revenues don't come from students and families—only indirectly. Most of their revenue comes through the Federal Treasury in the form of government loans that end up in the pockets of the owners of these for-profit colleges and universities.

More than half the students who left ITT in 2009 are in default on their student loans 5 years later—half.

One former student of ITT Tech is Marcus Willis from Illinois. He was aggressively recruited by ITT Tech with multiple phone calls each day. He finally signed up for classes. He graduated in 2003 from ITT Tech and spent months unable to find a job. When talking about his debt, Marcus said:

It's too much to even keep track of. I will never, ever be able to pay it back.

He said that he ''wouldn't wish ITT Tech on his worst enemy.''

Despite all the lawsuits, the scandal, and students like Marcus, January was a big month for ITT Tech executives Kevin Modany and Daniel Fitzpatrick. They both got big bonus checks. Modany received $515,000 and Fitzpatrick received $112,000. They can expect more. In 2014, Mr. Modany was paid more than $3 million. These are the same two who the SEC says violated numerous Federal securities laws in a fraudulent scheme to hide information from investors. But ITT Tech's board looks the other way. Instead of penalizing or dismissing them, they give them a bonus. ITT Tech investors have a right to be outraged.

Current and former ITT Tech students are also outraged. The Federal taxpayers should be outraged too. You see, ITT Tech receives 80 percent of its revenue from Federal student aid funds. Nearly $1 billion a year comes from the Federal Treasury, and even more than that when you count the money they take in from VA, GI bills, and the Department of Defense tuition assistance funding.

Recently, I sent a letter to ITT Tech's accreditor, the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools, asking them what steps they were going to take to respond to this company's misconduct and shaky financial situation. They responded last week that they have required ITT Tech to submit teach-out plans to ensure that students can continue their education at other institutions should the company fail. Incidentally, the other institutions are probably going to be more for-profit schools. So they transfer the kids from one failing for-profit to another questionable for-profit college.

They also told me that they will assess ITT Tech's financial stability, education quality, and program integrity when they get together in April.

I encourage the council which accredited Corinthian, which is now out of business, to make sure they take a hard look at ITT Tech. The writing is on the wall. There are reports that the University of Akron may be interested in buying this questionable college. I will be watching this development carefully to ensure that any potential transaction is in the best interest of students, their families, and taxpayers.

MENTAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. President, mental health conditions affect one out of five American adults. Yet this disease continues to be stigmatized, undertreated, and reduced to second-class status when it comes to certain health care benefits. Just like any other physical health disease, mental health conditions require a dedicated treatment plan and support for full recovery.

I still remember years ago, when Paul Wellstone, who used to sit right back there, and Pete Domenici, who sat over there, were in the Senate. Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, was a Democrat, and Pete Domenici of New Mexico was a Republican—what an unlikely pair. They came together because each of them had family experiences with mental health. What they tried to do—and successfully did—was to include in all of our health insurance plans coverage for mental health counseling as well as substance abuse treatment. It became standard. When we passed ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, it was built into health insurance policies. I have heard Members stand here and say: I am getting rid of ObamaCare. We are going to vote against it and make that go away. When they say that, we need to ask them: Will the coverage for mental health conditions go away too? How about the coverage for substance abuse treatment, will that coverage go away too?

This change made a big difference. It was a huge step in the right direction to expand access to mental counseling. We have to further eliminate barriers to treatment.

Last week, the Senate passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, authorizing several important programs to help people deal with mental health and substance abuse issues. I supported it because it was a step in the right direction. We know that approximately 44 million Americans experience some sort of brain health or mental illness issue during the year, and millions don't receive treatment or support. This need for mental health services is especially dire with one group of Americans.

How often in your life experience have you noticed a young man or woman go off to college and for the first time ever manifest some serious mental health issues? I have seen it with frequency, and I know that many schools struggle with it.

Studies have shown that one-half of all chronic mental illness begins by age 14 and three-fourths by age 24. College students can face stress in new academic surroundings and new social environments. Many of them are away from home for the first time, and mental health concerns start to manifest. Despite this, colleges and universities have limited resources to deal with it. The ratio of counselors to students far exceeds recommended levels, preventing colleges and universities from identifying the most at-risk students.

Right now, we are seeing a huge disparity between reported mental health needs and services being provided. In one nationwide study, 57 percent of students reported having felt overwhelming anxiety, 35 percent felt so depressed it was difficult to function, and 48 percent felt hopeless. Now, I remember some bad nights and bad mornings when facing a tough test, but we are talking about young people who have gone beyond that. They are facing some serious personal challenges.

Only 10 percent of enrolled students seek any kind of counseling. This means that too many are slipping through the cracks and too many are not receiving treatment for mental illness. This can have tragic results.

While millions of Americans suffer from serious mental illness, a very small statistical group engages in violence against themselves or others. We have examples of what happens when someone dealing with mental illness becomes violent. There was a horrific tragedy in 2008 on the campus of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. Six people died in a school shooting as a result of someone suffering from mental illness. Their families were changed forever, and so was the campus.

Not all mental health emergencies grab national headlines. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Americans aged 15 to 34. We can't ignore the silent suffering of millions of Americans, including many young people. That is why I have joined with Senator SUSAN COLLINS, a Republican of Maine, and Senator MICHAEL BENNET, a Democrat of Colorado, to introduce bipartisan legislation to improve

mental health services on college campuses, expanding outreach and counseling and tackling the mental health illness stigma. I am happy to partner with Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY of Illinois in introducing this legislation.

Our bill, the Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act, will support colleges and universities by giving them resources to better support the mental health needs of their students. It establishes a grant program to provide direct mental health services and outreach. Our bill will also increase awareness and treatment by promoting peer support training and engagement with campus groups. It launches a national education campaign to reduce the stigma, encourage identification of risk, and enhance the conversation about mental health and seeking help.

This bill is sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the American Psychology Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Chicago, and the American College Health Association, among others.

This morning this legislation was adopted by a voice vote as an amendment to the Cassidy-Murphy Mental Health Reform Act in the HELP Committee.

I thank Senators COLLINS and BENNET for their efforts to advance the bill. I also thank Senators CASSIDY, MURPHY, MURRAY, and ALEXANDER for working with us to ensure this important provision was included in the larger bill.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this bipartisan measure. I also know there is a lot of interest in addressing barriers to treatment in Medicaid, known as the IMD exclusion, which is under the Finance Committee's jurisdiction. I will continue to push a bill that I cosponsored with Senator KING of Maine, the Medicaid Care Act, which expands access to treatment and coverage.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE NIGERIAN MILITARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, nearly a year ago when Muhammadu Buhari became the first Nigerian to defeat a sitting President through the ballot box, I greeted the news with cautious optimism. For the most part, his message was and remains one that encourages greater cooperation between the United States and Nigeria to defeat Boko Haram and chart a brighter course for Africa's most populous nation.

Recent attacks by Boko Haram have served as a sobering reminder of the challenges Nigeria continues to face, and I have supported every initiative by the Obama administration to counter this scourge. Through my role as ranking member on the Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, I have also supported hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid for Nigeria annually, particularly for public health activities.

But words and money only go so far. While President Buhari has taken positive steps to combat corruption and his government has shown more interest than his predecessor in addressing the development challenges in the north, reports of human rights abuses by the Nigerian military continue to undermine the government's reputation and effectiveness. Unfortunately, this is nothing new. And although President Buhari has taken some initial steps to reform the military, far more needs to be done when it comes to accountability for such crimes.

I want to highlight an incident which, although tragic, provides an important opportunity for President Buhari to begin to reverse the long history of impunity within Nigeria's security forces. According to credible reports, on December 12, 2015, a convoy that was transporting Nigeria's chief of army staff was unable to bypass a gathering orchestrated by the Islamic Movement of Nigeria in Zaria, and the ensuing clashes resulted in as many as 300 civilians killed and many others detained. According to information I have received, many of the bodies were quickly buried by soldiers without the permission of family members, making it difficult to determine the death toll, but also making it hard for victims' families to know who had been killed and who had been taken into custody. The Kaduna State government subsequently established a judicial commission of inquiry to investigate the incident, a positive first step, and it is expected to complete its work sometime this month.

Serious questions, however, have been raised about the impartiality of the commission. While I understand that the inquiry is being conducted at the state level, it has national implications. The fact that President Buhari has said little about this situation—noting only that it is ''a military affair''—is worrisome given the potential for wide-ranging implications and the commitments he made during his inaugural speech to ensure discipline for ''human rights violators in the armed forces.''

I hope the Buhari administration fully supports the Kaduna State government judicial commission of inquiry and takes whatever steps are necessary to ensure it fulfills its responsibilities. The risks are great if the commission is deemed not to have been impartial and thorough in its review and if the findings are not publicly released and acted on, as appropriate. At the very least, a significant opportunity will have been missed to demonstrate that the Government of Nigeria values and defends the rule of law, is committed to transparency, and seeks to make real progress on issues of justice and accountability.

While this is an issue that Nigeria must tackle, I stand ready to support any assistance the United States can provide to help President Buhari strengthen Nigerian institutions of justice and combat impunity.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I want to congratulate the board of trustees, president and CEO William Bell, and the team at Casey Family Programs as this organization celebrates its 50th anniversary this month. Casey Family Programs is the Nation's largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for children and families across America. Its goal is to influence long-lasting improvements in the safety and success of children, families, and the communities where they live. I am also proud to say that Casey Family Programs is based in Seattle, WA.

March 15 is Casey's founders day. It is a time for the leaders to reflect on the foundation's creator, history, and its mission.

Jim Casey, the founder of United Parcel Service, saw a critical need 50 years ago to ensure that our Nation's most vulnerable children had safe and stable families who would provide the opportunities and support needed to succeed in life. As the eldest child when his father passed away, Jim felt responsible for taking care of his mother and three siblings at the young age of 14. From a fledgling bicycle messenger service that he started in 1907, he steadily grew his company into the world's largest delivery and logistics company United Parcel Services, UPS, in 1919.

Jim Casey said in 1947, ''. . . all of us, if we are to accomplish anything worthwhile, will do it largely through

the help and cooperation of the people work with.'' This sentiment led Jim Casey to make a generous donation to create several foundations, including creation of Casey Family Programs in 1966 to provide direct services to children and families.

Over the next 50 years, Casey Family Programs has grown to work with all 50 States and with Native American tribes. Although the foundation started with a specific focus on providing quality foster care, after considerable experience in direct services, Casey Family Programs recognized that it could have greater impact on families and children by working to support long-lasting improvements across entire child welfare systems and jurisdictions. Today the foundation provides strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research and evaluation at no cost to all 50 States, as well as county and tribal child welfare jurisdictions across the Nation.

From 2009 to 2015, Casey Family Programs will have invested $45 million in Washington. It has supported the work of the child welfare system, courts, tribes, policymakers, and other organizations to build communities of hope that safely reduce the need for foster care and support strong, lifelong families for all children. Washington State has two Casey field offices serving children and families in Seattle and Yakima.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Finance, which has oversight over the Federal foster care funding programs, I value the education and research provided by Casey Family Programs. I was proud to support the Child and Family Services and Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011, which renewed the ability of up to 30 States to seek Federal waivers to explore better ways to service children and families in the child welfare system. Since passage of the law, Casey Family Programs has partnered with interested States to provide information, support, and research on ways to support States that sought waivers.

Washington State is one of the waiver States, and the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe in Washington is the only tribe in our country with a Federal waiver. Casey Family Programs is offering support, data, and regular meetings to help the waiver States implement their waivers and to provide information on the progress of the waivers. This information will be valuable in my oversight work on Federal child welfare policy.

Jim Casey had a vision to help children and families, and the leadership of Casey Family Programs today is following his mission with a nationwide strategy to safely reduce the number of youth in foster care and to invest to build communities of hope. I want to congratulate the foundation for 50 years of service, and I look forward to learning from Casey's reports and leaders to promote further progress in Washington State and across the country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROTARY CLUB OF FRESNO

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 100th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Fresno, an organization dedicated to public service in Central California.

On March 1, 1916, Fresno Rotary became the ninth chartered Rotary in the State of California. The Rotary's first philanthropic project—planting 1,000 olive trees along the Golden State Highway—marked the start of a century of public engagement and community service. Since then, the spirit of Fresno Rotary has left an unforgettable mark on some of the community's most iconic local landmarks and organizations, including the Old Fresno Water Tower, Storyland and Playland at Roeding Park, the Boys & Girls Club, the Salvation Army, and numerous schools and hospitals.

The mission of Fresno Rotary goes far beyond the San Joaquin Valley. Over the years, the club has delivered thousands of wheelchairs and water treatment devices to those in need in developing countries and helped provide medical service to more than 100,000 residents living in a rural Mexican village.

A hundred years after its founding, the Rotary Club of Fresno remains a testament to the vision, commitment, and contributions of generations of service-minded Fresno citizens who want to make a positive difference in the world. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the members and friends of Fresno Rotary for their dedicated service, and I am pleased to join in honoring this special anniversary.●

REMEMBERING JERRY ENOMOTO

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Jerry Enomoto, a devoted husband and beloved friend who passed away on January 17, 2016, at the age of 89.

Jerry Enomoto was born and raised in San Francisco. In 1942, Jerry and his family were forcibly relocated to the Tule Lake Incarceration Camp as part of Executive Order 9066, one of the darkest chapters in our Nation's history. Despite being uprooted from Lowell College Preparatory High School, Jerry continued his studies and graduated as the valedictorian of his class while still held at Tule Lake. Upon release, he proudly served in the U.S. Army and subsequently earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of California, Berkeley.

Jerry dedicated his career to public service, serving as the first Asian Pacific American prison warden and the first Asian Pacific American to lead the California Department of Corrections. In 1994, Jerry broke racial barriers yet again by becoming the first Asian Pacific American appointed as a United States marshal.

Outside of work, Jerry was active in several civil rights organizations, twice serving as the national president of the Japanese American Citizens League, JACL. In 1992, JACL presented Jerry with their highest award, Japanese American of the Biennium, recognizing his years of advocacy and leadership. Jerry and his wife, Dorothy, always spoke out against injustice, and in 1999, they co-founded an annual dinner to promote civil rights and diversity in response to a series of hate crimes in their Sacramento community. Now in its 17th year, their annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration Dinner has become a highlight on the calendar for those who are committed to making Sacramento a more equal, inclusive, and diverse community.

Jerry was a true civic leader who lived a life of service and patriotism despite the prejudice he experienced in his own childhood. His immense contributions to the State of California will never be forgotten, and I send my deepest condolences to his wife, Dorothy, and their loved ones.●

REMEMBERING SYLVIA McLAUGHLIN

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Sylvia McLaughlin, an ardent environmental activist; a caring and involved community member; a loving wife; and a proud mother and grandmother who passed away on January 19, 2016.

Sylvia McLaughlin was born in Denver, CO, on December 24, 1916. Inspired by the surrounding Rocky Mountains, Sylvia was drawn to nature from an early age and participated in many outdoor sports, including skiing and mountain climbing. After receiving a bachelor's degree in French from Vassar College in 1939, she married Donald McLaughlin, and the couple settled in Berkeley, CA, where she became engaged in the growing environmental movement.

In response to the city of Berkeley's plan to build on 2,000 acres of the Bay's shoreline, Sylvia co-founded the Save San Francisco Bay Association in 1961, mobilizing thousands of residents in opposition to the Berkeley proposal. Their efforts succeeded, and Save the Bay subsequently championed a 1965 State law designating the San Francisco Bay as a State-protected resource and establishing the Nation's first

coastal-zone management agency, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, BCDC. These efforts prevented further unregulated shoreline development, helped preserve the health of the remarkable bay estuary as vital habitat for local wildlife, increased public access along the shoreline, and helped set the stage for later bay and wetland restoration projects that protect this precious ecosystem.

In addition to her pioneering work with Save the Bay, Sylvia remained an environmental activist throughout her life. She served as a board member for organizations, including the National Audubon Society, Citizens for East Shore Parks, Save the Redwoods League, the Trust for Public Lands, Greenbelt Alliance, and East Bay Conservation Corps.

For more than half a century, Sylvia worked tirelessly to preserve the natural resources of the Bay Area and all those who enjoy the beautiful shoreline of San Francisco Bay owe her an enormous debt of gratitude. I send my deepest condolences to her children Jeanie Shaterian and George McLaughlin; her stepson, Donald McLaughlin, Jr.; and her many grandchildren.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO TAKE ADDITIONAL STEPS WITH RESPECT TO THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13466 OF JUNE 26, 2008 WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA—PM 45

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') with respect to North Korea. The order takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, expanded in scope in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010, relied upon for additional steps in Executive Order 13570 of April 18, 2011, and further expanded in scope in Executive Order 13687 of January 2, 2015. The order also facilitates implementation of certain provisions of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (Public Law 114–122), which I signed on February 18, 2016, and ensures the implementation of certain provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2270 of March 2, 2016.

In 2008, upon terminating the exercise of certain authorities under the Trading With the Enemy Act (TWEA) with respect to North Korea, the President issued Executive Order 13466 and declared a national emergency pursuant to IEEPA to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula. Executive Order 13466 continued certain restrictions on North Korea and North Korean nationals that had been in place under TWEA.

In 2010, I issued Executive Order 13551. In that order, I determined that the Government of North Korea's continued provocative actions destabilized the Korean peninsula and imperiled U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region and warranted the imposition of additional sanctions, and I expanded the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466. In Executive Order 13551, I ordered blocked the property and interests in property of three North Korean entities and one individual listed in the Annex to that order and provided criteria under which the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate additional persons whose property and interests in property shall be blocked.

In 2011, I issued Executive Order 13570 to further address the national emergency with respect to North Korea and to strengthen the implementation of UNSCRs 1718 and 1874. That Executive Order prohibited the direct or indirect importation of goods, services, and technology from North Korea.

In 2015, I issued Executive Order 13687, in which I determined that the provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea constitute a continuing threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and further expanded the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466. In Executive Order 13687 I provided additional criteria under which the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate additional persons whose property and interests in property shall be blocked.

I have now determined that the Government of North Korea's continuing pursuit of its nuclear and missile programs, as evidenced most recently by its February 7, 2016, launch using ballistic missile technology and its January 6, 2016, nuclear test in violation of its obligations pursuant to numerous UNSCRs and in contravention of its commitments under the September 19, 2005, Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks, increasingly imperils the United States and its allies. The order addresses those actions and takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008. The order also facilitates implementation of certain provisions of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (Public Law 114–122), which I signed on February 18, 2016, and ensures the implementation of certain provisions of UNSCR 2270 of March 2, 2016.

The order is not targeted at the people of North Korea, but rather is aimed at the Government of North Korea and its activities that threaten the United States and others. It blocks the property and interests in property of the Government of North Korea and the Workers' Party of Korea and provides additional criteria for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to operate in such industries in the North Korean economy as may be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, such as transportation, mining, energy, or financial services;
- to have sold, supplied, transferred, or purchased, directly or indirectly, to or from North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea, metal, graphite, coal, or software, where any revenue or goods received may benefit the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea, including North Korea's nuclear or ballistic missile programs;
- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for an abuse or violation of human rights by the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of either such entity;
- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for the exportation of workers from North Korea, including exportation to generate revenue for the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have engaged in significant activities undermining cybersecurity

through the use of computer networks or systems against targets outside of North Korea on behalf of the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;

- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for censorship by the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or
- to have attempted to engage in any of the activities described above.

In addition, the order prohibits:

- the exportation of goods, services, and technology to North Korea;
- new investment in North Korea; and
- the approval, financing, facilitation, or guarantee of such exports and investments.

Finally, the order suspends entry into the United States of any alien determined to meet one or more of the above criteria.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All executive agencies are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 15, 2016*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2081. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam.

H.R. 3447. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 3797. An act to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3797. An act to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2686. A bill to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act.

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2081. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam.

H.R. 3447. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4696. A communication from the Acting Director of the Legislative Affairs Division, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Conservation Stewardship Program'' (RIN0578–AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4697. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Mark I. Fox, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4698. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additions to the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AG82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4699. A communication from the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, transmitting, pursuant to law, the October 2015 Quarterly Report to Congress of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4700. A communication from the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, transmitting, pursuant to law, the January 2016 Quarterly Report to Congress of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4701. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''OMB Sequestration Preview Report to the President and Congress for Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committees on the Budget; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4702. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Final Report to Congress on the Community First Choice State Plan Benefit''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4703. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Guidance and Transition Relief'' (Notice 2016–22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4704. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program Eleventh Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4705. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2016–0350); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4706. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2016–0352); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4707. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2016–0351); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4708. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on mining activities as required by the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4709. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''New Animal Drugs for Use in Animal Feeds; Removal of Obsolete and Redundant Regulations'' (Docket No. FDA–2003–N–0446) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4710. A communication from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4711. A communication from the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Performance Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4712. A communication from the Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2015 Performance and Accountability Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4713. A communication from the Executive Director, Mississippi River Commission, Department of the Army, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Report for calendar year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4714. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Rights-of-Way on Indian Land'' (RIN1076–AF20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–4715. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Office of Refugee Resettlement: Annual Report to Congress, FY 2014''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4716. A communication from the Supervisory Regulations Specialist, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Improving and Expanding Training Opportunities for F–1 Nonimmigrant Students with STEM Degrees and Cap-Gap Relief for All Eligible F–1 Students'' (RIN1653–AA72) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4717. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist (Executive Resources), Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Counsel, Small Business Administration, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–4718. A communication from the Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Vet Centers'' (RIN2900–AP21) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–4719. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Veterans Transportation Service'' (RIN2900–AO92) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–4720. A communication from the Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicants for VA Memorialization Benefits'' (RIN2900–AO95) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–4721. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of the Loess Hills Viticultural Area'' (RIN1513–AC20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4722. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of the Willamette Valley Viticultural Area'' (RIN1513–AC21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4723. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Witt-Penn Bridge Construction, Hackensack River; Jersey City, NJ'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–1008)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4724. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Delaware River; Marcus Hook, PA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0998)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation .

EC–4725. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Great Egg Harbor Bay; Somers Point, NJ'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1031)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4726. A communication from the Acting Division Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of Section 224 of the Act A National Broadband Plan for Our Future'' ((RIN3060–AJ64) (FCC 15–151)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 14, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4727. A communication from the Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Communications, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Amtrak's Executive Level 1 salary for 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4728. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Margin and Capital Requirements for Covered Swap Entities'' (RIN3064–AE21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4729. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''OMB Report to the Congress on the Joint Committee Reductions for Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committees on the Budget; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4730. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report related to the Colorado River System Reservoirs for 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4731. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Transmission Operations Reliability Standards and Interconnection Reliability Operations and Coordination Reliability Standards'' (Docket No. RM15–16–000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4732. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Third-Party Provision of Primary Frequency Response Service'' ((RIN1902–AE96) (Docket No. RM15–2–000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4733. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Emergency Operations Reliability Standards; Revisions to Undervoltage Load Shedding Reliability Standards; Revisions to the Definition of 'Remedial Action Scheme' and Related Reliability Standards'' ((RIN1902–AF06) (Docket Nos. RM15–7–000, RM15–12–000, and RM15–13–000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4734. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revised Critical Infrastructure Protection Reliability Standards'' (Docket No. RM15–14–000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4735. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Clean Watersheds Needs Survey 2012 Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4736. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Evaluation of the Medicare Patient Intravenous Immunoglobulin Demonstration Project: Interim Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4737. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, nine (9) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of State, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4738. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management

Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4739. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4740. A communication from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) received in the office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4741. A communication from the Director of the Office of Financial Reporting and Policy, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''FY 2015 Agency Financial Report''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4742. A communication from the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4743. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to financial integrity for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4744. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4745. A communication from the Board Members of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4746. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4747. A joint communication from the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Thefts, Losses, or Releases of Select Agents and Toxins for Calendar Year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4748. A communication from the Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA–3375-EM in the State of Michigan having exceeded the $5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4749. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States'' for the September 17, 2015, session and September 9, 2015, session; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4750. A communication from the Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to 47 CFR Part 301 to Implement Certain Provisions of the Spectrum Pipeline Act'' (RIN0660–AA31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4751. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''NASA Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: NASA Capitalization Threshold'' (RIN2700–AE23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–135. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to enact legislation to repeal the health insurance tax; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL 2001

Whereas, sections 9010 and 10905 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111–148) and section 1406 of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (P.L. 111–152) impose an unprecedented new tax on health insurance that numerous policy experts agree will be passed on to individuals, working families, small employers and seniors, contradicting a primary goal of health reform by making care more expensive; and

Whereas, the health insurance tax will cause premiums on the individual market to rise an average of $2,150 for individuals and $5,080 for families nationally over a ten-year period, will increase premiums in Arizona by an average of $1,964 over ten years and will increase premiums for families in Arizona over $3,958 over ten years; and

Whereas, the health insurance tax will impact small employers over the next ten years by reducing future private sector jobs by 125,000, with 59% of these reductions affecting small businesses, and reducing potential sales by at least $18 billion, with 50% affecting small businesses; and

Whereas, the health insurance tax will increase premiums for small employers in Arizona by an average of $2,674 per employee over ten years and for large employers by an average of $2,645 per employee over ten years; and

Whereas, the health insurance tax will impact Medicare Advantage beneficiaries in Arizona by costing an average of $3,303 more in premiums and reduced benefits over ten years; and

Whereas, the health insurance tax will impact Medicaid beneficiaries in Arizona who are enrolled in a coordinated care program by costing an average of $1,337 over ten years, putting pressure on already strained state budgets, decreasing benefits and potentially creating coverage disruption; and

Whereas, higher premiums are a disincentive for everyone to obtain insurance coverage, particularly younger, healthier people who are likely to drop their policy if it becomes too expensive, which would further erode the risk pool and make coverage even less affordable.

Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress enact legislation to repeal the health insurance tax, sections 9010 and 10905 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and section 1406 of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, to make health care more affordable for working families, individuals and businesses.

2. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM–136. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Michigan memorializing the United States Congress to appropriate funds from the Nuclear Waste Fund for the establishment of a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste or reimburse electric utility customers who paid into the fund; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 6

Whereas, The nuclear power industry needs a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste produced by reactors. Nuclear power plays a vital role in meeting our nation's current and future energy needs. However, the failure to construct a permanent repository severely impedes efforts to construct new power plants to provide clean and reliable base load power; and

Whereas, Over the last 30 years, the nuclear power industry and its customers have paid the federal government billions of dollars to construct a permanent repository. Under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, the U.S. Congress established the Nuclear Waste Fund to collect money for the repository. Revenue to the fund came from mandatory fees assessed on all nuclear energy. Since 1983, customers of Michigan electric utilities alone have paid $812 million into the fund for construction of the repository; and

Whereas, A permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste has not been established and constructed. More than 2,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel from power plants continue to accumulate at temporary and potentially vulnerable sites across the nation, adding to the more than 70,000 metric tons already stored at these sites; and

Whereas, The Nuclear Waste Fund contains a substantial balance for establishment of the repository. While fee collection was suspended on May 16, 2014, the fund still contains a balance of over $31 billion for the express purpose of supporting radioactive waste disposal activities. It is imperative

that Congress meet its obligation to the nuclear power industry and U.S. citizens who paid into this fund: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to appropriate funds from the Nuclear Waste Fund for the establishment of a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste or reimburse electric utility customers who paid into the fund; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM–137. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to fulfill their obligation to establish a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 8

Whereas, Over the past four decades, nuclear power has been a significant source for the nation's electricity production. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, nuclear power provided about 20 percent of the electricity produced in the United States in 2013, and Michigan's three nuclear power plants provided 28 percent of the electricity generated in Michigan; and

Whereas, Since the earliest days of nuclear power, the great dilemma associated with this technology is how to deal with used nuclear fuel. Currently, more than 70,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel are stored in pools or casks at temporary sites around the country, including Michigan. This high-level radioactive waste demands exceptional care in all facets of its storage and disposal, including transportation; and

Whereas, More than 30 years ago, Congress enacted the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to address this issue. The act requires the federal government, through the Department of Energy, to build a repository for the permanent storage of high-level radioactive waste from nuclear power plants and begin accepting waste by January 31, 1998; and

Whereas, It is now 2015, and the nation still remains without a permanent repository, despite billions of dollars collected from electric ratepayers for the project. Spent nuclear fuel continues to pile up at temporary sites around the country, and the ongoing problem of permanent disposal is a drag on the potential of the nuclear power industry to meet our nation's energy needs. There is only so long that our nation can continue to safely store this waste at temporary sites; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to fulfill their obligation, as provided by law, to establish a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of Energy, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 818. A bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–230).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 368. A resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. Res. 375. A resolution raising awareness of modern slavery.

S. Res. 378. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

S. Res. 383. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 388. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 392. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nomination of Rear Adm. Karl L. Schultz, to be Vice Admiral.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2688. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 615 6th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, as the ''Sergeant First Class Terryl L. Pasker Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2689. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to cellular therapies; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. FISCHER, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2690. A bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to modernize the funding of wildlife conservation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 2691. A bill to require the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to establish a pilot program for the adoption and use of certified electronic health records technology; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2692. A bill to counter foreign disinformation and propaganda, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 2693. A bill to ensure the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission allocates its resources appropriately by prioritizing complaints of discrimination before implementing the proposed revision of the employer information report EEO–1, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2694. A bill to ensure America's law enforcement officers have access to lifesaving equipment needed to defend themselves and civilians from attacks by terrorists and violent criminals; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2695. A bill to permit voluntary economic activity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2696. A bill to provide small businesses with a grace period for a regulatory violation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2697. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947 to prevent wage theft and assist in the recovery of stolen wages, to authorize the Secretary of Labor to administer grants to prevent wage and hour violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2698. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude certain health arrangements from the excise tax on employer-sponsored health coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2699. A bill to increase the rates of pay under the General Schedule and other statutory pay systems and for prevailing rate employees by 5.3 percent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 401. A resolution designating March 22, 2016, as ''National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. Res. 402. A resolution to authorize testimony, documentary production, and representation in United States of America v. Chaka Fattah, Sr., et al; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 752

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 752, a bill to establish a scorekeeping rule to ensure that increases in guarantee fees of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac shall not be used to offset provisions that increase the deficit.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1252, a bill to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1641

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1641, a bill to improve the use by the Department of Veterans Affairs of opioids in treating veterans, to improve patient advocacy by the Department, and to expand availability of complementary and integrative health, and for other purposes.

S. 1944

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1944, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 1 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 2179

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2179, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into certain agreements with non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers if the Secretary is not feasibly able to provide health care in facilities of the Department or through contracts or sharing agreements, and for other purposes.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2403

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2403, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide a period for the relocation of spouses and dependents of certain members of the Armed Forces undergoing a permanent change of station in order to ease and facilitate the relocation of military families, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2551

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2551, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity.

S. 2630

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2630, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to require certain disclosures be included on employee pay stubs, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 140

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 140, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

S. RES. 375

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 375, a resolution raising awareness of modern slavery.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 378, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015.

AMENDMENT NO. 3450

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3450 proposed to S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 401—DESIGNATING MARCH 22, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY''

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 401

Whereas rehabilitation counselors conduct assessments, provide counseling, support families, and plan and implement rehabilitation programs for individuals in need of rehabilitation;

Whereas the purpose of professional organizations for rehabilitation counseling and education is to promote the improvement of rehabilitation services available to individuals with disabilities through quality education for counselors and rehabilitation research;

Whereas various professional organizations have vigorously advocated for up-to-date education and training and the maintenance of professional standards in the field of rehabilitation counseling and education, including—

(1) the National Rehabilitation Association;

(2) the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association;

(3) the National Council on Rehabilitation Education;

(4) the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(5) the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(6) the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification;

(7) the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation; and

(8) the Council on Rehabilitation Education;

Whereas, on March 22, 1983, the president of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education testified before the Subcommittee on Select Education of the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives and was instrumental in bringing the need for qualified rehabilitation counselors to the attention of Congress; and

Whereas rehabilitation counselors with credentials may provide a higher quality of service to individuals in need of rehabilitation and the development of accreditation systems for rehabilitation counselors supports the continued education of such counselors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 22, 2016, as ''National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day''; and

(2) commends—

(A) rehabilitation counselors for the dedication and hard work rehabilitation counselors provide to individuals in need of rehabilitation; and

(B) professional organizations for the efforts professional organizations have made to assist those individuals who require rehabilitation.

SENATE RESOLUTION 402—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY, DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION, AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA V. CHAKA FATTAH, SR., ET AL

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. REID) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 402

Whereas, in the case of *United States of America v. Chaka Fattah, Sr., et al.*, Cr. No. 15–346, pending in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, testimony may be needed from Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., relating to his official responsibilities;

Whereas, by Rule VI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no Senator shall absent himself from the service of the Senate without leave;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent Members of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., is authorized to testify and to produce documents in the case of *United States of America v. Chaka Fattah, Sr., et al.*, except when his attendance at the Senate is necessary for the performance of his legislative duties, and except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Senator Casey in connection with the testimony authorized in section one of this resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3455. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3456. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1831, to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3455. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3450 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. ROBERTS) to the bill S. 764, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 4, strike line 17 and all that follows through page 5, line 4, and insert the following:

''(D) require that, if a food is voluntarily labeled under this section, the label shall—

''(i) clearly indicate to consumers that more information is available regarding the ingredients of the food;

''(ii) contain an approved form of electronic disclosure, such as a scannable image, code, Internet website link, or other similar technology, that provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is—

''(I) bioengineered; or

''(II) developed or produced using bioengineering; and

''(iii) contain a telephone number that provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is—

''(I) bioengineered; or

''(II) developed or produced using bioengineering.

Beginning on page 6, strike line 22 and all that follows through page 7, line 5, and insert the following:

quently consumed labeled foods through means other than the label or labeling that—

''(A) are clear and direct; and

''(B) would allow consumers to access the information as described in section 293(b)(2)(D).

On page 7, line 24, strike ''70 percent'' and insert ''80 percent''.

On page 10, strike lines 1 through 9 and insert the following:

''(ii) clear and direct means, other than the label or labeling, including—

''(I) an approved form of electronic disclosure, such as a scannable image, code, Internet website link, social media, or other similar technology, that provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is—

''(aa) bioengineered; or

''(bb) developed or produced using bioengineering; and

''(II) a telephone number that provides direct access to information regarding whether the food is—

''(aa) bioengineered; or

''(bb) developed or produced using bioengineering.

On page 13, strike line 19 and insert the following:

duced using genetic engineering.

''SEC. 296. NO PREEMPTION OF COMMON LAW OR STATUTORY CAUSES OF ACTION.

''Nothing in this subtitle or subtitle E (or any regulation promulgated pursuant to this subtitle or subtitle E) preempts, displaces, or supplants—

''(1) any common law right; or

''(2) any Federal or State law creating a remedy for civil relief, including for civil damage or penalty for criminal conduct.''.

SA 3456. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1831, to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established in the executive branch a commission to be known as the ''Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking'' (in this Act referred to as the ''Commission'').

SEC. 3. MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be comprised of 15 members as follows:

(1) Three shall be appointed by the President, of whom—

(A) one shall be an academic researcher, data expert, or have experience in administering programs;

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization; and

(C) one shall be the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (or the Director's designee).

(2) Three shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(3) Three shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(4) Three shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(5) Three shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(b) EXPERTISE.—In making appointments under this section, consideration should be given to individuals with expertise in economics, statistics, program evaluation, data security, confidentiality, or database management.

(c) CHAIRPERSON AND CO-CHAIRPERSON.—The President shall select the chairperson of the Commission and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall select the co-chairperson.

(d) TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS.—Appointments to the Commission shall be made not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) TERMS; VACANCIES.—Each member shall be appointed for the duration of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, and shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(f) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Commission shall serve without pay.

(g) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) STUDY OF DATA.—The Commission shall conduct a comprehensive study of the data inventory, data infrastructure, database security, and statistical protocols related to Federal policymaking and the agencies responsible for maintaining that data to—

(1) determine the optimal arrangement for which administrative data on Federal programs and tax expenditures, survey data, and related statistical data series may be integrated and made available to facilitate program evaluation, continuous improvement, policy-relevant research, and cost-benefit analyses by qualified researchers and institutions while weighing how integration might lead to the intentional or unintentional access, breach, or release of personally-identifiable information or records;

(2) make recommendations on how data infrastructure, database security, and statistical protocols should be modified to best fulfill the objectives identified in paragraph (1); and

(3) make recommendations on how best to incorporate outcomes measurement, institutionalize randomized controlled trials, and rigorous impact analysis into program design.

(b) CLEARINGHOUSE.—In undertaking the study required by subsection (a), the Commission shall—

(1) consider whether a clearinghouse for program and survey data should be established and how to create such a clearinghouse; and

(2) evaluate—

(A) what administrative data and survey data are relevant for program evaluation and Federal policy-making and should be included in a potential clearinghouse;

(B) which survey data the administrative data identified in subparagraph (A) may be linked to, in addition to linkages across administrative data series, including the effect such linkages may have on the security of those data;

(C) what are the legal and administrative barriers to including or linking these data series;

(D) what data-sharing infrastructure should be used to facilitate data merging and access for research purposes;

(E) how a clearinghouse could be self-funded;

(F) which types of researchers, officials, and institutions should have access to data and what the qualifications of the researchers, officials, and institutions should be;

(G) what limitations should be placed on the use of data provided;

(H) how to protect information and ensure individual privacy and confidentiality;

(I) how data and results of research can be used to inform program administrators and policymakers to improve program design;

(J) what incentives may facilitate interagency sharing of information to improve programmatic effectiveness and enhance data accuracy and comprehensiveness; and

(K) how individuals whose data are used should be notified of its usages.

(c) REPORT.—Upon the affirmative vote of at least three-quarters of the members of the Commission, the Commission shall submit to the President and Congress a detailed statement of its findings and conclusions as a result of the activities required by subsections (a) and (b), together with its recommendations for such legislation or administrative actions as the Commission considers appropriate in light of the results of the study.

(d) DEADLINE.—The report under subsection (c) shall be submitted not later than the date that is 15 months after the date a majority of the members of the Commission are appointed pursuant to section 3.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''administrative data'' means data—

(1) held by an agency or a contractor or grantee of an agency (including a State or unit of local government); and

(2) collected for other than statistical purposes.

SEC. 5. OPERATION AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) EXECUTIVE BRANCH ASSISTANCE.—The heads of the following agencies shall advise and consult with the Commission on matters within their respective areas of responsibility:

(1) The Bureau of the Census.

(2) The Internal Revenue Service.

(3) The Department of Health and Human Services.

(4) The Department of Agriculture.

(5) The Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(6) The Social Security Administration.

(7) The Department of Education.

(8) The Department of Justice.

(9) The Office of Management and Budget.

(10) The Bureau of Economic Analysis.

(11) The Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(12) Any other agency, as determined by the Commission.

(b) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet not later than 30 days after the date upon which a majority of its members have been appointed and at such times thereafter as the chairperson or co-chairperson shall determine.

(c) RULES OF PROCEDURE.—The chairperson and co-chairperson shall, with the approval of a majority of the members of the Commission, establish written rules of procedure for the Commission, which shall include a quorum requirement to conduct the business of the Commission.

(d) HEARINGS.—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold hearings, sit and act at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence as the Commission considers appropriate.

(e) CONTRACTS.—The Commission may contract with and compensate government and private agencies or persons for any purpose necessary to enable it to carry out this Act.

(f) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other agencies of the Federal Government.

(g) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

SEC. 6. FUNDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b) and the availability of appropriations—

(1) at the request of the Director of the Census, the agencies identified as ''Principal Statistical Agencies'' in the report, published by the Office of Management and Budget, entitled ''Statistical Programs of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015'' shall transfer funds, as specified in advance in appropriations Acts and in a total amount not to exceed $3,000,000, to the Bureau of the Census for purposes of carrying out the activities of the Commission as provided in this Act; and

(2) the Bureau of the Census shall provide administrative support to the Commission,

which may include providing physical space at, and access to, the headquarters of the Bureau of the Census, located in Suitland, Maryland.

(b) PROHIBITION ON NEW FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise available for the Bureau of the Census or the agencies described in subsection (a)(1).

SEC. 7. PERSONNEL.

(a) DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the chairperson with the concurrence of the co-chairperson. The Director shall be paid at a rate of pay established by the chairperson and co-chairperson, not to exceed the annual rate of basic pay payable for level V of the Executive Schedule (section 5316 of title 5, United States Code).

(b) STAFF.—The Director may appoint and fix the pay of additional staff as the Director considers appropriate.

(c) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay for a comparable position paid under the General Schedule.

SEC. 8. TERMINATION.

The Commission shall terminate not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The 2016 Water Resources Development Act—Policies and Projects.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''DHS Management and Acquisition Reform.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Preventing America's Looming Fiscal Crisis: the Need for a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION AND NATIONAL INTEREST

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Impact of High Levels of Immigration on U.S. Workers.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Deanna Mitchell, a National Park Service detailee in the office of Senator MURKOWSKI, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this calendar year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 377

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 12:45 p.m., Thursday, March 17, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 375, S. Res. 377; further, that there be 1 hour of debate equally divided in the usual form; further, that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on adoption of the resolution with no intervening action or debate; finally, if adopted, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1890

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m., Monday, April 4, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 355, S. 1890; further, that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; further, that following the use or yielding back of time, the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with no intervening action or debate; further, if passed, that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING COMMISSION ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1831, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1831) to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Burr substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3456) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 1831), as amended, was passed.

CAPTAIN JOHN E. MORAN AND CAPTAIN WILLIAM WYLIE GALT ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration of S. 719 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 719) to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 719) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 719

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. RENAMING OF THE ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER IN GREAT FALLS, MONTANA, AS THE CAPTAIN JOHN E. MORAN AND CAPTAIN WILLIAM WYLIE GALT ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER.

(a) RENAMING.—The Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, shall hereafter be known and designated as the ''Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law, map, regulation, map, document, paper, other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center.

NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 401, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 401) designating March 22, 2016, as ''National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 401) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

AUTHORIZING TESTIMONY, DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION, AND REPRESENTATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 402, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 402) to authorize testimony, documentary production, and representation in United States of America v. Chaka Fattah, Sr., et al.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this resolution concerns a criminal case pending in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania involving Congressman CHAKA FATTAH, Sr., and others, including an individual named Herbert Vederman. The Department of Justice is seeking trial testimony from Senator BOB CASEY about his office's receipt of a letter of support from the Congressman regarding Mr. Vederman's consideration for appointment to a high Federal office.

The government alleges that Congressman FATTAH conspired with Mr. Vederman to advocate for Mr. Vederman's appointment in return for Mr. Vederman providing money and things of value to the Congressman.

The indictment does not allege that any action was taken in response to this advocacy, and Mr. Vederman did not receive a nomination for any Federal position. Senator CASEY is being called as a witness only because of the fact of his office's receipt of this letter supporting Mr. Vederman.

Senator CASEY would like to cooperate with the government's request for his appearance at trial. Accordingly, consistent with the rules of the Senate and Senate practice, the enclosed resolution would authorize Senator CASEY to testify and to produce documents at trial. The resolution would also authorize the Senate legal counsel to represent Senator CASEY in connection with his testimony.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 402) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, until 12:45 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator LANKFORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, upon waking this morning, like a lot of other people did, I put on the news. About midway through the morning, about 7 a.m., a bulletin came out that the President had selected a nominee for the Supreme Court. Newsworthy.

At about 7 a.m., the email came out that said: ''I've made my decision.''

At 7:07 this morning, White House Legislative Affairs circulated a notification to all those folks on Capitol Hill, including our office, from President Obama that stated this fact: ''We've reached out to every member of the Senate, who each have a responsibility to do their job and take this nomination just as seriously.''

Well, this Senator thought that was very interesting because we hadn't received a notification.

At 7:14 a.m., 7 minutes later, the White House Legislative Affairs Office emailed my chief of staff with an attachment of the 7:07 a.m. email from

the White House notifying that they had this. So when my counsel called over to the White House Counsel and said: You stated earlier this morning that you contacted our offices—''you have reached out to us'' was the term—they clarified later in the morning: Well, that email we sent after we said we contacted you was really the contact that we meant to send earlier.

This was quite a morning for us. It is again the same doublespeak we received from the White House. When he said that they had reached out to all Members of the Senate, that actually means they had sent us an email after they had sent the American people an email saying they had made a decision. But even that email didn't say who it was.

Here is the challenge. It is a constitutional responsibility here, and it is extremely important that all of this is done right. It is extremely important that article I, the legislative branch, and that article II, the White House, agree on a Supreme Court nominee because article I and article II select article III judges to the Supreme Court.

A month ago, the U.S. Senate—the Members of the majority party notified the White House and the American people that we wanted to follow the same historical precedent that has been followed for decades, saying that in an election year, we would not appoint someone to the Supreme Court. This is not a new policy; it is a policy that has been around for a very long time. In fact, in 1968, when Democrats had the Senate and a Democrat, LBJ, was in the White House, the Democrat, LBJ, wanted to be able to appoint a Supreme Court nominee, and Democrats in the Senate blocked someone from their own party from putting up a Supreme Court nominee because it was an election year, and they held it. It has happened over and over again.

In fact, it has been interesting, because on this floor I heard numerous folks step up and say: This is unprecedented. This is new. This has never happened before.

The problem is that all of us know the history. It is the same history all of us look at.

The Washington Post this morning even put out a piece identifying this basic issue. They occasionally do what has been called the Pinocchio test, and this morning they identified multiple different Democratic Senators who have spoken on this floor saying things such as ''Republican Members met behind closed doors to unilaterally decide, without any input from this committee, that this committee and the Senate as a whole will refuse to consider any nominee. It's a dereliction of our constitutional duty.''

Another statement: ''The Senate shall advise and consent by voting on that nominee. That is what the plain language of the Constitution requires.''

Over and over again this has come up.

The Washington Post went back and researched and did an extensive piece detailing all the real history here of Supreme Court nominees, and they ended with this statement: ''[But] the Senate majority can in effect do what it wants'' to do, as it has historically, ''unless it becomes politically uncomfortable. Democrats who suggest otherwise are simply telling supporters a politically convenient fairy tale.''

The Washington Post gave the Democrats who made all these statements about the Republicans doing something unprecedented in shutting down this process a whopping three Pinocchios in their test in the Washington Post this morning.

This is not something new or radical; this is consistent. Quite frankly, the Constitution—article II, Section 2—sets up a 50/50 proposition for the selection of Supreme Court Justices. The White House has the first 50 percent to make that nomination, and the Senate has the second 50 percent in that we have what is called advice and consent, and that is choosing the time and person in the process. Is this the right time to do this nominee? Is this nominee the right person? That is advice and consent.

It is not new for the White House and the Senate to disagree on this. George Washington couldn't even get some of his nominees through the very first Senate, and he personally came over to the Senate, bringing his nominee, and said: I want my nominee to have a hearing. And the very first Senate, with the very first President—the very first Senate sent George Washington away and said: We are not going to hear it today. It is the wrong time and maybe the wrong person. We haven't decided yet.

This is an ongoing process. This Senate has determined, as it has many times, that an election year is the wrong time to have a departing President choose a Supreme Court nominee.

As many folks have said over and over again, this is not only old history in the United States, it is recent history. At that time, Senator BIDEN, who was the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, said on this floor in 1992:

> The Senate, too, Mr. President, must consider how it would respond to a Supreme Court vacancy that would occur in the full throes of an election year. It is my view that if the President goes the way of Presidents Fillmore and Johnson—

Referring to LBJ—

> and presses an election year nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over.
>
> It would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.
>
> Others may fret that this approach would leave the Court with only eight members for some time, but as I see it, Mr. President, the cost of such a result, the need to reargue three or four cases that will divide the Justices four to four, are quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what would assuredly be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President, if that nomination were to take place in the next several weeks.

Even Senator REID in 2005 said:

> The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that document does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.

This is not new; it has just become politically expedient to bring this up. It is not even new in the media. It was interesting to be able to see a comment in the New York Times from 1987 when the New York Times wrote an editorial about what happens if a President in his final term wants to be able to appoint a nominee with a Senate majority from the other party. Well, at that time in the previous election, the White House had a President who was a Republican, Ronald Reagan, and the Senate had changed over to the Democrats in the previous election. The New York Times wrote this about a Supreme Court selection process:

> The President's supporters insisted vehemently that having won the 1984 election, he has every right to change the Court's direction. Yes, but the Democrats won the 1986 election regaining control of the Senate, and they have every right to resist.

That was true then for the New York Times, that is true now, and we will see if they stay consistent as a newspaper standing from the exact same principle decades later—not new, not different.

The fact is, the Supreme Court is still working, still hearing cases, still going through the arguments, and still releasing opinions. Nothing has changed over there. The work is still continuing in the U.S. Senate. We are still hearing legislation. We are voting on legislation. We voted on a confirmation this week to the Department of Education. We are still working through nominations. We are still working through legislation. Nothing has changed on that. The decision was made that this Senate will not move during this election year.

It is interesting. I had a telephone townhall this Monday with individuals across my State, with thousands of people on the line. We asked a simple question about what should happen in this process dealing with the Supreme Court—this is before a nominee was even announced—and 71 percent of the people on our calls said the next President and the American people should choose who the next Supreme Court Justice will be.

I will submit that we should allow the people to decide this, that when

they decide the Presidential election this November, they are also determining the direction of the Supreme Court in the days ahead.

I don't want us to lose track of the basic facts here, but I also want us to stay focused. This Senate cannot get distracted with bitter fighting over something that we resolved a month ago and that will remain resolved. We are not going to move.

We have a lot of budget issues to deal with. We have appropriations bills that will come up in the days ahead. I would submit that one of the biggest things we can do in the Senate is to also reform the budget process, to stay focused on things that are really going to matter long term for us, because this issue with the Supreme Court is already resolved. We need to find ways to be able to eliminate the budget gimmicks that are in the budget process to get a long-term view, to make sure there is not this playing with the system in this 10-year window, and to deal with biennial budgeting to get a better prediction of where we are going in the days ahead. We need to find a way to stop government shutdowns and the constant threats of government shutdowns because they do nothing but hurt us. These are things we can work on and work on together to keep us on focus.

The Supreme Court issue is settled. It is not going to move. Let's find the things that we can agree on, that we can work on, and continue to work on those things together.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:44 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 17, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

MERRICK B. GARLAND, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, VICE ANTONIN SCALIA, DECEASED.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 16, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE BOST to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

WIDESPREAD FLOODING IN LOUISIANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to my home State of Louisiana, where thousands of people throughout the State, and in my congressional district particularly, are dealing with the aftermath of widespread flooding.

Beginning on Wednesday of last week, heavy rains began falling across northeast Louisiana. By Friday, we had recorded over 2 feet of rain. Creeks and lakes overflowed. Water topped levees and spilled into neighborhoods. State highways looked like rivers, and parking lots looked like ponds.

Since the flood began, I have visited a number of parishes throughout my district. Whether it was in north, central, or southeast Louisiana, the one constant was there were far, far too many people hurting.

As of yesterday, at least four people had died from the flood in Louisiana. Nearly 15,000 homes had been reported damaged, and the number will definitely grow. More than 6,800 people have requested help from FEMA, and that number will likely grow as well.

Lives were changed last week, and we have a long way to go to recover. The President has approved, at the request of the Governor, Federal disaster aid for most parishes affected. This is a great, great thing, and we need it. I appreciate that support very much.

I have lived in Louisiana all my life. I still live in a soybean field in northeast Louisiana not far from where I grew up in a cornfield, also close to my home. I have seen a lot of things in my time and I have seen a lot of rain come, but I have never seen as much rain as we received last week.

Unfortunately, Louisiana is all too familiar with disasters. In the last 10 years, we have seen five hurricanes, an oil spill, and now this horrific flooding. But each time we face adversity, Louisiana and her people respond. We follow Christ's commandment, which is to love and help one another.

I have been so inspired by the way our communities across Louisiana have answered the call to serve: packing sandbags in the wee hours of the morning, volunteering at shelters, cooking food for relief workers, housing stranded family members; and sometimes people who are not even known to these people, they are taking them into their homes. The acts of kindness just keep coming and coming, and we need more of them to keep coming.

There is one group of individuals I want to especially recognize, and that is our first responders. The National Guard has rescued over 3,295 people so far. Sheriffs, deputies, other law enforcement officials, and firefighters are still tallying their numbers because they have saved so many lives. These men and women have logged countless hours and put themselves in harm's way to save the lives of others.

I have heard stories of some officers using makeshift rafts to pull people from flooded homes and getting them out before waters overtook their home.

I have seen videos of the National Guard with Black Hawk helicopters rappelling into floodwaters and pulling people to safety who were clinging to trees. I saw one instance where a gentleman had been in a tree for up to 2 days.

It is just incredible what our first responders have done.

There is another story about our power company employees saving a man whose truck was swept off the road by water. Again, he had been in a tree, hanging on for life, for 2 full days before he was saved.

Story after story in parish after parish show the incredible strength our Louisianians have and the first responders' abilities and their caring and what they have done for our State.

The rains have stopped for now, but we are not in the clear by any means. The water is pushing most of our rivers over their flood stages in a big, big way. I hope another round of floods isn't on the way.

In Louisiana, we know how to bounce back from adversity, but we will only do so with the continued generosity of those who are in a position to help others. I ask the Nation to remember Louisiana in its prayers as we continue and start the process of rebuilding.

A REALISTIC INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the tortured Presidential nominating process continues with generalities and insults, but maybe we could avert our eyes and attention for a moment and consider some real challenges that we face closer at hand.

The backdrop in the metropolitan area in Washington, D.C., is that D.C. Metro has shut down for the entire day to deal with safety concerns—an unprecedented step. The bigger issue for most people in the region, for most riders and potential users, is the system's reliability.

It is a symbol of a lack of resources and a lack of leadership, not just for Metro, but for the States of Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Government itself. They have, sadly, been lacking in leadership, in vision, and providing the resources for this vital system for a region of approximately 4 million people.

At the same time, we have a looming water and sewer crisis, almost 2 million miles of pipe, in some cases long past its useful life. A water main breaks every 2 minutes. We have serious problems with system reliability with sewage.

The city of Flint, Michigan, and its terrible situation with lead in the drinking water has captured attention, but it has also pointed out for people who look deeper that this is a problem that afflicts communities across the country. We have, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, an overall grade, as a country, of D

dealing with sewer and water challenges.

What if the major candidates would train their attention on serious proposals to deal with the infrastructure crisis already upon us? Not mere generalities, but let's talk about how they would pay for it. What is their vision to deal with multiple needs, and how would they set priorities?

It is not really that hard. In a number of very red States, governments have stepped up to raise the gas tax and fund transportation. In metropolitan communities across the country, in red States and blue, people are dealing with their challenges, proposing to their communities funding and vision to solve the problem.

I have got bipartisan legislation to establish a Federal water infrastructure trust fund to help start in that regard.

We ought to fix the transportation funding. There is broad support amongst labor, business, profession AAA truckers to raise the gas tax and be able to deal with our transportation challenges.

Finally, we should embrace technology in transportation, things from self-driving, autonomous vehicles, electronic payment for road systems, a road user charge being experimented on in the State of Oregon. These are mechanisms that would help us update, modernize, and make these systems more effective.

And by the way, when you hear all those candidates talking about strengthening the middle class and the economy, these proposals would put millions of people to work at family-wage jobs in every community across America. It would strengthen safety and liveability and bring people together.

You know, when we have faced up to infrastructure challenges, whether it is Dwight Eisenhower's interstate freeway system, what we have done in the past with clean water and clean air, those are things that are broadly supported by Americans. An infrastructure agenda, a realistic infrastructure agenda has the potential of bringing people together while it strengthens America, and it would certainly be a nice change of pace.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KRIS ANNE VOGELPOHL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and to celebrate the life of Kris Anne Vogelpohl of Galveston. Many know Kris Anne Vogelpohl as the matriarch of the Galveston County Republican Party.

Kris Anne made her way from Colorado to Galveston, where she became chief therapeutic dietician at the University of Texas Medical Branch in 1950. It was at UTMB where she met her future husband, Dr. Elmer Vogelpohl.

Kris Anne didn't waste any time getting involved in the community and local politics, too. In fact, in 1955, Kris Anne became one of the founding members of the Galveston Republican Women. From there, she solidified her GOP trailblazer status by becoming chairwoman of the Galveston Republican Party, where she thereupon built a strong foundation for the party to grow and build on.

In addition to her political service, Kris Anne was an avid philanthropist within the community. One of the organizations she invested her time in was the Salvation Army, where she joined their county advisory board in 1959.

Kris Anne's unwavering commitment to the betterment of society was a sight to behold, Mr. Speaker. She made everyone feel so welcomed. She empowered so many people to take charge and get involved. Her enthusiasm for making our county, our State, and our country even greater was infectious. The proof is in the pudding. Galveston has become one of the strongest Republican counties along the Gulf Coast and in Texas.

Dr. Vogelpohl could often be seen with Kris Anne in event after event all over Galveston County. You talk about stalwarts, Mr. Speaker. My prayer is that we all be such sterling examples to those who come behind us. Lord knows that Dr. Elmer, as I call him, and Kris Anne were—or make that are, quite frankly.

Kris Anne lived to be 90 years old. She was married for 55 years and is survived by her husband, two children, and six grandchildren.

Kris Anne may be gone, but in reality she is still here. She will forever be in the hearts and minds of the people she touched.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and my prayers are with Dr. Elmer, their children, their grandchildren, and with the great multitude of friends she served. My prayer is also may the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, even the Lord Jesus Christ, wrap them up in His loving arms and comfort them. May He bless them and keep them. May God bless them all, and may God bless the great State of Texas and Galveston County that Kris Anne loved so much.

In a wonderful way, He has been blessing us. He loaned us Kris Anne.

□ 1015

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER JACAI COLSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I rise today to pay tribute and honor the life of Prince George's County Police Officer Jacai Colson, who was killed in the line of duty.

Line-of-duty deaths are always difficult to bear. A police officer or another first responder leaves their home, their station, or their vehicle, and their loved one, coworker, or partner expects to see them return.

My heart breaks for Jacai's loved ones and for the tight-knit community that is the Prince George's County Police Department.

On March 12, 2016, an off-duty detective, Police Officer First Class Jacai Colson, arrived at the District 3 police station in Landover, Maryland, with the intent of visiting a fellow officer, when matters took an unexpected turn for the worse.

We will continue to learn the details of this tragedy in the coming days. What we do know is that Officer Colson's actions saved lives and allowed his fellow officers to neutralize the threat, even as he made the ultimate sacrifice.

On behalf of the citizens of the Fourth Congressional District of Maryland, I want to extend my appreciation to Officer Colson for his selfless and heroic actions and his relentless dedication to public service.

I would like to remember the legacy Officer Colson leaves behind. He was a Pennsylvania native who played quarterback at Chichester High School in Boothwyn, Pennsylvania, where he graduated.

Officer Colson then went on to play wide receiver and defensive back at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. His college football coach recalled Colson as ''a really respectful kid and just a high-character young man. To be honest, he wasn't a great player, but he was a really great person.''

Officer Jacai Colson was the grandson of a career police officer. He himself joined the Prince George's County Police Department. After 2 years of service on the force, he joined the narcotics department. Officer Colson worked as an undercover detective. Later this week would have been his 29th birthday.

I well know how difficult a job our local police officers have. They are tasked with the tremendous responsibility of meeting the increasingly diverse needs of growing populations with diminishing resources.

At a time of so much national discussion about the relationship of law enforcement to our local communities, Officer Colson reminds us all of the important service and sacrifice of our men and women in blue.

Unfortunately, his death makes three officers that have been shot and killed in Maryland in 2016. Last month two officers from the Harford County Sheriff's Office were fatally shot: Senior

Deputy Mark Logsdon and Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey.

Today our police officers are being asked to be the first line of defense in our war on terror in addition to carrying out more traditional police work.

I want to thank them for their commitment to the citizens and families of this great State. They are Maryland's heroes, and they have my utmost respect and support.

Officer Jacai Colson's record of service was characterized by sacrifice, hard work, dedication to duty, and, most of all, by achievement. He leaves behind a legacy of service that others can and should aspire to.

Now that his time on Earth has come to a needlessly premature end, it is my hope that Officer Jacai Colson has found the peace he has earned. On behalf of this House, I extend my sincerest gratitude and condolences to James and Sheila Colson, his parents; his entire family; friends; Prince George's County Police Chief Hank Stawinski; Major Kathleen Mills, District 3 Commander; the entire Prince George's County Police Department; and the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 89.

May God continue to comfort and sustain each of you.

AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. V. TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 639.

Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation of immigrants. But, more importantly, we are a Nation of laws. We are also a Nation governed by a Constitution, a Constitution designed by our Founders to protect the people from government.

This same Constitution enumerates specific powers to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, these same powers that this President has decided he does not need to uphold.

As a result, we, as a united legislative body, will act this week against the President's executive amnesty and overreach. We must act because it is time that Congress—Republicans and Democrats—stand up for the Constitution of the United States and against President Obama, who has decided to turn his back on the American people.

We must act because the security and economic opportunity that Americans are so desperate for today come with respecting, not undermining, the spirit of self-government for which our Nation was founded.

Mr. Speaker, the President knows that he is not permitted to write laws. Yet, through his executive amnesty, he is directly attacking Congress' Article I power.

Today Congress will once again say no to President Obama. We will come together as an institution representing the American people to promote self-government.

I will vote in favor of the resolution on behalf of the great people of Missouri's Second Congressional District and in defense of the powerful words of James Madison in 1788:

''The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.''

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution and prevent this very tyranny we see today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

GENOCIDE OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, there were two votes that occurred earlier this week on House Concurrent Resolution 75 and House Concurrent Resolution 121, which deal with very important and complex issues that I would like to talk about this morning.

I cosponsored and voted for House Concurrent Resolution 75 because of my grave concern about the genocide occurring against Christians, Alawites, Shiites, Druze, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria.

However, I was extremely disappointed by amendment language that was later added to this resolution that provides cover or an excuse for ISIS and other terrorist organizations committing this genocide.

Specifically, the language I object to is the following: ''The protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.''

I fully reject this amendment to the resolution because it gives moral legitimacy to the actions of ISIS, al Qaeda, and others who are committing genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria.

This amendment is an obvious attempt to make ISIS look like their cause is legitimate. This is absolutely unacceptable and undermines the very heart and intent of this resolution.

This is very unfortunate because the problem of the genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria is very serious.

In fact, the main area in Syria where Christians and other religious minorities have any protection today from being slaughtered and where they can practice their religious faith without fear of prosecution is in the territory that is still controlled by the Syrian Government of Assad.

The reality is that the language added to this resolution, coupled with its sister resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 121, is really aimed at justifying the overthrow of Assad, the result of which would be a complete assault and elimination of Christians and other religious minorities in Syria.

The fact that this resolution, which was originally introduced to increase protection for Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities, has now been hijacked so that it becomes a vehicle to increase the likelihood of an even greater genocide against those religious minorities is an absolute disgrace.

The reality is that, if the Assad regime is overthrown tomorrow, every Christian, every Yazidi, and every other religious minority and ethnic minority in Syria will be in even greater danger than ever before from the genocide being perpetrated by ISIS, al Qaeda, and others who are slaughtering them.

This resolution is no longer a sincere effort to protect religious minorities. It has instead become a resolution to give more legitimacy to ISIS and al Qaeda's genocidal activities and would bring about an even greater genocide of those religious minorities by eliminating the only area where they now have refuge.

RECOGNIZING PRINCETON, INDIANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an outstanding community in Indiana's Eighth Congressional District.

It is no secret that the Hoosier State is home to hardworking, innovative, and compassionate people. In the Eighth District, we are leading the way.

Today I want to highlight a couple of great accomplishments in Princeton, Indiana.

Earlier this month high school senior Jackie Young, a star guard at Princeton Community High School, was awarded the Naismith Trophy. This prestigious award is presented annually to the men and women's college and high school basketball players who achieve great success on the court and solidifies Jackie as the Nation's top high school woman basketball player.

To us in southern Indiana, the award comes as no surprise. With 3,268 career points, Jackie is Indiana's all-time leading scorer. She is a natural leader on and off the court.

Congratulations to Jackie. We wish her all the best as she prepares for her next step, playing for Notre Dame.

Additionally, a community leader and anchor of our local economy, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, will soon celebrate the 20th anniversary of its ground breaking in Gibson County.

Over the past 20 years, the plant has been a leader in economic development for our region, providing thousands of jobs and supporting local organizations.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many of the hardworking and dedicated team members at Toyota in Princeton. These men and women make quality products in Indiana that are being sold across the country and around the world, and they take pride in doing it.

On behalf of all Hoosiers across the Eighth District, I thank everyone at Toyota Motor Manufacturing for your continued commitment to our community and congratulate them on this tremendous milestone.

As one of Indiana's designated Stellar Communities, Princeton is, without a doubt, a shining example of what our great State has to offer. It is an honor and privilege to represent the people of Gibson County and Princeton here in Congress.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WENONAH HIGH SCHOOL LADY DRAGONS ON THIRD CONSECUTIVE ALABAMA GIRLS 5A BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure of rising today for the third time in 3 years to congratulate the Wenonah High School Lady Dragons on winning their third consecutive Alabama girls class 5A basketball championship.

The Lady Dragons beat Central High School from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 58–33, imploring what the local news said was a suffocating pressure defense to cruise to their third consecutive title on March 5, 2016, at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex Legacy Arena in Birmingham, Alabama. The Wenonah Lady Dragons forced 32 turnovers that resulted in 19 points on their way to victory.

''The sign on our wall says 'Discipline plus defense equals championships,' '' said Wenonah High School coach Emanuel Bell. ''We're going to press. That's what we do.'' They put pressure on the other side.

□ 1030

The MVP of the game was Alexus Dye, who scored 12 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. ''Our defense is what got us here and led us to the win,'' said Dye.

The other star of the team was Wenonah's very own Kaitlyn Rodgers, who scored 12 points, grabbed 14 rebounds, blocked 6 shots, handed out 3 assists, and added 2 steals. ''This is what we came here for, and we want to go out with a bang,'' said Rodgers.

Mr. Speaker, more noteworthy is the fact that, according to Coach Bell, ''Every kid on my time averages a 3.0 GPA or higher. It's easy to coach players with academic and athletic talent,'' says Coach Bell.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the month of March as Women's History Month, recognizing trailblazing women throughout our history, clearly these young women have blazed their own remarkable path, both athletically and academically as student athletes, and we are happy, proud to commend them.

So on behalf of Alabama's Seventh Congressional District, I want to extend a heartfelt congratulations to these outstanding players and to Coach Bell.

While March Madness has gripped the rest of the State and the Nation, in Birmingham, Alabama, we are very proud of Wenonah High School's Lady Dragons. I am confident that these young ladies have bright futures ahead of them, and we will look back on these 3 consecutive years of championship wins with great accomplishment and pride.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all who call upon Your name. Send Your Spirit to fill their hearts with those divine gifts You have prepared for them.

May Your grace find expression in their compassion for the weak and the poor among us, and may Your mercy encourage good will in all they do and accomplish this day.

As the Members of the people's House face the demands of our time, grant them and us all Your peace and strength, that we might act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with You.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

ISIL-DAESH CHEMICAL ATTACKS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this weekend we learned that ISIL/Daesh has continued their use of chemical attacks against innocent civilians, including children, with two attacks in northern Iraq. Over 600 people suffered burns, suffocation, and dehydration. And, sadly, a young child, Fatima, died from Saturday's murderous attack.

Officials have confirmed that ISIL has used chlorine and low-grade mustard gas to kill, incapacitate, and incite fear. Recent news reports say ISIL developed a special unit for chemical and biological attacks, which is a threat to American families.

It is sad that the President's legacy is weakness. He has not submitted a plan to Congress to defeat ISIL, and has repeatedly belittled their threat of mass murder to American families. His legacy of failure is drowned children fleeing violence and dead children from chemical attacks.

I am grateful that the House of Representatives took a decisive stance against ISIL this week, accurately calling actions against Christians and other minorities genocide.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

God bless Hammond School.

STOP THE GENOCIDE

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 75, which was passed unanimously Monday evening by the House. I regret that a family commitment kept me from being present for the vote on this important bill, which I am proud to cosponsor.

It has been with horror and dismay that we have watched the barbaric acts of ISIL against ethnic and religious minorities in Syria and Iraq. Proud people, including many Christians who have lived in the region for centuries, have been wiped out in a campaign of rape, forced conversion, and murder.

The crimes qualify as genocide, and they must be called as such. The global community has a duty, stemming both from the Genocide Convention and our common humanity, to destroy and defeat ISIL and to provide safe haven for those fleeing their monstrous acts.

The campaign of genocide against religious and ethnic minorities in Syria and Iraq must be stopped, and those responsible must face justice.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. BENISHEK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Women's History Month.

Since President Reagan's administration, we have designated the month of March as a time to acknowledge the enormous impact that generations of women have had on all of our lives.

I have been blessed to have many strong women in my life, from the medical professionals who worked by my side at both the Iron Mountain VA and Dickinson Memorial Hospital to the strong women in my family, and, finally, the many Members of Congress that I am humbled to serve beside today.

It is important to recognize the diverse and irreplaceable contributions that these women and so many others have made to our society while also acknowledging that there is still much work to be done.

While we recognize Women's History Month this March, we should honor the important role that women play in our society every day and do our part to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to make their mark in the future.

BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Brain Awareness Week, part of a global campaign to increase public awareness about the benefits of brain research and the progress that has been made to address traumatic brain injuries.

TBIs are a significant health issue affecting our servicemembers, veterans, athletes and ordinary citizens. Military members are at increased risk for sustaining a TBI compared to civilians.

That is why I authored a law requiring the VA to assess its capacity to treat veterans with TBI and develop policies for TBI care and rehabilitation.

I recently toured the Stanford Neurosciences Institute to see how research can prevent and treat brain injuries and chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, a condition that typically affects people who experience repetitive brain traumas. Just this week the NFL admitted that there is a connection between football and CTE.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brain Awareness Week.

HONORING GENERAL JOHN ''DOC'' BAHNSEN, JR.

(Mr. MCKINLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Brigadier General John ''Doc'' Bahnsen, Jr., a Hancock County, West Virginia, resident who was recently recognized as a 2016 West Point Distinguished Graduate. I am honored to count Doc and his wife Peggy as my friends, and I cannot think of a man more deserving of this award.

General Bahnsen graduated from West Point in 1956 and began a 30-year career in the Army, including two tours in Vietnam. A member of the air cavalry, he piloted Hueys under fire.

He was one of the most highly decorated officers in Vietnam and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, five Silver Stars, and two Purple Hearts.

After Vietnam, General Bahnsen continued his service and helped to establish the National Training Center, where our soldiers prepare for deployment overseas.

In retirement, Doc has remained an active alumni at the Academy. He frequently travels to West Point to give lectures to cadets and is a leading booster for the West Point Rugby Team.

General Bahnsen is a true role model for America, and we should all strive to ascribe to his virtues. Through a life of service, he has proven how dedication, pragmatism, and patriotism can help make this country great again.

LOUIS VAN IERSEL POST OFFICE

(Ms. JUDY CHU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mr. Louis Van Iersel by introducing a bill to rename the Sierra Madre post office in his memory.

Mr. Van Iersel's incredible life is a true example of the American Dream. He arrived in the United States as an immigrant from the Netherlands in 1917 and enlisted in the U.S. Army the very next day. He learned English while working in the kitchen before moving on to the battlefield.

For his acts of bravery that saved over 1,000 American lives on a single mission, Mr. Van Iersel was awarded our Nation's highest recognition, the Medal of Honor.

After the war, Mr. Van Iersel moved to my district, in the city of Sierra Madre, to raise his family. But when World War II began, Mr. Van Iersel, along with his three sons, reenlisted, this time serving in the Marines.

An immigrant, veteran, father, and husband, Mr. Van Iersel exemplified courage and service to his country. It is my honor to memorialize him forever in this way.

HEIDI LAWRENCE'S STORY

(Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, West Virginia's families are struggling to make ends meet due to the war on coal. As coal mines close due to crushing regulations from this administration, families are forced to make tough choices to survive.

Heidi Lawrence lives with her family in Cyclone, West Virginia. Her husband lost his coal-mining job more than 5 months ago. Here is her story:

> We are doing everything we can do to pay our bills and raise our three kids.
>
> We have already lost vehicles because it takes everything that he gets in unemployment to pay the house payment and power bill, two things that we have to try to keep, not to mention all the other bills that just don't get paid because we can't afford them.
>
> My husband is a hardworking man. He has worked for 8 years in the coal mines for what we have, and we are now losing it.

Mr. Speaker, Heidi is a true West Virginia coal voice. Her family is an example of what happens when Washington regulates our coal jobs out of existence.

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. CARNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my support for Americans of all ages who have been affected by bleeding disorders.

Last month I met with Cole, a 10-year-old from my home State of Delaware. Cole has hemophilia, and he and his family struggle to afford the costly treatments he relies on.

Hearing Cole's story underlined the financial burden diseases like hemophilia place on many hardworking Americans. Hundreds of thousands of families across our country shoulder both the financial and emotional hardships that come with bleeding disorders.

That is why I am speaking today in recognition of Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month. This is not only an opportunity to raise awareness, but also to stress the importance of continued funding for research on diseases like this.

In Delaware, we are lucky to have the Nemours Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. Their research efforts are leading the way to better treatments for those with bleeding disorders, but it is not enough.

I urge my colleagues to support research for these and other diseases so that those with chronic illnesses can look forward to a brighter future.

PENN STATE'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING NEXT-GENERATION ELECTRONICS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Penn State University, which is located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, on receiving a nearly $18 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

These grant funds will be used over the next 5 years and will be dedicated to the growth of two-dimensional crystals in order to research how they can be used in next-generation electronics. This is very technical work which, at times, involves the use of materials only a few atoms thick.

Eventually, this research is expected to play a significant role in the development of electronics which are faster, use less energy, and can be built on flexible surfaces.

This grant for Penn State's Materials Research Institute was only one of two in the Nation awarded by the National Science Foundation.

I am proud to see such groundbreaking research happening at Penn State. It stands as proof of the university's leadership in this area of research, along with a testament to the skills of its faculty. I know this funding will be put to great use.

□ 1215

GEORGIA-12 YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2016

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, my office hosted the first-ever Georgia-12 Youth Leadership Summit at Georgia Southern University. Over 400 students and educators from around Georgia's 12th Congressional District represented their high schools at the summit. I was amazed by the turnout. The energy of the students was inspiring.

Many thanks to Colonel Sam Anderson, Garrison Commander at Fort Gordon; Stephanie Miller, morning host of Hot Country Hits Y96; Tyson Summers, head football coach at Georgia Southern University; and Congressman TOM GRAVES of the 14th District of Georgia, for sharing their experiences with these young leaders.

These students are the future leaders of Georgia and our country, and I want them to realize their potential, and I want to see them succeed.

I would like to give a special thanks to Georgia Southern University for hosting us, and members of my staff for their hard work in organizing and setting up this event.

Our district is very fortunate to have these great students and educators. It was evident that the young folks of Georgia-12 are an exceptional class of leaders who will step up to any occasion.

What a wonderful honor it was to host this important event last Thursday in Statesboro, Georgia.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF COLONEL FREDRICK VAN HORN

(Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Frederick Earl Van Horn for more than 20 years of dedicated service at Georgia Military College, an outstanding educational institution in Milledgeville, Georgia.

Prior to his tenure at GMC, Colonel Van Horn honorably served our Nation in the U.S. Army, where he completed three tours of duty in Germany, one in Italy, and a 2-year combat tour in Vietnam. His military achievements and medals include a Purple Heart.

Colonel Van Horn wore many hats at GMC, including commander of cadets, dean of students, adjunct professor of ethics, director of character education, executive vice president, and interim president.

But I commend him most for instilling the core values of honor, duty, and country into our students, and preparing the next generation for the challenges of the upcoming decades. He has distinguished himself as a servant-leader of the highest character and integrity.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Colonel Fred Van Horn on his retirement, and for his diligent, effective, and ardent leadership to GMC and our Nation.

I am grateful to have him in the Tenth District of Georgia. I sincerely thank him for his service and unyielding commitment to our State, and I wish Fred and his family the best on his retirement.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 16, 2016 at 9:20 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 337.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 4596.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 640, I call up the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, printed in the bill, shall be considered as adopted, and the bill, as amended, shall be considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4596

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Small Business Broadband Deployment Act''.

SEC. 2. EXCEPTION TO ENHANCEMENT TO TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The enhancements to the transparency rule of the Federal Communications Commission under section 8.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, as described in paragraphs 162 through 184 of the Report and Order on Remand, Declaratory Ruling, and Order of the Federal Communications Commission with regard to protecting and promoting the open Internet (adopted February 26, 2015) (FCC 15–24), shall not apply to any small business.

(b) SUNSET.—Subsection (a) shall not have any force or effect after the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REPORT BY FCC.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that contains the recommendations of the Commission (and data supporting such recommendations) regarding—

(1) whether the exception provided by subsection (a) should be made permanent; and

(2) whether the definition of the term ''small business'' for purposes of such exception should be modified from the definition in subsection (d)(2).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE.—The term ''broadband Internet access service'' has the meaning given such term in section 8.2 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) SMALL BUSINESS.—The term ''small business'' means any provider of broadband Internet access service that has not more than 250,000 subscribers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important responsibilities we have as a Congress, I think, is to protect and advocate for those who may not have the power themselves or the influence or the armies of lawyers to contend with the redtape that all too often is created by our own government.

The bill we are considering today helps them. It does just that. It relieves, we believe, an unnecessary regulatory burden on really small Internet service providers, the little ISPs out there all over our districts across the land that are struggling to compete in this marketplace.

By extending an exemption to the Federal Communications Commission's enhanced transparency rules, this bill allows these small businesses to focus on their core mission which, by the way, is providing broadband Internet access to customers all across America.

Over the last few months, we have spent a great deal of time focused on this issue. We first raised concerns with the Federal Communications Commission itself in a November letter from the Republican members of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, as well as the Small Business Committee.

We urged the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Tom Wheeler, to not only make the exemption that they had already had in their rules permanent, but also to raise that threshold for defining what a small business is to bring it in line with the definitions previously blessed by the Small Business Administration itself.

Well, the FCC, instead, extended the exemption for just 1 year. That is hardly time enough from these very onerous reporting requirements to make a difference, a 1-year extension.

Despite the overwhelming support in the record for a permanent extension, it was clear that Congress needed to act because the FCC wouldn't. So I introduced a discussion draft to get the conversation going that would permanently extend the exemption and would increase the threshold by defining a small business to match the definition used by the Small Business Administration itself.

We had a hearing in January on this draft. We heard from a small business, an Internet service provider from a small community, who shared the dilemma that I think was indicative of what other small ISPs face in these circumstances.

Should they put up new equipment and expand and improve their service?

Or if they have to comply with all these reporting requirements called for by the FCC, they said, look, I am going to have to spend the money, instead, on hiring lawyers and other compliance officers to meet a reporting requirement that is new.

Should they improve service for customers, or should they devote those financial resources to sifting through regulatory language and drafting expensive and extensive reports on esoteric metrics like ''packet loss''?

Now, often these small Internet service providers provide service to areas in the country that are rural, very rural, remote, or may not be as easy to serve or provide competitive options to customers of larger ISPs.

We should be making all efforts to promote the viability of these upstarts, these businesses, these small entrepreneurs that are trying to fill the gaps, serve and compete in this very competitive marketplace.

We should not be saddling them with additional requirements designed to snuff them out, basically, and that would make it more difficult for them to do the business that they want to participate in.

While there was some initial disagreement about how to ease some of these regulatory burdens, Mr. Speaker, Representative LOEBSACK and I were able to come to a compromise through some very serious negotiations. It worked out well, the legislative process.

We both agreed there is a problem. We said, okay, I don't really like this number; what about that number? We kept a focus on the mission and on the goal, which was to prevent this overreach of the Federal Government in the regulatory realm.

So in our amended bill, we extend the exemption from this reporting requirement to 5 years. It seems like a reasonable number. This gives greater regulatory certainty to these very small Internet service providers looking for stability and predictability when they are making some, frankly, pretty expensive investment decisions on equipment and access and expansion.

In addition, we increased the threshold for what is defining a small business from what the FCC had, and required the Federal Communications Commission to report back to Congress on this exemption, along with data about small ISPs that is currently lacking.

They don't have all the data we think they need, so as their overseer, we are telling the FCC, go look at this, tell us what it means, come back to us. And we put a sunset on this as well so that Congress will have the opportunity in a couple of years to come back and say this makes sense; does it still make sense; is it in the best interest of consumers and innovation and development of technology in the marketplace.

In the end, I think this legislation represents a really solid, thoughtful compromise that will relieve the burdens for our smallest Internet service providers while leaving in place really important protections for consumers, Mr. Speaker.

See, this does not wipe out what they have to do to serve customers, the laws they have to follow, all that. That stays. We just said, you don't have to do this really burdensome, costly, technical reporting to the government.

It is important to note that this bill does not affect the bright-line rules for managing traffic or the transparency rules adopted in the FCC's 2010 rules. Customers will continue to have access to those disclosures they have come to expect, with the information needed to make informed decisions about their Internet service.

So I would like to thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Ms. ESHOO, as well as, certainly, Mr. LOEBSACK, for working well with us on this bill.

I would like to particularly thank Kelsey Guyselman, from the majority committee staff, and Ashley Shillingsburg from Representative LOEBSACK's staff—I hope I said that right—for their hard work in getting together and working this out.

This bipartisan process has resulted in a strong piece of legislation, and I am confident it will actually protect many and promote continued network investment and build-out by small business so we have a more vibrant, competitive marketplace and more service into areas that otherwise might not ever get access to high-speed broadband which, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is really important in places like Tennessee and Oregon and Iowa.

This legislation represents a commonsense approach to a problem that directly impacts so many of our constituents, and this solution will enable our country to continue its leadership in broadband deployment.

So I would urge my colleagues to join us in this bipartisan legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, broadband development is a critical issue for my home State of Iowa, as it is for Congressman WALDEN's home State of Oregon, as it is for so many rural areas, in particular.

We all know how important Internet access is for our constituents. Our students need access to the Internet to do their homework. Our businesses need the Internet to participate in the global economy and engage in the ever-growing world of e-commerce. Our healthcare providers need Internet access to serve patients with innovative telemedicine tools.

□ 1230

Our constituents simply can't compete in the 21st century economy that we live in without access to the Internet. It is really that simple.

Broadband deployment is especially important in our country's rural areas. Less than half—only 47 percent—of Americans living in rural areas have access to broadband. We as legislators need to do what we can to get these essential services to our constituents.

This bill is a commonsense, bipartisan measure, and I thank Congressman WALDEN for working with me on this bill that will help small Internet service providers throughout the country deploy broadband and serve our constituents.

In my home State of Iowa, we have 134—that is 134. We have 99 counties but 134 individual small ISPs. The smallest provider in our State is based in my district and serves only 100 subscribers.

As a whole, these companies serve a median of only 750 subscribers. I am proud of the work done by these small businesses that serve the families and businesses that live on farms or in small towns that otherwise might not have any options.

Small ISPs do not have the resources that the bigger guys do, and that is the important thing to remember with this bill. I support the FCC's enhanced transparency rules, and I think that it is important to make sure that consumers have the information they need to make informed decisions and to make sure they are protected. It is also important that we find a balance between providing consumers with technical information about their Internet and making sure that consumers have access in the first place.

I have heard from small businesses in my district that these rules as proposed by the FCC will pose a significant burden and consume critical resources, potentially limiting their ability to invest in broadband development. For example, they have told me they would have to buy special equipment to measure things like packet loss on their networks. These are companies that may have only one technician on staff, so you can imagine the burden.

To address these burdens, this bill would continue the FCC's exemption of small business from the enhanced transparency rules for 5 years. It also instructs the FCC to gather data to determine the impacts of these rules so that we can revisit this issue down the road. When we revisit the issue, we have the opportunity then to figure out the best way to implement these important consumer protections going forward.

This short-term exemption gives small ISPs some much-needed certainty, allowing them to focus their resources on broadband deployment and thus serving their consumers.

I am glad that Mr. WALDEN and I were able to work together on a bipartisan compromise, and I thank our respective staffs as well. They did a great job.

While the original bill would have permanently exempted companies from the FCC's rule, this bill sunsets after 5 years, giving companies time to comply and giving the FCC time to report back to Congress on the real impact of these rules on consumers.

The original bill would have also exempted companies with 500,000 subscribers and 1,500 employees. I and others on the subcommittee were concerned that this threshold was simply too high, and we were able to come to an agreement to exempt ISPs serving half that many subscribers.

So this bill before us will give the certainty that small ISPs need, and it will help us achieve what I think we are all working for here, which is both expanded broadband access and the consumer protections that are needed by our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA). He is a very capable and able vice chair of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and a man from Ohio who has done incredible work on a whole range of these communications issues.

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4596, the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act. This legislation limits the regulatory burden on small Internet service providers, ISPs, serving rural America, just like in my area, and allows them to focus on improving services for consumers.

The Federal Communications Commission's 2015 Open Internet Order included enhanced transparency rules for ISPs, requiring disclosure of commercial terms for prices and other fees and a number of complicated performance metrics. The FCC recognized that the burden of compliance would fall disproportionately on smaller providers and offered regulatory relief by temporarily exempting ISPs with 100,000 subscribers or fewer.

Today's bipartisan action will extend the exemption to 5 years and expand the definition of small broadband providers to fewer than 250,000 subscribers. This commonsense proposal will help small and rural broadband providers across my district focus on investing in networks, deploying broadband, improving connectivity, and creating jobs.

I thank Chairmen UPTON and WALDEN, Ranking Member PALLONE, and Congressman LOEBSACK for working together on this bill. I am proud to support H.R. 4596 and believe it will protect vital small ISPs who serve all of our constituents.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, H.R. 4596, the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act. There has been a lot said about it, and anyone who tunes in, it is not as complicated as it sounds.

We know what the Internet represents. We know we want to expand broadband in our country. We know especially in the rural areas of our country that broadband and all that it represents has not reached everyone, and there are many small businesses that are working hard to bring broadband into the areas where people do not have access.

We also have some critical protections for the consumers of broadband, and we wanted to make sure that we could protect the consumer but also

not burden the small businesses, and that is what this legislation represents.

I am pleased that the bill includes the 5-year sunset provision, which is going to provide the FCC more time to study whether or not the exemption should be made permanent and how a small ISP should be defined.

So, long story short, I think that this is a good bill. It represents a bipartisan effort, and I hope it works out the way the promises are being made about it.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time each side has remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oregon has 21½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Iowa has 24 minutes remaining.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the distinguished and very effective majority leader of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his work on this.

Mr. Speaker, government policy is stuck in the past. Regulators from 20th century agencies are trying to manage and control a 21st century world—and it isn't working.

The world is too complex and individual situations are too unique for a big, bulky government to try to apply standards to everyone. And every time government tries to micromanage the markets or the free exchange of ideas or the development of new technology, our country and our people fall behind. We lose out on new companies, new jobs, and new services.

So, in the House, we want to free innovators from Silicon Valley to Boston by removing the obstacles that hold us back. We want breakthrough technologies and positive disruption that ensures American leadership around the world and brings government itself into the 21st century. It is our innovation initiative.

Today, thanks to GREG WALDEN, we have the first bill from the innovation initiative on the floor, protecting the Internet for hundreds of thousands of users.

The Internet is arguably the most dynamic contributor to a growing economy and higher quality of life in the world. It delivers information and education, supports new businesses and workers, and increases our ability to communicate and experience the world.

But right now, small Internet service providers that bring Internet to homes and businesses in less populated parts of the United States worry that the Washington bureaucracy will swoop in and impose regulations on them, and this will create a compliance burden that could put them out of business.

These small providers don't have enough resources to navigate the bureaucratic maze and bring broadband to communities at the same time. If these small Internet service providers go under, it could leave many people with limited Internet access or no access at all.

The administration delayed these rules once, but that was only temporary. These small Internet providers need permanent relief so they can focus on doing the job of delivering Internet to the American people. So we are passing a bill today that lifts these regulations on small providers for good.

We need to take every opportunity we can to create the space for innovation to thrive in this country. That is the purpose of our innovation initiative, and that is how we can make a more prosperous America that works for everyone.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), who brings extensive experience in all of this realm, of both electric and communications, based on his vast background on this during his days on the Public Utility Commission in North Dakota. He has been a huge asset on our subcommittee.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WALDEN for yielding the time and for his important leadership.

I think it is worth noting, as I know Representative LOEBSACK and several of us from rural districts often get involved in issues like this, and I always like to remind people that Representative WALDEN's district is actually larger than the State of North Dakota. That is how rural we are. We all know Iowa is a rural State. I think this bill is a great representation of what happens when a coalition of rural States and districts get together and try to do the right thing for the people we work for. So it is a pleasure to be part of that.

I will be brief because the leadership has already outlined the essence of the bill very effectively. I will spend just a minute or 2 talking about the reality of the importance of this to a place like North Dakota and to places like rural Oregon or Iowa and other places where distance is greater than the population, where the advantages of access to something as dynamic as the Internet makes all the difference in the world for education opportunities, for health care accessibility, and, of course, for individual use.

That is a challenge in rural America that, frankly, many of our small Internet service providers and communication and technology companies have been meeting all along with plenty of things going against them, not the least of which is: much of the deployment of broadband in rural America has been done, even when it is not necessarily economically advantageous to do it at the time, so that the burdensome regulations, intended or unintended, that came from the FCC rule just don't apply to everybody.

I think that the standards that we have set in the negotiation that have created the benchmarks for access deployment are appropriate. And 250,000 consumers and the size of the companies, I think, hits just right that sweet spot, not only because it was negotiated and it has got consensus, but because I think it is the right number. I think they are the right numbers.

So we don't want to stifle innovation. We want to expand innovation, especially in something as dynamic as the Internet. This act does that. I am honored to be a part of it, and I am honored to be a member of the committee.

I thank the Representative ESHOO as well as Representative LOEBSACK and certainly Chairman WALDEN for their leadership.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, seeing no other speakers on our side of the aisle, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I thank Chairman WALDEN for working on this, once again. Thanks to our staffs, again, for working on this compromise.

There is just one last thing. I would like to remind folks that transparency is a good thing, and the FCC has good intentions when they talk about transparency and making sure that consumers understand what they are getting for their money. So, as far as I am concerned, we have to continue to provide that transparency, but we have to make sure that we do it in the way that we are doing it in this particular legislation, to have that balance that those ISPs, those small-sized ISPs, can continue to provide that access in the first place, as I mentioned already in my remarks.

□ 1245

I thank everyone who has worked on this. It is a great compromise. I wish that we could do this more often here in this body and over in the Senate. I am not such a Pollyanna to believe that this is the beginning of great things to happen, but I think we made real progress here.

I again thank Chairman WALDEN, Ranking Member ESHOO, and our staffs for working on this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I want to thank my colleague from Iowa who has been a great partner in finding the right sweet spot here as we move forward on more telecommunication policy that will help us

allow these great innovators and inventors to go out and serve our constituents and offer competition in the marketplace and, not just because they are small, be snuffed out by a government that requires things they can't afford to do and takes money away from innovation.

They still have to, as you know, follow all of the laws and all of the protections and all of that. It is just this reporting requirement seemed pretty onerous. In fact, obviously, the FCC thought it was when they first came out with their rule. We concur with that and extend that exemption on out.

I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, I am really proud of the bipartisan work that Mr. LOEBSACK, myself, and others have done on our subcommittee.

This marks the fifth piece of legislation that we have brought to the House floor in this Congress in one capacity or another. We passed the FCC consolidated reporting legislation, Mr. Speaker, unanimously across this House floor.

This is designed to deal with the antiquated statutory requirements on reports that aren't needed, oftentimes aren't completed, and, yet, cost money to taxpayers and those who pay fees. So we have a consolidated report that is designed to simplify that process, save taxpayers money, and decrease the Federal bureaucracy a bit. That is over in the Senate now, Mr. Speaker.

We passed FCC process reform legislation that we reached bipartisan agreement on as well. I think it passed unanimously through the House, Mr. Speaker.

This is really important because we are trying to shed a little light on the FCC's activities and bring fairness and transparency to the Federal Communications Commission so that the public, the consumers, the stakeholders, all have a better opportunity to see how policy that will affect them is being deliberated and considered or even what is proposed. That bill is over in the Senate.

Then we dealt with the issue of what we call the DOTCOM Act to make sure that, when the contract runs out on how the Internet naming agency and all works and all the IANA and ICANN pieces, that consumers are protected and will continue to have free Internet, free from government intrusion, free, as it has been, to innovate and create this enormous change. That passed the House I think with over 380 votes.

The Spectrum Pipeline legislation actually was part of the bipartisan budget agreement we passed at the end of last year. So that is now in law, as a matter of fact.

This marks, as I say, our fifth initiative to try to help this great sector of our economy continue to expand, that provides access to the world, and provides access to commerce and jobs in a rural setting.

I can't tell you how important this is in a district such as mine where people now can locate in a smaller community, in a rural environment, with a great lifestyle, connect into the Internet, and be able to conduct commerce and grow jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fine piece of legislation, represents really solid work, and is really important to a lot of start-up and small companies across our country that we need to help grow, expand, and be the next competitor and the next one to really move up and give all us consumers more competition and better service.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I ask Members on both sides of the aisle to join us in bipartisan support of this legislation, which, by the way, Mr. Speaker, is also supported by the administration.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, we have built a proud, bipartisan record of success, and this legislation will help our nation's small businesses which are the lifeblood of Michigan's economy, and the American economy as a whole. A quick look at the stats reveals small businesses represent 99.7 percent of all employers in the United States, and they are true job creators, consistently accounting for 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs in each of the past ten years.

Small Internet providers in particular serve a unique role in connecting consumers across the country. They provide service to rural constituents, to other small businesses, and to areas of the country that otherwise would lack any alternative. They often do so with very few resources, relying on a smaller number of employees to do a great deal of work. The bill that we will vote on today makes sure that they can continue to do so without being hampered by regulatory burdens and red tape.

The Small Business Broadband Deployment Act builds on the temporary steps taken by the Federal Communications Commission to exempt small providers from the enhanced transparency requirements adopted as part of the 2015 Open Internet Order. At the time, the Commission recognized that there could be a significant impact on smaller businesses, and rightfully exempted them from the requirements. However, the FCC's grant of a series of temporary exemptions does not give these businesses the certainty they need to make informed investment decisions.

H.R. 4596 is a bipartisan solution to this problem. By extending the exemption for five years, and raising the threshold for the definition at a small business, this legislation will protect small businesses and ultimately benefit consumers. Keeping these entrepreneurs focused on laying fiber, building towers, and improving service means a better Internet experience for their customers, and more jobs. This is what they set out to accomplish when they started their businesses—serving their communities, not spending hours or days complying with a maze of regulations and piles of paperwork.

Our committee spent a great deal of time considering this problem. In addition, the robust record at the FCC in support of the exemption confirmed our view that this extension was necessary. We heard directly from witnesses like the president of a small fixed wireless provider, a former FCC commissioner, and a public interest representative. Their input both on how important this bill is, and on how to improve our early draft bill, helped us to come to the final version we are considering today.

Subcommittee Chairman WALDEN and Representative LOEBSACK worked in a bipartisan way to come to a consensus on legislation that achieves all of our goals. The final product is a bill that we can all be proud to support, and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense solution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. VEASEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 114–453.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 4, insert before the semicolon the following: '', including whether making such exception permanent would increase access to services provided by small businesses''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 640, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 4596, which simply adds an additional component to the required report from the FCC.

My amendment requests the agency to also answer whether a permanent exemption from enhanced disclosure for small Internet providers, or ISPs, could increase access to the services offered by these small businesses. As many of you already know, these exemptions were created in the FCC's most recent update to the open Internet order.

As Congress considers modifying or making this exemption permanent, it is important to know the impact this would have for those people the order was intended to protect, in this case, the consumers.

Mr. Speaker, the real purpose of a permanent exemption should not be to just lighten the load for these businesses, but also to increase access to broadband services in general.

Even in urban areas, like the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex that I represent, there is still an alarming number of people without access to all broadband services. Congress must work to enact evidence-based policy to expand Internet access.

My amendment would simply have the FCC provide additional information regarding the effects of a permanent extension on a small ISP's consumer base.

However, after speaking with my colleagues, including the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK), I am confident that the goal of my amendment will be achieved through the bill itself.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I thank the gentleman for his participation in this process and debate. I look forward to working with him on these issues. I share his concern, and I appreciate his participation. As I say, the door is always open and happy to continue. We all want the same outcome here for our consumers.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I failed to include in the RECORD a letter of support for our underlying bill signed by the heads of the American Cable Association; CCA; CTIA; United States Telecom Association; WISPA, the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association; WTA, Advocates for Rural Broadband, the rural broadband coalition; and the National Cable & Telecommunications Association, so I would like to include that in the RECORD in support of this effort.

MARCH 15, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy & Commerce, Washington, DC.
Hon. FRANK PALLONE,
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy & Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN UPTON AND RANKING MEMBER PALLONE: We write to express our strong support for H.R. 4596, the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act, which is scheduled to be considered by the full House of Representatives tomorrow.

We commend you, and Communications & Technology Subcommittee Chairman Walden and Representative Loebsack, for crafting a common-sense bill that provides small broadband providers with greater certainty than the Federal Communications Commission's temporary exemption from the enhanced transparency obligations adopted as part of the Open Internet Order. In multiple industry submissions to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), including filings regarding the Paperwork Reduction Act, small providers demonstrated that the enhanced requirements would impose time-consuming and costly compliance obligations; yet, the FCC only extended the existing temporary exemption for a limited time. After reviewing the record at the FCC and receiving testimony at its hearing on the legislation in January, the Communications & Technology Subcommittee found there was more than sufficient evidence to further expand and extend the exemption.

We are gratified that the Committee has produced a bipartisan bill that will enable small broadband providers to focus their financial and human resources on providing high-quality broadband service to their customers rather than dealing with new regulatory obligations. We urge support for H.R. 4596 and look forward to its approval tomorrow.

President and CEO of American Cable Association, President and CEO of CCA, President and CEO of CTIA, President and CEO of National Cable & Telecommunications Association, Chief Executive Officer of NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, President and CEO of United States Telecom Association, Executive Vice President of WTA—Advocates for Rural Broadband, Legislative Committee Chair of WISPA.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman's amendment is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1302

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 1 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Passage of H.R. 4596;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4416; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4434.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 0, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 124]

YEAS—411

Abraham	Clyburn	Foxx
Aderholt	Cohen	Frankel (FL)
Aguilar	Cole	Franks (AZ)
Allen	Collins (GA)	Frelinghuysen
Amash	Collins (NY)	Fudge
Amodei	Comstock	Gabbard
Ashford	Conaway	Gallego
Babin	Connolly	Garamendi
Barletta	Conyers	Garrett
Barr	Cook	Gibbs
Barton	Cooper	Gibson
Bass	Costa	Gohmert
Beatty	Costello (PA)	Goodlatte
Becerra	Courtney	Gowdy
Benishek	Cramer	Graham
Bera	Crawford	Graves (GA)
Beyer	Crenshaw	Graves (LA)
Bilirakis	Crowley	Grayson
Bishop (GA)	Cuellar	Green, Al
Bishop (MI)	Culberson	Green, Gene
Bishop (UT)	Cummings	Griffith
Black	Curbelo (FL)	Grijalva
Blum	Davis (CA)	Grothman
Blumenauer	Davis, Danny	Guinta
Bonamici	Davis, Rodney	Guthrie
Bost	DeFazio	Gutiérrez
Boustany	DeGette	Hahn
Boyle, Brendan F.	Delaney	Hanna
	DeLauro	Hardy
Brady (PA)	DelBene	Harper
Brady (TX)	Denham	Hartzler
Brat	Dent	Hastings
Bridenstine	DeSantis	Heck (NV)
Brooks (AL)	DeSaulnier	Heck (WA)
Brown (FL)	Deutch	Hensarling
Brownley (CA)	Diaz-Balart	Herrera Beutler
Buchanan	Dingell	Hice, Jody B.
Buck	Doggett	Hill
Bucshon	Dold	Himes
Bustos	Donovan	Hinojosa
Butterfield	Doyle, Michael F.	Holding
Byrne		Honda
Calvert	Duffy	Hoyer
Capps	Duncan (SC)	Hudson
Capuano	Duncan (TN)	Huelskamp
Cárdenas	Edwards	Huffman
Carney	Ellison	Huizenga (MI)
Carson (IN)	Emmer (MN)	Hultgren
Carter (GA)	Engel	Hunter
Carter (TX)	Eshoo	Hurd (TX)
Cartwright	Esty	Hurt (VA)
Castor (FL)	Farenthold	Israel
Castro (TX)	Farr	Issa
Chabot	Fattah	Jeffries
Chaffetz	Fincher	Jenkins (KS)
Chu, Judy	Fitzpatrick	Jenkins (WV)
Cicilline	Fleischmann	Johnson (GA)
Clark (MA)	Fleming	Johnson (OH)
Clarke (NY)	Flores	Johnson, E. B.
Clawson (FL)	Forbes	Johnson, Sam
Clay	Fortenberry	Jolly
Cleaver	Foster	Jones

Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—22

Adams
Blackburn
Brooks (IN)
Burgess
Coffman
DesJarlais
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (MO)
Harris
Higgins
Jackson Lee
LaMalfa
Lowey
Meeks
Rush
Scalise
Schweikert
Smith (WA)
Wittman

□ 1322

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 124, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye.''

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 124, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 124, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 124, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12715

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4416) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 2, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 125]

YEAS—418

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland

Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—2

Amash
Watson Coleman

NOT VOTING—13

Adams
Blackburn
Brady (TX)
Butterfield
DesJarlais
Duckworth
Graves (MO)
Higgins
Jackson Lee
Rush
Scalise
Schweikert
Smith (WA)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1329

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 13287

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4434) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 2, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 126]

YEAS—417

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—2

Amash
Watson Coleman

NOT VOTING—14

Adams
Blackburn
Cicilline
DesJarlais
Duckworth
Graves (MO)
Higgins
Jackson Lee
Norcross
Nugent
Rush
Scalise
Schweikert
Smith (WA)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1335

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, on March 16, 2016, I was unavoidably detained due to a family member's health emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall No. 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 123, 124, 125, and 126, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall No. 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, I would have voted "no."

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S VISIT TO CUBA

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, President Obama's trip to Cuba is ill-conceived and premature. A fun trip, the President labeled it. The visit comes on the heels of declarations by the Communist Party that it will ''not give up a single inch in the defense of revolutionary and anti-imperialist ideals.''

Harrumph. This translates to over 2,555 arbitrary detentions of peaceful

protesters between January and February of 2016 alone and over 8,000 arrests just last year.

The President's meeting with civil society is such a low benchmark, the official Cuban newspaper, Granma, stated that Obama's visit destroys the myth that Cuba violates human rights. The leader of the free world has chosen a legacy-shopping photo op enjoying a baseball game with a murderer and a thug.

In these critical moments for democracy on the island, we must support peaceful demonstrations like the one scheduled in south Florida at 11 a.m. on Sunday in front of the Bay of Pigs monument on 8th Street.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

It will be led by Assembly of the Cuban Resistance from Exile, Forum for Democracy and Freedom in Cuba, and Organization for Foundation for the Judicial Rescue.

It will be led by La Asamblea de la Resistencia Cubana desde el exilio, el Foro por los Derechos y Libertades desde Cuba, y la organización Fundación Rescate Jurídico.

The exile community in Miami, who has welcomed many of Castro's former political prisoners, is painfully aware of the trampling of human rights still going on today. This is not a fun trip for peaceful dissidents.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida will provide the Clerk a translation of her remarks.

IT IS TIME TO INVEST IN AMERICA

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today Washington, D.C., was a little bit more of a mess than usual. The Metro is shut down. In part, it is a consequence of mismanagement for years; but more importantly, it is a statement about the deteriorated state of transit in America. There is an $80 billion—B, billion—backlog of capital needed to bring existing transit—not new transit options to get people out of their cars and out of traffic and mitigate congestion—just to bring existing transit systems up to a state of good repair.

As I have been talking about this around the country for the last couple of years, I have been saying, you know, things are so bad that they are killing people in Washington, D.C., and that is what has been happening. It has deteriorated to the point where we had one accident that killed six people and a fire last year that killed one person.

We need to make these repairs. We need them made in America. We have the strongest Buy America requirements for transit of any part of the Federal Government. It will provide American jobs. It will give Americans better commuting opportunities. It will make our people safe on transit.

But this body has failed to bring forward or even allow a vote on additional funding for transportation infrastructure in this country. It is a crisis. We are becoming third or maybe fourth world in our infrastructure. Bridges are falling down, potholes, and transit systems that are falling apart; it is time to invest in America.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FAILURES

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Veterans Administration failed to contact thousands of veterans who submitted applications for health care. Apparently, those applications were incomplete, but the VA did not tell the vets to correct the applications and resubmit them; so the applications were left pending on a shelf with no action by the VA and no health care for the veterans. Reports state that nearly 300,000 veterans died waiting for a resolution from the VA.

Of course, the VA blamed the veterans. This is a farce. The veterans never even received a follow-up call to finish their supposedly incomplete applications.

These mistakes are that of the VA, not the veterans. The VA should be ashamed. Government bungling stood in the way of these warriors receiving health care and broke a promise the Nation gave to them.

The VA's dysfunctional bureaucrats need to be removed, and veterans should be allowed to have a voucher that gives them the privilege to go to their own doctors, doctors who are more concerned about health care than paperwork.

And that is just the way it is.

REMEMBERING MARTIN OLAV SABO

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of the floor today to pay homage and honor to a great Minnesotan and a Member of this body, Martin Olav Sabo. He was the Congressperson who preceded me to represent the Fifth Congressional District.

I can say without any reservation that very, very few people can boast to be greater public servants than Martin Sabo in my State of Minnesota or in America.

Martin Sabo served for more than 40 years in public life, 28 years in Congress. He was the chair of the Committee on the Budget, and he was also a good friend to all. I will say that he was always gracious and well-mannered. He was a helpful person, and he was available to mentor literally hundreds of Minnesota politicians, public activists, and servants.

It is with a heavy heart that I give these remarks because, of course, it would be wonderful to have all of our friends, including Martin Sabo, be with us for a long, long time; but, of course, every one of us does leave this world, and when they do, they would be very, very lucky to make the mark that Martin Sabo did—a great man, a great Minnesotan.

□ 1345

CHANGE NEEDED AT WMATA

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, our Metro system, informed us that they would be suspending operations all day today and into tonight.

While I appreciate that the new general manager had to make this decision to keep our riders safe, what this does is highlight many more widespread problems throughout the system that have been present for years that we need to address. We know a culture change in management needs to happen.

When our delegation met with the new manager at the end of last year, we told him we needed to have a management change and that we needed to see some action taken quickly. I am appreciative the Transportation chairman is going to have hearings on this.

I want to read to you an example of why we need changes here. A trainee at Metro talked about the incompetence there. He said:

> I'll be honest with you. I studied harder for fast-food jobs and waiter jobs when I was in college than I did for their training program at Metro. Their testing program is a joke.

This is from a Washingtonian article in December of last year.

WMATA and Metro lifers who haven't left for years need to start leaving so that we can have a new management culture there.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleagues for a Special Order about Women's History Month.

This month of March we are blessed with the opportunity to discuss the opportunities particularly presented by the Republican Party and the philosophies of the Republican Party as they relate to women, women's history and women's future and the opportunity to be involved in building women up and providing opportunities in the future, an opportunity culture that is shared by men and women to make sure that our homeland is safe and secure, to make sure that our families are in an environment that will be uplifting. These are some of the topics we will be discussing today.

I am joined by several colleagues, one of whom I would like to call on first. Incidentally, the first colleague I am calling on is a Republican man with whom I graduated from law school as a student at the University of Wyoming College of Law.

My own home State of Wyoming is the first government in the world to continuously grant women the right to vote. That occurred in 1869. Colorado, the home State of this gentleman, is the first State to grant women the right to vote.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

Mr. BUCK. I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming, my friend and law school classmate, for her great leadership on this issue.

I am proud to come from a State that was not only the first to give women the right to vote, but the first to elect women to the State legislature. My wife Perry is continuing that great tradition as a member of the Colorado General Assembly.

Many women have impacted our neighborhoods, our communities, and our Nation. But I want to speak briefly today about the many women who will impact our world.

They have ideas and ambitions and callings. They have machines to invent, deals to negotiate, people to heal, diseases to cure, and legislation to pass.

Republicans are advancing an agenda to help these women impact our future. We are focused on making the country more secure, on creating jobs, on replacing ObamaCare with a patient-centered alternative, on extending opportunity to all children, and on protecting the freedom at the heart of our prosperity.

Women don't need government getting in their way. That is why the efforts of Congress to reassert its authority and roll back executive overreach are so vital.

Congress has the responsibility to create an environment where women thrive. In 100 years, I hope we are celebrating the women who made this country great, not lamenting the government that stopped them.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for being here today and acknowledging the importance of Women's History Month and the involvement of women in politics and government and for his leadership in his home State of Colorado.

Next I would like to yield to a longstanding colleague who is well known to the House of Representatives. VIRGINIA FOXX has done more on workforce development issues in the last couple of years than have been done in many, many years in the House of Representatives.

She is the first in her family to graduate from college, earn a master's and doctorate degree, and then went on to be the president of an institute of higher learning, a community college.

Her presidency there also lifted education in her home State. She is the chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina's Fifth District (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LUMMIS for her leadership in this Special Order this afternoon and for all the great work that she has done.

She is a wonderful role model for women. She has lent her expertise as the former treasurer of her State, and has brought much, much talent to the House of Representatives. I appreciate all that she has done since she has been here.

We all know, I think, that March is Women's History Month, which honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout the history of the United States.

Since 1917, when Republican Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, 313 women have served as U.S. Representatives, Senators, or Delegates.

Many Americans might assume that their congressional Representatives come from exclusive and rarified backgrounds. Well, my story could hardly be less rarified.

As a child, my family's home didn't have electricity or running water. My parents, while dedicated and hardworking, were very poor, with little formal education. Girls with my background weren't likely to end up in Congress.

Fortunately, I was pushed by the right people, teachers and administrators who wouldn't let me settle for less than my best.

In the mountains of North Carolina, I learned firsthand the power of education and its vital role in the success of every American. Although it took me 7 years while working full-time, I became the first in my family to go to college and earn a degree.

In the 1970s, I was a member of the League of Women Voters. Through the League, I attended school board meetings in my county as a public observer to encourage accountability of elected officials. I went to countless meetings, many times as the only person representing the general public.

During one meeting of an all-male school board, a local reporter leaned over and said: These guys are incompetent. Why don't you run for the school board?

My instinctive response was: I am not qualified.

I think many women fall prey to this attitude of self-disqualification and underestimate their abilities. I took another look at those board members and changed my mind.

Eventually, I ran for the school board. While I lost that first race, I won the next election for school board, and I haven't lost an election since.

So while I may not have had wealthy parents or an Ivy League education, I did have what every single American has: opportunity.

A few weeks ago I spoke to a local Girl Scout troop about Congress and its role in our government. As the group was leaving my office, one of the parents pulled me aside and said how glad she was that the girls had the opportunity to hear from a woman in my position.

Women are a stronger presence than ever before on Capitol Hill. We have rich and varied perspectives and a commitment to good ideas and teamwork. The women of the 114th Congress are shaping our Nation, and it is an opportunity and responsibility that we take seriously.

Although I am now serving in my sixth term as a Representative from North Carolina, I am still really a teacher at heart, having spent the lion's share of my life working as an educator and administrator in North Carolina colleges and universities.

I believe confronting the challenges facing American schools and workplaces is critical to providing opportunity for every individual to get ahead.

That is why, as chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, I have led efforts to modernize and reform the Nation's workforce development system. I appreciate very much my colleague mentioning that.

In 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law. This bipartisan, bicameral compromise between the SKILLS Act that I authored and the Senate's Workforce Investment Act of 2013 streamlines and improves existing Federal workforce development programs and fosters a modern workforce that American businesses can rely on to compete.

House Republicans have also fought to limit one-size-fits-all Federal dictates that hamper innovation and limit the ability of States and local schools to address their students' needs.

Last fall we passed the Every Student Succeeds Act, which reverses Washington's micromanagement of classrooms and gives parents, teachers, and local education leaders the tools they need to repair a broken system and help all children reach their potential.

Unfortunately, many Americans still struggle to realize the dream of higher education because our current system is often expensive, inflexible, and outdated. Too many students are unable to complete college, saddled with loan debt and ill-equipped to compete in our modern economy.

The United States is the world's summit of opportunity, and we have a responsibility to act now to preserve that role. House Republicans are pursuing reforms that will help all individuals, regardless of age, location, or background, access and complete higher education, if they choose.

We are working to empower students and families to make informed decisions. We want to simplify and improve student aid as well as promote innovation access and completion. We are committed to ensuring strong accountability and a limited Federal role.

By keeping college within reach for students and preserving the excellence in diversity that has always set America's colleges and universities apart, our country and our economy stand to benefit.

While Women's History Month celebrates the incredible accomplishments of women throughout America's history, the most lasting tribute we can pay is our efforts to improve this Nation for the next generation of women.

Rather than simply being discouraged by the many problems facing our country and our world, I have learned to be an agent of change focused on the problems that can be solved and the people who can be helped.

I thank my friend who encouraged me back in the 1970s to run for the school board because of the opportunities it has provided me to help other people throughout my life.

Mrs. LUMMIS. We are tackling five big priorities that women care about this year: national security, jobs, health care, upward mobility, and balance of power.

You just heard from Congresswoman FOXX about jobs, about education, and upward mobility that comes through those avenues.

The other areas we are talking about include national security and health care. No one in Congress is better prepared to address those issues than our next speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the first woman to represent the Second District of North Carolina, which includes all of Fort Bragg, home of the airborne and Special Operations Forces.

She has served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee since 2012 and currently serves as chairman of the Republican Women's Policy Committee.

Prior to running for office, she worked as a registered nurse for over 21 years and owned a general surgery practice with her husband Brent in Dunn, North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS), someone with real life experience in the areas of health care and who represents a district that is so profoundly influential in this Nation's national security.

□ 1400

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. I thank my friend and colleague from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS). I just want to say how much I appreciate her leadership, especially today, as we are talking about Women's History Month and the different roles that we, as women in Congress, are playing, and how we want to formulate and build the structure into the future for all women. I thank her for her service to all of us in representing Wyoming.

Mr. Speaker, this month is Women's History Month. It is an opportunity to highlight the various ways women in America are pushing the envelope to leave a positive and lasting imprint on society.

As the first woman to represent North Carolina's Second District, and the first woman in our State to represent Fort Bragg, national security remains one of my utmost priorities.

So when I learned of a proposal to deactivate the 440th Airlift Wing located at Pope Army Airfield in Fort Bragg, I rallied my North Carolina colleagues. For nearly 2 years, we went toe-to-toe with the Air Force on this misguided decision.

The 440th is known for its ability to rapidly mobilize and execute last-minute exercises. It is unique in its mission and provides unparalleled levels of training to paratroopers of the 18th Airborne Corps.

Deactivation of the Airlift Wing would undoubtedly affect our military readiness and it could jeopardize the safety of our paratroopers. Given the global uncertainty abroad right now, this decision just doesn't make sense.

To fight this ill-conceived decision, I coordinated with my North Carolina colleagues to question top military leaders here at the Capitol. During these same meetings, we sought answers to tough questions and asked for data to back up their justification for the Wing's closure.

As a woman representing the military base, I have remained unwavering in my work to acquire answers. I have asked for meetings with the Air Force Reserve, the Army, the Pentagon, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and local Fort Bragg commanders.

The threat of terrorism abroad and the growth of radical groups like ISIS makes the decision to deactivate even more baffling. Constituents back home in North Carolina feel the same way, so I have charged forward in my efforts to prevent its closure.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to reiterate that the Republican women in Congress are making history in a variety of ways. As women, we are working to create new opportunities, restore a confident America, and ensure the safety and security of every family living in our country.

Again I thank my good friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS, for hosting today's Special Order, for being the person that she is, representing Wyoming, being a leader amongst all of us, as women in Congress, and allowing us to speak about the individual initiatives that we are tackling as women.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentlewoman and acknowledge her expertise on health care, and want to raise an issue that I would love to hear her comments on.

One of the bills that I am cosponsoring is a bill called the Research for All Act, and it would acknowledge that most medical research focuses on men, and studying women is suggested, but not required.

Now, sometimes different drugs have different effects on women than they do on men, and vice versa. For example, there is a diabetes drug study that shows that their drug may lower women's risk of heart failure, but increase a man's; and unless we have adequate studies done on both men and women, we won't recognize those differences or nuances in treatment options that should be tailored differently to men and women.

Based on your experience in nursing, your lifelong career there, do you have any comments about other healthcare initiatives that women are working on here in Congress?

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. First of all, I thank the gentlewoman for her piece of legislation on that particular issue because it shows the importance and how incredibly accurate you are when you are saying that there are so many differences in treatments geared towards women and geared towards men.

When you highlight heart conditions, that is the number one killer of women in this country, when we look at disease. Heart disease is the number one. When we look at this, we know that women respond differently to symptoms of heart disease than men do, and so do the drugs. So that is a perfect example of why we have to be focusing from a perspective where we consider both genders.

There are so many things that are being worked on here in Washington by the women leaders that we have. For instance, some of the things that we have been able to pass on a large bipartisan scale have to do with breast cancer.

The USPSTF came out with a decision saying that women between the ages 40–49 don't necessarily have to have mammograms, and so, therefore, their insurance companies shouldn't have to pay for it.

I worked across the aisle on legislation to stop that from moving forward, and we were able to put a 2-year moratorium on that decision so that we can actually bring a consensus together.

The last thing we want to do for women in this country is send out more mixed messages on breast cancer and the treatment of and the prevention of. So we are working with our colleagues, as Republicans and Democrats.

Another perfect example of a healthcare decision that is being made by the USPSTF right now is essentially interrupting the process for men to get a PSA test, which is the only way we can diagnose prostate cancer. It is a simple blood test, and right now they are making decisions as to whether or not insurance companies should have to pay for that. I think that is devastating.

And then, of course, I will just say, Medicare remains one of the major issues that we are working on. I will tell you that all of the women in the Republican conference are dedicated to this effort.

There are some new rule changes that are coming out from CMS now that we are all targeting, and we have got to do that for every senior in this country who is receiving Medicare. They need the health care that they deserve, and we have got to do everything we can to make sure that it is accessible to them.

But, obviously, the largest—the elephant in the room, if you will, is, of course, the Affordable Care Act, and we continue to be dedicated to this issue.

In North Carolina, I can tell you it is a mess with the insurance plans. The individual plans themselves have skyrocketed from 30 to 40 to 50 percent increase in premiums, with an equal increase on the deductible.

The out-of-pocket costs that families in North Carolina now are spending is outrageous. They are literally making decisions to not go to the doctor when they need health care because they don't want to have to pay extra.

This is unacceptable. It certainly was not the intention of the Affordable Care Act.

As you know, my dear colleague, we have had many of the solutions to this problem, and I believe that the women in our conference are going to lead and be a strong voice to our leadership for us to move forward so that we can show the American people that we have alternatives to the Affordable Care Act that will continue to give them good coverage, but also continue to support good health care.

The 21st Century Cures Act we passed in 2015 is another perfect example of all of us coming together to ensure the American people get the coverage, the cures.

What better way to save dollars in health care than to come up with cures?

If we could just find one on Alzheimer's alone, we would save incredible amounts of money.

Listen, I am just proud and honored to be able to have a voice, especially when it comes to health care because, as we know, health care touches every life, and we have to do everything as Members of Congress, as mothers, as sisters, to do everything we can for the American people.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Alzheimer's, which you mentioned, is a disease where two-thirds of the patients are women, which also means that men are 50 percent less likely to get it. So the importance of having women making policy on these issues is very high because we are the ones who are dealing with frequently female relatives, be they mothers, sisters, aunts, who are suffering from Alzheimer's.

When we have people like Congresswoman ELLMERS, who has a nursing background, a medical professional background, we have the opportunity to use that expertise that she has gained in her prior career, in her capacity as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, where much of the healthcare-related legislation originates in this Congress.

In addition, our new Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, has put together several idea-gathering groups to make sure that we are building an agenda for the next Congress that will address these issues that have festered during the last 8 years; among them, the unacceptable consequences of ObamaCare that have created the situations which you described in your home State.

Can you give us a sneak preview about what some of these idea meetings are bringing to light about the direction of healthcare policy, as crafted by the Republican Party, about your role in those idea sessions, and how we intend to roll out health care that truly is affordable?

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Well, I will just say that I have had the honor of being part of the Republican Study Committee group that has worked on alternatives to the Affordable Care Act, and we have come up with about 10 or 12 different issue-based sections that are good policy that really have been there for a while, that many of our members have had; and we have actually culminated it into a plan of action that would take care of the issue and cover those things that the Affordable Care Act is leaving the American people behind.

One of the issues is choice, being able to choose a plan for your family that you feel is appropriate. Unfortunately, the Affordable Care Act, it was promoted as something that provided incredible choice. You were going to be able to go to your doctor. You were going to be able to go to the hospital you wanted. It was going to bring down the cost. And none of those things have come to be true. So now we have to go in and we have to change that.

You should be able to buy insurance across State lines or from a different perspective rather than what you have within your own State. You should be able to have a healthcare savings plan where you can put dollars away and be responsible for yourself.

Young people are in a different situation. They shouldn't have to spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars every month on a healthcare plan that they cannot afford when they can have a much more economical issue there, another situation that they can deal with.

Another big issue is tort reform at the national level. I think this is something that will also save dollars. There are many, many ideas from the business side of it, with small businesses to larger businesses having better choices, being able to negotiate healthcare plans.

So when we are talking about health care and we are talking about the affordable care, what we really are talking about is healthcare coverage. And I think that is one of the most important parts of this discussion that many times, I think, gets confused.

We are talking about healthcare coverage, which leads to better health care. We should be doing everything we can to make sure that it is accessible to every American, and to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves.

Pre-existing conditions is a huge issue. We have to be able to deal with that. We know that we cannot leave the American people hanging. In other words, when we talk about wanting to repeal it, we know that there has to be a process in place to make sure that there is a safety net for all of those families who have been forced off of their insurance plans and on to an affordable care plan that was not their choice, only they were forced to do it because it became law.

Now we have to make sure that we are providing an option for them, one that will move them from one place to another, a much better place.

I will just say again that we are dedicated to this issue. It is the main reason I ran for Congress to begin with. I will not let up on this until we actually have the solutions that we are looking for.

□ 1415

I am looking forward to our working together over this next year on this issue and just moving health care forward in so many different ways. Unfortunately, the Federal Government does have a lot to do with what is working and what is not working, and I am just very happy to be part of that conversation.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank our colleague for her dedication and commitment to health care for Americans that will truly work for them.

Speaking of which, and in recognition of a wonderful woman who is an example of the types of healthcare issues that we are addressing this afternoon as part of our focus on Women's History Month, we have been joined by the good gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON), who would like to pay tribute to a woman from his great State of Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona, Congressman MATT SALMON.

Mr. SALMON. First, before I start honoring this wonderful woman, I would like to say that I learned early in my life, in my church, that if you want to talk about something, you convene a meeting with a bunch of men; if you want to solve something, you convene a meeting with women.

Mrs. LUMMIS. My former Senator, Alan Simpson, used to say: ''The cock croweth, but the hen delivereth the goods.''

Mr. SALMON. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak very, very lovingly and admiringly about one of the most wonderful people I have ever gotten a chance to know in my life. Her name is Laura Knaperek.

I first met Laura when I was a State legislator. I was assigned to be on the health committee, and Laura was a citizen activist that came down to champion the cause of families, and specifically families with children with developmental disabilities. I was amazed then at her passion, and I remember telling her: You ought to run for office some day.

She was a beloved member of the Arizona community and a tireless champion for those with developmental disabilities and one of the strongest advocates for families I have ever met in my life. She sought to lift people's lives around her.

She was first elected to the State legislature in 1994. She set herself apart as a selfless public servant. A few weeks ago, our Speaker, in talking to the Conference, mentioned that there are two types of people in politics: there are doers, and there are be-ers. Laura Knaperek was a doer. She was not interested in having the title of being a State legislator; she was interested in solving the problems of the day.

She was diagnosed, in 2012, with ovarian cancer. I remember seeing her shortly after that diagnosis, and there was no despair and no concern. Without missing a beat, she just wanted to talk about how she could uplift other people's lives.

I remember Laura decided to champion an idea in Arizona, which I believe is an idea whose time has come. It is the right called the Right to Try. I think it was one of the very first States in the country that has tried to pass this by referendum. Laura was successful in doing this.

It basically allows individuals with terminal diseases access to things that aren't necessarily approved by the FDA yet. If it is their last-ditch chance, they ought to have a shot at life, and that was Laura's contention. She championed this idea, and it passed overwhelmingly at the ballot.

I am sad to say that, 4 years after her diagnosis, she succumbed to this dread disease.

I was shocked because Laura was on Facebook and every other social media outlet constantly championing ideas and thoughts of others, and she never said anything about herself. She never wallowed in self-pity. She was the kind of person that realized that the greatest service that we can do is serving other people.

In my church, there is a saying that, when you are in the service of your fellow being, you are in the service of God. I think Laura understood that better than anybody.

Because of Laura, I introduced H.R. 3012, the Right to Try Act, introduced the last session of Congress. I think that Americans deserve the same opportunity that Arizonans have to be able to try to save their life and do whatever is necessary to save their life if they are terminally ill and they have no other options, no hope.

I think that we can honor Laura and others like her by allowing everybody across the United States who suffers from a terminal illness the access to every tool available to help them fight for their precious life. The Right to Try, to me, is, in reality, a component of the God-given right to life. The Right to Try offers hope to those who have nowhere else to turn.

Laura Knaperek passed away at the age of 60, leaving behind her husband, Robert, their 6 children, 19 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

I ask my colleagues to join with me today in honoring Laura's life and pray that we continue Laura's fight to allow those with terminal illnesses another chance at life.

I thank the gentlewoman.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for that warm tribute to a woman who selflessly provided an option that women and men can use in the event that they are terminally ill where a possible drug treatment or other type of treatment has been identified that has not yet cleared the FDA drug analysis and has not yet been approved but may be tremendously helpful to preserving these lives that will be otherwise cut short so early, especially a woman of Laura's caliber, who, at 60 years of age, died, leaving such a wonderful family.

I thank the gentleman for sponsoring the legislation giving people the same opportunities that Arizonans have.

Have you reintroduced that piece of legislation in this Congress?

Mr. SALMON. Actually, we are going to be reintroducing it, and we are probably going to rename it Laura's Law in honor of Laura Knaperek.

There are very few times in your life that you meet somebody that you think they got the memo mixed up in Heaven, that God sent a memo that said that this person that is supposed to be an angel actually got to come down to Earth. That was Laura. She was an angel, a living angel, and somebody that gave a lot of people reason for hope through the course of her life, and she never, ever sought recognition. All she sought was helping others and changing other people's lives.

Do you know what? That is the standard I think we all aspire to, but there are rare occasions where we find somebody that just embodies everything that is good.

Mrs. LUMMIS. As we celebrate Women's History Month, we look for that junction between women who have done historic things, women such as Laura, and the way that they have paved the way for policies that can be implemented that provide opportunities for people that are in a similar condition as hers to have some hope and a chance at a longer life.

We are grateful that Congressman SALMON has been willing to pick up the torch of her good work and bring it to the attention of, and hopefully the approval of, this Congress.

I thank the gentleman for his role in this Congress, for acknowledging the importance of Laura's life for today's Special Order on Women's History Month, and for carrying on her fine work in his capacity as a fine gentleman who is doing the best to represent his State, and in doing so, enhances the opportunity for every American in this Nation. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SALMON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. SALMON. I do want to say one other thing.

I know that the gentlewoman is going to be retiring after the end of this term, and I just want to say what a true honor it has been to serve with a statesman such as yourself. You are truly one of the bright spots in this place.

There have been a lot of times when I feel like I kind of had to kick myself

extra hard to get motivated to come back and get on that plane and come to Washington, D.C., and leave my family behind; but there are people that give me hope, and you are one of those people. You will be sorely missed. It doesn't matter whether you are a woman or not a woman. You happen to be. You are a fine, fine individual, and I am proud to know you.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman. It is an honor to serve with you.

I know you are completing your second tour of duty in this Congress as well and will be returning to a lovely family in Arizona. Those of us who are from the West are blessed to live in beautiful places with people that create a society that matches the scenery, and you are an important part of that society.

Clearly, Laura was an important part of that society. She enhanced your life; and you, in turn, enhance ours.

I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his service.

Here, in Women's History Month, I can't help but toot the horn of my great State of Wyoming, the first government in the world to grant women the right to vote. We also had the first woman Governor, the first woman justice of the peace, the first woman grand juror, the first women who were elected delegates to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, and the first woman elected official in the country, who happened to be the State superintendent of public instruction, Estelle Reel.

All of these women were trailblazers. This all happened 50 years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted all American women the right to vote.

Wyoming territory, in 1869, became the first government in the world to continuously grant women the right to vote, and it has been my privilege as a woman from the great State of Wyoming to follow a woman colleague, Congresswoman Barbara Cubin, who served 14 years in this body. I now, in my eighth term, make a combined total of 22 consecutive years where our beloved State of Wyoming has been represented in this House of Representatives by women. And that is really saying something, since Wyoming only has one Member of Congress. It is, indeed, a great honor.

These women, however, we cannot just celebrate their past, our past, and the opportunities that we enjoy in this great Nation. We have to use what we have learned as American women to enhance the lives of our fellow Americans as we serve here, which is one of the reasons that we are both celebrating Women's History Month and discussing specifically, today, what the Republican Party is doing.

Women's History Month is our opportunity to celebrate the incredible accomplishments women have made to America. But the most lasting tribute we can pay this month is our effort to make history for the next generation of women. That is why House Republicans are building an agenda to restore a confident America where every American feels secure in their lives and their futures.

The five big priorities that women care about that we are working on together this year include: national security, which was discussed by RENEE ELLMERS; jobs, which was discussed, of course, by VIRGINIA FOXX; health care, where we have several nurses and medical practitioners that are women that are deeply involved in this legislative project; and upward mobility, something that is important to all Americans, but especially women.

When you consider how many women heads of household there are; when you consider that a rising tide lifts all boats, and when women earn more money, families do better, children do better, women do better, and men do better, it is very important, when we are talking about upward mobility, that opportunities are provided for women by having a Tax Code that does not burden them and by having jobs that come back to this country that have previously left this country.

We can do that by changing our Tax Code in a way that allows us to bring jobs back to this country so those employers and their employees are not penalized by higher taxes that we have through a Tax Code that makes sure that corporations pay more taxes here than they do in other countries. That is why we have what are called inversions. That is why people are leaving this country to take their jobs to other countries. We need to bring them back, providing more opportunities to have great jobs here in this country for women, heads of household, and for all members of our society and culture.

With women making the majority of healthcare decisions in this country, we need to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act with an act that will provide opportunities for a marketplace for insurance that acknowledges that some people have preexisting conditions and you will not be penalized for such, that acknowledges that some people just want catastrophic coverage and later in their life can move into a system that maybe provides more specific coverage, and that allows you to shop for insurance across State lines. You can find a product that works specifically for you and that has a pool of participants large enough so that a very small population State like mine can be involved in a bigger pool, thereby bringing down the risk and bringing down the costs for those of us in very small States.

□ 1430

We have to be looking also at specific healthcare issues. Multiple sclerosis is much more prevalent in the Intermountain West than it is in a lot of other areas.

Research being done right now at Cornell University is showing that there is a possible connection between multiple sclerosis and a fungus in the soils.

These are the kinds of unusual connections when research is done that will allow us to address certain healthcare issues that may be more prevalent in one region than another, a healthcare system that is flexible and affordable and recognizes that not all healthcare issues are the same for men or women, for the Intermountain West versus the coastal States, for the African American population, for the Hispanic American population, for the White population.

These are all things that need to be discussed in the context of an affordable healthcare system that recognizes the tremendous scientific advantages that we enjoy by virtue of having a first-class higher education system.

We have to make sure that that higher education system continues to advance opportunities for all people that can contribute to the body of knowledge that have made America the greatest country in the world.

Women currently making up the largest component of the higher education population will be leading the way among them.

Mr. Speaker, before I wrap up this Special Order that has acknowledged women's history in this country and acknowledges the work that is being done here in Congress to make sure the future for American women is brighter, better, more prosperous, and more fulfilling than ever, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a champion of healthcare revision that will benefit both men and women.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming for yielding to me on this important topic. I am privileged to be here on the floor listening to this discussion that we have today.

I think of the many, many hours that roll back as far back as 2009, when the healthcare debate began to get intensified here in this Congress. From the beginning, for me, it was about freedom.

I often say to people that the most sovereign thing that we have is our soul. We are in charge of that. We are in control of that. With God's help, we are in the management of our own soul. The Federal Government hasn't figured out how to tax it, how to nationalize it, or how to manage it.

That may be a point of profundity, but what is the second most sovereign thing that we have, aside from our soul? Number two is our skin and everything inside it, our bodies.

The Federal Government has figured out under ObamaCare how to nationalize that, how to do—I call it a hostile

takeover of our skin and everything inside it—and tell us: We are going to tax your paycheck and we are going to command you to take that money and pay a health insurance premium, not the policy of your choice, but the policy of Uncle Sam's choice.

Then that policy, the rules written within it and the thousands of pages of rules that have been written on ObamaCare since, will determine whether you get health care or at least whether you get it paid for out of your health insurance policy or not. That I call a hostile takeover of my skin and everything inside it.

It is abhorrent to me for a free people to be subjugated to such a law. Yet, the other side of this is that we have had elections in 2010, 2012, 2014, and now an election coming up in 2016.

The results of this upcoming election might be the one where we finally set the full 100 percent ''rip it out by the roots as if it had never been enacted'' ObamaCare.

''Repeal it completely and entirely as if it had never been enacted'' actually are the last words of the repeal bill that I wrote in the middle of the night after it passed here on March 22, 2010, a sleepless night, I might add.

The question was: What is the other side of the glorious repeal of ObamaCare? A number of really good things that we would have done by now if it weren't obstructed by the policy that exists in front of us that is named after our President.

The first and I think most important one is to provide for selling insurance across State lines. There is legislation there that has existed for years called the McCarran-Ferguson Act.

It is legislation that enables the States to write the mandates and the specifications in such a way that the States can be lobbied by large health insurance companies whose goal is to have a monopoly within each of those States.

That is trade protectionism that is allowed. It is in violation of the Commerce Clause in the Constitution, I might add. But the McCarran-Ferguson Act enables that.

We need to repeal the components of the McCarran-Ferguson Act so that a young man, while at the beginning of this dialogue in 2009 or 2010—a 23-year-old young man would be paying about $6,000 a year for a typical health insurance policy in New Jersey, but a young man, same age, similarly situated in Kentucky, would be paying about $1,000 a year.

This would let the young man from New Jersey buy the policy from Kentucky, which, eventually, the competition would bring the price down in New Jersey, probably wouldn't bring it up in Kentucky, and we would see that the opportunities we would have as Americans we could trade for health insurance in any State.

Free trade zones on health insurance, what a wonderful thing. Then the Federal mandates would be gone. They would be away.

That would mean that especially young people that could wisely manage their investments would be able to buy a health savings account. The way they were set up in 2003, a couple at age 20 could have invested $5,150 a year. That was the max-out in an HSA.

If they spent about $2,000 a year for normal medical costs and accrued the balance of that at the 40-year average of interest rate, they would arrive at 65 Medicare eligibility with approximately $950,000 in their health savings account.

Uncle Sam's interest in that HSA at that point, that nearly $1 million, would be to tax it as real income when it comes out of the HSA.

Well, I would say instead, if you could buy a Medicare replacement policy in the dollars, when we did the math on this, for the couple for $144,000, the government would tax the balance. I would say keep the change tax free.

If you take yourself off of the Medicare rolls, the entitlement rolls, by buying a replacement annuitized, paid-up-for-life policy to replace the Medicare liability, keep the change tax free, say, $150,000, around $800,000 tax free, that becomes your retirement account.

The HSA has become now a life management account where you would be planning your health insurance. The more money you had in your HSA, the more deductible you could sustain, the higher deductible and the higher copayment.

With that nest egg of an HSA, you could negotiate the health insurance premiums down. You would manage your way, get your exercise, get your check-ups, because you would want to be able to live long and healthy to spend all of that mad money, if you choose, that balance of $800,000.

That is the kind of thing that is in front of us if we can get ObamaCare out of the way. Sell insurance across State lines, expand HSAs, address the tort reform piece of this, which is billions of dollars a year that is unnecessarily spent on tests that are done to protect from the liability that is there.

With these packages, other good ideas that come from other Members doing this in the fashion and vision by our Founding Fathers, we go out to where all of the solutions are, out to the voices and ideas of the people, bring those ideas here.

Each of us, our job, the gentlewoman from Wyoming's job and mine, is to sort through the good ideas, bring the best ideas here to Washington, let our best ideas compete with the other good ideas, and put that out on the President's desk for the solutions that we really need.

I appreciate the attention and the opportunity to speak.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa for his leadership on this issue, for being a devoted husband, father, and father-in-law.

I know that the women in his life have influenced his perspective on these healthcare issues, as have so many of us. I thank him for participating in this discussion, this Special Order, celebrating Women's History Month.

I want to conclude the Special Order by highlighting two Republican women with whom I serve in Congress who are truly doing courageous things in their lives with their families.

First of all, Congresswoman CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, who is the highest ranking Republican woman in this conference, is our conference leader. She is the mother of three children.

One is a special needs child, a friend to all of us, a delightful young man who was born while she was serving in Congress, as were her other two children.

The devotion that CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS has to her family and to parents of special needs children has brought about important legislation that is good for parents and special needs children all over this country.

As we celebrate this Women's History Month, I want to acknowledge our colleague CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS for her important role in this Congress as a leader on this issue and many others.

I also want to acknowledge our colleague JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER, who is from the State of Washington. JAIME, during a pregnancy which occurred while she also was serving as a Member of this Congress, as she still does, experienced a pregnancy that would have brought about the death of her child.

But because she was courageous enough to test and, like Laura's Law, allow a rather experimental treatment where she was injected with a saline solution in utero that allowed that baby to continue to mature until its birth, at which point it was allowed to grow and had dialysis, and then, at a point at which that child had become big enough and healthy enough, received an organ transplant from JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER's husband, the father of the child.

That child and that father and that mother, who we continue to serve with here in this Congress, are all doing well. This is the first known child to survive, given the condition that that child was identified as having before it was born.

Most doctors recommend that a parent terminate that pregnancy or, in many cases, that pregnancy will be terminated on its own without any involvement outside of the womb.

But in JAIME'S case, she took the extraordinary step of having a saline injection to allow that child to continue to grow and mature in a way that allowed it to be born.

This is a lovely child, another friend of all of ours, because, occasionally, that child visits us here in the Cloakroom behind this floor of the House.

What an honor to serve with these two courageous mothers who, while having these children and going through these extraordinary issues, are serving their States, their districts, their Nations in this Congress, and contributing to uplifting women in this country through their service to this Congress.

As I conclude this tribute to Women's History Month, I want to remind people that women in this Congress are making a difference with regard to legislation that affects all of us, whether they are in the avenues of natural resources, water, air—the areas that I spend most of my time on—whether they are in the areas of health care, jobs, or higher education.

The areas that women in Congress are interested in are as diverse as the areas that men are interested in, but women bring a different perspective to those same issues. Women look out into the future.

When I served in the Wyoming Legislature, our chief clerk, who sits up there just as these folks do and observes what is happening, was one day asked: Can you tell a difference between the way men and women legislate, regardless of whether they are Democrats or Republicans?

He said: Absolutely. Women are looking to the future. They are not focused on the next election. They are focused beyond the next election for what will be good for their children, their grandchildren, and future of the Nation.

□ 1445

As I observed his comments throughout my legislative years in Wyoming and now throughout my legislative years here, I think there is some truth to that. That is why I think it is so important that women be involved in the legislative process and participate in this great institution, which is the Congress of the United States, for the betterment of future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, we got word of a decision that may be the death knell for the budget proposal made by the majority of this body. The members of the self-styled Freedom Caucus have announced their refusal to support the plan that their own leadership has put forward. I am truly afraid of what they would offer as an alternative, because the budget being considered in committee this week is a far cry from what American families need.

Mr. Speaker, at its most fundamental level, a budget is two things: a guiding document and a statement of values. The budget that the House Republicans have put forward—the budget that is not enough for the Freedom Caucus—makes it clear that they value special interests more than working families. It is a guiding document to an America that is bereft of opportunity for those who have worked or have studied or have fought for it.

My colleagues and I are here on the floor tonight to support a very different plan—a budget that seeks to give everyday Americans the only opportunity they have ever asked for—the opportunity to work hard, to play by the rules, and to get ahead. It is a budget for the people, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that we call it The People's Budget.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Progressive Caucus budget would invest in our schools, our roads, our bridges, our workers, and our environment to put us back on the path to prosperity in a way that austerity never will, because the cuts of the past few years should have made one thing clear: trimming our spending does little to impact the long-term deficit, but it destroys working families, hinders the most vulnerable Americans, and threatens the future of our Nation.

The People's Budget would invest $1 trillion in our bridges, roads, railways, and other infrastructure facilities to prevent the kind of devastating failures we have witnessed in Flint, Michigan.

The People's Budget would fully fund Head Start, capitalizing on one of the best opportunities to give our young people a leg up in an increasingly global economy.

The People's Budget would take steps to make debt-free college a reality for students, keeping higher education as a ladder into economic prosperity rather than making it a privilege for top earners.

The People's Budget would fully fund affordable housing programs, and it would end persistent family homelessness with an investment of $11 billion.

The People's Budget would take a stand on protecting our environment from further damage by investing in clean and renewable energy resources and ending subsidies for oil, gas, and coal once and for all. And that is just the beginning.

Our economy may be rebounding from the Great Recession, but there are plenty of Americans who have been left behind—stuck in roles with low wages, in long-term unemployment, in the gender and racial pay gaps that persist in this Nation, or in debt that keeps them from progressing in their lives. We can't afford to let this stand. We need a budget for the people, and we need it now.

Mr. Speaker, the budget that was announced by the majority yesterday is truly a roadmap to ruin. It would leave seniors out in the cold by ending the Medicare guarantee. It would gut domestic programming with $6.5 trillion in cuts—the most outrageous and threatening action ever proposed by the majority on the Budget Committee. It would make the gap between average Americans and the wealthy few too great to bridge, taking away any chance at restoring the vibrant middle class our economy relies on. It would do the same thing that my colleagues have tried to do for some time, which would be to stack the deck for top earners and the well-connected at the expense of everyone else.

The people need change. The people need a plan that levels the playing field, that gives them opportunities to succeed, and that puts their interests above the interests of corporations and the wealthy. The people need salaries to let them do more than just make ends meet. The people need a way to pay for affordable child care while they are at their jobs. The people need education for their children and teachers who are trained to give students the tools to succeed. They need roads that aren't crumbling and trains that stay on the tracks; they need bridges and tunnels that connect them with their jobs without their having to spend hours in traffic; and they need job training to find employment in a changing economy.

The people, Mr. Speaker, need The People's Budget.

I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), my colleague and the chairman of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Mr. ELLISON. I thank the Representative WATSON COLEMAN. I appreciate the gentlewoman's leadership during the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour. Every week, she helps give the world the progressive message, and I am so grateful that she does.

Mr. Speaker, let me mention that The People's Budget is really not just some document that members of the Progressive Caucus, when huddled in a room, drafted up. We actually believed that the people ought to participate in the writing of The People's Budget, so

we engaged not only the ideas of constituents from our districts but also those from other people, like from the Economic Policy Institute, the people in the labor community, and others, who all had great ideas about how to formulate our budget. Altogether, we included the ideas of 44 different groups and of many, many individuals beyond that to support and help us draft The People's Budget. We want to thank all of them.

This really is a People's Budget because it puts forward the main thing that any budget ought to put forward in a budget from Congress, and that is the promotion of good-paying jobs.

Now, just because the unemployment rate has gotten to a lower level doesn't mean that we have got a great jobs picture for working Americans. The People's Budget would increase good-paying jobs by 3.6 million, and we are very proud of that. While Republicans may think that the best way to judge a budget is by how many dollars from the Federal budget they cut, we believe that the main way to judge a budget is by how many Americans are put to work in good-paying jobs.

How do we create these jobs?

One, by investing in our infrastructure. The People's Budget invests in $1 trillion so that we can rebuild our roads, bridges, railways, water systems, and grids. We make sure that the crumbling infrastructure that faces us right now gets fixed. That includes infrastructure in Flint, Michigan, and in other cities around this country where water infrastructure is so hard-pressed.

Beyond that, we will provide the protections that American workers need. The People's Budget calls for the protection of collective bargaining; it works to close the pay equity gap; it increases funding for worker protection agencies that crack down on wage theft and overtime abuses—but that $1 trillion will also save American lives.

Two weeks ago, I and many members of the Congressional Progressive and Black Caucuses traveled to Flint, Michigan, and I saw firsthand what happens when governments are run like a business. When money is the only consideration and when the Governor thinks that passing an emergency manager law just to cut costs at the expense of children's health and clean water, we see what the results of that kind of thinking are and that it is penny-wise, but incredibly pound-foolish. I met dozens of families who were exposed to dangerous levels of lead, but also people who were touched by the evils of Legionnaires' disease because of waterborne illness.

The People's Budget includes $765 million for the city of Flint so that we can replace toxic pipelines and provide health and education services for residents. Flint isn't the only city that is exposing residents to lead; so The People's Budget also includes $150 billion for waterlines nationwide.

We can never allow a tragedy like Flint's to happen again, but we have to make the investments right now. It is a simple choice: Do we believe that we should have a State's tax cuts go to the richest dead people? Should we cut their taxes? Should we cut the taxes of multinational, giant, profitable corporations? Or should we spend the money to help ensure the health and welfare of American children and other citizens?

I think we should look out for the American people. The People's Budget does that. We are glad to have the support of so many organizations, and we look forward to a very strong vote when the day arrives.

STOP VIOLENCE IN HONDURAS

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I want to make another statement which is unrelated to our budget, but it is still very important.

I am profoundly saddened and angered by the murders of Berta Caceres and Nelson Garcia, two leading environmental activists in the nation of Honduras. These two murders were less than 2 weeks apart. It is an ongoing challenge that must be addressed immediately.

Ms. Caceres spent decades fighting for the rights of Honduras' indigenous community, winning the Goldman Environmental Prize—an internationally recognized award—for her work. She was assassinated in her home while she was supposed to be under special protection by government security forces.

Mr. Garcia was a member of Ms. Caceres' organization, the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras. He was shot yesterday in front of his mother-in-law's home.

Honduras and the world have lost two extraordinary advocates for environmental and indigenous rights, and also for social justice.

We need to do more than mourn their losses. It is time to act. It is time to suspend assistance to the Honduras security forces until such time as we know they are not penetrated by illegal actors; until such time as we can be assured when they say they are going to protect somebody, those people are protected; and until we know and have confidence that American taxpayers' dollars are not being used to assassinate leaders who are doing nothing more than trying to improve the environment and increase the rights of indigenous people.

These assassinations fit into a pattern of attacks that has taken place against Honduran activists since the 2009 military coup. The NGO Global Witness calls Honduras the most dangerous place in the world for environmental activists. More than 100 environmental activists have been killed in the last 5 years there, and many activists and community leaders remain at risk. We must do everything in our power to stop this violence and harassment in Honduras.

Please rest in peace, Berta Caceres and Nelson Garcia. The people who remain behind will continue to fight for environmental justice and indigenous rights, and we here in the United States join that fight.

U.S. SUPREME COURT NOMINEE MERRICK GARLAND

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to spend a few minutes on another important topic as well.

Today, President Obama nominated Chief Justice Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy that has been left on the Supreme Court by Associate Justice Antonin Scalia.

Judge Garland has more Federal judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in history. His work on the D.C. circuit court, an appointment to which he was confirmed with strong bipartisan support, has earned praise from Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. He is qualified. He is competent. He is not the ultraliberal that many of my conservative colleagues feared.

□ 1500

Yet, following up on his promise that the Senate would consider absolutely no one that President Obama put forward, Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said today: ''It is a president's constitutional right to nominate a Supreme Court justice, and it is the Senate's constitutional right to act as a check on a president and withhold its consent.''

I beg to differ. I think it is the President's constitutional responsibility, not just a prerogative, to fill the bench of the Supreme Court. Withholding consent, something that is typically done when a candidate is underqualified or inappropriate, is far different than just ignoring the process altogether.

This is a political decision made about the only body that shouldn't be exposed to such things. It goes beyond just a filibuster or commentary from a few outliers.

And if Republicans follow through with their plan, it would constitute the longest vacancy with no vote on a nominee ever. There is no precedent for this. There have been appointments, nominations, and, above all, hearings during Presidential election years.

It is flat out ridiculous to refuse a man as qualified as Judge Garland even hearings. This is a dereliction of duty that surpasses the sadly run-of-the-mill inability of the majority to get anything done, from funding the government until the eleventh hour to passing a budget, to actually governing.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I came to the floor without taking the

time to say this: The Senate must change course and consider Judge Garland on his merits. He has earned bipartisan support before, and he deserves it again.

I need to remind this body and the Senate that the President of the United States was elected for a second term and that term includes four full years.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude my Special Order hour.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 121

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week there were a few very important votes that occurred on complex issues that I would like to discuss here today. They were with regards to H. Con. Res. 75 and H. Con. Res. 121, which is the one I will discuss now.

Make no mistake. H. Con. Res. 121 is a war bill. It is a thinly veiled attempt to use the rationale of humanitarianism as a justification for overthrowing the Syrian Government of Assad.

Similar resolutions were used in the past to legitimatize the regime-change wars to overthrow the governments of Iraq and Libya. I will have no part of it. I voted ''no'' on H. Con. Res. 121. I voted ''no'' against more unnecessary interventionist regime-change wars.

We all know that Bashar al-Assad, President of Syria, is a brutal dictator. But this resolution's purpose is not merely to recognize him as such. Rather, it was a call to action. Specifically, it is a call to escalate our war to overthrow the Syrian Government of Assad.

For the last 5 years, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and others have been working hand in hand in that war to overthrow the Assad Government, supposedly for humanitarian reasons. But I ask: How has this war to overthrow Assad actually helped humanity?

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been killed. Millions have become homeless refugees. Much of the country's infrastructure has been destroyed.

Terrorist organizations like ISIS, al Qaeda, and others have taken over large areas of the country and are engaging in genocide.

Now the same people who are behind this war to overthrow Assad want to escalate that war, and this resolution is an attempt to gin up public support for that escalation.

This resolution urges the administration to create ''additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians,'' which is really coded language for the creation of a so-called no-fly zone or safe zone.

The creation of this no-fly zone or safe zone in Syria would be a major escalation of the war. Doing this would cost billions of dollars, require tens of thousands of ground troops, and a massive U.S. air presence. It won't work.

Furthermore, it will likely result in a direct confrontation between the United States and Russia. Fortunately, President Obama has thus far opposed implementing such a so-called no-fly zone and has resisted pressure to escalate this war in this way,

The fact is that the main areas currently in Syria where Christian, Alawites, Druze, Yazidis, and other religious minorities can practice their faith without fear of persecution are in the Syrian territories where Assad maintains control.

Therefore, the overthrow of Assad would worsen the genocidal activities by ISIS and al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations against Christians, Alawites, and other Syrian religious minorities.

If the U.S. has learned nothing else from Iraq and Libya, we should have learned that toppling ruthless dictators in the Middle East creates even more human suffering and strengthens our enemy, groups like ISIS and other terrorist organizations in those countries.

It is undeniable that, in both Iraq and Libya, humanitarian conditions today are far worse than they were before those governments were toppled and ISIS and other terrorist organizations are far more powerful with greater strongholds, causing even more suffering.

If the U.S. is successful in its current efforts to overthrow the Syrian Government of Assad, allowing groups like ISIS and al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations to take over all of Syria, which is what will happen, including those Assad-controlled areas where Christians and other religious minorities remain protected, the United States will be morally culpable for the genocide that will occur as a result.

This is exactly what happened when we overthrew Saddam Hussein in Iraq. It is what happened in Libya when we overthrew Muammar Gaddafi. To do the same thing over and over and expect a different result is the definition of insanity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and to continue the deliberation here that makes this the most deliberative body anywhere in the world.

I understand that the Senate might take issue with that. However, I am always happy to engage in debate with the Senators as well.

I came to the floor because I wanted to speak, Mr. Speaker, about an issue that has cost scores and scores of American lives.

Since the time I came into this Congress, I was surprised and, you might say, shocked and appalled that so few Members were paying attention to the reality of what is happening in the streets of America over the years.

I think of a school bus that was run off the road up in Cottonwood, Minnesota, a few years ago. Four of the children in that school bus were killed. Two of them were siblings. Three families were hit with that terrible tragedy.

The cause of that accident was a vehicle that ran the bus off the road that was driven by an illegal alien that had been interdicted multiple times and turned loose on the streets to recommit again and again.

I recall that discussion. It brought home to me something that I knew logically, but I hadn't felt emotionally at that point, Mr. Speaker.

If there are people in this country who are unlawfully present and the law directs that, when encountered by law enforcement, they shall be placed into removal proceedings, if we enforce the law when we encounter people that are illegally in America, then, by the very definition of following the law that requires that they are placed in removal proceedings, they are no longer on the streets of America, they are no longer driving vehicles that are running school buses off the road or bringing about head-on crashes or being involved in vehicular homicide or driving while under the influence because, by definition of enforcement of the law, they are not here to do that.

They might commit these crimes in other countries, in their home country. That is the issue for the countries that they can be lawfully present in.

But here, when I see the funerals of four children that come about because we had an opportunity to enforce the law and, instead, we decided that our compassion for the law breaker was greater than our compassion for the victim of the crime, you end up with four funerals of children that were riding home from school in a school bus that day.

Now, it shouldn't take very much for people who are professionals that deal with this every day to understand that, that if the law says that they shall be placed in removal proceedings—you have a President who says to them instead, through Jeh Johnson, who is now the Secretary of the Department

of Homeland Security, to the law enforcement officers who have pledged and take an oath to support and defend the Constitution—which, by the way, the President takes an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution.

The very definition in the Take Care Clause of the Constitution is that he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Well, instead, the President has decided to essentially execute some of the immigration law that exists. That doesn't mean enforce it. When I say that, I say that facetiously, Mr. Speaker. He has ordered the law enforcement officers to not enforce the law.

And the advice that came from Jeh Johnson to the law enforcement officers of the Border Patrol was, if you came into this job and put on this uniform and took your oath to support and defend the Constitution and you thought that it meant that you are going to enforce immigration law, if you think that is what you are going to do, you had better get another job.

That was the message to them that came out here about 10 days ago—get another job if you came here to enforce the law—if you are working for the Border Patrol or for ICE or for Customs and Border Protection.

It is an appalling thing, Mr. Speaker, to think that we have a President who has taken an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and to take care that the laws be faithfully executed and, instead, he is taking care that they not be enforced in case after case after case. And this poster I have, Mr. Speaker, is the bloody result.

The title says ''Free to Kill: 124 Criminal Aliens Released By Obama Policies Charged With Homicide Since 2010.'' Now, that is not all of the homicides.

Here is where they are. A lot of them are in California. A good number of them are in Arizona, Texas, and up along the East Coast. They are in Council Bluffs, Iowa, or in Omaha. Yes, they are in my neighborhood as well, Mr. Speaker.

Now, that is 124 killers. These are criminals that had already been prosecuted, already been convicted. These are felons that had been released on the streets of America because of a policy that the President seems to think is a discretionary policy.

That is not 124 graves only. That is at least 135 graves because of the multiple murders that have taken place after they are convicted. At least two of them that were released on the streets in the past were already convicted of homicide-related charges. That is how bad this is.

The idea that we shouldn't enforce our laws even against people that are illegal in the United States, unlawfully present in America, out of some sense of compassion, and they might say that they don't have the room and they don't have the budget, well, that is not so either.

I would just note some of the statistics that I have pulled down here over time. In 2012, ICE reported that there were 850,000 aliens present in the country who had been ordered removed or excluded, but who had not departed. That is 850,000.

Now, they tell us that there are 11.2 million illegal aliens in America. Well, I don't actually accept that number. That is a number that has been constantly and commonly used here.

I arrived here in 2003. I swore in here in January of 2003. At that time, the immigration debate was talking about 12 million illegals in America. 12 million. 12 million. The drum of 12 million was beat for several years. Then it drifted down to 11.5. Now it is 11.2 million.

We are thinking that we have a crisis with illegal immigration coming into America. But the number hasn't increased? Have that many gone back home? Have that many died?

If not, that number is growing, and I think it has grown substantially more. The data we are looking at is 11.2 million, and that is from the Pew Research Center. I think they do a good job. I do disagree with them on that number.

If that is the case, out of 11.2 million illegals in America, 850,000 aliens are present in the United States of America who had already been ordered removed. We call that law enforcement?

Just about anybody in the world that has ever looked across and thought about coming to America knows that your chances of being sent back to your home country, if you succeed in getting into America, are nil. They are almost nothing.

If you embarrass the administration, if you are such a violent criminal, perhaps they will find a way to send you back. But even this administration, when they want to send them back, the few that they do, doesn't push hard on those other countries to take them back.

Now, every country in the world that refuses to take their illegals back, we have the leverage to convince them, I believe, to take those illegal aliens back, 850,000 of them.

□ 1515

I didn't divide that out, but it is roughly 1 in 12 of the illegal aliens in America have already been adjudicated for deportation, but they don't go, and we don't do anything about it.

Here is another statistic. For every 10 Americans detained in Federal court—that's Americans—173 illegal aliens are detained by a Federal court. So I don't know why they gave me 10 of 173, but I can divide that out in my head. Federal court deals with 17.3 illegal aliens for each American—that would be an American, lawful, permanent resident or an American citizen that they deal with. That is a high, high volume of illegal aliens going through our Federal court system.

Here is another piece of data that emerged from a study that I requested in 2005. This was a GAO study that shows that 27 percent of our Federal prison population is criminal aliens—27 percent. So more than a fourth of the inmates that are housed in Federal penitentiaries are criminal aliens. That is a huge percentage.

If you would think that they are in there for immigration crimes, for overstaying their visa, or for crossing the border, no. That is highly, highly unlikely that they are incarcerated for what this administration would call minimal offenses. They are in there for other things.

Here is another example. The illegal aliens represent 5 percent of the population, 27 percent of the Federal prison population, and presumably 27 percent of the Federal crimes that are committed as well. So that is a proportion of more than five times their representation in the population they are represented in prison and they are represented by the crimes that are committed.

Now, we should not think that these are just data, Mr. Speaker. Crimes aren't just data, because for every crime, there is at least one victim. The victims pay a huge, huge price that is not compensated by the taxpayer.

For example, our criminal laws are descended from old English common law, and old English common law recognizes this, that everything was the product, the property, of the sovereign, the king. If you went out and poached a deer, the crime was against the crown, because the king owned the deer. The king owned everything. So if you poached a deer, you killed the king's deer, and the king is going to have his justice. If you killed one of his subjects, one of his serfs, if you committed murder, the crime was against the crown.

That is why, today, the crimes that we have are against the State, whether it be the nation-state or whether it be the State that we happen to be abiding in. So when you go to criminal court, they will say this is the case of the State versus whoever has the charges brought against them, John Doe, criminal. You will hear that announced at the beginning of the criminal case: This is the case of the State of, say, Iowa, against John Doe, criminal.

The victim, if the victim is alive and survives and is in that criminal courtroom, they are going to be looking back and forth listening to the prosecution and then the defense go back and forth, and they are going to be wondering: Where am I in this equation? The victim is not in the equation

because, if the State believes that they get justice, then justice is served, and the victim is essentially out of that equation with the exception of a few little things we have done such as to allow for and provide that the victim or the victim's family have an opportunity to face the accused and, actually, face the convicted.

So we are descendants from that, Mr. Speaker. When the crimes are committed against individuals, the victims of these crimes are paying the price. They are paying the price with their lives. They are paying the price with their bodies. They are paying the price with whatever their treasured products might be.

If they are a victim of assault and battery and grand larceny, then they have been beaten up, they have been pounded, they have been bruised and bloodied and maybe bones broken. Maybe they have survived an attempted homicide, and maybe their wallet was lifted and their credit cards or their car. The things that they owned, the things that they cherished are lost, and they have to heal up. We don't compensate them for their loss even though the State is an intervenor in a criminal crime.

So the case of the State v. John Doe, criminal, should tell us that the loss of life is not compensated either. It is not measured. It is not quantified. The 124 criminal aliens released who have committed murders during this period of time is a small portion of the overall number of criminal aliens who were released who did commit homicides.

But what are those lives worth?

We just heard the gentleman from Minnesota lament the loss of two lives. It is tragic. I am sorry he comes here to this floor. I am sorry that he feels that pain. I am sure the families feel the pain. But these are mostly anonymous victims, the four children in Cottonwood, Minnesota.

Kate Steinle—the story that I pulled here, her name is now a household name, Mr. Speaker—was murdered in San Francisco on July 1, 2015. Now when I see an attractive young lady with brown hair, immediately the picture of Kate Steinle flashes into my mind's eye, standing there innocently and shot and killed by a criminal alien who had been ordered deported, I believe the number would be at least twice before, on the streets because San Francisco is a sanctuary city.

Well, the sanctuary city isn't just exclusive to San Francisco. All over this country there are sanctuary jurisdictions. There are sanctuary jurisdictions in Iowa, at least 25 of them that I can identify, and they exist across the country, local jurisdictions that have decided they are not going to cooperate with Federal law enforcement officers.

And furthermore, when ICE puts out a detainer order, Federal law requires that an ICE detainer order is mandatory. The statute that was passed directed the rules to be written in such a way that the detainer orders are mandatory.

A year ago, February 25, I believe that day would be—I remember my date is right, but I am not certain on my year. It could be 2014 rather than 2015. But the ICE Acting Deputy Director, Dan Ragsdale, sent a letter out to hundreds of political jurisdictions, law enforcement jurisdictions, and said to them: This ICE detainer order that you have been getting, that you have been complying with because it is an order, it is really not an order. It is just a suggestion. So we are not going to enforce that, and neither are we going to protect you if you are sued for detaining someone that ICE has put a detainer order on.

They essentially said: We don't have your back at the Justice Department, even though the law directs that we do have. And so that brought about more sanctuary cities, more sanctuary jurisdictions, entire counties that have decided they are not going to cooperate with ICE. So when ICE sends an ICE detainer order to a sanctuary jurisdiction—often, a city—their policy is: We aren't going to turn this criminal over to ICE. We are going to turn him loose instead.

Well, when they turn them loose instead, they do so by the tens of thousands. And, you know, Mr. Speaker, that Americans are the victims of homicide as a result, some of it first-degree murder, second-degree murder, negligent homicide, vehicular homicide. Americans' graves are scattered all over this country at the hands of illegal aliens, criminal aliens, not only those that came across the border illegally—that makes them criminals, Mr. Speaker—but those who are in this country even legally. When they commit a crime, they become a criminal alien.

There are graves in every single State in this country, multiple graves in every single State in this country that didn't need to be. There are grieving families all over this country in every single State that didn't need to grieve. They didn't need to see their loved one killed, whether it was a car accident, whether it was a bullet, whether they were bludgeoned, however it might have been. Those lives could have been saved by enforcing the law. But, instead, the Obama administration does the opposite. They set up an affirmative plan to start turning loose illegal aliens who are felons, who are criminals.

Here is some more data. In 2014, according to a U.S. Sentencing Commission report, it shows illegal immigrants represented 36.7 percent of Federal sentences, 36.7 percent of their sentences. I have already said that 27 percent of the inmates are criminal aliens. Then, again, it is about roughly half or a little bit more of them are from Mexico.

The Obama administration, in 2013, released—and this number has been committed to my memory for some time—36,007 criminal aliens turned loose on the streets, and that represented 88,000 convictions, more than 88,000 convictions among those 36,007 criminal aliens. Of that, 193 had been convicted of homicide.

Now, when do you turn murderers loose on the streets of America, especially if they are deportable? If they serve their time—they might be second-degree murder, maybe they serve their time, maybe they get an early out—they go home to their home country. They are deported at the end of their sentence. That is how our law reads.

But the Obama administration said: No, we are going to turn 36,007 of them loose: 193 homicides represented by them, 426 sexual assaults, 303 kidnappings, 1,075 aggravated assaults, all of that packaged up in the 36,007. That was just 2013. That was the beginning of this mass release of criminals who are criminal aliens, deportable criminal aliens out of our prisons.

In 2014, they slacked off a little bit. They only released 30,558 criminal aliens, and they represented 79,059 convictions. That is the work that is being done by the Obama administration. I could go on with data after data.

Here is one. ICE had been claiming to have removed record numbers of unlawful or otherwise removable aliens from the United States. Well, they counted their deportations differently than any administration before. So those that said they will accept a voluntary return when they are caught at the border, they will say: Well, we can put you in the van and haul you back to the port of entry and turn you loose to walk back across the bridge. If you will do that, we will count you as deported.

That used to be just voluntary return. Now the Obama administration has admitted that they have essentially jiggered the numbers and changed the category.

But even still, even if this isn't accurate in comparison to previous administrations, those numbers have gone down, from along the way, 389,834, fiscal year 2009. It did go up a little bit the next year, 392,000 and change, then up to 396,000, and then going back. The number in 2012 was almost 410,000.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, that number has dropped off by tens of thousands. Then ICE has since admitted to dropping in removals clear down to 368,000 in 2013, 315,000 in 2014.

This number continues to go down, from up to nearly 410,000 down to 315,000, almost 100,000 fewer deportations when they are counting the voluntary returns in that list. That means

we don't have a lot of immigration enforcement going on, and the message and the signal is: Come try to get into America. We are not going to do a lot about that in this Obama administration.

And what happens? Well, what happens is we have a Presidential nomination process that has emerged. Out of it comes, who got the first big bounce and spark off of making the pledge that he would build a wall, a beautiful wall, and he would return the people and end illegal immigration residence in America and put them the other side of the wall? That was Donald Trump. If Donald Trump doesn't have that issue, Donald Trump doesn't probably have a campaign. I am sure that it is a big part of what motivated him to run for President.

TED CRUZ also, Mr. Speaker, has the most solid and cleanest record on immigration policy. It is complete; it is inclusive; it is anti-amnesty all the way. And, by the way, he doesn't make provisions for inviting people back in after they are removed. I don't think that takes a whole lot of prudence to hold that position.

Why would you reward somebody that you needed to go to the trouble to adjudicate them for removal, deport them back to their home country, and then do as they said in the Gang of Eight bill? They have a provision in that bill that thankfully the House didn't take up. It is the ''we really didn't mean it'' clause in which they say, written into the Gang of Eight's bill, if you have been deported in the past and you are in your home country today, after the Gang of Eight bill presumably passed, you can apply to come to the United States.

□ 1530

We deported you before, but we really didn't mean it. We can bring you back in here. If we hadn't caught you in America and you had been here when the Gang of Eight bill would potentially become law, then, if you get to stay under those provisions, then you get to come back to America if you have previously been deported.

I think that is lunacy, Mr. Speaker, to be going to all the trouble to enforce the law and then to reverse course with that and provide the ''we didn't really mean it'' clause.

That bill, by the way, had in it prospective amnesty. In other words, it didn't deal with people who would come in after it became law, so, presumably, they would be treated with the same kind of amnesty or pass for those who were in America; and those that had been deported from America get to come back to America, too, with some exceptions if you are a bad enough criminal.

The logic of this is beyond my ability to reason with it, Mr. Speaker, but the logic that this country needs to reason with is the logic of the rule of law. We have to be a Nation of laws—not of men—and the laws need to apply to everyone equally, not applied differently to different people.

There has to be an expectation that the law will be enforced. If we don't have that, then we devolve into a Third World country. In a Third World country, you can get pulled over not even for not speeding, but you might have to pay off the officer in order to be able to drive on down the road. In this country, if that ever happens—I wouldn't say it never happens, but where I come from, it doesn't happen and I never hear of it—that would show a digression from the rule of law.

We have to all respect the law. The law has got to be enforced against everybody equally. There has to be an expectation that the law will be enforced. Any country that has any value to protecting its own sovereignty has to have borders.

We have borders. We know what they are: 2,000 miles on the southern border, roughly 4,000 miles on the northern border, oceans on the east and on the west. Those are the borders of the United States of America. We have water all the way around Hawaii. We know the lines in Alaska. We don't dispute them with Canada. We get along just fine agreeing on what our borders are. But if we don't enforce them, if we don't protect them, we are no longer a sovereign Nation.

We allow people to stream across the border. We have had Border Patrol testimony here in this Congress within the last decade where they testified that they believed that they interdicted perhaps 25 percent of those that attempted to cross the border. When you looked at the numbers of those interdictions and did the math on that, it turned out to be 4 million illegal border crossing attempts in a single year. That is roughly at the peak of this. That has diminished by a few million.

But think of that: 365 divided into 4 million works out to about 11,000 a night. About 11,000 illegal aliens come across our southern border at night. Maybe that number could be as far down as perhaps 6,000 or so, but that is still the size of Santa Anna's army. The size of Santa Anna's army comes across every night.

Coming across, sure, there are some decent people that are looking for a better life—maybe a lot of them—but 80 to 90 percent of the illegal drugs that are consumed in America come from or through Mexico. It is the demand in the United States that brings those drugs in here. We have a culpability in this, too.

But just the same, the violence in Mexico, the murders—over 100,000 people have been killed in the drug wars in Mexico—is all part of an open border situation that we have here in the United States, costing Mexican lives, costing American lives. Graves are scattered in every single State in the Union because we have an administration that decided not to enforce the law, even though the President takes an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and take care that the laws be faithfully executed. We have got executive overreach time after time after time. He has reached into the constitutional authority of this Congress.

Time after time, I brought an amendment to this floor, Mr. Speaker, that has cut off all funding to implement or enforce the President's lawless, unconstitutional amnesty actions, to cut off all funding under the Morton Memos, to cut off all funding to DACA, to cut off all funding to DAPA and shut down those operations that are outside the constitutional authority of the President, by my definition, by the definition of the majority vote in this Congress, and also by the definition of the President himself, who said multiple times—and we have him on videotape at least 22 times saying he didn't have constitutional authority to—I will put it in shorthand—grant amnesty. He didn't use those words, but it certainly is the paraphrase of what he had to say. After multiple times of telling us all the proper constitutional interpretation, he decided to do it anyway.

The President of the United States' restraint factor is not giving his word, putting his hand on the Bible, and raising his right hand and taking an oath to the Constitution. His restraining factor is not his word. It is what he can get away with.

He demanded that Congress pass the Gang of Eight amnesty bill, and Congress said: Nuts, we are not doing that. We are not going to see the demographics of America forever altered by bringing in millions of undocumented Democrats in order to play into the hands of Barack Obama and the Democrats in the Senate and the House.

We have a responsibility to the American people. We the people need to decide. That is why our Founding Fathers wrote in the enumerated powers in the Constitution the responsibility of Congress to establish the naturalization laws and, by inference, to write the immigration laws. That immigration policy is not to be set by the President of the United States. It is to be set by Congress.

Congress wrote the law in 1996, the Immigration Reform Act, which LAMAR SMITH of Texas was so instrumental in, as a large body of the immigration law that we have to follow. That was the considered will of the people. It was the bipartisan, considered will of the people, signed by the President of the United States. Gee, that would be Bill Clinton back then, wouldn't it?

So we have a country that is the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world. We have a lot to be proud of. We

have a destiny, an arc of history that has been flattened. It has been descending for a lot of reasons—economic reasons, cultural reasons, failure to adhere to our oaths to uphold the Constitution reasons—but in a large way, it is diminished because we have so little respect for the rule of law.

Of all of the things we can talk about with regard to immigration policy—securing our borders, ending sanctuary cities, making sure that local law enforcement works again in cooperation with Federal immigration officials, ending this idea that detainer orders are voluntary, not mandatory—piece after piece of this—an entry/exit system that tracks the people in the country and when they leave so we know what the balance is of those visitors who are here, and an E-Verify system that I will say the New IDEA Act, my bill—all of that put together brings America to the right place. We have an obligation to turn this into an upending arc of history, not descending.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1733

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 5 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 639, AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO APPEAR AS AMICUS CURIAE ON BEHALF OF THE HOUSE

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–458) on the resolution (H. Res. 649) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 639) authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on March 16, 2016, at 4:40 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President whereby he transmits a copy of an Executive Order he has issued, with respect to North Korea.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

BLOCKING PROPERTY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA AND THE WORKERS' PARTY OF KOREA, AND PROHIBITING CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–117)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') with respect to North Korea. The order takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, expanded in scope in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010, relied upon for additional steps in Executive Order 13570 of April 18, 2011, and further expanded in scope in Executive Order 13687 of January 2, 2015. The order also facilitates implementation of certain provisions of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (Public Law 114–122), which I signed on February 18, 2016, and ensures the implementation of certain provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2270 of March 2, 2016.

In 2008, upon terminating the exercise of certain authorities under the Trading With the Enemy Act (TWEA) with respect to North Korea, the President issued Executive Order 13466 and declared a national emergency pursuant to IEEPA to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula. Executive Order 13466 continued certain restrictions on North Korea and North Korean nationals that had been in place under TWEA.

In 2010, I issued Executive Order 13551. In that order, I determined that the Government of North Korea's continued provocative actions destabilized the Korean peninsula and imperiled U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region and warranted the imposition of additional sanctions, and I expanded the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466. In Executive Order 13551, I ordered blocked the property and interests in property of three North Korean entities and one individual listed in the Annex to that order and provided criteria under which the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate additional persons whose property and interests in property shall be blocked.

In 2011, I issued Executive Order 13570 to further address the national emergency with respect to North Korea and to strengthen the implementation of UNSCRs 1718 and 1874. That Executive Order prohibited the direct or indirect importation of goods, services, and technology from North Korea.

In 2015, I issued Executive Order 13687, in which I determined that the provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea constitute a continuing threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and further expanded the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466. In Executive Order 13687 I provided additional criteria under which the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate additional persons whose property and interests in property shall be blocked.

I have now determined that the Government of North Korea's continuing pursuit of its nuclear and missile programs, as evidenced most recently by its February 7, 2016, launch using ballistic missile technology and its January 6, 2016, nuclear test in violation of its obligations pursuant to numerous UNSCRs and in contravention of its commitments under the September 19, 2005, Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks, increasingly imperils the United States and its allies. The order addresses those actions and takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008. The order also facilitates implementation of certain provisions of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (Public Law 114–122), which I signed on February 18, 2016, and ensures the implementation of certain provisions of UNSCR 2270 of March 2, 2016.

The order is not targeted at the people of North Korea, but rather is aimed at the Government of North Korea and its activities that threaten the United States and others. It blocks the property and interests in property of the

Government of North Korea and the Workers' Party of Korea and provides additional criteria for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to operate in such industries in the North Korean economy as may be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, such as transportation, mining, energy, or financial services;
- to have sold, supplied, transferred, or purchased, directly or indirectly, to or from North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea, metal, graphite, coal, or software, where any revenue or goods received may benefit the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea, including North Korea's nuclear or ballistic missile programs;
- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for an abuse or violation of human rights by the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of either such entity;
- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for the exportation of workers from North Korea, including exportation to generate revenue for the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have engaged in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against targets outside of North Korea on behalf of the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have engaged in, facilitated, or been responsible for censorship by the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or
- to have attempted to engage in any of the activities described above.

In addition, the order prohibits:

- the exportation of goods, services, and technology to North Korea;
- new investment in North Korea; and
- the approval, financing, facilitation, or guarantee of such exports and investments.

Finally, the order suspends entry into the United States of any alien determined to meet one or more of the above criteria.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All executive agencies are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 15, 2016*.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attendance of memorial service for Ms. Tiffany Johnson, who served the House of Representatives.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on March 15, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 1755. To amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 17, 2015, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4657. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — New Animal Drugs for Use in Animal Feeds; Removal of Obsolete and Redundant Regulations [Docket No.: FDA-2003-N-0446 (formerly 2003N-0324)] received March 14, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4658. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Pharmaceutical Science and Clinical Pharmacology Advisory Committee [Docket No.: FDA-2016-N-0001] received March 14, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4659. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Unique Device Identification System; Editorial Provisions; Technical Amendment [Docket No.: FDA-2011-N-0090] received March 14, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4660. A letter from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4661. A letter from the Supervisory Regulations Specialist, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Improving and Expanding Training Opportunities for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students With STEM Degrees and Cap-Gap Relief for All Eligible F-1 Students [DHS Docket No.: ICEB-2015-0002] (RIN: 1653-AA72) received March 14, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4662. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's 2015 Data Mining Report to Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000ee-3(c)(1); Public Law 110-53, Sec. 804(c)(1); (121 Stat. 363); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 4360. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that a Federal employee who leaves Government service while under personnel investigation shall have a notation of any adverse findings under such investigation placed in such employee's official personnel file, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 114–454). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 3583. A bill to reform and improve the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Office of Emergency Communications, and the Office of Health Affairs of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–455, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4404. A bill to require an exercise related to terrorist and foreign fighter travel, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–456). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 639. Resolution authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674 (Rept. 114–457). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 649. Resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 639) authorizing the Speaker to appear as

amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674 (Rept. 114–458). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Energy and Commerce discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3583 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. HUDSON:

H.R. 4749. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an oil and gas lease sale for areas off the coast of North Carolina determined by the Secretary to have the most geologically promising hydrocarbon resources, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MACARTHUR (for himself and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 4750. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the prohibition on providing adoptive leave to each member of a dual military couple; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 4751. A bill to terminate the law enforcement functions of the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management and to provide block grants to States for the enforcement of Federal law on Federal land under the jurisdiction of these agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 4752. A bill to require the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to investigate and promote the exploration and development of space leading to human settlements beyond Earth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. VARGAS (for himself and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 4753. A bill to exclude from consideration as income under the United States Housing Act of 1937 certain veterans compensation and pensions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. NADLER, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. BASS, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RUSH, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. FATTAH):

H.R. 4754. A bill to require the Attorney General to ensure that State-appointed emergency financial managers do not violate Constitutional protections and that they ensure public health and safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK (for herself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 4755. A bill to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 4756. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit nurse practitioners to satisfy the documentation requirement under the Medicare program for coverage of certain shoes for individuals with diabetes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4757. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the eligibility for headstones, markers, and medallions furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for deceased individuals who were awarded the Medal of Honor and are buried in private cemeteries; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4758. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the award of the Presidential Memorial Certificate to certain deceased members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and certain deceased members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4759. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay costs relating to the transportation of certain deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries owned by a State or tribal organization; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BUCK (for himself, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 4760. A bill to make an attack on a police officer a hate crime, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California (for herself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. BERA, Mr. COOK, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. LEE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. COSTA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FARR, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. AGUILAR, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. BECERRA, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. BASS, Mr. ROYCE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. HAHN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. NUNES, Mr. MCCARTHY, Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. HUNTER):

H.R. 4761. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 61 South Baldwin Avenue in Sierra Madre, California, as the ''Louis Van Iersel Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. GRIFFITH):

H.R. 4762. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to cellular therapies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. KEATING, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. NADLER, and Ms. HAHN):

H.R. 4763. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947 to prevent wage theft and assist in the recovery of stolen wages, to authorize the Secretary of Labor to administer grants to prevent wage and hour violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DESANTIS (for himself, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. ROTHFUS, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. FLORES, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SALMON, Ms. GABBARD, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4764. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide service dogs to certain veterans with severe post-traumatic stress disorder; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER:

H.R. 4765. A bill to provide first responders with planning, training, and equipment capabilities for crude oil-by-rail and ethanol-by-rail derailment and incident response, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia):

H.R. 4766. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to American military personnel who fought in defense of Bataan, Corregidor, Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippine Archipelago between December 7, 1941, and May 10, 1942, and who died or were imprisoned by the Japanese military in the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Manchuria, Wake Island, and Guam from April 9, 1942, until September 2, 1945, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to their country; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 4767. A bill to provide safe, fair, and responsible procedures and standards for resolving claims of state secret privilege; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BUCK, Mr. YOHO, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BRAT, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. BABIN, Mr. SALMON, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. PALMER, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. TROTT, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. ISSA, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. CULBERSON, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. WALKER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. GOSAR, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 4768. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, with respect to the judicial review of agency interpretations of statutory and regulatory provisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4769. A bill to repeal the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. STIVERS, and Mrs. BEATTY):

H.R. 4770. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide appropriate rules for the application of the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities with respect to certain contract manufacturing or production arrangements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LOFGREN (for herself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. CLYBURN):

H. Res. 646. A resolution expressing the position of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15-674; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Ms. DELAURO):

H. Res. 647. A resolution recognizing the Girl Scouts of the USA on the 100th anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in Girl Scouts, which has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere since 1916; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RENACCI (for himself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BRAT, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BARR, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):

H. Res. 648. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives respecting budget-related points of order; to the Committee on Rules.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. HUDSON:

H.R. 4749.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4750.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 4751.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 4752.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with Indian tribes.

and

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof

By Mr. VARGAS:

H.R. 4753.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution, to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing Powers (Article I, Section 8, Clauses 12, 13 and 14), and all other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or officer thereof.

By Mr. CONYERS:

H.R. 4754.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 4755.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18:

The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 4756.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4757.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4758.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4759.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUCK:

H.R. 4760.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to clause 1, section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution of the United States which states: ''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California:

H.R. 4761.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4762.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4763.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.R. 4764.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER:

H.R. 4765.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 4766.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 of the Constitution, ''The Congress shall have power to coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures''

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4767.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution and clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE:

H.R. 4768.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article III, Section 1, Sentence 1, and Section 2, Clauses 1 and 4, of the Constitution, in that the legislation defines or affects judicial powers and cases that are subject to legislation by Congress; Article I, Section 1, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, in that the legislation concerns the exercise of legislative powers generally granted to Congress by that section, including the exercise of those powers when delegated by Congress to the Executive; and, Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution, in that the legislation exercises legislative power granted to Congress by that clause ''to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4769.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: Congress has the authority ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes''

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 4770.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 7 which provides that ''All bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 612: Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 619: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 654: Mr. OLSON and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 664: Mr. KIND, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. VELA, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. PLASKETT.

H.R. 752: Ms. ADAMS.

H.R. 759: Mr. POLLS.

H.R. 815: Mr. HULTGREN and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 816: Mr. STUTZMAN.

H.R. 842: Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 953: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 969: Mr. ROUZER and Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 986: Mr. DENT and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1336: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 1427: Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. CLAY, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1431: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1432: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1479: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 1586: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1594: Mr. WALDEN, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 1859: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. JONES, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 2342: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2434: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 2460: Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 2697: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 2799: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 2802: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 2817: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. HILL.

H.R. 2894: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 2896: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2932: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 2962: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2992: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. MENG, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KUSTER, and Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 3080: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3222: Mr. FLEISCHMANN and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 3235: Mr. POCAN and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 3365: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3381: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. MOORE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 3429: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 3514: Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. MENG, and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 3673: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 3684: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 3690: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 3691: Ms. NORTON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 3817: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 3880: Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 3892: Mr. RENACCI and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 3986: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4116: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. KIND, and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 4177: Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 4184: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 4219: Mr. TIBERI and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 4248: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 4262: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 4336: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 4352: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 4369: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 4400: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 4448: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 4534: Mr. KLINE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. HUNTER, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 4554: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 4562: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4570: Mr. MEEKS and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 4584: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 4592: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 4622: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 4633: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 4637: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 4640: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4651: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 4664: Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 4668: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 4678: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 4682: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4715: Mr. HURT of Virginia and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 4730: Mr. BENISHEK, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 4747: Mr. LOUDERMILK and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.J. Res. 54: Mr. RIBBLE.

H. Res. 112: Mrs. WALORSKI.

H. Res. 156: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H. Res. 290: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H. Res. 615: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H. Res. 621: Mr. BARTON.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, March 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's one-time declaration of March 1986 as Hemophilia Awareness Month. The goal of Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, as we now call it, is to augment awareness of hemophilia and all inheritable bleeding disorders, which unfortunately have no cure in sight. These incurable, hereditary disorders affect millions of Americans each day. Roughly 1 million Americans suffer from Von Willebrand disease (VMD), a genetic bleeding disorder which prevents blood from clotting properly due to a defective blood protein, and around 20,000 are affected by hemophilia, a rare genetic bleeding disorder that prevents blood from clotting properly—for people with hemophilia, a simple cut can be life-threatening. Consequently, treatment is costly; it involves life-long infusions of clotting factor therapies which serve as a replacement for missing or deficient blood clotting proteins.

Although treatment for Americans affected by bleeding disorders can be costly, it has improved immensely. Given the tremendous advances in treating hemophilia, with proper treatment and self-care, most people with hemophilia can maintain an active, productive lifestyle. However, the costs of treatment for individuals with inherited bleeding disorders can still be improved with increased awareness, research, and education.

For instance, the CDC Division of Blood Disorders conducts Hemophilia Treatment Center research and this research recently resulted in a more effective test for inhibitors, a complication of hemophilia. Medical innovations like this are made possible through extensive research and are an effective means to reduce treatment costs and increase diagnoses for individuals with hemophilia and related inherited blood issues. Awareness, research, and education are some of the most effective ways to improve care for Americans with inherited bleeding disorders and Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month helps elevate all three.

HONORING CSUCI PRESIDENT DR. RICHARD RUSH

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Dr. Richard R. Rush, a remarkable visionary and extraordinary leader in our community. Dr. Rush has served as the inaugural President of California State University Channel Islands for the past 15 years, and has dedicated himself to higher education as both an educator and administrator for over 40 years. As the founding President of California State University Channel Islands, Dr. Rush played a vital role in the growth and development of Ventura County's first four-year public university.

Since his first day as President, Dr. Rush has sought to ensure that the students of California State University Channel Islands receive a world-class college education. Dr. Rush developed programs that have positively shaped the identity and commitment of the university to students of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Thanks to his outreach to underserved students in the community, California State University Channel Islands earned the federal designation of a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

Furthermore, a cornerstone of Dr. Rush's time at California State University Channel Islands has been building meaningful and significant partnerships throughout the community. From forging relationships with Cottage Hospital, which led to the expansion of the nursing program, to developing a cooperative agreement with the Channel Islands National Park, which began the establishment of the Santa Rosa Island Research Station, Dr. Rush has been a strong leader in creating local working partnerships that will continue on as his legacy. Acting as a collaborative relationship builder, he sought partnerships with businesses in the community to ensure a strong curriculum and create greater learning opportunities for students.

Dr. Rush exemplifies true visionary leadership and is a treasure to our community. Throughout his lifetime dedication to higher education, Dr. Rush has been recognized with accolades regionally and nationally, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' President's Award, the California State Student Association's President of the Year Award, and the Distinguished Community Leader Award from the Ventura County Leadership Academy.

I graciously applaud Dr. Rush for his dedication to California State University Channel Islands, and to Ventura County as a whole. It has been my great honor to work with Dr. Rush throughout the years. The legacy Dr. Rush has built extends past the university and well into the roots of our community. I thank him for being instrumental in creating an institution of higher education in Ventura County that will educate generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14 and Tuesday, March 15, I was unavoidably detained in my Congressional district. As a result, I missed the following recorded votes:

On roll call Number 111, passage of S. 2426, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 112, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 75. As a cosponsor, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 113, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 121. As a strong supporter, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

I am pleased that my colleagues in the House voted unanimously to condemn those who commit genocide against Christians, and call these actions exactly what they are, war crimes. It is my sincere desire that both houses of Congress and the President would speak and act with a unified voice against the atrocities that are being committed against Christians in the Middle East by the Islamic State and other terrorist organizations on a daily basis.

On roll call Number 114, ordering the previous question of House Resolution 640, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 115, agreeing to House Resolution 640, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 116, passage of H.R. 2081, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 117, passage of H.R. 3447, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 118, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 119, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 120, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 121, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 122, motion to recommit H.R. 3797 with instructions, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 123, passage of H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 111 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass S. 2426, To direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on S. 2426.

On March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 112 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended, to H. Con. Res. 75, Expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'', I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on H. Con. Res. 75.

On March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 113 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended, to H. Con. Res. 121, Expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on H. Con. Res. 121.

AN INFORMAL TREATISE ON IMMIGRATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Conor Devlin attends Thompkins School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: An Informal Treatise on Immigration.

Something that has been plaguing my mind, most of western Europe, and this presidential cycle, is immigration. Initially, let me delineate ''refugees'' and economic migrants because many people, especially the authoritarian left, like to use a sweeping generalization and label them all refugees when they are clearly not. Refugees are people who are forced to leave their country due to war, extreme persecution and natural disasters. An excellent example would be the Kurds in northern Iraq, who are currently in battle with the Turks, ISIS, and Russia, and the middle eastern Christians who are being executed and forcibly converted by ISIS and Islamic regimes. These people are the embodiment of refugees; the Kurds are fleeing from war and persecution and the Christians are fleeing from extreme persecution and discrimination. On the other hand we have the economic migrants who are abandoning their countries and arriving at the border of Europe by the thousands. These, predominately male muslims, have no desire to assimilate into Europe despite what many of Europe's leaders may think, and they simply arrive wanting to receive benefits and free money from the European governments who seem all so willing to give them.

The issue stems from the seemingly unwillingness on behalf of many leaders in the EU who simply do not want to be branded as racists for proposing the idea that introducing a population of people who are antagonistic and loathe the European culture could possibly be a bad idea. The word racism thus becomes the metaphorical boogeyman who all politicians seek to avoid as the ruinous label will practically cut short their career. With this in mind it is easily understandable why so many people seem to reject common sense when dealing with a crisis of such a scale as this. If they speak out they will be silenced and utterly destroyed by their supposed friends and their own media. An atmosphere of fear has allowed the migrant crisis to take hold of all of Europe and install a brand new culture of violence and danger—something not yet witnessed in the largely peaceful and safe continent.

Another reason the crisis is still occurring is due to politicians enthrallment with the idea of cultural relativism. Cultural relativism is the idea that all cultures are seemingly equal ergo importing all of these middle eastern men will have no negative effects on society because their culture, where women are gang raped beaten and killed, where gays are killed, and where followers of other religions are persecuted, is seemingly equal to egalitarian free western culture. But it is not, their culture is degenerate and incompatible with western culture.

Censorship and cultural relativism are leading the way to a disastrous future in Europe and in order to see what lies ahead for the U.S. one would need to simply gaze across the pond at our embattled allies.

RECOGNIZING JAN TULK

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and I rise today to recognize Jan Tulk, who recently retired after 30 years of dedicated service with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) and SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory.

After years of service at the California Coastal Commission, Jan began as LLNL's first environmental attorney in 1985. In 1994, she was named Laboratory Counsel, managing a staff of 25 and offering advice and representation to senior managers on a wide range of complex legal issues.

In 2001, Jan became Associate Director for Administration and Human Resources while also retaining her Laboratory Counsel position for another three years. In this new role she led a staff of about 340 employees fulfilling all of the lab's personnel and administrative functions.

In 2007, Jan was named Senior Advisor to the Director and Special Counsel—a member of the senior management team giving advice on a variety of issues while also providing support in environmental law and litigation.

In 2012, Jan moved to SLAC to lead the Contract Management Group and the Research Partnership and Commercialization Office. In 2013, she became the lab's Chief of Staff, helping director Dr. Chi-Chang Kao work efficiently with SLAC staff and key stakeholders. She also played a major role in SLAC's transformation over the last few years and, being one of the few female leaders in the Department of Energy national laboratory system, Jan championed diversity and inclusion in the lab.

We rise today to recognize Jan Tulk's decades of service to these institutions which push our knowledge and our technology ever forward. She has been an invaluable asset, and we wish her the very best in her well-earned retirement.

IN HONOR OF GEORGE E. NORCROSS III

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my brother, George E. Norcross III, on his 60th birthday.

George is a longtime advocate for South Jersey, philanthropist, and a superb husband, father, son and older brother.

George was born in Cooper University Hospital in Camden, the hospital he now leads as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The oldest son of a labor leader and a home maker who later went on to work in social services, our parents, Carol and George E. Norcross, Jr., George has paved a path fundamentally his own.

After briefly attending Rutgers-Camden, my brother received his real estate and insurance licenses and started his own company. That company known today as Conner Strong & Buckelew, has become one of the nation's premier insurance, risk management and employment benefits brokerage and consulting firms.

But as successful as George has been in business, it has been his commitment to Camden and all of South Jersey that will be his defining legacy. As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cooper University Health System and Cooper University Hospital in Camden, New Jersey, where he has been a trustee since 1990, George has lead the transformation of Cooper into a top-tier tertiary academic medical center and launched the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University and

opened the MD Anderson Cooper Cancer Center. George and his wife, Sandy, serve as co-chairs of The Cooper Gala, the largest fundraising event in South Jersey each year.

Through the Norcross Family Foundation, George is working to improve education for youth, funding research to help cure diseases, supporting the arts and culture, improving the community's safety, and helping people with disabilities. The Norcross Foundation also partnered with KIPP to open the KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy and George has been a longtime benefactor of the Larc School in New Jersey, which serves children with disabilities.

Accordingly, George has been honored with numerous awards for his contributions to the community including the Annual Champion of Children Award by the Camden Children's Garden and the Tree of Life Award from the Jewish National Fund. In 2013 he was honored by the New Jersey March of Dimes at the organization's Born to Shine Gala, and he recently was awarded the 2015 Haas Regional Champion Medal by the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my wife, Andrea, and with love from my brothers, John and Phil, I wish my oldest brother, George E. Norcross III, a happy birthday, congratulate him for a brilliant first 60 years, and hope he has many more to come.

TWO TIME PURPLE HEART—J.H. HICKS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, it is my honor to pay tribute to an American hero and longtime Texan: J.H. Hicks. J.H. served his country bravely during World War II, receiving two Purple Hearts. He was born in Woodville, Oklahoma, on January 10, 1922, but got to Texas as fast as he could—moving to Houston in 1927, at the age of 5, and settling in Spring Branch for the next 88 years. In 1941, J.H. graduated from Reagan High School, however, the months following his graduation would be anything but conventional.

On December 8, 1941, one day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hicks bravely enlisted in the Marines at the age of 18. He was sent to basic training in California in 1942 and subsequently deployed to the Pacific, where he served with the United States Marine Corps aviation unit, MAG–1, over the next 4 years. During his time with MAG–1, Hicks was commissioned to a Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadron or a VMTB Aircraft. Flying with this VMTB Aircraft, Hicks fought in the Solomon Island Campaign, on Munda Island, and in the Battle of Guadalcanal in 1942.

While fighting in the Battle of Guadalcanal, Hicks's plane was intercepted by enemy combatants and attacked. The attack resulted in his plane crashing in the jungle near the Munda airstrip. This crash left him with a broken leg, 8 bullet wounds, and was labeled M.I.A. For two days, Hicks was missing in the jungle, wounded. After he was found, J.H. received a Purple Heart and a battlefield promotion to First Sergeant for his sacrifice.

After four years with MAG–1, a Purple Heart, and a battlefield promotion to First Sergeant, Hicks moved back to Houston where he lived for two years. After two years of job hunting, he decided to reenlist. The Marines were naturally his first choice, given his history, but, when the Marines wouldn't recognize his rank of First Sergeant upon reenlistment, he opted for the Air Force. While with the Air Force in 1945, J.H. fought in one of the most important battles of WWII, the battle of Okinawa. As a result of the battle, Hicks received his second Purple Heart.

It is heroes like J.H. Hicks who remind us freedom isn't free—remind us that day in and day out brave men and women put their lives on the line, and often sacrifice all, to protect our freedoms. Hicks's loyalty, leadership, and patriotism is unparalleled and stands as a shining example to the type of people who call Texas home.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING MR. PAUL BONDERSON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Paul Bonderson, President of the Ducks Unlimited (DU) conservation group, for his tireless commitment to educational and conservation initiatives in the State of California.

Mr. Bonderson's passion for wildlife and the environment began early in life, accompanying his father and grandfather on early-morning duck hunting trips throughout his childhood. As he put it, "I have always been an outdoor person. I have a great appreciation for the outdoors and am aware of how much it's been destroyed." A lifelong Californian, Mr. Bonderson graduated from Sacramento's Encina Preparatory High School before attending California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. He began working with Ducks Unlimited in 2000, and became the group's 43rd President in June 2015.

From 2001 to 2006, Mr. Bonderson oversaw the acquisition of 2,500 acres of land in Butte County. The land had previously been used for rice production, but Mr. Bonderson has restored the property to its natural habitat. Today, the property—known as Birdhaven Ranch—is home to thousands of ducks, and provides invaluable wetlands educational opportunities for local high school and college students. These conservation and education efforts are especially critical in California, which has lost over 95 percent of its historic wetlands. And as President of DU, he has set forth an admirably ambitious agenda: Mr. Bonderson hopes to raise $2 billion for waterfowl and wildlife conservation as part of the group's "Rescue Our Wetlands—Banding Together for Waterfowl" campaign.

Mr. Bonderson has also helped lead efforts to restore North America's Boreal Forest. The forest, over one billion acres of pristine wildlife habitat, is home to 14 million ducks during breeding season, and is threatened by expanding energy, mining and agriculture sectors. In partnership with Pew Charitable Trusts, DU has permanently protected millions of acres of forest, aiming to eventually preserve at least 50 percent of all Boreal territory on the continent.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Bonderson has worked tirelessly to preserve our nation's natural beauty. His commendable efforts will ensure that our country's pristine lands will be enjoyed by future generations, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for votes on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. I would like to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on roll call votes 114, 115, and 123. I would have also voted "yea" on 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121 and 122.

IN HONOR OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE ARIZONA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the historic Town of Florence, Arizona. Founded in 1866, Florence is one of the oldest European settlements in the state and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

Scenic Florence is home to many prominent geographical landmarks that contribute to Arizona's picturesque beauty such as the Gila River, Box Canyon and the Casa Grande Ruins. Florence serves as the final resting place for the Father of Arizona, Charles D. Poston. Moreover, the town admirably provides the state with employees for the nine correctional operations in Florence. It also serves as a connection point for three major transportation corridors in the state. Over time, Florence has developed a fanciful history as a model wild-west establishment. Its notable downtown, Old Silverbell copper Mine, and wonderfully preserved fuel Coke Ovens from the mid-nineteenth century attract visitors from all over.

I would like to take the time to show my appreciation to the Town of Florence for their positive additions to Arizona through timeless beauty, employment, and state pride. Florence's distinctive history over the last 150 years contributes to the unique characteristics shared in the state of Arizona. It is my honor to serve the Town of Florence and wish them a happy 150th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE BRAIN INJURY CENTER OF VENTURA COUNTY

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with Brain Injury Awareness Month, I rise to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County, an organization wholeheartedly dedicated to raising awareness, providing support and resources to survivors and caregivers impacted by brain injury.

Beginning as a grassroots organization in 1995, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has grown into an outstanding network that supports an estimated 16,000 people living with traumatic brain injury in Ventura County, as well as thousands of stroke survivors with acquired brain injuries.

Through far-reaching and impactful community outreach efforts, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County provides education and awareness about the organization's programs, services and brain injury prevention information. In 2015 alone, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County assisted more than 800 survivors and caregivers to re-establish life after brain injury and develop strategies to build social skills, as well as provide support to families and caregivers.

Today, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County is collaborating with community healthcare partners, including the Ventura County Medical Center's Trauma Department, to launch the ''Care Transitions Demonstration Project.'' This initiative will allow the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County to support severe brain injury survivors from the point of trauma through post hospital discharge. The Brain Injury Center of Ventura County also works diligently to provide information to patients with mild to moderate brain injuries and concussions in emergency rooms.

Moreover, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has helped caregivers develop strategies to meet their personal goals and deal with the challenges in the caregiver-survivor relationship. Some of the organization's services and programs include support groups, courses in social skills and vocational skills, internships, and referral assistance for medical specialists, neuro assessments, counseling, rehabilitation, housing, transportation, employment, financial planning, education and so much more.

For the organization's extensive history and work to improve the quality of life for all individuals impacted by brain injury and their significant efforts and contributions to provide support, resources and awareness for brain injury survivors and caregivers throughout the region, I am honored to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County.

MAJORITY RULE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Claire Jeffress attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: Majority Rule.

While growing up and learning about the differences between right and wrong, one is often taught about being fair. When being first taught about the majority rule, I was told one uses the majority rule to be fair to all parties involved. Majority rule is defined as a political principle in which the greater percentage of people who share the same view should exercise greater power. Intuitively this makes sense. If most people want to pick Joe to be President, then Joe should be President. However, we must make sure that Majority Rule does not become Majority Tyranny. Nazi Germany is an example of how devastating an impact a brainwashed majority can have on the very lives of a religious minority. Majority rule should only be applied until the point that it infringes on the liberty of another.

In America, one of the ways we have balanced majority rule with individual rights is that we have enshrined each person's rights in our constitution. In many countries, if the majority does not like what you say, they can stop you from saying your point of view. Here, our right of free speech is protected by the constitution. Similarly, I am entitled to go to church and share my religious beliefs even if others feel differently. The majority is not allowed to vote away my right to speak my opinion or my right to exercise my beliefs. In many other countries, I can be thrown in jail just for sharing my views or going to a church that the majority doesn't believe in. America balances the will of the majority with the rights of the individual by enshrining those rights in our Constitution.

America also protects the individual by having checks and balances in our three branches of government. Venezuela is a good example of where majority rule can go wrong. The people of Venezuela elected Hugo Chavez as their leader. Unfortunately, it was an example of one person, one vote, one time. Mr. Chavez used his power of the majority to steal and redistribute money from individuals to his majority. He also put many of his own people in the courts to ensure that only his voting majority was protected. People who disagreed with his policies were jailed and had their property confiscated. In America, we have an independent Supreme Court and Congress that can override the President if he tries to violate individual rights in our constitution. I cannot be punished just because I disagree with the President.

Many people sometimes think of Democracy as a simple example of majority rule. This thinking is too simplistic. Our founding fathers realized that simple majority rule would just lead to another country torn apart by a tyranny of the majority. They ensured individual liberties were protected through our Constitution and three branches of government. Once the individual was protected, the majority could determine our policies and direction.

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEUTENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE, TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-AMERICAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day on February 27th, 2016. Today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adjacent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as ''trainees,'' even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed ''Uncle Tom's Cabin.'' This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Dominican newspaper lists his cause of death as a B–25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time,

went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 15, 2016, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on roll call no. 118, NAY.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''YEA'' on Numbers 114, 115, 116, 117, and 123 and voted ''NAY'' on Numbers 118, 119, 120, 121, and 122.

SYRIAN IMMIGRATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Cameron Lavine attends George Ranch High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

Throughout history, the United States has been a beacon of hope for immigrants around the world. Beginning in the early 1700's, when the first of the Scots-Irish immigrants came to America, we have generally been extremely welcoming to foreigners, even if we did not necessarily want them. The Scots-Irish, more specifically the Paxton Boys, caused many problems for Americans and Native Americans, yet, despite the danger they presented to society, the Scots-Irish were still allowed to enter the United States. Then, in the mid-1800's, there was a wave of Irish immigrants because of the famine and there was a wave of Chinese immigrants into America. Although Chinese immigration was later on restricted, people were still allowed to enter this country. There are many other groups of people who have been able to seek refuge in the United States as well, and the latest asylum seekers are the Syrians who have been displaced by the poverty and violence that resulted from a civil war. However, instead of opening our arms and providing assistance to those in need as we have done in the past, many people want to close off the United States.

The number of Syrian refugees has increased severely over the past year, creating a large burden on European and Middle Eastern nations such as Greece, Germany, and Turkey. Many of these countries are calling upon the United States to take action since they are the current hegemonic power. However, a majority of American politicians believe that we should ignore that call. This humanitarian crisis has turned into an ethical dilemma: Should the United States accept the Syrian refugees who are trying to escape poverty and violence despite the potential dangers, or should we close our doors in order to protect national security? This event has really sent the traditional belief that the United States is safe haven for anyone trying to escape persecution, violence, and poverty into a tailspin. For the first time, the U.S. is considering turning its back on those in need, a direct contrast to past events where America was a willing safe-haven for those seeking asylum.

HONORING JOHN AND DENISE KURTZ OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to honor John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined Federal service to the United States of America.

With 32 years of service, John began his Federal Government career as a GS–1 Clerk Typist with the United States Army Logistics Evaluation Agency. He rose through the ranks primarily working in financial operations and concluding his career as Director, DLA Finance Distribution. Through his financial acumen, I understand he was instrumental to the success and execution of the Defense Management Review Decision 902, as well as, numerous Base Realignment and Closure and A–76 actions. Always committed to continuous process improvement and stewardship excellence, John shared his innovative ideas and proactively developed financial solutions that enabled DLA Distribution to provide premiere distribution support to the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

With 30 years of service, Denise began her Federal Government career as a Payroll Clerk, GS–3, with the Defense Depot Mechanicsburg and rose through various diverse assignments, concluding her career as Acting Director, Distribution Policy and Processing at Defense Logistics Agency Distribution. Denise was instrumental in spearheading major initiatives integral to the organization's Inventory Integrity and Stock Readiness Programs, while regularly seeking opportunities to improve processes and procedures ensuring that the organization provided effective, efficient and best value logistics solutions to our Nation's military.

From the beginning of their careers, the Kurtz's exhibited professionalism and devotion to duty—the standard by which all civil servants are to be measured.

On behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, it's with great pride that I congratulate John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined service to the United States of America.

HONORING MR. JOHN BILLINGSLEY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the honoring of John Billingsley, a founder and Chief Executive Officer of Tri Global Energy, in the Dallas Business Journal's ''2015 Who's Who in Energy.'' Mr. Billingsley has worked in a variety of industries including commercial real estate, banking, and manufacturing. However with Tri Global Energy, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, his focus is on wind power in Texas.

Mr. Billingsley was born south of Lubbock, Texas on a cotton farm and attended college at Texas Tech University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Accounting. Among other admirable ventures, he co-founded a CPA firm, Johnson Kubica & Co. that later merged into Arthur Young, and served as Chairman of the Board and President of the Western State Bank of Midland.

Billingsley founded Tri Global Energy in January of 2009 when a few wind developers approached him asking to lease his land. Tri Global Energy now leases land in Texas to a renewable energy developers and has become a solar energy developer and provider as well. The company's ''Wind Force Plan'' allows for ownership and partnership for landowners, stakeholders, and local communities who are involved in their wind projects—creating a strong community within the company.

Tri Global Energy is now the top developer of wind energy projects in Texas, and reflects the growing diversity of energy production in the state of Texas. Billingsley has wind generation projects under development in Texas and New Mexico that could potentially produce some 6,600 megawatts of power when they become fully operational. He has proven himself to be a valuable member of the North Texas business community and leading energy entrepreneur in the state of Texas, and I

am honored to recognize him as a constituent of my district.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the career of John Billingsley. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating this milestone in his remarkable life.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF VIVIEN HAIG

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements and contributions of my good friend Vivien Haig as she steps down from her position as director-general of the Transatlantic Policy Network.

Over the years, Vivien has encouraged international cooperation through her work with the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN), the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the Atlantic Council, the Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce, and the Hong Kong—Europe Business Cooperation Committee. Vivien has served as director-general of TPN since its founding in 1992. A natural communicator with experience in non-profit entrepreneurship, Vivien understood TPN's potential to strengthen the transatlantic partnership and worked diligently to turn TPN into a highly effective network with a reputation for getting things done. She focuses on bringing together business leaders, think tank contributors, and elected officials for constructive dialogue on policy issues important to both sides of the Atlantic.

Another example of Vivien's leadership is the annual success of TPN's Transatlantic Week in Washington, DC. Each year, Transatlantic Week has been an unprecedented opportunity to engage in candid conversations with policy leaders at the highest level. Vivien played an invaluable role in convening a diverse group of people dedicated to the success of our transatlantic partnership. Participants appreciate the chance to dive into timely discussions with Members of Congress, Members of European Parliament, industry leaders, and prominent officials such as U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, former World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick, EU Ambassador to the U.S. David O'Sullivan, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, and many more.

Leaders around the world have commended Vivien for her capacity to build relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. Regardless if Vivien holds an official position or provides informal advice, anyone who has worked with Vivien knows they can rely on her quick wit, attention to detail, and practical approach to develop innovative ideas. It is no surprise the European American Business Council honored Vivien by naming her as the 2008 private sector recipient of the Atlantic Leadership Award. Her innate ability to bring people together will continue to reap benefits for the transatlantic relationship in years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and respect that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Vivien Haig and her many contributions to the U.S.-European partnership. Most importantly, I want to personally thank Vivien for her friendship over the years. We would not be where we are today without your vision and leadership.

HONORING MR. KENNETH H. HOFMANN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Kenneth Hofmann, owner of the Rancho Esquon Wildlife Area and wetlands steward par excellence, for his commitment to community development and wildlife preservation.

Mr. Hofmann, a lifelong Californian, has spent most of the past three decades working to promote philanthropy, educational and artistic initiatives, and wildlife conservation. In 1990, Mr. Hofmann purchased Rancho Esquon, a sprawling agricultural property in Butte County, and began working to restore its natural habitat. Today, the ranch boasts over 900 acres of wetlands, is home to more than 20,000 trees and 173 species of birds, and serves as a valuable educational resource. Over 4,000 students have taken class field trips to Rancho Esquon, many of whom have returned to visit the site's egg salvage facility.

Today, to further expose and educate regarding the importance of our wetlands, Mr. Hofmann is in the process of building the Pacific Flyway Center, a world-class museum and zoo facility in Suisun Marsh. The Center is dedicated to inspiring conservation of the Pacific Flyway, a critical migratory route stretching from Alaska to Patagonia. Every year, at least one billion birds migrate along the Flyway, and its importance to waterfowl populations cannot be overstated. Upon completion, the Center will offer educational opportunities for local students and citizens.

Mr. Hofmann's charitable organization, The Hofmann Family Foundation (HFF), has worked for over 20 years to help young people in need. In 1995, a $1 million donation from the HFF created the Concord Community Youth Center, which today provides educational and athletic opportunities for 1,900 underprivileged young people. And in 2014, Mr. Hofmann donated funds to create the De La Salle Academy, a division of De La Salle High School dedicated to providing high-quality education for boys whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent private schooling. By the end of 2016, the Academy will have 80 students enrolled in the fifth and sixth grades.

Mr. Speaker, Kenneth Hofmann has dedicated his time and resources for nearly 40 years to enriching the lives of California's young people and protecting its environment. Mr. Hofmann's efforts have benefitted our community enormously, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

[From FoxNews.com, Sept. 16, 2015]

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

(By Malia Zimmerman)

The federal government can tell you how many ''Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders'' stole a car, the precise number of ''American Indian or Alaska Natives'' who were arrested for vagrancy or how many whites were busted for counterfeiting in any given year. But the government agencies that crunch crime numbers are utterly unable—or unwilling—to pinpoint for the public how many illegal immigrants are arrested within U.S. borders each year.

In the absence of comprehensive data, FoxNews.com examined a patchwork of local, state and federal statistics that revealed a wildly disproportionate number of murderers, rapists and drug dealers are crossing into the U.S. amid the wave of hard-working families seeking a better life. The explosive figures show illegal immigrants are three times as likely to be convicted of murder as members of the general population and account for far more crimes than their 3.5-percent share of the U.S. population would suggest. Critics say it is no accident that local, state and federal governments go to great lengths to keep the data under wraps.

''There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available, and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels,'' said former Department of Justice attorney J. Christian Adams, who has conducted exhaustive research on the subject. ''These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad.''

Adams called illegal immigrant crime a ''wave of staggering proportions.'' He and other experts noted that the issue has been dragged into the spotlight by a spate of cases in which illegal immigrants with criminal records killed people after being released from custody because of incoherent procedures and a lack of cooperation between local and federal law enforcement officials. The murders, including the July 1 killing of Kathryn Steinle, allegedly by an illegal immigrant in San Francisco, have left grieving loved ones angry and confused, local and federal officials pointing fingers at one another and the voting public demanding secure borders and swift deportation of non-citizen criminals.

''Every one (of the recent cases) was preventable through better border security and enforcing immigration laws,'' said Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at the Center for Immigration Studies. ''They should have been sent back to their home country instead of being allowed to stay here and have the opportunity to kill Americans.''

A spokesperson for U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement told FoxNews.com that comprehensive statistics on illegal immigrant crime are not available from the

federal government, and suggested contacting county, state and federal jail and prison systems individually to compose a tally, a process that would encompass thousands of local departments.

FoxNews.com did review reports from immigration reform groups and various government agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Sentencing Commission, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Government Accountability Office, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and several state and county correctional departments. Statistics show the estimated 11.7 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. account for 13.6 percent of all offenders sentenced for crimes committed in the U.S. Twelve percent of murder sentences, 20 percent of kidnapping sentences and 16 percent of drug trafficking sentences are meted out to illegal immigrants.

There are approximately 2.1 million legal or illegal immigrants with criminal convictions living free or behind bars in the U.S., according to ICE's Secure Communities office. Each year, about 900,000 legal and illegal immigrants are arrested, and 700,000 are released from jail, prison, or probation. ICE estimates that there are more than 1.2 million criminal aliens at large in the U.S.

In the most recent figures available, a Government Accountability Office report titled, ''Criminal Alien Statistics,'' found there were 55,000 illegal immigrants in federal prison and 296,000 in state and local lockups in 2011. Experts agree those figures have almost certainly risen, although executive orders from the Obama administration may have changed the status of thousands who previously would have been counted as illegal immigrants.

Hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrant criminals are being deported. In 2014, ICE removed 315,943 criminal illegal immigrants nationwide, 85 percent of whom had previously been convicted of a criminal offense. But that same year, ICE released onto U.S. streets another 30,558 criminal illegal immigrants with a combined 79,059 criminal convictions including 86 homicides, 186 kidnappings, and thousands of sexual assaults, domestic violence assaults and DUIs, Vaughan said. As of August, ICE had already released at least 10,246 criminal aliens.

David Inserra, a policy analyst for Homeland Security and Cybersecurity at The Heritage Foundation, said letting illegal immigrants convicted of crimes go free while they await deportation hearings is putting the public at risk.

''While it is not certain how many of these individuals were here illegally, most of these individuals were in deportation proceedings and should have been detained or at least more closely supervised and monitored until their deportation order was finalized and executed,'' Inserra said.

Adams opened a rare window into the dearth of public data when he obtained an internal report compiled by the Texas Department of Public Safety and revealed its contents on his Pajamas Media blog. The report showed that between 2008 and 2014, noncitizens in Texas—a group that includes illegal and legal immigrants—committed 611,234 crimes, including nearly 3,000 homicides. Adams told FoxNews.com that other states have also closely tracked illegal immigrant crime, especially in the wake of 9/11, but said the statistical sorting ''is done behind closed doors.'' States closely guard the statistics out of either fear of reprisals from the federal government or out of their leaders' own insistence on downplaying the burden of illegal immigrant crime, he said.

''There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels,'' Adams said. ''These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad.''

A smattering of statistics can be teased out of data made public in other states heavily impacted by illegal immigration, although a full picture or apples-to-apples comparison remains elusive.

In Florida, there were 5,061 illegal immigrant inmates in state prison facilities as of June 30, but neither the state Department of Corrections nor the Florida Department of Law Enforcement track the number in county prisons, spokesmen for those agencies told FoxNews.com.

In Illinois, where state prisons house 46,993 inmates, some 3,755 are illegal immigrants, according to Illinois Department of Corrections figures. Once again, state officials do not compile figures for county jails, although a Cook County official estimated that nearly 6 percent were illegal immigrants.

In Arizona, neither state public safety officials nor the governor's office could produce figures showing the number of criminal illegal immigrants held in county jails, but state prison figures released by the Arizona Department of Corrections show out of 42,758 prisoners held in state facilities in July, about 10.8 percent were illegal immigrants.

In California, there were 128,543 inmates in custody as of Aug. 12, but the state, which has been criticized for its leniency toward illegal immigrants, no longer keeps track of the citizenship status of inmates. As of July 31, 2013, the last time figures were documented, there were as many as 18,000 ''foreign-born'' citizens in California state prisons of 133,000 incarcerated. The Board of State and Community Corrections provided figures to Fox News from 2014, showing there were 142,000 inmates in 120 county prisons, but while everything from mental health cases to dental and medical appointments are closely tracked, the number of illegal aliens—or even non citizens—is not.

''Frankly, this is something every state should track, but they don't. Not even ICE publishes this much information on offenders and immigration status,'' Vaughan said.

Several pro-immigration groups contacted by FoxNews.com declined to comment on the outsize role illegal immigrants play in the U.S. criminal justice system. One group that did insisted that even illegal immigrants provide a net benefit to the U.S.

''Immigrants, regardless of their legal status, make valuable contributions to our economy as workers, business owners, taxpayers and consumers,'' said Erin Oshiro, of Asian Americans Advancing Justice. ''We need an immigration system that keeps families together, protects workers, and prioritizes due process and human rights.''

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Connor Cerda attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that state level bans on same-sex marriage was unconstitutional. It also ruled that the denial of same-sex marriage licenses and the refusal to preform same-sex marriages was no longer allowed. This has been a very controversial topic for decades and through this ruling, it truly showed where America as a country is heading.

In the eyes of Christians and pastors around the U.S., this ruling spat in God's face and in the founding fathers' faces of this great nation. They founded this nation on the teachings of the Bible, but every generation since has fallen away. The Bible specifically describes marriage as the unity of man and woman and that is what it was intended to be for all of eternity. Christians, by no means, hate homosexuals or those who practice same-sex marriage; but rather, Christians hate the practice of it. It breaks the hearts of Christ followers to see people fall into this sin and false illusion that this practice is okay. As for pastors, this ruling is even more troubling to them. They are now under pressure from the public to perform these marriage ceremonies and recognize these same-sex couples even though it goes against all that they stand for and believe in. However, those who refuse often face harsh public criticism. On a religious standpoint, this ruling has affected the relationship between church and state. Although separate, it is hard to trust a government to protect one's religious rights if they make decisions that directly oppose what this country was so proudly founded upon and what people strongly believe in.

This nation was founded on strong and bold principles that not many countries share. The fact that the U.S. is changing these principles is disturbing. And for what benefit? There is no clear reason or purpose to pass this ruling besides it was what a group of people wanted and the U.S. government gave in. There is no positive outcome or benefit that has been reaped from this ruling. It is scary to think about what other principles this nation is willing to sacrifice. If anything, it created a gap between the citizens of this nation and the country as a whole. A certain level of trust was lost that will be extremely hard to gain back. It also creates a messed up view from the perspectives of other countries. They look at the U.S. and see a screwed up society that believes marrying the same sex is okay and a given right to people. This country is socially going down hill through the decisions made by the government and the people and this ruling was just another step towards this fall.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL MANAGER REFORM ACT OF 2016

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act of 2016 is intended to ensure that state-appointed emergency financial managers for municipalities in fiscal distress do not violate Constitutional protections, ensure public health and safety, and are accountable stewards of taxpayer funds. The bill responds to problems presented when unaccountable emergency financial managers usurp local elected officials and unilaterally make decisions that jeopardize public health and safety.

Across our Nation, there are many cities in financial distress still struggling to recover from the Great Recession and other factors undermining their economic recovery. While most states work cooperatively with their cities to foster economic stability and growth, others such as my home state of Michigan, use draconian, autocratic laws that usurp local elected officials and replace them with unaccountable political appointees—typically known as emergency financial managers—who, through their vast powers, can jeopardize the health and safety of those who live and work in these struggling cities.

In Michigan, for example, the root cause of the hazardous condition of Flint's lead-contaminated drinking water and the Detroit Public School System's buildings is the unaccountable emergency financial managers appointed by our Governor, Rick Snyder. This law and its implementation threaten not only our citizens' health and safety, but our fundamental Constitutional values and principles.

In addition, extreme emergency financial manager laws frequently facilitate conflicts of interest and mismanagement and can be used to contravene important federal and state constitutional protections for collective bargaining agreements. They can authorize emergency financial managers to unilaterally reject collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations and thereby negate years of hard earned worker pension benefits. These are not just problems in Michigan, as it has been suggested that Atlantic City, which is also in financial distress, be taken over by an unaccountable emergency financial manager with broad powers similar to those available in Michigan.

The Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act responds to these serious concerns by authorizing the Attorney General to reallocate five percent of the law enforcement funds that would otherwise be allocated to a state under the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne–JAG), which provides funding to states for law enforcement purposes, if it is determined that the state appointed emergency financial manager violates any one of seven common sense safeguards:

Protection Against Discriminatory Impact on Voting—This provision requires the state that has appointed an emergency financial manager to submit a certification to the Attorney General (and every 18 months after such appointment if the tenure of the emergency financial manager continues beyond such period) that the appointment: (A) has neither the purpose nor the effect of denying, abridging, or diluting the right to vote on account of race or color; and (B) the community for which the emergency financial manager is sought to be appointed has had an opportunity to comment, on the impact of such appointment may have on voting rights.

Protection Against States Ignoring Adverse Impacts on Voting Rights—This provision requires the Attorney General to receive copies of all public comments submitted in response to the notice required above and to interpose an objection to the certification.

Protection Against Harm to Public Health and Safety—This provision requires the emergency financial manager before making decisions affecting public health or safety, including the disbursement of any emergency funds provided by any federal or state entity for the purpose of addressing lead or other contamination of drinking water in a public water system, to receive prior approval from the governor and local elected officials.

Protection Against Conflicts of Interest, Mismanagement, and Abuse of Discretion—This provision requires the emergency financial manager to have adequate oversight to ensure against conflicts of interest, mismanagement, and abuse of discretion.

Protection Against Unilateral Rejection of Other Contracts—This provision provides that the emergency financial manager may not reject, modify, or terminate an existing contract without mutual consent or unless such rejection, modification, or termination is approved by a federal bankruptcy court.

Protection Against Rejection of Collective Bargaining Agreements—This provision provides that the emergency financial manager may not reject, modify, or terminate a collective bargaining agreement without mutual consent of the parties.

Protection Against the Failure to Provide Public Notice and Opportunity to Comment—This provision ensures that the public—before an emergency financial manager is appointed—is provided notice and the opportunity to comment on whether the appointee has any conflicts of interest, whether he or she has the requisite experience and financial acumen, and whether the appointee is empowered to propose sources of financial assistance, such as loans, grants and revenue sharing. The public must also be given the name of a state official designated to received complaints from the public about the appointee's conflicts of interest, mismanagement, or dereliction of duty.

The objective of the legislation is not to deny Byrne–JAG grant funds, but rather to incentivize the states to protect their citizens against these risks and abuses when emergency financial managers are appointed. However, if in the event the finds are withheld, they are directly reallocated to the local government for which an emergency financial manager is appointed.

We can and must stand together to make sure that the unaccountable emergency financial managers responsible for these man-made disasters—and the legal system that empowered them—are not permitted to inflict further harm on our citizens.

TRIBUTE TO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY POLICE OFFICER JACAI COLSON

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my condolences and prayers to the family of Prince George's Police Officer Jacai Colson, who died in the line of duty last Sunday just before his 29th birthday. The senseless, callous, and unprovoked death of Officer Colson reminds us that our men in blue risk their lives every day for our safety. In his four years of service on the force, Officer Colson was dedicated to his community. His friends and family describe him as a natural leader with an infectious smile who followed in his grandfather's footsteps to become a police officer. Officer Colson served as an undercover narcotics officer and was placed frequently in high risk situations—risks that he took because he knew he was making a difference. Our community lost a true hero who every day put his life at risk for the rest of us. His loss is a tragedy for his family, his fellow officers, and our State. I offer my deep condolences to all who knew Officer Colson in this time of grief.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes taken on the House floor on March 3, 2016, and March 14, 2016, as I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 106, 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 107, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 108, 'YES' on Roll Call Vote Number 109, 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 110, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 111, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 112, and 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 113.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT ANDREW JONES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Andrew Jones of Boy Scout Troop 729 in Treynor, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based

achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. For his project, Andrew planned and implemented the installation of a new fence and other grounds maintenance at the Fairview Pioneer Memorial Chapel. He is also an active member of his community and participates in local food drives, flag retirement ceremonies, and highway litter removal projects. The work ethic Andrew has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Andrew and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I missed ten votes on March 15. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 114: On Ordering the Previous Question, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 115: On Passage of H. Res. 640, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 116: On Passage of H.R. 2081, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 117: On Passage of H.R. 3447, ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 118: On Passage of Pallone Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 3797, ''nay.''

Rollcall No. 119: On Passage of Pallone Amendment No. 2 to H.R. 3797, ''nay.''

Rollcall No. 120: On Passage of Bera Amendment to H.R. 3797, ''nay.''

Rollcall No. 121: On Passage of Veasey Amendment to H.R. 3797, ''nay.''

Rollcall No. 122: On the Motion to Recommit with Instructions, ''nay.''

Rollcall No. 123: On Passage of H.R. 3797, ''yea.''

HONORING JIM GREER

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Jim Greer, Veteran Service Officer of Stanislaus County Veterans Services Office, on his retirement and to thank him for his dedicated service to our Nations heroes.

After serving 30 years, Jim retired as a Command Master Chief Petty Officer in the Navy. Following his service, he applied for a Veterans Services Representative position in Stanislaus County, and was hired in April of 1993. At first, the Veterans Services Office was serving about 50 to 60 veterans a month. Within six months of Jim's service, the office was seeing nearly 500 veterans a month.

As a Veterans Service Officer, Jim gladly accepted tremendous responsibilities including: visiting the local Veterans Service Organizations, training work study students to become Veterans Representatives, and personally assisting as many veterans as he could.

Jim has played a vital role in acquiring a Veterans Center and a VA Community Base Outpatient Clinic in Modesto, California, improving assistance to veterans in the area. As a member of the California Association of County Veterans Services Officers, Jim has been asked to speak at various conferences and events to raise awareness on administrative issues in order to benefit local veterans.

An active member of my Veterans Advisory Committee, Jim plays an essential role to reach out to the Veterans population with the most current information regarding bills, issues, and needs.

Jim has changed the lives of thousands of veterans through his dedication and commitment over the last 23 years. He lives by the motto, ''if Veterans don't help each other, no one else will'' and he has truly lived up to that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing my friend for his unwavering leadership, many accomplishments, and contributions on behalf of the veteran community and his service to the United States of America.

CONGRATULATING I.C. NORCOM HIGH SCHOOL'S BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ROBERT C. ''BOBBY'' SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a talented group of young athletes who have distinguished themselves as giants on the basketball court, making their school, their community, and the city of Portsmouth, Virginia very proud. The I.C. Norcom High School boys basketball team had another remarkable season and I am honored to recognize their accomplishments.

On March 12, 2016, the I.C. Norcom Greyhounds beat the Hopewell Blue Devils 67 to 65, to win the Group 3A state basketball championship. It was truly a remarkable game. In overtime, I.C. Norcom tied the game and with only seconds left on the clock, the Greyhounds' Travis Fields stole the ball from the Blue Devils, successfully hit a jump shot, clinching another championship for I.C. Norcom.

The Greyhounds have had a consistent run of excellence in recent years. This year's victory is I.C. Norcom's third consecutive state title and their fifth state title in the last seven seasons. It goes without saying, but I.C. Norcom has certainly become a force to be reckoned with in Virginia high school sports.

I.C. Norcom High School was founded in 1913 as the High Street School, the first public high school for black students in Portsmouth. It was renamed in 1953 in honor of its first supervising principal, Israel Charles Norcom, a pioneering educator, civic leader and businessman. Now, more than 100 years and three locations later, I.C. Norcom High School is still an innovating and inspiring place for Portsmouth students.

In addition to excelling on the basketball court, the Greyhounds are also doing great things in the classroom. I.C. Norcom houses a Center of Excellence in Math and Science, which provides students with additional classes in science, math, and technology. Seniors completing the Center's curriculum this year will receive Center of Excellence Diplomas which require five science course credits, one more than necessary under the advanced diploma. In addition, I.C. Norcom students have been participating in the First College program—attending Tidewater Community College this semester and taking up to 14 college credits before they graduate. I.C. Norcom is doing a great job cultivating excellence both on and off the athletic field.

I would like to extend my enthusiastic congratulations to each of the Greyhounds' players, their families, Principal Shameka Pollard, Coach Leon Goolsby and his entire coaching staff, on the occasion of another amazing state championship victory. On behalf of the citizens of Virginia's Third Congressional District, I commend the Greyhounds for this historic win and wish the program many more years of continued success.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 5

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the effects of consumer finance regulations.
SD–538

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine recent Iranian actions and implementation of the nuclear deal.
SD–419

APRIL 6

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 7

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.
SD–538

APRIL 13

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 14

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.
SD–538

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''
SD–628

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Thursday, March 17, 2016*

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, thank You for giving us another day.

Your care and wisdom are shown to us by the way You extend Your kingdom into our world down to the present day. Your word reveals every aspect of Your saving plan. You accomplish Your designed purpose in and through the hearts of the faithful who respond to You.

Today convert our minds and hearts that we may become the great Nation You hope us to be.

Help the Members of this people's House to seek Your presence in the midst of their busy lives. Animate them with Your holy spirit, and help them to perform their appointed tasks to come to solutions that will redound to the benefit of our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VEASEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE LIFE OF GUNNERY SERGEANT MICHAEL D. STANTON II

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, as cochairman of the Congressional Explosive Ordnance Disposal Caucus, today I rise to honor the life and service of Gunnery Sergeant Michael D. Stanton II, United States Marine Corps, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Retired.

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Gunny Stanton was born on January 27, 1963, and passed on February 6, 2016, in Dunedin, Florida.

At the start of his career, Gunny Stanton was a telephone technician, but he soon took those technical skills and put them to work as an explosive ordnance disposal technician. When Gunny Stanton first began his training, he attended the basic EOD course at Eglin Air Force Base. While in training, his block tests and final examination scores were so high that his records remain intact to this day.

In the course of his 18 years in the Marine Corps, Stanton earned many awards too numerous to list in this space. He is preceded in death by his father, Michael Dale Stanton Sr.; and a brother, Brian Stanton. Gunny Stanton is survived by his loving family: his wife, Terri Stanton; his mother, Gloria Mueller; and a brother, Timothy Stanton.

While I know that his family and friends will remember him in their own personal way, I would like all of us here in the House of Representatives to remember him as a courageous leader and a fine marine who each day bravely faced the challenges inherent in the life of an explosive ordnance disposal technician.

IMMIGRANTS ARE PART OF AMERICA'S BACKBONE

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, later today House Republicans will forward a resolution authorizing the Speaker to file an anti-immigrant amicus brief with the Supreme Court.

While Speaker RYAN has called for a vote, House Republicans refuse to reveal what the plan may say; but then again, given House Republicans' extensive record on anti-immigrant actions, little is left to the imagination.

Time and time again, GOP leadership has failed to bring a comprehensive immigration reform vote to the floor. Instead, they have favored deporting DREAMers. They have done all they can to undermine President Obama's executive actions on immigration.

Later this week, this gimmick that they are proposing will do nothing to fix our broken immigration system. Instead, it sends a message that the GOP intends to continue confining hard-working immigrants and their families to the shadows. Families who currently live in fear of deportation should be afforded the opportunity to fully contribute to the only country they call home.

As 5 million DACA/DAPA-eligible immigrants anxiously await the Court's final decision, I remind my House Republican colleagues that immigrants are part of America's backbone, and their contributions should not be discounted.

FRIVOLOUS ADA LAWSUITS ARE FLOODING OUR COUNTRY

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a wave of frivolous lawsuits flooding my district. These lawsuits use the Americans with Disabilities Act, a law that has done tremendous good in our Nation, as legal cover to sue small mom-and-pop businesses for often unnoticed and easily correctible ADA violations.

Businesses that have passed local inspections are often unaware that any ADA violation exists until a lawsuit arrives in their mailbox. Instead of demanding the violation be fixed, these lawsuits try to make a quick buck by settling out of court. The businesses have little choice: pay the settlement or pay expensive business-ending attorney fees to fight the charge.

Often these attorneys, as in my district, don't even live in the State.

Some use Google Earth to find violations and then file these lawsuits remotely. This is wrong. It takes advantage of the ADA, those with disabilities, and small businesses that thought they were in compliance.

That is why I have cosponsored the ADA Education and Reform Act, which we believe will fix this problem. I will work to get this bill passed so west Texans won't be abused by predatory attorneys who care more about money than helping those with disabilities.

FREE SPEECH IS UNDER ASSAULT IN TURKEY

(Mr. PERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, free speech and the freedom of the press are under assault in Turkey.

No longer can the United States turn a blind eye as an increasingly authoritarian regime continues to crack down on virtually all critical voices. The harassment, intimidation, and prosecution of dissenting journalists and citizens as well as the government takeover of critical media outlets represents the antithesis of free speech and a free press. These are not the actions of a nation that respects democratic values.

Beyond the obvious consequences, by continuing on this path, the regime risks destabilization and pushing the persecuted into the arms of Islamist extremism. Right now, today, Turkey's leadership should embrace the marketplace of ideas that is a part of any vibrant, real, and sincere democracy.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL FORAN, GRAND MARSHAL OF SAVANNAH'S 2016 ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Savannah's St. Patrick's Day parade as well as Mr. Michael Foran, the 2016 grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade.

The St. Patrick's Day parade is a family tradition for all Savannahians and many tourists alike. After 190 years of the St. Patrick's celebration, the Savannah parade has grown into the third largest in the world.

I would like to congratulate the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee on 192 years of festivities. I know this year's committee will present an excellent parade.

I would also like to congratulate Mr. Foran as the 2016 grand marshal. Holding all the characteristics of a great grand marshal, he fits the bill of a true Savannahian. As a member of a proud Irish family, Mr. Foran is the perfect person to receive this distinction.

I want to thank Mr. Foran and his family for their continued service to the entire Savannah community.

REMEMBERING HOWARD COBLE

(Mr. HUDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my dear friend, mentor, and former colleague, Congressman Howard Coble. Howard was a proud son of Greensboro, who for 30 years served the people of North Carolina's Sixth District with honor, integrity, and kindness.

While he is no longer with us, we will always remember Howard fondly. We miss his unique style, including madras jackets, colorful suspenders, and distinctive hats, his humble sense of humor and his personality that drew people to him.

As a matter of fact, Howard never met a stranger, and he set a standard for legendary constituent service. His constituents knew they had a friend in Congressman Coble. I work every day to live up to that example.

Howard's 85th birthday would have been tomorrow. I want to ask my colleagues and my fellow North Carolinians to join me in celebrating his remarkable life. It was a privilege to get to know Howard Coble, to call him a friend, and to continue his legacy of service to the people of North Carolina.

I know there will be no shortage of celebration in Heaven tonight.

Happy birthday, Congressman Coble.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 639, AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO APPEAR AS AMICUS CURIAE ON BEHALF OF THE HOUSE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 649 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 649

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 639) authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15-674. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution to its adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members of the House have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this rule, which will provide for consideration of House Resolution 639. I believe the underlying resolution is imperative to protecting the balance of power that our Founders so carefully enshrined in the United States Constitution.

I would also like to point out that the House Committee on Rules held an original jurisdiction hearing and markup yesterday in which we received testimony and consideration of an amendment from the minority.

Mr. Speaker, over 25 States or State officials have filed suit challenging the Obama administration's expansion of DACA and the creation of DACA-like programs for aliens who are parents of U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents.

On February 16, 2015, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas entered and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit affirmed a preliminary injunction prohibiting further implementation of these programs on the ground that States are likely to prevail in their argument for the programs that have run afoul of the law.

The Supreme Court indicated that they will begin hearing oral arguments on United States v. Texas in April of 2016 and that it will consider the plaintiffs' claims under the Take Care Clause. Because of this timely consideration by the highest court in the land, it is imperative that the House consider this underlying resolution.

I want to make it very clear that this resolution is not about policy. If you spoke with every single Member of this body, you would find a wide spectrum of opinions regarding how to handle the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants currently residing in the United States unlawfully. This resolution is not about those viewpoints. It is about the fundamental separation of power ingrained in our founding document, the Constitution.

Article I, section 8 gives Congress, not the President, the authority ''to establish a uniform rule of naturalization.'' The administration simply cannot ignore certain statutes and selectively enforce others or bypass the

legislative process to create laws for executive fiat.

This administration has failed in its duty under Article II, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and the Supreme Court has specifically indicated that it will consider the plaintiffs' claims under the Take Care Clause. Clearly, the Court views this case as an important review of Article I and Article II issues and the balance of power between the branches.

□ 0915

For that reason, and that reason alone, the United States House of Representatives is uniquely suited to speak to this underlying question that has been raised by the court.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans in the House can't agree on a budget. They take futile vote after futile vote to kill ObamaCare. They waste millions of dollars and thousands of hours on the futility. Children are drinking lead-tainted water from aging pipes crisscrossing the country. Young people are saddled with crushing student loan debt. Bridges are crumbling. Our schools are falling apart. Obviously, the Metro system in Washington is in serious condition. Our airports are struggling to function, and we have no high-speed rail.

But what do we do here? We vote 64 times to take health care away from people. We have Benghazi hearings, which come to nothing. We have had eight in the House. Many chairs of those committees have said there is nothing there, so we set up a Select Committee to look at it again and spend millions of dollars to see what they can find.

We go after Planned Parenthood, investigate them, set up a Select Committee to do that—despite the fact that a case in Texas against Planned Parenthood found in favor of Planned Parenthood and indicted the people who made the film which created such a sensation in this House. We waste congressional time with duplicative, baseless investigations. Today, the crusade against President Obama reaches new heights.

This resolution surrounding United States v. Texas adds to the already overwhelming list of baseless political tactics that the House majority has used to discredit, undermine, and disrespect President Obama.

This resolution makes a political statement, one that represents the House majority—not the entire House of Representatives or even the entire Congress, since a major part of it has been left out of this altogether.

This resolution seeks to put this whole Chamber on record when there is significant, vocal, and strong opposition. In fact, 186 House Democrats, along with 39 Senate Democrats, have joined together for our own amicus brief in support of the President's executive actions.

Not only were the President's actions constitutional, they are in line with decades of bipartisan action by Presidents on immigration itself, including action by President Ronald Reagan and President George H.W. Bush.

This is a rarely seen ploy, seeking to file an amicus brief as the whole House, leaving out completely the voice of the minority. I hope the American people will see it for what it is: purely political. This shows us, once again, that the Republicans are willing to prioritize their party over their country.

Adding insult to injury, Speaker RYAN has said:

''The president is not permitted to write law—only Congress is.''

How true, indeed. So why don't we, the Congress, do what we were sent here to do: write laws.

Republicans have reached for a tool that is not in their constitutional tool box: running to the courthouse. Rather than allowing Congress to do its job, the Republicans insist on telling other branches of government how to do theirs.

It is quickly becoming clear that this is a dangerous moment in our country and in our political system. The Presidential primary field on the Republican side is resorting to demagoguery and nativism, fanning the flames of dangerous anti-immigrant anger and anger in general.

What the President rightly called ''vulgar and divisive rhetoric'' in the Republican contest is a logical and foreseeable consequence of the anger and fear carefully and deliberately cultivated by decades of Republican campaign strategy, as Republicans went beyond principled advocacy for smaller government to the outright encouragement of people to think of government as the problem and they're an enemy to be hated.

This debate would not have even been an issue if, last Congress, the House had taken up the bipartisan Senate immigration bill, which they were asked time and time again to do but it never saw the light of day here. That was an opportunity for our country to come together in a bipartisan way, instead of further dividing us.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the argument we are making today is that this President has a repeated history of needing to have his actions resolved through the court system.

The Supreme Court has acted over 13 times to rule against the Obama administration. This President is an activist President that works around the legislature. As a matter of fact, even Members of this body have indicated that they don't even know who their White House contacts are.

We have repeatedly tried to work with the President. We hold hearings. They ignore and rebuff the things that we do. They disallow what are considered to be normal rules of law.

So this is an action that has been brought by the States, not by the United States Congress. We were simply asked to give an opinion, and that is what we are doing today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) one of our bright, new members of the Rules Committee.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the rule and the underlying resolution.

I disagree with the gentlewoman from New York. This is not about politics. This is about the Constitution of the United States. And it is very clear. It says the President ''shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.''

Now, some people may argue about what that may mean. But in 1792, President Washington, who was the chair of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, wrote this:

''It is my duty to see the Laws executed—to permit them to be trampled upon with impunity would be repugnant to'' my duty.

Fast forward to 2010. In response to those arguing for executive amnesty at that time, President Obama himself stated:

I am President. I am not king. There's a limit to the discretion that I can show because I'm obliged to execute the law. I can't just make the laws up myself.

Six months later, the President went further. He said this:

There are enough laws on the books by Congress that are very clear in terms of how we have to enforce our immigration system that for me to simply, through executive order, ignore those congressional mandates would not conform with my appropriate role as President.

Unfortunately, in 2012, President Obama reversed course and unilaterally imposed a massive program of executive amnesty in violation of this country's immigration laws. In 2014, he doubled down with a second, more expansive executive amnesty program.

According to an analysis by the Migration Policy Institute, 87 percent of all illegal aliens will be exempted from immigration enforcement actions under this President's amnesty policies. Thus, immigration laws, as actually written by Congress, will apply to a mere 13 percent of violators.

In the upcoming case of the United States v. Texas, the Court will consider whether the President's executive amnesty violated the Constitution. Consequently, that case has the potential

to be one of the most important constitutional decisions on executive power ever decided.

This resolution authorizes the filing of an amicus brief on behalf of this House in legal opposition to the President's unconstitutional actions.

As a lawyer, I can tell you amicus filings are important. They allow the court to obtain information and arguments from nonparties who have an important bearing on this case.

This resolution will allow this body to be heard before the Supreme Court.

This is not about immigration policy. This is about ensuring that this President and future Presidents, regardless of their political party, do not have the authority to ignore or change the laws through executive fiat. Ultimately, this is about the Constitution and protecting the rule of law.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and this important resolution.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative LOFGREN's resolution expressing the position of the House in support of the Obama administration in United States v. Texas.

If the House is going to take a vote on weighing in on an anti-immigrant lawsuit filed against the President, we should at least have the option of voting to support the President's executive actions, which are a worthwhile and temporary first step toward reforming our broken immigration system.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, to discuss our proposal.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I think it is worth reflecting why we are here.

When we had the bipartisan bill passed by the Senate last Congress, the Congressional Budget Office calculated that it would mean almost a trillion dollars to the positive for the American economy, not to mention the human toll that our current broken system inflicts on people.

Now, we failed to act. And when we did, the President went to the Office of Legal Counsel, an independent group, and asked them what he could do, if anything. I thought they were rather conservative, but one of the things they said he could do was to give temporary reprieve to children who had been brought here without their concurrence and to the parents of American citizens. So he did that.

How could he do that? Because the Congress has delegated to the executive the authority to act. In 1952, we did so—it can be found at 8 U.S.C. 1103(a)(3)—and again in 2002. When we created the Department of Homeland Security, we told the Department Secretary that he should establish immigration policies and priorities for removal.

Now, why would that happen? We have only appropriated 4 percent of the funds necessary to remove everyone who is here without their proper papers. So clearly, there needs to be some prioritization. We recognize that. We told the Secretary to do it, and that is exactly what he did. We delegated the authority.

On work authorization, again, we delegated that authority. In 1981, President Reagan went to rulemaking and established that authority, which is actually in practice; it has been in place. And Congress, in 1986, explicitly recognized the authority to give work authorization to those who are in deferred action status.

But even without that delegation, the President has long had the authority to take the action that the President has in this case. It is called prosecutorial discretion and foreign policy.

In United States v. Arizona, Justices Roberts and Kennedy noted that when the executive has broad discretion, a principal feature of the removal system is that it extends, and it extends to whether it makes sense to pursue removal at all.

This isn't new with President Obama. When President Reagan held that office, he sponsored a bill that gave relief—amnesty, if you will—to several million people; but the Congress—and it is reflected in the Judiciary Committee report—specifically excluded the spouses and children of those who had relief. What did Reagan do? He gave deferred action to the spouses and the children who had been specifically excluded from relief by the Congress because he didn't want to break up families. That was about 40 person of the undocumented people at the time—about the same amount that President Obama has dealt with.

Not only is this resolution wrong, it is the wrong process. Democrats went to the Ethics Committee. We got approval to get a volunteer to write a brief, which I will later include in the RECORD. We read it before we signed it.

In contrast, what are you asking Members to do? You have no idea what you are signing onto, just that you are against it.

Now, does this mean that you are saying that the Administrative Procedure Act applies whenever the President takes a discretionary action? Well, good luck fighting ISIS then. Good luck getting disaster relief if there is a flood.

It is defective for process, too. There is a group called the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group. I have been involved with that in the past. That group is consulted when there is an issue that relates to the prerogatives of the House. For example, is there a speech or debate issue before the court?

□ 0930

This did not come before the BLAG because this is political. This is not about the prerogatives of the House.

Now, all Members of the House had an opportunity to file a brief, and Republican Members still can if they can meet the time deadlines. But using this process, I think there is a reason why CRS was unable to tell us any other instance where a process like this was used about the prerogatives of the House.

So this is a radical procedure and a radical act because it says the House cannot delegate to the executive, as we have done, because it could cripple the President by requiring the Administrative Procedure Act whenever he takes a discretionary act, because it violates the procedures the House has always used.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. LOFGREN. But finally, the net result could be this: if the Republicans prevail, we could end up with a roundup of a million kids who did nothing wrong, who were brought here as infants, who don't even remember the country of their birth.

When all is said and done, that is what this is about.

I would urge that our colleagues vote ''no'' on this radical resolution. We will attempt to offer a resolution that, instead, is something you know what you are buying into, not a pig in a poke, but a thoughtful, reasoned brief that outlines what the House has done to delegate to the executive, outlines what the executive's authority has been since Eisenhower.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if you listen to our colleagues, they make wild accusations. They are swinging widely rather than understanding the essence of the case. The essence of the case is more than 25 States have gone to Federal Court in Texas, at the heart of the border, and argued the laws of the United States of America.

The process that comes about and that we agree with is we do not believe that the President of the United States, not any President, has the authority, the responsibility, or the legal standing to do what this President has done.

The President repeated that, evidently, some 21 times, that he did not have that standing either to do what he eventually did, which was purely political, and that is what we are being accused of today.

We believe that rule of law is the most important attribute, and we simply in the House of Representatives are

supporting what the Supreme Court has asked at the time the oral arguments will be done here before the Supreme Court, probably in the next month or so.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), an esteemed district attorney in Colorado and currently a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution lays out a very clear picture of how our government works. In Article I, section 8, the Founding Fathers gave Congress the duty to create laws. More importantly, Article I gave Congress the authority to ''establish a uniform rule of naturalization.''

Rather than enforcing the laws Congress created, the President has failed to execute them. Through his executive actions, he has even bypassed this building, rewriting the laws on immigration to his liking.

Sadly, this is not the only time our President has bypassed Congress and, by extension, the will of the people. On energy regulations, health care, war powers, gun rights, and even judicial nominations, all have faced Presidential work-arounds. Through executive actions, failure to enforce laws, and administrative regulations, the executive branch is slowly becoming a monarchy.

I founded the Article I Caucus last year to fight executive overreach and reassert the power of Congress. Today we have an incredible opportunity to speak to not just one, but two of the other branches of government.

Speaker RYAN has a duty to stand up for Congress and the people of this Nation by filing a friend of the court brief in this case. I urge my colleagues to vote today to give him that prerogative.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in April, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the United States v. Texas, a case that has been repeatedly litigated by our colleagues in the halls of Congress. And this resolution is absolutely about immigration policy. Let's be clear.

Numerous hearings have been held in our committee challenging the constitutionality of Deferred Actions for Parents of Americans. Our colleagues, instead of moving forward on comprehensive immigration reform and fixing our broken immigration system, have instead insisted on putting forth a resolution, a resolution that has no substantive findings, makes no legal arguments against the executive action, and exists only in the hopes of securing time before the Court during oral arguments.

If our colleagues do find themselves before the Court in this case, it would be helpful if they remember the settled Constitutional law on this subject.

DAPA is a lawful exercise of executive discretion well within the bounds of the Constitution. It is based on laws enacted by Congress that grant broad discretion to the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Since 1952, Congress has authorized the executive branch to establish such regulations, issue such instructions, and perform such other acts as it deems necessary for carrying out its authority. And within that authority, it is a reasonable exercise of the discretion delegated by Congress to do what it is doing.

The executive action focuses the limited resources of the Department of Homeland Security on public safety priorities, ensuring that we are deporting felons, not families.

It is important to recognize that Congress appropriates enough to remove less than 4 percent of the unauthorized immigrants now in our country. The Secretary of Homeland Security has the statutory responsibility to set enforcement priorities and to adopt policies necessary for meeting these priorities.

It is consistent with the actions of Presidents of both parties for the last decades, including President Eisenhower, President Reagan, and President George Herbert Walker Bush. In fact, the strongest historical precedent for DAPA was the Family Fairness program implemented by President Reagan and President Bush.

These executive actions will strengthen our communities, keep families together, and grow our economy.

This resolution is not about limiting executive authority. It is about attempting to reverse immigration policy set by the executive branch.

I understand why my friends on the other side of the aisle don't want to admit that, or they want to frame it in the context of a Constitutional question, but it is really about changing policies that are keeping families together, that are making sure that we properly allocate resources to the most serious individuals who should be deported, those who have committed crimes, and keep families together while we work to fix our broken immigration system.

This is about a fundamental change in immigration policy that will rip families apart, that will undermine our values as a country. We ought to call it what it is.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the rule and vote against this resolution.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would remind this body, Mr. Speaker, that over 13 times the highest court in this land, the Supreme Court, has ruled against this activist President for exceeding his constitutional authority.

This President, in his own concoction of the way the country ought to be run, does not follow the rules, not the rule of law, not the rule of providing enough information for people by properly delineating the way rules and laws should be executed.

That is why we are here today. It has everything to do with our belief that the President of the United States has not well and faithfully properly executed the laws of the country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership on this important situation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 639.

Mr. Speaker, we are here again discussing the President and his executive actions. Back in November of 2014, President Obama announced a series of executive actions that would have provided amnesty to approximately 5 million additional illegal immigrants.

Amnesty for these 5 million illegal immigrants would have been in addition to the millions who were provided amnesty under the administration's 2012 actions.

The President continues to degrade the rights of American citizens and ignores the U.S. Constitution which this country was founded on.

The checks and balances that our Founding Fathers established made it specifically clear that they wanted Congress to enact laws that shape our country, not the President. That is why I am supporting House Resolution 639.

House Resolution 639 will allow the Speaker of the House to submit to the U.S. Supreme Court its opinion, arguing that the President's executive action on amnesty for illegal immigration is unconstitutional. Congress must be able to express its arguments that the President's executive order on amnesty is unconstitutional so we can continue to maintain the balance of power between Congress and the President.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 639 so we can continue to deny the President's overreach of power and uphold the rights and responsibilities given to this body by the Constitution.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I think context is important in this debate we are having today. I can't get it out of my head, as we look at House Resolution 639, that our Senate has just announced that it is going to shut down the Supreme Court nomination process.

Only a few years ago, the House shut down the government for 16 days.

We have had 62 ACA repeals.

MITCH MCCONNELL once said, famously, that his goal was to make Obama a one-term President. He failed at that.

The fact is that here we are again with Republican efforts to undermine, thwart, and shut down President Obama. This is outrageous, in my opinion.

House Resolution 639 is nothing but a continuation of the politics of obstruction, just one more way to say you are not really the President, you are not legitimate. That is what this represents today. That is the exercise we are taking on this floor.

President Obama's action will bring relief to millions of families who live in fear. Families shouldn't be torn apart because House Republicans refuse to work together with Democrats to pass an immigration bill which would make executive action unnecessary.

While the Republicans held up progress, President Obama worked within his authority and took courageous steps needed to address the problems of millions of Americans.

The Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and the expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program is an important step toward fixing an immigration system that is inhumane and cruel, and it is within the right of the President to prioritize removal proceedings for certain people. We have to prioritize them. We cannot remove everybody at the same time.

Furthermore, it is consistent with the action of past Presidents, dating back to President Eisenhower, including George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, who both took executive action to keep immigrant families together.

The Republicans offer no substantive findings and no legal arguments in their resolution. This is a delay tactic. This is a political tactic. This does not serve the interests of the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. ELLISON. The fact that executive action is right for American families, and right for our economy, and right for our society, is what should guide our actions today, not political delay tactics.

Republicans won't acknowledge that immigration and immigrants are an important part of the society that we live in. I stand with the families that President Obama is trying to keep together within his authority.

Vote ''no'' on House Resolution 639.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

There is a lot of good debate here today. The facts of the case are real simple. The Supreme Court of the United States will be deciding this.

□ 0945

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Federal District Court of the Southern District of Texas have let their answer be known, and that is they believe that the President is wrong. But we have a process to follow, and the good part is it is not whether something House Republicans are doing is trying to delay or to stop something that might be a decisionmaking that has been made by someone else. We are simply trying to support an action that was asked as a result by the Supreme Court: Do we have an opinion about this issue? And it is thus that we are asking the House of Representatives to come together today to hear the facts of this issue and to then render a decision.

That, to me, Mr. Speaker, is normal and regular, and our Speaker, PAUL RYAN, is most meticulous in looking at this issue. His advice and judgment comes from the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Virginia, BOB GOODLATTE. Both of these gentlemen are not only well balanced, but really doing what is being asked of them by the third branch of government, which is the judiciary. The judiciary has asked the House of Representatives and parties to this suit if they would please discuss this issue.

We believe our ideas are material to the question at hand, and that is why the United States House of Representatives, through the Rules Committee, is here for this rule today and the underlying legislation in just a few minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), an exciting young member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of Speaker RYAN's House Resolution 639.

Like many of my colleagues, I continue to oppose President Obama's illegal amnesty program, and I have long believed that the proper venue to challenging the President's overreaching actions is primarily in the courts of this country. To this end, I was 1 of 68 Members of Congress—and the only member from the New Jersey delegation—to sign an amicus brief in support of a lawsuit brought by a coalition of 26 States against the President's executive order on immigration.

As a lawyer who has practiced constitutional law in my home State of New Jersey, I have tried to study these issues closely. There is no gray area: Congress writes the laws, and the executive branch enforces them.

The executive overreach consistently taken by this administration demonstrates not only contempt for law, but a disregard for the critical balance of powers central to our Constitution. The American system of self-governance would not be as strong as it is if it were not for these bedrock principles.

Today, we have unelected officials in Federal agencies writing our laws. The executive branch is appropriating taxpayer funds without authorization from Congress, and departments are selectively deciding which laws to enforce. Prosecutorial discretion cannot be expanded to break the rule of law, as I am confident the Supreme Court of the United States will rule.

I applaud Speaker RYAN for pursuing an amicus brief to defend our Article I powers under the Constitution. Given the President's gross executive overreach, it is essential for this institution to respond as a whole. This action today is not only prudent, but an important and necessary step in defense of the Constitution and the rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support House Resolution 639.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, this is a political act because this action only comes with President Obama. We never did this with Republican Presidents.

Let me give you an example. After Tiananmen Square, the House of Representatives passed a bill to preclude the deportation of Chinese students. President Bush vetoed that bill. Do you know what he did then? He deferred the deportation of the Chinese students because he had the executive authority.

In 1999, a letter was sent to Janet Reno. It was signed by Henry Hyde, LAMAR SMITH, SAM JOHNSON, and many others asking her to use her prosecutorial discretion and citing the fact that the prosecutorial discretion is clear in removal proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, I will include that letter in the RECORD.

I was shocked to hear Mr. SESSIONS say that the Court had solicited a brief—maybe I misunderstood him—had asked the House for a brief. If that is the case, I would respectfully request to see a copy of the document soliciting a brief from the House of Representatives. That is a procedure that would be an extraordinary one, and it is certainly news to me.

Finally, I would like to add that the fact that Mr. GOODLATTE doesn't agree with the President has nothing to do with the fact that the procedures were not followed in this case. The Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group is the process established in the House to be used when the House takes a step in Court to defend its prerogatives, which is what the majority is suggesting is at play in this case.

This is clearly a political act, and if it succeeds, who will be punished? One million children who did nothing wrong, who will be rounded up and taken from their homes.

I don't know what Republicans think they are doing if they sign on to this resolution because it doesn't give any findings nor does it say what, in fact, they are signing on to.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), my dear friend.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman from Texas for yielding and for leading on this issue.

As I sit and listen to this debate, a number of things come to mind, and they start with this: I am hearing a lot of policy discussion over on the other side of the aisle, but this is about a constitutional question.

We have just said good-bye to one of the great, great Justices in the United States Supreme Court, Justice Scalia, who often said that, when he made a decision based on the Constitution and he was uncomfortable with the policy that resulted from that constitutional decision, he was most comfortable that he had made the right constitutional decision when he disagreed with a policy result of that decision.

That is also how we should view this case. Every one of us that has the privilege to speak and address you on the floor of this House has taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. This is about the President's oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, except his says take care to ''preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States,'' and it is referenced in the Take Care Clause in the Constitution that requires him to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Now, I don't know that there is a schoolchild in this land that is going to get that wrong. They don't think that the President should execute the law itself and then conduct himself in the fashion that he sees fit. I think they understand that the President, multiple times, has lectured the country in his adjunct constitutional law professorship that he didn't have the constitutional authority to do what he did.

So this issue is about the Take Care Clause, the President keeping his oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, and it is about prosecutorial discretion, as the gentlewoman from California said; except that, it was a clear understanding, when they wrote the Morton Memos, that they were creating groups of people, classes of people, and categories of people, and the Morton Memos were the beginning of this. They created four different categories of people, and as far as I know, anyone who fit into those categories was essentially maybe individually dealt with because they processed their paperwork, but they were automatically exempted from the application of the law. That is when this began.

We should not think, Mr. Speaker, that the House hasn't weighed in on this. It goes back to this. March 2, 2011, was the introduction of the Morton Memos. That was the first executive overreach on immigration that is starkly on paper. The first opportunity to push back on that was a hearing in which Janet Napolitano asserted that it was on an individual basis only and repeated herself. And Morton Memos themselves have several references to an individual basis only, except that they create four categories of people. So the words don't mean what the rules do. They abuse prosecutorial discretion by granting it to vast groups of people that were defined first in the Morton Memos.

So I brought an amendment June 7, 2012, that cut off all the funding to the Morton Memos. That passed 238–175 on a bipartisan vote. The next opportunity was the Morton Memos in DACA, another King amendment, June 6, 2013, that passed 224–201, another bipartisan vote in the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas.

So we addressed the Morton Memos in this House and voted to defund them in 2012. That was the first opportunity.

The next opportunity was 2013. We addressed the Morton Memos in DACA and defunded them in this House of Representatives. That was also a bipartisan vote.

Then August 1, 2014, we addressed DACA alone, defunded it, a vote of 216–192, another bipartisan vote, Mr. Speaker.

Not to be completing it there, January 14, 2015, the House addressed, separately, DAPA and Morton Memos in an amendment to defund. That passed 237–190. And we picked up the DACA in a separate amendment, same day, and that passed 218–209.

The House has voted time and time again. And if that was not enough for the voice of the House to weigh in on this, we came back again on June 3, 2015, another King amendment, and defunded the DOJ lawsuit we are talking about here now because we said: Step back, Mr. President; keep your oath of office. We stood up, and we defended ours.

I will say this. Despite all of these votes, the government and Democrat Members claim Congress has acquiesced to the unconstitutional actions when the House has a clear voting history of opposing each step in the President's path to amnesty.

So the House has now exhausted our remedies, with the exception of the omnibus spending bills, where everything gets packaged up in one vote. Except for that, the House has done all it can, Mr. Speaker, except for this opportunity to introduce an amicus brief that will be the voice of the House keeping our oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Ms. LOFGREN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LOFGREN. Is it the gentleman's proposition that a vote in this House that does not become law voids an action of the House that does become law, to wit, the 2002 Department of Homeland Security Act that directed the Secretary to establish priorities for removal?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I am asserting that the House needs to do all it can to keep our oath to support and defend the Constitution, and we are doing this today with this endorsement of the Speaker's amicus brief so that the House can weigh in in defending our constitutional obligation.

I thank the gentlewoman from California and the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the gentlewoman from New York for her courtesies.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to take note, in light of the previous debate and comments that were made, that this is a House divided. This amicus brief more than likely will be supported by a number of Members, but it will not be supported by the entirety of the House. So whether or not it is a majority, which is the other party, it is not going to be the voice of the entirety of the House.

As far as I am concerned, and as the Constitution has made clear, that responsibility that the President has exercised is a constitutional authority. So I oppose the resolution because it is nothing more than our Republican majority's latest partisan attacks on the President and a diversionary tactic to avoid addressing some of the more important issues such as the broken immigration system.

Just a few years ago, the Senate Republicans and Democrats came together to produce and pass a very thorough assessment of the immigration system, and they actually passed laws, the intent of the Nation, represented by Senators, and that came to the House and never saw the light of day to be able to be voted on. But yet the

Homeland Security Committee, in an extensive series of hearings and then, of course, legislation, then wrote legislation that passed by voice vote in a bipartisan manner to protect the border, everything that the Republican side is asking for.

But lying at the heart of the plaintiff's misguided and wholly partisan complaint is a specious claim that President Obama lacked the constitutional authority and statutory authority to take executive action. This frivolous and partisan lawsuit seeks to have DACA and DAPA declared to be invalid and to permanently enjoin the Obama administration from implementing those salutary policies.

Let me briefly speak about these actions by the President. They are reasonable. The reason they are reasonable is because, in addition to establishing the President's obligation to execute the law, the Supreme Court has consistently interpreted the Take Care Clause as ensuring Presidential control over those who execute and enforce the laws and the authority to decide how best to enforce the laws.

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Arizona v. United States, Bowsher v. Synar, Buckley v. Valeo, Printz v. United States, Free Enterprise Fund v. Public Company Accounting Oversight Board.

Let me also say to you that this is a Texas case that they are submitting the amicus on. These are Texas DREAMers. Many of us have worked with them. They are in our institutions of higher learning. They are going to be contributing to society. This is what this amicus brief is, to turn them back and to turn their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Texas an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. How would DACA and DAPA impact domestic violence? DACA provided a sense of peace, knowing that this woman would not be deported.

I would argue to my friends that whatever the vote is today, it is not the sense of the House. It is a divided House, and we are not supporting an amicus to turn back the President's constitutional authority.

With that, I ask my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the underlying resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to both the rule governing debate of H. Res. 639, and the underlying resolution, which authorizes the Speaker to appear as Amicus Curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674.

I oppose the resolution because it is nothing more than the Republican majority's latest partisan attack on the President and another diversionary tactic to avoid addressing the challenge posed by the nation's broken immigration system.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 639, if adopted, would vest in the Speaker alone the power to file on behalf of the full House an amicus brief with the Supreme Court supporting the constitutionally untenable position of 26 Republican-controlled states in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674.

Lying at the heart of the plaintiffs' misguided and wholly partisan complaint is the specious claim that President Obama lacked the constitutional and statutory authority to take executive actions to implement Administration policy with regard to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of American Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents, the creation of (DAPA).

This frivolous and partisan lawsuit seeks to have DACA and DAPA declared invalid and to permanently enjoin the Obama Administration from implementing these salutary policies, both of which are intended to keep law-abiding and peace loving immigrant families together.

The purely partisan nature of the resolution before us is revealed by its text, which authorizes the Speaker to waste precious taxpayer funds and file on behalf of every Member of the House an amicus brief that no Member has seen in support of a position opposed by virtually every member of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly discuss why the executive actions taken by President Obama are reasonable, responsible, and within his constitutional authority.

Pursuant to Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution, the President, the nation's Chief Executive, ''shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.''

In addition to establishing the President's obligation to execute the law, the Supreme Court has consistently interpreted the ''Take Care'' Clause as ensuring presidential control over those who execute and enforce the law and the authority to decide how best to enforce the laws. See, e.g., Arizona v. United States; Bowsher v. Synar; Buckley v. Valeo; Printz v. United States; Free Enterprise Fund v. PCAOB.

Every law enforcement agency, including the agencies that enforce immigration laws, has ''prosecutorial discretion''—the inherent power to decide whom to investigate, arrest, detain, charge, and prosecute.

Thus, enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), properly may exercise their discretion to devise and implement policies specific to the laws they are charged with enforcing, the population they serve, and the problems they face so that they can prioritize our nation's resources to meet mission critical enforcement goals.

Mr. Speaker, to see the utter lack of merit in the legal position to be supported by the amicus brief permitted by H. Res. 639, one need take note of the fact that deferred action has been utilized in our nation for decades by Administrations headed by presidents of both parties without controversy or challenge.

In fact, as far back as 1976, INS and DHS leaders have issued at least 11 different memoranda providing guidance on the use of similar forms of prosecutorial discretion.

Executive authority to take action is thus ''fairly wide,'' and the federal government's discretion is extremely ''broad'' as the Supreme Court held in the recent case of *Arizona* v. *United States*, 132 S. Ct. 2492, 2499 (2012), an opinion written by Justice Kennedy and joined by Chief Justice Roberts:

''Congress has specified which aliens may be removed from the United States and the procedures for doing so. Aliens may be removed if they were inadmissible at the time of entry, have been convicted of certain crimes, or meet other criteria set by federal law. Removal is a civil, not criminal, matter. A principal feature of the removal system is the broad discretion exercised by immigration officials. Federal officials, as an initial matter, must decide whether it makes sense to pursue removal at all. If removal proceedings commence, aliens may seek asylum and other discretionary relief allowing them to remain in the country or at least to leave without formal removal.'' (emphasis added) (citations omitted).

The Court's decision in Arizona v. United States, also strongly suggests that the executive branch's discretion in matters of deportation may be exercised on an individual basis, or it may be used to protect entire classes of individuals such as ''[u]nauthorized workers trying to support their families'' or immigrants who originate from countries torn apart by internal conflicts:

''Discretion in the enforcement of immigration law embraces immediate human concerns. Unauthorized workers trying to support their families, for example, likely pose less danger than alien smugglers or aliens who commit a serious crime. The equities of an individual case may turn on many factors, including whether the alien has children born in the United States, long ties to the community, or a record of distinguished military service.

Some discretionary decisions involve policy choices that bear on this Nation's international relations. Returning an alien to his own country may be deemed inappropriate even where he has committed a removable offense or fails to meet the criteria for admission. The foreign state may be mired in civil war, complicit in political persecution, or enduring conditions that create a real risk that the alien or his family will be harmed upon return.

The dynamic nature of relations with other countries requires the Executive Branch to ensure that enforcement policies are consistent with this Nation's foreign policy with respect to these and other realities.''

Exercising thoughtful discretion in the enforcement of the nation's immigration law saves scarce taxpayer funds, optimizes limited resources, and produces results that are more humane and consistent with America's reputation as the most compassionate nation on earth.

Mr. Speaker, a DREAMER (an undocumented student) seeking to earn her college degree and aspiring to attend medical school to better herself and her new community is not a threat to the nation's security.

Law abiding but unauthorized immigrants doing honest work to support their families pose far less danger to society than human traffickers, drug smugglers, or those who have committed a serious crime.

The President was correct in concluding that exercising his discretion regarding the implementation of DACA and DAPA policies enhances the safety of all members of the public, serves national security interests, and furthers the public interest in keeping families together.

Mr. Speaker, according to numerous studies conducted by the Congressional Budget Office, Social Security Administration, and Council of Economic Advisors, the President's DACA and DAPA directives generate substantial economic benefits to our nation.

For example, unfreezing DAPA and expanded DACA is estimated to increase GDP by $230 billion and create an average of 28,814 jobs per year over the next 10 years.

That is a lot of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, in exercising his broad discretion in the area of removal proceedings, President Obama has acted responsibly and reasonably in determining the circumstances in which it makes sense to pursue removal and when it does not.

In exercising this broad discretion, President Obama not done anything that is novel or unprecedented.

Let me cite a just a few examples of executive action taken by American presidents, both Republican and Democratic, on issues affecting immigrants over the past 35 years:

1. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan used executive action in 1987 to allow 200,000 Nicaraguans facing deportation to apply for relief from expulsion and work authorization.

2. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter exercised parole authority to allow Cubans to enter the U.S., and about 123,000 ''Mariel Cubans'' were paroled into the U.S. by 1981.

3. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush issued an executive order that granted Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to certain nationals of the People's Republic of China who were in the United States.

4. In 1992, the Bush administration granted DED to certain nationals of El Salvador.

5. In 1997, President Bill Clinton issued an executive order granting DED to certain Haitians who had arrived in the United States before Dec. 31, 1995.

6. In 2010, the Obama Administration began a policy of granting parole to the spouses, parents, and children of military members.

Mr. Speaker, because of the President's leadership and visionary executive action, 594,000 undocumented immigrants in my home state of Texas are eligible for deferred action.

If these immigrants are able to remain united with their families and receive a temporary work permit, it would lead to a $338 million increase in tax revenues, over five years.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me note that the President's laudable executive actions are a welcome development but not a substitute for undertaking the comprehensive reform and modernization of the nation's immigration laws supported by the American people.

Only Congress can do that.

America's borders are dynamic, with constantly evolving security challenges.

Border security must be undertaken in a manner that allows actors to use pragmatism and common sense.

Comprehensive immigration reform is desperately needed to ensure that Lady Liberty's lamp remains the symbol of a land that welcomes immigrants to a community of immigrants and does so in a manner that secures our borders and protects our homeland.

Instead of wasting time debating divisive and mean spirited measures like H. Res. 639, we should instead seize the opportunity to pass legislation that secures our borders, preserves America's character as the most open and welcoming country in the history of the world, and will yield hundreds of billions of dollars in economic growth.

I urge all Members to join me in voting against H. Res. 639.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), who serves on the Agriculture Committee.

Mr. BOST. I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, whenever we take these offices—and understand, I have raised my hand and took an oath of office many times in my life, whether it was in the United States Marine Corps., local government, or here in Congress. When I take that oath and mention the fact that I am swearing allegiance to the Constitution to do my duty and do it correctly, I make that promise, and I make that promise to the American people. This document that we take an oath to, the President himself has to take that same oath.

When the President steps away from that oath, this House has no other thing that they can do but to act.

Any grade school civics student knows that Congress makes the law and the President executes them. It is called the separation of powers, checks and balances. But the President's executive amnesty proves once again that he wants to do both—both. That is not in the Constitution. It doesn't work that way.

Immigration law clearly states that individuals who are here illegally must be removed. The President does not have the power to pick and choose. That is not what the law says. He doesn't get to ignore the laws.

The outcome of this case will be determined in the Court. But I want my constituents—and I want to be on the record—to know that I will uphold the Constitution; I will stand for the Constitution; and I take my oath of office very, very seriously.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the rule and the underlying resolution so we can stop this unconstitutional move.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and the underlying legislation. And I call on the Speaker to stop this political game and allow the vote on comprehensive immigration reform that we should have taken 2 years ago.

Everyone agrees that our immigration system is broken, but instead of voting on a solution, Congress is again wasting time on a political gimmick that does not address a single real problem.

The President took lawful action to help families being torn apart by our current system. If Republicans take issue with what current law allows, they should stop obstructing meaningful debate and get serious about comprehensive immigration reform.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I helped lead efforts last Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform by introducing the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, H.R. 15. I believe that bill would have passed if we had been given a chance to vote on it on the floor. We had 200 cosponsors and a chance to fix this problem then.

I won't blame the current Speaker for mistakes of the past, but he has a chance to lead now.

For too long, Congress has failed to take meaningful action to address our broken immigration system. As a result, we have a deeply flawed system that is not working for our communities, our businesses, immigrants, or families.

It will take Congressional action to truly repair our broken immigration system, so I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution and demand that Congress act.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the arguments that are on the floor today evolve and revolve around the issues that we believe are very important; that is, we believe that the President of the United States has exceeded his executive authority, and the Supreme Court is going to hear the case.

But, in fact, today the question that lies before the House is about an action that will be taken by this House to support, in an amicus brief, the positions that will be needed.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN), the Speaker of the House.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, I rise today to urge Members to support this measure, House Resolution 649. Let me explain why, and why everyone should support this.

This resolution authorizes me, on behalf of the House, to file an amicus brief to defend our Article I powers under the Constitution. Normally this question would be considered by what is known as the House's Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group, but I am asking the whole House to go on the record, as an institution.

I recognize that this is a very extraordinary step. I feel it is very necessary, though. In fact, I believe this is vital.

This is not a question of whether or not we are for or against any certain

policy. Members who are making immigration policy arguments are missing the entire point here. This comes down to a much more fundamental question. It is about the integrity of our Constitution.

Article I. Article I states that all legislative powers are vested in Congress.

Article II. Article II states that the President ''shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.''

Those lines, that separation of powers, could not be clearer. Article I: Congress writes laws. Article II: Presidents faithfully execute those laws.

In recent years, the executive branch has been blurring these boundaries to the point of absolutely overstepping them altogether. As a result, bureaucrats responsible for executing the laws, as written, are now writing the laws at their whim.

This just doesn't throw our checks and balances off-balance, it creates a fourth branch of government. This creates a fourth branch of government that operates with little or no accountability whatsoever. Most profoundly, this means that we the people, through our elected representatives, are not drafting the laws that we live under. This is the profound difference that is occurring here. This fourth branch of government is a danger to self-government itself.

The Supreme Court has recognized the severity of this threat. In United States v. Texas, the Court has asked whether the President's overreach violates his duty to faithfully execute the laws. This House is uniquely qualified and, I would argue, obligated to respond.

Colleagues, we are the body closest to the people. We are the ones who are directly elected by the American people every other year. And if we are going to maintain the principle of self-government, if we are going to maintain this critical founding principle of government by consent of the governed, then the legislative branch needs to be writing our laws, not the executive branch, and certainly not a branch of unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats. This is what is happening. And it is not just this administration, although this administration has taken it to whole new levels.

As Speaker, I believe the authority of the office that I have been entrusted by each and every one of you is to protect the authority of this body. I am prepared to make our case.

We must defend the principle of self-determination, of self-government, of government by consent of the governed.

This Constitution protects our rights, as people. It makes sure that the government works for us and not the other way around. It makes sure that we, as citizens, if we don't like the direction our government is going, if we don't like the laws that we are being forced to live under, that we can change that through the ballot box. And this is being undermined every day.

I am prepared to submit this defense of our Article I powers, and I ask the whole House for its support.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), the ranking member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, obviously, we all like and honor the Speaker of the House. I was pleased to hear his recognition that this should have gone through the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group because that is how the House organizes itself before asserting a privilege of the House in court.

What he didn't say is why, since cert was granted on January 19—and today is March 17—he didn't call together the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group. Certainly, we have met in a much shorter time frame. I know because I have been a participant in that process.

The failure to follow the procedures in this instance can only lead observers to conclude that this is a more politicized action than is traditional in terms of intervening in the court.

Now, the Speaker said: ''All legislative powers are vested in Congress.'' No one can disagree with that. And that the President must ''take care that the laws be faithfully executed.'' No one can disagree with that.

Is the Speaker saying that we did not, in 2002, delegate to the Secretary of Homeland Security the responsibility to establish priorities and policies, the priorities for removal, that we did not fail to provide most of the money that would be necessary to actually remove every single undocumented person in here? I think not. In fact, the President has done exactly what we said he should do in 2002.

To approve this resolution, which says that he has acted inconsistent with his duties, is a mystery. It is a pig in a poke for the Republicans.

The District Court made a finding that in order to take a discretionary action, one would need to comply with the Administrative Procedures Act. That is a very bulky procedure—90 days posting.

Are the Members of the House being asked to say that whenever the President takes a discretionary action, he must post a rule for 90 days? We don't know because this resolution only says we are against it.

If we are saying that a rule must be adopted whenever a discretionary action is taken, that would be an extraordinary departure from the President's power to act, and it is certainly something that Members ought to know they are doing before they vote on this resolution.

Much has been said about the States that filed the lawsuit. They were all States with Republican Governors. But there are States who disagree, including my State of California.

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There is a brief filed by the Californians which reads that the discretionary action the President took would generate 130,000 jobs in California and that it would provide $3.8 billion in taxes to California.

So if we are going to use as an excuse the fact that Republican Governors filed a lawsuit to stop it, let's think about the States that have been enjoined unfairly and that are experiencing extreme economic damage because of the Fifth Circuit's misguided opinion.

I hate to say it, because I do appreciate the Speaker of the House, but there is only one way to look at this resolution—as a highly politicized effort. This is not the way the House has traditionally proceeded when adopting a court proceeding, a court intervention, that deals with the privileges of the House.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I advise my colleague that I have come to the end of my speakers and would wait for her to offer her final comments, and I will close.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative LOFGREN's resolution expressing a position of the House in support of the Obama administration in United States v. Texas.

If the House is going to vote on weighing in on the anti-immigration lawsuit that was filed against the President, we should at least have the option of voting to support the President's executive actions, which are a worthwhile, if temporary, first step toward reforming our broken immigration system.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, our immigration system is broken, as evidenced by the fact that there are 11 million undocumented persons who are living in the United States.

Instead of engaging in a bipartisan legislative process to reform the system, the House majority has decided to focus on discrediting the President rather than forming policies that benefit our country. There is ample evidence of Presidents long before this one having exercised the same executive order privilege without there having

been any great rush by the House of Representatives to go to court to try to stop him. House Democrats would welcome the chance to work on a bipartisan solution to the Nation's broken immigration system, but we can't because we simply are not allowed to participate—only to show up to vote.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. If we have a ''no'' vote on this closed rule, we then will be able to present our own resolution in support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentlewoman from New York for her engagement on this important issue and for her leadership on the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, most of all, what we are doing here is acknowledging that the Supreme Court of the United States will make this decision; but in seeking input on this important question, we feel like the House is uniquely qualified to begin answering that question, literally, with a vote. That is how we do things around here.

I do recognize and respect that the minority leader has gathered a group of those who might be Democrats—from the Democrat Party, House and Senate sides—for their own opinion, and they did file that. This is an action that will be taken today that is by the House of Representatives, and I think the Speaker outlined why we are here and the importance of it.

Mr. Speaker, in July of 2011, President Obama stated: ''I swore an oath to uphold the laws on the books. Now, I know some people want me to bypass Congress and change the laws on my own. Believe me, the idea of doing things on my own is very tempting, I promise you, not just on immigration reform, but that's not how our system works. That's not how our democracy functions. That's not how our Constitution is written.''

I quote the President of the United States on addressing the same issue exactly that is before us today.

Article I, section 8 gives Congress, not the President, the authority to establish a uniform rule of naturalization. It is directly out of the Constitution. The President had it right at least 21 times.

Article II, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States requires the President take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us today, before this body, is not about policy. It is not about how we should handle the 11 million undocumented, illegal immigrants who are currently residing in this country. It is about our Nation's Constitution. It is about the checks and balances that our Founders labored over so intensely to ensure a government will always be by and for the people. It has even been noted that it has been taught and is taught today in elementary school that the legislature—the Congress—writes the laws. That is why we are here today. It is even taught in our elementary schools.

Mr. Speaker, this administration, as well as future administrations from either party—whoever serves—must not be allowed to ignore the Constitution and circumvent those who write the laws, and it is imperative that the House speaks as an institution on this matter.

I am pleased with the arguments that have been made today. I believe they were right and just, and I believe that our Speaker, PAUL RYAN, in his own wisdom and experience and temperament, is attempting to approach this as an important constitutional issue and as the prerogative and the right and the responsibility of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following amici curiae brief:

No. 15–674

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al.,
Petitioners,

v.

STATE OF TEXAS, et al., Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

BRIEF OF 186 MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND 39 MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE AS AMICI CURIAE IN SUPPORT OF PETITIONERS

KENNETH L. SALAZAR.
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr, LLP.
SETH P. WAXMAN, COUNSEL OF RECORD.
JAMIE S. GORELICK.
PAUL R.Q. WOLFSON.
DAVID M. LEHN.
SAURABH H. SANGHVI.
RYAN MCCARL.
JOHN B. SPRANGERS.
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr, LLP.

INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE

Amici are 186 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 39 Members of the U.S. Senate. A complete list of amici is set forth in the Appendix. Among them are:

U.S. House of Representatives:
Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader.
Steny H. Hoyer, Democratic Whip.
James E. Clyburn, Assistant Democratic Leader.
Xavier Becerra, Democratic Caucus Chair.
Joseph Crowley, Democratic Caucus Vice-Chair.
John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary.
Zoe Lofgren, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security of the Committee on the Judiciary.
U.S. Senate:
Harry Reid, Democratic Leader.
Richard J. Durbin, Democratic Whip.
Charles E. Schumer, Democratic Conference Committee Vice Chair and Policy Committee Chair, and Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, Committee on the Judiciary.
Patty Murray, Secretary, Democratic Conference.
Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary.
Robert Menendez, Democratic Hispanic Task Force Chair.

As Members of Congress responsible, under Article I of the Constitution, for enacting legislation that will then be enforced by the Executive Branch pursuant to its authority and responsibility under Article II, amici have an obvious and distinct interest in ensuring that the Executive enforces the laws in a manner that is rational, effective, and faithful to Congress's intent. Given their institutional responsibility, amici would not support executive efforts at odds with duly enacted federal statutes. But where Congress has chosen to vest in the Executive discretionary authority to determine how a law should be enforced and the Executive has acted pursuant to that authority—as is the case here—amici have a strong interest in ensuring that federal courts honor Congress's deliberate choice by sustaining the Executive's action.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

Congress understands that the Executive is often better positioned to determine how to adjust quickly to changing circumstances in complex fields, particularly ones involving law-enforcement and national-security concerns. Congress therefore regularly gives the Executive broad discretion to determine how to enforce such statutes. Rarely has it done so more clearly than in the Nation's immigration laws.

Recognizing the Executive's institutional advantages in the immigration context, Congress has for more than sixty years granted the Executive broad discretionary authority to ''establish such regulations; . . . issue such instructions; and perform such other acts as [the Secretary] deems necessary for carrying out his authority'' under the Immigration and Nationality Act (''INA''). 8 U.S.C. 1103(a)(3). And in 2002, in the face of a yawning gap between the size of the unauthorized immigrant population and the amount of resources reasonably available for enforcement, Congress charged the Secretary of Homeland Security with ''[e]stablishing national immigration enforcement policies and priorities.'' 6 U.S.C. 202(5). Congress thereby encouraged the Executive to focus its resources in a rational and effective manner on cases in which the Nation's interest in removal is strongest, to provide the maximum return on Congress's sizeable but necessarily finite investment in immigration enforcement.

As representatives of diverse communities across the United States, amici have witnessed how an approach to enforcement of the immigration laws that does not focus on appropriate priorities undermines confidence in those laws, wastes resources, and needlessly divides families, thereby exacting a severe human toll. Amici thus regard the DAPA Guidance as exactly the kind of ''enforcement polic[y]'' that Congress charged the Secretary with establishing. Building on the Secretary's decision to prioritize for enforcement threats to national security, border security, and public safety, the DAPA Guidance establishes a ''polic[y]'' that certain nonpriority immigrants may be considered for ''deferred action,'' i.e., memorialized temporary forbearance from removal, which triggers eligibility for work authorization upon a showing of economic need.

This Court has observed that deferred action is a ''commendable exercise in administrative discretion.'' Reno v. American-Arab

Anti-Discrimination Comm., 525 U.S. 471, 484 (1999) (''ADC''). Deferred action is not just a humanitarian exercise. Like other uses of deferred action, the DAPA Guidance facilitates the implementation of the Secretary's priorities and promotes the efficient and effective execution of the immigration laws consistent with the limited enforcement resources available. The Guidance does this by encouraging eligible persons to submit to a background check so they can be identified and classified according to removal priority, and by enabling those with an economic need to support themselves lawfully.

That the Secretary's guidance is within his statutory authority should not be open to doubt. For half a century, the Executive has used deferred action and other forms of discretionary relief in a variety of circumstances, even when not specifically authorized by statute. Congress has approved of those practices, repeatedly amending the immigration laws without foreclosing the Executive's broad discretion to use them—and even enacting provisions that presume the Executive will continue its discretionary practice of deferred action. Similarly, Congress has explicitly recognized the Executive's broad discretion to determine which removable individuals qualify for work authorization and has never disturbed the Executive's decades-long practice of providing work authorization to those granted deferred action.

The court of appeals' holding that the DAPA Guidance is ''manifestly contrary to the INA'' reflects a misreading of the INA and a faulty approach to interpreting complex regulatory statutes like the immigration laws. The court reasoned that the immigration laws' specific references to discretionary relief from removal and work authorization under certain circumstances implicitly foreclosed discretionary relief and work authorization under others. But deferred action is not a substitute for specific statutory statuses and forms of discretionary relief, as it grants none of the legal rights that lawful status provides. Moreover, the court's expressio unius analysis disregards the broad grants of discretion that are explicit in the immigration laws and the long history of undisturbed executive exercise of that discretion. The court's approach would make it virtually impossible for Congress to grant the Executive the broad authority and discretion required to tackle urgent and unforeseen immigration challenges, while retaining the ability to direct specific enforcement action it deems appropriate. More generally, it would hamper Congress's ability to allocate to the Executive the combination of broad discretion and specific responsibilities so often needed to administer sprawling statutory schemes effectively.

Finally, even if a claim under the Take Care Clause is justiciable, and even if such a claim may be asserted against an Executive officer other than the President, the claim must fail here. The States' challenge rises and falls on the proper interpretation of the immigration laws, and thus should be viewed as presenting only a statutory claim. In any event, the Take Care Clause surely does not prevent an agency faced with the task of removing hundreds of thousands of individuals each year from pursuing such removals in a rational rather than haphazard manner in light of its limited enforcement resources.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following letter:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, November 4, 1999.

Embargoed for release Monday, November 8, 1999.

Contact: Allen Kay, Rep. Lamar Smith.

Re Guidelines for use of prosecutorial discretion in removal proceedings.

Hon. JANET RENO,
Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Hon. DORIS M. MEISSNER,
Commissioner, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO AND COMMISSIONER MEISSNER: Congress and the Administration have devoted substantial attention and resources to the difficult yet essential task of removing criminal aliens from the United States. Legislative reforms enacted in 1996, accompanied by increased funding, enabled the Immigration and Naturalization Service to remove increasing numbers of criminal aliens, greatly benefitting public safety in the United States.

However, cases of apparent extent hardship have caused concerns Some cases may involve removal proceedings against legal permanent residents who came to the United States when they were very young, and many years ago committed a single crime at the lower end of the ''aggravated felony'' spectrum, but have been law-abiding ever since, obtained and held jobs and remained self-sufficient, and started families in the United States. Although they did not become United States citizens, immediate family members are citizens.

There has been widespread agreement that some deportations were unfair and resulted in unjustifiable hardship. If the facts substantiate the presentations that have been made to us, we must ask why the INS pursued removal in such cases when so many other more serious cases existed.

We write to you because many people believe that you have the discretion to alleviate some of the hardships, and we wish to solicit your views as to why you have been unwilling to exercise such authority in some of the cases that have occurred. In addition, we ask whether your view is that the 1996 amendments somehow eliminated that discretion. The principle of prosecutorial discretion is well established. Indeed, INS General and Regional Counsel have taken the position, apparently well-grounded in case law, that INS has prosecutorial discretion in the initiation or termination of removal proceedings (see attached memorandum). Furthermore, a number of press reports indicate that the INS has already employed this discretion in some cases.

True hardship cases call for the exercise of such discretion, and over the past year many Members of Congress have urged the INS to develop guidelines for the use of its prosecutorial discretion. Optimally, removal proceedings should be initiated or terminated only upon specific instructions from authorized INS officials, issued in accordance with agency guidelines. However, the INS apparently has not yet promulgated such guidelines.

The undersigned Members of Congress believe that just as the Justice Department's United States Attorneys rely on detailed guidelines governing the exercise of their prosecutorial discretion, INS District Directors also require written guidelines, both to legitimate in their eyes the exercise of discretion and to ensure that their decisions to initiate or terminate removal proceedings are not made in an inconsistent manner. We look forward to working with you to resolve this matter and hope that you will develop and implement guidelines for INS prosecutorial discretion in an expeditious and fair manner.

Sincerely,

Henry J. Hyde; Lamar Smith; Bill McCollum; Bill Barrett; Barney Frank; Sheila Jackson Lee; Martin Frost; Howard L. Berman; Brian P. Billbray; Charles T. Canady; Nathan Deal; David Dreier; Eddie Bernice Johnson; Patrick J. Kennedy.

James P. McGovern; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.; Henry A. Waxman; Gene Green; Corrine Brown; Barbara Cubin; Lincoln Diaz-Balart; Bob Filner; Sam Johnson; Matthew G. Martinez; Martin T. Meehan; Christopher Shays; Kay Granger; Ciro D. Rodriguez.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 649 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 646) expressing the position of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of House Resolution 646.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and]

has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 181, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 127]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—181

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Buchanan
Comstock
DeSantis
Fincher
Frankel (FL)
Graves (MO)
Himes
Jordan
Kirkpatrick
Lieu, Ted
Rooney (FL)
Rush
Sanchez, Loretta
Scalise
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

□ 1043

Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Messrs. RUIZ, COHEN, TONKO, and HINOJOSA changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. COFFMAN and Mrs. LUMMIS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 180, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 128]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)

Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—180

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Buchanan
Comstock
DeSantis
Fincher
Frankel (FL)
Graves (MO)
Jordan
Kirkpatrick
Lieu, Ted
Quigley
Rooney (FL)
Rush
Sanchez, Loretta
Scalise
Sherman
Smith (WA)
Stutzman
Westmoreland
Young (IN)

□ 1050

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1831. An act to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 719. An act to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO APPEAR AS AMICUS CURIAE ON BEHALF OF THE HOUSE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 649, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 639) authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15674, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, is the Speaker not already authorized by way of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to offer an amicus brief with current authority without the need to pass the resolution under consideration?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may consult clause 8 of rule II for the role of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will please state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Is it in order to offer an amendment to amend section 2 of the resolution to make the text of any amicus brief to be filed available for all Members to review for 3 days previous to its filing?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 649, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution to its adoption without intervening motion, except for a motion to recommit.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. Is it in order to amend section 2 of the resolution to formally include the amicus brief prepared by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) and signed by more than 200 Democrats?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As the Chair just stated, the previous question is ordered without intervening motion, except for a motion to recommit.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. So it is not in order?

Mr. POLIS. Is or isn't?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. No intervening motions are in order except as provided in House Resolution 649.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Okay. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Is it in order to offer an amendment to section 3 that would make available all names of outside counsel that will be providing services to the Office of General Counsel; that way the American public can know who all the outside counsel is?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair's response remains the same.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, further inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. Is it in order to offer an amendment to include a CBO report on the costs of the Office of General Counsel that would occur under this resolution?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair's response must remain the same.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Isn't it true, Mr. Speaker, that every President since President Eisenhower and up through President Obama has used powers granted to them by Congress to set aside the deportation of certain immigrants?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has not stated an inquiry related to the pending proceedings.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. I thought I was.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I have a further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, is it true that Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush protected in excess of 1 million undocumented immigrants by executive action?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is not stating a parliamentary inquiry related to the pending proceedings.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Further parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I believe that what we are seeing here are some dilatory moves on behalf of the minority. While I respect every bit of that, we have decorum that is established in this House, and I believe the Speaker has adequately responded to the questions thereon by the gentlemen, and I ask that we move on forward.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask unanimous consent——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend. All Members will suspend.

Pursuant to House Resolution 649, the resolution is considered read.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 639

Resolved, That the Speaker is authorized to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the Supreme Court in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674, and to file a brief in support of the position that the petitioners have acted in a manner that is not consistent with their duties under the Constitution and laws of the United States.

SEC. 2. The Speaker shall notify the House of Representatives of a decision to file one or more briefs as amicus curiae pursuant to this resolution.

SEC. 3. The Office of General Counsel of the House of Representatives, at the direction of the Speaker, shall represent the House in connection with the filing of any brief as amicus curiae pursuant to this resolution, including supervision of any outside counsel providing services to the Speaker on a pro bono basis for such purpose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes, once again, the gentleman from Texas.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will please state her parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. LOFGREN. Under the rules of the House, in order to accept volunteer efforts, one must be cleared by the Committee on Ethics. The resolution purports to seek pro bono assistance, but the inquiry is whether this comports with the rules of the House requiring the Committee on Ethics to preclear the acceptance of such assistance to avoid unseemly or potentially illegal assistance?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not interpret a pending measure. That is a matter for debate.

The gentleman from Texas is recognized.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 639, authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al.

Mr. Speaker, as we have earlier stated, as we were debating and discussing the rule, over 25 States or State officials have filed suits challenging the Obama administration's expansion of DACA and the creation of DACA-like programs for aliens who are parents of U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents.

The States allege that these administrative actions run afoul of the Take Care Clause of the Constitution. Article II, section 3 declares that the President ''shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed,'' which requires any President to enforce all constitutional valid acts of Congress, regardless of the administration's views of the wisdom or the policy.

The States in this case that brought the case in southern Texas allege that these actions run afoul of the separation of powers set forth in the Constitution Article I, section 8, which gives Congress—not the President—the authority to establish a uniform rule of naturalization. That is directly from the Constitution.

Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act, which clearly specifies the limited cases in which the executive branch can suspend the removal of unlawful aliens.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has sought review on this case from the Supreme Court, which granted its petition, and that is because this administration lost in the Federal District Court in the Southern District of Texas and lost its case in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

In doing so, the Court indicated that it would also consider the plaintiffs' claims under the Take Care Clause.

I include in the RECORD the official document from the Supreme Court.

UNITED STATES, ET AL. V. TEXAS, ET AL.

The petition for a writ of certiorari is granted. In addition to the questions presented by the petition, the parties are directed to brief and argue the following question: ''Whether the Guidance violates the Take Care Clause of the Constitution, Art. II, §3.''

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the questions presented in the case are really extraordinarily significant to the House of Representatives. In particular, this case raises issues related to the limits on executive discretion not to enforce laws enacted by Congress as well as the point at which the exercise of such discretion turns into lawmaking, thereby infringing on Congress' Article I legislative powers.

□ 1100

It is precisely because of these constitutional questions pending before the highest court in our land, the United States Supreme Court, that the U.S. House of Representatives—which, I believe, will present a side which we believe is important from a constitutional perspective—will consider this resolution. The House, I believe, will and must protect its Article I legislative powers on behalf of the American people and on behalf of Representatives who believe in self-governance.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, today there are a lot of legal arguments and talk. I want to make sure the American people listening at home and watching at home know exactly what we are talking about here today.

I want to talk about somebody whose life is on pause, waiting for the DAPA program to clear the courts. The brief that the Republicans are seeking to file is the exact opposite. It is saying that DAPA cannot occur. And this gentleman and his family, Colorado constituents of mine—just to put a human face on it—show what DAPA means for so many families across our country.

Mr. Edin Ramos of Colorado—he is pictured there next to his three lovely kids and his wife—is a native of Honduras. He has been in the United States for over 13 years. His kids are American citizens, were born here, don't

know any other country. He fled his home country to avoid persecution and extortion at the hands of local, corrupt officials and gangs.

He is married to a U.S. citizen. They have three young children together. He is a very successful business owner in my district. He and his wife employ 12 people. They make investments in our local community. We rely on them for jobs, for the services they provide. Yet the lack of any peace of mind prevents families like Edin Ramos' from reaching their full potential.

Every day his kids come home from school, and his wife worries over something as minor as a taillight being out or a speeding ticket, that Mr. Ramos could find himself in detention for an indefinite period of time, removed from his family, or even deported to another country which he doesn't have any ties to.

I would also like to talk about the case of Ms. Mercedes Garcia. Mercedes is a long-time resident of my hometown, Boulder, Colorado. Her life has been greatly affected by the arbitrariness of an immigration system that is immoral and has lacked meaningful priorities.

She has been in the United States for close to 20 years. She is the mother of three American children, U.S. citizen children. But you know what happened? Her husband was removed from the United States in 2011 over a traffic citation, forcing her to be the sole provider for her three children.

Now, Mercedes is undocumented herself, and she fears contact by immigration authorities on a daily basis. DAPA was a ray of hope for her. What DAPA would do is provide Mercedes with a meaningful level of certainty, the ability to legally seek employment, the ability to provide her family with expanded opportunities here in the U.S., and would help make her American citizen children as successful as they are able to be.

Her children are just as American as you or me, Mr. Speaker, as is anyone born in the United States. Don't they deserve to have their mother help them succeed with all the great promises that this country offers? Why can't we give that certainty to their mother?

DAPA is a legal, commonsense, lawful exercise of discretion. It is consistent with the actions of Presidents, both Democratic and Republican, for decades. It directs, very simply, with the limited amount of enforcement resources we have in the Department of Homeland Security, that we want to focus on removing undocumented immigrants who pose a threat to public safety or national security—not Mr. Ramos, not Ms. Garcia. We want to remove those who represent a danger or a threat to our country.

To somehow misfocus those limited resources on tearing apart families instead of going after criminals would put the American people at risk. The President has acted to make the American people safer by ensuring that our limited law enforcement resources are focused where they will have the biggest impact.

These policies are very simple. They create a process for low-priority enforcement immigrants who come forward, submit to a background check, register, be able to get a provisional work permit, and work legally. It enhances our public safety and national security.

Yet we hear people from the other side saying: Well, this is something Congress should have done. I agree. This is something Congress should have done. You know what? It is not my fault Congress didn't do it.

I have talked about immigration every week and every month here on the floor of the House. I cosponsored a comprehensive bill. I signed a discharge petition last Congress to try to bring it forward. Yes, I agree.

You know what? Congress didn't do it, Mr. Speaker. And that is on the Republican majority that Congress failed to act.

So the President moved forward with the legal authority he has and that Republican and Democratic Presidents in the past have used to say that Ms. Garcia is not the same risk to this country as a dangerous criminal.

It is common sense, and it is about time that we move forward with DAPA and DACA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time you will see that our Republican Members that will come and speak are men and women not only with extensive legal experience, grounded in the law and the Constitution of the United States but will make their arguments from a professional nature that are directly related to the law.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), who served as a judge in Texas, and is a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today is whether the U.S. Constitution will be followed by the President or not. That is the issue. That is why we have this unusual situation, where the House of Representatives, by this resolution, is joining in on a legal action to let that be resolved by the judiciary branch of government.

It all started in November of 2014, when the Department of Homeland Security wrote out a memo and sent it out to the fruited plain and said that the Department of Homeland Security would no longer enforce U.S. immigration law.

The Department of Homeland Security is a branch, a portion of the administration.

This unprecedented, unilateral action by the executive branch was a nullification of immigration law of the United States. And it was not done by Congress. It was done by administrative edict that came from the White House.

Article I, section 8, clause 4 states that Congress—that is us—has the power ''to establish an uniform rule of naturalization'' in the United States.

So what value is the law or the Constitution if the executive, who is supposed to enforce the law—not make it, as we all learned in ninth grade civics—sends out a memo saying it will no longer enforce the law?

The law of the land is repealed by the administrative pen because the President doesn't like the law, as written.

Repealing a law is supposed to be a legislative action—that is Congress—and is not supposed to be an executive action; that is, if the Constitution is followed, which it is not under these circumstances.

This illegal executive action will place a burden on the States that the action is taking place against, such as my home State of Texas, where the amnesty proclamation by the executive branch, through its memo, has been in effect.

The Federal Government is not going to pay for the benefits of these 5 million-plus folks. The States will be forced, required, and obligated to pay for that.

So the States will pay for the driver's licenses, government benefits, and health care benefits for these newly legalized individuals. All of the money the State spends will be taken away from the ability to provide services for U.S. citizens and residents who are already legally in the U.S.

This action is in direct contravention of U.S. law. Texas, my State, will be one of the hardest-hit. That is why the Governor of the State of Texas was the first to file a lawsuit—this lawsuit—against the unconstitutional action by the executive branch of government. And that occurred in 2014.

The Constitution, to me, is very simple. It lays out an outline for democracy. Congress makes the laws; the executive branch faithfully executes the laws; and the judiciary resolves disputes between government, other entities, and between the branches of government.

So, if U.S. immigration law is going to be changed, the Constitution states that it should be changed by the U.S. Congress. That is us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. POE of Texas. Even if the Congress doesn't act, that doesn't give the executive branch Burger King authority.

The Burger King philosophy is: the President wants it his way. He can't have it his way. He has got to follow

the Constitution. He is a former constitutional law professor. He ought to know better.

That is what this lawsuit is about. That is why it is a constitutional issue. And that is why we should join in with those other Governors in filing this lawsuit with an amicus brief to support the Constitution of the United States against executive memos from the executive branch.

The executive branch should take care of the Constitution, not tear up the Constitution.

That is just the way it is.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ), a great leader on the issue of uniting families.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the fact is, we shouldn't even be here today. This is partisan politics at its worst. And using the resources of the Federal Government and the legislative branch of government to promote a political agenda is just an affront to all Americans.

Why don't you just say it clearly? This is your: I want to deport 4 to 5 million people. I wish the majority would stop talking about the Constitution and really talk about what it is they mean to achieve here.

If you want to see people deported, why don't you all stand up and say it? Be men and women of integrity and of your word and say: I want 4 to 5 million unprotected, and amend this to say, ''this is a mass deportation for 4 to 5 million people.''

You keep saying that the candidates out there on the Presidential trail do not represent your values, do not represent who you are politically, and then you come back here and stoke the fire even more.

What you are demonstrating here is that you should be doing immigration reform. What you are demonstrating here is your impotence at being able to get it done. Why don't you just say that this is what it is all about?

Because out on the campaign trail, on immigration, we get lots of demagoguery from the majority. The debate has sunk to a level where people are actually throwing punches, and worse.

Two refugees from Southeast Asia and a gentleman from Puerto Rico were shot and murdered in front of their children in Milwaukee because they didn't have the right accent in their voice.

□ 1115

Two students, a Muslim and a Latino, were attacked by a man when they encountered him beating a Black man in Kansas this week, and he turned to them and shouted racist threats and said they should just go and leave the country.

We have Go Back to Africa and Hitler salutes, and all of this is becoming more and more what we expect, the reality we see in 2016.

And now the Republicans in the House are stoking the same anti-immigrant fears and mass deportation fantasies some more. No, they are not leading. They are not calling for calmer rhetoric, let alone more rational policies. They are playing politics with immigrants, plain and simple. Shame on them.

If Republicans are so secure in the validity of their arguments, they should write a brief and submit it, just like the 259 Democrats did last week, without politicizing and using this august body to bring about your partisan political hatred against immigrants.

The vote is a political stunt disguised as a legal brief. This is not a legal brief. This is a political stunt. The Republican majority sees a crass political opportunity to stand with the anti-immigrant wing of their party.

I guess the Speaker thinks, hey, why play it straight when you can force a purely political vote on immigration, designed to deepen the partisan line and validate the very angry people who go around showing their hatred, their bigotry, and their prejudice in the political process in America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I recognize that there are people in this body who are frustrated, and I have engaged a number of those people very thoughtfully, and they have tried to engage me, I think, thoughtfully.

But the essence of what today's argument is about is actually a legal exercise because, in fact, the Federal District Court in southern Texas, Judge Andy Hanen, looked at the law, and he, in a judicial sense, heard evidence that would be presented from all of the some 25 States, as well as the Federal Government; and findings of facts and conclusions of law, not upon hyper-political accusations or bombastic comments that are made to attack another side, is what actually prevailed in the case.

I am well aware that a number of our colleagues want to talk about politics, politics, politics, and make accusations. This is about the foundation of law, and it actually goes to direct words out of the Constitution of the United States.

A Federal District Court is particularly in tune with those arguments as they handle constitutional issues and questions, and the Court clearly found in favor of these States. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, in reviewing that case, came to that same conclusion.

Mr. Speaker, I believe you will see that the Supreme Court will also rule on the law, not upon political sound bites that come back and forth from this body.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the distinguished gentleman who, I believe, represents not only thought and balance, but who is trying to work within the constitutional confines and the laws of this country.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the chairman for his leadership on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, without enforcement of the law, there cannot be accountability under law, and political accountability is essential to a functioning democracy. We in the House of Representatives who face re-election every 2 years, under the Constitution, are perhaps reminded of that more than others. And while there is at least one political branch willing to enforce the law, we will not fail to act through whatever means by which we can successfully avail ourselves.

When the President fails to perform his constitutional duty that he take care that the laws be faithfully executed, the Congress has appropriations and other powers over the President. But none of those powers can be exercised if a sizable Senate minority controlled by the President's own political party refuses to exercise them, or in the absence of veto-proof majorities in both Houses. Nor would the exercise of those powers solve the problem at hand because they would not actually require the President to faithfully execute the laws.

Of course, the most powerful and always available means of solving the problem at hand is to vote out of office a President who abuses his power. In the meantime, however, the need to pursue the establishment of clear principles of political accountability is of the essence.

So today we consider a resolution to authorize the Speaker to file on behalf of the House in litigation brought by a majority of the States challenging the constitutionality of the President's unilateral immigration amnesty program.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court agreed to hear that constitutional challenge to the President's immigration plan, which the people's legislative representatives never approved.

So far, a Federal judge in Texas has issued a preliminary injunction in the case blocking the enforcement of the President's unilateral immigration amnesty. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that injunction.

Importantly, the Supreme Court granted certiorari in the case and, rather than limiting the issue the way President Obama requested, it took the State's suggestion and requested briefing on the following question: ''whether the President's action violates the Take Care Clause of the Constitution, Article II, section 3.''

That clause of the Constitution requires the President to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

The Founders would have expected Members of the House of Representatives, known as the people's House for its most direct connection to the will of the people, to aggressively guard their role in the constitutional legislative process. The resolution before us today will provide another means of doing just that.

The stakes of inaction are high. The lawsuit challenges the President's failure to enforce key provisions of the immigration laws.

We should all support this resolution today as it aims to help deliver a simple message: Congress writes the laws, under Article I, section 1, the very first sentence of the United States Constitution.

We should all support this resolution today. Our own constitutionally required oath to support the Constitution of the United States requires no less.

What is required of the President of the United States is found in Article II, section 3, which says, ''he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.'' That is the issue before us.

For the Court to pay attention to this institution's concern, the Court requires that the Congress take a vote, and that is what we should do today in order to let the Court know that this brief is not just a collection of a group of Members; this is an actual vote of the United States House of Representatives to ask the Court to consider our very well-founded concerns and protect the people's House, protect the people's rights under the Constitution, protect the Constitution itself, and Article I, section 1, which said very simply, ''All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States.''

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of Latin used on the other side. But the plain English is this vote is about ripping apart the families of my constituents, Mr. Ramos, Ms. Garcia, countless others, millions across the country. And this vote would weigh in from the House of Representatives that the House of Representatives, those who vote for this, want those families ripped apart.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), the chairman of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

So last week, 186 Members of this House and 39 Senators from the Senate filed an amicus brief. We filed it before the Supreme Court in this very case that is being discussed, United States v. Texas. But we filed it without using taxpayer dollars. We filed it individually, separately from our official duties.

The brief that we submitted supports the actions which President Obama took because he is our Nation's chief executive and he has the right to try to make our laws work as best as possible.

In the case of our immigration laws, everyone agrees that they are broken, they are fractured, and it is a system that does not work coherently. There are more than 4 million people who will be impacted by the decision that the Supreme Court reaches in the case of United States v. Texas. President Obama took his actions exercising his authority under the Constitution to execute and implement the laws of the land.

So here we are today. Speaker RYAN and my colleagues on the House side, on the Republican side, will force this House to vote on a resolution authorizing the House to file a similar type of amicus brief, albeit in this case opposing the President's position in the case of United States v. Texas.

But there is a big difference between the amicus brief that was filed by 186 Members of this House and 39 Members in the Senate and what the Republican majority in the House is intending to do today—a big difference. They are looking to use taxpayer money to push forward their political partisan agenda and their position in this case of United States v. Texas; so they are injecting every American who pays taxes into this fight, even though most Americans support a comprehensive fix to our immigration system.

Why would we want to use taxpayer dollars to go litigate? These days it seems that my Republican colleagues in Congress spend more time and taxpayer money filing partisan lawsuits and legal briefs than working to pass the country's must-do legislation. We have got a budget to do. We should be passing jobs legislation, and, yes, we should be fixing a broken immigration system by passing comprehensive immigration reform.

Congress doesn't need to file a legal brief lobbying the Supreme Court to fix our broken laws. Most Americans know from their high school civics classes that the Constitution vests the Congress with the power to make or change any law without having to hope or wait for the Supreme Court to bail out Congress for not doing its work.

In fact, today, Speaker RYAN said: ''The legislative branch of government needs to be the branch making our laws, not the executive.'' He is absolutely right. So rather than doing legislation to file a lawsuit, let's do our job, which is to make the laws.

This Republican Congress, unfortunately, is completely out of step with the interests and expectations of the American people. It is time to legislate, not to litigate.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, consistent with the Republican message today, one of our other senior Members who is a former chairman of the Judiciary Committee now serves as the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. He is a gentleman who has devoted himself and his life to the rule of law, a gentleman who is in the thick of the understanding of the immigration issue, being from San Antonio, Texas. He has seen for a long time the need and the desire for not just Congress to work with the executive branch, but the rule of law. He has believed in that in his years of service to the Judiciary Committee. He stands as a testament to his belief in constitutional law—including Federal court and Supreme Court decisions—and how important they are. I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that this gentleman has, for a long time, spoken with balance and credibility on the issue, not just to rule of law, but also about this Nation and how we do treat those who come to this country with dignity and respect.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the young chairman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the chairman of the Rules Committee and my Texas colleague for yielding me time and also for his very generous comments.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution authorizing the Speaker to submit an amicus brief to the Supreme Court in support of the Texas-led lawsuit challenging the President's amnesty policies.

It is critical that the House of Representatives defend the Constitution, which specifically gives Congress, not the President, the power to enact immigration laws.

Regrettably, the President's policies have ignored laws, undermined laws, and changed immigration laws. The President's policies have led to a surge of tens of thousands of illegal immigrants across our borders, allowed unlawful immigrants to compete with unemployed Americans for scarce jobs, and established sanctuary cities that release dangerous criminal immigrants into our neighborhoods where many go on to commit other crimes.

The House of Representatives must reinforce the rule of law and protect the lives and livelihoods of the American people. Mr. Speaker, that is why I support this resolution.

□ 1130

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democratic leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, happy St. Patrick's Day to you. What a way House Republicans have chosen to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

Today we pay tribute to the contributions of generations of Irish immigrants and their descendants to the fabric of America. Today we are reminded that ours is truly a nation of

immigrants—that immigrants have truly made America more American with their optimism, their hope, and their courage to come to America, and to make a future better for their families. That is what America is all about, and that is what immigrants have strengthened.

We have spent this entire week with our Irish friends celebrating the heritage of immigrants in America. The Taoiseach—that would be the Prime Minister of Ireland—was here in the Capitol earlier in the week. He spoke about immigration last night at the dinner. In the letter that was read by the Irish Ambassador from the Taoiseach, he talked about immigration. Here on the floor of the House, we are talking about immigration in a totally negative way.

Why would House Republicans want to spend St. Patrick's Day in this insulting manner to Irish immigrants?

House Republicans have brought forward a resolution authorizing the Speaker to file an anti-immigrant amicus brief with the Supreme Court, but they won't tell the House or the American people what they are planning to say in it. Given Republicans' past positions and rhetoric, that raises serious questions:

Will the Republicans yet again call for tearing apart families?

Will they call for deporting DREAMers?

Will they yet again suggest a religious test for prospective immigrants?

Will they ask the Court to explore ending birthright American citizenship, as they did in their Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee hearing?

Sadly, there is not much difference between the rhetoric of the Republican candidate for President and House Republicans when it comes to a record of appalling anti-immigrant statements—an agenda of discrimination.

Furthermore, Republicans have denied House Democrats the opportunity to have a meaningful vote on our alternative amicus brief in support of the President's immigration executive actions, which we filed with the Court last week, 225 House and Senate Democrats.

The fact is the President's immigration actions fall within the legal and constitutional precedent established by every administration, Republican and Democrat, since President Eisenhower.

The fact is the President has the right to take these administrative actions under the law, and he also is following in the precedents of former Presidents to do so.

I don't know if the Republicans were silent or didn't know what was going on when President Reagan went further in his administrative actions on immigration in terms of affecting a higher percentage of immigrants than President Obama's actions have affected.

The President is acting because Congress has refused to act to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Even when the Republicans in the Senate had a bipartisan bill, it did not get the chance to have a vote in this House. So the President has acted.

President Reagan, to his credit, acted even after Congress acted, and he signed their bill into law, and then he said back to Congress that you didn't go far enough to protect families. So he initiated, by executive action, Family Fairness. That was carried on by President George Herbert Walker Bush, and the spirit of all of that was carried on by President George W. Bush, all of those, including President Clinton in between and President Obama, were strong, strong advocates for comprehensive immigration reform and respecting the role that immigrants play as a consistent reinvigoration of America.

So, by law, legal authority and by precedent, legal authority, the President has the right to do this. If it was okay when President Reagan did it and President George Herbert Walker Bush did it, why isn't it okay when President Obama takes these same administration acts and, as I said, affecting a smaller percentage of people than President Reagan did?

So here we go. It is long past time for us to have comprehensive immigration reform that honors our heritage and our history. Immigration has always been the reinvigoration of America. Each wave of immigrants brings their hopes, their aspirations, their faith, their work ethic, and their determination to succeed to our shores.

Let us not tear families apart and deport young DREAMers and their parents. Let us oppose this radical, narrow-minded, anti-immigrant resolution. This St. Patrick's Day, let us recognize the immense contributions that immigrants of all cultures and all creeds have made to the past, to the present, and to the greatness of America.

Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, consistent with what we have seen for the last 8 years by a White House and administration, so we see here on the floor of the House of Representatives a denial of trying to follow the law but, rather, to blame people, including using the word ''discriminatory'' and trying to attach that to a party.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, this issue is far different. This is based upon rule of law. In the Federal District Court in the Southern District of Texas, during the trial, there was a determination that was being pushed about whether DACA would be characterized as an exercise of prosecutorial discretion. In fact, when challenged, because this was a claim that the administration made, that Federal district court examined the operation of the DACA process, and despite the claim or the reason why the President had this authority, that DACA was applied on a case-by-case basis, the administration could not provide one piece of evidence in the Federal district court, no examples of DACA applicants who would meet the program's criteria.

Mr. Speaker, it does matter why you do something, how you do something, and, if you are going to be a professional, how you sustain that which you have done, in a Federal district court, when asked directly to sustain what the assertions are, could not even sustain their answers.

This is why we are talking about rule of law, Mr. Speaker, and to come here and ascribe insults to a party, to a Presidential process, or to a rule, a body that operates under rule of law, I believe misses the point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY) in order to further this example of why Republicans are on the floor at this time, and he will so adequately explain our case.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, the issue in this case actually implicates the very existence of the House. The law is the reason we exist. We do not exist to pass ideas or to pass suggestions. We make law with the corresponding expectation that that law will be enforced, respected, and executed.

We do so because the law is the thread that holds the tapestry of this country together. It is the most unifying, equalizing force that we have. It makes the rich respect the poor, and it allows the powerless to challenge the powerful. Attempts to undermine the law, Mr. Speaker, regardless of the motivation, are detrimental to the social order.

In 2014, President Obama declared unilaterally that almost 5 million unlawful immigrants would receive deferred action under some tortured definition of ''prosecutorial discretion.''

I can't help but note the word ''discretion'' means sometimes you say yes, and sometimes you say no. But, of course, the administration has never said no. The Court found not a single time has the administration said no. So that is not prosecutorial discretion, Mr. Speaker. That is lawlessness.

You may like what the President did. I take it from some of the speakers that they do, and you may actually wish what the President did was actually law. You may wish—Mr. Speaker, you may wish that when Democrats controlled the House, the Senate, and the White House for 2 years that they had lifted a finger to do a single, solitary thing about what they are talking about this morning. You may wish that. You may wish that all these grandiose policies that we are talking about this morning on the other side, that

they cared enough about them to actually make law when they had a chance, but they did not.

They know now that one person doesn't make the law in a republic. You may want to live in a country where one person makes the law, but that would not be this country. You would have to look for another one.

The President knows this because, more than 20 times, Mr. Speaker, he said he could not do the very thing that he eventually did. His power didn't change. The law didn't change. The politics is all that changed.

We should have seen this coming, Mr. Speaker. He warned us. On this very floor, he warned us that he didn't need the people's House. He said he would do it with or without Congress. Many of you cheered when he said that. Many of you cheered because you benefit from the nonenforcement of the law today.

But tomorrow will be different. Tomorrow is coming, and tomorrow will be different. Tomorrow you will cry out for the enforcement of the law. Tomorrow you will want others to follow the law.

We are here, Mr. Speaker, because this administration violated one law in its haste to allow others to violate yet another law. The administration lost, and then they appealed. So here we are before the Supreme Court.

For too long, Mr. Speaker, Congress has let the executive branch engage in constitutional adverse possession. Today it is immigration. Tomorrow it will be some other law. One day, I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, one day your party may not control the gears of enforcement. One day a Republican President might decide that he or she doesn't like a law and is going to ignore it and fail to enforce it.

For more than two centuries, Mr. Speaker, the law has been more important than any political issue. It has been more important than any election, and it has been more important, frankly, than any one of us. It binds us together, and it embodies the virtues that we cherish like fairness, equality, justice, and mercy.

We symbolize our devotion to the law with this blindfolded woman holding a set of scales and a sword. That blindfold keeps her focus on the law. But I want you to understand this, Mr. Speaker: once that blindfold slips off, it is gone forever. You can want to put it back on, but it is gone forever, because once you weaken the law, good luck putting it back together.

So once you decide that some laws are worth enforcing and some are not, once you decide that some laws are worth following and others are not, then you have weakened this thing we call the law, and you have weakened it forever.

Let me just say this. I will say this, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't take any courage to follow a law you like. That doesn't take any courage, following a law you like? What takes courage, which makes us different, is we follow laws even that we don't like, and then we strive to change them—legally. That is the power and the fragility of the law. But once it is abandoned, it is weakened in the eyes of those we expect to follow it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. GOWDY. I will say this, Mr. Speaker. In conclusion, in the oath of citizenship that we require new citizens to take—and I am sure the Speaker already knows this, and perhaps some of my colleagues on the other side may know this as well—but in that oath, it references the law five separate times, five separate references to this thing we call the law—in the very oath that we want new citizens to take, five times in a single paragraph.

Mr. Speaker, good luck explaining why new citizens should follow the law when those in power do not have to. Good luck explaining the difference between anarchy and the wholesale failure to enforce the law simply because you do not like it. Good luck stopping the next President from ignoring a law that he or she does not like.

If the President can pick and choose which laws he likes, then so can the rest of us, and you have undermined the very thing that binds us together. So be careful what you do today. Tomorrow is coming.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

□ 1145

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, even 100 years ago, if you asked somebody who was living in Asia or Latin America or Europe where on Earth they would want to go if they were going to leave their home country, the answer was very clearly the United States of America.

We proudly say, as Americans, that we are a Nation of immigrants, yet throughout the generations, immigrants from different corners of the world have encountered resentment and scapegoating here in our land.

Today we celebrate St. Patrick's Day for the Irish. When the Irish came in the 1800s, they were greeted by signs that said ''No Irish need apply'' in cities like New York and Boston. The Chinese, for many decades, were excluded from admission into the United States. The Japanese and Germans were interned through World War II.

There was an operation called ''Operation Wetback'' in the Eisenhower administration that rounded up and deported thousands, if not over a million, Mexicans and Mexican Americans back to Mexico.

The latest iteration of those politics, the latest attempt to relive our worst mistakes started when a man—who may become President—called Mexican immigrants rapists and murderers.

There are times in our Nation's history when our politics become a race to the bottom, and it takes people of good faith, of different political stripes and beliefs, to stand up and put the brakes on it. Sometimes we have, and sometimes we have failed to do that. But make no mistake that we are in one of those eras now, and this resolution represents just the beginning.

My colleague from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ), about 45 minutes ago referenced talk of mass deportations. That is not just talk. That is coming from the leading Republican frontrunners for President.

Do you know what that means? That means that you are going to go pull 2- and 3- and 4-year-old kids out of homes, from their parents forcibly, and send them out of here. It means that you are going to take parents and drag them away from their kids, leaving them alone.

I know that there are people of very good faith who disagree with Democrats on this issue. In fact, many have spoken today, and I respect their opinions. But I would ask all of us, as Americans, to ask ourselves whether this represents the very best of our Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Texas an additional 1 minute.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. The fact is we are a Nation of immigrants, we have always been a Nation of immigrants, and we will always be a Nation of immigrants. It is what has made us strong, it is what has made us powerful around the world, it is what has earned us friends, and it is what has made us the envy of the world.

All of us have to make sure, in governing, that 50 years from now, when somebody in Europe or Latin America or Asia is asked where on Earth they would want to move, if they were going to leave their home country, that the answer is still the United States of America.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his courtesy.

And to my fellow Texan who is managing on the other side, the chairman of the Rules Committee, it is a moment in history that we are speaking of, and it is powerful to follow my fellow Texan on the moment in history that we have.

Earlier today, I said that as my friends on the other side were debating about the will of the House, I indicated that it is a divided House, and that is not the will of the American people. It is evidenced in the rules.

So to go and suggest that any brief that would wish to overcome, if you will, the President's constitutional authority is bogus; it is not true. If this was a consensus, the brief would be prepared, and all Members would sign onto the brief. That is not the case.

As I come from Texas, let me say that much of what is being done is out of fear. You don't understand it. You don't understand DREAMers.

We do in Texas. We have a State law that allows our DREAMers to go to college, and they are making good. I see them in my office. And I know their parents, of whom we are speaking about, because some of their parents' children are, obviously, children who are citizens and who are able then at a point in time to be able to be under the DACA and the DAPA.

So let me reinforce the fact that the President has acted under executive orders that squarely fall under the Take Care Clause, as ensuring Presidential control over those who execute and enforce the laws. You can rely on Arizona v. United States, Bowsher v. Synar, Buckley v. Valeo, Printz v. United States, and Free Enterprise Fund v. PCAOB.

The enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, properly may exercise their discretion to devise and implement policies specific to laws they are charged with enforcing, the population they serve, and the problems they face so that they can prioritize our Nation's resources.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Texas an additional 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Are we to kick out children who are on their way to success and then their parents?

And the reason why I want to dispel this myth of fear: These parents are working. Maybe they are working in positions that others would not have; maybe they are working alongside of fellow Americans. I don't adhere to in any way to think of people displacing Americans looking for jobs. That is not this issue.

A principal feature of the removal system is the broad discretion exercised by immigration officials. Federal officials, as an initial matter—we have prioritized criminals and those who would do us harm.

But we are operating out of fear, just as was earlier said. When someone who—the world does not know whether he is a Presidential candidate or whether he is a spokesman for America—blocks and puts his hand up to stop all Muslims from coming in. Who will be next? Would it have been the Irish in the 1800s? Would it have been the Italians in the 1900s?

America has to get back to reasonable lawmaking, pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill, and make a difference.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying I don't want the next victim of domestic violence to be thrown out.

Vote against this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to both the rule (governing debate of H. Res. 639), and the underlying resolution, which authorizes the Speaker to appear as Amicus Curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674.

I oppose the resolution because it is nothing more than the Republican majority's latest partisan attack on the President and another diversionary tactic to avoid addressing the challenge posed by the nation's broken immigration system.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 639, if adopted, would vest in the Speaker alone the power to file on behalf of the full House an amicus brief with the Supreme Court supporting the constitutionally untenable position of 26 Republican-controlled states in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No.15–674.

Lying at the heart of the plaintiffs' misguided and wholly partisan complaint is the specious claim that President Obama lacked the constitutional and statutory authority to take executive actions to implement Administration policy regard to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of American Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents, the creation of (DAPA).

This frivolous and partisan lawsuit seeks to have DACA and DAPA declared invalid and to permanently enjoin the Obama Administration from implementing these salutary policies, both of which are intended to keep law-abiding and peace loving immigrant families together.

The purely partisan nature of the resolution before is revealed by its text, which authorizes the Speaker to waste precious taxpayer funds and file on behalf of every Member of the House an amicus brief that no Member has seen in support of a position opposed by virtually every member of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly discuss why the executive actions taken by President Obama are reasonable, responsible, and within his constitutional authority.

Pursuant to Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution, the President, the nation's Chief Executive, ''shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.''

In addition to establishing the President's obligation to execute the law, the Supreme Court has consistently interpreted the ''Take Care'' Clause as ensuring presidential control over those who execute and enforce the law and the authority to decide how best to enforce the laws. See, e.g., Arizona v. United States; Bowsher v. Synar; Buckley v. Valeo; Printz v. United States; Free Enterprise Fund v. PCAOB.

Every law enforcement agency, including the agencies that enforce immigration laws, has ''prosecutorial discretion,'' the inherent power to decide whom to investigate, arrest, detain, charge, and prosecute.

Thus, enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), properly may exercise their discretion to devise and implement policies specific to the laws they are charged with enforcing, the population they serve, and the problems they face so that they can prioritize our nation's resources to meet mission critical enforcement goals.

Mr. Speaker, to see the utter lack of merit in the legal position to be supported by the amicus brief permitted by H. Res. 639, one need take note of the fact that deferred action has been utilized in our nation for decades by Administrations headed by presidents of both parties without controversy or challenge.

In fact, as far back as 1976, INS and DHS leaders have issued at least 11 different memoranda providing guidance on the use of similar forms of prosecutorial discretion.

Executive authority to take action is thus ''fairly wide,'' and the federal government's discretion is extremely ''broad'' as the Supreme Court held in the recent case of *Arizona* v. *United States*, 132 S. Ct. 2492, 2499 (2012), an opinion written by Justice Kennedy and joined by Chief Justice Roberts:

''Congress has specified which aliens may be removed from the United States and the procedures for doing so. Aliens may be removed if they were inadmissible at the time of entry, have been convicted of certain crimes, or meet other criteria set by federal law. Removal is a civil, not criminal, matter. A principal feature of the removal system is the broad discretion exercised by immigration officials. Federal officials, as an initial matter, must decide whether it makes sense to pursue removal at all. If removal proceedings commence, aliens may seek asylum and other discretionary relief allowing them to remain in the country or at least to leave without formal removal.'' (emphasis added) (citations omitted).

The Court's decision in Arizona v. United States, also strongly suggests that the executive branch's discretion in matters of deportation may be exercised on an individual basis, or it may be used to protect entire classes of individuals such as ''[u]nauthorized workers trying to support their families'' or immigrants who originate from countries torn apart by internal conflicts:

''Discretion in the enforcement of immigration law embraces immediate human concerns. Unauthorized workers trying to support their families, for example, likely pose less danger than alien smugglers or aliens who commit a serious crime. The equities of an individual case may turn on many factors, including whether the alien has children born in the United States, long ties to the community, or a record of distinguished military service.

Some discretionary decisions involve policy choices that bear on this Nation's international relations. Returning an alien to his own country may be deemed inappropriate even where he has committed a removable offense or fails to meet the criteria for admission. The foreign state may be mired in civil war, complicit in political persecution, or enduring conditions that create a real risk that the alien or his family will be harmed upon return.

The dynamic nature of relations with other countries requires the Executive Branch to ensure that enforcement policies are consistent with this Nation's foreign policy with respect to these and other realities.''

Exercising thoughtful discretion in the enforcement of the nation's immigration law saves scarce taxpayer funds, optimizes limited resources, and produces results that are more humane and consistent with America's reputation as the most compassionate nation on earth.

Mr. Speaker, a DREAMER (an undocumented student) seeking to earn her college degree and aspiring to attend medical school to better herself and her new community is not a threat to the nation's security.

Law abiding but unauthorized immigrants doing honest work to support their families pose far less danger to society than human traffickers, drug smugglers, or those who have committed a serious crime.

The President was correct in concluding that exercising his discretion regarding the implementation of DACA and DAPA policies enhances the safety of all members of the public, serves national security interests, and furthers the public interest in keeping families together.

Mr. Speaker, according to numerous studies conducted by the Congressional Budget Office, Social Security Administration, and Council of Economic Advisors, the President's DACA and DAPA directives generate substantial economic benefits to our nation.

For example, unfreezing DAPA and expanded DACA is estimated to increase GDP by $230 billion and create an average of 28,814 jobs per year over the next 10 years.

That is a lot of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, in exercising his broad discretion in the area of removal proceedings, President Obama has acted responsibly and reasonably in determining the circumstances in which it makes sense to pursue removal and when it does not.

In exercising this broad discretion, President Obama has not done anything that is novel or unprecedented.

Let me cite just a few examples of executive action taken by American presidents, both Republican and Democratic, on issues affecting immigrants over the past 35 years:

1. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan used executive action in 1987 to allow 200,000 Nicaraguans facing deportation to apply for relief from expulsion and work authorization.

2. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter exercised parole authority to allow Cubans to enter the U.S., and about 123,000 ''Mariel Cubans'' were paroled into the U.S. by 1981.

3. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush issued an executive order that granted Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to certain nationals of the People's Republic of China who were in the United States.

4. In 1992, the Bush administration granted DED to certain nationals of El Salvador.

5. In 1997, President Bill Clinton issued an executive order granting DED to certain Haitians who had arrived in the United States before Dec. 31, 1995.

6. In 2010, the Obama Administration began a policy of granting parole to the spouses, parents, and children of military members.

Mr. Speaker, because of the President's leadership and visionary executive action, 594,000 undocumented immigrants in my home state of Texas are eligible for deferred action.

If these immigrants are able to remain united with their families and receive a temporary work permit, it would lead to a $338 million increase in tax revenues, over five years.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me note that the President's laudable executive actions are a welcome development but not a substitute for undertaking the comprehensive reform and modernization of the nation's immigration laws supported by the American people.

Only Congress can do that.

America's borders are dynamic, with constantly evolving security challenges.

Border security must be undertaken in a manner that allows actors to use pragmatism and common sense.

Comprehensive immigration reform is desperately needed to ensure that Lady Liberty's lamp remains the symbol of a land that welcomes immigrants to a community of immigrants and does so in a manner that secures our borders and protects our homeland.

Instead of wasting time debating divisive and mean spirited measures like H. Res. 639, we should instead seize the opportunity to pass legislation that secures our borders, preserves America's character as the most open and welcoming country in the history of the world, and will yield hundreds of billions of dollars in economic growth.

I urge all Members to join me in voting against H. Res. 639.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), the ranking member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, we have heard some very eloquent comments today. I was particularly taken by my colleague from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY), the chairman of the committee, his passionate speech about the rule of law. In fact, we all do agree about the importance of the rule of law in American life and in the vitality of our country.

Unfortunately, the facts of this case have nothing to do with the speech given by Mr. GOWDY.

On November 20, 2014, a number of memoranda were issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security. One of them is titled: ''Policies for the Apprehension, Detention and Removal of Undocumented Immigrants.'' That was pursuant to the 2002 action of this Congress, creating the Department of Homeland Security and directing the Secretary to establish priorities for removal. And it is worth pointing out that this memorandum has not been enjoined. Nobody sued to stop it. It is in effect. Nobody has challenged its legality. It is what is happening right now.

In fact, the only things that have been enjoined temporarily are the DAPA, the relief for parents, and the expansion of relief for children.

My colleague, who I respect and like, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), did mention that the deferred action provides benefits, health care, and education. In fact, the deferred action provides no such benefits. It is not a legal status. It is a deferral of deportation. It is revocable at any time.

Here is what the memorandum establishing this said:

''This memorandum confers no substantive right, immigration status or pathway to citizenship. Only an act of Congress can confer these rights. It remains within the authority of the executive branch, however, to set forth policy for the exercise of prosecutorial discretion and deferred action within the framework of existing law. This memoranda is an exercise of that authority.''

In fact, the exercise of that authority is nothing new. We have mentioned earlier that President Reagan deferred action on the deportation of the wives and children of those who got relief through the 1986 IRCA Act that Congress passed, despite the fact that Congress told him not to do it, because he had the authority to do it.

We have also had instances where wives of American soldiers were going to be deported. Do you know what? The President gave them deferral from deportation because it was unconscionable to us that a soldier fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan would have his wife deported while he is over in the battlefield.

We have private bills that we take up, egregious cases. Do you know what? If we ask for a report from the Department about that bill, the Department defers action on it. They defer deportation for the person who is the subject of that bill.

We, on the committee, thank them for doing that. We know that they do that, and we agree and like that they do that.

I mentioned earlier that the Congress, after Tiananmen Square, passed a bill to prevent the deportation of Chinese students who had been murdered, some of them, in Tiananmen Square. President Bush vetoed that bill. Why did he veto it? He vetoed it so he could give deferred deportation to the students because it was his position—and no one challenged that—it was the President's authority to do that.

I want to raise another issue. My friend, the Chairman of the Rules Committee, mentioned earlier this morning that the House had received a request to brief this issue. I was very surprised by that. It was the first I had heard of it. It is my understanding from the paper submitted that what he was referring to was the Petition for Writ of Certiorari, which was granted. This is what it says:

''In addition to the questions presented by the petition, the parties are directed to brief and argue the following question—''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. LOFGREN. I know that Mr. SESSIONS is not a lawyer and I would not suggest he intended to mislead this House. But the comment was, in fact, misleading because that is not a requirement for the House to brief that point. It is simply directed to the parties in the litigation, which we are not.

This is about whether we deport kids or not, but it is also about whether we engage in rhetoric that is injurious to the public because it distorts the actual facts of this case.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has repeatedly and explicitly passed laws delegating enforcement authority to the executive branch in the immigration context.

Through DAPA and the expansion of DACA, the Secretary of Homeland Security is simply enforcing these existing laws that have previously been passed.

□ 1200

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? Words matter.

In talking about the families, like Ms. Garcia's from my district, we really know that, especially during a campaign season or when there is rhetoric on the floor, the words that those of us in elected office say matter. I found that out firsthand as I talked to some of the families in my district who have mixed status children who turn on to VTV and see some of our national politicians rail against them.

I asked permission to use stories from some of our families here today. In the past, it has always been very customary that they have said, ''Yes. If it will help to share my story, please share it with the American people. The American people will understand that I want to be with my child. What is more family oriented than that?''

Those are the values of the people. Yet, when I asked over the last few days and when my staff asked, there were many families who said no to having their stories told on the House floor.

Why? Because major, national political figures, like Donald Trump, are running for higher office and are trying to win votes by promising that they will do everything in their power to break up families like Ms. Garcia's. They promise to do everything in their power to rip apart our communities at the core, to separate American children from one or both parents. By any means necessary, they say, we will deport mothers and fathers of American children.

We are better than that, Mr. Speaker. We are better than that. DAPA and DACA are an enormous step forward.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself an additional 1 minute.

I find it so annoying that they argue this is Congress' job; yet the very people arguing that it is Congress' job are the people who are preventing Congress from doing its job. Thank goodness the President used his executive authority, which already exists, to move forward in prioritizing immigration cases just as President Reagan did, just as President Bush did.

If those on the other side believe that Congress should solve this, let them stop standing in the way.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY).

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, four really quick points.

I would say to my friend from Colorado, through the Speaker, that one reason Congress may not enact new laws is that we have absolutely zero confidence they will actually be enforced. Maybe if this President enforced current law, we would be more willing to embark on new ones.

Secondly, I think Judge POE was right. I do think part of the opinion deals with the conferring of benefits, but I would invite people to read it for themselves.

Thirdly, on this issue of prosecutorial discretion, Mr. Speaker, all law enforcement agencies have limited resources, but they don't hold press conferences ahead of time and announce ''you are not going to be prosecuted or investigated if you just steal 'this' amount of money. You are not going to be prosecuted or investigated if you just possess 'this' amount of controlled substances.'' This is not prosecutorial discretion. This is a political decision to not enforce the law.

Lastly, I want to say—and she is my friend—I have great respect for Ms. LOFGREN, and I am actually not including her in what I am getting ready to say because I will bet you, in 2008, she was ready, Mr. Speaker, to move on comprehensive immigration reform when nobody else was. From 2008 to 2010, when they had all the gears of government, they didn't lift a finger Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, they did not lift a finger. So with all of the ideas I hear my friends talking about, it just makes me wonder: Where were you when you had the House? Where were you when you had the Senate? Where were you when you had the White House? You had all three of them, and you didn't do any of the things you are talking about doing this morning.

In conclusion, yes, you are right. It is Congress' job to pass the law. As soon as you show us that you are willing to enforce it, maybe we will be willing to pass some new ones; but asking us to trust an administration, Mr. Speaker, that is deciding, wholesale, certain categories not to enforce, we may not be smart, but we are smarter than that.

In the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue about the constitutional equilibrium. The House needs to speak up for itself, and I applaud Speaker RYAN for doing exactly that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members, once again, to please direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend from Colorado.

Where we were was doing a lot of business unlike we are doing now.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution.

I say to my friends across the aisle, who are so passionate about Congress having a role in this case: where was that enthusiasm when Congress had ample opportunity to prevent this case by doing its job and enacting real, bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform?

The only reason this case exists is that Congress did not do its job, and then President Obama had no choice but to act in the limited capacity that he could under the law. He acted within his legal authority—something I am confident the Court will affirm. He acted because it would have been inhumane not to do anything while families were being torn apart by our broken immigration policies and this Congress' failure to act.

The Democratic-controlled Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill in June of 2013, and House Republicans did nothing for more than 500 days before President Obama resorted to the power of his pen. Now to authorize the Speaker to file an amicus brief opposing the President's actions rather than acting through the office known as the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group is a break from the usual procedure by which the House weighs in on a matter before the courts in which it may have an interest.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 20 seconds.

Mr. HOYER. In other words, this is not regular order, as is so often the cry of my Republican colleagues. This is

regular disorder. I am a member of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group. It was never brought to us. We never considered it.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to oppose this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution.

I say to my friends across the aisle, who are so passionate about Congress having a role in this case—where was that enthusiasm when Congress had ample opportunity to prevent this case by doing its job and enacting real, bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform?

The only reason this case exists is Congress did not do its job.

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This amicus brief, which no one has even yet seen, reflects this majority's policy of opposing the administration's legal, policy determinations to help immigrant families after having earlier abandoned its reponsibility to do so through statute.

I was proud to be one of 225 Democratic members of the House and Senate to sign our own amicus brief last week supporting the administration's position.

I'm also among the Democratic members of the House proud to cosponsor a resolution today in support of the President's executive actions and offering our amicus brief as an alternative to the one Republicans are putting forward to represent the views of the House.

And I will continue to work toward the goal of comprehensive immigration reform legislation that offers an earned pathway to citizenship, keeps families together, and makes it easier to recruit and retain talented innovators and entrepreneurs from abroad to contribute to our economy and create jobs here in America.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this resolution.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I inquire as to how much time remains on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from Colorado has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This discussion is about my constituents, Mr. Ramos and his family. It is about keeping them together. As Mr. GOWDY says, it is about Congress not doing its job, Democrats and Republicans. In the absence of Congress doing its job, thank goodness this President or any President has used his executive authority that exists under the law, most recently in the form of DAPA and DACA, to provide some certainty to Mr. Ramos and his family so that his American kids come home from school to a loving family and so that those 12 jobs Mr. Ramos and his wife have created in our community are protected and preserved and their business is given every ability to expand.

Rather than doing the right thing by debating how to fix our broken immigration system, this Chamber is working, once again, to undermine the only significant progress that has been achieved in recent years.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution, to support the families of Ms. Garcia, of Mr. Ramos, and of so many others who are scared to be named, and to reject this approach we see today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I believe what happened up in the Rules Committee was going through regular order—regular order to hear the original jurisdiction and regular order as we were discussing, debating, and voting on the rule. Going through regular order here on the floor of the House of Representatives is important, and I appreciate the American people and the Speaker in understanding what we are attempting to accomplish.

I also reiterate that this resolution is not about policy. It is about the law. It is about the Constitution of the United States. It is about the fabric of our democracy and the checks and balances which are demanded by every single Member of not only this House of Representatives, but also by the American people. It is about our American Constitution.

The House, I believe, must speak, will speak, and will defend its Article I legislative powers on behalf of the American people. Today you have watched Republicans argue thoughtfully and carefully on behalf of this, and I urge my colleagues to join me and the Speaker in support of this important resolution.

While we have consulted with the Committee on Ethics and been advised that this resolution complies with its guidance in the House Ethics Manual, section 3 of the resolution provides further authorization for the Speaker to accept pro bono assistance so there is no question as to its propriety.

Mr. Speaker, the relevant portion of the House Ethics Manual states:

''[A]s detailed below, Members and staff may accept pro bono legal assistance for certain purposes without Committee permission.

''As to pro bono legal assistance, a Member, officer, or employee may accept such assistance without limit for the following purposes:

''To file an amicus brief in his or her capacity as a Member of Congress;''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my support for the President's executive actions on immigration to expand the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and the creation of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program.

Soon, the Supreme Court will consider U.S. v. Texas, the case concerning President Obama's executive actions on immigration to extend temporary relief from deportation for undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. when they were children and eligible parents of American citizens or legal permanent residents. These crucial programs have been halted as this litigation continues and our families, our businesses, and our economy hang in the balance.

Today, the House Republicans brought a polarizing resolution to the floor authorizing the Speaker to file an anti-immigrant amicus brief with the Supreme Court opposing these executive actions. I am disappointed that House Republicans are attempting to block the President's executive actions on immigration from taking effect.

The President acted to keep hard-working immigrant families together and to ensure that DREAMERS can continue to live in the only country they've ever known. As co-chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' Immigration Task Force, I'm hopeful that the Supreme Court will recognize the legality and importance of President Obama's executive actions for our immigrant families. We compromise our nation's family values when we tear apart families and instill fear and mistrust among communities.

With so much at stake, we can't rely on the courts to correct this injustice. America deserves a fair and just immigration system, and our hard-working immigrant families have waited long enough. It's time for Congress to do its job and pass comprehensive immigration reform immediately.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H. Res. 639, a misguided resolution forced on all Members of the House of Representatives in an attempt to block President Obama's execution action on immigration. This is yet another partisan effort by House Republicans to tear families apart and separate children from their parents.

This amicus brief that Speaker RYAN will file on behalf of the entire House of Representatives not only goes against well-established Constitutional precedents but also against our economic interest. The Congressional Budget Office and numerous other researchers have found that immigration raises average wages for U.S. born workers and grows our economy by billions of dollars. In my State of California alone, the President's Executive action will generate 130,000 jobs and lift 40,000 Californian children out of poverty.

The actions taken by the President on the subject of immigration are within authority of the executive branch. I am proud to join 186 of my House colleagues in support of the President's immigration executive actions.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to House Resolution 639, which would allow the Speaker to file an amicus brief on behalf of the entire House of Representatives in United States v. Texas.

This case deals with critical executive actions implementing immigration initiatives that will strengthen our communities, protect the dignity of families, enhance public safety and national security, raise average wages for U.S.-born workers, and grow our economy by tens of billions of dollars.

Unfortunately, the majority opposes these initiatives and now seeks to influence this pending appeal before the Supreme Court.

I oppose this resolution for several reasons.

First, it is entirely unnecessary. Earlier this month, 185 of my colleagues and I filed an amicus brief in this case with the Supreme Court.

And other individual Members of this body are already free to file their own amicus briefs as well.

The Speaker, however, has chosen to expend legislative time on this measure instead of focusing on what Americans truly care about. Americans are worried about jobs, about overwhelming student loan debt, and in my State, the safety of the drinking water.

Another problem with this resolution is that it authorizes the filing of an amicus brief on behalf of the entire House of Representatives in United States v. Texas when in fact it would not reflect the views of the entire legislative body.

The amicus brief authorized pursuant to House Resolution 639 would represent the views of only the Republican majority.

The majority should not be able to bind the minority to this ill-conceived and misleading undertaking.

Finally, we have already thoroughly debated the constitutionality of the President's executive actions and it is clear that the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals immigration programs are lawful exercises of executive discretion.

Presidents from both parties, including George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, have routinely used similar deferred deportation policies to promote family unity in our immigration system.

These programs are commonsense solutions to our broken immigration system that has divided families for decades.

The Supreme Court is the proper venue to resolve this issue, and I am confident the Court will find these actions consistent with the law and the Constitution.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to oppose this ill conceived and wasteful resolution.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution. H. Res. 639 is an unprecedented measure by the House Majority to make its opposition to deferred action the official policy of the United States House of Representatives.

A resolution offering the full House to file an amicus has never been done before. Last week, I proudly joined 222 congressional colleagues in sending a amicus brief to the Supreme Court in support of immigrant communities and deferred action. House Republicans are welcome to do the very same. However, to send a brief in the name of the full House and the American people is unprecedented and unwarranted.

DAPA, Deferred Action for Parental Accountability, and expanded DACA, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, created by the President's 2014 Executive Order, would give over 5 million immigrants living in our country today—including an estimated 182,000 immigrants living in Harris County, Texas—the opportunity to no longer live in fear and a shot at the American Dream.

The President's Executive Order that created DAPA and expands DACA is entirely within the Department of Homeland Security's legal authority to grant or deny applications for deferred action. Congress has explicitly passed laws delegating broad immigration enforcement authority to the Executive Branch.

There is a strong historical precedent for DAPA: During the administrations of President Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, deferred action was granted to hundreds of thousands of immigrants in the 1980's and early 1990's.

All of this would be completely unnecessary, Mr. Speaker, if the House Majority had stood with the American people in the last Congress and passed comprehensive immigration reform. Instead, we will be voting on an unprecedented resolution that has little, if anything, to do with fixing our nation's broken immigration system and everything to do with the political season.

I sincerely hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, many of whom I have worked with for years and consider good friends, will not allow the People's House, or their party, to adopt the anti-immigrant views of Donald Trump. Mr. Trump's demagoguery and fearmongering against immigrants who came to this country for a better life—just like our forefathers and foremothers before us—must not be allowed to become the sanctioned policy of Congress.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand with me and vote against this needless and unprecedented resolution.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 639. This bill would allow Speaker RYAN, on behalf of the House, to file an amicus brief in the Supreme Court case on expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA). An amicus brief submitted by the House of Representatives should convey the sentiments of the entire House and not just those of the Republican party—a party whose frontrunner in the presidential campaign has maligned our immigrant communities with hateful and demeaning rhetoric. The Speaker and his party do not speak for the whole House on this matter, and they certainly do not speak for me.

I support the president's executive actions to expand DACA and implement DAPA. Every president for more than fifty years, regardless of party, has taken executive action on immigration, including Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. President Obama's actions are a step forward in allowing more people to come out of the shadows to participate more fully in our communities.

If Speaker RYAN and House Republicans are serious about reforming our broken immigration system, they should not waste time and taxpayer money on partisan political stunts. Instead, I call on the Speaker to bring his caucus to the table to help negotiate a sensible, bipartisan immigration reform package that will enhance our national security, protect the dignity of families, grow our economy, and put millions of immigrants on a path to citizenship.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express frustration and disappointment in my Republican colleagues' obstinate and insulting discussion about President Obama's Executive Action on Immigration. We are a nation built on the shoulders of immigrants. For most of us, our family trees will reflect a history with roots in other nations—making us the sons and daughters of immigrants ourselves. It has become profoundly clear, however, that many of us today have forgotten this.

The arguments being made on the House floor today not only disrespect the legacy of the immigrants who helped shape this nation, but it undermines the authorities we entrust to our nations President. Simply put, the Executive Action taken to address the immigration crisis in this country fall wholly and legally into his executive authority. DACA and DAPA are necessary in approaching our immigration policy in a compassionate and humane way. We are not prepared to rip babies from the arms of their mothers and deport them. We do not support destroying the families of hardworking men and women who came here looking for a better life. We are better than that. America is better than that.

We all recognize that the President is responsible for upholding and executing the laws passed by this Congress. The actions taken on immigration policy are not only legal but necessary, yet my friends on the other side of the aisle appear to ignorantly and vehemently disagree. So to them I ask, if this approach to immigration reform does not sit well with you, why don't you instead do your job and bring forward legislation on comprehensive immigration reform and let us vote on it in this House? You've made it clear in this discussion today that you understand that it is Congress' job to create immigration law and yet, all I see is a Party content to sit on its hands and scream at the administration for taking the action that they refuse to take themselves. This nation is ready for comprehensive immigration reform. Our constituents deserve answers, our hardworking immigrant families deserve relief and our undocumented guests, who work tirelessly to contribute to the economy of this country, deserve a clear and fair pathway to citizenship.

I support comprehensive immigration reform. I do not support this ill conceived resolution. I urge a no vote.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today, the House is taking up H. Res. 639, authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States v. Texas concerning the creation of the Deferred Action for

Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program and the expansion of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. I adamantly oppose H. Res. 639. Congress needs to prioritize and pass comprehensive immigration reform instead of wasting precious time with partisan, backwards legislation like H. Res. 639.

For over a decade, Democrats and Republicans in both houses have been trying to pass immigration reform. My colleagues and I have voted repeatedly against Republican attempts to defund DACA and have signed a discharge petition requesting a vote on comprehensive immigration reform. Because Arizona is a border state, we have suffered from years of federal inaction to fix our broken system. It's time for leadership to stop trying to obstruct programs like DAPA and DACA, which are keeping Arizona families together, and pass comprehensive immigration reform to address border security in our state, offer a fair but tough pathway to citizenship and provide an effective system to meet Arizona's and the country's labor needs.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement to publicly express my strong opposition to H. Res. 639. I will vote against this resolution as I have already signed onto an amicus brief to the Supreme Court supporting President Obama's Executive Action on deferred action.

Today, Speaker RYAN brought a completely partisan resolution to the House Floor. H. Res. 639 would grant him the power to file an amicus brief with the Supreme Court on behalf of the entire House of Representatives to support the one-sided position of only 26 GOP-controlled states in the partisan lawsuit of United States v. Texas. These states are claiming that the Administration did not have the legal authority under the laws of the United States to issue its Immigration Executive Action in November 2014. Speaker RYAN does not reflect my view or the view of many of my fellow colleagues on the Hill.

What Speaker RYAN ignores is that every single Democratic and Republican President since Eisenhower has used that authority to take action on immigration, including six Republican Presidents, and as recently as 2012, the Supreme Court, including Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Anthony Kennedy, recognized the legitimacy of Executive Branch discretion in immigration.

Last year, I joined 181 House Democrats in signing an amicus brief in support of President Obama's Executive Action on immigration because the deferred action programs derive from the Executive Branch's longstanding legal authority to exercise discretion in the enforcement of our immigration laws, to take necessary actions to carry out the Executive's authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act, and to establish national immigration enforcement policies and priorities.

Instead of these divisive and partisan actions, Speaker RYAN should take up comprehensive immigration reform that sets out a path to citizenship for the millions of people living in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 649, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the resolution will be followed by a 5-minute vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 234, nays 186, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 129]

YEAS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—186

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—14

Bass
Buchanan
Chaffetz
Comstock
Fincher
Frankel (FL)
Graves (MO)
Jordan
Kirkpatrick
Lieu, Ted
Rush
Sanchez, Loretta
Scalise
Smith (WA)

□ 1233

Ms. BROWN of Florida changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mrs. WALORSKI changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14; Tuesday, March 15; Wednesday, March 16; and Thursday, March 17, 2016, I was on medical leave while recovering from hip replacement surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 111 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 2426).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 112 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Con. Res. 75, as amended).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 113 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Con Res. 121, as amended).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 114 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 640).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 115 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 640).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 116 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2081).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 117 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3447, as amended).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 118 (on agreeing to the Pallone Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 3797).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 119 (on agreeing to the Pallone Amendment No. 2 to H.R. 3797).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 120 (on agreeing to the Bera Amendment to H.R. 3797).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 121 (on agreeing to the Veasey Amendment to H.R. 3797).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 122 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 3797, with instructions).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 123 (on passage of H.R. 3797).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 124 (on passage of H.R. 4596).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 125 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4416).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 126 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4434).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 127 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 649).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 128 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 649).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 129 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 639).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 127, 128, 129, I was unable to vote, as I was attending a funeral service for a close family friend. Roll No. 127 was ordering the previous question; Roll No. 128 was H. Res. 649, providing for consideration of the resolution H. Res. 639, which authorizes the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of U.S., et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15–674; and Roll No. 129 was agreeing to that resolution, H. Res. 639. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all three rollcall votes.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING COMMISSION ACT OF 2015

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1831) to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established in the executive branch a commission to be known as the ''Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking'' (in this Act referred to as the ''Commission'').

SEC. 3. MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be comprised of 15 members as follows:

(1) Three shall be appointed by the President, of whom—

(A) one shall be an academic researcher, data expert, or have experience in administering programs;

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization; and

(C) one shall be the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (or the Director's designee).

(2) Three shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(3) Three shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(4) Three shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(5) Three shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, of whom—

(A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

(B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(b) EXPERTISE.—In making appointments under this section, consideration should be given to individuals with expertise in economics, statistics, program evaluation, data security, confidentiality, or database management.

(c) CHAIRPERSON AND CO-CHAIRPERSON.—The President shall select the chairperson of the Commission and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall select the co-chairperson.

(d) TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS.—Appointments to the Commission shall be made not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) TERMS; VACANCIES.—Each member shall be appointed for the duration of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, and shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(f) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Commission shall serve without pay.

(g) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) STUDY OF DATA.—The Commission shall conduct a comprehensive study of the data inventory, data infrastructure, database security, and statistical protocols related to Federal policymaking and the agencies responsible for maintaining that data to—

(1) determine the optimal arrangement for which administrative data on Federal programs and tax expenditures, survey data, and related statistical data series may be integrated and made available to facilitate program evaluation, continuous improvement, policy-relevant research, and cost-benefit analyses by qualified researchers and institutions while weighing how integration might lead to the intentional or unintentional access, breach, or release of personally-identifiable information or records;

(2) make recommendations on how data infrastructure, database security, and statistical protocols should be modified to best fulfill the objectives identified in paragraph (1); and

(3) make recommendations on how best to incorporate outcomes measurement, institutionalize randomized controlled trials, and rigorous impact analysis into program design.

(b) CLEARINGHOUSE.—In undertaking the study required by subsection (a), the Commission shall—

(1) consider whether a clearinghouse for program and survey data should be established and how to create such a clearinghouse; and

(2) evaluate—

(A) what administrative data and survey data are relevant for program evaluation and Federal policy-making and should be included in a potential clearinghouse;

(B) which survey data the administrative data identified in subparagraph (A) may be linked to, in addition to linkages across administrative data series, including the effect such linkages may have on the security of those data;

(C) what are the legal and administrative barriers to including or linking these data series;

(D) what data-sharing infrastructure should be used to facilitate data merging and access for research purposes;

(E) how a clearinghouse could be self-funded;

(F) which types of researchers, officials, and institutions should have access to data and what the qualifications of the researchers, officials, and institutions should be;

(G) what limitations should be placed on the use of data provided;

(H) how to protect information and ensure individual privacy and confidentiality;

(I) how data and results of research can be used to inform program administrators and policymakers to improve program design;

(J) what incentives may facilitate interagency sharing of information to improve programmatic effectiveness and enhance data accuracy and comprehensiveness; and

(K) how individuals whose data are used should be notified of its usages.

(c) REPORT.—Upon the affirmative vote of at least three-quarters of the members of the Commission, the Commission shall submit to the President and Congress a detailed statement of its findings and conclusions as a result of the activities required by subsections (a) and (b), together with its recommendations for such legislation or administrative actions as the Commission considers appropriate in light of the results of the study.

(d) DEADLINE.—The report under subsection (c) shall be submitted not later than the date that is 15 months after the date a majority of the members of the Commission are appointed pursuant to section 3.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''administrative data'' means data—

(1) held by an agency or a contractor or grantee of an agency (including a State or unit of local government); and

(2) collected for other than statistical purposes.

SEC. 5. OPERATION AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) EXECUTIVE BRANCH ASSISTANCE.—The heads of the following agencies shall advise and consult with the Commission on matters within their respective areas of responsibility:

(1) The Bureau of the Census.

(2) The Internal Revenue Service.

(3) The Department of Health and Human Services.

(4) The Department of Agriculture.

(5) The Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(6) The Social Security Administration.

(7) The Department of Education.

(8) The Department of Justice.

(9) The Office of Management and Budget.

(10) The Bureau of Economic Analysis.

(11) The Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(12) Any other agency, as determined by the Commission.

(b) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet not later than 30 days after the date upon which a majority of its members have been appointed and at such times thereafter as the chairperson or co-chairperson shall determine.

(c) RULES OF PROCEDURE.—The chairperson and co-chairperson shall, with the approval of a majority of the members of the Commission, establish written rules of procedure for the Commission, which shall include a quorum requirement to conduct the business of the Commission.

(d) HEARINGS.—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold hearings, sit and act at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence as the Commission considers appropriate.

(e) CONTRACTS.—The Commission may contract with and compensate government and private agencies or persons for any purpose necessary to enable it to carry out this Act.

(f) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other agencies of the Federal Government.

(g) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

SEC. 6. FUNDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b) and the availability of appropriations—

(1) at the request of the Director of the Census, the agencies identified as ''Principal Statistical Agencies'' in the report, published by the Office of Management and Budget, entitled ''Statistical Programs of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015'' shall transfer funds, as specified in advance in appropriations Acts and in a total amount not to exceed $3,000,000, to the Bureau of the Census for purposes of carrying out the activities of the Commission as provided in this Act; and

(2) the Bureau of the Census shall provide administrative support to the Commission, which may include providing physical space at, and access to, the headquarters of the Bureau of the Census, located in Suitland, Maryland.

(b) PROHIBITION ON NEW FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise available for the Bureau of the Census or the agencies described in subsection (a)(1).

SEC. 7. PERSONNEL.

(a) DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the chairperson with the concurrence of the co-chairperson. The Director shall be paid at a rate of pay established by the chairperson and co-chairperson, not to exceed the annual rate of basic pay payable for level V of the Executive Schedule (section 5316 of title 5, United States Code).

(b) STAFF.—The Director may appoint and fix the pay of additional staff as the Director considers appropriate.

(c) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay for a comparable position paid under the General Schedule.

SEC. 8. TERMINATION.

The Commission shall terminate not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. HURD of Texas (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader and my friend, for the purpose of inquiring about the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30. On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning hour and noon for legislative business, and on Wednesday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. No votes are expected in the House on Thursday or Friday.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a number of suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, the House will also consider H.R. 2745, the SMARTER Act, sponsored by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD). The bill will ensure that no matter who reviews mergers and acquisitions, be it the Federal Trade Commission or the Department of Justice, there will be uniform rules so that every transaction is reviewed fairly.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

I did not see or hear ''the budget for this coming year.'' I know the Committee on the Budget marked up the budget yesterday. As I understand it, they completed their work, and they have reported a budget. I do not see it on the calendar for next week, which means that the earliest we could consider a budget would be April.

Speaker RYAN, as the majority leader knows so well, indicated we are going to pursue regular order, which would be the adoption of a budget, the establishment of a 302(a) allocation, which means the overall expenditure level for discretionary spending, and then the markup and consideration in this House of the 12 appropriation bills.

It would appear, if we are not going to do it next week, could we expect to see the budget on the floor, Mr. Leader, in April?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The gentleman is correct that the Committee on the Budget successfully reported a budget resolution last night. I want to take a moment to thank Committee on the Budget Chairman TOM PRICE for his work, and the whole committee.

There are more conversations among Members which will be required before moving the budget to the floor, and therefore it will not be scheduled for the upcoming abbreviated week, but I will let the gentleman know as soon as we do schedule it.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for that information.

As the gentleman probably recalls, back in January Majority Whip Scalise was quoted as saying: ''We will forge ahead with spending bills and other initiatives in the coming year.'' He implied that the House would start early on its appropriation bills.

Now, I can remember, as a long-time member of the Committee on Appropriations, that early for us was early May for actual appropriation bills to be on the floor. In December, Speaker RYAN stated: ''By having this budget agreement that my predecessor put in place, we no longer have a dispute over the sequester.''

Now, it is my understanding, Mr. Leader, that the budget that is being

proposed is inconsistent with and does not carry out the agreement that was made between the Speaker and our leader and on which the House voted, a significant majority of the House voted to pass a budget deal. It is my understanding this budget does not carry it out.

After saying: Let's set aside the dispute over the sequester, the Speaker went on to say: ''By getting the slate cleaned now''—Mr. Leader, this was December 22 that the Speaker said this. ''By getting the slate cleaned now''—which meant this argument over sequester, which of course your chairman of the Committee on Appropriations has said is unreasonable and unworkable, in effect, and ''ill-advised'' was the word that he specifically used.

The Speaker said: ''By getting the slate cleaned''—by making that deal—''by getting this behind us, we can start our appropriations process early next year''—now, we are beyond early next year, of course—''and do it the right way, individual bills, all 12 bills, open up the process . . . do it the way the Founders intended in the first place.''

My question to you is, Mr. Leader, do you expect that we will start considering appropriation bills on or before the end of April? Does the majority leader contemplate the consideration of all 12 appropriation bills, as the Speaker indicated he wanted to do, with full consideration open to amendment prior to the July adjournment, for essentially 6 weeks, coming back in September?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank my friend for yielding.

You always make me smile when you come with your quotes. At times they seem selective.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time just for a second, it always gives me great pleasure to bring a smile to your face, Mr. Leader.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Well, if the gentleman just wished me happy St. Patrick's Day, that would have done the same thing.

Mr. HOYER. I will wish you happy St. Patrick's Day, and I congratulate Kelly on that beautiful green blouse she is wearing.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for his mood today, but I do want to correct the RECORD; and this is probably a good reason why we are not bringing the budget to a shortened week next week, because you have some misinformation.

□ 1245

The budget that passed the committee abides by the exact number of what the agreement was. So I would find that you would probably be very supportive.

Secondly, one thing that I would find is that it is our full intention to do all the appropriations bills on the floor. We believe in regular order. I remember a time here when I was in the minority that we didn't have any appropriations bills on the floor. I did not spend the time to get the old quotes about that, because I think America wants us to move forward.

We want to allow time for conversations on the budget.

Appropriations have been going through with their committee meetings. So we are in line to get them done on time and moving them forward.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the gentleman's comments and observations.

He and I, frankly, have a factual disagreement on whether or not the budget that was reported out does, in fact, reflect the agreement. Technically, he may be accurate.

But, of course, the problem with this budget taking so long to present—which I know the majority leader and the Speaker were hopeful it would have been done either in very late February or very early of this month—clearly, the disagreement, as everybody knows, is that so many of your caucus did not want to abide by the agreement that the three leaders of their party voted for back in December. And we understand there are additional actions going on to placate those on your side of the aisle who don't want to follow the agreement; and, in fact, they are looking for cuts beyond to return to sequester. That is why I referred to the sequester in my opening remarks, although the Speaker said we have gotten beyond that argument. Well, obviously, we haven't gotten beyond that argument. And that is, obviously, why your budget has been delayed and why we are not considering it before we leave here for the Easter break and, therefore, will not consider the budget in March.

So I understand that we have a different perspective perhaps—not a disagreement necessarily, but a different perspective on what the budget process is presenting.

If I can go on, Mr. Leader, let me ask you this. Very frankly, we are concerned about adjourning next week. We are very concerned, Mr. Leader, that we have a brief week. Essentially, in the 2 weeks that we have been here—this week and next—we are going to be meeting 3 full days. We come in at 6:30 on one day. We will leave early today. We will leave early on Wednesday of next week.

We have three crises confronting Americans, and we ought to be dealing with those, Mr. Leader. We would urge that we not adjourn next Wednesday. We would urge that we meet Thursday. Friday, of course, is Good Friday; and Sunday is Easter. Those are very serious holidays for an overwhelming number of us, and we ought to observe those.

But in the spirit of that holiday—of Good Friday and of Easter—we ought to at least sacrifice some of our time in the week following that to address these three crises.

Mr. Leader, I just had the opportunity to meet with a young man, who is in the eighth grade, and his brother, who is in the sixth grade. They are from Flint, Michigan. They have to pay for the water that they drink at school because the water at school is unsafe for them to drink.

Now, the administration has dealt with that, partially. Those of us who have been to Flint, Michigan, have seen a lot of people on the ground—from Health and Human Services to the CDC to the Health Department, from a lot of agencies of the Federal Government there to help. We should be acting on giving some direct help to Flint, Michigan, and assisting.

It is, I think, unfathomable why the State of Michigan that caused this problem by shifting the water supply from Lake Huron through Detroit to the city of Flint—controlled by a receiver, appointed by the Governor, not the mayor or council of Flint, Michigan. It is unimaginable to me that we would be charging children for water that they ought to be supplied, as almost every school in America does.

So, we ought to be dealing with Flint.

Secondly, Mr. Leader, we have a crisis for a large number of Americans. Both of these crises are somewhat related but are separate and distinct issues we ought to be dealing with, and you and I have had the opportunity to discuss them. I appreciate your leadership and concern.

You and I convened a joint meeting with the Department of Health and Human Services; with the CDC, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; NIAID and NIH's Tony Fauci; Secretary Burwell; and Dr. Frieden were there talking to us about Zika.

Zika is a health crisis for America and for Americans, and we ought to be dealing with that. We ought to be dealing with it by giving to the administration the resources it needs to respond to this to make sure that America's health is safe and to make sure that the Americans who are living in Puerto Rico have the resources to deal with the eradication of the mosquito that transmits this disease and is a threat to health generally, but particularly the health, as the gentleman knows, of pregnant women or women who may become pregnant.

So Flint and Zika.

Lastly, I would mention that we ought to be dealing with the crisis that confronts Americans in Puerto Rico who are going to be unable to pay their bills. On May 1, they will have another large indebtedness due.

We have been considering for many months now the authorization for Puerto Rico to be able to declare bankruptcy so that it can, in a reasonable,

ordered fashion, settle that which they owe in a way that they can accomplish.

All three of these issues, Mr. Leader, we believe are critically important for us to address now. They have been pending for months—some for as long as a year, in terms of Puerto Rico's prospective bankruptcy.

I would ask the leader if he would consider coming back after Easter and doing the work that we ought to be doing to meet these three crises. I believe if we did so, the American people would say that we are a responsible body doing the work that needs to be done.

Frankly, Mr. Leader, over the last 3 weeks, we have done things that could have mostly been done under suspension. We are filling time. We need to fill that time with policies addressing the crises that confront us.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

There are three questions in there, and I want to answer each and every one of them.

As the gentleman did note, next week is Holy Week. We have Holy Thursday; we have Good Friday, and, of course, Easter.

Now, the gentleman spoke with great passion, but there is one thing I think you missed in this. I hope you have the same passion for those at the EPA who knew of Flint and stayed silent, who did not warn those of the water that had been poisoned.

The gentleman talks very boldly about wanting things done, but we should talk about what has happened.

As we speak today, we just had a hearing on Flint, Michigan, where you had Gina McCarthy in; you had the Governor of Michigan in.

Secondly, the gentleman knows that, when it comes to Zika, we had a meeting together, where we pulled in all those in government who are dealing with this issue. And they will tell you, there is no short answer for it. They will tell you the mosquito is not as easy as just spraying. And they will tell you, each and every day, they are learning something more.

The White House did not send us a supplemental until just a few weeks ago. We have done nothing but move even faster. There is no agency—from the NIH or the CDC—lacking in money to be acting today, and they will answer that question for you. They have money to go forward and do the work that they need to do and that we believe needs to happen. We can argue later about where that money comes from. But in no way have we stopped or slowed down. We have actually been in front of this.

If I recall correctly, it was me who approached you on the floor and requested that we work together on this. It was me who called you and said: Let's make this bipartisan. So we brought all the committee members in with the Secretary and Directors. So in no way do I want the American public to think for one moment that we are not doing the work.

Now, there is not one easy answer for it. You can look around the world to Australia; they have been battling this for quite some time. There are challenges, but we want to make sure we get it done. I want to work with you to make that happen, but I don't want to play political games with it.

You know as well as I do, if you think we are here just on Good Friday and there is going to be a fundamental change, there won't be. But we are making change on the work we are doing.

When it comes to Puerto Rico, we have been working on Puerto Rico. We have been working on Puerto Rico so much, the committee chairman just went there the last time we had a district work period to investigate. So did Congressman SENSENBRENNER and Chairman BISHOP.

Yesterday the Speaker, myself, the committee chair from the Judiciary Committee, Congressmen GOODLATTE, SENSENBRENNER, and BISHOP, all met. After that meeting, Congressman SENSENBRENNER directly went to speak to Leader PELOSI on what we are doing because we are doing this in a bipartisan manner. I think you are going to see hearings being scheduled very shortly. We want to get this right.

I understand your frustration because my frustration is across the Chamber over here with the Senate, because we have acted many times on the direction of where we are going.

The last part I would bring up is that we are going to have disagreements on the budget. And maybe your argument is thinking the budgets are different. They are different. We have brought a budget to the floor every year we have been in the majority here, and they have balanced. Every time the President has sent a budget here and we have put this on the floor, there have only been two votes on the other side of the aisle for the President's budget.

So, yes, we are going to have disagreements on the budget because we are going to fight over here to balance the budget and give us a brighter future. And, yes, maybe philosophically, you think we need to spend more money. But that is a disagreement that I think the American public expect you and I to have a disagreement on and fight for what we philosophically believe in.

I just firmly disagree with your last question on all three—not from a basis of politics, but a basis between you and I knowing what we are doing. You and I both know personally what we have been working on. We haven't hidden the fact. We haven't made it partisan. We have been very open with it. We are going to solve the problem.

I am not going to play political games with you and say, if you come on a Saturday, we are going to solve it. I am going to put us in a room on the exact day that we should be. I am going to have the experts in the room as well. We can disagree with where we want to go. But at the end of the day, we are going to solve the problem.

And I welcome working with you as we solve them.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I want everybody to know that he is correct. He came to me to work in a bipartisan fashion. In fact, we have come to one another at various times to work in a bipartisan fashion. And I am pleased to work with the majority leader.

I think the majority leader—as I have said with him not present and I will say it here today—is someone with whom I can work, have worked, and expect to work. I think he is honest and straightforward when he makes his representations to me, Mr. Speaker, so I want to thank him for that.

But I want to reference all three of the issues that you just discussed. I am going to go in the opposite direction you went. The gentleman started out with the EPA. I am going to start out with the budget.

As the gentleman I am sure knows, there is a $1.5 trillion asterisk in this budget: savings to be determined at some time in the future. Hooray. What courage.

□ 1300

What I am saying about the budget is we had a deal. We agreed, in a bipartisan fashion, an agreement that you and I both voted for.

Mr. Speaker, we both voted for it. It wasn't what either of us probably wanted, Mr. Speaker, but it was an agreement. It was compromise. It was how this body should and does work.

And the problem is we have had such great difficulty saying we are going to implement that agreement, notwithstanding what Speaker RYAN said just a few months ago.

So from the budget standpoint, A, I don't share the gentleman's optimistic view, Mr. Speaker, that it is balanced. It is easy to put an asterisk in there and say we are going to get $1.5 trillion somewhere, somehow, from someplace. It is much more difficult to say where you are going to get it. And what the American people have seen is that asterisk is never realized.

So he and I disagree on the fact that, A, we haven't worked in a bipartisan fashion. We did. It was very tough. The Speaker, you, Mr. SCALISE, Leader PELOSI, and I, all five of us voted for an agreement.

Very frankly, it is our perception, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader's side of the aisle has not been able to carry out their agreement because of internal divisions within your party. Frankly,

that is reported on. It seems to be self-evident, and that is our view. Our view is we had a number agreed upon.

It is not about spending more money. It is what we agreed to spend, in a bipartisan fashion, that is not being adhered to.

Secondly, when the gentleman says there is money somewhere, of course there is money somewhere, but it is not a zero sum game. Somebody will be disadvantaged and hurt and left behind if we take money from the program that this Congress appropriated to be spent on Ebola.

The gentleman came to me, we did have a bipartisan meeting, which I have referred to and the gentleman has referred to. Tony Fauci was there, Secretary Burwell was there, Dr. Frieden was there from the Centers for Disease Control.

All of them said that the suggestion that we take money from Ebola and put it towards Zika would harm the effort to ensure that Ebola does not come back to our shores and, in fact, is controlled overseas as well, because if it is overseas, it will ultimately come on shore here in America; so that they have asked for the resources to deal with Zika now. The longer we wait, the more difficult it will be.

I agree with the gentleman entirely, that we are finding out new things as each day goes by, as each week goes by. But the fact of the matter is we need to give them the assurance that they will have the resources to deploy the kind of effort that we need to make sure that Zika does not become an epidemic here in this country, in Puerto Rico, in the Virgin Islands, and in other places in the world.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, it is, to me, very ironic. I have heard this year, in years past, EPA, get out of our lives. EPA, stay out of our communities. EPA, we don't need your advice and counsel.

Mr. Speaker, the Governor of Michigan, knowing full well that the water from the Flint River was not the kind of water that we ought to be feeding to our children and to our adults, and refusing to spend the money to treat the pipes so that they would have been lined and the lead from the pipes would not leach into the water and adversely affect the health of the children of Flint, nevertheless, went ahead.

In January of last year, the EPA advised the Governor of Michigan and the Department of Environmental Quality in Michigan, you are getting lead in your water. It is dangerous. January 15, 2015.

Notwithstanding that advice, the Receiver, appointed by the Governor of Flint—the mayor wasn't in charge, the city council wasn't in charge. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, appointed by a Republican Governor, kept feeding the water to the people of Flint. And we have now determined that EPA kept after them after January 15, and their advice was ignored and, in fact, said, look, we have got it. We can handle this. We have experts.

Frankly, a professor from Virginia Tech started testing the children and found that, tragically, the lead levels in the blood of the children of Flint were going up to dangerous and harmful levels.

So, Mr. Leader, very frankly, your party has made it very clear repeatedly on the bills that you have brought to the floor, you don't want EPA involved. I don't mean you personally. Let me make that clear, Mr. Speaker.

But the votes on this floor have been to reduce EPA's authority, to reduce their involvement, to reduce reliance on EPA's wisdom on behalf of the health and environment of our country.

So then on all three of those issues, Mr. Speaker, let me say something in conclusion.

I know it is Holy Week. And what Holy Week teaches us is that we need to care for one another; that we need to make sure, Mr. Speaker, when there are those in trouble and at risk, that we act. If that is not what Holy Week is about, I don't know what it is about.

We ought to be about the business of responding, Mr. Speaker, to these three crises. Now, we don't have to do it on a Saturday, and I agree with my friend, the majority leader.

We say that all the time, ''my friend,'' but KEVIN MCCARTHY is my friend, Mr. Speaker. I have great respect for him. He is hardworking, he is honest, and he cares about our country. Let there be no mistake.

But what I am trying to do, Mr. Speaker, is simply to elevate a sense of urgency to respond to two emergencies that confront Americans; and that we, therefore, have a responsibility to act, act promptly, decisively, and effectively. I am urging that we do that, and I am urging that we not waste time in accomplishing that objective.

I am through, unless the majority leader would like to respond further. I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I just want to respond to a few points you made.

The money that we are talking about using for Zika, so nobody is delayed, is leftover money from the emergency supplemental voted in 2014. I know it is dealing with Ebola, but it is $3 billion sitting over there. They have some leftover money that they should make sure that they don't wait 1 day to start working.

Now, you talk of the budget. We just passed a budget out of the Budget Committee that had a discretionary number of $1.07 trillion. Nowhere does it show that that is not the agreement.

Now, you and I can debate a lot, but since Republicans took the majority, if you look at the numbers of—and I know in your last year in the majority, you didn't produce a budget. But we have saved America tremendous, more than $800 billion by taking the majority.

Now, you and I both know that the real challenge for America is the mandatory spending, and we have to get to that.

Now, when you talk about the EPA, the challenge that I find, and nobody should ever have water like Flint had. But I am very passionate about this issue. I am passionate that the children have drinking water. You know why? Because that same thing is happening in my State because of lack of water.

Every year we have been in the majority, we have passed a bill here dealing with California water, but it goes nowhere in the Senate.

I want the same for children across the country, because it is not just these two areas, there are lots of places we have to deal with this.

But if I remind the gentleman, I think it was just a month ago, bipartisan on this floor, the vote was 416–2, telling the EPA not to hold information because, when it came to Flint, they knew of it and they waited months before they brought that information forward.

So you and I work together, just as both sides of the aisle in here. They said the EPA needs to stop. If they have information on any community, don't hold that, release it. People need to be warned. People need to be advised.

I was proud of the fact that both sides joined together, and I look forward to our being able to work on the other issues.

Now, you and I may have a disagreement on the timing, because what I have found, these committees have been working. We want to get it right. And in no way, in no shape, have we not kept you, one, a part of it, or if we even have a meeting, advised of it.

Congressman SENSENBRENNER walked from a meeting with the Speaker, the committee chairs, and me directly over to your Leader PELOSI, the same time that we have been dealing with this within the committee, showing all what is being worked on, and I hope we can keep that same working together as we solve the problem.

I wish the gentleman from Maryland good luck in his NCAA bracket. But as he knows, Cal State Bakersfield has never lost in the tournament. Now don't take it we have never been in it, but we have never lost yet.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate his wishes of good luck, and I hope they result in many Maryland victories. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, obviously, we don't have a difference on objectives. And yes, the gentleman from Wisconsin did walk across yesterday, yesterday.

The Puerto Rican bankruptcy challenge has been confronting us for more than two-thirds of a year. This is not something new. Zika is new, but Puerto Rico's bankruptcy challenge is not new.

So I am simply saying, Mr. Speaker, that these are matters of urgency, of crisis, and we believe that we ought to work on those. We believe working together, as the majority leader said, we can get that done, and we would hope that we would do so.

Unless the majority leader wants to say something further, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2016, TO MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday, March 21, 2016, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

(Ms. STEFANIK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, in celebration of Women's History Month, I rise to honor a pioneer for women's suffrage from my district.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born in Johnstown, New York, where she attended Johnstown Academy until the age of 16. As Members of this House and people across our country know, Elizabeth would go on to be one of the true trailblazers of the women's suffrage movement for our Nation.

She helped organize the Seneca Falls Convention, where she presented a Declaration of Sentiments, a call for women's rights, proclaiming that men and women are equal, which was a revolutionary concept in 1848.

As the youngest woman ever elected to Congress, I certainly would not be here today on the House floor without the passion, activism, and dedication of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. And so it is my honor to celebrate her legacy today for Women's History Month.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND POVERTY

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate Women's History Month, but also highlight the harmful impact of poverty on women all over our Nation.

This month we celebrate Women's History Month and reflect on the generations of American women and their many contributions that have brought us to this place in our history.

For example, as Women's History Month was being created back in the 1970s, the Honorable, the late Shirley Chisholm, my mentor and friend, she was making history. She became the first African American woman to serve in Congress, and the first woman and African American to run for President of the United States.

Throughout her career, she broke many glass ceilings, while remaining unbought and unbossed.

Today we see women challenging the status quo everywhere, from sports and politics, to STEM fields and corporate boardrooms. In fact, I am proud to serve in this Congress that has 104 women, the most in history, with our very first Speaker, NANCY PELOSI.

But too many women are still fighting to break down barriers and lift themselves and their families out of poverty. It is truly a disgrace that in 2016, despite making up 50 percent of the workforce, women still earn 77 cents, on average, for every $1 a man makes.

Even worse, African American women earn 64 cents and Latina women earn 55 cents for every $1 a man makes.

□ 1315

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT'S STRATEGY TO END HOMELESSNESS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, in 2015, the Department of Housing and Urban Development released a new strategy that will affect ending homelessness and the programs involved. However, this top-down approach is forcing homeless shelters to change the way they serve the most vulnerable members of their communities or risk losing access to Federal grants.

In my district, at least two different homeless shelters have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in grant funding that they once received. The Esplanade House has provided a housing option to homeless families with children in Chico, California, for over 25 years. The programs they have put in place for their residents have achieved remarkable success rates. Because of HUD's new approach, the Esplanade House's ability to continue to help the less fortunate members of their community is in jeopardy.

I have sent a letter to Secretary Castro and plan to meet with his staff to make sure our concerns are heard and that this new approach is revised. Indeed, it has taken away accountability of their clients, and now just makes handouts.

A Washington-knows-best approach that doesn't take into consideration the impact it has at the local level is the wrong way to fight homelessness. We need to empower these local entities to be more effective in fighting homelessness in the future.

HALT ANTI-IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS ON AMICUS BRIEF

(Mr. AGUILAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to call on House Republicans to halt their proceedings to file an anti-immigrant amicus brief with the Supreme Court on behalf of the entire House of Representatives. The document in question hasn't even been made public, and the House of Representatives is trying to speak on behalf of the entire Chamber and our Nation without allowing us to even see the language.

What will the brief say? Will the Court tell the House of Representatives to encourage tearing families apart by rounding up and deporting DREAMers? Will they advocate ending birthright citizenship and repealing part of the 14th Amendment? Will it call for building their big, beautiful, 50-foot-tall wall along our southern border?

Comprehensive immigration reform has historically been an issue that receives bipartisan support, and I welcome this discussion. We are here as a nation of immigrants. Let's work together to fix our broken immigration system.

RECOGNIZING UALR MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the University of Arkansas at Little Rock men's basketball team on their successful 2015–2016 season. On Saturday, February 28, the Trojans won their first outright Sun Belt Conference title after 25 seasons in the league.

In the first year under Chris Beard's leadership as head coach, the team embarked on one of the greatest turnarounds in the program's history, improving on a 13–18 record 1 year ago to a current record of 26 wins and 3 losses.

They are now moving on to victories, and I look forward to their continued success. As we see on the eve of March Madness, I look forward to seeing their big win against Purdue.

ISIL IN SYRIA

(Mr. CURBELO of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the barrage of attacks committed by ISIL are crimes against humanity.

The administration's strategy in Syria and against ISIL up until now has been to do the bare minimum, which has only exacerbated the deteriorating situation. Assad remains in power and has, himself, committed an untold number of war crimes through the use of chemical weapons and barrel bombs against his own people, all while giving ISIL time to develop and to strengthen.

Last month, the administration failed to comply with the legally mandated deadline to submit a plan to Congress. However, just this week, the House unanimously passed a nonbinding resolution condemning the attacks as genocide; and today, Secretary Kerry determined that Christians, Yazidis, and Shiite groups are victims of genocide. Because of the Obama administration's inaction and failure to develop a comprehensive strategy, minorities continue to be targets for these atrocious attacks.

Now that the administration has begun to recognize the severity of these massacres, it is time to finally create a comprehensive strategy that will address the root causes of this conflict, including the continued presence of Assad in Syria.

HEZBOLLAH TERROR DESIGNATIONS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, the Gulf Cooperation Council pledged to designate Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy, as a terrorist organization. This positive move was followed up with a similar designation by the Arab League. This is in stark contrast to President Obama's strategy, where he continues to appease the Iranian regime at the expense of our traditional alliances in the region.

Do problems still exist within some of the Arab League nations as it relates to support for terror and terror financing? Of course they do.

I will continue to press all of those nations to do more to curb these problems and to tackle all extremist groups, not just Hezbollah. But designating Hezbollah as a terrorist group is a step in the right direction. We must work with these nations and encourage greater cooperation to root out all extremist groups.

Mr. Speaker, instead of allowing Iran's continued provocations to pass without repercussion, the Obama administration should be holding Iran accountable for its actions. It is long past overdue.

PENN STATE FARM EMPHASIZES VALUE OF AGRICULTURE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I rise today to commend the efforts of students at Penn State University in their efforts to set up a student-run farm in State College, Pennsylvania, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, the university's Student Farm Club has been working toward securing ground for this farm for the past couple years, finally obtaining an acre of space at a meeting in January.

The farm will operate as a laboratory where students will have the chance to study food production as well as distribution and marketing. Food grown there will be delivered to the community through student-run, community-supported agriculture, which connects consumers with growers.

Now, I know that this is just the beginning for Penn State's Student Farm Club, as they hope the student-run farm will expand in years to come.

Agriculture is the number one industry in my State, and it is key to Penn State University's past, present, and future. I wish these students the best of luck in this endeavor.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise during National Agriculture Week to recognize the tireless work of our farmers, ranchers, and producers. I am proud to represent Nebraska's Third District, the number one agriculture district in the Nation.

As the world's population grows, demand for food is projected to increase by as much as 60 percent by 2050. This provides great opportunity for Nebraska agriculture.

Our innovative producers utilize the latest advancements in the industry, including biotechnology. When biotechnology is applied to cultivated crops, producers increase yields while using less land, less water, and fewer chemicals. Not only is this good for the environment, it also lowers the cost of food at a time when one in eight people worldwide is suffering from chronic malnutrition.

Study after study has shown the safety and vast benefits of biotech crops. I am confident our farmers and ranchers can meet growing global demand, but the Federal Government must let them do their jobs. As founder and co-chairman of the Modern Agriculture Caucus, I am committed to promoting sound policies to help producers do what they do best: help feed the world.

NO MORE UNAUTHORIZED SPENDING

(Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind all of us that those who sent us here did so because they trust us with their voice to set the priorities in the people's House, because that is the way that our Founding Fathers intended it to be—a government of, by, and for ''We, the People.''

But what was established as three branches of government has evolved into an overextended executive and an overly active court system, with the American people's voice getting lost. Americans are frustrated, and I am, too. That is why I introduced the USA Act, to promote a more effective, accountable, and timely oversight of our entire Federal Government.

Too much of the government is currently on autopilot. We must challenge the status quo by ensuring that spending and decisions made by the executive branch departments, agencies, and programs come under the citizens' scrutiny.

No more unauthorized spending. It is time to hold Federal bureaucrats accountable for being so disconnected from their mission and reclaim the power of the purse.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the USA Act.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS IS GENOCIDE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, facing persecution, murder, and torture each day, Christians overseas are persecuted for their religious beliefs. These individuals are being slaughtered, raped, and sold into slavery and forced to watch as their churches are burned down.

This morning, the State Department labeled these atrocities as genocide. This is mass genocide by ISIS and other radical jihadist groups that is taking place throughout the world.

Less than a year ago, 30 Ethiopian Christian men were marched to a beach, beheaded, and shot by radical Islamist terrorists because of their religion. These killers proudly put the video of the executions on YouTube.

In total, over 1,000 Christians have been killed by the radical Islamic State. These atrocious, cold-blooded massacres are an attack on the very nature of human existence: the right to practice one's religion.

Declaring the torture, crucifixion, and murder of Christians and certain religious groups genocide is now the official position of the United States. Genocide in any form is a grave injustice to those who are persecuted for their beliefs. Those people who murder Christians and other minorities because of their religion must be brought to justice because, Mr. Speaker, justice is what we do.

And that is just the way it is.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Genocide is defined in Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948) as ''any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part1; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.''

The definition of Genocide is codified in 18 U.S. Code Sec. 1091:

(a) Basic Offense.—Whoever, whether in time of peace or in time of war and with the specific intent to destroy, in whole or in substantial part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such—

(1) kills members of that group;

(2) causes serious bodily injury to members of that group;

(3) causes the permanent impairment of the mental faculties of members of the group through drugs, torture, or similar techniques;

(4) subjects the group to conditions of life that are intended to cause the physical destruction of the group in whole or in part;

(5) imposes measures intended to prevent births within the group; or

(6) transfers by force children of the group to another group;

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR CASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, next week, the Supreme Court will hear the most important religious freedom case in decades. It is Zubik v. Burwell. The purpose of this Special Order is to talk a little bit about religious freedom and what is at stake here.

Before I begin, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who has long been a champion of human rights across the globe and understands the importance of religious freedom and is also the chair of our Pro-Life Caucus.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I want to thank my good friend and colleague, KEITH ROTHFUS, for his tremendous leadership on protecting the weakest and the most vulnerable among us, including the unborn and their mothers who are at risk of violence perpetrated by abortion, and for his dedication to protecting conscience rights, again, the subject of today's Special Order.

Next week, the Court will hear oral argument on a landmark case for religious liberty. The impact of the Court's ruling in this case cannot be overstated, but the question before the Court is really quite simple: Can the government coerce the Little Sisters of the Poor and other people of faith to violate their conscience?

The Obama administration is telling these religious sisters, women who have given their life in service to God by taking care of the elderly poor, that their conscience is irrelevant and that they must follow the Federal Government's conscience rather than their own.

This abuse of government power is absolutely antithetical to the American principle of freedom of religion and the First Amendment. Unless reversed, Obama's attack on conscience rights means that government can impose discrimination against Americans who seek to live according to their faith.

The Little Sisters have 30 homes for the elderly across the United States. Each Little Sister takes a vow of obedience to God and of hospitality ''to care for the aged as if they were Christ Himself,'' and they wear religious habits as a sign to others of God's presence in the world. Yet the Obama administration is dictating to the Little Sisters and others about how they should interpret their own religious beliefs. That, in a word, is outrageous.

□ 1330

The Sisters object to having their healthcare plans used to funnel drugs and devices that they have a moral objection to, including drugs that could even destroy a young human life. The sisters say that facilitating the provision of these items is a violation of their religious beliefs, and the government is saying: No, it isn't. We know better than you.

Under the Obama administration's coercive mandate, the Little Sisters and other religious organizations, like Priests for Life and Geneva College, are put in the impossible situation of being forced to violate their religious beliefs or face Obama-imposed crippling fines of $100 per day per employee. In the case of the Little Sisters, that would mean about $70 million per year.

This obscene penalty is completely unfair, unreasonable, and unconscionable. The Obama administration is saying: We will punish you; we will hurt you; we will stop you from serving, unless you provide health care according to the government's conscience, not your own.

President Obama has no business imposing his morality on people of faith, but that is exactly what this oppressive mandate does.

Let's make no mistake about it, this mandate is very much Obama's willful intention. The imposition of this attack on religious freedom is no accident. It comes straight from the pages of ObamaCare.

In December of 2009, in the run-up to passage of ObamaCare, Senator MIKULSKI offered an amendment which provided the authorizing language for this oppressive mandate; and some, including Senator CASEY, rigorously supported Senator MIKULSKI's amendment.

Mr. Speaker, when President Obama spoke in 2009 at Notre Dame University—which, I would say parenthetically, has also filed suit over the mandate—he spoke about drafting a sensible conscience clause. Yet today, protection of conscience is another highly visible broken promise of ObamaCare.

The Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, has a duty to protect the right of the Little Sisters of the Poor and others to live according to their conscience, to ensure that they serve the elderly poor according to their conscience.

Again, I thank Mr. ROTHFUS for his leadership.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, again, for his long leadership on this very important subject of protecting life and protecting conscience.

He mentioned something about the government deciding what is or is not a sincerely held belief. It has been long established, Mr. Speaker, that that is up to the religious adherent-to-be, making that decision, not the government, not the government to interpose itself and tell an individual what is a sincerely held belief for the individual. That is a fundamental freedom that the individual has.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), who also has concerns about what is at stake.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROTHFUS.

Also, I appreciate following somebody like the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who has been a tremendous leader on life and on the individual liberties that we are guaranteed

and that, indeed, were the cornerstones of the founding of this country and are our religious rights. So I am glad to be able to support Mr. ROTHFUS today in this Special Order about our First Amendment to the Constitution.

We know that next Wednesday, it appears the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the consolidated cases of Zubik v. Burwell.

Now, why is it we are even having to do this? How far have we gotten out of touch, as a Nation and as this oppressive government, that we have to go to court to assert the religious rights and freedoms of individual organizations, like Little Sisters and others that are joining them? It is outrageous to me because, again, a cornerstone of the founding of this country is religious rights.

The Little Sisters of the Poor is a tremendous faith-based organization consisting of Catholic nuns who serve the elderly in over 30 countries around the world, giving from their hearts to help people in a way they see fit in their views and their religion with God.

My scheduler, Caitlin, hosts a weekly movie night at the Little Sisters D.C. home, where she and many others can attest to the incredible work that is done by these nuns.

The HHS mandate under ObamaCare is now forcing religious organizations, like the Little Sisters, to provide health care plans, contraceptives, drugs, and things that they find that are against their belief system, that violate their deeply held belief system system; yet the club of ObamaCare and this Federal Government, hitting them over the head saying ''you have to provide this,'' goes against our founding principles, and I think the whole country should be outraged by this, merely so that a few can have something provided to them for free by an organization that shouldn't have to be doing so.

Indeed, John Adams once stated: ''Nothing is more dreaded than the national government meddling with religion.'' It is a fundamental liberty critical to a thriving and free society.

We have been blessed in a free country, where we can have our expression free, not having to adhere to a healthcare mandate or being forced to bake a cake because of someone else's idea of violating religious views. It is not government's place to determine what a person's religion requires or adheres to. Our laws should support and encourage citizens to worship without fear of reprisal from an oppressive Federal Government.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for religious organizations, such as Little Sisters of the Poor, and protect them from this horrific HHS mandate. And for the Supreme Court, once they decide to weigh in on a decision, not just to have yet another partisan down-the-line decision based on politics but, indeed, look into their hearts and look into their souls to what is right for the founding principles of this Nation and for people like Little Sisters of the Poor to carry out their God-given and God-driven agenda to help the people of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank Mr. ROTHFUS for the time and for leading this Special Order here today.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman LAMALFA for those observations and to hear about some personal interactions with the Little Sisters of the Poor and the tremendous work that they do.

We see the Little Sisters of the Poor at my parish about once a year. They are the most unthreatening individuals you would imagine. They stand at the door. Some of them are older, so it appears that some of them may have a little bit of arthritis as they are bent over holding a basket. And in that basket is a request for donations. They beg. They beg for people to support their work, which is caring for the most vulnerable people in our society, the elderly poor.

We haven't gotten here in a vacuum, Mr. Speaker. I think it is very important for us to take a look at the historical context of religious freedom and its importance.

Freedom of religion is fundamental in our country. An interesting note, here in my pocket is the Constitution, and religious freedom is literally the very first freedom mentioned in our Constitution. It is in the Bill of Rights.

''Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.''

The very first freedom mentioned.

After freedom of religion, there is freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of the right of the people to peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. But the very first freedom mentioned is the freedom of religion.

It is interesting because we also talk about rights in our society. As a footnote, our founding documents—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—talk about rights. But the very first right in one of our founding documents is the right to life.

In our Declaration, ''We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.''

The very first right in our founding documents is the right to life, and the very first freedom in our founding documents is the freedom of religion.

Why was it so important? Because there is a long history, Mr. Speaker, of how religion has been treated throughout the world.

You can go back to the beginnings of the development of the Christian faith in Europe where we saw this religious sect begin in the Holy Land and then spread to the capital of the Roman Empire.

It was the Roman emperors who first persecuted the people of faith, who had the Christian faith. We saw how the emperors forced early Christians to violate their conscience.

It might not seem as any big deal. All they wanted was for individuals to burn a little pinch of incense before the Roman gods because the emperors were concerned about threats to the empire; and they thought if they could appease the Roman gods, if they had everybody in the empire doing that little pinch, it was not going to hurt anybody.

In fact, a lot of Christians went along with it. But there were those who did not because they could not do that in their conscience. And what happened to them? They were murdered. They were murdered because they did not burn that pinch of incense to the Roman gods.

So we look back through history and we understand now that it was wrong for an all-powerful government to go after people of conscience's sincerely held beliefs. We all recognize that as abhorrent right now.

But it wasn't just 2,000 years ago or 1,800 years ago, Mr. Speaker, that we saw these persecutions happening. There was a gentleman in 16th century England, in 1535. We know him now in history as ''a man for all seasons.'' Thomas More, an extraordinary intellect, was a poet, lawyer, father, husband, Speaker of the House of Commons, chancellor.

Mr. More was a man of serious faith and serious conscience. He had a very good relationship with his friend, King Henry VIII, but King Henry had a problem. He had made an arrangement to have special permission granted where he could marry the widow of his brother who had died, Catherine of Aragon.

But after some time, Henry was concerned that he did not have a male heir that he wanted to leave the throne to. So he thought he needed another wife.

We know the course of history: He divorced Catherine, and he married Anne Boleyn. He wanted the people of England to accept that. He knew that his dynasty was at stake, so he required people to accept that.

Thomas More, in conscience, could not. He was jailed in the Tower of London. His books were taken away. He refused to speak on the matter because he thought that silence would protect him. Then there was perjury, and he was convicted of treason for opposing the king, and he was beheaded, all because he was following the dictates of his conscience.

This was the context, Mr. Speaker, in which Western history was developing. And as the Renaissance was happening—and More was part of the English Renaissance—and as we went

into the later 16th century and the 17th century, the development of thinking on religious freedom—and there were religious wars throughout Europe, and all these minorities seemed to be getting oppressed by the government—a number of sects decided that there would be a better place where they could practice their faith in conscience, and that place was the New World across the ocean.

□ 1345

It took a lot of trouble to get to the New World—dangerous new territory, treacherous crossing, unknowns—but these were people who were looking to build a city upon a hill. We know the stories of Pilgrims, who sought religious freedom, and of, later, the Puritans. My own State, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, was established as a colony where people of conscience would be protected.

William Penn, in his Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges in 1701, wrote:

''No people can be truly happy, though under the greatest enjoyments of civil liberties, if abridged of the freedom of their conscience as to their religious profession and worship.''

Penn, himself, was jailed for his exercising his conscience, as he wrote from Newgate Prison in 1670:

''By liberty of conscience, we understand not only a mere liberty of the mind but the exercise of ourselves in a visible way of worship, upon our believing it to be indispensably required at our hands, that if we neglect it for fear or favor of any mortal man, we sin and incur divine wrath.''

All of these individuals were seeking protection, were seeking a place where they could exercise their freedom of conscience. Maybe that, Mr. Speaker, is why the freedom of religion is the first freedom mentioned in our Bill of Rights.

Our Founders, the Fathers of our country, understood the importance of religion. President George Washington remarked in his farewell address that religion and morality are ''the firmest props of the duties of men and citizens'' and ''the indispensable supports of the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity.''

Six years prior to his farewell address, Washington wrote a letter to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, which contained, arguably, one of the most beautiful articulations of religious liberty in American history:

''The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy—a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.''

Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited this country in the 1830s, explains in ''Democracy in America,'' in looking back at the experience of the Pilgrims: The Pilgrims came, de Tocqueville said, ''to make an idea triumph.'' They founded a community, the Pilgrims, and a society where government could not encroach on their particular religious practice. This is part of the fabric of our country.

Look at the experience in history. All of the Founders were well-versed in our history, the Western history—of the importance of conscience, of religious freedom. Outside observers coming to this country, like de Tocqueville, were seeing it and understanding the importance of people of faith to correct the errors that were in our country. The movement to abolish the abominable practice of slavery happened because people of faith stood up and recognized the inherent indignity of the practice and the violation of fundamental human rights. History in our country is just replete with instances of people of faith who have stood up to make a difference. One hundred years after the end of the Civil War, it was people of faith who began the marches in the South. It was people of faith from the north who went down to help.

Dr. Martin Luther King was a pastor. He went to seminary in my home State of Pennsylvania, to the Crozer Theological Seminary. He was motivated by what was the fabric of his life, which was grounded in scripture. He asked the big questions.

Just before his death, Dr. King says:

''Conscience asks, 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when we must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because it is right.''

People of faith, people of conscience, we have seen them very active in the effort to protect all human life since the Supreme Court, in 1973, took what then-Justice White said was an exercise in raw judicial power and said that certain human beings aren't persons.

We know that we have had more than 50 million abortions since that time, but it has been people of faith who have been looking for solutions, who have been seeking to help women in crisis. Whether it has been Catholic charities, crisis pregnancy centers, people of faith, they have been standing up and providing assistance to women in crisis, walking with them, helping to carry the burdens that they are experiencing—of women who have often been abandoned and isolated, who don't feel like they have a friend but then who find a hotline where a voice picks up—somebody who has been motivated by his faith to be sitting by that phone, wanting to help, asking to help.

Next week, the Supreme Court is going to be taking a look at this case. Again, it may be the most important religious freedom case the Court has heard. The Court is going to make the decision: For the individual who objects to signing a form based on his religious belief, is that a legitimate exercise of his conscience?

That is not the government's decision, Mr. Speaker. The government should not be subjectively telling an individual in this country, who has a fundamental First Amendment right—a first freedom—to exercise his religion, what is legitimate and what is not. That is what is at stake here.

It is interesting that my diocese—the diocese in which I live, the Diocese of Pittsburgh—is the lead plaintiff named in the case, Bishop Zubik.

Bishop Zubik has written:

''Religious freedom is not secondary freedom; it is the founding freedom. Religious freedom in this country means that we pledge allegiance to both God and country, not to God or country.

''We have the right not just to worship, not just to pray privately. We also have the right to try to have an impact on our society for the common good. We have our rights to express our beliefs publicly and try to convince hearts and minds. We not only have a duty but the right to live out the faith in our ministries of service.

''Religious freedom is not a passive act. Religious freedom is intentionally action. Religious freedom has to be expressed. Religious freedom has to be lived. Religious freedom has to be out in the open, among the people. Freedom of religion can never be confined to merely the freedom to worship. It defies the Constitution and does a mortal injustice to society.''

The First Amendment doesn't say ''freedom to worship.'' It says ''freedom of religion.''

For those who are Christians, you can go to Matthew, chapter 25, and the mandates that we have from Jesus.

Looking at whether in your life you fed the poor, clothed the naked, gave drink to the thirsty, visited those in prison, when you go up to the pearly gates, those who have lived in accordance with Matthew 25 may still ask the question: When did I help you? When?

''When you did it to the least of my brothers, you did it to me.''

That is not happening inside the church, Mr. Speaker. That is happening on the streets. It is happening in hospitals. It is happening in health clinics. It is happening in food banks. It is happening on counseling hotlines. These are people of faith who are engaged in

public society, who want to help others. In a spirit of solidarity, they are standing with those who are suffering, and they are wanting to help—motivated by their faith.

That is what the Little Sisters of the Poor do. I mentioned how the Little Sisters come to my parish and beg. They are not a very threatening bunch, Mr. Speaker. They have homes across the country in which they are taking care of the elderly. They offer an opportunity for dignity for the people who have lived long and hard lives. At the end of their lives, they may not have much to show for it from a monetary perspective, but they may have lived very rich lives in the way they were helping in their communities. That is not a condition for going to stay with the Little Sisters of the Poor. They love unconditionally and they provide a chance for people in their senior years to have a little bit of respect and a little bit of dignity.

The Little Sisters of the Poor are up against a leviathan—Goliath—the all-powerful United States Federal Government at the Department of Health and Human Services.

It says, ''You will sign this. You, Sister, will sign this.''

''But,'' Sister says in her conscience, ''I can't do that.''

''Sister, it is an opt-out.''

Sister is saying, ''Yes, but if I sign that document, that sets in chain the provisions of services that violate my conscience. You are forcing me to take an act to be the cause—the cause of something I don't believe in.''

''But, Sister, you will. You will do this.''

Think back 2,000 years, 1,800 years. The Empire needs to be protected from barbarians who are going to be coming across—the Goths, whoever it is. We have to sacrifice just a pinch—just a pinch—to our Roman gods to be protected.

Thomas More: King Henry's surrogates go to Thomas in the tower. ''Just sign the document. Just sign the document. It is not going to hurt. It will bring peace. It will make sure that the king's dynasty will continue. We are tired of religious wars in Europe, and if the king doesn't have a male heir, then we are going to have all kinds of continued wars. There is a very good justification, Sir Thomas, to sign that document.''

Thomas says, ''I can't. I can't.'' He lost his head.

People of faith in England and in Holland—wherever—knew that if they got to these shores, they could live in freedom of conscience.

□ 1400

Now we have the all-powerful government coming in and saying: You will comply; you will sign. Oh, Sister, that is not a violation of your religious freedom. Trust us.

Really? Really? How is it that the Federal Government could be the arbiter of what is a sincerely held belief? Doesn't that set the government up perhaps as an entity itself making religious decisions?

I thought the Federal Government was not supposed to make religious decisions. If the Federal Government has a bureau of what is a sincerely held religious belief, that is a pretty serious issue that the Court needs to take a look at.

I wonder what you would call that bureau? Bureau of legitimate religious practices? Bureau of legitimate religious beliefs? Bureau of what we will allow you to believe in this country? Is that what this is?

It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that religious freedom is not a priority here for those who promulgate these regulations.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK), who is a stalwart defender of human life.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative ROTHFUS for setting up this time so we can draw attention to this case of the Little Sisters of the Poor and for his eloquent defense of the right to life.

I am here today to also support the Little Sisters of the Poor and all the faith-based groups in our country that seek to help the poor and unfortunate among us.

Northern Michigan, where I come from, is home to many of these organizations, and I am very familiar with the good works that these groups do in our communities. We need to be doing more to encourage this type of service and make faith-based organizations even more important in our country, not put undue problems in their way and make them do things that they don't believe in.

The undue burden that is being imposed on many of these organizations by the Federal Government is completely wrong. Thanks to the President's healthcare law, faith-based organizations are being forced to participate in a convoluted system that leads to abortion, a practice that is contrary to their and my deeply held beliefs.

I stand with the Little Sisters of the Poor and many of my constituents in northern Michigan in the belief that life inside the womb is just as precious as life outside the womb. Both unborn and born children have a right to life, and we have a duty to defend this right. This is a civil right. This is what our country was founded upon. Life is the first of the freedoms that are enumerated.

My hope is that Americans who believe in the sanctity of life will keep strong in their efforts to stop the Federal Government's intrusion into our religious freedom.

I, myself, am frankly amazed that we live in a country that was founded on the right to life and liberty—and we all have heard the phrase ''life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness''—and that the Federal Government is paying for losing a civil right: the right to life.

I don't know what it is exactly, how this country that is founded on principles like that could have gotten to this state. It is one of the reasons I am standing here. I never was involved with politics in my life until this administration came upon the scene and started destroying the fabric of our Republic.

I think often, too: How does this happen? How does God allow this to happen? This time in our lives, in our country, is truly a test of our faith.

Really, Mr. Speaker, I am here to be sure that all Americans continue to fight and not lose the hope that our country will solve this problem and get out of the business of paying for abortions and the tragedy of abortion over the many years that it has been legal in this country. I call upon those Americans to continue to work hard, to keep strong in their efforts, to bring an end to this tragedy that is going on in America and the overreaching Federal Government that is allowing it to happen.

I again commend Mr. ROTHFUS for doing this and really call out to all Americans to not lose hope that we are going to put a stop to this and to continue to fight for the lives of the unborn and unfortunate.

I again applaud those faith-based organizations that continue to fight and go to court over this and that we need to continue to do this.

I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. BENISHEK.

Again, you think about the dignity of the human person and, as he talked about, the importance of the right to life, just a fundamental right.

Again, as I mentioned earlier, the first right in our founding documents, beginning with the first freedom being the freedom of religion.

It is amazing to me how the freedom of religion in this country has informed the world and what took root in this country 240 years ago, which is the notion that we were not going to have an established church and that we were going to allow people to freely exercise their faith and how that has led to this proliferation in our country of the practice of faith. And comparing what is happening in the United States versus other countries, particularly in Europe where there was an established church, we know that more people go to church in this country than in Europe.

It was the American experience, I think, that has really informed others, including the Catholic church, of which I am a member. I hark back to what President Washington had written to the Hebrew congregation:

''The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess, alike, liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship.''

It is amazing to look at that letter and then to reflect how the Catholic church came together under, now, Pope Saint John XXIII with the Second Vatican Council, which the whole idea was to open up the church and to engage modernity and to see what was out there that might inform how people are ordering their lives.

The Second Vatican Council issued a number of remarkable documents, including a declaration on religious freedom, the Dignitatis Humanae. It states:

''The exercise of religion, of its very nature, consists before all else in those internal, voluntary and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind.''

The Second Vatican Council, they had to recognize how religious freedom developed in this country because there was no coercion. Conversely, there is the long history going back hundreds of years, centuries, back to the Roman martyrs where the emperor was forcing people to act against their conscience, King Henry VIII.

Here we have, today, an all-powerful Federal Government sitting in judgment on what somebody's sincerely held belief is. The Court needs to protect this fundamental freedom. The Court needs to protect conscience. This country is a better place because of it.

It is interesting because, as the Affordable Care Act has been implemented, the purported compelling interests that the government uses about providing access to health care, they have set up a regime, a scheme where not every single plan is being required to provide the services that the Little Sisters of the Poor find objectionable or that the Diocese of Pittsburgh would find objectionable or Geneva College, a Christian college in my district, would find objectionable, because they grandfathered some plans. They grandfathered plans that cover millions of people.

So I guess it is a compelling interest when they are going after a little religious charity, but it is not a compelling interest if they are going against a big corporation that might have a grandfathered plan.

Oh, it is just signing a little paper, Sister.

No, it is not; it is coercion.

If the Little Sisters of the Poor are providing health insurance to their employees without the mandated services that include abortion-causing drugs, if they provide a health plan that covers cancer, covers maternity benefits, covers a broken bone at the emergency room, but doesn't cover those services they find objectionable, they will be fined $36,500 a year for one person. All told, when you add it all up, it is $70 million. But if they provide no plan—no plan at all—it is $2,000 per employee. If that doesn't send a message of coercion, I don't know what does.

I urge the Court to recognize the right of conscience and to be tolerant of that. This country is a wonderful country. ''Tolerance'' is one of the words that we have inscribed down here on the rostrum of the House of Representatives—''tolerance.''

It is a two-way street, Mr. Speaker, and I would urge the folks at the Department of Health and Human Services to give a better appreciation for tolerance.

This country just has a long history of protecting religious freedom from the very beginning through the movement to abolish slavery, through the movement to ask for the cashing of the promissory note that Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King talked about, to the pro-life movement, to the charities, the hospitals, the clinics, the schools, and the food banks that have all been run by religious organizations. It is about these organizations wanting to take care of people.

Although not a party to the case, I think of a story involving the Missionaries of Charity, that order founded by blessed Teresa of Calcutta, who will be canonized a Catholic saint this September by Pope Francis, who spoke here in this Chamber.

Mother Teresa's nuns have established a number of homes around the world. We know that they had a home for the elderly in Yemen, and some of those residents were murdered just weeks ago by radical jihadists. Four of the sisters were murdered as well.

Mother Teresa has established homes in our country, and I remember hearing a story about a home in San Francisco in either the late 1980s or early 1990s. It was a home that was caring for people with AIDS. There was a story of one gentleman who was going to die, and he needed a place to stay.

□ 1415

The Missionaries of Charity took him in, and they nursed him back to health. He went back out and continued his life, but he got sick again and came back again. The sisters welcomed him back.

As he neared the end of his life, he was scared until Mother Teresa picked him up in her arms. For once in his life, he found unconditional love and peace because a person of faith whom we all recognize did great things because of faith, that person found peace.

Millions of people in this country have found peace because of the free exercise of religion. Let's not crush that. Let's protect these fundamental freedoms of religious freedom, the tremendous good that is being done. We should not make religious organizations adjuncts of the all-powerful Federal Government: You can practice your charity as long as you do it the way we want you to. We lose something there, Mr. Speaker.

How much time do I have remaining, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BABIN). The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I am going to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), who has long been an advocate for the types of freedoms I have been talking about, religious freedom, and the first right that we have been talking about, the right to life.

I yield to Mr. GOHMERT.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), my friend. I mean, just within days of Mr. ROTHFUS arriving here at the Capitol as a United States Congressman, we were together, abiding together, standing together, and it has been my great honor to do so. I have come to know his heart. He is a man of intellect, a man of character.

Mr. ROTHFUS. So the gentleman from Texas will control the time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to join my colleagues in support of fundamental American values, among which are commitments to religious freedom, human rights, and religious expression.

As a Catholic, my faith plays a significant role in every aspect of my life and fosters a respect for the religious rights and freedoms of others.

Next week, the Supreme Court will hear from our religious non-profit organizations, including the Little Sisters of the Poor, which have challenged the HHS mandate and its impact on their religious rights and freedoms.

I believe in the importance of patient-centered health care for women, and I also want to ensure that conscience rights and religious liberties are protected.

At its core, this case is about the state forcing religious organizations to provide for services that violate their beliefs.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, to hear my friend Mr. ROTHFUS talk about the Little Sisters of the Poor—I have not met them personally as he has. I don't know them personally as he does, but it is rather clear they bear a great deal of resemblance in the way they carry themselves, in the way they help others, in the way they are incredibly selfless, that they are living their lives

truly committed to doing what Jesus said when he said: If you love me, you will tend my sheep.

These Little Sisters of the Poor, these Catholic nuns, since I haven't met them personally and dealt with them personally, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), my friend, has, I take it from his description and from what I have seen of them on television and heard them speak on radio and television and in the written media, these are precious, extraordinary women, the kind of people about which Jesus spoke when he said: They will inherit the Earth.

Unfortunately, between that time when they inherit all things, they have to endure the slings and arrows of people who ridicule and persecute Christians for their beliefs. It is so remarkable that we are supposed to have this incredibly educated judiciary, this incredibly educated group of people in the United States, when, as I have heard repeatedly in my district over the last few months, you know, there is sense, s-e-n-s-e, in Washington and at the Capitol, but it's not common sense there.

It is common sense where the Little Sisters of the Poor are located. It is common sense where I live in Texas, common sense among the 12 counties that I travel constantly. There are places around the country it is common sense, but not here, because the people around the country can read the First Amendment to our Constitution. It says Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

This is a Nation, according to our Founders, who had a tremendous amount to say about our foundation. I know that we have had people educated to the level of Ph.D.—perhaps even beyond, whatever that is—and yet they have not gotten a complete education of the basis on which this Nation was founded. They have been convinced by people who have taken tiny little parts of our founding and seen little trees and shrubs and ignored the forest.

If people on the Supreme Court and in our Federal court system would dare to look at a full history of this Nation, they might actually read what the Pilgrims themselves said in their own writing, their own agreement, because in 1620, November 11, 1620—I am quoting from the Pilgrims:

''In the name of God, Amen . . . having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick.''

Or how about September 26, 1642, some educational institution called Harvard that has also been educating people out of common sense. Thank God there are people who have graduated from Harvard and have been able to maintain some level of common sense. But Harvard said:

''Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let every one seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him (Proverbs 2:3).''

Or how about this entry in George Washington's prayer book. Perhaps some of our courts' liberal judges, some of them have probably heard of George Washington, and I know in some of our schools we have had to drop the study of real history because they are teaching to the ridiculous test that some bureaucrats think should be appropriate because the Federal Government has gotten too involved and gone beyond what the Constitution allows them to require and do. But George Washington's prayer book included this prayer:

''O, most glorious God and Jesus Christ, I acknowledge and confess my faults in the weak and imperfect performance of the duties of this day. I called on Thee for pardon and forgiveness of sins, but so coldly and carelessly that my prayers are come my sin and stand in need of pardon. I have heard Thy holy word, but with such deadness of spirit that I have been an unprofitable and forgetful hearer . . . Let me live according to those holy rules which Thou hast this day prescribed in Thy holy word. Direct me to the true object, Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and life. Bless, O Lord, all the people of this land.''

Wow. That was the father of our country, in his prayer book that is.

So I think about the wisdom. Proverbs says fear the Lord's beginning of wisdom, and I think about the wisdom of a lady who is not that well formally educated, Ms. Milam in Mount Pleasant, Texas, one of my mother's best friends.

My late mother had some awesome friends, and I loved to hear them talk.

Ms. Milam's daughter, Emma Lou, was talking to her mother, Ms. Milam, and it was my great honor when I was able to drive as a 14-year-old and Ms. Milam would call over and tell my mother: Tell LOUIE I have got some homemade rolls.

And I would head over to Ms. Milam's house because they were incredible. She had real butter.

She didn't have a very advanced education. I don't know if she got to seventh or eighth grade. I know she didn't go too far at all in school, but she was a very, very smart woman. And having discussions, sometimes eating rolls and real butter, and hearing the wisdom of this lady—I think she was 90, maybe, when she said this, but her daughter was talking about someone there in our hometown where I was growing up, Mount Pleasant, and she mentioned a guy there.

Ms. Milam said: He is a fool.

Emma Lou, her daughter, said: Mother, he has his Ph.D.

Ms. Milam said: I don't care. He will always be a p-h-u-l, fool.

There are people in this country, they may have their Ph.D.s, but they will always be, as dear Ms. Milam, Emma Lou Leftwhich's mother, you say he will still be a p-h-u-l, fool.

She may not have been the most accurate speller, but she knew a fool when she saw and heard one.

So we have people who have not been properly educated about our history, and so they go about miseducating others by telling people like me when we were students: By the way, Benjamin Franklin was a deist, someone who believes if there was something that created the universe and it didn't just all amazingly happen from a big bang or whatever—some of us believe there could be a big bang and still have been intelligent design to what happened.

But we were told Ben Franklin, no, he didn't believe that there was a God that intervened in the ways of man, that if there was a deity or something of force that set things in motion, that that thing, force, deity, whatever it is, if it still exists, it never interferes with the laws of nature, the ways of man. It just lets everything play out, so we are on our own.

But if you look at the words Ben Franklin wrote and spoke himself, we know what he said in 1787, June, at the Constitutional Convention, because he was asked for a copy. He wrote it down. Madison took notes, but Franklin wrote it down. In part, he says—and, of course, he was 80 years old, a couple years away from meeting his Judge, his Maker. This brilliant man said:

''I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His''—God's—''notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?''

□ 1430

''We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' ''

He said:

''I firmly believe this; and I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little partial local interests . . . and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages.''

This is a man who is one of the greatest Founders of this country, who made

clear, standing before all of these brilliant people in Philadelphia and the little Independence Hall and told them unashamedly that if we do not invoke God's help here in our effort to put together a Constitution that this country will work and live under, then we will succeed no better than the builders of Babel. It will all come crashing down, as the Tower of Babel did.

Yet we get far enough from that amazing speech in 1787—and yes, it is true that because they didn't have a treasury; they didn't have money; they weren't getting paid; they weren't able to hire a chaplain, as they had throughout the Revolution. The Continental Congress had a chaplain that led in prayer every day before they started.

They didn't have money. They didn't have a treasury. They couldn't hire a chaplain. There were denominations of Christians there that didn't trust other members to do a prayer that was satisfactory for all, so they all had to hire a chaplain during the Continental Congress days to do the prayer for everyone, that they could all be assured was a fair prayer to each of the Christian sects. Even the Quakers would not get upset if they picked the right Christian chaplain. So that is what they did.

But it is true, after Franklin made this speech, that it was pointed out they have got no money. They can't hire a chaplain. So they will get to that later—and later, they did. Because since that first day that Congress was sworn in, in 1789, in Federal Hall there in New York, right after George Washington put his hand on his own Bible and added the words to the end of his oath of office ''so help me God,'' he goes in, he makes a brief speech—back in those days, they did that, a brief speech—to Congress. Then they all went down to St. Paul's Chapel, which is still there, that was protected from the concrete and debris and steel—all those things that came flying—totally protected by a sycamore tree that fell there in the cemetery. It was totally protected—even the fragile stained glass windows—from any harm.

The chapel where George Washington and the first Congress, after they were sworn in, came down Wall Street and actually had a prayer service together in St. Paul's Chapel.

Is it any wonder that, after 9/11, the only building that was not harmed in what was considered part of Ground Zero was St. Paul's Chapel, where that first prayer session came together? Jonathan Cahn has written eloquently about that.

When I was there a few months after 9/11, that is where everybody was bringing their wreaths and their messages that just broke your heart: Has anyone seen this person? It is St. Paul's Chapel.

It is not just me that says it. But let's go to another of our Founders. A lot of people don't know that he was a Founder, Noah Webster.

In 1783, Noah Webster wrote and published the first book on proper spelling for words, which eventually morphed into our dictionary. Generation after generation has learned at the hands of Noah Webster, and a lot of people don't realize what an important role Noah Webster had as a thinker, as a brilliant man, as a confidant to George Washington, as a confidant to Alexander Hamilton, another of our Founders.

But that brilliant man, Noah Webster, said this:

''The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all of our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible.''

Wow.

Of course, Jedidiah Morse, the father of American geography, as he is called, and the father of Samuel B. Morse, stated:

''Whenever the pillars of Christianity shall be overthrown, our present republican forms of government, and all the blessings which flow from them, must fall with them.''

Of course, this is what the Supreme Court has been doing, the very thing that our Founders, including this direct statement of Jedidiah Morse made: when the pillars of Christianity fall, then self-government is going to fall with it.

And that is why John Adams had made the point that he did, that this form of government is intended only for a religious and moral people. It is totally ineffective to govern any other kind.

Yes, they had some things wrong. No one should have been enslaved when a Constitution and a Bill of Rights were adopted, as it was. No one should have been. People should have been treated equally—not by behavior or conduct, because there have to be laws governing behavior and conduct and choices—but regarding things that you have no control over: race, creed, color, gender, national origin. And it took a little while to get that right.

People talk about Jefferson. People say he didn't even believe in God. Are you kidding me? Jefferson, whose memorial is not far from this very Capitol—a beautiful dome overlooking the Tidal Basin—has inscribed on the walls:

''Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?''

John Quincy Adams, our youngest diplomat in the history of the United States, appointed by George Washington. Became President in the election of 1824. He was the only person to have been President and, after he was President—defeated in 1828 by Andrew Jackson—runs for Congress in 1830. Nobody ever did that before or since. Why would anybody run for Congress after they had been President?

Well, in the case of John Quincy Adams, it was because he believed God had called him to do what William Wilberforce was doing and had almost completed doing in the British Empire, and that is, eliminating slavery because of his beliefs of the teachings in the Bible.

By the way, John Quincy Adams overlapped with Lincoln for about a year just down the hall here. We now call it Statuary Hall. It has got a brass plate where his desk was. There is a brass plate where a skinny, not that handsome guy sat in the very back for 2 years, overlapped with Adams.

I asked the historian Steve Mansfield about this. He said, there is no question about it that Abraham Lincoln, sitting at the back of Statuary Hall—the back of the House Chamber down the hall, listening to the speeches of John Quincy Adams over and over about the evils of slavery and how in the world could we expect God to continue blessing America when we are putting brothers and sisters in chains? He said, there is no question; those speeches materially affected Lincoln more than anything else in his 2 brief years in the House of Representatives, so much so that after the compromise of 1850 and slavery appeared to be perpetuated, that eventually he had to get back involved in politics to try to get rid of slavery.

Why? Because Lincoln, who started as an infidel, as Mansfield's book ''Lincoln's Battle With God'' points out, he bragged about being an infidel in the early 1820s. But by the time he became President, he had no question whatsoever: There is a God Almighty who has control of the universe. He does let us make free choices. And Lincoln felt like he may have made some wrong choices that contributed to trouble in the country that broke his heart, caused him depression. But he believed.

He was materially affected by the man who believed that God had called him to bring an end to slavery. And in obedient response to what he believed was God's calling, he materially affected that young freshman sitting at the back of Statuary Hall to the point that he ended up being the leader that brought about the end of slavery.

My friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) was quoting from and relating to Martin Luther King, Jr. What was he? He was an ordained Christian minister who believed in God, who believed in the saving grace of Jesus Christ, just like the little Sisters of the Poor, who have dedicated their lives to helping others who don't have the ability to care for themselves. They have spent so much of their lives that would

equate to millions and millions of dollars providing health care and help to people in need.

And what happens? We have, as Thomas Jefferson related, gotten so far from remembering where our rights come from that this Nation is in peril of continuing to stay free.

You have other statements. John Quincy Adams says:

''The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: It connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity.''

From the day of the Declaration, they—the American people—were bound by the laws of God and by the laws of the gospel which they nearly all acknowledged as the rules of their conduct.

Well, certainly.

Under the freedom of religion in our First Amendment that was adopted June 15, 1790, nobody can be forced to become a Christian. God gives us free choice. And that is part of the foundation of this Nation and the freedoms. And the minute that a majority of this country think our freedoms come from a government, those freedoms are gone.

The Nation—at least a majority—must accept that our freedoms are a gift from God that should be protected by the government, and the minute a majority believes otherwise, then it is—as defendants used to say, after they were sentenced in my court, sometimes they would say: It is all over but the slow talking and the low walking.

And so it will be over for this Nation when a majority believes that freedom is something this government in Washington gives benevolently to us. Because once that belief is a majority belief, then the government giveth and the government taketh away.

□ 1445

What that government will find, as every government that has ever been instituted, whether king, dictator, emperor, Parliament, Congress, it ultimately will always find that when you do not know the basis, the foundation of the world, then your government will not last just a whole lot longer. That is why the Founders kept trying to make sure we understood this.

Alexis de Tocqueville, that my friend, Mr. ROTHFUS, referenced, who came over here to do a study of what was making America so special and great. This one is not often quoted, but it is a quote from 1835:

There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America, and there can be no greater proof of its utility and of its conformity to human nature than that its influence is powerfully felt over the most enlightened and free nation of the Earth.

There are so many quotes that are part of our history. Franklin Roosevelt, 1935, says:

We cannot read the history of our rising development as a nation, without reckoning with the place the Bible has occupied in shaping the advances of the Republic. Where we have been the truest and most consistent in obeying its precepts, we have attained the greatest measure of contentment and prosperity.

It was the Ambassador to the U.N. from Lebanon, and later President of the U.N. of the General Assembly said this in 1958, ''Whoever tries to conceive the American word without taking full account of the suffering and love of salvation of Christ is only dreaming.

''I know how embarrassing this matter is to politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen and cynics, but whatever these honored men think, the irrefutable truth is that the soul of America is at its best and highest Christian.''

But you don't have to be a Christian. You can be an atheist, agnostic, Buddhist, Muslim, whatever you want to be, as long as the Constitution and the Bill of Rights is foremost in your guiding principle here in this country.

But this administration has done what really would be unthinkable in any other administration. It basically has an undeclared—publicly undeclared war against Christianity. And it has sown seeds around the world so that when I have met and wept with people, victims in Nigeria and around the world, they don't understand why America doesn't stand up against Christian genocide around the world and their suffering. Because when you look, the United States Government will litigate against the Little Sisters of the Poor, Mother Teresa, basically, and say: You have got to believe what we tell you to believe. You have got to practice the religious beliefs we tell you to believe. We don't care how moral and Christian and wonderful and humble and helpful you have been. We don't care. You are going to do what the new God of this country says, the five majority on the Supreme Court. That is the new God.

It is about marriage. It is about everything else. Until the five majority in the Supreme Court wake up and allow freedom of religion not to be prohibited, consistent with the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, then we have not a whole lot of time left as a free people.

As an Australian group told me, if something happens to the United States, forget trying to come to Australia. We are gone as soon as you are.

It is time we stand up and make sure religious freedom lives again completely free in America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 719. An act to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 2426. An act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 49 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 21, 2016, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4663. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Additions to the Entity List [Docket No.: 160106014-6014-01] (RIN: 0694-AG82) received March 15, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4664. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 15 [Docket No.: 150302204-5999-02] (RIN: 0648-BE93) received March 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4665. A letter from the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Information Required in Notices and Petitions Containing Interchange Commitments [Docket No.: EP 714] received March 15, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

H.R. 4771. A bill to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system; to the Committee on

the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PEARCE:

H.R. 4772. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds to accept commercial flight plans for travel between the United States and Cuba until certain known fugitives are returned to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WALBERG (for himself and Mr. KLINE):

H.R. 4773. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to nullify the proposed rule regarding defining and delimiting the exemptions for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees, to require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a full and complete economic analysis with improved economic data on small businesses, nonprofit employers, Medicare or Medicaid dependent health care providers, and small governmental jurisdictions, and all other employers, and minimize the impact on such employers, before promulgating any substantially similar rule, and to provide a rule of construction regarding the salary threshold exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.R. 4774. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. FLORES, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. MCCARTHY, and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4775. A bill to facilitate efficient State implementation of ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. LEE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 4776. A bill to establish a national program to identify landslide hazards and reduce loss from landslides, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SEWELL of Alabama (for herself, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. PALMER):

H.R. 4777. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1301 Alabama Avenue in Selma, Alabama as the ''Amelia Boynton Robinson Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 4778. A bill to direct the Comptroller General to submit to Congress a report on medical items and services being offered in the facilities of recipients of assistance under title X of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300 et seq.) or of their affiliates, subsidiaries, successors, or clinics; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 4779. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to prevent Federal prosecutions for certain conduct, relating to CBD oil, that is lawful under State law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 4780. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive strategy for Department of Homeland Security operations abroad, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. DUFFY (for himself, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 4781. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to make certain functions of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation subject to appropriations; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4782. A bill to increase, effective as of December 1, 2016, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 4783. A bill to reauthorize and improve the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHRADER (for himself and Mr. BILIRAKIS):

H.R. 4784. A bill to increase competition in the pharmaceutical industry; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PERRY (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4785. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HARDY, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 4786. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a pilot program for commercial recreation concessions on certain land managed by the Bureau of Land Management; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida (for himself and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida):

H.R. 4787. A bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce to award competitive grants to institutions of higher education to combat lionfish in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, through the Cooperative Science and Education Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 4788. A bill to strengthen resources for entrepreneurs by improving the SCORE program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 4789. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a structure for visitor services on the Arlington Ridge tract, in the area of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 4790. A bill to promote innovative approaches to outdoor recreation on Federal land and to open up opportunities for collaboration with non-Federal partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Education and the Workforce, Armed Services, Energy and Commerce, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRAT (for himself, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. PERRY, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. BABIN, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 4791. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to require deposits into the Immigration Examinations Fee Account to be subject to appropriations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4792. A bill to update the oil and gas and mining industry guides of the Securities and Exchange Commission; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4793. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire land south of Lake Okeechobee, Florida, for the purpose of flood damage reduction and water storage, treatment, and conveyance purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 4794. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rollovers between 529 programs and ABLE accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 4795. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4796. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to specify a minimum number of days of parental leave available for a member of the Armed Forces in connection with the birth of a child of the member or in connection with the adoption or foster care of a child by the member; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mr. QUIGLEY):

H.R. 4797. A bill to provide grants to eligible entities to reduce lead in drinking water; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. LEE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H.R. 4798. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote family unity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4799. A bill to hold the salaries of Members of the House of Representatives in escrow if the House does not pass all of the regular appropriation bills for a fiscal year prior to the beginning of that fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 4800. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a land exchange involving lands within the boundaries of the Cape Cod National Seashore, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 4801. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, and title XVIII of the Social Security Act, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct audits of medical loss ratio reports submitted by health insurance issuers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 4802. A bill to require consideration of the impact on beneficiary access to care and to enhance due process protections in procedures for suspending payments to Medicaid providers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. KEATING, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. FOSTER):

H.R. 4803. A bill to increase the participation of historically underrepresented demographic groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and industry; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4804. A bill to provide for a task force within the FBI to deal with certain malicious and false threats in order made to obtain a response by law enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself and Mr. BYRNE):

H.R. 4805. A bill to amend the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act to provide that information held by health care clearinghouses is subject to privacy protections that are equivalent to the protections that apply to information held by other types of covered entities under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 4806. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate national primary drinking water regulations regarding lead and copper; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 4807. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide the same level of Federal matching assistance, regardless of date of such expansion, for every State that chooses to expand Medicaid coverage to newly eligible individuals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4808. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require students who do not complete a program of study to repay Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 4809. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require the disclosure of political intelligence activities, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for restrictions on former officers, employees, and elected officials of the executive and legislative branches regarding political intelligence contacts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STEFANIK:

H.R. 4810. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Defense to cooperate with Israel to develop directed energy capabilities to detect and defeat ballistic missiles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. FARR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 4811. A bill to authorize Federal agencies to establish prize competitions for innovation or adaptation management development relating to coral reef ecosystems and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. HARRIS, and Mr. DELANEY):

H.R. 4812. A bill to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to enter into an agreement with the Harriet Tubman Statue Commission of the State of Maryland for the acceptance of a statue of Harriet Tubman for display in a suitable location in the United States Capitol; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 4813. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the age requirement with respect to eligibility for qualified ABLE programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H.R. 4814. A bill to provide that the salaries of Members of a House of Congress will be held in escrow if that House has not agreed to a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2017 by April 15, 2016; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H. Res. 650. A resolution providing for the safety and security of the Iranian dissidents living in Camp Liberty/Hurriya in Iraq and awaiting resettlement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and permitting use of their own assets to assist in their resettlement; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HASTINGS:

H. Res. 651. A resolution condemning the recent violent terrorist attack against Taylor Force and the recent wave of terrorism

against Israel and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' failure to condemn such attacks; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT (for himself, Mr. HECK of Washington, and Mr. REICHERT):

H. Res. 652. A resolution recognizing the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington, as the National Nordic Museum of the United States; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

179. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, relative to House Resolution No. 220, urging the President and Congress of the United States to explore and support policies that will lead to the establishment of facilities within the United States for the reprocessing and recycling of spent nuclear fuel; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

H.R. 4771.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to provide for uniform laws that remove barriers to trade and facilitate commerce nationwide; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 9; Article III, Section 1, Clause 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts.

By Mr. PEARCE:

H.R. 4772.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. WALBERG:

H.R. 4773.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.R. 4774.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 4775.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 4776.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Ms. SEWELL of Alabama:

H.R. 4777.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution, which reads: ''The Congress shall have power . . . To establish Post Offices and Post Roads''.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 4778.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 : ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes''

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 4779.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 4780.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4781.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7.

By Mr. ABRAHAM:

H.R. 4782.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4783.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8, cl. 2; Art. I, §8, cl. 7; Art. I, §8 cl 11; and Article I, §8, cl. 12.

By Mr. SCHRADER:

H.R. 4784.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 4785.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4786.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause). Under this clause, Congress has the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. By virtue of this enumerated power, Congress has governing authority over the lands, territories, or other property of the United States—and with this authority Congress is vested with the power to all owners in fee, the ability to sell, lease, dispose, exchange, convey, or simply preserve land. The Supreme Court has described this enumerated grant as one ''without limitation'' Kleppe v New Mexico, 426 U.S. 529, 542–543 (1976) (''And while the furthest reaches of the power granted by the Property Clause have not been definitely resolved, we have repeatedly observed that the power over the public land thus entrusted to Congress is without limitation.'') Historically, the the federal government transferred ownership of federal property to either private ownership or the states in order to pay off large Revolutionary War debts and to assist with the development of infrastructure.

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida:

H.R. 4787.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8, clause 3

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 4788.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4789.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2, relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 4790.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BRAT:

H.R. 4791.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

American immigration law stems from Congress' power to ''establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization'' (Article I, Section 8, Clause 4) and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign Nations'' (Article I, Section 8, Clause 3). Only Congress has the power to ''lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises'' (Article I, Section 8, Clause 1), and Article I, Section 9, Clause 1 states that ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law,'' explicitly requiring congressional authorization for funds to be spent. Furthermore, it is clearly both ''necessary and proper'' (Article I, Section 8, Clause 18) that Congress maintain control over funds through appropriations to ensure that the President ''take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed'' (Article II, Section 3).

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4792.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

Article I; Section 8; Clause 18

The Congress shall have Power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4793.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CRENSHAW:
H.R. 4794.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. CRENSHAW:
H.R. 4795.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution
By Ms. DUCKWORTH:
H.R. 4796.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clauses 14 and 18 of the United States Constitution
By Ms. DUCKWORTH:
H.R. 4797.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. HONDA:
H.R. 4798.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution
By Mr. JOLLY:
H.R. 4799.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. KEATING:
H.R. 4800.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:
H.R. 4801.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:
H.R. 4802.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section VIII.
By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:
H.R. 4803.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: the Commerce Clause
By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:
H.R. 4804.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:
H.R. 4805.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. QUIGLEY:
H.R. 4806.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution
By Mr. RICHMOND:
H.R. 4807.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 18).
Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall have no bearing on judicial review of the accompanying bill.
By Mr. SALMON:
H.R. 4808.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8:
The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.
By Ms. SLAUGHTER:
H.R. 4809.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Sections 5 and 8 of Article I of the Constitution of the United States
By Ms. STEFANIK:
H.R. 4810.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. TAKAI:
H.R. 4811.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:
H.R. 4812.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:
H.R. 4813.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution
By Mr. WITTMAN:
H.R. 4814.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 6 of the Constitution of the United States

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 169: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 228: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 230: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 605: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 664: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. VEASEY, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. ESTY, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 670: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 704: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 729: Mr. RUSH, Mr. ROSS, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 879: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 969: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 971: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 986: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1025: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1170: Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 1178: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1218: Mr. KEATING, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1220: Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 1233: Mr. SALMON.
H.R. 1309: Mr. DUFFY.
H.R. 1310: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 1342: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 1427: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1453: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1621: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 1643: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 1653: Mr. KILMER and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 1655: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 1660: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1714: Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 1736: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 1769: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MICA, and Mr. SALMON.
H.R. 1779: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1814: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 1941: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 1950: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 1958: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 2102: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 2124: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2167: Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 2315: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 2403: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2473: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 2546: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 2713: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 2737: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 2802: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 2896: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 2911: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
H.R. 3074: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 3084: Mr. REED and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3117: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3119: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 3225: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 3226: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3229: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 3591: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 3640: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3691: Ms. PINGREE and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3706: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 3790: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3808: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. MACARTHUR.
H.R. 3817: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3870: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3892: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 4007: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4019: Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 4073: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEVIN, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 4099: Mr. MARCHANT and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 4113: Ms. NORTON and Mr. COOPER.
H.R. 4167: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 4184: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 4212: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 4247: Mr. MICA, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.
H.R. 4253: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 4255: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 4262: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 4263: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 4277: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 4294: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4323: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 4336: Mr. DELANEY, Mr. NUGENT, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4352: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 4386: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4389: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. TONKO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mr. HONDA, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4442: Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4479: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4480: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 4488: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. KIND, and Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 4497: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4499: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 4501: Mr. KILMER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4514: Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 4529: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 4534: Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. REED, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4555: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4585: Ms. MENG, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 4595: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4613: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 4614: Mr. GIBBS and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 4636: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4651: Mr. WALKER.
H.R. 4653: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4683: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 4703: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4730: Mr. BABIN, Mr. BARTON, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 4731: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4742: Ms. EDWARDS and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 4754: Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 4760: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 4764: Mr. WALKER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 4768: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. COFFMAN.
H. Res. 32: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H. Res. 54: Mr. BOST and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H. Res. 169: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
H. Res. 432: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H. Res. 540: Ms. PELOSI and Ms. EDWARDS.
H. Res. 551: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. HAHN, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Ms. MATSUI.
H. Res. 590: Mr. COLE, Mr. YOHO, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. ABRAHAM, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. JONES, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. DESANTIS.
H. Res. 591: Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. ROBY, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. KIND.
H. Res. 615: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H. Res. 637: Ms. PELOSI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

52. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Board of Directors of the Fleetwood Area School District, Fleetwood, PA, relative to supporting equitable funding for school districts in the Commonwealth; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

SENATE—*Thursday, March 17, 2016*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You are the shepherd of our souls. Because of You, blessings overtake us. Thank You for inscribing each of us on the palms of Your hands. Great is Your faithfulness.

Bless our Senators and those who labor with them. Give them strength to meet today's challenges with a peace that comes from total trust in You. Remind them that the way to find life is to lose it in service for others.

Surround us all with Your favor, as You complete the work You have started in each of us.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The minority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE CHIEF KIM DINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend the Republican leader will be here shortly. I have something to do downtown, so I will have to leave. I certainly do not want to get ahead of him. I know he is going to say something because we have talked about Chief of Police Kim Dine, who has retired.

I want to join with the Republican leader in recognizing the work of the U.S. Capitol Police Chief, Kim Dine. He spent his life in law enforcement. He spent his entire professional life serving and protecting the people of Washington, DC, and the entire metro area. He started as a young officer here in Washington 41 years ago and over the course of three decades has moved up the ranks of the Metropolitan Police Department, becoming assistant chief of police.

In 2002, he was selected to serve as chief of police of Frederick, MD. He served the people of Maryland with distinction for 10 years.

In 2012, our Sergeant at Arms asked Chief Dine to come back to Washington, this time as Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police Department. We are very fortunate that took place.

Chief Dine helped oversee President Obama's 2013 inauguration, and since then it has been event after big event: four State of the Union Addresses, Memorial Day and Fourth of July concerts, and, of course, Pope Francis's historic visit here last year. During all of those proceedings, it was his obligation to protect the people who are visiting and to protect the people who work within this beautiful Capitol Complex. At every one of those events, Chief Dine and his department did a superb job protecting 30,000 people—Senators, Congressmen, and staff—who are in the Capitol Complex virtually every day. And that doesn't include the visitors who come here.

So now, as the Chief embarks upon a well-deserved retirement, we thank him for his service. We thank his wife Robin and their two daughters for sharing their husband and father with us the past few years. I am sure this man was as taken care of at home as he has taken care of all of us in the metropolitan area. I hope his family takes satisfaction in the outstanding work he has rendered to the American people.

I thank you very much, Chief. We wish you nothing but the best.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE CHIEF KIM DINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this weekend U.S. Capitol Police Chief Kim Dine will retire his badge and say goodbye to the Senate after several decades of law enforcement service, including more than three right here in the Capitol.

Chief Dine was police chief in a nearby Maryland suburb when he first came to this position in December of 2012. You could say the appointment was a bit of a homecoming for him given that Chief Dine began his more than 40 years in law enforcement with the DC Metropolitan Police Department. He served there for 27 years and rose through the ranks, eventually becoming assistant chief of police.

I know it is never easy to leave the Capitol, but you have to imagine Chief Dine has a lot to look forward to in retirement. After all, this is a guy who has been known to get into the office before the sun rises and leave after it sets. Most would need some rest after so many years of that kind of schedule.

So here is what we would like to say: The Senate appreciates Chief Dine's willingness to serve our country. And after nearly four decades in law enforcement, we wish him all the best in his retirement.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND SUBPOENA ENFORCEMENT RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me state an obvious point. When it comes to filling the current Supreme Court vacancy—which could fundamentally alter the direction of the Court for a generation—Republicans and Democrats simply disagree. We simply disagree. Republicans think the people deserve a voice in this critical decision; the President does not. So we disagree in this instance, and as a result, we logically act as a check-and-balance.

There is no reason one area of disagreement should stop us from looking for other areas of agreement, though. We will continue our work in the Senate as the American people make their voices heard in this important national conversation. For instance, we will address another very important issue today, which I would like to talk about now.

Senator PORTMAN and Senator MCCASKILL are the top Republican and top Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Over the past year, they have worked together in a bipartisan way to examine human trafficking. Their probe has revealed how trafficking has flourished in the age of the Internet. It has also revealed how many cases of sex trafficking, including cases involving children, have been linked to one Web site in particular: backpage.com.

One national group who tracks the issue has told the subcommittee this: Nearly three-quarters of all suspected child sex trafficking reports it receives

from the public through its tip line have a connection to backpage.

Chairman PORTMAN and Ranking Member MCCASKILL have wanted to do something about this. They know they have to keep investigating. So they issued a subpoena to backpage. They wanted documents about the company's business practices. They wanted to know how it screens advertisements for warning signs of trafficking. As the leaders of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, they had every right to make these requests in the course of their investigation, but backpage has refused to comply. Does that mean Senators PORTMAN and MCCASKILL give up? Of course not. And we shouldn't, either. They jointly submitted a Senate resolution that would hold the company in civil contempt and force it to turn over this required information. This resolution passed through the committee with unanimous bipartisan support 15 to 0, and today it can be adopted by the full Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support too. We will have that opportunity this afternoon. If we do, it will allow the Senate's legal counsel to bring a civil suit in court and ask the court to order compliance with the subpoena. That is critical for allowing this bipartisan investigation to move forward.

I thank Ranking Member MCCASKILL for all she has done. I thank Chairman PORTMAN for all he has done.

We saw Senator PORTMAN's great work last week in passing bipartisan legislation to help address America's heroin and opioid crisis, and again today we will see Senator PORTMAN's great work in leading on another important issue and doing so once more in a bipartisan manner.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:45 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to address what I believe is the urgency of the moment, really the test of the time. We have a Constitution that was designed for three coequal branches of government. We know the importance of each of those branches of government and the roles they have are spelled out in the Constitution.

A fully functioning Supreme Court—one of the coequal branches—is of the utmost importance to the proper function of our democracy. Justices decide cases that shape the daily lives of all Americans. Even one Justice can deeply affect the rights and liberties of the American people for generations to come.

Yesterday, the President nominated Chief Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court of the United States.

A clear and plain reading of the text of the Constitution says explicitly in article II, section 2, that it is the duty of the Senate to provide ''advice and consent'' to the President on key nominations, particularly Justices to the Supreme Court.

I, along with my 99 colleagues, took an oath of office. We swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and to faithfully discharge the duties of the offices we hold. There was no addendum to that oath that excused us from our responsibilities during a Presidential election year. The people of New Jersey elected me to serve a full 6-year term. That means my duties and obligations as a Senator—or the duties and obligations of each of the 100 Senators in this body—should not be interrupted by a Presidential year. That is especially true when those duties are explicitly laid out in the Constitution and when the duties impact a coequal branch of government, such as the Supreme Court.

I have only served in the Senate since October of 2013. This is my first Supreme Court nominee to consider, and I look forward to thoroughly reviewing Chief Judge Garland's record, to meeting with him face to face, and hopefully, I believe rightfully, taking an up-or-down vote on his confirmation.

That is what all of us swore an oath and signed up to do when a vacancy occurs on the Supreme Court. That is the duty the American people expect of us—to abide by the Constitution and provide our advice and consent regarding a Presidential nomination of this significance—a lifetime appointment—to the Supreme Court, a coequal branch of government.

We may not ultimately agree on whether Chief Judge Garland should be confirmed. The Senate can vote no. Senators have that independent choice. It happens almost every day here where we disagree on issues. There is no guarantee in the Constitution that the President's nominee should get confirmed. But we should agree at least to do the job we were elected to do and to allow the confirmation process to move forward. That is bigger than any one party.

Now, as I understand it, Chief Judge Garland is highly respected, experienced, and is considered by many to be a deliberate jurist whom the Senate overwhelmingly confirmed in 1997 to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, which is known as the second highest court in the land. His nomination to be an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court is certainly deserving of our consideration.

Chief Judge Garland, in fact, has more Federal judiciary experience than any other Supreme Court nominee in history.

He currently serves as Chief Judge of the D.C. Circuit Court, a court where he has served for almost 19 years. Previously, he has served under both Democratic and Republican Presidents at the U.S. Department of Justice. He first worked as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of DOJ and later served as the Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General. In those posts, he supervised high-profile cases at the Department of Justice such as the prosecution of the Oklahoma City bomber, which ultimately brought Timothy McVeigh to justice.

To call his qualifications impressive is an understatement. Chief Judge Garland has dedicated his life to public service, and his lengthy career reflects his commitment to the high ideals etched on the Supreme Courts itself, ''Equal justice under law.''

He has said, ''The role of the court is to apply the law to the facts of the case before it—not to legislate, not to arrogate to itself the executive power, not to hand down advisory opinions on the issues of the day.'' No wonder he is known in legal circles and around Capitol Hill for his careful opinions and lack of overt ideological bias.

Chief Judge Garland is so well admired, so highly regarded, and so accomplished that his appeal transcends the typical partisan divisions that we too often see in Washington.

There is no possible justification—based on this nominee's reputation, his experience, his dedication, his service, and his work—to ignore, blockade, or stonewall Chief Judge Garland's nomination or to deny him a hearing and a vote. There is no reason for that.

There is certainly no historical or constitutional precedent behind such a blockade. Since committee hearings began in 1916, every pending Supreme Court nominee has received a hearing, except for nine nominees who were confirmed within 11 days. So what is being suggested—to not even meet with this

nominee or to not even give this nominee a hearing in committee—is unprecedented in our Nation's history.

The Senate has previously confirmed Supreme Court nominees during a Presidential election year. History shows us that the Senate has previously confirmed a Supreme Court nominee at least 17 separate times during the Presidencies of liberals and conservatives, Republicans and Democrats, alike. We have even held confirmation hearings of Supreme Court nominees at least five times in Presidential election years since the hearing process began in 1916.

Thus, the excuse that we should not move forward with the confirmation process for Chief Judge Garland because this is a political election season simply falls flat in the face of our history. In fact, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and, more recently, President Ronald Reagan saw their Supreme Court nominees confirmed in a Presidential election year. Since 1975, it has taken, on average, a little over 2 months for the full Senate to consider a nomination before voting.

It is only March, so there is plenty of time to consider and confirm a nominee. There is no reason why Chief Judge Garland cannot be confirmed by even the end of May, given the average time of recent Supreme Court confirmations, which is more than ample time for the next Justice to be on the Court before the next Supreme Court term begins in October.

When the Supreme Court, that coequal branch of government, has a body of work to do, for the Senate to deny this nominee a hearing and a vote we would also deny that coequal branch of government its full, functioning complement of members. This is a historic time and a critical test for this distinguished body. It is a time that will test how dignified our confirmation process will be for future Supreme Court nominees.

It provides us an opportunity, amidst all of the partisanship, amidst all of the delays that are going on, amidst all of the partisan rhetoric, for this body to rise above the fray. We can show that the Senate, at its best, treats nominees to our highest court with a level of dignity, honor, and respect. Indeed, we can show a greater fidelity to the Constitution than to party, and show that we are not susceptible to the partisan winds of the time.

I believe Chief Judge Merrick Garland deserves a dignified confirmation process. It is up to each and every Senator to decide whether he should be a Supreme Court Justice. For me, this moment in time is not just about the individual; it is also about how we as a body, the Senate, will do business and whether we will do our jobs even in Presidential election years.

I have heard some of my colleagues say simply: Let the people decide.

That sentiment appears to resonate at first, especially since a first principle of any democracy is to let the voters decide important issues. But in reality the people have already decided. They decided when they voted for each of the 100 Members of this distinguished body, which tells us that we should do our duty. The people decided when they voted for President Barack Obama for a second consecutive 4-year term. The people did not decide that the President should be a 1-year President or a 2-year President, but that he should serve a full 4-year term and conduct his duties—his sworn duties—accordingly.

No Senator nor the President should shirk from fulfilling their Constitutional obligations. The people in this democracy decided when they elected us. We should do our job and give Chief Judge Garland a hearing and a vote.

Our country has a deep history of fights, which have taken place not only in this body but in our larger democracy. There have been divisions and factions in this country. The Federalist Papers literally acknowledged that there would be divisions and fights, but the Constitution was designed to call us to a higher purpose, to overcome our petty divisions, and to unite us.

Our Nation is mighty and strong, and I am so proud of that because, as much as our differences matter, we always seem to understand that our country matters more. The people who founded our Nation understood that we would have differences of opinion and ideology. They understood that our differences and diversity of thought would make our country great, but they also understood that, in order for our Nation to succeed and endure, we must be loyal to our ideals and principles. Those ideals and principles are enshrined in the Constitution itself and reflected in our democracy, and that is what brings us together. In fact, it harkens to the very hallmark ideal of our country: ''E Pluribus Unum,'' out of many, one. It is written into the culture of our country. There is an old African saying: If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.

When our Founders drafted the Declaration of Independence, they enshrined for all time the ideal that we are individuals endowed by our creator with inalienable rights. The Founders ended that national charter by pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to each other.

There has been no greater honor in my life than when I stood in this well before the Vice President and swore my oath to uphold the Constitution. In fact, if I ever have to, I will sacrifice myself for my country. These are the ideals and this is the honor that I believe has helped our great country persevere.

Now we are faced with a test where two conflicting ideals have been put forth: whether a President and a Senate should fulfill their obligations all the way to the end of their sworn terms or whether we should begin to truncate the powers of a Presidency and the powers of individual Senators and suspend our constitutional obligations because it is an election year. To me, that undermines the purpose and the spirit of our constitutional institution.

As I said, the nomination of Chief Judge Garland to the Supreme Court will be a greater test for the Senate and the constitutional values we hold dear. I worry we will fail this test and descend deeper into the kind of divisiveness that undermines our Constitution.

I believe this is a time that calls for an honorable stance. We have an extremely competent Supreme Court Justice nominee before us. I am not going to blockade his nomination. I am not going to avoid meeting with this distinguished nominee. I hope we will hold hearings and a vote so that Senators may decide whether this nominee is worthy of sitting on the Nation's highest Court. I hope that each individual Senator will honor the precedent that has been continuous for years and years and years and then allow this nominee an up-or-down vote. The purpose of our sacred Constitution, as spelled out and written in article II, section 2, is to allow the President to put forward a nominee and the Senate to give its ''advice and consent,'' which I believe means an up-or-down vote on a nomination.

Again, we are here because greater Americans made a pledge to each other. As different as they were, they came together and wrote a Constitution and a Declaration of Independence. We are here because people greater than we are pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

Let us harken back to that honor. Let us put forth our sacred honor now and not allow this country to lurch even deeper into divisiveness. Let us unify and show that, yes, there are differences; yes, there are divisions; yes, there is partisanship, but in the end, we will unite around those bonds that hold this Nation together and ensure that our democracy functions for years, decades, and generations to come.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Ms. HIRONO pertaining to the introduction of S. 2710 are printed in today's RECORD under

''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS' ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I want to take a moment or two to speak about our Nation's veterans. The Presiding Officer and I have the honor of serving together on the Senate Veterans' Affair Committee. I take that responsibility—as does the Presiding Officer—very seriously. There is no other group of people that we should hold in higher regard than those who served our country. Today I want to talk about some of the challenges they are facing as a result of our failure to do that.

Who would we expect to get the very best health care in our country? We want everyone to have good quality, affordable health care. But of all the people we would want to make certain received the health care services they were promised, clearly, it would be those who served our country—the men and women of our military who are now veterans. They deserve timely, high-quality health care. That is true whether they live in an urban or suburban setting or a rural place like your State and mine. There are more than 221,000 veterans who call Kansas home, and the vast majority of them live in very rural parts of our State.

Before being elected to the Senate, before the honor that Kansans allowed me to serve them here in the Senate, I served in the U.S. House of Representatives. I represented the First District of Kansas, generally known in our State as the Big First. That is a congressional district larger than the State of Illinois, and there isn't a VA hospital in that congressional district. Veterans in this part of Kansas drive hours on end to get care, or they simply go without it all together.

Over the past year, Congress has repeatedly passed legislation designed to ease the burden for veterans who are struggling to get health care from VA facilities in my State and yours and across the country. In the wake of the scandal, we learned across the country about the false waiting list for veterans. The VA put people on a waiting list that didn't really exist. The scandal across our country allowed us, as Members of the Congress and the Senate, to come together—Republicans and Democrats—and we passed legislation called the Choice Act. This legislation allows veterans who can't get timely service to access that service with a provider outside of the VA.

Importantly—and what I want to talk about today—the Choice Act says that if you are a veteran who lives more than 40 miles from a VA facility, then at your request you can have those services provided by a local hometown physician, be admitted to your hometown hospital, see your local optometrist, and be treated by your local physical therapist or chiropractor. All of those things make a lot of sense for the veterans who live in the places where I come from.

In the process of doing that, part of the goal was to ease the burden, in addition to providing quality and timely services, for those who live in rural places. Part of the theory—and I think rightly so—in passage of the Choice Act was to lift a bit of the burden on the VA off of the VA. It has been difficult for them to have the necessary health care providers to meet the needs of veterans. So we began providing services in the community. And we are also speeding up the process by which a veteran who still goes to a VA hospital or still goes to a VA clinic gets services in a more timely and effective way.

This past July Congress passed legislation to amend the Choice Act. We did so because of the number of problems we were encountering as a result of the stories that I heard from my veterans across our State—and I know it is true of many Senators, if not all—about problems with the way the Choice Act was being implemented by the Department of Veterans Affairs. We amended that legislation to try to make it work better. In my view, that shouldn't have been necessary. The VA could have solved this challenge on their own but didn't.

What it says is that it is not a facility. I have used this example on the Senate floor before. My hometown is a town of about 1,900 people. It is about 23 miles from the community of Hays—about 20,000 people—where there is an outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA was saying that you cannot access the Choice Act if you live within 40 miles of a facility, and the problem was that they were saying even if that facility doesn't provide the service the veteran needs. So by law, we changed the definition of what a VA facility is, and it said that it is not a VA facility if it is not open full time and doesn't have a full-time physician—a pretty commonsense kind of thing that we needed to apparently put in the law to get the Department of Veterans Affairs to implement and to interpret the Choice Act in a commonsense way that was designed to meet the needs of veterans.

Unfortunately, many of our veterans remain unaware of their options. I talk to lots of veterans, some who have given up on Choice, some who don't know it is an option, and some who tried and are caught up in a bureaucratic system and are trying to get an answer about whether they qualify, and even if they do, where they can go and how their bill will get paid.

Examples in my State: One of the Kansas VA community-based outpatient clinics—known as a CBOC—is only open 2 days a month, and it shouldn't be counted as part of the Choice Act, a facility of the Choice Act. There are 9 out of 14 CBOCs in Kansas that do not have a full-time medical doctor. Those nine community-based outpatient clinics should not be counted under Choice. I want to highlight that for veterans from Kansas and across the country who might happen to hear what I have to say today so they know there are more options than they may realize.

Many Kansas veterans choose to live in rural communities. Many of us often choose to live in rural communities and raise our families, see our grandkids, and more often than not, those communities don't have a VA hospital or a clinic to serve those veterans' needs.

In townhall meeting after townhall meeting and up and down Main Streets of communities in my State, the most common conversation I now have is with veterans who are expressing how the system is failing them, the frustration they are encountering, and that they are not seeing the improvements and changes for the betterment of the care they are entitled to.

As I said earlier, many veterans are so frustrated with the back-and-forth they have with the VA and the redtape, they simply give up and either go without health care or end up trying to pay for it out of their own pocket. That is exactly what occurred to Mr. Lamoine Guinn, who is a rural Kansan. Mr. Guinn shared his story with me not to try to get me to solve the problem, but he wanted others to know how this program needed to change so that other veterans would benefit. After a year of dealing with the VA, he decided to simply give up on Choice. I don't want to let that happen. I don't want veterans to give up on Choice. I don't want the Department of Veterans Affairs to have the excuse to say Choice is not a viable program, veterans don't like it, and come back to Congress and tell us that it is no longer needed.

If I were home in Kansas, I would explain it this way: Again, my hometown, Plainville—population now 1,900—used to have rail service, and over time the rail service diminished and became less effective. The rates went up, and fewer people used the rail service, the railroad, to haul grain in particular. Then the railroad could go to the regulators and say: Nobody is using the railroad; can we just abandon it?

I worry that that kind of attitude and approach could happen with this issue if we don't make certain our veterans see the benefit and actually receive the benefits that come from the Choice Act. I don't want to give anybody—the Department of Veterans Affairs or other Members of Congress—the opportunity to say ''The Choice Act doesn't matter. People don't like it. It is not popular. Let's do something different'' when the reality is that it would be popular if it were working effectively and in a timely way and veterans were being cared for.

Mr. Guinn lives in Oberlin, a small town, a county seat town in Decatur County, almost in Nebraska. It is one of those typical Kansas small farming communities. The closest VA facility to him is actually in Grand Island, NE. Although he is a Kansas resident, he is part of the Nebraska VA network because of its proximity to Grand Island. He is eligible under the Choice Program, and he needed to schedule spinal surgery with the community provider. That is what he wanted to do. So the VA referred him to HealthNet. HealthNet is the organization that manages this program for the Department of Veterans Affairs. HealthNet then referred him to TriWest because he is a Kansas resident. TriWest covers Kansas while HealthNet covers Nebraska. The health care providers were arguing about who is responsible for his care because he lives one place and his VA provider is in an adjoining State.

My complaint is that it shouldn't matter where he lives. He is stuck in a bureaucracy. The burden ought not fall to him to solve all of his problems. The VA ought to step in and solve the problem for him and tell him what it is that ought to be done and get him out of the back-and-forth between the Nebraska and Kansas networks.

He has now gone a year without the surgery. He is going to now drive to another VA medical center in Omaha—300 miles one way—so he can get the surgery he is entitled to have by his hometown provider or a regional hospital in his area.

Many of our veterans—I don't know the age of this particular veteran, Mr. Guinn, but many of the veterans who live in those communities are World War II veterans and now more likely Vietnam veterans. The opportunity for them to have family around them, the ability for them to get long distances is a complete challenge. To have to go 300 miles, when the law says that he is a veteran and he, who served our country, is entitled to services at home, is a terrible mistake, and it ought to be something that can be sorted out, but every time he has attempted to do that, the burden still rests with him. We want the Department of Veterans Affairs to step in and figure this out and get it done and get it done quickly.

Another veteran who reached out to my office for assistance was Mr. Francis Wierman, a 92-year-old veteran. He lives in La Crosse. It is a county seat town of a couple thousand folks. Because of his age, it is difficult for him to travel for his annual physical appointments.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak until I conclude my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. I thank the Chair.

Because of his age—Mr. Wierman needs to travel. It is difficult for him to do it. What he needs is an annual physical. So Mr. Wierman has attempted to utilize the Choice Program, and he was told there was no flexibility to be seen in La Crosse by a hometown doctor or go to a hometown hospital due to his proximity, his location next to an outpatient clinic.

Mr. Wierman sacrificed for our country, and he deserves to be able to receive his care in his own community given the burden and strain traveling imposes upon him, a veteran of 92 years of age. We need to make certain he receives the care he is entitled to, and we need to make sure the VA is doing what needs to be done to accomplish that.

My final example today is Mr. Dabney, who suffers from post-traumatic stress. He was also told he was eligible for Choice, so he set up an appointment with the local care provider. Despite the OK from the VA practitioner about getting care outside of the VA, the handoff got lost in the shuffle, and somehow the VA determined that it was Mr. Dabney's fault that the paperwork didn't follow him, leaving him with the bill for the services provided by the outside-the-VA practitioner.

I shared this case with Secretary McDonald at a hearing the Presiding Officer and I attended several months ago. The conclusion months later by the VA was that Mr. Dabney simply didn't understand the Choice Act and he should have tried harder to get an official authorization before setting up the appointment; therefore, the bill still rests with him. Thankfully, the provider, the network TriWest, disagreed, and they are now elevating his case to try to make certain he doesn't have to pay the bill for the services the VA originally authorized him to receive outside of the VA.

The Choice Act was designed specifically to help these veterans. They gave of themselves to serve our country and fought on our behalf, and they deserve the care and respect they should be receiving today from or country and its Department of Veterans Affairs. Our country must fulfill its commitments to these individuals and to others who provide for those who sacrificed for our Nation, regardless of the community they call home.

Last week I joined my Senate colleagues in sponsoring the Veterans Choice Improvement Act of 2016. This legislation is designed to fix problems with the original Choice Act that the VA has been unable to resolve on their own to make sure these veterans receive what they are entitled to. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I look forward to working with the Presiding Officer and other members and with our chairman, JOHNNY ISAKSON from Georgia, as well as the ranking member, Senator BLUMENTHAL, for purposes of making sure that we get this right and that we make certain the VA does its job in caring for these men and women who served our country.

I will continue to make certain that happens, and I continue to express my gratitude to those who served our country and renew my willingness and my desire to make sure they receive the health care they are entitled to.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

(The remarks of Mr. COTTON pertaining to the introduction of S. 2708 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. COTTON. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I come to this Chamber for the 131st time to urge this body to break free and wake up to what carbon pollution is doing to our atmosphere and our oceans.

Last week, scientists at NOAA reported that carbon dioxide levels at their Mauna Loa Observatory jumped in 2015 by the largest year-to-year increase in 56 years of research.

Pieter Tans, lead scientist at NOAA, said:

> Carbon dioxide levels are increasing faster than they have in hundreds of thousands of years. It's explosive compared to natural processes.

We see the effects of this runaway carbon pollution everywhere, in ever-climbing temperatures, in ever-changing weather patterns, and in ever-rising, warming, and acidifying seas. But the Republican-controlled Congress refuses to take responsible action. They put their climate effort elsewhere, such as attacking former Vice President Al Gore for raising awareness of the real and looming climate crisis.

One Republican colleague has railed against Mr. Gore, calling him ''the world's first climate billionaire,'' claiming that he is ''drowning in a sea of his own global warming illusions'' and faulting him for ''desperately trying to keep global warming alarmism alive today.''

Another prominent Republican, this one running for President, suggested ''the Nobel committee should take the Nobel Prize back from Al Gore.''

Others claim that cold or snowy weather proves Mr. Gore wrong. After one snow in DC a few years ago, a prominent Republican TV personality claimed the storm ''would seem to contradict Al Gore's hysterical global warming theories.'' A Senator gloated after that storm, ''Where's Al Gore now?''

Another Senate colleague said while campaigning for President in Iowa:

I have to admit, I was really confused. Al Gore told us this wasn't going to happen, but it was cold there.

These are all profoundly ignorant comments if you know anything about climate change, but they cannot resist. They inhabit what Politico's Daniel Lippman and Mike Allen this week called ''a political reality indifferent to the exigencies of climate change.''

So let's catch up on what Al Gore is up to on climate change. He has a TED talk on the ted.com Web site, and I highly recommend it. Mr. Gore's presentation opens with the fact that our atmosphere is not as big as most people think. He shows this picture taken from the International Space Station to remind us that the atmosphere surrounding our planet is really just a thin shell. It is into this thin shell that we continue to spew megatons of heat-trapping carbon pollution day in and day out. Mr. Gore explains that this thin atmosphere ''right now is the open sewer for our industrial civilization as it's currently organized.''

Here is how he shows our carbon dioxide emission rates through time. You can see the amount of carbon emissions really started to increase here after World War II. Vice President Gore explains: ''[T]he accumulated amount of man-made, global warming pollution that is up in the atmosphere now traps as much extra heat energy as would be released by 400,000 Hiroshima-class atomic bombs exploding every 24 hours, 365 days a year.''

He continues:

[T]hat is a lot of energy. . . . And all that extra heat energy is heating up . . . the whole earth system.

The Vice President didn't mention it, but the Associated Press has used a similar analogy about the heat from climate change that is going into our oceans, a piece that said: ''Since 1997, Earth's oceans have absorbed man-made heat energy equivalent to a Hiroshima-style bomb being exploded every second for 75 straight years.''

Mr. Gore showed this depiction of average temperatures between 1951 and 1980. The blue is cooler-than-average days, the white is average days, and the red is warmer-than-average days. Now we are going to look at what happened in the next three decades after this 1951 to 1980 period. What is going to stay the same is this green line. That will be the constant against which you can see the change. Let's go to the next chart.

This is 1983 to 1993. You will notice that everything has moved against the constant. You will also notice down here that a new category has emerged. This category is extremely hot days.

The next chart is 1994 to 2004. Again, the average continues to move against this green line which is a constant, and now you see that new category of extremely hot days growing even more.

Here is our last decade, 2005 to 2015. What we experience in this last decade has moved completely away from the historic norm indicated by that green line, and this extreme temperature, the extremely hot days category, is now bigger than the cooler-than-average category. Remember, 1950 to 1980, this category didn't even exist. Now it is bigger. Well, it might have existed, but it wasn't visible on the graphs; let me put it that way. Now it is bigger than the cooler-than-average category. Mr. Gore points out that these extremely hot days in the last 10 years ''are 150 times more common on the surface of the earth than they were just 30 years ago.'' By the way, we measure this stuff. This is not a theory.

Worldwide, 2015 was the hottest year since we began keeping records in 1880, according to NOAA and NASA. That Republican colleague who went to Iowa and thought that the cold disproved climate change dismissed that finding as ''pseudo-scientific theory.'' You know what. NASA is driving a rover around on the surface of Mars right now, so I will go with them knowing what they are talking about.

The last 5 years have been the warmest 5-year period on record, according to the World Meteorological Organization, and 14 of the 15 hottest years ever measured have been in this young century. We are a terrestrial species. We live on the land, so naturally we pay more attention to the land and not so much to what is happening in our warming and acidifying oceans. This chart shows the oceans absorbing over 90 percent of the excess heat trapped in the atmosphere by greenhouse gas emissions. This is the effect of those Hiroshima bomb equivalents warming up the oceans that the Associated Press used as their example.

What does all that extra heat mean for the oceans? Well, unless you are going to dispute the law of thermal expansion, it means that warming things expand.

Last month, a study of tidal flood days along my east coast came out. The author's conclusion? I will quote him:

It's not the tide. It's not the wind. It's us.

There is one industry, the insurance industry, that pays serious attention to climate change as their losses have been mounting. This is insurance company data from the Insurance Information Institute in January of 2006 showing the climate rate of worldwide extreme weather catastrophes. Why? Well, Dr. Kevin Trenberth works at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. He says:

All storms are different now.

Do you hear that?

All storms are different now. There's so much extra energy in the atmosphere, there's so much extra water vapor. Every storm is different now.

Well, the challenge of climate change is urgent, but Mr. Gore points out that we have the understanding and engineering prowess to generate energy from new sources, and we are doing unexpectedly well. Vice President Gore says:

The best projections in the world 16 years ago were that by 2010, the world would be able to install 30 gigawatts of wind capacity. We beat that mark by 14 and a half times over.

It is the same story for solar capacity, which is taking off even more quickly than wind. Again quoting Vice President Gore: ''The best projections 14 years ago were that we would install one gigawatt [of solar] per year by 2010.''

The Vice President continues:

When 2010 came around, we beat that mark by 17 times over. Last year, we beat it by 58 times over. This year, we're on track to beat it 68 times over.

Look at that curve. These innovations helped renewable energy costs become comparable with fossil fuel power even though, as Vice President Gore points out, ''fossil energy is now still subsidized at a rate 40 times larger than renewables.''

If you look at what the International Monetary Fund has said about the ''effective subsidy'' of fossil fuel, the subsidy for fossil is actually way bigger than that.

Most importantly, society is moving. More than 150 major U.S. companies signed onto the American Business Act on Climate Pledge, supporting a strong outcome in the Paris climate negotiations. Fifty-three percent of young Republican voters—that is, young Republican voters under the age of 35—have said they would describe a climate change denier as ''ignorant,'' ''out-of-touch'' or ''crazy.'' Those are not my words; these are the words in the poll that the young Republicans chose.

Despite the recent stay of the administration's Clean Power Plan, 19 States are continuing with EPA to develop compliance strategies for their economies and their energy sectors. Roughly 6 in 10 Republicans and GOP-leaning Independents under age 50 think the government should limit greenhouse gases even if it causes a $20 increase in their monthly bill. So people are moving.

Mr. Gore uses a line from the great American poet Wallace Stevens: ''After

the final no, there comes a yes, and on that yes the future world depends.''

Well, Al Gore has faced a lot of ''no.'' The fossil fuel industry and its minions have mocked and derided him. The climate denial machine keeps working its poison. In fact, we just learned that Arch Coal's bankruptcy filing shows they were funding an extremist group dedicated to harassing and threatening scientists.

As the evidence comes in, as every major science agency and organization lines up with all our National Labs and military services and our home State universities across the country, it turns out the mockers and the deniers were wrong. In fact, in all decency, Al Gore deserves an apology, as do the countless men and women who scrutinize these data, who labor in the real science, and who call us to action. If we continue sleepwalking in Congress, we will need to apologize not just to Al Gore but to future generations. We will need to apologize to our own grandchildren for our negligence when we knew better.

So let us wake up from our fossil fuel-funded make-believe and meet our moral obligation.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BACKPAGE.COM

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, this afternoon the Senate will proceed to a vote on S. Res. 377, a resolution that would hold backpage.com in contempt of Congress for not complying with an investigation being conducted by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Unfortunately, concerns have been raised that the Web site has connections to sex trafficking. Backpage has refused to comply with the subpoena request from the subcommittee. We all know that sex trafficking is a heinous, evil practice, and we should not and we will not tolerate it.

In 2012 I sponsored an amendment to the Violence Against Women Act that included a sense of Congress demanding that the owners of backpage.com remove the adult services section of their Web site.

Last year this Chamber passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and it was signed into law by President Obama in the spring. This law contains language offered by Senator KIRK from Illinois which gives law enforcement officials additional tools to prosecute individuals such as those behind backpage.com who knowingly facilitate the sale or advertisement of human trafficking victims online.

Today's resolution is another opportunity for the Senate to stand up for the victims of human trafficking.

As a reminder, when we debated the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, we talked about the profile of a typical victim of human trafficking—not that any of them are typical, but on average it is a girl between the ages of 12 and 14. This is a horrific business and sordid business, and I encourage every Member to support this resolution.

I thank the chairman of the subcommittee, Senator PORTMAN from Ohio, who has been working tirelessly to highlight this issue and bring it to the Senate's full attention. I am grateful for his bipartisan efforts and strong leadership and look forward to voting yes on the resolution later today.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, on another matter, we all know that yesterday President Obama exercised his authority under the U.S. Constitution to suggest to the Senate a nominee for the Supreme Court of the United States. During the announcement, President Obama spent time talking about the serious task of selecting a Supreme Court nominee, particularly one to succeed a legal lion such as Justice Scalia, whom the President appropriately called one of the most influential jurists of our time. His point was that the Supreme Court of the United States—the highest Court in the land—is an institution of unparalleled importance. What happens at the Supreme Court affects the lives of every American. So lifetime appointments to this most powerful Court in the land should not be taken lightly. As the President put it, our Supreme Court Justices have been given the role as the ''final arbiters of American law'' for more than 200 years. Of course, today they consider and answer some of the most pressing and challenging controversies and questions of our time. I agree with what the President said to that point.

We all know the Supreme Court is critical to our form of self-government and our democracy, and the role it serves is an essential one. When it plays a role our Founders did not intend, it really undermines respect for the rule of law and for the Court as an institution. So the selection of the next Supreme Court Justice should be handled thoroughly and thoughtfully.

I understand the President is taking his authority seriously, but under the same Constitution—the same Constitution that gives the President the authority to nominate a person to fill this vacancy—that same Constitution has a separate responsibility for the U.S. Senate either to grant or to withhold consent to that nomination.

With the passing of Justice Scalia, the Senate must exercise its constitutional authority as well. Regardless of how we come down on the controversy of the day with regard to when this vacancy should be filled, we all take this responsibility seriously, and because of that, I believe we should follow the examples set by the minority leader, Senator REID; the senior Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER; and Vice President BIDEN when he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee—their admonitions made over the years when they were in the majority—and not move forward with the President's nominee at this time.

I think it is only a matter of fundamental fairness to apply the same rules to the same situation no matter who is in the majority and who is in the minority. When they were in the majority, they argued that these vacancies should not be filled the last year of the President's term of office. JOE BIDEN did that in 1992 during the Presidency of George Herbert Walker Bush. Senator REID made that same argument when George W. Bush was President of the United States. And in 2007, 18 months before George W. Bush left office, Senator SCHUMER, the heir apparent to the Democratic leader, said there should be a presumption against confirmation. So it is only fair to play by the same set of rules which they themselves advocated.

Based on the conduct, based on the behavior of our Democratic colleagues when they were in the majority—well, first when they were in the minority, when they filibustered judges for the first time, and later when they were in the majority, before they saw the majority flip to Republicans, the Democratic leader packed the DC Circuit Court of Appeals by invoking the so-called nuclear option, breaking the Senate rules in a raw display of political power in order to pack a court that many people call the second most important court in the land. So this lifetime appointment to the Court is a critical check on the executive branch—a check this administration has proved over and over again we need desperately.

As others and I pointed out long before the President announced this nominee, this nomination will change the ideological balance of the Supreme Court for a generation. Justice Scalia served for 30 years. Because of that, because of all of this, I believe the American people should have their voices heard in the selection of the next Supreme Court nominee. We have already undertaken the process here of the Democrats choosing their nominee for President, and Republicans are doing the same. There is simply too much at stake to leave this decision in the hands of a President who is headed out the door—a decision that will have dramatic consequences on the balance of

the Court and the direction of the country for a generation to come.

I believe we should listen to the voices of the American people and allow them to cast their vote and to raise their voice and determine who will make that selection.

I know there have been some members of the press who have asked: Well, if not now, how about in a lameduck session of the Congress; that is, after the election and before the new President is confirmed?

I think that is a terrible idea. If you believe in the principle that the American peoples' voice ought to be heard, it makes no sense to have an election and then to do it and not honor their selection.

So I know some have expressed some concern about that. I, for one, believe we ought to be consistent. That consistent position and the consistent principle are that the American people deserve to be heard and their voice heeded on who makes that selection to something as important as filling this vacancy on the Supreme Court.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, yesterday President Obama nominated Federal appeals court judge Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy left by the death of Associate Justice Scalia. The President has done his job. Now it is time for the Senate to do ours, to use advice and consent on this nominee, not to treat that as an option but as an obligation.

It is my sincere hope that in the coming days and weeks, all of my Senate colleagues will join me in meeting the nominee and evaluating him based on his merits and on his record and that Republican objections about this individual be laid aside so that at least they can look at his qualifications, his judicial temperament, and his record.

Chief Judge Garland has served the U.S. Court of Appeals since 1997. Let me stress that he has served on this important court for almost 20 years. He was previously at a law firm as a partner. He served as U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia and as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Finally, he served as a U.S. circuit judge earlier in his career.

He is highly qualified as a nominee. America deserves to have a fully functioning court, and they deserve to have Senators who will do their job in reviewing this nominee. The Supreme Court cases that impact our fundamental rights and our operations of government—including the extent of property rights, privacy rights, the balance between civil liberty and national security, how to ensure equal protection under the law, and how to guarantee adequate and due process—are all things that deserve to have a full Supreme Court.

We need a fully functioning Court to keep the balance that we have in our system—the checks and balances throughout our government. We cannot delay the consideration of this Supreme Court nominee.

President Obama had an obligation to fill this vacancy on the Court. He did so by making this nomination. His duty does not end just because this is an election year.

The Senate has a constitutional obligation now to provide the advice and consent to the President on this nominee. That is a job that we should all take very seriously. The American people deserve no less. In fact, the Supreme Court Justice who grew up in the State of Washington, William O. Douglas, was nominated and confirmed within 16 days. That is right—16 days.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt nominated Justice Douglas on March 20, 1939, to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court on a seat vacated by Justice Brandeis. Justice Douglas was confirmed by the Senate on April 4, 1939. He went on to serve on the Supreme Court for 36 years.

So it can be done. While I am not saying it has to be done in the short amount of time that took—16 days—I do believe that we can get this nominee done in an efficient time. If you look at the record of most of the Supreme Court nominees, it has been, on average, 70 days. So we have plenty of time to make this consideration and make this decision. Yet Senate Republicans have manufactured their own artificial barrier to this debate of the Supreme Court nominee, basically saying that they don't believe we have to take up consideration of this issue.

I am asking them: Please, take Judge Garland's phone calls. Please make your schedule available to meet with him. When we return, please schedule a hearing to consider his nomination. Then, do what the American people want us to do; that is, do our job and actually vote on consideration of Judge Garland. This is in the interest of the American people. I know that Senate Republicans want to say they want to wait. But we cannot wait a full year to get another nominee on the Court.

The Senate has confirmed Supreme Court Justices in the final year of a Presidency more than a dozen times. During the last year of President Reagan's final term, Justice Kennedy was unanimously confirmed by a Democratic-controlled Senate. So the Republicans on the other side of the aisle, and many out there in the party, are saying they want to just allow a minority to drive the interests of the party and delay, delay, delay.

Well, in my opinion, you are delaying justice. In fact, you are taking some of the gridlock that has existed in this building and are just moving it across the street to the Supreme Court. We cannot have delays and gridlock in our judicial system. We need to do our job and move through this process. Today, I am urging my colleagues to have a hearing, ask the tough questions, and finally hold a vote.

Let's show the American people that we can do our job and that we can vote for or against this nominee. But you have to first meet with him, take his phone calls, and schedule a hearing.

The Seattle Times recently wrote: ''The hyperpartisan milieu of Congress this election year must not thwart the framers' intent.''

The Olympian newspaper in our State wrote:

> The Republican Party's intransigence in Congress is legendary. But the new refusal to consider any appointment of a new justice to the U.S. Supreme Court by President Obama is an outright abuse of power.

So, if the other side continues to refuse a nominee until a new President is sworn in, it would mark the longest period in the history of the Senate, since the Civil War, to fill a vacancy. All the positions on the Supreme Court are essential. My constituents and people all across America expect the Senate to do its job, regardless of whether it is an election year or not.

So I hope that, as our forefathers and Framers of our Constitution put together a government that works, those here in the Senate will take the phone calls of Judge Garland, take the meetings, schedule a hearing, and make sure that we vote on this nominee this year.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4721, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Thune-Hatch-Nelson-Wyden substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3457) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''$2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were $3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 20.83 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(b) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$8,193,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

(d) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(e) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(f) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(g) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(h) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by amending subparagraph (E) to read as follows:

''(E) $7,711,387,500 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(5) $2,058,333,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(9) $124,093,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 106. COMPLIANCE WITH AVIATION FUNDING REQUIREMENT.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$122,708,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting ''or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016;''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 4721), as amended, was passed.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DIRECTING SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL TO BRING A CIVIL ACTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 377, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 377) directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 1 hour of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today in support of S. Res. 377, which is a resolution to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chair. I will be joined shortly by my colleague Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL of Missouri, who is the ranking Democrat on the

subcommittee and whom I worked with as a partner on this issue over the past year.

This is a subpoena that we issued to a group called backpage—backpage.com. This resolution is intended to enforce that subpoena. Backpage and its chief executive officer, Carl Ferrer, have not been willing to cooperate with the committee. Unfortunately, we are at the point where we have to seek the enforcement of our subpoena.

For nearly a year now, Senator MCCASKILL and I conducted a bipartisan investigation into the scourge of human trafficking on the Internet with a focus on sex trafficking involving children. In the past 5 years, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children reported an over 800-percent increase in reports of suspected child sex trafficking, an increase the organization has found to be ''directly correlated to the increased use of the internet to sell children for sex.'' They testified before our subcommittee about this. They are the experts. They see this huge increase being related to the Internet. In other words, the destructive crime of sex slavery has moved from the street corner to the smartphone.

An adult can now shop for underaged trafficking victims from their computer screen. Sex traffickers are well aware that backpage.com, the biggest one by far, offers them a quick and easy-to-use marketplace to sell children and coerce adults.

Here is how the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children spells it out, describing this growing problem at a hearing I chaired late last year:

> Online classified ad sites such as backpage.com . . . allow [sex traffickers] to remain anonymous, test out new markets, attempt to evade public or law enforcement detection, and easily locate customers to consummate their sale of children for sex. Online sex trafficking also enables traffickers to easily update an existing ad with a new location and quickly move the child to another geographic location where there are more customers seeking to purchase a child for rape or sexual abuse.

This is from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. As cochair of the Senate Caucus to End Human Trafficking, I have spent many hours with those dedicated to fighting this crime and those who are victimized by it. For victims, the toll of sex trafficking is measured in stolen childhoods and painful trauma. For traffickers, it is measured in dollars—often a lot of dollars. It is a problem, I believe, that should command more attention around our country and certainly here in the U.S. Congress.

The aim of our investigation is very straightforward. We want to understand how lawmakers, law enforcement, and even private businesses can more effectively combat this serious crime that thrives on the online black market.

Traffickers have found refuge in new customers through Web sites that specialize in advertising ''ordinary'' prostitution and lawful escort services. A business called backpage.com is the market leader in that industry, with annual revenues in excess of $130 million last year. Backpage has a special niche: According to one industry analysis in 2013, $8 out of every $10 spent on online commercial sex advertising in the United States goes to backpage.com. The public record indicates that backpage sits at the center of the online black market for sex trafficking.

Again, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children has reported that of the suspected child trafficking reports it receives from the public, 71 percent involve backpage. Again, they have said that of the suspected child trafficking reports they receive from the public—and they have a 1–800 number; they get reports from the public—71 percent involve backpage.com.

According to a leading anti-trafficking organization called Shared Hope International, ''Service providers working with child sex trafficking victims have reported between 80 percent and 100 percent of their clients have been bought and sold on backpage.com.'' In fact, this organization has documented more than 400 cases in 47 States of children being sex trafficked on backpage.com.

Despite all this, backpage executives said they are committed to combatting sex trafficking. The company claims that its internal procedures for reviewing and screening the advertisements ''lead the industry.'' That claim led us to ask a very simple question: What are those industry-leading procedures? If they are so effective in the fight against human trafficking, Congress and other lawmakers ought to know about it. That is why Senator MCCASKILL and I asked backpage for documents about their ad-screening practices—a process backpage calls ''moderation.'' We also asked for other information about their business practices—fair questions, targeted questions, relevant questions. The company has refused to answer them and refused to cooperate.

We then took the next step and issued a subpoena to backpage's CEO, Carl Ferrer, inquiring him to produce documents about backpage's moderation practices, efforts to combat human trafficking, and financial information. The company essentially told us no. Wrapping itself in a privileged First Amendment argument, backpage refuses to produce documents about its business practices and told us that the company refuses to even look for documents—not just that they don't have the documents, but they refuse to even look for them, a clear sign of willful contempt for the Senate's process.

That is why we are here today on the floor. Senator MCCASKILL and I gave backpage every opportunity to cooperate in good faith with our investigation. We carefully considered its objections to the subpoena. We actually issued a 19-page opinion, thoughtfully overruling their objections and directing backpage to comply. They continued to stonewall.

In the meantime, our investigation has not stopped. Our investigators and lawyers found a number of third parties and other witnesses who had information about backpage's practices and procedures. Along the way, we discovered that from 2010 to 2012, backpage outsourced much of its screening and, again, this moderation; meaning, looking at these ads coming in, the screening and moderation they outsourced to others, including to workers in India.

We obtained emails from the California company that managed those India-based moderators, including emails with backpage's CEO and other executives. These emails are deeply troubling. Our investigation showed that backpage edits advertisements before posting them by removing certain words, certain phrases, certain images. For instance, they might remove a word or image that makes it clear that the sexual services are being offered for money. Then they might post this sanitized version of an ad. While this editing changes nothing about the underlying transaction, it tends to conceal the evidence of illegality. In other words, backpage's editing procedures—far from being an effective anti-trafficking measure—serve to sanitize the ads of the illegal content to the outside viewer.

We still don't know the full extent of backpage's editing practices. How much of the illegal conduct—or even the fact that they were selling minors online—was being concealed? Why? Backpage will not tell us.

Then there is this email. It tells the moderators what to do if they have doubts about whether a girl advertised on backpage is underage. I am going to quote from this email. It says:

> If in doubt about underage: The process should for now be to accept the ad . . . however, if you ever find anything that you feel is underage and is more than just suspicious, you can delete the ad. . . . Only delete if you [are] really very sure person is underage.

To be clear, we didn't get this information from backpage itself because it refuses to provide it. This came from the contractor. Backpage claims emails like this are protected by the First Amendment, which is not accurate.

In November, Senator MCCASKILL and I released a bipartisan staff report about our investigation and held a hearing to consider what to do about backpage's noncompliance. I encourage Members to take a look at this staff report. It is online. You can find it.

By the way, despite being under subpoena, backpage's CEO refused to show

up for the hearing we held. Shortly before the hearing date, he simply informed us that he wasn't going to show up. This is something Senator MCCASKILL and I will continue to focus on. But others did show up for our hearing. We heard testimony from law enforcement, prosecutors, and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children confirming what we had come to suspect: Backpage is not really an ally in the fight against human trafficking; they said it profits from it.

The general counsel of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children told us that it had dozens of meetings with backpage about improving the company's anti-trafficking measures, but those meetings ended because the national center concluded that backpage was ''not engaging in good faith efforts to deter the selling and buying of children for sex on its Web site.''

The national center told us that ''[d]espite backpage's assertions, it was adopting and publicizing only carefully selected sound practices, while resisting recommended substantive measures that would protect more children from being sold for sex . . . on backpage.com.'' For example, the national center noted that backpage did not ''hash'' its photos—a very low-cost technique for comparing digital images that could help identify missing children.

The national center also noted that backpage has more stringent rules to post an ad to sell a pet, a motorcycle, or a boat than it does to sell a person. A user is required to submit a verified phone number for selling a hamster but not in placing ads that could involve the sale of a child for sex. Think about that.

The human toll of all this is staggering. It is hard to overstate the traumatic effect of a minor being advertised on a daily basis on a site like backpage.com.

In a recent lawsuit brought against backpage in Boston, the plaintiff was a 15-year-old girl who had been raped over 1,000 times as a result of being advertised on backpage.com—1,000 times. In the course of our investigation, we also heard some similarly heartwrenching stories. For example, backpage receives reports from families pleading with it to take down ads of their children. Here is one such email sent to backpage that the national center shared with us. Remember, this is an email from a parent about a child being sent to backpage. It said this:

> Your Web site has ads featuring our 16-year-old daughter [ ], posing as an escort. She is being pimped out by her old [boyfriend], and she is underage. I have emailed the ad multiple times using your website, but have gotten no response. . . . For God's sake, she's only 16. . . . Stuff like this shouldn't be allowed to happen.

This is from a parent pleading.

Even after receiving such reports, the national center tells us backpage often does not remove the ad. Instead, the ad remains live on the Web site, which allows the abuse of that child to continue. Imagine as a parent or a grandparent, aunt or uncle, brother or sister feeling helpless in the face of backpage not even being willing to take down an ad of a family member.

It is sometimes hard to square backpage's public statements about its business practices with the reality on the ground. For example, the national center recently was searching for a child who was missing—and by the way, still is missing—and found she appeared in a sex advertisement on backpage. Sadly, that is pretty common. What made this case even more incredible was that backpage ad actually contained a missing-child poster of that same child. So the ad advertising sex actually used the missing-child poster of that child. That poster had the child's real name on it, real age, real picture, and the date she went missing. The other pictures in the ad included topless photos. We certainly would like to know what supposedly market-leading screening and moderation procedures missed that one. And that, Madam President, is exactly why we need the documents we have asked for from backpage, documents we have subpoenaed from backpage. Without them, we can't really evaluate how sex trafficking is proliferated in these online marketplaces. We can't really evaluate how Congress can do a better job fighting against this crime. We can't help the many prosecutors at the local level who are trying to stop this practice or the attorneys general around the United States of America who are trying to stop this practice. We can't really help to stop this from happening.

To be clear, our purpose is absolutely not to shut down any particular company or to deter protected advertising for lawful services. This is not an attempt to shut down something that is lawful on the Internet, it is an attempt to stop something that is unlawful, and nor are we even looking for information about individual advertisers. In fact, Senator MCCASKILL and I have made clear that backpage should redact from any documents they send us any of the personally identifying information about its users. We don't need that. That is not what we are about. What we are interested in are facts that will enable smart legislation on a critical issue of public concern. We hope our investigation will help to combat this process directly but also will help to generate legislation here in the Congress.

This civil contempt resolution before us today—S. Res. 377—will enable us to get those facts. It was reported out of the full committee unanimously. I wish to thank Senator RON JOHNSON, the chairman of the committee, and Senator TOM CARPER, the ranking member of the committee, and all of our colleagues on the committee for their unwavering support for this investigation.

This will be the first time in more than 20 years that the Senate has had to enforce a subpoena in court. I can't think of a time when it has been more justified. To my colleagues who are wondering about this, again, I hope they will look at our report and see why it is so important that we move forward with enforcing this subpoena.

The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations has a long history of investigating crime that infiltrates interstate commerce and affects our Nation's health and safety. In our era, the crime of human trafficking has become a scourge, and Congress needs to know everything it can to be able to better fight it. No investigation of that subject could omit backpage.com. Again, as we have heard from these outside groups, the vast majority of this sex trafficking that is going on online is through this very site. The National Association of Attorneys General has described backpage as a ''hub'' of ''human trafficking, especially the trafficking of minors.'' That is the attorneys general around the country.

Unfortunately, this is an issue that affects all of our communities. It knows no ZIP Code.

Madam President, before I yield the floor, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a number of statements in support of the resolution from the Nation's leading anti-trafficking organizations, including the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

> ''Rights4Girls applauds the Senate's passage of this important resolution that will provide much needed accountability and insight into Backpage.com's business practices—practices that have led to the trafficking and exploitation of children all across this country. We are especially grateful to Senators Portman and McCaskill for their leadership in advancing this resolution and for their dedication to protecting our nation's most vulnerable children.''—Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Rights4Girls
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> ''I commend the Senate, particularly Senators Rob Portman and Claire McCaskill, for their leadership on the investigation into Backpage and their dedication to assisting victims of child sex trafficking and their families. I am outraged at the business practices Backpage continues to engage in and that they are not being held accountable for facilitating and profiting from child sex trafficking on their website. Backpage is a shopping mall for people who want to exploit children and they shouldn't be able to continue profiting on the rape of children without repercussions. These creeps keep hiding behind the veil of the First Amendment while knowingly allowing children to be trafficked for sex on their website. This isn't

about prostitution or sex between consenting adults, this is about children being purchased for rape and sexual abuse.—John Walsh, human and victim rights advocate and creator of America's Most Wanted

''The Subcommittee's efforts to investigate the practices of Backpage.com and demand answers in an effort to prevent the sex trafficking of children on that website and others like it is critical to our work to end sex trafficking. Shared Hope proudly supports the resolution and the Subcommittee's important work. We are grateful to you for your bravery and diligence.''—Shared Hope International

SHARED HOPE INTERNATIONAL,
Vancouver, WA, March 16, 2016.

Hon. ROB PORTMAN,
Chair, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. CLAIRE MCCASKILL,
Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.,

DEAR CHAIRMAN PORTMAN AND RANKING MEMBER MCCASKILL: Shared Hope International is writing to strongly support the resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena issued by the Subcommittee to the Chief Executive Officer of Backpage.com, Carl Ferrer (S. Res. 377). We thank you for your brave leadership on this investigation and dedication to assisting the victims of online commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Shared Hope International was founded and exists to end sex trafficking of women and children and assist the victims through restoration and access to justice. Since 1998, we have implemented programs and advocated for laws and policies that would ensure victims of sex trafficking are protected, served and honored as victims. Increasingly, the victims we serve have been sold for sex on the internet, and most often the website named is Backpage.com. In fact, NCMEC reports that 71% of all child sex trafficking reports to the CyberTipline relate to Backpage ads. Shared Hope documented 495 cases representing at least 548 child victims who were sold for sex on Backpage.com in nearly every state in the U.S. These are cases we identified through media coverage, which means they represent only a fraction of the total number of cases. Our partners indicate most of the youth they serve in recovery programs were sold on the site. A study by YouthSpark in Atlanta, Georgia, found 53% of children receiving care from service providers across the country were bought and sold for sex on Backpage.com.

The Subcommittees efforts to investigate the practices of Backpage.com and demand answers in an effort to prevent the sex trafficking of children on that website and others like it is critical to our work to end sex trafficking. Shared Hope proudly supports the resolution and the Subcommittee's important work. We are grateful to you for your bravery and diligence.

Sincerely,

LINDA SMITH,
(U.S. Congress 1995–99, Washington State Senate/House 1983–94), Founder and President, Shared Hope International.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN,
Alexandria, VA, March 15, 2016.

Hon. ROB PORTMAN,
Chairman, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.,
Hon. CLAIRE MCCASKILL,
Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PORTMAN AND RANKING MEMBER MCCASKILL: On behalf of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the families and children we serve, I am writing to express our strong support for your resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena issued by your Subcommittee to the Chief Executive Officer of Backpage (S. Res. 377). We commend you for your leadership on this investigation and your dedication to assisting victims of child sex trafficking and their families.

NCMEC is a private, non-profit organization that for over 31 years has been designated by Congress to serve as the national clearinghouse on issues related to missing and exploited children. In this role, NCMEC has learned a great deal about child sex trafficking, including its pervasive growth online and the devastating impact this crime has on children and their families. We know that sex trafficking is a crime that takes place in nearly every community in the United States and increasingly children are sold for sex online on websites like Backpage.com.

NCMEC receives reports of child sex trafficking through intakes of missing child cases, requests for analytical assistance, and reports to the CyberTipline, the reporting mechanism for child sexual exploitation crimes. In recent years, NCMEC has witnessed an increase in missing and exploited child cases involving the online trafficking of children for sex. In 2015, NCMEC assisted with approximately 10,000 reports regarding possible child sex trafficking, but we know this is only a small fraction of suspected child sex trafficking victims in this country.

Even more concerning is that a majority of child sex trafficking cases reported to NCMEC involve ads posted on Backpage.com. More than seventy-one percent (71%) of all child sex trafficking reports submitted by members of the public to NCMEC relate to Backpage ads. We also have seen a disturbing trend of runaway children trafficked on Backpage.com. Today, when we are looking for a runaway child who we have reason to believe might be trafficked, Backpage.com is the first place we look for the child.

We have long been alarmed about Backpage's business practices that fail to prevent children from being sold for sex on its website. The work of your Subcommittee to investigate these practices and to demand answers is to be widely commended.

NCMEC is proud to lend our support to this important resolution, and we hope the Senate's work can uncover more information regarding the use of online websites, such as Backpage.com, to traffic children. We are grateful for your dedication to the safety of our nation's children and look forward to continuing to work with you and others who are working tirelessly to halt the terrible tragedy of online child sex trafficking.

Sincerely,

JOHN F. CLARK,
President and CEO.

POLARIS,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2016.

Hon. ROB PORTMAN,
Chairman, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. CLAIRE MCCASKILL,
Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PORTMAN AND RANKING MEMBER MCCASKILL: On behalf of Polaris, a non-profit organization working to end human trafficking and restore freedom to victims and survivors, I am writing to express my strong support for S. Res. 377, which directs the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena issued by your Subcommittee to the Chief Executive Officer of Backpage. I appreciate your tremendous work on this investigation and your leadership in the fight to ensure victims of child sex trafficking and their families receive justice.

Since 2007, Polaris has operated the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), a 24-hour, national, confidential anti-trafficking hotline and resource center created and overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services. Additionally, in March 2013, Polaris launched our BeFree textline, allowing trafficking victims and concerned citizens to use text message to contact us for help.

In 2015, the NHTRC received 1,383 cases involving sex trafficking of a minor, and Polaris received 22 cases through our BeFree textline involving sex trafficking of a minor. In these two sets, Backpage was specifically referenced in 222 cases. In total, the NHTRC has received 5,810 minor sex trafficking cases since 2007, BeFree has received 66 cases since 2013, and Backpage has been referenced in 595 cases.

Backpage's business practices have long been a major source of concern for Polaris and the anti-trafficking community as a whole. We wholeheartedly support your Subcommittee's investigation into Backpage, and we think that S. Res. 377 is critical to ensuring Backpage is held accountable for its shocking, blatant disregard for your investigation. We are proud to stand with your Subcommittee in this fight to stop child sex trafficking, and we hope the Senate will unanimously pass S. Res. 377.

Sincerely,

BRAD MYLES,
CEO.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this resolution and vindicate the authority of Congress to obtain information necessary for sound legislation to protect the most vulnerable among us.

We are going to hear shortly from Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL, who has been a partner of mine in this effort from the beginning. This investigation has taken about a year. We have done it thoughtfully and carefully. Again, I wish to express my gratitude to her for her support for the legislation. We wanted to wait until she was back in Congress—she was home taking care of some important health matters—in order to take up this vote today. I know she will express her own strongly held views on this.

I just want to say I hope all of my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—will look at this issue and

realize this is an opportunity for us to go on record supporting an investigation that could lead to legislation that can actually help to protect those most vulnerable among us.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, today the Senate will vote on S. Res. 377, a resolution directing Senate legal counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, PSI, against Carl Ferrer, chief executive officer of backpage.com LLC, ''backpage''. I support this resolution in furtherance of PSI's bipartisan investigation into businesses that directly or indirectly facilitate sex trafficking.

Backpage officials have publicly acknowledged that their website may have been used by criminals to engage in sex trafficking, including the trafficking of children. Identifying and shutting down the tools that help criminals engage in such illegality is critical to preventing these crimes. We must do all we can to stop these criminals and to support the survivors. That is why I support this resolution and why I have worked tirelessly to enact legislation to prevent human trafficking in the first place and to provide resources for trafficking victims so that they can begin to rebuild their lives.

Last year the chairman and ranking member of PSI jointly launched a bipartisan investigation to examine businesses that directly or indirectly facilitate sex trafficking. Backpage is one of the companies that PSI has been investigating, but it is not the only one. PSI aims to learn as much as possible about these businesses so that the Senate can craft appropriate legislative and policy responses to combat sex trafficking and child exploitation.

On October 1, 2015, and in accordance with subcommittee rules, PSI voted on a bipartisan basis to issue a subpoena to backpage's CEO, Carl Ferrer. This subpoena was issued only after backpage failed to comply with a subpoena issued earlier in the year and after several backpage employees refused to testify. The subpoena required, among other things, the production of backpage's policies and practices with respect to reviewing advertisements for potential criminal activity, information on how backpage cooperates with law enforcement, data on how many advertisements backpage denies or deletes, and information relating to revenue earned through adult advertisements. To date, backpage has refused to comply with the subpoena.

On November 19, 2015, PSI held a hearing about backpage.com. At this hearing, the senior vice president of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children testified that 71 percent of reports of suspected child trafficking it receives involve backpage. The hearing also raised significant concerns about backpage's willingness to cooperate with law enforcement. PSI issued a subpoena compelling the testimony of Carl Ferrer at the hearing, but he refused to appear.

The refusal of backpage to comply with the subpoena compelled the full Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to vote unanimously in favor of the resolution now before us. The resolution authorizes Senate legal counsel to begin to take action to enforce the subpoena in Federal court. PSI's investigation is exactly the type of oversight the Senate should be conducting. The subject matter is one of utmost importance, and PSI's efforts have been jointly conducted by the chairman and ranking member of PSI since the investigation began. Most importantly, the requested documents are critical to understanding how online sex trafficking is effectuated and to finding ways to stop it.

Authorizing Senate legal counsel to enforce a Senate subpoena is a very serious matter that should not be taken lightly. This action should be taken only in the most limited of circumstances and should never be pursued for partisan or political motives. Given the serious nature of this investigation and the unanimous support by all members of the committee and subcommittee throughout the process, I support this resolution.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I wish to express my strong support for the resolution to enforce the subpoena against backpage's CEO Carl Ferrer.

From my work as chairman and now ranking member of the Select Committee on Intelligence, I know how important congressional investigations can be to ensure that we have all the facts, and that is the type of issue before us today.

In this case, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations is conducting a bipartisan investigation into the use of the Internet to facilitate sex trafficking, particularly sex trafficking of minors. As my colleagues know, this has been an area I have worked to address legislatively, including in an amendment to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act that passed 97–2 that makes it a Federal crime to knowingly advertise minors for commercial sex. I believe the Investigations Subcommittee's work can inform the work of the Congress as a whole to better protect vulnerable children trafficked over the Internet.

Backpage is a Web site that allows for the advertisement of commercial sex online. In 2013, it was estimated that $8 out of every $10 spent on online sex advertising in the U.S. goes to backpage. Moreover, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children has itself determined that backpage is linked to 71 percent of all suspected child sex trafficking reports that it receives from the public through its ''CyberTipline.'' Thus, this bipartisan investigation naturally involves questions about the specifics of how backpage operates.

As I understand it, the subcommittee's subpoena seeks documents to help explain backpage's current policies and practices. These questions involve, among other things, whether backpage edits the content of ads before they are published, whether backpage might be more helpful to law enforcement with the data it collects, and whether backpage has resources sufficient to further prevent trafficking on its site. But backpage has refused to comply with this subpoena.

Where an investigative subcommittee is conducting a bipartisan investigation into the most horrific crimes committed against young people, it is the right thing to do for the Senate to enforce this subpoena through the legal process.

I would like to also share about a case that arose in my State very recently. Last week, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department arrested three individuals charged with abducting a 20-year-old woman and transporting her to the Bay Area to sexually exploit her. The victim was initially kidnapped in Palmdale, where she was viciously assaulted and then moved 6 hours north to Oakland, where her pictures were taken and posted to backpage.com. She was then driven back down to Orange County and had a gun pointed at her by one of her attackers. The victim was fortunately able to make some panicked calls to her mother while taken captive, and the L.A. Sheriff's office was able to find her in a motel and rescue her. The suspects were then captured and now face a litany of charges. This all occurred just weeks ago.

The point is sex trafficking, facilitated by the Internet, continues to plague communities all over the country.

I recently met with John Clark, the new president and CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. The National Center reported that over the last 5 years, there has been an 846 percent increase in reports of suspected child sex trafficking and that this increase is ''directly correlated to the increased use of the Internet to sell children for sex.'' That is sobering.

Every day in America, vulnerable victims are advertised over the Internet and exploited by traffickers. I believe the Congress must get to the bottom of it, try to understand how it is happening, and do all that we can to stop it. So I fully support enforcement of this subpoena and urge my colleagues to do the same.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. PORTMAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to support S. Res. 377, a resolution to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations against backpage.com and Carl Ferrer, the company's chief executive officer. This action comes as part of the subcommittee's ongoing investigation into the sex trafficking of minors and the unfortunate and increasing role of the Internet in facilitating this horrific crime.

Before I go much further, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the chairman. Senator PORTMAN has been tenacious. He is committed. He is forcing us as a body to address an issue that is so unpleasant that many times we shy away from it because we would rather talk about more pleasant subjects and issues that are less emotional. But it is what is happening in America and in the world, and thanks to the leadership of Senator PORTMAN, it is being addressed in a forthright manner that alerts all of us and, indeed, alerts the world. I very much appreciate the great work he has done on this issue. I know he remains committed for as long as he is a Member of this body, and we are incredibly grateful for his friendship and his leadership.

This marks the first time in 20 years that the Senate has been required to enforce a subpoena in court. I have been in Congress for a long time, and I have never seen anything quite like it. As part of the subcommittee's fair and deliberative investigation into human trafficking and child exploitation on the Internet, we have encountered a company that, instead of doing everything in its power to assist in protecting the most vulnerable in our society, has decided to focus its energies on stonewalling congressional efforts to do so.

Let me be clear. As is always the case in this unsavory underside of society, it is about money. Backpage.com is the market leader in commercial sex advertising. It was valued at over $600 million in 2015, with over $130 million in annual revenue, and their business model is dependent on the revenue generated from this part of its Web site. Backpage claims to be a leading partner in the fight to combat child sex trafficking by screening advertisements for evidence of trafficking and taking deliberate steps from preventing illegal activity from appearing on its Web site. But the company has refused to produce documents that could verify this claim, and the facts gathered by the subcommittee from other sources indicate this is not the case.

As Senator PORTMAN has indicated, backpage has been linked to hundreds of human trafficking cases, including those of children. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has gathered data that indicates that the vast majority of suspected child trafficking reports it receives from the public include postings made on backpage. Identifying what screening procedures are in place and the effectiveness of these efforts in curbing trafficking are an important part of this investigation.

Thanks to the leadership from the Senator from Ohio, it is hard to think of a more worthy use of the Senate's investigative authority than examining the methods used to facilitate the buying and selling of children for sexual exploitation. This investigation is designed to guide Congress as we consider ways to combat human trafficking and identify what can be done to protect children and eliminate this crime. Enforcement of this subpoena is necessary to accomplish that goal and to protect the prerogative of the Senate to investigate matters of consequence to our national interest. I appreciate Senators PORTMAN and MCCASKILL's truly bipartisan efforts to investigate matters of consequence to our national interest. I appreciate their efforts to shed light on this difficult issue, and I appreciate their commitment to defending the Senate's role in addressing it.

I hope and believe that vote will be 100 to 0, as we strongly support Chairman PORTMAN's right to obtain the information he believes is necessary to the subcommittee's investigation concerning human trafficking. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important resolution.

I know that my friend and colleague Senator PORTMAN knows that one of the areas where human trafficking is most intense are those States that are on the border, and our southern border is obviously penetrated regularly by these human traffickers. I would like, as a representative of the people of my State of Arizona, where this issue is of particular importance, to thank Senator PORTMAN and Senator MCCASKILL for their unending worthy and important efforts on this issue.

By passing this legislation, we will send a message to others. We will send a message to others, I say to my colleague from Ohio, that they can run but they can't hide.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Arizona. He has been a leader on this issue for many years. For people who don't know, Cindy McCain, the wife of the Senator from Arizona, is an international leader on this issue dealing with human trafficking all over the world and also sex trafficking here at home. I appreciate his passion and his commitment to it. As a former chair and a ranking member of this committee, I look to him for counsel and advice on how we conduct ourselves. He has been very helpful in this specific issue, and I thank him.

I yield to the Senator from Minnesota for such time as she may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator MCCAIN for his work. I started to work on some of these backpage issues in conjunction with Senator MCCAIN's wife Cindy McCain, as well as with Senator HEITKAMP. We took a trip to Mexico focusing on the trafficking going on across the border with that country.

I want to thank Senators PORTMAN and MCCASKILL for leadership on this really important resolution. Just last year, five St. Paul residents were charged with running a multistate sex trafficking ring. One of the alleged victims was 16. Those underage girls were being advertised on backpage, and the ads were placed in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Georgia, Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois.

In Southwest Minnesota, an operation involving backpage resulted in charges against 48 men around the towns of New Ulm and Mankato, the town my husband grew up in. These cases prove that sex trafficking isn't just happening in some faraway place. It is happening right now in the United States of America. It is happening in our own neighborhoods. It is happening in oil patches in North Dakota. It is happening in Cleveland, and it is happening in St. Paul. These are real stories with real people.

In 2014 I spoke to the trafficking advocacy group Polaris when they released their State-by-State rankings of efforts to fight human trafficking. They said then:

> The scope and scale of human trafficking within the United States presents a daunting challenge to policymakers, service providers, law enforcement, and advocates. Originally, human trafficking was thought to be more of a problem in other countries, but now it is known to be happening in our backyards. It is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of victims of sex and labor trafficking inside our borders.

We have learned more about human trafficking through the advocacy and dedication, as I mentioned, of our friend Cindy McCain and her work at the McCain Institute. Their 2014 report actually focuses specifically on this advertising.

When I was a prosecutor for 8 years, yes, we had trafficking—of course, we did—and, yes, we had child pornography, but I would say we didn't see

this tsunami of advertising that we see now. Why? The Internet has made it easier. We love the Internet. It has allowed us to communicate in ways, but it has expanded demand for sex trafficking victims because of the fact that it is easier to do than it used to be.

What the McCain report shows is that the availability of potential victims of domestic minor sex trafficking exceeded researcher expectations, with no less than 38 different Web sites advertising victims who showed indications of being juvenile sex trafficking victims, with at least 4 Web sites providing customer feedback and soliciting recommendations of victims of sex trafficking.

The McCain report went on to say: ''In Phoenix, during 10 days of ad screening, 34 ads were identified as possibly depicting minor victims with duplicate ads resulting in 81 distinct tips of domestic minor sex trafficking.''

Last year we successfully passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act that Senator CORNYN and I led. We are making good progress in implementing this bill. Senator CORNYN and I met recently with Attorney General Lynch. They are working hard. Ongoing work not only includes this resolution and is the focus on the advertising of illegal sex trafficking but also partnering with the private sector.

Senator WARNER and I have introduced the Stop Trafficking on Planes Act or the STOP Act, which is built on the work of the industry to train flight attendants and train people on the planes to find the victims. I note this investigation led by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations is a bipartisan attempt to address a serious issue. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. Res. 377. This is just one element of this fight against sex trafficking, but it is an important one because people should not be allowed to violate the Senate rules, they shouldn't be allowed to skirt hearings, and they shouldn't be allowed to get away with this kind of behavior. Backpage and others of its ilk are not just a vehicle for advertising this crime, they are actually a vehicle for expanding this crime and hurting more people.

I appreciate the work of Senator PORTMAN and Senator MCCASKILL.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Minnesota for her strong support of this resolution today, which again is just enforcing a subpoena that is targeted and focused on information that can help us to be able to legislate in this matter. I hope all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join us in this effort. I also thank her for broader work on this issue, specifically the leadership role she has played as a former prosecutor in trying to get at this problem of sex trafficking online.

Senator KLOBUCHAR is absolutely right. The Internet has provided so many wonderful things for our economy and for our society. Yet there is a dark side, isn't there. That dark side is shown as clearly as anywhere with regard to backpage; the fact that this sex trafficking has been made more efficient through the Internet and specifically through this one Web site that contains the vast majority of sex trafficking and commercial sex.

Again, I refer you to my comments I made earlier. We talked about the fact that there is a girl who is currently missing. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children has been trying to find her. They put up posters about her, and recently she appeared on a sex advertisement on backpage. Again, this is more common than you would expect.

What made this case even more incredible to me was the backpage actually contained a missing child poster of that same child. So the missing child poster that the national center had put out there for all of us to help find her shows up on backpage.com as an advertisement for this young girl. This poster had the child's real name, real age, real picture, and the date she went missing. Other photos in that ad included topless photos of this girl. She is 16 years old.

This is another example of where there is a problem that must be addressed. Our investigation is to create the information for us to be able to legislate wisely on this issue.

I see my colleague from New Hampshire has joined us. We wish to hear from her. She is another former attorney general of a State and has been involved in this issue for many years and is an active member of the caucus we talked about earlier to try to combat trafficking.

I yield to my colleague, the Senator from New Hampshire, such time as she may need.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I thank Senator PORTMAN and Senator MCCASKILL for their strong leadership on the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, of which they are the chair and ranking member, on such an important issue because enforcing the subpoena—the resolution we have before us to enforce the subpoena is critical.

As you heard today, I was attorney general of New Hampshire. I had the opportunity to work with the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children reports that of suspected child trafficking reports it receives from the public, 71 percent involve backpage.com.

What is the resolution about? It is about the fact that Senator PORTMAN, Senator MCCASKILL, and the committee they lead has asked legitimate questions and asked for documents from backpage.com.

We have heard the horrific stories of things that have happened and have been reported. Senator PORTMAN referenced a recent report in Boston about a 15-year-old girl who had been raped over 1,000 times as a result of being advertised on backpage.com.

Of course, we have heard horrific stories about children. In one Pennsylvania case, a defendant forced a minor to have sex with approximately 15 different men in one encounter where she was threatened with a weapon—advertised on backpage.com, so it is pretty straightforward.

In a Florida case, a trafficker drugged and threatened to kill a 14-year-old girl so he could sell her for sexual services online—backpage.com.

In a California case, a trafficker forced two women to work as prostitutes through beating and threatening them with sexual violence—backpage.com.

These are very legitimate questions that have been asked to inform our policy decisions of backpage.com. Yet they will not produce the documents that have been asked of them, to ask how they were screening to ensure they aren't taking illegal actions when it comes to child sex trafficking and trafficking of women and men and boys and girls. Yet they will not answer that. The CEO of backpage.com was subpoenaed to testify, and he refused to appear here.

If backpage.com is not doing the things in some of these reports that have come forward and is not acting illegally, then they will come and talk to us about this. The CEO of backpage would not try to hide behind the First Amendment, making arguments that don't bear out under the First Amendment because we are talking about illegality, the trafficking of children in horrific ways—then this is a legitimate inquiry for this committee.

I again commend Senator PORTMAN and Senator MCCASKILL.

I urge the Members of the Senate to support this resolution to enforce this subpoena so we can ensure that we get the information this committee needs to inform our policy decisions to address a very important issue that is putting children at risk, that is harming families, that is harming men and women who are being trafficked, and we need to get to the bottom of it.

I yield the floor back to Senator PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank my colleague from New Hampshire.

Let me just say I already talked about Senator MCCASKILL in my remarks, but she has been a terrific partner on this issue and many others. She

has a passion for it as a former prosecutor, someone who understands this issue well.

I yield all remaining time to Senator MCCASKILL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, last year a 15-year-old girl wandered into an emergency room in St. Louis, told a horrific tale, asking for help. She had been trafficked across truckstops throughout the Midwest, taken from truckstop to truckstop, and sold to truckers for sex—all through backpage. As we debate this today, it is important we stay focused on that 15-year-old girl and don't get lost in the process of the Senate.

This is a valid investigation. This is an important investigation. What we are doing today is making sure the Senate can do its work under the Constitution. Backpage has refused to cooperate. It has refused to willingly cooperate. It has refused two legitimate and duly authorized subpoenas concerning backpage asking for information at the heart of the investigation.

Under any circumstances, I find it shocking that a company would refuse a lawful subpoena of the U.S. Senate, would ignore a lawful subpoena of the U.S. Senate. It is particularly outrageous given that backpage has already admitted that serious criminal activity, including sex trafficking of children, occurs on its site. Backpage simply has no excuse for not complying with these legal subpoenas.

During our November 19 hearing, I promised that while the subcommittee would move forward carefully and cautiously, we would not go quietly into the night, and on some day in the near future we would use the Senate's enforcement measures to compel cooperation from backpage. Today is that day. While we stay focused on that 15-year-old girl, I know I speak for the chairman—and I wish to give the chairman great accolades for our working relationship. It is not always easy to reconcile differences in positions, differences in policy, and staffs working together, but he didn't give up. We both stay at it, and we are both determined to work on this committee in a bipartisan fashion. I am very grateful to him for his effort in that regard.

As we think of that 15-year-old girl and the information we need, we also need to think that a bigger principle is at stake; that is, if we ignore backpage's refusal, what does that say to companies in the future when we need information in order to do our job? That you can give the back of your hand to the U.S. Senate and there will be no consequences? Obviously, that is a slippery slope I don't think we should go down. I don't think the Founding Fathers would want us to go down that slippery slope.

That is why today is the day we say enough. We go with this vote to the courts and we get enforcement of these legal subpoenas so we can truly find out what, if any, role backpage has had in the highly illegal and immoral practice of trafficking children for sex.

I yield the floor.

I yield back all remaining time for the Democrats.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question occurs on adoption of the resolution.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 38 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Flake	Murphy
Ayotte	Franken	Murray
Baldwin	Gardner	Nelson
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Paul
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Roberts
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Rubio
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Carper	Johnson	Schatz
Casey	Kaine	Schumer
Cassidy	King	Scott
Coats	Kirk	Sessions
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Collins	Lankford	Shelby
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Corker	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Daines	McCaskill	Toomey
Donnelly	McConnell	Udall
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Enzi	Merkley	Warren
Ernst	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Boxer	Sanders
Cruz	Vitter

The resolution (S. Res. 377) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the preamble is agreed to and the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 29, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from South Carolina and I be permitted to engage in a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESIDENT'S SYRIAN POLICY AND RUSSIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, briefly, the Senator from South Carolina and I discussed this announcement that Russia will begin withdrawing some military forces from Syria. It obviously signals Vladimir Putin's belief that he has bombed and killed enough of the opponents of the murderous Assad regime to assure Assad's survival.

For 4 years, this administration—this President—stood by as the Assad regime slaughtered nearly half a million people in Syria. Then, when Assad appeared weak, it watched as Putin intervened militarily and protected his brutal regime, in a move that the President described as Putin going into a ''quagmire.'' Well, apparently now Vladimir Putin is leaving that ''quagmire,'' and he is leaving a solid Bashar Assad in a position of strength. He is leaving thousands of dead moderate opposition that he has indiscriminately bombed, and the United States has their begging bowl out, asking and pleading that they somehow reach some agreement again in Geneva.

It is really embarrassing to watch this President and this Secretary of State as they continue to beg Vladimir Putin and his stooge Lavrov as they continue to place Russia in a position of influence they have not had since Anwar Sadat threw them out of Egypt in 1973.

They now have a major role to play in the Middle East. They have a military base. They have a naval base. They have upgraded airfields, and they have now solidified Bashar Assad's position in power.

Is there anybody who believes that Russia will agree to an arrangement that Bashar Assad or his stooge doesn't remain in power? Of course not. Aren't we tired of begging Vladimir Putin? Aren't we tired of watching the United States and the young men we trained and equipped being bombed by Vladimir Putin and killed and murdered? Don't we sometimes grow a little tired of that? It is no wonder that the United States of America has no standing and no influence in the region.

I don't often quote from the New York Times. I would ask my colleague if he has seen this:

The Russian move may . . . be a reflection that Mr. Putin is now supremely confident in Mr. Assad's renewed stability and can afford to step back a bit and play statesman. Mr. Putin has achieved many of his main goals: bringing Russia back to center stage as a global power; preventing, on principle, regime change by outside powers, particularly Western ones; gaining a stronger foothold in Syria; picking off Russian jihadists on the Syrian battlefield; and strengthening Mr. Assad.

I wish to ask my friend from South Carolina: Isn't it obvious what is going to happen next; and that is, an increase in fighting in eastern Ukraine, more Ukrainians slaughtered while we refuse to give them defensive weapons, but just sufficient amount of violence and killing to prevent the United States of America or the Europeans from taking any significant action? Indeed, won't there now be pressure on the part of the special interests and the industrialists, particularly in Germany, to lift the sanctions on Vladimir Putin?

Mr. GRAHAM. I think you are right, I say to Senator MCCAIN.

Let's look at what our military leaders say rather than just look at what political people think. General Dunford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a hearing you chaired today was asked: What is Putin up to? What do you think he is trying to do here?

He said: Well, all I can tell you is the reason he came into Syria was to destroy ISIL and help fight ISIL. He has proven that he did not do that. He didn't try to do that.

So what General Dunford said was that basically Putin lied about why he came to Syria. If he is leaving Syria, the job against ISIL is far from done. But I think you nailed it, I say to Senator MCCAIN. The job of propping up Assad has been accomplished.

So what General Dunford said is that the reason that Putin came into Syria was not to destroy ISIL but to help his stooge, his puppet Assad. He believes he achieved such military superiority on behalf of Assad by bombing the people we trained that he can now leave.

So at the end of the day, he is not leaving. A naval base and an air force base will be in Syria. He said: We are withdrawing our forces, but, of course, we will have a naval presence and an air base.

Here is what I would say. If he needs to help Assad in the future, he will. Geneva has become a joke. There is no way you are going to negotiate a successful agreement when Assad is backed by Russia and Iran. The opposition has been abandoned by the United States and the free world. The Russian President has bombed the people the American President trained to take Assad out.

Mr. MCCAIN. What does the Senator from South Carolina think that does to our reputation when we arm, train, and equip young men, send them in to fight, ostensibly against ISIS or Bashar Assad—although, in this case ISIS—and we stand by and watch the Russians slaughter them from the air?

Mr. GRAHAM. I think it sends a signal that you can't rely upon us. You have two training programs—one by the CIA and one by the Department of Defense. The people trained outside the Department of Defense have been wholesale slaughtered by the Russian air attacks, and we have done nothing about it.

What does the region say? We have two enemies—Assad and ISIL. Our unwillingness to confront Assad has created a sense of abandonment in the entire region. Assad is a puppet of Iran. Iran is the mortal enemy of the Sunni Arab states.

So what has the President accomplished here? He said Assad must go. He trained people to help take him down. Russia came in and said Assad will not go. They have attacked the people we have trained, and we basically have abandoned the free Syrian opposition.

Now we are in Geneva talking about a peace agreement where the whole balance now is in Assad's favor. Does anybody really believe there is military jeopardy for Assad? And without his being in jeopardy, how do you get an agreement the Syrian people can live with? If Assad or his henchmen stay in power, how do you ever end the war in Syria?

So what we have accomplished is that we have given the Russians more influence in the Mideast than at any time since 1973. We have allowed Iran basically to dictate the terms in Damascus. We have jeopardized our relationship with our Arab partners. We have put in question Americans' reliability in terms of the people inside of Syria.

The Syrian policy of Barack Obama has done enormous damage. Without Russia being involved, none of this would have happened.

Mr. MCCAIN. The tragedy of all of this, I would say to my friend, is that when the United States of America was required to stand up because of the commitment of the President of the United States if the Bashar Assad regime had used chemical weapons and slaughtered—it is the gruesome pictures that you and I have seen—and then backed off, that was one of the seminal moments that American credibility disappeared. Here we are now still refusing to arm, train, and equip young men to fight against Bashar Assad and, in fact, making them pledge that they would only fight against ISIS. It is not ISIS that is barrel-bombing them. It is not ISIS that is dropping chemical weapons. It is not ISIS that has brought in thousands and tortured and beaten and killed. ISIS is our enemy. ISIS is evil. But to somehow excuse the behavior of Bashar Assad with the Russians' indiscriminate bombing is one of the most disgraceful chapters in American history in my view.

Mr. GRAHAM. To build on this, several years ago Russia took by force Crimea. This was not a fair election. It is pretty hard to have a fair election when there is a Russian tank parked in front of your yard. Good luck saying you don't want to go to Russia.

We have done nothing other than sanction Russia. Russia is still engaged in provocative behavior. We told him not to go into Crimea. We told him not to dismember Ukraine. He did. He is stronger, not weaker. We told him not to use military force to help Assad, who is the Butcher of Damascus. He did. We pleaded with him not to attack non-ISIL targets. He did. He destroyed the opposition to Assad. Russia is in league with Iran. So the biggest winner of Russia's involvement on the ground in Syria has been the Iranians, which is the most destabilizing group of people in the entire Mideast. The biggest loser has been the free Syrian opposition, the Syrian people themselves, and close behind is the American reputation in the region.

I want the administration to know that your handling of Syria has been a disaster on multiple levels. It has emboldened Iran. It has made Russia stronger. We are losing credibility in the region at a time when the region needs leadership. If you go to Geneva and you close out a peace deal that is a joke that allows Assad or somebody—Bob Assad, not Bashar Assad—to stay in power, if you allow a peace agreement where the Iranians control Damascus and Russia has a naval and air force base and more influence than we do, what have you accomplished?

I hope and pray the administration will stop this insane desire to bring Syria to a conclusion where the conclusion is going to make the whole region subject to blowing up. A successful conclusion is not having Iran being the dominant force inside of Syria, Russia having more influence, an air base and a naval base, and the Syrian people losing the ability to replace their tormenter, and ISIL having a magnet for future recruitment, which is an Iranian-backed Assad. That is not a successful outcome.

What do you think, I ask Senator MCCAIN?

Mr. MCCAIN. For the last 5 years, we have been writing a shameful chapter in American history. To sum all of this up, leading from behind doesn't work. If America leads from behind, somebody else is going to be in front. If the United States leaves conflicts and creates vacuums, then bad things happen.

Look at a map of the Middle East in January of 2009, when this President came to the Presidency of the United

States, and look at that map now—the way ISIS has metastasized, the way hundreds of thousands have been murdered and millions are on the march as refugees. We still have apologists for this leading from behind, a policy which is described as ''Don't do stupid stuff.'' This is the result of leadership that has left the scene in a way that we have not seen since the 1930s, in the days of Neville Chamberlain and ''peace in our time.''

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, last week the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC—the hard-line military force that answers only to Iran's Supreme Leader and is committed to the preservation of Iran's revolutionary regime—launched a number of ballistic missiles, in clear violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231. These missile launches are profoundly disturbing and suggest a regime that is content on continuing to destabilize the region and threaten our vital allies and its neighbors. They don't technically violate the terms of last summer's nuclear agreement, but they do serve as a vital reminder that Iran remains a revolutionary regime that does not respect world opinion and does not share our values or interests.

America and our allies must seek every opportunity to push back on Iran's aggressive behavior—especially behavior such as this that is outside the parameters of the nuclear deal—by enforcing existing sanctions on Iran's illegal ballistic missile tests, its ongoing human rights abuses, and its support for terrorism across the Middle East and the world.

Another critical way the international community can demonstrate we are serious about holding Iran accountable is by aggressively enforcing the terms of the nuclear deal. Today I will discuss a key element of enforcing that deal: fully funding the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, the world's nuclear watchdog, which is responsible for monitoring Iran's compliance with the deal. The case for providing robust, sustainable funding for the IAEA is further strengthened by a second topic I will discuss, which is Iran's continued human rights abuses.

Iran's compliance with the nuclear deal so far does not mean that its government intends to embrace the international community or heed the call of the Iranian people for greater democracy. In fact, I believe the actions of the IRGC and Iran's hard-line conservative leaders indicate that the Iranian regime intends to continue to repress dissent, block democratic reforms, incite anti-Semitism, and violate basic human rights.

Mr. President, in a speech to the United Nations in December of 1953, President Eisenhower proclaimed American support for a new international organization tasked with putting nuclear technology ''into the hands of those who will know how to strip its military casing and adapt it to the arts of peace.''

Since its founding in 1957, the IAEA has undertaken a broad array of responsibilities—from promoting international nonproliferation efforts to supporting peaceful nuclear power—but none more vital than maintaining its safeguards program, which provides credible assurances that countries are honoring their international obligations to use nuclear technology and material only for peaceful purposes.

The IAEA could not do its job without the ongoing full support of the United States. The United States develops the inspections technology on which the IAEA depends. We train and support the IAEA inspectors, scientists, and staff, particularly through our system of National Laboratories. Since 1980, every single IAEA inspector has been trained at least once at the Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico. At any given time, roughly 20 percent of all the inspectors who work for the IAEA are undergoing training or retraining at the vital National Labs of the United States.

The commitment made by American scientists and taxpayers to the IAEA is even more important now in light of the agreement reached by world powers last summer to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. This agreement, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action, or JCPOA, gives the IAEA unprecedented access to monitor Iran's nuclear efforts through highly intrusive physical inspections and 24–7 remote monitoring technology. Unlike previous nuclear agreements, the JCPOA requires Iran to allow the IAEA to monitor Iran's entire nuclear fuel cycle, which includes all the steps required to go from mining and milling raw uranium to producing centrifuges that enrich uranium, to the actual enrichment sites.

The IAEA's regular inspections and continuous monitoring and oversight mean that the international community will know if Iran tries to cheat on the terms of the JCPOA before it can dash to a nuclear weapon or build a bomb in secret. But access alone is not enough. The IAEA must have the resources to actually inspect, monitor, and verify Iran's compliance with the nuclear deal by confirming that Iran's nuclear declarations are accurate and comprehensive, by monitoring their declared sites to ensure Iran's behavior actually complies with the terms of the JCPOA, and by tracking all nuclear-related material leaving every facility to make sure Iran doesn't divert and pursue illicit nuclear activities elsewhere in their country.

Given Iran's long record of cheating and of pursuing nuclear weapons illicitly over the decades past, investing resources in ensuring that the IAEA can take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity is a wise investment not just for the American people but for the world. To fulfill these responsibilities in addition to its regular and ongoing mission of ensuring nonproliferation in every other country in the world, the IAEA must have the resources to turn access into oversight.

Back in January, I traveled with seven other Senators to the IAEA's headquarters in Vienna, Austria, and there we heard directly from Director General Yukiya Amano about the challenges the agency faces in fulfilling its new responsibilities under the JCPOA. At the top of that list of challenges is securing a reliable, long-term source of funding. A recent report by our own nonpartisan Government Accountability Office here in the United States echos those very same concerns, stating that ''the IAEA faces potential budgetary and human resource management challenges stemming from the JCPOA-related workload.''

Effectively enforcing the terms of the JCPOA will require more than just additional inspectors, while inspectors are vital; the IAEA will also be required to train a new generation of nuclear scientists and to continue to develop more and more innovative nuclear detection and monitoring technologies as well—an undertaking as complex as it is important. That is why I urge Congress to increase America's voluntary contribution to the IAEA to a level at least $10.6 million above the President's fiscal year 2017 request and commit to a sustained and long-term investment so that we can be confident that the IAEA has the resources to recruit, to train, and to place the very best inspectors the world can produce. The increase of $10.6 million that I am urging will provide reliable funding for the IAEA—the funding they need to monitor the Iran nuclear program while continuing to work for safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear technology throughout the rest of the world.

An additional $10 million would not crowd out contributions from other states. American representatives at the U.N. offices in Vienna could direct extra funding to specific projects or withhold it from others, allowing us to address unanticipated needs by the IAEA without discouraging other donors from fulfilling their obligations as they should.

We also need to continue to insist on full transparency so that reports received by the IAEA, things they might learn, are shared with the United States—with our intelligence community, with our lawmakers, with our executive branch—and to ensure, frankly, that we know if there are additional classified or secret agreements, side agreements between the IAEA and Iran.

Look, whether my colleagues supported the JCPOA or opposed it, surely we can agree that it is in America's interest to see the IAEA succeed in monitoring Iran's behavior and attracting the best and brightest young scientists from around the world for years to come. As Brent Scowcroft—who served ably as National Security Advisor to both President Gerald Ford and later President George H.W. Bush—wrote in an August 21 Washington Post op-ed, Congress ''should ensure that the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant bodies and U.S. intelligence agencies have all the resources necessary to facilitate inspection and monitor compliance'' with the nuclear deal with Iran.

To fully and sustainably fund the IAEA is to make a sound investment in a highly technical organization that directly contributes to international peace and our security. But why exactly is it so important that we fund the IAEA, enforce the JCPOA, and push back on Iran at every opportunity? A brief review of Iran's dismal human rights record might reenforce why it is crystal clear that this is a priority for our Nation and must remain so.

Iran's Government continues to preach anti-Semitism, to incite hatred against Israel, and to call for the destruction of the Jewish State of Israel, and it uses state-run media to blame the Jewish people for the instability and violence that currently dominates the Middle East. Just last week, one of the ballistic missiles Iran illegally launched supposedly had a message printed on the side in Hebrew saying, ''Israel must be wiped off the earth.''

In January, as the international community marked Holocaust Remembrance Day, Iran's Supreme Leader published a video on his official Web site in which the narrator condemns the world for supporting Israel and questions the legitimacy and magnitude of the Holocaust. These statements should deeply concern and outrage the world community, but they are simply another reflection of the Iranian regime's longstanding disregard for international values and human rights.

Earlier this month, the United Nations issued a report showing that the number of people executed by the Iranian Government skyrocketed to nearly 1,000 last year—twice as many as in 2010 and 10 times as many as in 2005. Most of these executions were allegedly for drug-related offenses. According to some reports, last year one village in Iran saw every single adult male—every single one in the entire village—executed for so-called drug crimes.

These alarming statistics follow a January report from Amnesty International that documented Iran's execution of over 70 juveniles in the decade from 2005 to 2015, with another 160 young juvenile offenders still on death row. No country in the world uses capital punishment for minors more than Iran. And despite Iran's ratification of an international treaty banning capital punishment for minors, Iranian law still allows the death penalty for girls as young as 9 and boys as young as 15.

In addition, Iran's unelected Guardian Council suppressed democracy in its most recent elections, preventing the vast majority of either female or reform-minded candidates from even appearing on ballots.

Iran has illegally and inappropriately detained American citizens, including retired FBI agent Robert Levinson and Iranian American energy executive Siamak Namazi—both of whom we believe remain detained in Iran. The Committee to Protect Journalists estimates that at least 19 reporters are today still being held unjustly by the Iranian Government.

These are just a few examples among countless many of Iran's unwillingness to respect even the most basic norms of international human rights. Effectively pushing back on these egregious human rights abuses and enforcing the JCPOA demands international collaboration, but increasing our voluntary contribution to the IAEA makes a direct impact without requiring approval or action by any other country.

There are two other additional unilateral steps this Congress can take today.

First, we could increase Federal investment in our National Laboratories, which train the IAEA inspectors I spoke about, develop technologies that nuclear inspectors depend on, and undertake research that improves the lives of people around the world.

Second, and more promptly, the Senate could and should confirm Laura Holgate, a nonproliferation expert who was nominated more than 5 months ago to serve as America's Ambassador to the U.N. agencies of Vienna, which includes the IAEA. After months of delays for purely political reasons, her nomination was finally approved by the Foreign Relations Committee on January 28. The full Senate should not delay any further to ensure that our government is represented at the very organization the world relies upon to prevent Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon.

Later this month, the President will convene heads of state from around the world for a fourth Nuclear Security Summit, a conference dedicated to preventing nuclear terrorism and securing stockpiles of nuclear material from around the world. The IAEA is at the very forefront of this vital mission, and we need to work together to make sure it has the tools it needs to take on these serious tasks.

These goals demand involvement from every actor on the international stage, but by increasing America's voluntary contribution to the IAEA by an additional $10 million, Congress can send a strong signal that we intend to hold Iran to the terms of the JCPOA, to support the international cause of nonproliferation, and to provide a vital incentive for our international partners to dedicate more of their resources to this important agency.

Iran remains today a revolutionary regime fundamentally opposed to America's values and interests. Iran's ballistic missile tests just last week serve as another reminder that the Iranian Government is neither America's friend nor ally. We must be relentless in our efforts to push back on these missile tests, on Iran's destabilizing support for terrorism, and on its human rights abuses. We must continue to enforce the existing sanctions in American law and be willing to consider imposing new ones when Iran's behavior warrants it.

Let me be clear about one thing in closing. The Persian culture, the culture of the people of Iran, is one of great richness and complexity. I have had the blessing of knowing many Persian Americans in my life and have known them to be people of great intellect and inventiveness and capability and to be the products of an ancient and respectable culture. We in the United States do not wish the people of Iran ill, but the Iranian regime and those who support it deserve international condemnation for a decades-long pattern of human rights abuses, support for terrorism, and other bad behavior. But we can and should make a distinction between the Iranian regime and the Persian people.

The people of Iran—those who turn out at polls to vote even in elections that are neither free nor fair and who have repeatedly demonstrated in the streets for democracy and engagement, risking life and limb to do so in the decade past—must know that the American people support the struggle of those who hope for real democracy someday in Iran and those who hope for an Iranian regime that someday respects international values and human rights.

So today, just a few days before Monday's Iranian New Year of Nowruz, we wish the people of Iran a happy, healthy, and peaceful new year, while continuing to stand firm against the values and actions of the Iranian regime.

Thank you.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PUERTO RICO

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I am trying to assess the financial and economic challenges facing Puerto Rico, an issue I have been speaking about since last summer. In fact, it was July of last year when I first wrote to Treasury Secretary Lew, expressing my concern about the fiscal situation in Puerto Rico and inquiring about the Obama administration's plans to address this predicament. While I did eventually get a response from the Treasury Secretary, numerous questions that I asked in that initial letter to this day remain unanswered.

Over the ensuing months, I made other inquiries to Health and Human Services Secretary Burwell because, for some time now, we have been told that funding—or to be more specific, a decline in funding—for Federal health care programs was a factor contributing to Puerto Rico's debt crisis. So as the chairman of the Senate committee of jurisdiction over most of those programs, I wanted to know what HHS thought needed to be done.

Not surprisingly, I am still waiting for a substantive response to those inquiries.

Instead of detailed proposals, I was initially told simply that health funding issues surrounding Puerto Rico are difficult and that the administration expected Congress to address these issues in a fiscally responsive way—and to do it quickly.

Eventually, last month, with the release of the President's budget proposal, we learned that the administration wants to provide $30 billion—that is with a ''b''—in additional Medicaid funds for Puerto Rico. When asked how the administration thought we should pay for this, Secretary Burwell suggested we simply adopt the President's budget. However, given that there are more surviving members of The Beatles than there are Senators willing to vote in favor of an Obama budget, I don't know if anyone can take that suggestion very seriously.

That is the sum total of the input we have gotten from the administration on dealing with Puerto Rico's health funding issues—a proposal for dramatically increased spending with no credible way to pay for it and a demand that we provide that funding as quickly as possible. That is all they are willing to say publicly on this matter, even though administration officials have labeled this a humanitarian crisis.

By the way, buried in all of the details is the fact that this proposal for increased Medicaid funds is meant to shore up an inequity created by the so-called Affordable Care Act. Apparently, the Democrats' partisan health law provided billions in additional Medicaid funding for Puerto Rico, but also included a cliff—or a point in time when that funding would drop off quickly and dramatically—and that cliff is fast approaching.

Let's be clear: The Democrats constructed that cliff, presumably knowing what they were doing at that time. The Democrats in Congress voted for it, and the Democrat in the White House signed it into law. No Republican in Congress supported that cliff.

Yet, now we are told that we must act quickly to eliminate the cliff that they have created and add even more funds without a realistic way to pay for them. And, on top of that, Democrats in Congress have labeled any hesitation on the part of Republicans to fix a problem they created and to fix it in the exact way they prescribe as callous indifference toward the plight of the American citizens living in Puerto Rico.

I have been as clear as I can be on this issue. I have said repeatedly that I want to work with my colleagues to find a solution, but we need to do so in a manner that is fiscally responsible with an eye toward righting the irresponsible course taken by the Government of Puerto Rico.

Toward that end, I, along with a number of my colleagues, have repeatedly requested audited financial statements from the Government of Puerto Rico. One would think that is a reasonable request. These requests date back to last September with the first hearing I held on these issues in the Finance Committee. That was six months ago, yet we still don't have that information from fiscal year 2014, let alone 2015.

In addition, last month I wrote a 9-page letter to the Governor of Puerto Rico, asking a number of questions about Puerto Rico's finances, and I asked that they be answered by the first of this month. I have received no answers to these questions.

In the face of a humanitarian crisis, it seems to be too much to ask of the Government of Puerto Rico that they provide some verifiable financial information so that Congress can make an informed decision about how to handle this very difficult situation. And, apparently, some of my friends on the other side of the aisle are ready and willing to spend tens of billions of dollars in taxpayer funds without all the relevant information and to publicly attack anyone who questions that strategy.

So far, my friends on the Democratic side, including Members of Congress and the administration, have been generally unwilling to provide even the most basic information about how much their various proposals for Puerto Rico would cost the Federal Government or whether they intend to offset those undisclosed costs. And none of them show an interest in even discussing ways to help Puerto Rico return to a more sustainable fiscal and economic course. Yet they repeatedly have the audacity to accuse Republicans of indifference to the struggles faced by the residents of Puerto Rico. Sometimes I feel as though I am all alone, trying to solve this problem without any help from the other side, and there are even difficult times on our side.

The absurdity of this debate, if that is what we want to call it, is compounded by the fact that the only practical and fiscally responsible legislation introduced in Congress to address these issues has come from Republicans.

As most of my colleagues should know, even with the severely incomplete information we have, Senators GRASSLEY and MURKOWSKI, who chair the Judiciary and Natural Resources Committees, and I have introduced a bill that would provide some tax relief and fully offset funds to Puerto Rico for transition assistance as well as an oversight authority to help ensure that Puerto Rico establishes credible budgets and future fiscal plans. Our bill provides the platform needed for sustained economic growth and a return of access to credit markets.

However, neither the administration nor any of my friends on the other side of the aisle have shown much interest in discussing the substance of our bill. One would think they would want me to bring it up, and if they wanted to amend it, they could amend it. We have to do this. We can't just play around with this. Instead, we have seen the aforementioned proposals to send tens of billions of dollars in health funds to Puerto Rico, no questions asked, and a proposed bankruptcy scheme that my colleagues have misleadingly claimed would simply give Puerto Rico access to chapter 9 debt relief—the same access we give to every municipality in the country.

Of course, as I have made clear on a number of occasions, the so-called chapter 9 access they are seeking for Puerto Rico doesn't really resemble the actual chapter 9 of the current Bankruptcy Code. In reality, their proposal would create, for lack of a better word, a super chapter 9 specifically for Puerto Rico and grant the territory unprecedented authority to restructure its debt. And that is the territory not having a special supervisory board to make sure they do restructure its debt.

Before I say more about the super chapter 9 proposal, I just want to make

clear that I and others have been working for quite some time now to find an agreeable solution to these problems. We have done so even while the Government of Puerto Rico refuses to provide anything resembling a complete picture of its finances, which, it seems to this Senator, ought to be the first thing that is done.

I have been working with colleagues in both the House and the Senate to explore legislative options. And while I don't want to speak for anyone else at the moment, I will say we have been willing to consider various debt restructuring mechanisms for Puerto Rico, balancing the need for fairness and equal treatment for similarly situated parties.

However, as we consider various approaches, I want to make three things perfectly clear.

First, the Government of Puerto Rico must negotiate in good faith with its creditors, and creditors must do the same with Puerto Rico. It would be a mistake for officials in Puerto Rico to hold out or drag their feet on good-faith bargaining efforts in an anticipation of congressional action.

Second, contrary to claims made by some of my colleagues, none of us have any interest in helping out the ''vultures'' or ''speculators'' looking to profit out of the misery created in Puerto Rico. If anyone uncovers illegal actions taken by investors in Puerto Rico, then by all means they should be prosecuted. If anyone can identify any investors whose actions are clearly predatory and unethical, we should all rain shame upon them. And, if former Federal Government officials who travel through the revolving door of the administration are found to be unduly enriching themselves off of Puerto Rico's plight, their actions should be brought to light. I have no qualms with any of that because my goal and the goal of my Republican colleagues is to provide sensible and reasonable solutions to help the people living in Puerto Rico.

However, this does bring me to my third point. Innocent and ethical investors from Utah, New York, New Jersey, and every other State in the Union, as well as good-faith investors in Puerto Rico, should not be casually labeled as ''vultures'' or ''speculators'' and should be treated as any other similarly situated investor. A retiree or near-retiree in Sandy, UT, who invested part of her retirement savings in Puerto Rican debt instruments, which carry Federal tax preferences, is no less deserving of repayment than any other similarly situated claimant. It is easy to make exaggerated claims that the bondholders are all rich people; they are not. Thousands and thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, are average people who have trusted the bonds.

Teresa and Julio Garcia, who are residents of Puerto Rico, along with other middle-class Puerto Ricans who own a significant share of Puerto Rico's debt, are certainly not vultures and don't deserve unequal treatment. Residents of Puerto Rico who are retired or near retirement and who are numbered among Puerto Rico's bondholders, but don't happen to receive public pensions, do not deserve to see their savings depleted in order to favor certain public pension benefits in Puerto Rico. To some, that last example may seem oddly specific; however, if you look at the super chapter 9 proposals put forward by Democrats, the intent to favor public pensions over private bondholders—even those whose retirement savings are invested in those bonds—is explicit. What is wrong with worrying about private bondholders who are like Julio and his wife?

Regarding those public pensions, it is true that Puerto Rico tried to reform the retirement systems for its government employees and did end up making some lasting changes from one of its programs. Nonetheless, the territory has not followed through on some aspects of the reforms it did make, and even in the face of dire fiscal conditions, some of Puerto Rico's major public pension systems remain unchanged. And for my friends on the other side, it appears that any effort to encourage Puerto Rico to substantially improve its public pension systems as the island restructures some of its debt would be out of the question. That just can't be.

Madam President, as we see increasingly large municipal bankruptcies and States with mounting fiscal pressures, severely underfunded public pensions almost always seem to be lurking in the background. Until now, Detroit was probably the biggest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history, with a debt of around $18 billion. Now Puerto Rico is coming to Congress for help to deal with $73 billion of debt and $43 billion of shockingly unfunded public pension obligations, bringing the total to more than $115 billion.

It would be beyond irresponsible to offer aid to Puerto Rico without taking at least some action to improve public pension reporting and transparency. Given the growing crisis of underfunded public pensions around the country, which I have been warning my colleagues about for years now, taking no action will ensure that States and municipalities that have been responsible with their pensions and their fiscal planning will see their costs go up as a result of the bad and imprudent actors. On this point, officials of the Securities and Exchange Commission and municipal market analysts overwhelmingly agree: Increased transparency on public pension liabilities is clearly necessary.

Earlier this week, while our bicameral work to produce passable legislation to address the problems in Puerto Rico has progressed, some of my friends on the other side of the aisle decided to chime in once again with another round of implausible policy proposals and fresh political attacks. The latest group of bills introduced by Democrats includes a number of repackaged ideas from last year, including unscored and unsound proposals to allocate funds and direct aid as well as a renewed effort to grant unprecedented debt resolution authority for Puerto Rico. The only real difference between the ideas we have seen already and those that were included in the bills this week is that Democrats are apparently now willing to be upfront about the fact that the debt resolution authority they are seeking isn't just the same chapter 9 everyone else has, but an entirely new animal altogether.

Last year, my friends on the other side had a bill to provide Puerto Rico with an ability to apply chapter 9 debt resolution authority on a retroactive basis. The reasoning and rhetoric behind the bill was that municipalities in every State have access, and so should Puerto Rico—never mind the retroactivity.

Now, however, the goalposts are being moved. My friends have now introduced their super chapter 9 bankruptcy scheme devised by administration officials. Of course, this new super chapter 9 is not something available to other municipalities or States. It is, in fact, without precedent. It includes virtually all government debt in Puerto Rico and blows right through a payout protection afforded to general obligation debt that is in Puerto Rico's Constitution. This not only steps directly on Puerto Rico's autonomy, but it also sends dangerous signals by telling municipal bond markets to no longer regard general obligation debt issued by States as being safe, as previously expected. That, of course, means higher costs to States for funding things like infrastructure projects, and it is something that many State Governors have said they worry about and do not support. Needless to say, this freshly constructed bankruptcy scheme is extremely risky. Though my friends are now being transparent about the relief they want, it doesn't make their proposals any more palatable.

The bills introduced this week include proposals beyond the super chapter 9 proposal. While these ideas are not at all new, it is worth taking a few minutes to go through them individually.

First, we have provisions, as poorly constructed this year as they were last year, calling for additional Medicare and Medicaid funds for Puerto Rico.

Second, we have proposals to extend parts of the U.S. personal income tax system that provide direct aid to U.S. taxpayers to people in Puerto Rico, excluding any part that requires positive tax payment. Residents of Puerto Rico do not file Federal income tax returns

or pay any personal Federal income tax, yet my colleagues want the earned-income tax credit and child tax credits to be paid out to residents of Puerto Rico. Of course, the Joint Committee on Taxation—the nonpartisan scorekeeper and adviser when it comes to tax policy—has already indicated that such a scheme would be rife with administrative difficulties and fraud. It is, at the very least, difficult and counterintuitive to expect the IRS to properly operate an income tax program for people that are not subject to the income system to start with. However, that doesn't seem to faze my friends on the other side.

Third, we have a control board to oversee the restructuring of Puerto Rico's debt that under the bill would be populated by Puerto Rican political appointees. That is one of the problems—the political appointees in Puerto Rico. Why don't they start thinking about all the taxpayers in America? Clearly, the structure of this proposed control board would subject any financial decisionmaking in Puerto Rico to the same political wrangling that got the territory into this mess in the first place. Yet the obviousness of these problems seems to have escaped my colleagues.

As with last year, we do not know the precise cost of the health funding and refundable tax credit proposals because my friends have not been interested in getting them scored or in disclosing how much they cost. Essentially, my colleagues want to have a debate about their proposals without any real discussion of what they will cost the American taxpayers.

I have been here only about 39 years—actually, 40—but I think that is long enough to know that anyone who puts forward legislation designed specifically to throw taxpayer funds at a problem without disclosing how much they actually want to spend isn't all that interested in passing the legislation. Instead, what people tend to want in those situations is to send a political message that they care about a problem while the other side does not.

Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps my friends on the other side do want to see their proposals become law. If that is the case, they would be glad to know that I have worked with JCT and the Congressional Budget Office to get a ballpark figure on the cost of their proposals. All told, the provisions put forward in the bill Senator MENENDEZ and some of his colleagues introduced this week would cost Federal taxpayers more than $45 billion, and probably closer to $50 billion, at least from what we can tell from the legislative language, which is not the clearest I have ever seen.

I can only assume that the administration does not support these bills, given that, in what little communication we have had with them on these issues, they have consistently admonished us to address the Puerto Rico problem in a ''fiscally responsible way.'' I have a hard time imagining any argument that the approaches proffered by my friends this week would satisfy even the loosest definition of fiscal responsibility, at least not until they come up with a semireasonable way to offset the $50 billion cost.

Once again, given all these ominous realities, I have to assume that these bills are more about politics than solutions. As I said, people who are serious about solving a problem typically don't propose tens of billions of dollars in spending without actually disclosing the costs and talking about offsets. No, people who put out big ideas without a plausible path to get them enacted are usually more interested in talking about a problem than they are in solving it and more interested in political posturing than actually helping people.

Let me say that again. People who put out big ideas without a plausible path to get them enacted are usually more interested in talking about a problem than they are in solving it and more interested in political posturing than in actually helping people.

This Senator is not interested in the politics surrounding the crisis in Puerto Rico nor in what the polls say on this issue. I have been working for some time now to craft a legislative solution that can actually pass because I am more interested in enhancing the lives and opportunities of our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico than I am on the political impact this debate could have between now and November. Since last summer, well before almost anyone in Congress really began thinking about the challenges facing Puerto Rico and long before we sought any outlandish legislative proposal from our friends on the other side, I have been calling on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work with me to find serious and credible solutions to help the people, not the politicians, in Puerto Rico.

I repeat that call today. If there is anyone who wants to put people far out in front of politics and frankly address these problems instead of merely talking about them, my door remains open—wide open—and I hope some will walk through to help us get this done.

I want to get this done. I believe the people of Puerto Rico deserve having it done, but it has to be done right, and it can't be done by gouging everybody else in America for profligacy and improper conduct in Puerto Rico.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I wish to talk about an issue my colleague Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan and I have been working on for 2 months. It is an issue that is sad and has been absolutely catastrophic for people who live in our State, in the city of Flint.

In fact, today we had hundreds of folks from Flint come to Washington, DC, to attend a House hearing that was held to talk about what had happened in Flint and to get answers from the EPA Administrator, as well as the Governor of Michigan. The folks came to make sure their voices were heard in this tragedy, to make sure people would see them as human beings who are being afflicted by this horrible tragedy. They are in a situation where they can't turn on their tapwater and have clean water, water free from lead.

I think many folks are aware of what happened. We had a situation where an unelected emergency manager was appointed by the Governor to save dollars, to save money, and in the process contaminated a water system.

The decision was made to move away from clean Detroit water from the Detroit water system—water that comes from Lake Huron in the Great Lakes—and move on a temporary basis until a new system could be put up and running that drew water from the Flint River. The Flint River was known to be water that was very corrosive. In fact, General Motors had an engine plant along the Flint River and used Flint River water in their manufacturing process but found that the water was so corrosive that it was damaging engine blocks. So they stopped using this water because of the damage it was doing to the manufacturing process, but, unfortunately, the unelected emergency manager and the State government decided to use that water for the people of Flint as a source of drinking water, and they did not put in the proper corrosion control chemicals that may have mitigated this disaster. As a result, this highly corrosive water was going through the pipes, damaging the pipes, and released very large amounts of lead that has led to the contamination of an entire water system.

This should have never happened. This is a disaster that was clearly manmade. It was a result of negligence on the part of those folks who were given the trust to run the system properly. Now we are left with an absolute catastrophe in the city.

Although every resident is hurt, there is no question that it is primarily the children of Flint who have been impacted as a result. That is what is so insidious about lead poisoning. Even

though it will eventually be flushed out of your body, if you are ingesting this when you are young while your brain is still developing, it can have permanent brain damage. That damage can be mitigated, but it is going to require the use of wraparound education services. It is going to make sure those children have proper nutrition and make sure they have health coverage, but certainly this is every resident in Flint, not just children but also the elderly and everybody who is a resident of that city.

What has been so frustrating about this effort is that certainly we know this is the State's responsibility. The State broke it. They need to fix it. The State needs to put substantial resources in place. The Governor was here today talking about some of those efforts. He needs to do a whole lot more. Everybody agrees the State has to do a whole lot more, and taking responsibility means making sure the resources are there to provide the services that are going to be necessary—not just now but for what will likely be many decades in the future.

What I am concerned about, what the residents of the city of Flint are concerned about, is that although right now this issue has received national attention and the eyes of the country are focused on Flint, they know that sooner or later the TV cameras will go, that the lights will not be shining on Flint, and people may forget what happened in Flint. However, the people of Flint will be left dealing with this problem for decades to come. We cannot let that happen. These people cannot be forgotten. Certainly Senator STABENOW and I have been working aggressively to hopefully force the Governor to create a future fund that will provide resources for years to come for the people who have been impacted by this horrible crisis.

Even though this is a State responsibility and the State needs to step up and do more, there is also a role for the Federal Government. Wherever there has been a disaster anywhere in the country, the Federal Government has stepped up and helped those folks who have been the victims of disaster. Some argue this is a manmade disaster, the Federal Government shouldn't be involved in it, and we only deal with natural disasters, but I would just say ask the people of Flint: Does it matter who actually caused this problem? Can we be there to help folks? They don't care. They don't really care where it came from. They just know their children have been poisoned. They have ingested lead. They know they can't use the water. Even now, although they have filters, a lot of them can't use the water. They are living on bottled water.

Today I had a woman named Gladys who came up to me. She traveled to Washington to tell her story. She brought a bag with hair in it. She is losing her hair as a result of using some of this water. She can't use her home. She was in tears as she talked about the lost value of her home, her entire life's savings in this house. Now she doesn't know what that house is worth because she is not sure whether the water is safe to drink.

Folks in Flint don't care who caused this problem, they just need help. In the past, the Federal Government and this body, the Senate, have always stepped up to help those in need. That is the right thing to do. That is what the American people expect us to do. The American people look to make sure that they are always in a position to help those in need. It is our values. It is who we are as a country. It is who we are as a people. Yet it has been extremely difficult to get that help out of this body.

I am pleased to say that in the last 2 months we have made some progress. Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska and Senator INHOFE of Oklahoma have been great in working with Senator STABENOW and me. We have been able to build a list of cosponsors who are also helping us in this effort: Senator BURR, Senator CAPITO, Senator KIRK, and Senator PORTMAN. A number of Senators have come together on both sides of the aisle to say: Here is a solution we can get behind.

The proposal Senator STABENOW and I have worked on will provide money through the Safe Drinking Water Fund. It will provide grants for any community that has an emergency. Any community, not just Flint, that finds itself in an emergency of this kind could reaccess these resources. Although Flint is the only community right now that would qualify, we believe there are other communities that will likely qualify in the future. In fact, there may be some in a relatively short period of time.

It also creates a loan fund of potentially up to $700 million—perhaps even more—that every single community can access. This is an issue every community in our country may potentially face. With aging infrastructure, we know there are incredible infrastructure needs that have to be met, and the legislation we have worked on helps every community of every single State deal with this very important issue.

It also addresses some of the health issues I mentioned earlier in my talk—issues that help the children and the residents who have been poisoned by lead—by plussing up public health programs for lead abatement and helping the CDC do its great work to help folks.

This is a commonsense proposal that addresses some of the pressing needs in the city of Flint, while also addressing some of the pressing needs we face as a country to make sure we are investing in water infrastructure so that a citizen, no matter where they live or who they are, can turn on their tap and have clean drinking water come out of it.

We have also worked hard to address some of the concerns we heard from the other side of the aisle, in addition to the fact that this is open to all communities, not just Flint. We also heard that folks wanted it paid for, and certainly Senator STABENOW and I believe that as well. So we are fiscally responsible. We found a pay-for in a program that deals with vehicle technology but one we thought was important to use to help the people of Flint and help water infrastructure projects across the country.

The important thing about this, in addition to dealing with the problem and in addition to its being completely paid for, is that it also reduces the deficit. It will actually generate more money than is necessary to pay for this bill and will reduce the deficit.

In the past, when we have had a national disaster such as the one we have seen in Flint, normally we see emergency funds being used, as we have done with bridge collapses and oil refinery fires and water main breaks. Even though that is probably the best source to fund this—if you treat the people of Flint like we treat other folks all around the country, we would use emergency funds—we went the extra distance to take a fund and make sure it would completely pay for this program, while at the same time reducing the deficit.

We have done backflips and have worked with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and have built support, and I believe if this bill went to the floor, it would pass. I think it would pass by a good margin. We believe we have very strong support for it. Yet here we are today, about ready to break for 2 weeks, and we are going to break without addressing this issue that has such strong bipartisan support. This has been a work in progress for over 2 months. It is ready to be voted on, yet we are going to leave without that vote.

We are going to leave because there is basically one Senator out there who doesn't want to see it move forward—one Senator who doesn't really like this proposal. I am not going to speak for that individual, but they have their issues and they continually want more and more. The folks who are suffering right now are the people of Flint. I wish that one Senator who has the hold would have met with the people I met with this morning and that Senator STABENOW and some of our other colleagues met with this morning. I wish that Senator would have heard their stories, heard their anguish, and saw the tears in their eyes as they talked about what they are dealing with. Yet this Senator continues to have a hold.

Now, I understand the Senator may have a problem with a particular piece

of legislation. That happens. We are not going to agree on everything. I would just ask that we allow this legislation to come to the floor and the one Senator who has the hold—if he doesn't like the legislation, that is fine—can vote no if he likes. That is certainly his prerogative as an elected Member of this body—to vote no. But please let the other 99 Senators in this body have a say. That is all we are asking for. Put it on the floor and let this body make the final decision as to whether or not this is an appropriate response to an absolutely catastrophic disaster that has hit a community in this country of ours. I don't think that is asking a lot.

Now, I am a new Member here. I am new, but I cannot imagine that folks here in the Senate will not allow legislation that is so important for people who have been impacted in such an extreme way to come to the Senate Floor. What would our Founding Fathers think if they were to look upon the Senate? They were concerned about factions and political parties and a body that would be paralyzed to really work on the tough issues that our country was going to face. I can't imagine looking in the eyes of our Founders and saying: The Senate—the deliberative body, the body that is supposed to take up the really tough issues facing us as a country—refuses to act and refuses to even put it on the floor so it can be debated and voted upon.

So I will close and pass this on to my colleague, the senior Senator from Michigan, Ms. STABENOW, and let her continue. I am certainly disappointed, and I would ask all of my colleagues to please join with us to work to get this to the floor so we can have a vote. The people of Flint cannot wait any longer. The rest of the country is looking at the Senate and they are shaking their heads wondering why the Senate is incapable of putting this issue on the floor and having a simple up-or-down vote.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, first I want to thank my partner and colleague, Senator PETERS, for his wonderful friendship and commitment to the people of Flint. We both share this. This has really become a second full-time job for us, given what has happened in Flint, in reaching out on behalf of the 9,000 children who are under the age of 6 who have been exposed and the homes that have exposure of lead that is higher than a toxic waste dump.

As a mom and now as a grandmother, I can't imagine what that must feel like for the moms and dads and the grandpas and grandmas and the fear and horror they feel, as well as for the adults and the seniors who are exposed and everyone who is paying a price. Certainly, the business community is concerned now about people coming and doing business and going to restaurants in the city of Flint, despite the fact that there is wonderful work going on downtown in rebuilding this community. There are wonderful, exciting things happening, and now they have really been knocked off their feet because of what has happened.

Across the way in the other Chamber today, there are hearings going on. There is a lot of effort back and forth in talking about who is to blame for what happened. We certainly understand what happened, coming from Michigan, but I have to tell you that we are laser-focused on the folks who had nothing to do with what happened—nothing to do with what happened. These are the people of Flint, who assumed, like each one of us does, that when you get up in the morning and turn on the faucet, when you take a shower or you feed your children, clean water is going to come out of the pipes. We all assume that. That is pretty much a basic human right, certainly in America. It may not be in other countries, but it certainly is in America, where we assume that is the case.

In America, when a community is struck by this kind of catastrophe—a catastrophe they did not cause—we come together as Americans. That is what we do. We pitch in. We do what we can to help. That is what Senator PETERS and I have been hoping to accomplish on behalf of the people of Flint.

Since we have started debating these issues, we have found other communities as well that have challenges—none to the extent we are seeing in Flint, where 100,000 people and the entire city have been exposed to lead poisoning and the whole water system is in shambles. But there are other communities that have challenges, and we believe it is important to help them as well. So we have come up with something, as Senator PETERS said.

We have been working hard for the last 8 weeks to find a bipartisan plan—a compromise—that is not only fully paid for but out of something that I authored in the 2007 Energy bill, by the way. Because of the importance of this to the people of Flint, I said: OK, we will give something we care about here. We will restructure it. We will shorten the time of the program, and we will pay for it out of that.

Senator PETERS, when he was in the House, was the champion for this particular advanced manufacturing loan program. We are saying: OK, we are willing to have that end in order to be able to pay for what is happening in Flint. On top of a fully paid-for program out of a program that Republican colleagues don't like—so we are going to be ending something that folks would like to end—tens of millions of dollars in deficit reduction come along with this for the score. So it doesn't get any better than this.

We were told to find something that is a pay-for that is not going to infringe with what other people care about. We did that. We were told no earmarks. We did that. We were told no new programs built on current programs. We did that. And we added deficit reduction. Yet the children of Flint are still waiting. The children of Flint—for the last 8 weeks—and their families are still waiting.

As Senator PETERS said, we met some of these people this morning, and it just breaks your heart. People are looking at us and saying: OK, you have been working on this and you have this bipartisan group; isn't that great. But what is happening? The children of Flint are waiting.

So we are at a point where this has to stop. We need a vote. We need a vote. We have a bipartisan bill, and we need a vote. We are at a point where we need to have a vote and stop this ability of one person to just hold things up.

First, I want to thank our Republican colleagues as well as Democratic colleagues who have been working with us. First of all, our main Republican sponsor, the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator INHOFE, has been a true champion for supporting water infrastructure investments nationally. I am so grateful he came forward and offered the idea of not only being able to support Flint but to activate a financing program set up in the last water resources bill that would address communities across the country as well. That is terrific. If we can help other communities, along with what we need to do to support the families of Flint, that is great. So we thank him for his diligence. He has really stepped up, and we are so grateful.

I want to thank the chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the ranking member, Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator CANTWELL, who have been stellar. I can't count how many hours we have talked on the phone, we have had meetings, and we have talked on the floor, and the lengths to which both of them have been willing to go to support us in solving this problem. They have been wonderful—even as late as a couple of hours ago in talking to us to figure out how we could move forward both to address this water infrastructure bill to help Flint and other communities and also to move forward on the Energy bill. So we need to be doing both, and we are at a point where that needs to get done.

We have 10 cosponsors of the bill, and I want to thank Senator PORTMAN and Senator BROWN, Senator KIRK, Senator REED of Rhode Island, Senator BURR, Senator DURBIN, Senator BOXER, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator CAPITO, and Senator BALDWIN. People from both parties have come together to do something that will make things better for

the families and the communities that we represent. There are a number of other Members and staff who have been working behind the scenes. We are so grateful for their kind words and encouragement and for the people who have offered their support for what we are doing.

I particularly want to thank our appropriations leaders, Senator COCHRAN and Senator MIKULSKI, for going the extra mile to figure out some strategy that would satisfy the Senator from Utah to get beyond this hold and to come together.

Unfortunately, despite strong bipartisan support and our best efforts, we find ourselves still in a spot, even though we have had conversations today—and I appreciate that, and folks say they still want to work together, but it seems like we go round and round and round and round. We need to stop and have a vote at this point in time. At one point, we thought we had agreement. As I said, we met again today. It would make sense in moving forward to offer the Senator the opportunity to have a second-degree amendment to our proposal. He has a different idea on structuring that. We are willing to make the case, let him make the case, and decide. That is what the Senate is about—have a vote, decide.

The children of Flint need our help. Somehow this procedural stuff—talking to folks about holds and cloture and all this—is not going to turn on the water in Flint. It is not going to help the children who have already been exposed and their families. We need the sense of urgency they have.

When we look around the country—and, believe me, our focus is on Flint. Even though there are certainly other communities in Michigan with water issues, others around the country, we are laser-focused on the place where the water has been destroyed and the people have been poisoned because of a whole range of what happened, and people have not been able to take a bath or cook with water out of a tap or to be able to care for their children or themselves for almost 2 years.

It is also true that when we talk to colleagues in putting together this bill, there are drinking water infrastructure needs around the country to be addressed. Utah will require $3.7 billion in drinking water infrastructure over the next 20 years to meet minimum human health and safety requirements. In Jackson, MS, last month—after random samples showed lead levels above Federal action levels—the mayor issued a warning to pregnant women and children 5 years of age and younger to stay away from tapwater. The mayor also said: This is not Flint because we are telling people about it and we are taking action, which, unfortunately, did not happen to protect the health and safety of the people in Flint.

Last month in Crystal City, TX, there was black sludge water coming out of the faucet, and residents were warned to boil tapwater before drinking it—in Texas. According to a recent survey by EPA, Texas will require nearly $34 billion in upgrades to its drinking water infrastructure over the next 20 years to comply with minimum safety standards.

Last month in Ohio, 13 water systems were under lead advisories. In Sebring, OH, lab tests last August found unsafe levels of lead in drinking water—and it took 5 months before the city told pregnant women and children not to drink the water and to shut down the taps and fountains in schools.

Just today, the USA TODAY network published a report that identified nearly 2,000 water systems where excessive lead levels have been detected in the last 4 years, and they serve 6 million people.

Virginia Tech professor Marc Edwards recently again sounded the alarm about lead pipes in Washington. In Cleveland, children have high levels due to exposure to lead in household paints. We could go on and on. Pennsylvania, high lead levels.

The reason I am saying this is because while the catastrophe has happened in Flint—for many reasons beyond the control of anybody in Flint—there are other communities now that need help as well, which is why the proposal we have is one that has broad bipartisan support to be able to activate a wider infrastructure-financing mechanism that allows communities around the country to be able to solve problems before they get to what happened in Flint on the early end to solve the problems so people don't get lead poisoning. That is in this bill. We step up, because these are Americans in Flint, MI, and say: We hear you. We see you. We care about you, and because you have a Federal emergency declaration we will provide the opportunity to get some help. In addition to accountability and responsibility of the State, the Federal Government, because of the EPA's role in this, will be a part of the solution in fixing these pipes.

We also address public health issues: the Centers for Disease Control Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund, HUD's Healthy Homes Program for lead both in water and in paint, and we address the opportunity to reach out and deal with the public health issues for children.

Needless to say, we are extremely disappointed—putting it mildly—in how we feel about coming to a point today, despite best efforts on many people's parts, frankly, despite our patience working with people, accepting them at their word, working, trying to get things done, looking at various alternatives to get beyond the roadblocks, despite a lot of effort. Again, we are grateful for those who have stood with us and worked so hard on our behalf. It is incredibly disappointing and frustrating and, frankly, maddening that we are here as the Senate is leaving for the next 2 weeks and we do not have action on Flint and on water systems across this country.

Again, I can tell you that for the people of Flint who have not gotten help for so long, for the people of Flint who were told the water was OK and it wasn't—and I have now been watching coverups and slow-walking for going on 2 years—this is just one more time when they are watching inaction and we could be stepping up and doing something to help.

So that is what we are asking for; that when we come back, the children of Flint be a priority for action; that we work together, as we have done across the aisle, to put forward something that will address water infrastructures to help the people of Flint, to help people around the country so they don't find themselves in a situation like the people of Flint; and that we do that together; that we pass that bill; that we pass an energy bill; and that we move forward after weeks and weeks and weeks of good-faith efforts to get something done.

All we are asking for is a vote. That is all we are asking for, after all this effort, is the opportunity to vote. If someone believes it is not the right thing to do, they have the opportunity that we all have, to vote no, but the children of Flint deserve a vote. The children in Jackson, MS, and the people around the country are worried they might become the crisis, the catastrophe in Flint, and are asking us simply to vote.

Lead poisoning is a frightening thing. It gets in your body and never leaves. It goes from your blood to your bones. When a woman gets pregnant, it goes into the fetus. It is a frightening form of poison. If that is not a national emergency worthy of action by the Senate and the House—the Congress of this country—I don't know what is.

Frankly, there are a whole lot of people who have lost faith in the government right now of Flint, who are asking us to see them, to care about them, and to help.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, regarding the vacancy on the Supreme Court, many of our colleagues in the minority party have said the same things we are saying today. Let's stop kidding each other. This kind of political showmanship—and, yes, indeed, hypocrisy—is exactly what makes everyone in my home State absolutely apoplectic with Washington.

The last time I addressed the Supreme Court vacancy on the Senate floor, I urged my colleagues on the other side of the aisle not to let the nominations process get bogged down in partisan politics—that is not what this should be about—not to let this process turn into political theater because that is exactly what has happened far too often in this body ever since the Bork nomination way back in 1987.

The organized campaign of vilification and character attacks surrounding Judge Bork's nomination was so unprecedented and so extreme that it took the creation of a new word, ''to Bork,'' to describe what had happened.

The process for nominating Justices to the Supreme Court has been thoroughly politicized ever since. That politicization has done great damage not only to the Court but to this body, the U.S. Senate. It has expanded beyond just Supreme Court nominees and now affects so many of our nominees for circuit judgeships as well. That is what happened in 2013, when then-Majority Leader REID broke a tradition almost as old as the Senate itself by invoking the nuclear option and breaking the Senate's filibuster rule to stack various circuit courts.

I don't think I need to remind any of my colleagues that when the Democrats were in the minority, there was no shortage of protests heard in this room about how sacred an institution the filibuster was. Keep in mind that the nuclear option was invoked after the Senate confirmed the President's first nominee to the DC Circuit by a unanimous 97-to-0 vote. It was an act of raw political power, the nuclear option.

We heard yesterday that the President has named his nominee to the Supreme Court, but let's be clear, any previous confirmation or record as a judge or professional qualifications are not the issue for any nominee. What is at stake is the integrity of the process, not the person. It is the principle, not the individual, because our judicial nominees to the Supreme Court, the circuits, and the district courts deserve better than to be used as pawns in any political fight, and that is exactly what would happen if the Senate were to consider any nominee in the middle of this political season.

I am a new Member to this institution, but this has been the view of my colleagues in both parties who have served in the Senate far longer than I have. This was their view no matter who the nominee was. This was their view even when there wasn't a vacancy to fill.

The former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Vice President BIDEN, recognized this in 1992, when he said:

Once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be—I want to emphasize that ''must''—must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

I agree. The Vice President correctly saw that when we inject a nomination into a contentious election-year atmosphere, we do a disservice not only to the nominee but to the institution of the United States Senate itself. It is my view that enough institutional damage has already been done to the Senate through these politicized nominations.

I wish to say a little about the text of the Constitution. We hear both sides talk about this, but let's see it in detail.

I have heard so many of my Democratic colleagues claim that the Senate has an obligation to schedule hearings and hold a vote on this nominee. We have all read article II, section 2, of the Constitution. Every Member of this body knows the Constitution says nothing about hearings or votes on judicial nominees. It is simply not there.

Senators of both parties have always understood this and have said so for years, regardless of who was in the majority. In 2005, Minority Leader REID said: ''Nowhere in the Constitution does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.'' Before that, in 2002, the former chief judge of the DC Circuit, Abner Mikva, who was a Carter appointee, said: ''The Senate should not act on any Supreme Court vacancies that might occur until after the next presidential election.'' The senior Senator from Nevada and Judge Mikva were right then, and Chairman GRASSLEY and my Republican colleagues are right now.

Despite many of them previously making the exact same points we are today, my Democratic colleagues are continuing this diatribe of telling us to do our job. I would respectfully say to my Democratic colleagues today, we are doing our job. Our job as Senators is to decide how to responsibly exercise the powers of advice and consent delegated to us under our Constitution.

The responsible course of action here—a course of action endorsed by both Democrats and Republicans for decades—is to refrain from initiating the nomination process in the midst of an election-year political fight. The responsible course of action is to avoid the political theater this nomination would become.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING NEBRASKA'S SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to continue my tribute to Nebraska's heroes and the current generation of men and women who lost their lives defending our freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each of these Nebraskans has a special story to tell. Throughout this year and beyond, I will continue to honor their memory here on the Senate floor.

FIRST LIEUTENANT JACOB FRITZ

Today, I wish to highlight the life of 1LT Jacob Fritz of Verdon, NE. Jake, as he was known to his friends and loved ones, grew up on his family's farm near Verdon, NE, a town with fewer than 200 people. While attending Dawson-Verdon High School, Jake thrived and stood out as a model student. He was an all-around athlete and played the baritone in the honor band. He was also passionate about helping others in need and regularly devoted his time to organizations that combat substance abuse in Verdon and around the State.

Jake's former principal, John Eickhoff, described him as ''a great kid, student and athlete.'' Principal Eickhoff recalls, ''If I had a school full of Jacob Fritzes, I wouldn't have had anything to do.''

When Jake entered his senior year in high school, his focus remained on his commitment to helping others, and he began pursuing a career in the U.S. military. His mother Noala recalls Jake's dream of serving his country, which was inspired by his grandfather, a retired Air Force officer. Karen Mezger, a family friend, recalls that Jake wanted to have a career in the Army and more than anything come back to Verdon and live the life of a gentleman farmer.

With the support of his family and the nomination from then-Senator Chuck Hagel, Jake left Nebraska in June of 2000 to begin his first year at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. As soon as he arrived, Jake earned the reputation among his fellow cadets as a warm and supportive person. His friend, 1LT Travis Reinfold, recalls Jake's midwestern values. ''I called him 'Jolly Jake,' '' Lieutenant Reinfold remembers, ''because no matter who you were, he always gave you a warm country smile.'' Lieutenant Reinfold also noted Jake's superb voice as a member of the West Point Glee Club. His voice was always filled with conviction and beauty, particularly when singing the hymn ''Mansions of the Lord.''

After 4 years, Jake graduated from West Point with a bachelor's degree in systems engineering. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army on May 28, 2005. Following speciality training, Jake was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute

Field Artillery Regiment, at Fort Richardson, AK.

Not long after Jake's arrival at Fort Richardson, the 2nd Battalion was deployed to Iraq. It was 2006, and the war was escalating. The insurgency was in full force and threatening to erase the progress made by American troops. By the end of that year, President Bush announced a counterassault known as the ''surge'' and deployed an additional 30,000 troops to the region. Lieutenant Fritz joined this effort and routinely volunteered at Forward Operating Base Karbala to assist Iraqi soldiers. Jake had a natural instinct to step up and take charge. He felt an obligation and a commitment to the mission, which often required volunteering for these types of assignments.

But shortly after Jake arrived at Karbala, all hell broke loose. On January 20, 2007, enemy militants disguised as friendly soldiers entered the base and attacked. In a matter of minutes, Lieutenant Fritz and three other American soldiers were captured. The militants rushed Jake and the other hostages east towards Mahawil. American troops quickly located their trail and they followed in hot pursuit. Shortly after crossing the Euphrates River and with American forces gaining, the militants attempted to hasten their escape by executing the four captives. The American soldiers were stripped of their identification and shot as the militants fled the scene, and Jake was mortally wounded. As his heartless murderers fled into the abyss, Jake realized his body might not be identified, and so in a final act of bravery, he managed to scrawl a few letters in the dust of an abandoned vehicle. So when the American troops arrived at the scene, they saw his body and the word ''Fritz.''

Back in Verdon, NE, it was a snowy day in late January of 2007. Jake's mother Noala arrived home to find two strange cars in the driveway. Men dressed in uniform approached her as she walked to the back door. She instinctively knew why they were there, and she refused to listen to the words no mother should ever hear. It was clear that her son would not be coming home.

First Lieutenant Jacob Fritz was laid to rest on January 31, 2007. He received full military honors, and he was buried in a church ceremony just 4 miles from his home. Family and friends paid their final respects in a moving service that honored the courage, commitment, and sacrifice of this local hero. Jake was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Prisoner of War Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

His two younger brothers later followed in his footsteps, and they earned commissions in the Army. They serve to this day with the same distinction and the honor they learned from their big brother.

Jake's mother retired from teaching and spends much of her time helping Gold Star families throughout Nebraska.

Meanwhile, Jake's memory lives on in the hearts and minds of the State he served. Nebraskans are forever indebted to his sacrifice.

First Lieutenant Jacob Fritz is a hero, and I am honored to tell his story.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATIONS OF BETH COBERT AND MICHAEL MISSAL

Mr. CARPER. Thank you, Mr. President. It is good to see the Presiding Officer on this St. Patrick's Day, and I am pleased to have a chance to rise and to urge my colleagues to confirm two very important nominees. Some of my colleagues have scattered across the country to go home for a 2-week recess, but the Presiding Officer is here. Hopefully, the words that I am saying here today will find their way to our colleagues wherever they are or wherever they are headed.

One of the nominees is a woman named Beth Cobert, who has been nominated to be the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and the other is Michael Missal, who has been nominated to be the inspector general of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Like many of my colleagues, I have grown frustrated over the years as, too often, senior positions in the Federal Government have been left vacant or filled by someone serving in an acting capacity for far too long. A lack of critical leadership at agencies can—and oftentimes does—undermine the effectiveness of Federal programs. I know all of us want Federal agencies to work more efficiently to provide the most value to American taxpayers, and having strong leadership in place is key to that effort. I hope we can move to quickly confirm both of these nominees when the Senate returns after the recess.

Let me start with a few words about Beth Cobert. I don't know if the Presiding Officer has had a chance to meet with her. She is one of the most impressive leaders of this administration or any administration whom I have had the privilege to know. She is an excellent nominee to head OPM. Right from the start, I have been very impressed with her work, with her leadership, with her work ethic, and with her ability to get people to work together at OMB and now during her time at OPM in this acting capacity. Before that, she was Deputy Director for Management within the Office of Management and Budget. I just think we are really lucky in this country that she is willing to continue to serve in this capacity as well as serving in her previous capacity. She comes out of the private sector, from McKinsey & Company, a brand new California operation. She did that and had a number of senior positions within that company and a great career.

The Office of Personnel Management performs critical functions affecting the entire Federal workforce. What they do every day has a direct impact on the quality of work at all executive branch departments and agencies. As my colleagues know, Ms. Cobert's time at OPM began in the aftermath of one of the worst cyber attacks committed against our government last year. One result of that incident has been a major effort to overhaul the information technology infrastructure, which requires great levels of management attention and expertise.

Even before she came to OPM, Ms. Cobert was deeply involved in the OPM response to the breach from her Senate-confirmed role at OMB. If you look at her management and technology experience in the private sector, her experience at OMB, and the time she has already spent leading the Office of Personnel Management, she is the ideal candidate to lead OPM at such a critical time. I am only one of many who have been impressed by Ms. Cobert. In addition to receiving a unanimous vote from the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on her nomination to lead OPM, she has the support of Chairman JASON CHAFFETZ at the House and of Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS, who lead the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Representatives CHAFFETZ and CUMMINGS sent a letter to Majority Leader MCCONNELL and Minority Leader REID supporting Ms. Cobert's confirmation.

Here is a taste of what they had to say about her: ''[Ms. Cobert] is a qualified and competent choice to lead OPM, which is in need of strong leadership, and we urge the Senate to approve her nomination swiftly.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full letter.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND MINORITY LEADER REID: We write in support of President Obama's nomination of Beth Cobert to serve as Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). She is a qualified and competent choice to manage OPM, which is in need of strong leadership, and we urge the Senate to approve her nomination swiftly.

On February 1, 2016, the Inspector General of OPM, on his departure from federal service, sent a letter to President Obama praising Ms. Cobert's leadership:

''I am also comforted by the fact that Acting OPM Director Beth Cobert appears to have wrapped her arms around the multitude of challenges currently facing OPM. Further, she seems to be arduously striving to institute high standards of professionalism as she works to reinvigorate this great agency.''

We further expect that as Director, Ms. Cobert will continue to assist the Committee's ongoing investigation of the data breach that OPM announced in 2015, which resulted in the loss of personally identifiable information for over 21.5 million individuals. On February 3, 2016, the Committee issued a subpoena to Ms. Cobert—who has served as OPM's Acting Director since July 10, 2015—for documents related to the data breach investigation. The agency produced some responsive documents by the February 16, 2016, deadline and has agreed to produce outstanding documents on a rolling basis; however, there are still outstanding documents that have not been produced to the Committee. We expect the agency to fully comply with the subpoena and produce all outstanding documents.

Please contact Katie Bailey of the Chairman's staff or Tim Lynch of the Ranking Member's staff with any questions. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS,
Ranking Member.

Mr. CARPER. Ms. Cobert is a highly qualified nominee. We are fortunate indeed that she is willing to serve in this capacity and take on the many challenges that are currently facing OPM.

I urge my colleagues to quickly confirm her so she can continue to do the good work that she is doing at OPM.

I have known people who are show horses and folks who are workhorses. This woman is a workhorse—I like to think people look at us as workhorses as well—but she is focused on getting the job done. She is especially good at surrounding herself with terrific people. She did that at OMB, she did that at OPM, and she did that before when she was in her very significant position at McKinsey & Company.

Let me just turn the page and talk about Michael Missal. I want to talk about him and thank him for his willingness to step up and serve as the inspector general for the Department of Veterans Affairs. He served 5 years of Active Duty in a hot war as a naval flight officer in Southeast Asia and another 18 years as a P–3 aircraft mission commander in the Navy right up to the end of the Cold War.

As Governor for 8 years in Delaware and commander in chief of the Delaware National Guard, we send people from Delaware. Right now we have people in Afghanistan. We have sent people over the years to any number of places where they are in harm's way.

I care a lot about veterans. My dad was a veteran. A bunch of my uncles were veterans. One of them got killed in World War II, the victim of a kamikaze attack on his aircraft carrier in the western Pacific. So veterans' concerns run deep in my family.

As we all know, our inspectors general play an extremely important role in our government. Their work helps us to save money while also revealing and prosecuting wrongdoing, promoting the integrity and efficiency of our government, and hopefully increasing the confidence and faith that the American people have in their government. I believe the work of inspectors general, along with that of GAO, is invaluable with respect to the work of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, in which I am privileged to serve, and the whole Senate as we look for ways to get better results for less money and further reduce our Federal deficit down from $1.4 trillion a half dozen years ago to about close to a quarter of that—which is still too much. We are making progress, but we need to make more. The IG is a big part of helping us to meet that goal. I think it is critical that we have qualified, experienced people in place to serve these important roles. This is tough work. We are blessed by the many IGs we have.

We have seen far too many IG positions, including the one Mr. Missal has been nominated to fill, sit vacant or be filled by someone serving in an acting capacity for far too long. In fact, the VA, of all agencies, given the concern we have heard and seen across the country in recent years—the IG vacancy at the VA—has been without a permanent, Senate confirmed inspector general for more than 2 years. In the past several years, I have joined all the members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee in sending letters to the President, urging him to nominate people to fill all the IG vacancies, including one letter that specifically pointed out the importance of the one I am talking about today, the inspector general position at the VA.

Our committee held a hearing last year on IG vacancies and pointed out the importance of having permanent IGs in place to ensure the independence of this office.

I want to thank the President for responding to our committee's letters. He has done this by sending the Senate a number of well-qualified nominees, including Mr. Missal, for our consideration. These words have been heard in the last couple of weeks. He is doing his job, and now it is time for us to do our job with respect to these nominations.

I was pleased that both the Veterans Affairs' Committee and our committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, were able to move quickly to consider Mr. Missal's nomination. I want to thank my colleagues on our committee for making it a priority.

However, since early this year, there has been no action by the Senate on Mr. Missal's nomination. This is an inspector general vacancy in Veterans Affairs, where we know there have been hospitals and facilities across the country that are troubled, and we need the best leadership we can find at the VA in this position. Again, I think the President has given us a very good person. He is willing to do the job. We need to get him confirmed.

As we know, the VA has been facing significant challenges over the last couple of years. I believe that confirming a permanent IG at the VA will help provide much needed oversight, while helping to point out and resolve some of the problems at the VA that are negatively impacting the lives of our veterans every day.

Leaving this position vacant impedes much needed progress on identifying and addressing serious issues at the VA that impact our veterans. If we want to do more to fix the VA, we need a strong and independent inspector general to be our partner in that effort. Delaying this nomination also delays improvements to the services that our veterans receive.

Permanent leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General is long overdue and will go a long way toward providing stable leadership and oversight of the agency. I urge my colleagues to quickly confirm Mr. Missal so he can go to work on behalf of our veterans and the American people—not in a couple of months or later this year; we can do it now, as soon as we come back from the recess that begins tomorrow.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to talk about an issue that is both concerning and tragic; that is, the rapid spread of the Zika virus in Central and South America in recent months. This is a virus we have known about ever since I was born, and that has been about 69 years. I think the first time somebody detected this was maybe on an island in the South Pacific. It has ebbed and

flowed over the years, and now it is flowing big time.

Every day researchers are discovering more about this virus and its potential impact, particularly on pregnant women and their unborn children. The findings are not good. In fact, they are deeply troubling. There are strong indications that the virus is connected to a developmental birth defect that can lead to underdeveloped brains. We have seen the photographs of smaller heads in too many children.

Additional studies are also examining a potential connection between the Zika virus and other health concerns. With the World Health Organization estimating that as many as 4 million people could be infected in the region this year, it is clear that we must act swiftly to combat this threat. That is why I was pleased to see President Obama and his administration take an early and proactive role in addressing the Zika virus. For example, a coordinated Federal response led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is working with State, local, and international public health partners to step up mosquito control efforts and to ensure that health officials have the equipment they need to test people for this disease.

To further these efforts, President Obama has recently submitted a supplemental funding request to Congress. These funds would go toward developing vaccines, mosquito control efforts, and diagnostic testing, among other things. The Senate should take a long, hard look at the President's request in the coming days and weeks and consider what measures we need to take to ensure we are ready for Zika and for other future outbreaks.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, in closing, I want to do something I think the Presiding Officer has heard me do before. I try to come to the floor once a month and talk about some of the employees who work at the Department of Homeland Security. They work for us across this country and really around the world.

This is the youngest Department, if you will, that we have in the Federal Government. It is about 12 years old. It sort of formed on the heels of 9/11. Twenty-two agencies that have some commonality in their focus or the way they touch the security of our homeland and the people who live in it kind of glommed together.

The morale in the Department has not been good. There has been a great, sustained effort—and certainly we are trying to support it in our Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs—to turn a corner and let people know that not only is the work they do important, but we appreciate their efforts.

I wish to say a few words today about some of the men and women who work tirelessly to keep us safe and secure, often without a lot of recognition and thanks. I am talking about the good people at the Transportation Security Administration, now led by retired Coast Guard Admiral Neffenger, Peter Neffenger, a very able and impressive leader.

As the Easter holidays approach, many Americans will be traveling to spend time with their families around the country and even around the world. If you head to an airport, as many of my colleagues, their colleagues, and their constituents will be doing very soon, chances are you will interact with some of the hard-working men and women of the TSA who keep our skies safe. Nearly 59,000 people work at TSA. Many are focused on securing our aviation system, while others work to protect our service transportation networks, such as the train I took to work this morning and will be jumping on later today to go home.

TSA's work is not only carried out by frontline employees whom we see at the airports as we check in and go through security, have our bags checked, our bodies checked, there are also many dedicated people who are hard at work behind the scenes. We never actually see them, but they are there keeping us safe too. These men and women perform the critical work of gathering and analyzing intelligence in order to identify potential threats to our transportation system and to mitigate them in real time.

I would like to use the remainder of my time to highlight the outstanding efforts of some of these individuals. I learned about them yesterday while meeting with Admiral Neffenger, who happened to be in a meeting that we had in my office and was with me again today for a secure briefing in the SCIF. He shared with me something I was very happy to learn about. He told me of six members of the current intelligence team within TSA's Office of Intelligence and Analysis and how they recently received the 2015 Intelligence Community Counterterrorism Award for Education and Training from the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center. That is a mouthful, but it is quite an award, quite a recognition. These six individuals—three men, three women—developed a counterterrorism threat briefing for all frontline employees who man our checkpoints and transit systems so they can better understand the connection between intelligence and TSA security operations.

In essence, these individuals are helping TSA frontline officers understand the ''why,'' if you will, behind their work. According to the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, these six or seven men and women ''exemplified the essential attributes of the counter-terrorism community: expertise, integration, collaboration, and information sharing.''

While I cannot state their names here, maybe for obvious reasons, I do wish to say to all of you out there—you know who I am talking about—thank you for the work you do every day to ensure that your fellow Americans, people who work here and the people we represent, can travel safely and that our transit systems are secure. Thank you for the work you have done to ensure that your fellow TSA employees have the tools they need to carry out the critical work they do. Your dedication and your invaluable service are appreciated by me, by all of our colleagues in the Senate, our staffs, and by millions of Americans who travel throughout our country every single day.

With that, I have probably said enough. I will say to the Presiding Officer, the staff, and everybody who might be tuned in, happy St. Patrick's Day. We hope good fortune shines on all of us and on our country, not just over this holiday and upcoming recess and a special day today but for a long time after that.

Some of the people we have talked about today—their job is to make sure we are not just lucky, but that we are safe, secure, and successful going forward. There is an old saying: The harder I work, the luckier I get. I am talking about some people who work very hard so we can be fortunate and blessed in this country. I bid you a happy St. Patrick's Day.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DUNCAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a distinguished Kentuckian, a man who knows the meaning of public service, who I am proud to call a friend. Robert M. ''Mike'' Duncan will be celebrating his 65th birthday next month, and I want to wish him great happiness and every success on such a special occasion.

Mike is well known in Kentucky and nationally for wearing many hats. Currently he serves as the president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a national nonprofit organization that advocates for coal miners in Kentucky and elsewhere and for the use of coal as an affordable and reliable resource in our Nation's energy mix.

Mike has served the Republican Party in many roles, most notably as

the 60th Chairman of the Republican National Committee, RNC, from 2007 to 2009. He came to that role having previously served as treasurer and general counsel of the RNC before his election as chairman.

During his career, Mike's served on the campaigns of five Presidents. He worked in the White House as the assistant director of the Office of Public Liaison. He was appointed to the President's Commission on White House Fellows in 2001, and later served as the chairman and a board member of the Tennessee Valley Authority. He served in various roles with the U.S.-China High Level Political Party Leaders Dialogue and the Center for Rural Development.

Mike is also active politically in Kentucky at every level. He has served as a precinct captain to a county chairman to the State chairman to the national chairman. In 1998, he chaired Jim Bunning's successful U.S. Senate race. Mike's involvement with Kentucky politics dates back to his time interning for the Kentucky General Assembly, when he got the chance to serve as President Richard Nixon's driver when the President was campaigning for reelection in the Bluegrass State.

Mike is also active with numerous nonprofit organizations. He is a trustee of the Christian Appalachian Project and runs a student mentoring program. He has been recognized with honorary degrees from several schools, including the College of the Ozarks, Cumberland College, and Morehead State University.

In his professional life, Mike is the principal owner, along with his wife, Joanne, of two community banks with five offices in eastern Kentucky. He has served as the president of the Kentucky Bankers Association and as a director of the Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank Cincinnati Branch.

Mike holds degrees from Cumberland College and the University of Kentucky College of Law. He and Joanne call Inez, KY, their home; and they have a son, Rob, who is an assistant U.S. attorney.

Mike was 8 years old when his uncle ran for superintendent of schools. It was volunteering for his uncle's campaign that sparked his love of politics, and we are glad that it did. He has been of great service to the people of Kentucky and to the people of this Nation for many years, and we owe him our gratitude.

I want to wish Mike a very happy birthday, and I know my colleagues join me in recognizing his achievements and wishing him many happy returns.

Thank you, Mike, for your service to the Party and to our country.

THIRD ANNUAL CESAR CHAVEZ DAY-LAS VEGAS FESTIVAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the third annual Cesar Chavez Day-Las Vegas Festival. Since 2013, the Las Vegas City Council, the Cesar Chavez Committee, and Councilmember Bob Coffin have organized this community festival in Las Vegas to honor the lasting legacy of civil rights activist and labor leader, Cesar Chavez.

Cesar Chavez led a courageous and humble life. He was born on March 31, 1927, in a small farm outside of Yuma, AZ. His experiences as a laborer and migrant worker in the fields of the southwest United States encouraged his pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento, CA. He brought attention to the workplace inequities experienced by those who tilled America's soil and harvested America's crops. Alongside Dolores Huerta, Larry Itliong, and United Farm Workers, Cesar Chavez fought tirelessly to raise salaries and improve the working conditions of farm workers. He organized migrant workers to raise awareness for the humane and fair treatment of all workers. Today Mr. Chavez's legacy inspires hope, action, and prosperity for those who are often burdened by marginalization and discrimination. His contributions will forever be embedded in the fabric of our country, and we owe gratitude to the indelible mark that Cesar Chavez has left on our Nation.

Cesar Chavez dedicated his time to a life of purpose in bringing social justice and dignity to the workplace. As we commemorate his meaningful work and contributions, it is vital that we continue his legacy by fighting for higher wages, worker rights, and the fair treatment of all workers. I commend the Las Vegas City Council, the Cesar Chavez Committee, and Councilmember Bob Coffin for commemorating Cesar Chavez, and I join in honoring Mr. Chavez's visionary leadership.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 29 years ago, March was designated National Women's History Month. It is hard to imagine, but as recently as the 1970s, history books largely left out the contributions of women in America. This began to change in 1978, when a small group set out to revise the school curriculum in their community—Sonoma County, CA. The idea was to create a Women's History Week, and its goal was to write women back into history books. It was an idea that was long overdue. And Women's History Week took off around the county . . . around the State . . . and across the Nation. It didn't take long before organizers lobbied Congress and even the White House. And on February 28, 1980, it paid off.

President Jimmy Carter announced for the first time that March 2–8, 1980, would be designated as National Women's History Week. He urged libraries, schools, and community organizations to focus on leaders who struggled for equality: Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cody Stanton, Harriet Tubman, and Alice Paul. In 1981, the cause gained further momentum when an unlikely partnership between then-Representative BARBARA MIKULSKI and Senator ORRIN HATCH cosponsored a congressional resolution for National Women's History Week. And 6 short years later, National Women's History Week became National Women's History Month. And last November, Senator MIKULSKI was awarded the Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in part for her work on equal pay for women—what an honor.

Throughout history, women have achieved significant progress in the face of discrimination and, time and time again, blazed new trails. So it is appropriate that Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI would play such an integral role in creating National Women's History Month. After all, she understands the role of a trailblazer better than many. And during her last year in the U.S. Senate, it is fitting we honor some of her accomplishments. Senator MIKULSKI was the first woman elevated to a leadership post in the U.S. Senate and the only current Member of Congress in the National Women's Hall of Fame. She is also the first woman elected to Congress in her own right, not because of a husband or a father or someone who served before her in higher office. Senator MIKULSKI embodies what National Women's History Month is all about, particularly this year, when its theme is ''Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government.''

So with that in mind, I would like to tell you a story about Senator MIKULSKI, also known in this chamber as the Dean of Women. Following the election of a number of esteemed women into the Senate, a lot of reporters deemed 1992, the Year of the Woman, but Senator MIKULSKI didn't like the sound of that.

She said: ''Calling 1992 the Year of the Woman makes it sound like the Year of the Caribou or the Year of the Asparagus. We're not a fad, fancy or a year.''

That is classic for Senator MIKULSKI.

Today there are a record 20 female Members in the Senate, but BARBARA would be the first to point out that is still a minority, and we can do better. Well, after 40 years in Congress, Senator MIKULSKI will be sorely missed. Without the leadership and determination of Senator MIKULSKI, the fight gets a little harder, and there is plenty of work to do.

Women still receive an average of 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, and it is even greater for women of color. African-American women make 64 cents for every dollar earned by men, and Hispanic women only make 56 cents. It is not right, and it is long past time that Congress pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to provide women with the necessary tools to fight wage discrimination. It is also time to guarantee paid family and medical leave for all. Making this a reality will mean that when major life events happen, birth of a new child or caring for an aging parent, hard-working Americans will not have to choose between their family and debt, bankruptcy, or losing their job. But America can overcome these challenges. We have done it before. Just look how far we have come.

Here are just a few of the problems women faced and overcame since the 1970s: women could be fired from the workplace for being pregnant; sexual harassment wasn't recognized in the workplace; women couldn't get a credit card; and marital rape wasn't considered a crime in most States. But we solved these discriminatory and heinous practices. You see, America's democracy has indeed been imperfect, but throughout our history, we have sought to address our Nation's imperfections. Because the story of the United States is not a story of a perfect union, It is a story about the pursuit to create ''a more perfect union.''

Let me close with this. Years ago, in my home State of Illinois, then First Lady Hilary Clinton said: ''If you go to the poorest places on Earth struggling from social problems of poverty, disease, and hunger and all that comes with it, and you can only ask one question to determine if they have a chance, the question you should ask is this: How do you treat your women?''

If you give women an equal playing field, status, education, and opportunity, you are giving them and your country a chance to thrive.

This March, as we pay tribute to all the brave women who have moved this country forward and in doing so inspired each and every one of us, let's challenge ourselves to build on their legacies and make our country a more equal society for our mothers, sisters, and daughters.

TRIBUTE TO DON HOOPER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize Don Hooper, a great Vermonter who is soon to retire from the National Wildlife Federation.

Don is a great environmental conservationist whose advice I have sought for at least 20 years on issues affecting Vermont, the United States, and indeed the planet. For 17 years, Don has helped lead the National Wildlife Federation, NWF, in Vermont and the region. He helped to bring the peregrine falcon back from the brink of extinction in Vermont and to restore our State's breeding population of bald eagles. Beyond Vermont, he advocated for piping plovers, wolves, Atlantic salmon, and more. Don helped the NWF become one of the first organizations to sound the alarm about the accelerating impacts of climate change and to pull together coalitions of environmental advocates, conservationists, and sportsmen and sportswomen to push for solutions.

Don's public service extends beyond his conservation leadership. He worked hard in the mid-1990s as Vermont's Secretary of State to reduce barriers to the ballot box and to make government more open and accessible, priorities both he and I share.

Many Vermonters also celebrate Don's 8 years representing the towns of Randolph, Brookfield, and Braintree in Vermont's General Assembly, when Don led efforts to divest pension funds from South African investments, helped to craft significant environmental and planning legislation, and achieved what would be unthinkable in most States—a political redistricting map that was adopted by near consensus.

And as is the story with any great Vermonter, Don's foundation has been his family. Since 1974, the Hooper's Brookfield farm, worked by Don, his wife, Allison, and sons, Sam, Jay, and Miles, has been a mainstay of the community. They have sold hay, vegetables, goat's milk, and meat from the farm to friends and neighbors. Don helped found the Montpelier Farmers Market that Marcelle and I visit whenever we are home in the summer. With Allison in the lead and Don doing much heavy lifting and dishwashing, the Hoopers became cheesemakers and founded the Vermont Butter and Cheese Company, which has thrived for 32 years, employs 77 people directly, supports many more Vermont farmers, and has Vermont's specialty cheese industry on the international culinary map.

On top of all of this, Don is a volunteer for the fire department and a member of the local Farm Bureau. It is hard to think of a more dedicated member of the community.

These are just some of the layers of Don's life in Vermont. He has also done great work as a Peace Corps volunteer in Botswana and in the leadership of national organizations. Don Hooper stands as tall as ever in retirement, and while this might conclude his leadership of the NWF in Vermont, I know it will not be the last we hear and see of this great Vermonter.

RECOGNIZING THE ''USS MONTPELIER''

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as a native of Montpelier and as one who attended the christening of the USS *Montpelier*, I was so happy to see an article in the Times Argus regarding its return to the United States after a 6-month deployment last month. Steve Martin and Debra Smith have both been involved for years and supported the crew of the USS *Montpelier*. Marcelle and I had a memorable time at a picnic they held for the crew in Middlesex. As a Vermonter, they both make me proud, and I wanted my fellow Senators to see what they have done.

I ask unanimous consent that the Times Argus article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Times Argus, Feb. 8, 2016]

USS MONTPELIER RETURNS TO STATES

(By Josh O'Gorman)

NORFOLK, Va.—The USS Montpelier has returned home to the United States following a six-month deployment.

Friday afternoon, the submarine—the third naval vessel to share the name of Vermont's capital—docked at Naval Station Norfolk after logging more than 38,000 nautical miles during its most recent deployment.

The crew of the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine, which includes 15 officers and 129 enlisted crew, spent the recent deployment supporting national security interests in Europe and the Middle East, with stops in Bahrain, France, Greece and the United Arab Emirates.

''I have been connected with this amazing group of men for 14 or 15 years now,'' said Debra Smith, of Middlesex, who chairs the Veterans and Family Support Committee for the Montpelier VFW.

Smith's support for the sailors of the USS Montpelier began with her efforts to keep them entertained while at sea. Smith, who used to operate Capital Video in Montpelier before it closed, would send the sailors movies to watch during their down time.

Most recently, Smith organized an effort in which students from Hardwick Elementary School are making ''Welcome Home'' and Valentine's Day cards, which are expected to go out in the mail to the crew this week.

Both Smith and Steve Martin, also of Middlesex, have been passengers of the 360-foot submarine, which was commissioned in 1993 and which launched the first Tomahawk cruise missiles during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

''It was pretty awesome,'' Martin said. ''It's pretty tight in there. We spent the day out at sea and when they surfaced we were able to go up on the bridge with the captain.''

He also described the steepness with which the submarine dives and surfaces.

''You're keeping your balance and your face is a few feet from the floor,'' Martin said.

Next month, Smith and Martin will take a road trip that will include a stop in Norfolk to visit the boat and its crew.

REMOVAL OF NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, on December 18, 2015, I placed a hold on the

nomination of Dr. Janine Ann Davidson to be Under Secretary of the Navy. As I made clear in my statement at that time, my action was not directed at Dr. Davidson; rather, it was directed at the pending promotion by the Navy of RDML Brian Losey and concerns I had related to findings by the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General concerning Rear Admiral Losey's retaliation against whistleblowers. I have been informed by the Navy that Rear Admiral Losey will not be promoted. Consequently, I am removing my hold on Dr. Davidson's nomination and will support her confirmation.

To quickly review why I took this action, the DOD OIG conducted several extensive investigations into allegations of retaliation by Rear Admiral Losey against senior members of his joint command. In three of those investigations, the DOD IG concluded that he wrongfully retaliated against his staff even after he was advised not to do so. The DOD IG also concluded that his immediate subordinates carried out retaliatory actions at his behest in two of those cases.

I found the OIG findings compelling. In a January 14, 2016, letter to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Senator MCCAIN and Senator REED, in their capacity as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, also cited the OIG findings in support of their request to Secretary Mabus that Losey not be promoted.

Notwithstanding Rear Admiral Losey's long service to our country, the Navy would have been wrong to dismiss the OIG findings and promote him. Doing so would have sent exactly the wrong message, namely that retaliation against whistleblowers is acceptable.

One of the pillars of our system of government is the rule of law; a principle that applies no less to our military and to the vital principle of civilian control over the military. It is illegal to retaliate against whistleblowers, whether civilian or military, and I commend the DOD inspector general and his staff for their diligence in these investigations.

I commend Secretary Mabus and the Navy for taking what I believe is the right course of action in this situation, but my concern with the protection of whistleblowers did not begin with the Losey case, and it will not end with the Losey case. I will continue to work here in the Senate to ensure that those who come forward to expose waste, fraud, or abuse are protected.

In the meantime, I encourage the nominee, Dr. Janine Ann Davidson, to focus on the hard work she has before her in addressing whistleblower retaliation issues in the military.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation approved legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. I applaud the work of my colleagues Senators THUNE and NELSON. Their leadership on this important legislation was critical. I would like to make clear that, while we took important steps forward with this legislation, more work remains to be done to ensure the United States remains a global leader in aviation, safety, and innovation.

Going into this year, many on the Commerce Committee, along with Department of Transportation Secretary Foxx and FAA Administrator Huerta and key stakeholders, aimed high on FAA reauthorization. We aimed high because there are big ideas we need to address when it comes to aviation in this country.

From the current state and financing of our airport infrastructure, to completing NextGen implementation, to accelerating commercial use of UAS technology, to new proposals about our Air Traffic Control system, there were a lot of innovative ideas on the table, and while we made strides on some, more work remains to be done. There is widespread agreement that the status quo is not acceptable, and I was pleased to join my colleagues in taking this initial step forward to reauthorize the FAA for the upcoming 18 months.

Furthermore, I am pleased that I was able to put forth amendments that were included in this bill to ensure adequate staffing levels at the Newark air traffic control tower. In addition, we were able to secure a much-needed study of the New York and New Jersey airports, which cover the busiest airspace in the country. Findings from this study will enable us to make informed decisions about how best to address this staffing problem in the future.

I am also concerned about staffing levels at the Transportation Security Administration, TSA. There have been incredibly long delays at Newark airport because of inadequate staffing of TSA agents at our airport. Safety is absolutely paramount in our airports. It is my hope that we can achieve both topnotch security and an efficient, reliable process for travelers using our airports. Increased staffing should help us achieve that goal.

In this reauthorization, I was pleased to work with Senator CANTWELL to increase competition in the Newark airport with the hope that increased competition and opening up more flight slots at the airport may yield more options and price points for consumers. But I must stress that these changes cannot move forward without ensuring the airport is equipped to handle more traffic and passengers. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on this issue and am excited by the opportunities this could bring for my constituents.

We also made progress on furthering the integration of unmanned aerial systems, UAS, or drones into our airspace in our legislation. This technology is literally taking off around the world. It has the power to enhance search and rescue, deliver humanitarian aid, improve agriculture practices, and newsgathering. I introduced the Commercial UAS Modernization Act to help advance this technology and was pleased to see many of our ideas incorporated in this legislation. I worked with committee leadership to further advance a microUAS rule, which would allow U.S. businesses to fly micro-drones under 4.4 pounds responsibly and safely.

Advancing microUAS use will bring tremendous innovations and new efficiencies across the country and will keep the United States on par with other developed nations who have been making great strides ahead of us in utilizing this technology. From improving research to providing unmanned bridge inspections, the benefits of this technology are truly limitless. UAS has the power to save lives and create new efficiencies across industries. I am excited to see what the innovators and entrepreneurs come up with as a result of our rule which sets forth clear safety guidelines for responsible operation.

Finally, I want to address a couple of amendments that I put forth that were not included in this legislation and express my sincere hope that the chairman and ranking member will work with me before this bill gets to floor. I introduced two amendments to the bill that would address disadvantaged business enterprise, or DBE, projects. The goal of this program, of course, is to promote equity and inclusion in federally financed transportation projects. While neither of these amendments were incorporated into this legislation as of yet, I am confident that we can work together to advance this important policy goal. One amendment would ensure conformance of the DOT size standard for small businesses to the metric defined by the Small Business Administration.

This update will enable more minority and women-owned businesses to compete for infrastructure work. The second amendment sets goals for minority and women-owned businesses on projects financed only by passenger facility charges, or PFCs. I ask the chairman and ranking member to continue to work with me as this bill goes to the floor to advance these two important goals.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE ENZI

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, on March 29 in Laramie, the University of

Wyoming will recognize the work of Senator MIKE ENZI with an official dedication of the Michael B. Enzi STEM Facility. It is a well-deserved honor and one that I would like to share with my fellow Senators.

The state of the art facility opened in January of 2016. With more than 107,000 square feet and over 30 labs, the University of Wyoming Michael B. Enzi STEM Facility will allow 900 students from multiple disciplines to be actively engaged in lab studies at the same time. The design of the facility allows students to enjoy an active learning environment that encourages continuous interaction between instructors and students. Classrooms are laid out in such a way that instructors have the flexibility to adjust their lessons to accommodate the needs and interests of the students, ensuring that they are always in an environment most conducive to learning.

There is no better way to honor the lifetime work of Senator ENZI than to name this facility in his honor. Throughout his years as an accountant and in elected office, MIKE has been a solid leader who is willing to take on tough challenges. From his time as mayor in Gillette, a town that truly represents the definition of an American boomtown, to his work in the U.S. Senate, MIKE studies and works through an issue and always approaches the problem with an ''I will solve this and make it better'' attitude. This approach to problem solving has helped MIKE succeed as chairman of both the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and the Senate Budget Committee.

Senator ENZI recognizes that if you provide people the tools to succeed, many will. MIKE understands human nature and recognizes that a one size fits all approach to serious problems is not always the best way to fix things. Senator ENZI believes in the ability of people to learn, whether in the classroom, on the job, or through personal experiences, and to take that knowledge and use it in a way to better themselves and others.

The Michael B. Enzi STEM Facility is a perfect reflection of the man: give people an opportunity to learn, to interact, to share, and in an environment that works for them, and they will achieve great things.

In praising his effort to improve education in Wyoming, Chris Boswell, University of Wyoming's vice president for governmental and community affairs, said the following about MIKE ENZI: ''He has been very influential in crafting legislation that garners bipartisan support in the Senate. These have been bills that moved significant education initiatives forward. Whether as chairman or ranking member, Senator ENZI knows how to move bills through to become law, and Wyoming and the country are the better for it.''

I agree completely, and I congratulate Senator ENZI on this honor.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC TIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, on March 15, we commemorated the 25th anniversary of the reestablishment of diplomatic ties between the United States and the Republic of Albania. Over 25 years ago, Albania emerged from nearly five decades of isolation and Communist rule to establish a multiparty democracy and forge closer ties with the free world. A quarter century later, Albania has made significant progress. Albania's economy grew and its people participated in elections judged as largely free and fair. Albanians enjoy freedom of religion, movement, unrestricted Internet access, and academic freedom. Today Albania is a NATO ally and a candidate for accession into the European Union, EU.

Since its emergence from isolation, Albania has been an active and contributing member of the international community. Over the course of two decades, Albania deployed more than 6,500 military personnel in support of operations lead by NATO, the EU, and the United Nations. In 2003, Albanian troops deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Between 2002 and 2014, Albania deployed over 3,000 personnel to support U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan. Albanian personnel continue to serve in Afghanistan.

Despite a quarter century of notable strides, pervasive corruption, high unemployment, organized crime, and underrepresentation of women in business and politics, among other issues, prevent Albania from realizing its full potential. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, I have consistently voted to support assistance to Albania to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, promote sustainable economic growth, and assist with its regional and international integration. As co-chair of the Senate Albania Caucus, I will continue to work with my colleagues on to strengthen the U.S.-Albania relationship and support Albania's ongoing efforts to become a prosperous, democratic state and pillar of stability in the Balkans.

HONORING OFFICER JACAI COLSON

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the tragic death of a Marylander. Officer Jacai Colson of the Prince George's Police Department was killed in the line of duty, on Sunday, March 13, 2016. Officer Colson was an upstanding law enforcement officer whose death shocked and saddened so many in Maryland and the national law enforcement community. America is the great Nation it is in no small part because of our respect for the rule of law. Officer Colson and his fellow Prince George's County police officers put their lives on the line every day to uphold the rule of law.

Officer Colson was only 28 years of age. Today, March 17, 2016, would have been his 29th birthday.

On Sunday, March 13, 2016, the district III station in Prince George's County came under fire in what was a deliberate attack on law enforcement and on the rule of law itself. Officer Colson arrived on the scene. After finding himself in the middle of a firefight, Officer Colson had the composure to return fire. During the firefight, Officer Colson was shot and killed.

Every member of the U.S. Senate, every Marylander, and every American should be inspired by the life of Officer Jacai Colson. Officer Colson was an undercover narcotics agent. He had a dangerous job with zero margin for error. Officer Colson did not make errors. He was a 4-year veteran of the Prince George's Police Department. The commander of the Prince George's County Police Department's narcotic enforcement division said of Officer Colson: ''Not only is he good at his job, he's that guy that you wanted on your team.'' The president of the Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 89, described Officer Colson as ''. . . always the first person here in the morning, ready to work and put in a full day's work.''

Officer Colson was a native of Boothwyn, PA. He came from a law enforcement family. His grandfather, Sergeant James G. Colson, Jr., retired from the Delaware County, PA, police department after more than 40 years of service. Officer Colson was the quarterback of his high school football team. He attended Randolph Macon University, where he also played football. He sang in the Ujima Gospel Choir and worked in the admissions office and in the marketing and communications department. Officer Colson gave of himself to improve his community while he was in college. He was a member of Brothers 4 Change, a student organization devoted to community service, and he also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity.

I am thankful to the Colson family for sharing such a promising young man with the people of Prince George's County. The pain they are going through right now is a pain no family should have to endure. Most tragically, they are not alone. So far in 2016, 23 law enforcement officers have died in the line of duty. In February, two of Officer Colson's Maryland colleagues from the Harford County Sheriff's office, Senior Deputy Mark Logsdon and Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey were killed responding to a call.

The loss of Officer Colson represents the loss of one of the best and brightest among us. He could have done anything with his life, and he chose to protect his fellow Americans. I am thankful that Officer Colson was able to enrich and save the lives of so many people during his life. On behalf of the people of Maryland and my fellow U.S. Senators, I offer my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Officer Colson. I hope they are able to find solace in the fact that Jacai Colson was a true hero.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH 2016

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to join the American people in celebrating Women's History Month. It is clear that 1 month is hardly enough time to recognize all that women have done, what they are doing, and what they have yet to accomplish. Despite the persistence of dogmatic opposition, women have played a major role in advancing every society on earth.

I am a proud husband, father, and grandfather. In my time representing the people of Maryland, in the U.S. Senate, I have traversed the State many times. As a member and now ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I have had the chance to travel and meet with people from very diverse backgrounds.

At home and abroad, I have found it difficult and often imprudent to make generalizations with regard to policy. One common truth, however, that easily crosses national borders, ethnic lines, political divides, and religious devotions is this: the way a nation treats its women is very much a barometer as to how well that nation is doing.

And so this March we will celebrate women on the forefront of industry and innovation, science and social justice, policy and patriotism, and so much more. We must also remember that Women's History Month is not just about celebrations. Women's History Month should be a time when all Americans come together for a frank conversation about the well-being of women at home and abroad. That conversation must lead to concrete action because, if we want to improve any aspect of our society, starting with empowering and lifting up women is an investment that will return the greatest dividends.

Throughout American history, we have made progress in so many arenas because women had the bravery to break the proverbial glass ceiling. One such woman who I think deserves accolades during this Women's History Month, and every month for that matter, is a Member of this very body. This Congress boasts the most female representatives in history. I suspect that number would be larger if we gave the people of Washington, DC, full statehood and a voting Senator, but I will discuss that another time.

The record number of women in Congress is not an accident; it took hard work and grit. The living embodiment of that grit and know-how is the senior Senator from Maryland, my colleague Senator MIKULSKI. There is a wonderful sense of symmetry in the fact that in 1981, then-Congresswoman MIKULSKI co-sponsored the first Joint Congressional Resolution proclaiming a Women's History Week, and today she is being celebrated as a role model during Women's History Month.

Senator BARB has been more than a dedicated champion for the State of Maryland. She has fought tirelessly for the welfare of all Americans across the country. In the Halls of the Senate, she opened doors that had previously been closed to women. Sometimes she used gentle politicking, and sometimes she knocked the doors off the hinges. No matter how she did it, Senator BARB refused to accept second-class treatment because of her gender and fought to be recognized as an equal. To take that one step further, Senator BARB refused to let other women be treated like second-class citizens by the rule of law or antiquated social norms. I don't have the time to list all that she has done for Marylanders and working families across the country in her long and distinguished career, but I will share a list of hard-fought firsts: first Democratic woman elected to the U.S. Senate in her own right; first Democratic woman to serve in both Houses of Congress; first woman to be elected to statewide office in Maryland; first Democratic woman Senator elected to a leadership position; first Democratic woman to serve on the Senate Appropriations Committee; first woman to chair an Appropriations Subcommittee—the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee; first woman to serve on the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee; first woman to serve on the Senate Small Business Committee; first woman to serve on the House Interstate & Foreign Commerce, now known as the Energy & Commerce Committee—first woman on the Health Subcommittee; most senior woman in the Senate on January 3, 1997; longest serving woman Senator in U.S. history on January 5, 2011; and longest serving woman in Congress in U.S. history on March 17, 2012.

Senator BARB will be leaving the Senate when her term ends next January. That does not mean that she will stop doing what she does best, fighting for what is right. Generations of young women who choose to participate in public life or who dream of joining the U.S. Senate have benefited from Senator BARB's trailblazing legacy.

As we begin to fathom life in the U.S. Senate without Senator BARB, we should take a minute to analyze the current state of politics and policy as it relates to women in America.

Regardless of any Member's political support of anyone running to replace President Obama, it is worth noting that there is a chance that a woman, a former U.S. Senator, a former Secretary of State, and Former First Lady could potentially be the next President of the United States.

The 2016 election should serve as a chance to audit how our political system is working on behalf of women, including in terms of health care.

The Affordable Care Act, ACA, has played a role in creating greater gender equality in this country. Under the ACA, being a woman is no longer a ''preexisting condition.'' What does that mean? It means insurance companies can no longer force women to pay more based on their gender.

The ACA also provides more preventive services for women at no cost. Lifesaving preventive services like mammograms, cervical cancer screenings, and prenatal care are now covered at no additional cost for roughly 48.5 million American women with private insurance. Access to these services means that fewer women will be sidelined from the job market, unable to support families because of preventable illnesses. There is no question that we are making progress in women's health care, in terms of cost, equity, and in providing much-needed services.

We have further to go. Gender-based disparities in medical research still remain. Some medical trials today do not consider the impact of gender in their research, and diseases like heart disease, which is the leading cause of death for American women, are often misdiagnosed or overlooked.

That is why I have continuously fought for robust funding for the National Institutes of Health, NIH, which pioneers much of our Nation's groundbreaking medical research and clinical trials. I was very encouraged to see the NIH receive a $2 billion increase in the fiscal year 2016 Omnibus spending bill—thanks in large part to Senator MIKULSKI. That is the largest increase NIH has received since 2003. By ensuring that NIH has all of the tools it needs to continue such urgent work, we can address persistent disparities and continue to build on the gains in our health care system made under the ACA. One thing is certainly clear: we only stand to gain from increased resources for our medical community to improve the health of women.

Improving health care is only one part of the equation involved in empowering and uplifting women in the United States.

I have previously spoken about the need to close the gender pay gap, the need to pass meaningful legislation to reduce the number of women killed by guns during instances of domestic violence, and the need to ensure women can continue to make choices concerning their own reproductive health.

All of these are critically important to the well-being of women in America.

America was built on the promise of equal rights. Our history is defined by groups struggling to achieve full equality under the law. I think many Americans would be shocked to find out that the Constitution still lacks a provision ensuring gender equality. Think about that: women still lack the same constitutional protections as men. I think this is wrong and have introduced legislation to remove the deadline for States to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, which 35 States have ratified already—just three more to go.

The Equal Rights Amendment is slightly longer than two tweets, but would finally give women full and equal protection under the Constitution. It reads as follows:

Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

It is that simple. When Congress passed the ERA in 1972, it provided that the measure had to be ratified by three-fourths of the States, 38 States, within 7 years. This deadline was later extended to 10 years by a joint resolution enacted by Congress, but ultimately only 35 out of 38 States had ratified the ERA when the deadline expired in 1982. To put that in context, in 1992, the 27th Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting immediate Congressional pay raises was ratified after 203 years.

Article V of the Constitution contains no time limits for ratification of constitutional amendments, and the ERA time limit was contained in a joint resolution, not the actual text of the amendment. The Senate could pass my legislation removing the 10-year deadline right now. I hope that the majority leader will bring this legislation up for a vote because American women deserve to know that their most fundamental rights are explicitly protected by our Nation's most venerated document.

I would like to take a moment to discuss some issues that apply more to women outside of the United States but still affect every American.

I serve as the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In that position, I have seen firsthand how the relatively small amount of money allocated for foreign assistance saves both lives and American tax dollars over time. At less than 1 percent of the Federal budget, foreign assistance helps us rely less on costly military operations and prevent international catastrophes before they happen.

As I previously stated, the way a nation treats its women is very much a barometer as to how well that nation is doing. And just as in the United States, giving women outside United States the tools they need to succeed uplifts families, communities and nations. The millennium development goals, MDGs, were some of the most aggressive and successful attempts to combat global poverty and improve the quality of life for millions of women and families in the developing world.

The millennium development goals, first established in 2000, brought together nations, businesses, international organizations, and foundations in a focused and coordinated effort to reduce poverty and disease by 2015. Over the last two decades, the number of people worldwide living in extreme poverty has been cut in half, from about one in every six people in 1990 to 836 million in 2015. We have made progress in global education, with a 20 percent increase in primary school enrollment in sub-Saharan Africa and a nearly 50 percent decrease in the number of out-of-school children of primary school age.

In terms of gender equality, we still have a long way to go, but today we can cheer the fact that women have gained more parliamentary representation in ninety percent of the countries of the world than twenty years ago. The rate of maternal mortality has declined by forty-five percent worldwide, including by sixty-four percent in Southern Asia and forty-nine percent in sub-Saharan Africa.

When it comes to combating HIV/AIDS, we have made truly incredible strides over the past fifteen years. New HIV infections dropped by forty percent between 2000 and 2013, and the number of people living with HIV that were receiving anti-retroviral therapy increased seventeenfold from 2003 to 2014.

Behind these impressive numbers are countless women who are alive and strengthening their families and communities because of the millennium development goals, but there are still many areas where we need to make more progress.

In September 2015, more than 150 world leaders gathered at the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 sustainable development goals, SDGs. The SDGs aim to build on the successes of the millennium development goals and catalyze further progress.

One area where there is still much work to be done concerns child marriages. I am pleased the sustainable development goal 5 includes a target to eliminate child, early and forced marriages.

According to the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, each year, 14.2 million girls are married before their 18th birthday. Some of these girls are as young as 9 years old. Childhood marriage robs girls of their adolescence, denies them an education, greatly increases the risk of maternal mortality, and decreases their chance of becoming economically independent. Pregnancy and childbirth are the leading causes of death for young girls in low- to middle-income countries. And children of young mothers have higher rates of infant mortality and malnutrition compared to children of mothers older than 18.

Terrorist groups often use forced marriages to sustain their efforts. Last April, for instance, Boko Haram kidnapped over 250 girls in Nigeria. Some of those girls were later forced to marry their kidnappers. The so-called Islamic State is also notorious for forcing local women and girls to marry its fighters. Forced marriage is deplorable for many reasons, not the least of which is that is it used as a weapon of war.

The women and girls being forced into these marriages are the very same women and girls who could be leaders, business owners, teachers, and doctors if given the chance. It is in the best interest of these girls and of the United States that the international community speak with a united voice against this practice. As ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I invite all members of Congress to work together to find a way to address this pressing human rights issue.

I am an original co-sponsor of S. Res. 97, a bipartisan resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day. After seeing the impacts that the MDGs have had on vulnerable populations around the world, I have no doubt that the goals contained in this resolution can be accomplished if the United States is willing to take the lead in organizing the international community.

I have mentioned only a small portion of legislative priorities the Senate could act on right now.

As we move through Women's History Month, let us remember that strong and empowered women have gotten us to this point in history and will help lead us to a brighter future.

BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY WEEK

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I wish to request that, for the second year in a row, the U.S. Government officially recognize the last week in March as Black Women's History Week. During the week of March 28, 2016, as part of Women's History Month and in honor of the second year of the United Nation's International Decade for People of African Descent, several leading social justice organizations will be holding their second annual week of events to honor Black women and recognize their current struggles in American society. This week will shed light on the reality that Black

women confront many intersectional challenges in American society, yet their concerns are often pushed to the margins of public attention and intervention. This week marks the perfect occasion to attend to the often hidden experiences of Black women and to generate attention to address the challenges they face.

Black women have traditionally gone above and beyond the call of duty in their contributions to American society. Black women have been inspirational symbols of strength and perseverance through their high voter turnout and historic leadership of racial justice movements. Even in the face of grave oppression throughout our Nation's history, Black women have continued to stand strong and contribute to the well-being of their families, their communities, and our country as a whole; yet at the same time, Black women continue to face undue burdens and obstacles to their own well-being. Acknowledging both the centrality of Black women in our history and social fabric as well as the unique inequalities they face is critical in our efforts to build a society that ensures equality and justice for all.

In conjunction with the congressional declaration, a coalition of organizations advocating for the well-being of women and communities of color will partner to elevate the stories, histories, and realities of Black women's lives, building off the momentum generated by Black Women's History Week in 2015. Our charge is to ensure that the lives of Black women and girls are not overlooked and that efforts to generate information about their well-being is widely shared across public agencies and partner institutions.

Thank you.

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today is St. Patrick's Day. It is a great day for those of us in this country whose ancestors came here to find a better life. And today, like many of us here, I got up and put on a green tie, but I switched it out for this one, a red one, to highlight support for those who suffer from serious conditions that many Americans don't speak much about or know much about.

This March is the first Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month. It also marks the 30th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's one-time declaration of March as Hemophilia Awareness Month.

Tens of thousands of Americans have been diagnosed with bleeding disorders, including more than 100 Alaskan families. These families are spread all across my State, in Anchorage and Fairbanks, but also in rural communities like Chevak, Elim, Tuntutuliak, Kodiak, and Klawock. These Alaskans face serious health challenges with strength and grace and form a vibrant tight-knit community, and I want to thank those communities for supporting their fellow Alaskans.

Hemophilia is the most expensive chronic condition to treat. There are Alaskan children whose daily dose of medication exceeds $1,800 per day. The good news is there is treatment that continues to improve.

I want to highlight the work done by the Alaska Hemophilia Association, a chapter of the National Hemophilia Foundation, which provides services and support for the Alaskan bleeding disorder community. They work to provide access to care and insurance and support our youth by hosting an annual summer camp for Alaskan children with bleeding disorders and their siblings. Camp Frozen Chosen allows these youth to interact with others with similar bleeding disorders. They are also able to learn to manage and take ownership of their condition and their lives, enabling them to be leaders of their generation.

The Alaska Hemophilia Association and the Alaska bleeding disorder community are the epitome of Alaskan grit and determination and are part of what makes Alaska such a wonderful place.

I would ask that we think of those this month who are suffering from these disorders and that we continue to work together to find solutions and to offer support.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING TAMARA D. GRIGSBY

● Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Tamara D. Grigsby, whose untimely passing at the age of 41 has left Wisconsin without one of its greatest champions for equality and justice. Tamara committed her life to public service and making a difference in the lives of others. She was known for her honesty, dedication, and ability to see beyond partisan posturing to become a voice for those too often forgotten.

Growing up in Madison, WI, Tamara's path in life was shaped by her experiences confronting economic disparity and racial bias as a student in what is considered Wisconsin's most liberal city. When asked about the apparent dichotomy of this circumstance, she simply responded: ''I'm a liberal. But liberal doesn't mean enlightened, and it doesn't mean informed.'' That statement embodies the essence of who Tamara was.

After earning a bachelor's degree at Howard University and a master's degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Tamara put her energy and skills to work as a social worker in the Milwaukee office of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. Upon seeing the impact she could have on individual lives, she became convinced of the need for effective advocacy on a larger scale.

In 2004, she successfully ran for the Wisconsin Legislature. Her drive and passion to change the world around her led to her success in a three-way primary and an unopposed general election to represent the 18th Assembly District in Milwaukee. During her tenure in the assembly, Tamara was a strong advocate for disadvantaged families and at-risk children, who were too often overlooked and marginalized.

Tamara quickly gained the respect of her colleagues as a passionate, strong voice for equity, fairness, and the expansion of opportunity. She immersed herself in the legislative process as a member of the joint finance committee and as chair of the assembly committee on children and families. She was an outspoken and effective advocate on critical issues such as access to scientifically based sex education and birth control, expansion of transitional jobs to connect unemployed individuals with work, examination of the State's disproportionate Black incarceration rate, and the collection of racial data in police traffic stops. She stood fast against opposition to low-income tax credits and quality health care for low-income Wisconsin residents.

Although an unexpected illness ended her 8 years as a State representative in 2012, her public service continued. She worked in the Milwaukee Public School system and was tapped to lead Dane County's Department of Equity and Inclusion. It is in this role that Tamara's life came full circle. She was once again in Madison challenging the status quo on the issues that inspired her to become a fierce advocate for the poor and underrepresented.

Although Tamara's time with us was too short, she leaves behind a legacy for future leaders to emulate. She will always be remembered for having the courage to speak for those who didn't have a voice.●

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE ELLEN M. HELLER

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor the career of Judge Ellen M. Heller. Judge Heller has served the people of Baltimore and Maryland in several capacities for many decades. She is well known and well respected in the legal and nonprofit and communities across our State. In 2010, Judge Heller brought her considerable talents to the Weinberg Foundation, one of Baltimore's most effective nonprofit organizations. After 6 years, Judge Heller will be concluding her role as chair of the board on March 1, 2016, and she will come to the end of her current term as a trustee of the Weinberg Foundation on May 16, 2016.

Judge Heller has helped change lives while she has served at the Weinberg Foundation. Her commitment to service and her steadfastness have made her an incredibly effective chairwoman. For my colleagues who may be unfamiliar with the Weinberg Foundation, the organization does incredible work on behalf of low-income and vulnerable people from Maryland to Hawaii and from the former Soviet Union to Israel and beyond. The responsibility of chairing the board at the Weinberg Foundation is significant; we are fortunate Judge Heller's personal and professional experiences helped make her uniquely suited for the job.

Judge Heller is no stranger to hard work. She graduated from the Johns Hopkins University, cum laude. She also graduated from my alma mater, the University of Maryland School of Law, cum laude. She earned both degrees while raising two sons. Judge Heller's accomplished legal career began as an assistant attorney general. She soon became an associate judge in the Baltimore City Circuit Court, the eighth judicial circuit, and would spend 6 years as the judge in charge of the civil docket.

In 1999, Judge Heller became the first woman to serve as a circuit administrative judge on the eighth circuit. She championed numerous reforms, including the practice of alternative dispute resolution, ADR, in circuit court cases and the introduction of court-ordered mediation in certain civil cases. She also directed the establishment of a new pretrial discovery process, including the appointment of two felony discovery judges. Her dedication not only to justice as a concept, but to improving the process by which justice is administered, would serve her well at the Weinberg Foundation.

Judges are the public face of the rule of law. I am thankful that so many people will associate justice with such a capable and revered judge. In 2003, Judge Heller retired from the bench and began to lend more of her time and talent to various worthy causes around Maryland and around the world. For instance, Judge Heller served as president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, gaining experience in international aid missions. In her long and illustrious career, Judge Heller has worked with many other distinguished groups: the Maryland School for the Blind, the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene & Public Health, the Task Force on Women in Prison, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, the Greater Baltimore Medical Center, the Public Trust and Confidence Implementation Committee, the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, and the World Jewish Restitution Organization. I have omitted many more organizations, but the underlying point here is that Judge Heller brought a wealth of experience and talent to the Weinberg Foundation.

The Weinberg Foundation has a long track record of tackling issues head on. The foundation has been a national leader on addressing the basic human needs of healthcare, housing, economic stability, and food security. The Weinberg Foundation has also established itself as an effective advocate for people living with disabilities, the elderly, and our veterans.

Judge Heller has helped the Weinberg Foundation accomplish extraordinary feats during her time on the board. She oversaw the Baltimore Library Project which to seeks to design, build, equip, and staff new or renovated libraries in selected schools where existing public funds can be leveraged. The Weinberg Foundation, with the help of 40 partners, will create as many as 24 of these inspirational spaces. The Weinberg Foundation has committed a total of $10 million for what is expected to be a legacy project.

Judge Heller doubled the amount of funding provided under the employee giving program. The Weinberg Foundation's employee giving program awards grants to their deeply committed staff to fund direct outreach programs.

Judge Heller and the Weinberg Foundation have done immeasurable good for people across the State of Maryland and around the world. As Judge Heller prepares to step down from the foundation, I would like to thank her for her dedication to lifting up all people. I would also like to thank her husband, Shale D. Stiller, and the rest of her loving family for sharing such an incredible woman with humanity. Judge Heller has placed the Weinberg Foundation on solid footing to continue to carry out its important missions. I know I join my colleagues in congratulating Judge Heller on everything she has accomplished and wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.●

RECOGNIZING THE EIGHTH GRADE CLASS AT BIG TIMBER GRADE SCHOOL

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the eighth grade class at Big Timber Grade School. The class recently took over the writing for the Big Timber Pioneer Newspaper.

The Big Timber Pioneer participated in Newspapers in Education Week, and the lucky new young writers were the eighth graders of the Big Timber Grade School. This very special edition of the newspaper was compiled of stories written by the individuals of the class. There are 38 students in the class and they all wrote an article.

Big Timber is located in southern Montana. It is a small town of roughly 1,600 people. I am sure this was a huge honor for the eighth grade class, their parents, and the whole town.

Thank you to Lindsey Kroskob, the managing editor of the Big Timber Pioneer, for making this a goal of hers since 2015 and for making it happen this year. It is people like you that can help shape the minds of our young Montanans to realize that anything is possible.

Congratulations to the eighth grade class for getting the opportunity to write for the newspaper. I look forward to reading your very special edition and learning about the students of Big Timber Grade School. Maybe I will see your names someday in national publications across our country.●

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT LOUGH

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Robert Lough for his tireless effort in helping Nevada's brave servicemembers after they have returned home from the battlefield. Mr. Lough has been a volunteer with the Henderson Municipal Court's Veterans Treatment Court program since its opening in 2011, going above and beyond to help fellow veterans in need.

The Henderson Municipal Court's Veterans Treatment Court program is an invaluable resource to the southern Nevada community, providing our veterans with vital services that range from job placement to suicide prevention. This program assists our nation's servicemembers as they return home and readjust to life in their communities. The court program includes representatives from the legal system and volunteers who work to rehabilitate veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or drug or alcohol issues. Although there is no way to adequately thank the men and women who lay down their lives for our freedoms, the Henderson Municipal Court's Veterans Treatment Court program acts as a one-stop solution for veterans who find themselves in a position of need. The State of Nevada is fortunate to have someone like Mr. Lough, who demonstrates unwavering loyalty to Nevada veterans, working in support of this important program.

Mr. Lough, a veteran himself, served in the U.S. Navy from 1967 to 1973. No words can properly thank him for his service to our country, but I offer my deepest gratitude for his sacrifices in defending our freedoms. In addition, he is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America in Henderson and Boulder City Chapter 1076. In February, Mr. Lough was recognized as Veteran of the Month by Governor Brian Sandoval for his efforts in the Henderson Municipal Court's Veterans Treatment Court program, an accolade that is well deserved. Mr. Lough is truly a role model to all not only for his service to our country, but also for his ambitions in caring for our Nation's heroes. For the last 5 years, Mr. Lough has served as a mentor to struggling veterans who have lost their way. His charisma, caring character, and dedication to helping others are truly admirable.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I know the struggles that our veterans face after returning to civilian life after service. Congress has a responsibility to honor these brave individuals and ensure they receive the quality care they have earned and deserve. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation. I am grateful to have someone like Mr. Lough working as an ally to ensure the needs of our veterans are being met.

Today I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Mr. Lough for his work at the Henderson Municipal Court's Veterans Treatment Court, a program with a mission that is both noble and necessary. I am honored to acknowledge Mr. Lough for his efforts, and I wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.●

RECOGNIZING SANFORD CENTER GERIATRIC SPECIALTY CLINIC

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the opening of the Sanford Center Geriatric Specialty Clinic, the first of its kind in the Silver State. This facility's innovative and unique health care offerings will contribute greatly to Nevadans' quality of life and help improve the quality of medical care offered to seniors across northern Nevada.

The geriatric specialty clinic offers screenings and assessments on the University of Nevada, Reno campus inside the Center for Molecular Medicine. The facility provides geriatric assessment and care management to our elderly population, addressing a wide range of medical concerns, including arthritis, dementia, depression, high blood pressure, frailty, and more. The clinic takes on a comprehensive approach, allowing social workers, primary care physicians, nurses, and psychologists to collaborate in order to make a comprehensive patient assessment. Effective communication within the facility connects both the physical and mental health of patients, creating a better understanding of the patient's needs. The facility also supports patients with multiple chronic conditions, coordinating home and clinical services. In addition, the Sanford Center for Aging is spearheading the start of a telemedicine program to support our rural communities. Those leading the way at this center stand as role models to our local community, demonstrating a genuine concern in improving the health and well-being of Nevadans. The State of Nevada is fortunate to have a facility like this available to our growing senior population.

The Silver State has one of the fastest growing elderly populations in the country, which is why I am pleased to see the clinic is dedicated to caring for Nevada's seniors throughout the aging process. As a member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I am committed to ensuring the needs of this community are met. The opening of the Sanford Center Geriatric Specialty Clinic is another step in providing Nevada's seniors with the support they need and deserve. The groundbreaking care that this facility will provide is invaluable to northern Nevada.

Those serving at this clinic have gone above and beyond to address the needs of our senior community. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the opening of the Sanford Center Geriatric Specialty Clinic.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN S. WALDEN

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to LTC John Walden for his 29 years of exemplary dedication to duty while serving as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve. I am grateful that he will continue to serve his family and the local community of Oxford after concluding his career with the Army. We wish him well in his retirement.

A native of Georgia, LTC John Walden was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Corps from Georgia Military College in 1988. He completed a bachelor of science in criminal justice from Georgia State University in 1995 and his masters of arts in leadership from Luther Rice University in 2013. His military education includes the Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course; Military Intelligence Officer Advance Course; Psychological Operations Officer Course; Counterintelligence Officer Course; Combined Arms Exercise; Command and General Staff College, Intermediate Level Education; and airborne school.

As an Army Reserve officer, Lieutenant Colonel Walden has served with military intelligence, psychological operations, and special operations units at the platoon, detachment, company, battalion, group, and major command level. Assignments have included: tactical intelligence officer, counterintelligence officer, HUMINT team chief, counter terrorism analyst, Iraq Threat Finance Cell OIC, deputy chief, counter terrorism analyst, intelligence training officer, and deputy commander.

As with all our citizen soldiers, it is important that we acknowledge his service in the civilian sector. Lieutenant Colonel Walden has extensive law enforcement experience, serving as both a deputy sheriff in the Rockdale County sheriff's office and as a detective and special investigator with the Valdosta Police Department. As an ordained minister, he was able to continue serving the community and provide mentorship to those in need. He has also worked at Ford Motor Company and the Maxell Corporation. It is because of all of their cooperation and understanding during his many tours of duty that he was able to make such a positive impact on the Army Reserve.

Considering his many positions and service in both the Army and civilian sector, we must acknowledge the tireless support of John's wife, Shelley, and his children, Johnathon, Lucy, and Samuel. I thank them for their sacrifices and wish them all the best for continued success in the future.

Throughout his 29-year career, LTC John Walden has made positive impacts on the careers and lives of his soldiers, peers, and superiors. I am grateful for his service to our country, his community, and that he chose to serve as an Army leader. I join my colleagues today in honoring his dedication to the United States of America.●

REMEMBERING GARY BRAASCH

● Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, Gary Braasch, a gifted photographer of the natural world, died on March 7, 2016. Gary dedicated his career to capturing visually striking portrayals of the devastating effects of climate change. His work has been published in Time, LIFE, the New York Times, National Geographic, and Discover and featured in the Boston Museum of Science, the Chicago Field Museum, and the California Academy of Sciences. Some of Gary's most well-known photos depict the retreat of glaciers. The juxtaposition of old photos from the turn of the 20th century with Gary's modern photos dramatically demonstrated large amounts of glacial melting. Some of these photos were featured in Al Gore's ''An Inconvenient Truth.''

Gary also documented the environmental effects of the fossil fuel industry. He famously captured the first images of Shell's ill-fated Kulluk oil rig, as it prepared to drill an exploratory oil well in the Arctic Ocean. The Kulluk is now regarded as a symbol of the recklessness and dangers of Arctic oil drilling and has become a powerful image of our need to transition to low-carbon, renewable energy.

Gary's photographs were also influential in the scientific and policy communities. He worked with scientists to determine how to use photography to accurately portray the science of climate change. He also visited Capitol Hill on numerous occasions, providing visual evidence of our changing environment to me and my colleagues in the House and Senate. His 2007 book ''Earth Under Fire'' graced my office for many years.

Gary died capturing breathtaking photos on Australia's Great Barrier Reef, a region particular vulnerable to the effects of climate change. His images resonated in a way words and data could never do alone and will stand on as a key component of our planet's record of climate change. Gary may no

longer be with us but his work will continue to inspire the next generation of photographers and all of us who want to protect our planet and its people.●

REMEMBERING BARRY LYNN COATES

● Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor one of South Carolina's veterans, Barry Lynn Coates. Mr. Coates recently passed away at the age of 46 on January 23, 2016, after a long battle with cancer. He became the voice for veterans across the nation as he fought hard to improve the Veterans Affairs medical system. He fought not for himself, but to improve the lives of all veterans suffering from delays in their medical care.

About a year after first complaining to his doctors of pain, he was finally able to get a colonoscopy. Doctors discovered a cancerous tumor the size of a baseball. At that point he had stage 4 cancer, and it was only a matter of time before he was overtaken by the illness. He suffered for months. A simple medical procedure might have saved his life, but he found himself on a growing list of veterans waiting for appointments and procedures. Barry Lynn Coates was courageous in his fight against cancer and in his fight for other veterans to receive the care they deserve.

Lynn is survived by his wife, their five children, five grandchildren, and a community that loved his bubbly personality and passion for pawn shops and for fixing things. He loved the beach, nature, his family above everything, and he lived for the service of his country.

It is with pride and honor we recognize Barry Lynn Coates and his family today and add their legacy to our March 17, 2016, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. We will never forget his sacrifice.●

TRIBUTE TO BETSY FLEMING

● Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor one of South Carolina's great college presidents, Ms. Betsy Fleming. Ms. Fleming is the sitting president for Converse College. Converse College is a private master's university in Spartanburg, SC, providing a distinctive undergraduate liberal arts education for women and innovative programs for co-ed graduate study. President Fleming has decided to step down at the end of the semester after 11 years of leadership at the College.

Through her leadership, Converse College has seen unprecedented growth and extraordinary success. Ms. Fleming has used her passion for the arts to make great strides at Converse, in Spartanburg and statewide. She is leaving quite a legacy in the endowment growth of the school, her decision to cut tuition by 43 percent, and the restructuring of the college to make it more financially sound.

President Fleming's love and understanding of the arts community has also brought value to the students and faculty at Converse College, and she has personified what it means to lead. Her vigorous involvement in the college as well as at the local and State level are second to none, and she truly represents what it means to be an outstanding leader, president, and trailblazer.

It is with pride and honor we recognize Ms. Betsy Fleming and her outstanding achievements today and add her legacy to our March 17, 2016, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. We will always remember her admiration for the arts, for Spartanburg, and above all for Converse College.●

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF THE JENKINS INSTITUTE

● Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I would like to honor and congratulate the Daniel Joseph Jenkins Institute for Children in North Charleston on their 125th anniversary.

In 1891, the Jenkins Institute was founded as Jenkins Orphanage. In 1892, the institute was chartered by the State of South Carolina with the mission of providing a loving and secure home to many children, specifically orphans, in the community.

The Jenkins Institute is an example of an organization that remains committed to the well-being of our community. For 125 years, they have opened their door to orphan children, regardless of their race or socioeconomic backgrounds.

Today the institute continues to welcome those in need of a safe place to call home. They have shown tremendous faith through works of charity, and their honorable legacy will forever be appreciated. I acknowledge with pleasure the Jenkins Institute's influence in North Charleston and therefore recognize their service, dedication, and 125 years rooted in love and faith. Because of places like the Daniel Joseph Jenkins Institute, our children will have a brighter future ahead of them.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a treaty which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:57 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4416. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4434. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4596. An act to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:59 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 2426. An act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1831) to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4416. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4434. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4596. An act to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 17, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 2426. An act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

Report to accompany S. 1177, An original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves (Rept. No. 114–231).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Jennifer M. O'Connor, of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the Department of Defense.

*Todd A. Weiler, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

*Army nomination of Gen. Joseph L. Votel, to be General.

*Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, to be General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Sargent and ending with Brig. Gen. Robert D. Tenhet, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Jeffrey J. Johnson and ending with Col. Ronald T. Stephens, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Dennis P. LeMaster and ending with Col. Michael J. Talley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Michael K. Nagata, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Todd T. Semonite, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Col. Bradley S. James and ending with Col. Kurt W. Stein, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 25, 2016.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Austin S. Miller, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDs on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators .

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Air Force nominations beginning with James B. Anderson and ending with Hyral B. Walker, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jeremy V. Bastian and ending with Christopher A. Watson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Air Force nominations beginning with Christopher F. Abbott and ending with Devin Lee Zufelt, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Air Force nomination of Christopher T. Stein, to be Major.

Army nomination of Gregory L. Boylan, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Derek G. Bean, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Adrian R. Algarra and ending with Gregory B. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Philip O. Adams and ending with Benjaman M. Wunderlich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Julia N. Alvarez and ending with April D. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nominations beginning with Wendy M. Adamian and ending with D012433, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nomination of Vernita M. Corbett, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Matthew H. Adams and ending with D012453, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Army nomination of William D. Rose, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Mark W. Manoso, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Eric F. Sabety, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Andrew R. Mciver and ending with Gerard C. Philip, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 3, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Aaron R. Craig and ending with Christopher T. Steinhilber, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Jimmy W. Darsey and ending with Gerald E. Pirk, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 28, 2016.

Navy nominations beginning with Matthew T. Allen and ending with Joshua F. Zimmer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Navy nominations beginning with Richard W. Lang and ending with Bradley E. Shemluck, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 22, 2016.

Navy nomination of Michael L. Hipp, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Ronald H. Nellen, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Ashley A. Hockycko, to be Lieutenant Commander.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2700. A bill to update the authorizing provisions relating to the workforces of the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 2701. A bill to require consideration of the impact on beneficiary access to care and to enhance due process protections in procedures for suspending payments to Medicaid providers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2702. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 2703. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rollovers between 529 programs and ABLE accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 2704. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the age requirement with respect to eligibility for qualified ABLE programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2705. A bill to authorize Federal agencies to establish prize competitions for innovation or adaptation management development relating to coral reef ecosystems and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2706. A bill to promote innovative approaches to outdoor recreation on Federal land and to open up opportunities for collaboration with non-Federal partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 2707. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to nullify the proposed rule regarding defining and delimiting the exemptions for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees, to require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a full and complete economic analysis with improved economic data on small businesses, nonprofit employers, Medicare or Medicaid dependent health care providers, and small governmental jurisdictions, and all other employers, and minimize the impact on such employers, before promulgating any substantially similar rule, and to provide a rule of construction regarding the salary threshold exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2708. A bill to provide for the admission to the United States of up to 10,000 Syrian religious minorities as refugees of special humanitarian concern in each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 2709. A bill to require the posting online of certain government contracts; to the

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2710. A bill to increase the participation of historically underrepresented demographic groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and industry; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 2711. A bill to expand opportunity for Native American children through additional options in education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2712. A bill to restore amounts improperly withheld for tax purposes from severance payments to individuals who retired or separated from service in the Armed Forces for combat-related injuries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 2713. A bill to provide for the implementation of a Precision Medicine Initiative; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 2714. A bill to vest responsibility for inspector general duties for the National Background Investigations Bureau of the Office of Personnel Management in the Inspector General of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 2715. A bill to amend section 2302 of title 5, United States Code, to include the suspension or revocation of access to classified information as a personnel action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2716. A bill to update the oil and gas and mining industry guides of the Securities and Exchange Commission; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2717. A bill to improve the safety and address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams to prevent flooding on Indian reservations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2718. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support innovative approaches to career and technical education and redesign the high school experience for students by providing students with equitable access to rigorous, engaging, and relevant real world education through partnerships with business and industry and higher education that prepare students to graduate from high school and enroll into postsecondary education without the need for remediation and with the ability to use knowledge to solve complex problems, think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and develop academic mindsets; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2719. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to improve the protections provided to members of the uniformed services and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2720. A bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to amend certain regulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2721. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to credit individuals serving as caregivers of dependent relatives with deemed wages for up to five years of such service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2722. A bill to amend the Home Owners' Loan Act to allow Federal savings associations to elect to operate as national banks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2723. A bill to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to apply whistleblower protections available to certain executive branch employees to legislative branch employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEE, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SASSE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2724. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, with respect to the judicial review of agency interpretations of statutory and regulatory provisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2725. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COATS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2726. A bill to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2727. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to allow preservation leasing as a form of compensatory mitigation for discharges of dredged or fill material affecting State or Indian land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 2728. A bill to facilitate the import of marine mammal products into the United States by Alaska Natives; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2729. A bill to require full spending of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, provide for expanded uses of the Fund, and prevent cargo diversion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2730. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the ''Ghost Army'', collectively, in recognition of its unique and incredible service during World War II; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2731. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a land exchange involving land within the boundary of the Cape Cod National Seashore, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2732. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to exempt Indian tribes from compensatory mitigation requirements in connection with certain discharges of dredged or fill material, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. LEE):

S. 2733. A bill to ensure that venue in patents cases is fair and proper, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY:

S. 2734. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion of gain or loss from the sale or exchange of certain brownfield sites from unrelated business taxable income, and to extend expensing of environmental remediation costs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 2735. A bill to strengthen the enforcement of explosive materials prohibitions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ROUNDS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. KING, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2736. A bill to improve access to durable medical equipment for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2737. A bill to improve medical device innovation; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2738. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require the disclosure of political intelligence activities, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for restrictions on former officers, employees, and elected officials of the executive and legislative branches regarding political intelligence contacts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2739. A bill to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydropower by the

Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BENNET, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 403. A resolution designating the week beginning April 24, 2016 as ''National Industrial Assessment Center Week'' in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Industrial Assessment Centers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. Res. 404. A resolution designating March 2016 as ''National Middle Level Education Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. Res. 405. A resolution designating Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the site of the centennial commemoration of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, in coordination with Vision 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 406. A resolution recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in the Girl Scouts, which has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere since 1916; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. Res. 407. A resolution congratulating the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team for winning the 38th annual United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association national championship; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. Res. 408. A resolution designating April 2016 as ''National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FISCHER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. CARPER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 409. A resolution recognizing March 2016 as ''National Women's History Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. Con. Res. 34. A concurrent resolution providing for an adjournment of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 453

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 453, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide grants to States to streamline State requirements and procedures for veterans with military emergency medical training to become civilian emergency medical technicians.

S. 491

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 774, a bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 1082

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1082, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1208, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require gas pipeline facilities to accelerate the repair, rehabilitation, and replacement of high-risk pipelines used in commerce, and for other purposes.

S. 1209

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1209, a bill to establish State revolving loan funds to repair or replace natural gas distribution pipelines.

S. 1333

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1333, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude cannabidiol and cannabidiol-rich plants from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes.

S. 1383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1383, a bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes.

S. 1631

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify certain provisions relating to multiemployer pensions, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 2085

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2085, a bill to clarify that nonprofit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity may accept donated mortgage appraisals, and for other purposes.

S. 2102

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2102, a bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority.

S. 2125

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2125, a bill to make the Community Advantage Pilot Program of the Small Business Administration permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2377, a bill to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and protect and secure the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2390, a bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38,

United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2494

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2494, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2531, supra.

S. 2603

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2603, a bill to deny corporate average fuel economy credits obtained through a violation of law, establish an Air Quality Restoration Trust Fund within the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes.

S. 2613

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2613, a bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

S. 2630

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2630, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to require certain disclosures be included on employee pay stubs, and for other purposes.

S. 2632

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2632, a bill to promote freedom, human rights, and the rule of law as part of United States-Vietnam relations and for other purposes.

S. 2633

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2633, a bill to improve the ability of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide health care to veterans through non-Department health care providers, and for other purposes.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2693

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2693, a bill to ensure the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission allocates its resources appropriately by prioritizing complaints of discrimination before implementing the proposed revision of the employer information report EEO–1, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

S. RES. 391

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 391, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to oppose the transfer of foreign enemy combatants from the detention facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States homeland.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2706. A bill to promote innovative approaches to outdoor recreation on Federal land and to open up opportunities for collaboration with non-Federal partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, last summer, I set out on a tour of Oregon's Seven Wonders to hear from Oregonians in every corner of the State about how to improve access to outdoor recreation. Recreation is a big economic multiplier for my State, and Oregonians are the true experts on—outdoor recreation—it is in our DNA.

Oregon's recreation and tourism economy generates an estimated $10 billion a year in direct economic impact for the state and supports more than 101,000 jobs—enough people essentially to fill every seat in Autzen and Reser stadiums, home to the University of Oregon Ducks and Oregon State Beavers. Recreation supports communities and businesses large and small throughout urban and rural Oregon and can have astounding benefits on veterans, youth, and seniors.

Not only do you have outfitters and the crafts people who produce recreation products, like canoes, kayaks, bikes, and fishing poles, recreation supports the broader travel and tourism industry including equipment retailers and gear shops. But the benefit doesn't stop when the sun goes down. Then visitors go to the brewpubs and restaurants, and they stay overnight at the hotels and the motels. So what we need to do is ensure that recreation is a higher priority for the future so it can continue to boost economies large and small.

Yet on my tour of Oregon's Seven Wonders, I consistently heard one troubling theme that's yanking our recreation economy's potential back down to earth. Simply put, red tape is tying down the opportunities for Oregon recreation and tourism to lift off to even greater heights. Outfitters and guides must navigate confusing permit processes only to wait months or years for their permits to get approved, and outdoor enthusiasts searching for outdoor recreation opportunities often get lost in the paperwork before they ever hit the trails.

That is why today I am introducing the Recreation Not Red-Tape, RNR, Act to ensure that recreation is a priority for Federal agencies and to cut the bureaucratic red tape in the recreation permitting process to make accessing outdoor recreation opportunities easier and much more fun. I gathered input from Oregonians who enjoy public lands, entrepreneurs in the outdoor travel and tourism industry, and community leaders from Oregon and across the Nation. The bill focuses on making sure everyone has easier access to the outdoors, recognizing and building on recreation as an economic driver, and making the repair and management of our recreational public lands easier. Additionally, the bill supports improving access to outdoor recreation for veterans, seniors, and youth.

My friend and colleague, Representative EARL BLUMENAUER, is today introducing the House companion of the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act. The bill

is supported by over 50 Oregon and national organizations, from American Alpine Club to Vet Voice.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2708. A bill to provide for the admission to the United States of up to 10,000 Syrian religious minorities as refugees of special humanitarian concern in each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, 6 months ago, a 12-year-old boy stood before a crowd in a Syrian village not far from Aleppo. This boy was Christian and standing above him were Islamic State terrorists holding knives. In the crowd was the boy's father, a Christian minister. Methodically, the terrorists began cutting off the young boy's fingers. Amidst his screams, they turned to the minister, his father. If he renounced his faith and in their terms returned to Islam, his son's suffering would stop. In the end, however, these ISIS terrorists killed the boy, killed his father, and killed two other Christians solely over the faith they professed. They did so by crucifixion.

In the time of Christ, the cross was not just a means of execution but a brutal and public warning to all. Because of Christ's suffering, the cross was transformed into a revered symbol of His sacrifice and promise of salvation, but today it is clear ISIS seeks to turn the cross once again into a message of dread.

Eight other Christians in the village that day were also killed. They were executed by public beheading, but not before ISIS barbarians raped the two women among the victims and forced the crowd to witness the atrocity.

Today was the deadline set by law for Secretary of State Kerry to present Congress with an evaluation of the persecution of Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria and Iraq. I am heartened Secretary Kerry this morning took the needed step of declaring the systemic murder of religious minorities by ISIS what it plainly is: genocide.

The nature of these horrific crimes of ISIS has not been a secret. It is no secret that the story of the torture and death of that 12-year-old Syrian boy, his minister father, and 10 other Christians is repeated many times over in different villages, with different victims of different religions throughout the region. It is no secret that hundreds of thousands of religious minorities in Syria and Iraq have been driven by war and violence from homes and lands they have held for generations. It is no secret ISIS terrorists have destroyed Christian churches, desecrated holy ancient shrines, and dug up Christian graves and smashed their tombstones. It is no secret bishops, priests, and other clerical leaders are being abducted and murdered. It is no secret ISIS terrorists capture Yazidi women and girls and lock them into a life of sexual slavery and repeated rape. Many of these victims choose to take their own lives, seeing suicide as their only escape amidst hopelessness and unimaginable suffering. It is no secret that thousands of Christians and other religious minorities have been systematically raped and tortured, beheaded, crucified, burned alive, and buried in mass graves, if buried at all. It is no secret the word we should use to describe the whole of these atrocities—the word we must use—is ''genocide.''

The plain reality is that the Islamic State is seeking to eradicate Christians, Yazidis, Sabean-Mandeans, Jews, and other religious groups it sees as apostates and infidels. This is part of its fanatical focus on establishing a caliphate first in the Middle East and eventually across the rest of the world.

Christians, Yazidis, and others who have managed to find refuge have seen ISIS's genocidal campaign firsthand. They can list name after name of missing family members—wives and daughters kidnapped into sexual slavery, sons and brothers killed, and others spirited away to unknown fates. These victims know the truth of the genocide occurring in Syria and Iraq, and now that truth is recognized officially by the United States of America.

There are those who wavered on whether this was genocide. They feared that uttering this truth would compel U.S. action to stop the genocide. My answer is—and? A mortal enemy who wishes to commit mass terrorist atrocities against the United States is also systematically persecuting and exterminating Christians and other religious minorities. When will our national security interests ever overlap more perfectly with our moral sentiment than now? We can and we ought to stop ISIS dead, stop them before they kill more Americans, stop them before they eliminate Christian communities that have existed since the days of Christ himself.

Still others argue that while a genocide may be occurring, recognizing it may somehow play into ISIS's propaganda that it is fighting a righteous jihad against a supposed new Crusade. I never understood this argument. To stay silent in the face of ISIS's propaganda is to accommodate that propaganda. To cede any power to ISIS's narrative is to bend the light of truth to the hard darkness of a lie. Standing up for the practitioners of religions born in the Middle East and calling the region home since the beginning of recorded history is not a new Crusade. It is a defense of world order demonstrated through the periods of peaceful coexistence of the many religions in those ancient lands—an existence that today is threatened with extinction by ISIS's barbarism.

Today the United States rightly recognizes this genocide, but we must also take action to relieve it. ISIS is a threat to the United States, our allies, and to the stability of the whole Middle East. Destroying ISIS and stopping its malignant expansion is a core national security interest of the United States, but stopping ISIS and the depraved ideology that enables it is also a pursuit that aligns with our highest ideals and humanitarian principles.

I and many of my colleagues in the Senate have deep disagreements with the President's policy to defeat ISIS. For 2 years his policy of confusion, delay, and paralysis has failed to stop these terrorists. An entirely new approach that has the United States in the lead of a determined coalition is badly needed, but it is not only President Obama's strategic approach that is ill-considered. His policy on Syrian refugee resettlement is as well. Because the United States unwisely relies on the United Nations for all referrals of refugees seeking resettlement in the United States, Christians and other religious minorities fleeing persecution are the victims of unintentional discrimination when seeking asylum and protection in the United States.

Last year, of the 1,790 Syrian refugees resettled in the United States, only 41 were religious minorities. Of that 41, 29 were Christian. That means that while 13 percent of Syria's prewar population consisted of religious minorities, only 2.3 percent of the refugees who make it to the United States are religious minorities. Without doubt, Syrians of all confessions are being victimized by this savage war and are facing unimaginable suffering, but only Christians and other religious minorities are the deliberate targets of systemic persecution and genocide. Their ancient communities are at risk of extermination. Their ancestral homes and religious sites are being erased from the Middle Eastern map. Christians and other minorities should not be shut out from the small number of refugees who find shelter in the United States. We ought to help ensure that these faith communities survive, but why are Christians underrepresented among the refugees? There are a number of factors. Perhaps chief among them is that the United States, for all intents and purposes, relies exclusively on the U.N. refugee agency to identify candidates for resettlement. According to the State Department, less than 1 percent of the thousands of Syrian refugees referred by the U.N. to the United States are religious minorities.

Let me stress that this underrepresentation is not the result of intentional discrimination. The U.N. does praiseworthy and hard work in relieving the suffering of refugees around the world and, as a result, improving the security and stability of nations in and near conflict and disaster zones, but it is well established that many religious

minorities in Syria are very reluctant to register as refugees with the United Nations because they fear facing even more persecution. The U.N. itself has reported that minority communities ''fear that registration might bring retribution from other refugees'' in camps or other areas in which they sought safe haven. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has reported that Christians refrain from registering with the U.N. because they fear being marked for revenge by forces loyal to Bashar al-Assad should he remain in power in Syria.

Whether these fears are well-founded or not, the reality is, they exist and they deter Christians from seeking U.N. protection. While the U.N. has sought to educate minority populations on the safety of the registration system, the fact remains that only 1 percent of the millions of Syrian refugees who registered with the U.N. are non-Muslim.

The United States ought not to depend solely on the U.N. for refugee resettlement referrals. If we are to do our part in saving ancient faith communities from genocide, we must find alternate ways to identify persecuted people to whom we can grant safe haven.

Today I am introducing legislation to create that alternate way. The Religious Persecution Relief Act would grant religious minorities fleeing persecution from groups like ISIS and other groups in Syria priority status so they can apply directly to the U.S. resettlement program, without going through the U.N. first. It will set aside 10,000 resettlement slots annually that must be devoted to religious minorities.

The priority status, known as P–2 status, will allow religious minorities to skip the U.N. referral process, and it will fast track the process by which we confirm that they are in fact targets of persecution and genocide. To answer in advance a most urgent and understandable question, those who apply for P–2 status will be subject to the exact same security vetting process as all other refugee applicants. It is my strong position that the United States must work with known religious leaders in the region and pursue other proven vetting methods to ensure that those who enter this country are not threats to the security of the American people.

Extending a hand to help persecuted people in this manner is not a new idea. In 1989, the late Senator from New Jersey, Frank Lautenberg, crafted what has been called the Lautenberg amendment, which granted P–2 priority status to Soviet Jewry, Vietnamese nationals, and other religious minorities seeking refuge. In 2004, the late Senator from Pennsylvania, Arlen Specter, expanded the Lautenberg amendment to cover religious minorities fleeing oppression from the Ayatollahs in Iran. In 2007 the late Senator from Massachusetts, Ted Kennedy, passed a bill that granted priority status to certain Iraqi religious minority members.

The bill I am introducing today follows this bipartisan tradition of the Senate and our country. Among the first Americans were Pilgrims from religious persecution in the Old World. That is one reason we have a long tradition of defending religious minorities here and around the world.

In the coming weeks, I will discuss this bill with my fellow Senators. My hope is, it will pass and pass soon because each day will bring another Christian child who is tortured, another minister crucified, and another girl raped. Faith communities in the Middle East are slowly being strangled out of existence.

We are coming upon Easter, the day of Christ's resurrection. The message of Easter is one for all of humanity; that in times of pain and suffering, trial and tribulation, there can ultimately be salvation, there can ultimately be triumph over death.

I try to keep this message in mind, particularly amidst these times when religious conflict and oppression do not seem to be waning but waxing. Today Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world. Other religions are not far behind in the scope and depth of the oppression they face. While the United States cannot save all those who are suffering from religious persecution, when the persecutors are rabid terrorists who want to kill Americans and we have the means not only to defeat those terrorists but to also protect the innocent, we ought to act. Certainly we have an obligation to stop the unintentional discrimination in our own refugee process that unfairly blocks Christians and other religious minorities from seeking safety in the United States.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2710. A bill to increase the participation of historically underrepresented demographic groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and industry; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, March is Women's History Month. So this morning I would like to highlight the progress women have made in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math—or the STEM fields—challenges that persist, and legislation that I will be introducing to help overcome these challenges.

Today we rely on computers for much of our modern life. For that, we thank pioneer RDML Grace Hopper, who was one of the first computer programmers. Space travel is one of the most technologically challenging endeavors that humankind has undertaken. The road to becoming an astronaut requires intelligence and toughness, not to mention fortitude. Astronauts like Sally Ride, the first American woman in space, have shown that women belong in every endeavor.

Hawaii is home to women leaders in STEM fields. Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott was raised in rural Hana on the island of Maui. She became the first Native Hawaiian woman to receive a Ph.D. in science and went on to discover over 200 species of algae. She remains a leading expert on Pacific algae. These women persevered and rose to great heights of success in the STEM fields. However, we must do better to make sure that many more women have the opportunity to pursue STEM careers. While girls and boys express a similar level of interest in STEM at an early age, studies have found that women start to lose interest in STEM as early as in middle school. This loss of women and minorities continues at nearly every stage of the STEM career trajectory. For example, women are more likely to switch from a STEM to non-STEM major in their first year of college than their male counterparts.

Girls and women report many reasons for losing interest in STEM. These include negative stereotypes about women in STEM, perceived gender barriers, feelings of isolation, and a lack of female role models and mentors. Gender bias and institutional barriers still slow the advancement of girls and women. Research shows that issues of bias can hinder interest in STEM, influence academic performance, and influence whether faculty encourages female students to pursue STEM careers. Furthermore, bias—whether conscious or unconscious—can harm the hiring, promotion, and career advancement of women in STEM. Bias can even hurt female researchers' chances of winning competitive science grants. Approximately half of the U.S. population and workforce is made up of women. But women make up just over a quarter of the STEM workforce.

As our economy becomes more global, our entire population—men and women—must be engaged in fields that will keep America competitive on the world stage. Expanding the number of women and minorities in STEM fields is essential to meeting that challenge. The importance of growing the U.S. STEM workforce is acknowledged by leaders and businesses in all fields at all levels. For example, this recognition was very evident in the Senate's immigration reform debate. When I served on the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2013, increasing our STEM workforce through immigration policy drove major sections of the bipartisan immigration reform bill passed by the Senate.

In Hawaii and elsewhere, there are programs that expose students to STEM careers through mentoring and interactive activities such as robotics. I want to focus on one school in Hawaii that created these opportunities for their students—Molokai Middle School. This is a school that struggled with science and math scores, but when their teachers established a robotics programs, students from all backgrounds got interested in science. The year the program started, the Molokai Middle School robotics team overcame all odds to represent Hawaii in a national robotics tournament. This year, they will compete in an international robotics competition in Kentucky. Molokai is an island of only about 7,000 people. Their students have thrived and succeeded through their STEM experience. While programs like these have a positive impact on encouraging students to stay excited about STEM fields, there are not enough of such programs.

That is why today I am proud to be joined by Senators GILLIBRAND, MURRAY, FEINSTEIN, HEINRICH, BALDWIN, STABENOW, and BROWN to introduce the Women and Minorities in STEM Booster ACT to improve the recruitment, retention, and success of women and minorities at all stages of the STEM pipeline. This bill authorizes the National Science Foundation to award competitive grants for outreach, mentoring, and professional development programs.

The STEM booster act also authorizes funding for STEM education outreach programs at the elementary and secondary school levels, funding for mentoring programs, and programs to increase the recruitment and retention of women and minority faculty.

I am also working on another bill to address some of the cultural and institutional barriers that I mentioned today, which impede women's and minorities' advancement in STEM fields. In addition to increasing mentoring and outreach programs, the second bill will improve guidance, training, and coordination among Federal STEM agencies and universities to proactively combat bias and discrimination.

We are on the right track to grow our STEM workforce in the United States, but we still need to move forward faster. We must act now to speed this process. My bill will help expose more girls, women, and minorities to opportunities in STEM fields and accelerate their participation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting women and minorities in STEM now.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 2711. A bill to expand opportunity for Native American children through additional options in education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation to help tackle the challenging problem of fixing our broken education system on Indian reservations. The bill, known as the Native American Education Opportunity Act, would expand the education opportunities of Native American student living on reservations by allowing their parents to take full advantage of Education Savings Account which would be funded by the Bureau of Indian Education, BIE.

Under this bill, eligible students could apply for up to 90 percent of the per pupil expenditure that BIE would spend on them at a BIE school and use those funds to pay for private school tuition, tutors, online curriculum courses, special needs services, and other K–12 education needs. This funding would be provided through the use of Education Savings Accounts, or ESA's, which are established State-administered programs in the States of Arizona, Mississippi, Florida, Tennessee, and Nevada.

Across the Nation, there is a growing interest in State legislatures in enacting ESA's because of the freedom and opportunity they give to families, but in particular low-income students. My home State of Arizona is at the forefront of this revolutionary approach of empowering parents to customize their child's education. I believe that families living on Indian reservations in my state and elsewhere should reap the benefits of ESA's too.

As my colleagues know, the need to improve Indian County is a crisis issue. I'm of course referring to the broken Bureau of Indian Education system which consists of 185 schools and 41,000 students. By some estimates, the BIE's average per pupil spending is $15,000—higher than the national average. Less than 7 percent of all Native American students attend a BIE school, but the performance disparity between BIE students and Native American students attending non-BIB schools is staggering. Almost half of BIE students do not graduate from high school. Their test scores trail by double digits compared to their peers. Some BIB schools have facilities that are unsuitable as a learning environment. A series of recent reports by the Government Accountability Office, GAO, have focused on the disrepair of schools and bureaucratic mismanagement. Some schools desks, school supplies, and even heat.

I wholeheartedly agree that Congress must intervene and implement administrative reforms and maintenance improvements. But, let us consider that market competition could be a powerful tool for improving teacher retention, diversifying education options, and improving test scores and graduation rates in Indian Country more so than any 5-year BIB plan developed in Washington.

This bill is particularly useful for rural Indian reservations with large land bases where children living on the reservation have little choice but to attend a BIB school. Take for example the Navajo Nation where non-BIB public schools can be over 50 miles away, and private school options are few and far between. It is unconscionable to leave students stranded in failing schools when we can create the option of expanding their educational opportunities in even the most remote parts of Indian County. We can and should do more to create a market that attracts private schools and other education services willing to open shop on remote Indian reservations.

School choice initiatives, while still relatively new, are building a track record of success. One example is a Federal program set up 12 years ago to address the beleaguered public school system in our Nation's capital, Washington, D.C. Congress established the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program which at one time provided up to $20 million in scholarships to low income families to pull their children out of a failing DC public schools and place them in a private school. The DC program transformed the future of thousands of children in the District. In 2011, a U.S. Department of Education study found that graduation rates, particularly among minority students jumped by as much as 20 percent for the kids who participated in the program.

The situation in the BIE school system is failing, and it is a reflection of our failure in our solemn obligation to meet certain needs of Native Americans living on Indian reservations. I believe that opening up education opportunism beyond BIE schools for Native American families can prove to be one of the most effective agents for change for education in Indian Country. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2716. A bill to update the oil and gas and mining industry guides of the Securities and Exchange Commission; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation to require the Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC, to update its industry guides for oil, gas, and mining companies.

In November 2015, Peabody Energy agreed to provide comprehensive SEC disclosures about climate change risks facing the company when it settled charges of misleading investors. The company executed this settlement with the New York Attorney General after an investigation discovered that Peabody Energy ''repeatedly denied in public financial filings to the SEC that it had the ability to predict the impact that potential regulation of climate

change pollution would have on its business, even though Peabody and its consultants actually made projections that such regulation would have severe impacts on the company.''

Unfortunately, it appears that the SEC had no role in this settlement, in which Peabody Energy agreed to amend its SEC disclosures, admitting that ''concerns about the environmental impacts of coal combustion . . . could significantly affect demand for our products or our securities.''

It is clear that the SEC needs to do more when it comes to critically reviewing the disclosures being filed by publicly traded companies, but it is also clear that the SEC's industry guides for oil, gas, and mining companies should be updated to reflect the growing risk of climate change to these companies. By so doing, the investing public can access the material information necessary to make informed decisions when investing in these types of companies. Indeed, it is for this reason that the SEC has established industry guides for certain industries with complex financial and non-financial data.

These disclosures are important to investors, such as Allianz Global Investors, which is a global diversified active investment manager with nearly $500 billion in assets under management. Allianz has specifically called for ''achieving better disclosure of the effects of carbon costs on the Oil & Gas companies.''

In updating the industry guides for oil, gas, and mining companies, my legislation would direct the SEC to work with the SEC's Investor Advisory Committee. This Committee was established by the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to advise and consult with the SEC on regulatory priorities, the regulation of securities products, trading strategies, fee structures, disclosure effectiveness, and on initiatives to promote investor confidence and the integrity of the securities marketplace.

I thank Ceres for their support, and I also thank Representative CARTWRIGHT for introducing companion legislation in the House of Representatives today. I urge our colleagues to join us in supporting this legislation.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2717. A bill to improve the safety and address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams to prevent flooding on Indian reservations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Dam Repairs and Improvements for Tribes Act of 2016 or DRIFT Act. This important legislation is intended to address the flood prevention and dam safety needs in Indian Country. It would address the deferred maintenance needs of Bureau of Indian Affairs, BIA, dams, as well as reform tribal programs within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The BIA has 137 high-hazard dams and over 700 low-hazard dams across the United States. Nearly all of the high-hazard dams are in Western United States, including two high-hazard dams on the Wind River Reservation in my home State of Wyoming—Washakie Dam and Ray Lake Dam. According to the BIA staff, on average these dams are 70 to 80 years old and have over $500 million in deferred maintenance needs. Funding is simply not keeping up with the maintenance needs of these dams and the threat to public safety in and around Indian Country is very real. The United States has a trust obligation to maintain and operate these dams and prevent what could be a future dam failure.

The legislation I am introducing today would require the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of the Army, to address the maintenance backlog of BIA dams by establishing a High-Hazard Indian Dam Safety Deferred Maintenance Fund and a Low-Hazard Indian Dam Safety Deferred Maintenance Fund. The high-hazard fund would receive $22,750,000 each year from fiscal years 2017 through 2037. The low-hazard fund would receive $10,000,000 for the same time period. The bill funds low-hazard dams if their needs are critical as well and are not being addressed by available scarce resources. Neglecting the deferred maintenance needs of these dams may result in them becoming high hazard dams in the near future.

The DRIFT Act establishes criteria for how the money would be prioritized, looking at criteria such as threats to public safety, natural or cultural resources, and economic concerns. The criteria also looks at the ability of increasing water storage capacity of BIA dams to prevent flooding to downstream communities.

The legislation also seeks to make other important flood prevention and dam safety policy reforms for both the BIA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Specifically, the DRIFT Act establishes a 4-year pilot program for a BIA flood mitigation program for tribes; establishes a Tribal Safety of Dams Committee within the Department of the Interior to make recommendations to Congress for modernizing the Indian Dam Safety Act; and mandates that tribes regularly report their dam inventory to BIA.

The bill requires the BIA to report annually on the safety status of their dams to Congress; makes reforms to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Tribal Partnership Program to allow the Corps to pay for any feasibility study of a project costing not more than $10,000,000; allows in-kind contributions by tribes to count towards a cost-share of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' feasibility study; and allows tribes to not have a cost share for studies and projects that cost up to $200,000. This is the same cost-sharing requirements the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allows for U.S. territories.

It is time to make sure that we make the necessary changes to ensure that tribes and surrounding communities are protected, and that the Federal Government collaborates with and empowers Indian tribes to secure their communities.''

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2718. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support innovative approaches to career and technical education and redesign the high school experience for students by providing students with equitable access to rigorous, engaging, and relevant real world education through partnerships with business and industry and higher education that prepare students to graduate from high school and enroll into postsecondary education without the need for remediation and with the ability to use knowledge to solve complex problems, think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and develop academic mindsets; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, the demands of today's competitive global market require that students have the right skills and knowledge to succeed in postsecondary education and enter the workforce. Providing students with an engaging experience that is relevant to the workforce and integrates partnerships with industry and higher education is critical to our Nation's future. Unfortunately, these opportunities are lacking in many of today's high schools, leaving students unprepared for 21st century careers.

Career and technical education, CTE, is often overlooked in discussions on increasing relevancy and rigor in our Nation's schools—despite the fact that a strong focus on academics is the cornerstone of high-quality CTE. When the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education conducted a 4-year longitudinal study in three states, they found that students participating in CTE programs or career pathways outperformed their peers on the number of credits they earned in science, technology, engineering and math, STEM, and AP classes, while also earning higher grade point averages in their CTE classes.

That is why I am introducing with my colleagues, Senators PORTMAN, BALDWIN, and CAPITO, the CTE Excellence and Equity Act. This bipartisan legislation supports funding for innovation in career and technical education

to help redesign the high school experience for historically underserved students. It would authorize grants to partnerships among school districts, employers, and institutions of higher education in Virginia and other states that help students earn industry recognized credentials or credit toward a postsecondary degree or certificate. The bill also places an emphasis on understanding the relevance of coursework in the context of a future career by placing an emphasis on teaching workplace skills through job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships.

CTE programs are critical components to every student's education. I am pleased to be introducing this bipartisan legislation to strengthen CTE programs in high school so that students are better prepared for postsecondary studies and the workforce. I hope that my colleagues consider this legislation as we move to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins CTE Act.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2719. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to improve the protections provided to members of the uniformed services and their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I have often said when our nation sends men and women to war we commit to taking care of them when they return home. We also promise them important legal protections to allow them to focus on their mission and in recognition that while they are deployed or away from home servicemembers often do not have the resources to respond to a range of financial and legal issues. Despite these protections, too many servicemembers have been cheated on their student loans, on their mortgages, and on their credit cards.

When our men and women in uniform are serving our country, they should not have to worry about whether our government is going to hold up its end of the bargain and fulfill its responsibilities to them.

So today I introduce the SCRA Enhancement and Improvement Act of 2016, which will put an end to many of these predatory practices and give servicemembers and the government the tools they need to fight back when banks and student loan servicers deny servicemembers their rights.

In 2014, I learned of allegations that at least one major student loan servicer had been overcharging men and women in uniform on their student loans while they were on active duty. That's unacceptable. One servicemember overcharged on their student loans is one too many.

That is why this bill will end the unfair and improper practices of student loan servicers by requiring them to automatically apply the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, SCRA, interest rate cap, respond within 14 days to any request for SCRA protections, and provide a full explanation any time they deny an SCRA protection, along with clear instructions on how to remedy the situation so the servicemember can receive that protection. It will also require student loan servicers to have a designated service representative or point of contact for servicemembers and ensure these individuals are properly trained on the needs of servicemembers, how the military operates, and the protections required by SCRA, the Higher Education Act, and other laws.

The bill will hold servicers accountable for their conduct and treatment of servicemembers by requiring them to retain all communications with servicemembers so we can conduct thorough oversight.

The SCRA Enhancement and Improvement Act will also hold the Department of Education accountable for enforcing standards and the law with its student loan servicers. Following numerous allegations of servicemembers being mistreated by student loan servicers who were not complying with the SCRA interest rate caps, and at least 69,000 servicemembers who were overcharged by one Federal contractor, I asked the Department to review how many servicemembers had been improperly denied their benefits under SCRA. Shockingly, the Department told us that the servicers were complying in the ''vast majority of cases.'' This was inconsistent with what the Department of Justice and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau had found.

I wrote to the Department of Education's Inspector General and asked her to review the Department's findings. Two weeks ago the IG released their report, and it showed that instead of doing a thorough investigation to find out exactly how many servicemembers may have been overcharged on their student loans, the Department's review was riddled with errors and papered over mishandling of military borrowers' loans.

The bill I am introducing today will require sufficient notice to be given when a loan is transferred or sold, and that all benefits or protections for the servicemember are seamlessly transferred to the new loan servicer. It will also forgive all Federal and private student loan debt in the event the servicemember dies in the line of duty.

The SCRA Enhancement and Improvement Act also expands protections beyond student loans. I was concerned when several years ago some of the nation's largest mortgage servicers improperly overcharged and foreclosed upon deployed servicemembers in violation of the SCRA. Thousands of servicemembers and veterans were wronged over several years. After those allegations came to light, and after the Department of Justice reached a settlement with those mortgage servicers, GAO released a report in 2014 looking at the importance of mortgage and foreclosure protections in the SCRA. The results were concerning, especially when they found at one mortgage servicer that 82 percent of loans that would have benefitted from the SCRA's interest rate cap still had rates in excess of 6 percent.

This bill would reduce the interest rate cap to three percent to provide meaningful protection to servicemembers, including a zero percent cap for servicemembers eligible for hostile fire or imminent danger pay. It would expand the SCRA interest rate protection to all of a servicemember's debt regardless of when it was incurred, in order to cover consolidation loans and in recognition that the same challenges exist for military borrowers regardless of when a debt was first incurred. It would also strengthen the protections that prevent judgements against a servicemember who cannot appear in court because of military service.

As the daughter of a World War II veteran, I know how much our military families sacrifice on behalf of their country. So I believe protecting our military men and women from predatory practices is an absolutely essential commitment we make to them. We will not allow our servicemembers to be taken advantage of.

Finally, as we have seen too often, these protections are only as good as our ability to enforce the law and hold people accountable. The SCRA Enhancement and Improvement Act will give servicemembers, the Department of Justice, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau the legal and oversight tools they need to hold entities accountable. It would clarify that servicemembers may bring a private right of action to enforce their rights and make arbitration clauses unenforceable unless all parties agree after a dispute arises. The bill will give the Attorney General the authority to issue civil investigative demands in SCRA investigations. It would double the fines against parties found to be violating the protections afforded by the SCRA.

With the number of Federal entities involved, it is essential the departments and agencies work collaboratively to protect servicemembers. The Defense Department must ensure it is providing clear, useful information to servicemembers on their rights and how to invoke them, and that the training stays current. I especially commend the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for its dedicated work on behalf of our men and women in uniform.

Our servicemembers deserve better than what they have gotten over the last several years. The SCRA Enhancement and Improvement Act will go a long way to ensuring our servicemembers are protected, putting a stop to the predatory practices of banks and student loan servicers, and change the apathy that has characterized the Department of Education's oversight. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2730. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the ''Ghost Army'', collectively, in recognition of its unique and incredible service during World War II; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act to honor the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, called the ''Ghost Army,'' which was a top-secret unit of the United States Army that served in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. The unit was actively engaged in battlefield operations from June of 1944 through March of 1945. The deceptive activities of the Ghost Army were essential to several Allied victories across Europe and are estimated to have saved thousands of lives.

I was inspired to introduce this bill after hearing the story of Jack McGlynn of Medford, MA. I have known Jack for decades going back to my time in the Massachusetts State Legislature, but I never knew that he was a member of the Ghost Army. Like many World War II Veterans, Jack returned home to Massachusetts after the War, started a family, and got involved in local politics. Jack was a city councilor, Mayor, and State Representative. He kept his service in the Ghost Army a secret from everyone, even his wife and 6 children. Finally in 2008, Jack read that it was declassified and he finally shared the story with his family and friends.

In evaluating the performance of the Ghost Army after the War, a U.S. Army analysis found that ''Rarely, if ever, has there been a group of such a few men which had so great an influence on the outcome of a major military campaign.''. Many Ghost Army soldiers were specially selected for their mission, and were recruited from art schools, advertising agencies, communications companies, and other creative and technical professions.

The first four members of the Ghost Army landed on D-day and two became casualties while camouflaging early beach installations. The Ghost Army's secret deception operations commenced in France on June 14, 1944, when Task Force Mason landed at Omaha Beach to draw enemy fire and protect the 980th Artillery.

Task Force Mason was a prelude to full scale tactical deceptions completed by the Ghost Army. Often operating on or near the front lines, the Ghost Army used inflatable tanks, artillery, air planes and other vehicles, advanced engineered soundtracks, and skillfully crafted radio trickery to create the illusion of sizable American forces where there were none and to draw the enemy away from Allied troops.

Ghost Army soldiers impersonated other, larger Army units by sewing counterfeit patches onto their uniforms, painting false markings on their vehicles, and creating phony headquarters staffed by fake generals, all in an effort to feed false information to Axis spies. During the Battle of the Bulge, the Ghost Army created counterfeit radio traffic to mask the efforts of General George Patton's Third Army as it mobilized to break through to the 101st Airborne. It also provided assistance to elements of 10th Armored Division in the besieged Belgian town of Bastogne.

In its final mission, Operation Viersen, the Ghost Army deployed a tactical deception that drew German units down the Rhine River and away from the 9th Army, allowing the 9th Army to cross the Rhine into Germany. On this mission, the 1,100 men of the Ghost Army, with the assistance of other units, impersonated forty thousand men, or two complete divisions of American forces, by using fabricated radio networks, soundtracks of construction work and artillery fire, and more than 600 inflatable vehicles.

Three Ghost Army soldiers gave their lives and dozens were injured in carrying out their mission. Their activities remained classified for more than forty years after the war and I believe the extraordinary accomplishments of this unit are deserving of belated recognition. The United States will be eternally grateful to the Ghost Army for their proficient use of innovative tactics throughout World War II, which saved thousands of lives and were instrumental in the defeat of Nazi Germany.

I ask all my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation to give a Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Ghost Army.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 403—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING APRIL 24, 2016 AS ''NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ASSESSMENT CENTER WEEK'' IN CELEBRATION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDUSTRIAL ASSESSMENT CENTERS

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BENNET, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 403

Whereas Industrial Assessment Centers (IACs) are university-led programs funded by the Department of Energy that provide energy efficiency assessments to small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises in the United States for improving energy efficiency and reducing water usage and waste;

Whereas IACs increase the energy efficiency, productivity, sustainability, and competitiveness of manufacturers in the United States;

Whereas, since the inception of the IAC program in 1976, IACs have conducted more than 16,000 assessments at manufacturing plants across the United States;

Whereas the assessments conducted by IACs have saved an estimated 76,000,000,000,000 British thermal units, a quantity equivalent to meeting the energy needs of almost 1,400,000 homes in the United States;

Whereas IACs have saved participating manufacturers more than $1,000,000,000 in energy costs;

Whereas an estimated 6,000,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions have been avoided due to IAC assessments, a quantity equivalent to the emissions from more than 1,200,000 cars;

Whereas the IAC program equips undergraduate and graduate university students with the skills to conduct energy audits, improving workforce training and cultivating the next generation of energy engineers;

Whereas more than 3,000 students have graduated from the IAC program, with more than 60 percent continuing on to pursue careers in energy-related fields; and

Whereas 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of the IAC program: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning April 24, 2016 as ''National Industrial Assessment Center Week''; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to observe National Industrial Assessment Center Week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 404—DESIGNATING MARCH 2016 AS ''NATIONAL MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION MONTH''

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 404

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Association for Middle Level Education, the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals have declared March 2016 as ''National Middle Level Education Month'';

Whereas schools that educate middle level students are responsible for educating nearly 24,000,000 young adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15, in grades 5 through 9, who are undergoing rapid and dramatic changes in

their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development;

Whereas young adolescents deserve challenging and engaging instruction and knowledgeable teachers and administrators who are prepared to provide young adolescents with a safe, challenging, and supportive learning environment;

Whereas young adolescents deserve organizational structures that banish anonymity and promote personalization, collaboration, and social equity;

Whereas the habits and values established during early adolescence have a lifelong influence that directly affects the future health and welfare of the United States;

Whereas research indicates that the academic achievement of a student in grade 8 has a larger impact on the readiness of that student for an institution of higher education at the end of high school than any academic achievement of that student in high school; and

Whereas in order to improve graduation rates and prepare students to be lifelong learners who are ready for an institution of higher education or a career and civic participation, the people of the United States must have a deeper understanding of the distinctive mission of middle level education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2016 as ''National Middle Level Education Month'';

(2) honors and recognizes the importance of middle level education and the contributions of the individuals who educate middle level students; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Middle Level Education Month by visiting and celebrating schools that are responsible for educating young adolescents in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 405—DESIGNATING PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, AS THE SITE OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, IN COORDINATION WITH VISION 2020

Mr. CASEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 405

Whereas the 19th Amendment to Constitution of the United States was ratified on August 18, 1920, guaranteeing women in the United States the right to vote;

Whereas the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment will occur in 2020;

Whereas Vision 2020, developed by the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership at Drexel University, has launched the Vision 2020 Campaign for Equality—

(1) to commemorate the centennial of women's suffrage; and

(2) to advance and achieve economic, social, and political equality for women in the United States by 2020;

Whereas Vision 2020 is partnering with national associations and professional organizations that represent more than 20,000,000 women and girls in the United States;

Whereas in 2020, celebratory events will take place in cities all across the United States, particularly in cities in which monumental historic events and people shaped the women's suffrage movement;

Whereas Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which was home to historic women who played significant roles in the women's rights movement, including Lucretia Mott, Alice Paul, Fanny Jackson Coppin, and Eliza Sproat Turner, should be designated as the headquarters and coordinating site to celebrate the centennial of women's suffrage;

Whereas the women's suffrage movement was closely tied to abolitionism and many suffragists gained previous experience in advocacy as antislavery activists;

Whereas the first major event in the women's suffrage movement occurred on July 19, 1848, the date on which Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the first convention on women's rights, the Seneca Falls Convention;

Whereas in 1850, Lucy Stone organized the National Women's Rights Convention and gave a speech that inspired Susan B. Anthony and others to join the cause for women's rights;

Whereas in 1851, Sojourner Truth gave her famous speech entitled ''Ain't I a Woman?'' at a convention in Akron, Ohio;

Whereas in 1869, women suffragists formed the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, which were national organizations established to work for the right of women to vote that united in 1890 to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association;

Whereas in 1872, Susan B. Anthony and a group of women voted in the Presidential election and were arrested and fined for voting illegally;

Whereas in the late 19th century, the Senate voted on women's suffrage for the first time;

Whereas during the early 20th century, a new generation of women joined the women's suffrage movement and devoted time to marches and other active forms of protest, including the first picket lines in front of the White House;

Whereas women suffragists were often detained and sent to jail and some of those women who went on hunger strikes were aggressively force fed;

Whereas since the ratification of the 19th Amendment, the work begun by the suffragists continues to advance the equality of women in all political, social, economic, and cultural aspects of life in the United States, including shared leadership; and

Whereas the contributions of women suffragists who fought for and won, for women of the United States, the right to vote should be celebrated on the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the crucial role that the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution played in advancing the rights of women and promoting the democratic values at the core of the United States;

(2) designates Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the site of the national centennial commemoration of the ratification of the 19th Amendment; and

(3) commends the efforts of Vision 2020—

(A) to orchestrate, lead, and coordinate that momentous occasion in Philadelphia; and

(B) to continue the fight for equality for women.

SENATE RESOLUTION 406—RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD, THE HIGHEST AWARD IN THE GIRL SCOUTS, WHICH HAS STOOD FOR EXCELLENCE AND LEADERSHIP FOR GIRLS EVERYWHERE SINCE 1916

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 406

Whereas each girl who pursues the Girl Scout Gold Award aspires to transform an original idea and vision for change into an actionable plan with far reaching and sustainable results;

Whereas for more than a century preceding the date of adoption of this resolution, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (referred to in this preamble as the ''Girl Scouts'') has inspired girls to lead with courage, confidence, and character;

Whereas the Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest form of the ideals of courage, confidence, and character;

Whereas the Girl Scout Gold Award calls on a Girl Scout in grades 9 through 12 to take on a project that has a measurable and sustainable impact on the community of the Girl Scout by—

(1) assessing a need;

(2) designing a solution to the need;

(3) completing the project; and

(4) inspiring others to sustain the project;

Whereas the highest award in Girl Scouting honors leadership in the tradition of the Girl Scouts;

Whereas the Girl Scout movement began on March 12, 1912, when Juliette ''Daisy'' Gordon Low, a native of Savannah, Georgia, organized a group of 18 girls and provided the group of girls with an opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually;

Whereas the goals of Juliette ''Daisy'' Gordon Low were to bring girls of all backgrounds together to develop self-reliance and resourcefulness, and to prepare each girl for a future role as a professional woman and active citizen outside the home;

Whereas shortly after the inception of the Girl Scout movement, it was decided that there should be a special recognition for each girl who—

(1) represents the very best of the Girl Scouts; and

(2) through courage, tenacity, dedication, and skill, takes action in her community with an immediate and sustainable impact;

Whereas, in 1916, the Golden Eaglet was introduced as the highest award in Girl Scouting;

Whereas the highest award in Girl Scouting has been known as the Golden Eaglet, the Curved Bar Award, First Class, and, for the period of 35 years preceding the date of adoption of this resolution, the Girl Scout Gold Award;

Whereas although the name of the highest award in Girl Scouting has changed over the years, the conviction, dynamism, and idealism it takes to earn the award have not;

Whereas the Girl Scout Gold Award, like each girl who earns the award and the project the girl undertakes—

(1) stands as an enduring symbol of the fortitude and personal strength of a Girl Scout; and

(2) clearly demonstrates the tangible, real-world impact that participation in the Girl Scouts can have on the life of a girl, and by extension, the community of the girl and the world;

Whereas earning the Girl Scout Gold Award is comparable to achieving the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America;

Whereas a girl who earns the Girl Scout Gold Award—

(1) joins an elite group of less than 6 percent of Girl Scouts each year; and

(2) may be eligible for a higher grade when enlisting in the Armed Forces of the United States or for scholarships at certain institutions of higher education;

Whereas according to a study of the Girl Scout Research Institute entitled ''The Power of the Girl Scout Gold Award: Excellence in Leadership and Life'', recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award, compared to non-recipient peers—

(1) report a more positive sense of self;

(2) are more engaged civically and in community service;

(3) have more confidence in their leadership abilities; and

(4) experience greater life satisfaction and success;

Whereas the Girl Scout Gold Award acknowledges the power and dedication of each young woman to better herself and to make the world a better place for other individuals;

Whereas during the century preceding the date of adoption of this resolution, millions of Girl Scout alumnae have positively impacted their communities and the world with creative, effective, and sustainable Take Action projects; and

Whereas in the centennial of the Girl Scout Gold Award, the Girl Scouts invites alumnae and supporters of the Girl Scouts everywhere to ''Celebrate 100 Years of Changing the World'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the remarkable impact that recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award during the century preceding the date of adoption of this resolution have had on—

(A) the lives of individuals in the United States; and

(B) the world;

(2) recognizes the lasting impact of the projects of recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award on the communities of the recipients;

(3) congratulates the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girl Scout Gold Award recipients everywhere on the centennial of the Girl Scout Gold Award; and

(4) joins the Girl Scouts of the United States of America in celebrating 100 years of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today not only to recognize the 104th anniversary of the Girl Scouts, but also the 100th anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award. The Gold Award is the most prestigious award in Girl Scouting, only comparable to the Boy Scouts of America's Eagle Scout recognition.

Approximately one million Girl Scouts have earned this prestigious award. Girls who pursue their Gold Award aspire to transform an idea and vision for change into an actionable plan with measurable, sustainable, and far-reaching results. Since 1916, Girl Scouts have been planning and executing significant projects in response to pressing community needs. The Gold Award has inspired girls in Maryland and across the country to find greatness inside themselves and share their ideas and passions with their communities.

I love the Girl Scouts. I loved being a Girl Scout, especially when working on my badges. Those badges I earned served as symbols for success, leadership, and service to my community. It was during my time as a Girl Scout that I learned about the values and attitudes that serve as good guides throughout life, like courage, confidence, and strong character to help make the world a better place.

I also loved the camaraderie of working with other girls on various challenges. It really is about friendship. I am so proud to be among the more than 59 million women in the United States who are alumnae of the Girl Scouts of America. I could not have done it without the support of Ms. Helen Nimick, my Girl Scout leader. In fact, I wanted to grow up and be just like Ms. Nimick. She seemed to know how to do 43 different things with oatmeal boxes.

The Girl Scouts is an organization that has meant so much to me, and to this country. What started out as a group of eighteen girls in Georgia organized by Juliette Gordon Low has grown into an organization of more than 2 million girls and women, with over 800,000 adult volunteers. When the Girl Scouts started, women were not allowed to vote or have property in their name, and only few ever made it to college.

The founding of the Girl Scouts started a revolutionary movement to train and educate girls. Now, it is working to bring gender balance to leadership roles, whether it is in business or politics. I believe in that mission, and I know we can do it. While we have a long ways to go, we certainly have made progress. When I came to the Senate almost 30 years ago, there were only two women—Senator Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas and myself. Today, there are 20 women in the Senate! Nearly 45 years ago, there was only one woman CEO of a Fortune 500 company; now there are 23.

I bring the lessons I learned from Girl Scouts with me to the United States Senate, every day and in every way. I love the Girl Scout promise: ''To serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and to live by the Girl Scout law.'' To this day, I still carry the Girl Scout law in my wallet. I believe that if you follow the Girl Scout law, you're in pretty good shape—it has certainly worked for me. ''I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and what I do, and to respect myself and others, to respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout, and a sister to every Boy Scout.''

While I am in the Senate now, in many ways I am still working on my badges. But instead of working on my cookie badge, the badges I am working on now are called ''ending gender discrimination in health care,'' ''guaranteeing equal pay for equal work,'' and ''promoting access to quality and affordable child care.''

In today's hectic and increasingly uncertain world, Girl Scouts are more important than ever before. The Girl Scouts are an important contribution to American society—they prepare the leaders of tomorrow, and every day they inspire millions across this country to make the world a better place. Ladies, let us put on our badges, square our shoulders, suit up, and work together to make a change.

SENATE RESOLUTION 407—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING MEN'S NORDIC SKI TEAM FOR WINNING THE 38TH ANNUAL UNITED STATES COLLEGIATE SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 407

Whereas, on March 12, 2016, the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team won the 2016 United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''USCSA'') national championship in Lake Placid, New York, by sweeping all 4 events;

Whereas the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team has won consecutive USCSA national titles;

Whereas as members on the University of Wyoming Nordic ski teams, Will Timmons won the 2016 USCSA men's individual title and Elise Sulser won the 2016 USCSA women's individual title;

Whereas the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team placed 3 men among the top 10 overall individual finishers at the 2016 USCSA national event;

Whereas co-head coaches Christi Boggs and Rachel Watson have successfully guided the University of Wyoming men's and women's Nordic ski teams to multiple USCSA national titles;

Whereas the University of Wyoming men's and women's Nordic ski teams have each won 6 team USCSA national titles between 2003 and 2016: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team as the winner of the 2016 United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association national championship;

(2) commends the athletes, coaches, parents, and staff of the University of Wyoming Nordic ski teams for their hard work and dedication;

(3) recognizes the students, alumni, and loyal fans that supported the University of

Wyoming men's Nordic ski team on the team's journey to win another national title; and

(4) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to—

(A) the president of the University of Wyoming;

(B) the athletic director of the University of Wyoming; and

(C) the co-head coaches of the University of Wyoming Nordic ski teams.

SENATE RESOLUTION 408—DESIGNATING APRIL 2016 AS ''NATIONAL CONGENITAL DIAPHRAGMATIC HERNIA AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 408

Whereas congenital diaphragmatic hernia (referred to in this preamble as ''CDH'') occurs in individuals in which the diaphragm fails to fully form, allowing abdominal organs to migrate into the chest cavity and preventing lung growth;

Whereas the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes CDH as a birth defect;

Whereas the majority of CDH patients suffer from underdeveloped lungs or poor pulmonary function;

Whereas babies born with CDH endure extended hospital stays in intensive care with multiple surgeries;

Whereas CDH patients often endure long-term complications, such as pulmonary hypertension, pulmonary hypoplasia, asthma, gastrointestinal reflux, feeding disorders, and developmental delays;

Whereas CDH survivors sometimes endure long-term mechanical ventilation dependency, skeletal malformations, supplemental oxygen dependency, enteral and parenteral nutrition, and hypoxic brain injury;

Whereas CDH is treated through mechanical ventilation, a heart and lung bypass (commonly known as ''extracorporeal membrane oxygenation''), machines, and surgical repair;

Whereas surgical repair is often not a permanent solution for CDH and can lead to reherniation and require additional surgery;

Whereas CDH is diagnosed in utero in less than 50 percent of cases;

Whereas infants born with CDH have a high mortality rate, ranging from 20 to 60 percent, depending on the severity of the defect and interventions available at delivery;

Whereas CDH has a rate of occurrence of 1 in every 3,836 live births worldwide;

Whereas in the United States, CDH affects approximately 1,088 babies each year;

Whereas since 2000, CDH has affected more than 700,000 babies worldwide;

Whereas CDH does not discriminate based on race, gender, or socioeconomic status;

Whereas the cause of CDH is unknown;

Whereas the average CDH survivor will face postnatal care that totals not less than $100,000; and

Whereas Federal support for CDH research at the National Institutes of Health for 2015 is estimated to be not more than $3,300,000: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2016 as ''National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month'';

(2) encourages that steps should be taken—

(A) to raise awareness of and increase public knowledge about congenital diaphragmatic hernia (referred to in this resolving clause as ''CDH'');

(B) to inform all people of the United States about the dangers of CDH, especially groups of people that may be disproportionately affected by CDH or have lower survival rates;

(C) to disseminate information on the importance of quality neonatal care of CDH patients;

(D) to promote quality prenatal care and ultrasounds to detect CDH in utero; and

(E) to support research funding of CDH—

(i) to improve screening and treatment for CDH;

(ii) to discover the causes of CDH; and

(iii) to develop a cure for CDH; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States, interest groups, and affected persons—

(A) to promote awareness of CDH;

(B) to take an active role in the fight against this devastating birth defect; and

(C) to observe National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 409—RECOGNIZING MARCH 2016 AS ''NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH''

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FISCHER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. CARPER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 409

Whereas National Women's History Month recognizes and spreads awareness of the importance of women in the history of the United States;

Whereas, throughout the history of the United States, whether in the home, at the office, in school, in the courts, or in wartime, women have fought for themselves, their families, and all people of the United States and played an essential role in the history of the United States;

Whereas, even from the early days of the United States, Abigail Adams urged her husband to ''Remember the Ladies'' when representatives met for the Continental Congress in 1776;

Whereas women were particularly important in the establishment of early charitable, philanthropic, and cultural institutions in the United States;

Whereas women led the efforts to secure suffrage and equal opportunity for women and also served in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, labor movements, civil rights movements, and other causes to create a more fair and just society for all people;

Whereas suffragists wrote, marched, were arrested, went on hunger strikes, and were force-fed in prison but were ultimately successful in achieving the enactment of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which provides, ''The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.'';

Whereas women have served and continue to serve as leaders in the forefront of social change efforts;

Whereas women of every race and background have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of the life of the United States, including by constituting a significant portion of the labor force working inside and outside of the home;

Whereas women now represent approximately ¼ of the workforce in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;

Whereas women once were routinely barred from attending medical schools in the United States but now represent 47 percent of medical school students;

Whereas women previously were turned away from law schools but now represent 47 percent of law school graduates but only 20 percent of law school deans and 27 percent of State and Federal judges;

Whereas women have served in the United States Armed Forces in volunteer and enlisted positions, with 201,400 active-duty women currently serving and women comprising approximately 10 percent of veterans;

Whereas more than 9,900,000 women own small businesses in the United States;

Whereas women in the United States contribute significantly to the artistic and literary advancements of the United States;

Whereas the 2016 theme of National Women's History Month is ''Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government'';

Whereas, in 1932, Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas was the first woman elected to the United States Senate;

Whereas Margaret Chase Smith of Maine was the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress;

Whereas, in the 114th Congress, 20 women serve as Senators and 84 women serve in the House of Representatives, both of which are records;

Whereas, in 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first proclamation designating March 2 through 8 as ''National Women's History Week'';

Whereas, in 1987, a bipartisan group of Senators introduced the first joint resolution to pass Congress designating ''Women's History Month'';

Whereas, in 1987, President Ronald Reagan issued the first Women's History Month proclamation; and

Whereas, despite the advancements of women in the United States, much remains to be done to ensure that women realize their full potential as equal members of the society of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2016 as ''National Women's History Month'';

(2) recognizes the celebration of National Women's History Month as a time to reflect on the many notable contributions that women have made to the United States; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe National Women's History Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 34—PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MCCONNELL submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Wednesday, March 23, 2016, through Friday, April 8, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 3:30 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2016, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3457. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. WYDEN)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4721, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3457. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. WYDEN)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4721, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''$2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were $3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 20.83 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(b) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$8,193,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

(d) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(e) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(f) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(g) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(h) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by amending subparagraph (E) to read as follows:

''(E) $7,711,387,500 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(5) $2,058,333,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(9) $124,093,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 106. COMPLIANCE WITH AVIATION FUNDING REQUIREMENT.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$122,708,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting ''or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016;''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''HealthCare.gov: A Review of Operations and Enrollment.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reviewing the Administration's Nuclear Agenda.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resource' Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 3 p.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2016, at 9 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examining Agency use of Deference, Part II.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Priyanka Hooghan, a fellow serving in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 439 and 488.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Janine Anne Davidson, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Navy; and Todd A. Weiler, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Davidson and Weiler nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 486, 489 through 494, 496, 497, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment to a position of importance and responsibility in the United States Coast Guard and to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., Section 50:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Karl L. Schultz

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Gen. Joseph L. Votel

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. Raymond A. Thomas, III

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Army Medical Service Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Sargent
Brig. Gen. Robert D. Tenhet

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Army Medical Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be brigadier general

Col. Jeffrey J. Johnson
Col. Ronald T. Stephens

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Army Medical Service Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be brigadier general

Col. Dennis P. LeMaster
Col. Michael J. Talley

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Michael K. Nagata

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Marine Corps Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bradley S. James
Col. Kurt W. Stein

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade

indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Austin S. Miller

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1164 AIR FORCE nominations (16) beginning JAMES B. ANDERSON, and ending HYRAL B. WALKER, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1165 AIR FORCE nominations (14) beginning JEREMY V. BASTIAN, and ending CHRISTOPHER A. WATSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1166 AIR FORCE nominations (2068) beginning CHRISTOPHER F. ABBOTT, and ending DEVIN LEE ZUFELT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1167 AIR FORCE nomination of Christopher T. Stein, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

PN1077 ARMY nomination of Gregory L. Boylan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1107 ARMY nomination of Derek G. Bean, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1168 ARMY nominations (120) beginning ADRIAN R. ALGARRA, and ending GREGORY B. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1169 ARMY nominations (50) beginning PHILIP O. ADAMS, and ending BENJAMAN M. WUNDERLICH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1170 ARMY nominations (27) beginning JULIA N. ALVAREZ, and ending APRIL D. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1171 ARMY nominations (178) beginning WENDY M. ADAMIAN, and ending D012433, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1172 ARMY nomination of Vernita M. Corbett, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1173 ARMY nominations (44) beginning MATTHEW H. ADAMS, and ending D012453, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1175 ARMY nomination of William D. Rose, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1176 ARMY nomination of Mark W. Manoso, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1177 ARMY nomination of Eric F. Sabety, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1197 ARMY nominations (2) beginning ANDREW R. MCIVER, and ending GERARD C. PHILIP, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 3, 2016.

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

PN464 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (7) beginning Eric Del Valle, and ending Ryan Truxton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 7, 2015.

PN952 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (11) beginning Cheryl L. Anderson, and ending Melissa A. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 19, 2015.

PN953 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (37) beginning Jennifer M. Adams, and ending Sunil Sebastian Xavier, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 19, 2015.

PN1086 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (4) beginning Daryl Arthur Brehm, and ending Melinda D. Sallyards, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 2016.

PN1087 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (23) beginning Scott D. Hocklander, and ending Catherine Mary Trujillo, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 2016.

PN1089 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Holly S. Higgins, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 2016.

PN1156 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of John McCaslin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1157 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (11) beginning Laurie Farris, and ending James Rigassio, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1117 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning AARON R. CRAIG, and ending CHRISTOPHER T. STEINHILBER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1130 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning JIMMY W. DARSEY, and ending GERALD E. PIRK, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

PN1178 NAVY nominations (53) beginning MATTHEW T. ALLEN, and ending JOSHUA F. ZIMMER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1179 NAVY nominations (4) beginning RICHARD W. LANG, and ending BRADLEY E. SHEMLUCK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 22, 2016.

PN1198 NAVY nomination of Michael L. Hipp, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 3, 2016.

PN1200 NAVY nomination of Ronald H. Nellen, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 3, 2016.

PN1202 NAVY nomination of Ashley A. Hockycko, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 3, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 368, S. 483.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 483) to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. REGISTRATION PROCESS UNDER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) FACTORS AS MAY BE RELEVANT TO AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.—Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) In this section, the phrase 'factors as may be relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety' means factors that are relevant to and consistent with the findings contained in section 101.''.

(2) IMMINENT DANGER TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY.—Section 304(d) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824(d)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''(d) The Attorney General'' and inserting ''(d)(1) The Attorney General''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) In this subsection, the phrase 'imminent danger to the public health or safety' means that, due to the failure of the registrant to maintain effective controls against diversion or otherwise comply with the obligations of a registrant under this title or title III, there is a substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of an immediate suspension of the registration.''.

(b) OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN PRIOR TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION.—Subsection (c) of section 304 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824) is amended—

(1) by striking the last three sentences;

(2) by striking ''(c) Before'' and inserting ''(c)(1) Before''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) An order to show cause under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) contain a statement of the basis for the denial, revocation, or suspension, including specific citations to any laws or regulations alleged to be violated by the applicant or registrant;

''(B) direct the applicant or registrant to appear before the Attorney General at a time and place stated in the order, but not less than 30 days after the date of receipt of the order; and

''(C) notify the applicant or registrant of the opportunity to submit a corrective action plan on or before the date of appearance.

''(3) Upon review of any corrective action plan submitted by an applicant or registrant pursuant to paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall determine whether denial, revocation, or suspension proceedings should be discontinued, or deferred for the purposes of modification, amendment, or clarification to such plan.

''(4) Proceedings to deny, revoke, or suspend shall be conducted pursuant to this section in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code. Such proceedings shall be independent of, and not in lieu of, criminal prosecutions or other proceedings under this title or any other law of the United States.

''(5) The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to the issuance of an immediate suspension order under subsection (d).''.

SEC. 3. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate identifying—

(1) obstacles to legitimate patient access to controlled substances;

(2) issues with diversion of controlled substances;

(3) how collaboration between Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and the pharmaceutical industry can benefit patients and prevent diversion and abuse of controlled substances;

(4) the availability of medical education, training opportunities, and comprehensive clinical guidance for pain management and opioid prescribing, and any gaps that should be addressed;

(5) beneficial enhancements to State prescription drug monitoring programs, including enhancements to require comprehensive prescriber input and to expand access to the programs for appropriate authorized users; and

(6) steps to improve reporting requirements so that the public and Congress have more information regarding prescription opioids, such as the volume and formulation of prescription opioids prescribed annually, the dispensing of such prescription opioids, and outliers and trends within large data sets.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The report under subsection (a) shall incorporate feedback and recommendations from the following:

(1) Patient groups.

(2) Pharmacies.

(3) Drug manufacturers.

(4) Common or contract carriers and warehousemen.

(5) Hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers.

(6) State attorneys general.

(7) Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.

(8) Health insurance providers and entities that provide pharmacy benefit management services on behalf of a health insurance provider.

(9) Wholesale drug distributors.

(10) Veterinarians.

(11) Professional medical societies and boards.

(12) State and local public health authorities.

(13) Health services research organizations.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 483), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

PROVIDING AUTHORITY TO MAINTAIN AND OPERATE A TOLL BRIDGE ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 374, S. 2143.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2143) to provide for the authority for the successors and assigns of the Starr-Camargo Bridge Company to maintain and operate a toll bridge across the Rio Grande near Rio Grande City, Texas, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2143) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2143

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. STARR-CAMARGO BRIDGE.

Public Law 87–532 (76 Stat. 153) is amended—

(1) in the first section, in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) by inserting '', and its successors and assigns,'' after ''State of Texas'';

(B) by inserting ''consisting of not more than 14 lanes'' after ''approaches thereto''; and

(C) by striking ''and for a period of sixty-six years from the date of completion of such bridge,'';

(2) in section 2, by inserting ''and its successors and assigns,'' after ''companies'';

(3) by redesignating sections 3, 4, and 5 as sections 4, 5, and 6, respectively;

(4) by inserting after section 2 the following:

''SEC. 3. RIGHTS OF STARR-CAMARGO BRIDGE COMPANY AND SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Starr-Camargo Bridge Company and its successors and assigns shall have the rights and privileges granted to the B and P Bridge Company and its successors and assigns under section 2 of the Act of May 1, 1928 (45 Stat. 471, chapter 466).

''(b) REQUIREMENT.—In exercising the rights and privileges granted under subsection (a), the Starr-Camargo Bridge Company and its successors and assigns shall act in accordance with—

''(1) just compensation requirements;

''(2) public proceeding requirements; and

''(3) any other requirements applicable to the exercise of the rights referred to in subsection (a) under the laws of the State of Texas.''; and

(5) in section 4 (as redesignated by paragraph (3))—

(A) by inserting ''and its successors and assigns,'' after ''such company'';

(B) by striking ''or'' after ''public agency,'';

(C) by inserting ''or to a corporation,'' after ''international bridge authority or commission,''; and

(D) by striking ''authority, or commission'' each place it appears and inserting ''authority, commission, or corporation''.

ADDING ZIKA VIRUS TO THE FDA PRIORITY REVIEW VOUCHER PROGRAM ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 389, S. 2512.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2512) to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Adding Zika Virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program Act''.

SEC. 2. EXPANDING TROPICAL DISEASE PRODUCT PRIORITY REVIEW VOUCHER PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE TREATMENTS FOR ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE.

Section 524(a)(3) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360n(a)(3)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (R) as subparagraph (S);

(2) in subparagraph (Q), by striking ''Filoviruses'' and inserting ''Filovirus Diseases''; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (Q) the following:

''(R) Zika Virus Disease.''.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 2512), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 111, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 111) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 111) was agreed to.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING MEN'S NORDIC SKI TEAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 407, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 407) congratulating the University of Wyoming men's Nordic ski team for winning the 38th annual United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association national championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 407) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

NATIONAL CONGENITAL DIAPHRAGMATIC HERNIA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 408, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 408) designating April 2016 as ''National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 408) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 409, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 409) recognizing March 2016 as ''National Women's History Month.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 409) was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 34.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 34) providing for an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 34) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

REMOVAL OF INJUNCTION OF SECRECY—TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 114–11

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the injunction of secrecy be removed from the following treaty transmitted to the Senate on March 17, 2016, by the President of the United States: Treaty with Kazakhstan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Treaty Document No. 114–11. I further ask that the treaty be considered as having been read the first time; that it be referred, with accompanying papers, to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed; and that the President's message be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The message of the President is as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on February 20, 2015. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties negotiated by the United States to more effectively counter criminal activities. The Treaty should enhance our ability to investigate and prosecute a wide variety of crimes.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Under the Treaty, the Parties agree to assist each other by, among other things: producing evidence (such as testimony, documents, or items) obtained voluntarily or, where necessary, by compulsion; arranging for persons, including persons in custody, to travel to another country to provide evidence; serving documents; executing searches and seizures; locating and identifying persons or items; and freezing and forfeiting assets or property that may be the proceeds or instrumentalities of crime.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to

the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 17, 2016*.

REPORTING AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the Senate's adjournment, committees be authorized to report legislative and executive matters on Monday, March 28, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016, THROUGH MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, March 21, at 10 a.m.; Thursday, March 24, at 11 a.m.; Monday, March 28, at 11:30 a.m.; and Thursday, March 31, at 6:30 p.m. I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, March 31, it next convene at 3 p.m., Monday, April 4; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, I ask that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016, AT 10 A.M.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:33 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 21, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

DOUGLAS BARRY WILSON, OF DELAWARE, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2017, VICE ELIZABETH F. BAGLEY, TERM EXPIRED.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

HEIDI NEEL BIGGS, OF OREGON, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2017, VICE ERIC J. TANENBLATT, TERM EXPIRED.

WESTLEY WATENDE OMARI MOORE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2016, VICE STAN Z. SOLOWAY, TERM EXPIRED.

WESTLEY WATENDE OMARI MOORE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2021. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ANNE HALL, OF MAINE, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

JEFFREY A. ROSEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2021, VICE LOUIS J. GIULIANO, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION

ALMO J. CARTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS, VICE PATRICIA CUSHWA, TERM EXPIRED.

LARRY T. GLENN, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES PAROLE COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS, VICE ISAAC FULWOOD, JR., RETIRED.

THE JUDICIARY

LISABETH TABOR HUGHES, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT, VICE BOYCE F. MARTIN, JR., RETIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

LAURA S. BARCHICK
CHRISTOPHER A. BROWN
CHAD C. CARTER
W. SHANE COHEN
PAUL R. CONNOLLY
ERIK C. COYNE
PAUL E. CRONIN
DON D. DAVIS III
JOEL F. ENGLAND
JOHN E. GILLILAND
PAULA M. GRANT
JENNIFER C. HYZER
JUDY L. KING
CHRISTINE A. LAMONT
JEFFREY G. PALOMINO
TODD W. PENNINGTON
JULIE L. PITVOREC
JULIE L. RUTHERFORD
MICHAEL W. SAFKO
CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR SMITH
RONALD L. SPENCER, JR.
DAVID E. VERCELLONE
KEVIN J. WILKINSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

MICHELLE D. AASTROM
REGINA D. AGEE CRUZ
JOHN F. BAER
BARBARA A. CAIN
RUSSELL D. CARTER
JULIET T. DEGUZMAN
KAREY M. DUFOUR
DONNA M. EGGERT
INGRID D. FORD
JEANETTE L. FRANTAL
RUSSEL L. FRANTZ, JR.
TRICIA ROCHELLE GARCIA
ERWIN N. GINES
LORRAINE S. GRAVLEY
LINDA A. HAGEMANN
GACQUETTE R. JENNINGS
KAREE M. JENSEN
DEBORAH K. JONES
JOHN L. MANSUY
GINGER S. MILLER
JOANN V. PALMER
PATRICK W. STILLEY
PATRICIA A. B. TATE
JENNIFER L. TRINKLE
SHEELAH Z. WALKER
RICHARD E. WALLEN
JOHN J. WEATHERWAX
CYNTHIA J. WEIDMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

LAIRD S. ABBOTT
PHILIP F. ACQUARO
KIRSTEN G. AGUILAR
JENNIFER J. ALLEE
MATTHEW S. ALLEN
MICHAEL P. ALLISON
JAMES JAY ALONZO
AARON D. ALTWIES
STEVEN J. ANDERSON
DAVID R. ANZALDUA
CHRISTOPHER E. AUSTIN
MAURICE C. AZAR
BRIAN J. BACARELLA
STEPHEN G. BAILEY
JEREMIAH W. BALDWIN
CHAD A. BALETTIE
JENNIFER M. BARNARD
WILEY L. BARNES
JOHN R. BARNETT
JEREME A. BARRETT
WILLIAM A. BARRINGTON, JR.
BENITO J. BARRON
CHRISTIAN A. BARTHOLOMEW
ROBERT R. BASOM
JAMES EARL BASS
TODD A. BEAN
JASON L. BECK
ERIC J. BEERS
STEPHEN M. BEHM
STEVEN G. BEHMER
SCOTT J. BELANGER
ANTHONY P. BELLIONE
MATTHEW J. BIEWER
MICHAEL R. BLACK
STEVEN M. BOATRIGHT
MICHAEL C. BOGER
RHETT CAMERON BOLDENOW
BARTHOLOMEW G. BONAR
CHAD B. BONDURANT
STEVEN P. BORDING
PHILLIP G. BORN
JOHN P. BOUDREAUX
JOSHUA D. BOWMAN
BRIAN L. BRACY
SEAN A. BRADLEY
KENNETH B. BRATLAND
THEODORE A. BREUKER
ROBERT M. BRINKER
DOUGLAS F. BROCK
CHRISTOPHER J. BROMEN
KATHRYN A. BROWN
MICHAEL D. BROX
DAVID R. BUCHANAN
ROSS M. BULLOCK
PAUL C. BURGER
WILLIAM H. BURKS
PAUL K. CARLTON III
MICHELLE C. CARNS
PHILIP E. CARPENTER
JEFFREY F. CARTER
MICHAEL B. CASEY
RONALD E. CHEATHAM
STEVEN R. CHERRINGTON
ANDREW M. CLARK
TAD D. CLARK
ROBERT K. CLEMENT
SPENCER C. COCANOUR
SHAWN T. COCHRAN
JASON J. COCKRUM
STEVEN P. COLLEN
THOMAS R. COLVIN
JOSHUA W. CONINE
CEIR CORAL
ALFREDO CORBETT
JASON E. CORROTHERS
CHARLES R. COSNOWSKI
LARRY T. COUNCELL
WILLIAM E. COURTEMANCHE
SEAN J. COVENEY
AARON S. COWLEY
DANE B. CRAWFORD
KEITH I. CRAWFORD
JEFFREY S. CRIDER
JAMES R. CULPEPPER
MICHAEL A. CURLEY
SARA A. CUSTER

CAMERON DADGAR
TODD D. DARRAH
CHAD J. DAVIS
GREGORY A. DAVIS
MICHAEL T. DAVIS
WILLIAM A. DAYTON
CHRISTOPHE J. DEGUELLE
ANTHONY M. DELUCA
JUSTIN D. DEMARCO
WILLIAM S. DENHAM
DAVID R. DETHLEFS
DUANE JEFFREY DIESING
MITCHELL K. DIXON
MICHAEL W. DONAHUE II
DAVID A. DOSS
JESS W. DRAB
CHARLES M. DROUILLARD
CLIFTON M. DURHAM
DEBORAH KAYE DUSEK
SCOTT T. EKSTROM
JOHN W. ELLER
DAVID C. EPPERSON
CHARLES B. ERICSON
ROBERT T. EWERS III
MICHELLE E. EWY
WILLIAM B. FARLOW
BRIAN J. FARMER
PETER P. FENG
DEREK R. FERLAND
DERON L. FRAILIE
JOHN C. FRAZIER
LANCE R. FRENCH
CHRISTOPHER K. FULLER
DANIEL L. GABLE
FRANKLIN D. GAILLARD II
JACK P. GARDNER
KRISTOFER W. GIFFORD
RONALD E. GILBERT
MARCUS K. GLENN
JEFFREY L. GOGGIN
JERRY GONZALEZ
RICHARD A. GOODMAN
CHRISTOPHER E. GOODYEAR
BETH D. GRABORITZ
JEFFREY H. GREENWOOD
RICHARD GRESZLER, JR.
G. JOHN GRIMM
BRIAN J. GROSS
SCOTT A. GRUNDAHL
PETER J. GRYZEN
MICHAEL C. GUISCHARD
NICHOLAS O. GUTTMAN
ROBERT F. HAAS
JAMES R. HACKBARTH
DAVID A. HAMMERSCHMIDT
LINDA M. HAMPTON
JON T. HANNAH
ROBERT L. HANOVICH, JR.
JOHN C. HANSEN
TIMMY W. HARBOR
MARK E. HARRIS
MICHAEL C. HARVEY
BRENT R. HATCH
WALTER C. HATTEMER
DAVID R. HAUCK
JEREMIAH S. HEATHMAN
DANIEL G. HENDRIX
JOHN A. HENLEY
SCOTT A. HERITSCH
CURTIS L. HERNANDEZ
JOSHUA L. HETSKO
RENAE M. HILTON
GEORGE H. HOCK, JR.
SCOTT A. HOFFMAN
PHILIP A. HOLMES
DEAN M. HOLTHAUS
SCOTT M. HOPPER
DOUGLAS W. HORNE
THOMAS E. HOSKINS
BRIAN C. HOYBACH
KEVIN D. HUEBERT
DARIN P. HUMISTON
WILLIAM H. HUNTER
JOHN S. HUTCHESON
ROBERT J. HUTT
TRAVIS L. INGBER
CHRISTOPHER P. INGLETON
DARRYL L. INSLEY
DOUGLAS D. JACKSON
MICHAEL A. JACKSON
TRAUNA L. JAMES
AMY K. JARDON
BRADLEY L. JOHNSON
KEVIN S. JOHNSON
MELISSA A. JOHNSON
MICHAEL J. JOHNSON
MICHELE ELAINE JOHNSON
SAM C. JOHNSON
OTIS C. JONES
STEPHEN R. JONES
SHANNON L. JUBY
JAMES R. KAFER
CHRISTIAN D. KANE
CHRISTOPHER P. KARNS
KIERAN F. KEELTY
BARTON D. KENERSON
JOHN A. KENT IV
HERBERT L. KEYSER
ROBERT A. KIELTY
JASON S. KING
ROBERT F. KING
GEORGE B. KINNEY III
JASON T. KIRBY
EILEEN M. W. KIRKLAND
NIKI J. KISSIAR
MICHAEL A. KLEPPE
STEVEN W. KLINGMAN
TIMOTHY A. KODAMA
KURT A. KOENIGSFELD
TERRY A. KOESTER
TIMOTHY P. KUEHNE
BRIAN S. LAIDLAW
CHRISTOPHER L. LAMBERT
BRIAN L. LAMIRANDE
CHRISTOPHER A. LANE
LEO LAWSON, JR.
EARL D. LAYNE
MATTHEW A. LEARD
CHRISTOPHER J. LEONARD
DAVID D. LEROY
SHERRI J. LEVAN
HARMON S. LEWIS, JR.
PAUL C. LIPS
TONY S. LOMBARDO
DAVID R. LOPEZ
GABRIEL N. LOPEZ
SHANE D. LOUIS
DANIEL L. LUCE
STEVEN E. MACEDA
ROBERT H. MAKROS
DANIEL R. MANNING
FRANK MARCONI
GAVIN P. MARKS
LISA MARIE MARTINEZ
ROBERT A. MASAITIS
DAVIS H. MAULDING
TIMOTHY P. MAXWELL
KENNETH C. MCADAMS
BRIAN A. MCCULLOUGH
DAVID M. MCILLECE
BRIDGET M. MCNAMARA
ANDREW B. MCVICKER
DAVID S. MENKE
ERIES L. G. MENTZER
ROGER R. MESSER
JOSEPH R. MEYER
WILLIAM B. MICKLEY
JACOB MIDDLETON, JR.
ANDREA C. MILLER
CAROL J. MILLER
CRAIG S. MILLER
DAVID S. MILLER
RAYMOND G. MILLERO, JR.
JOHN F. MOESNER IV
JEREMIAH R. MONK
SCOTT J. MONROE
MATTHEW A. MORAND
DAVID J. MORELAND
STEVEN W. MORITZ
TARA J. MUEHE
ANTHONY B. MULHARE
MARK J. MULLARKEY
DOUGLAS A. MUSSELMAN
SCOTT J. NAHRGANG
ROBERT L. NANCE
CRAIG T. NARASAKI
RICHARD J. NELSON
JACK L. NEMCEFF II
LISA A. NEMETH
BRETT D. NEVILLE
MICHAEL S. NEWSOM
QUY H. NGUYEN
JUSTIN H. NIEDERER
CRAIG M. NIEMAN
PHILLIP L. NOLTEMEYER, JR.
JOHN D. NORTON
DAVID M. NYIKOS
RANDY P. OAKLAND
BRADLEY R. OLIVER
DAVID R. OMALLEY
BRIAN P. ONEILL
BRYAN C. OPPERMAN
LOUIS E. ORNDORFF
STEVEN G. OWEN
NATHAN L. OWENDOFF
JODY M. OWENS
MARC L. PACKLER
DARIAN J. PADILLA
THOMAS S. PALMER
SUKIT T. PANANON
PHILLIP R. PARKER, JR.
BRIAN L. PATTERSON
TRACY W. PATTERSON
ERIC C. PAULSON
JOHN F. PEAK
ROBERT J. PEDERSEN
ROBERT K. PEKAREK
JAY E. PELKA
JEAN PHILIPPE N. PELTIER
DEVIN R. PEPPER
WILLIAM D. PERCIVAL
MANUEL P. PEREZ
KIRK W. PETERSON
MICHAEL J. PFINGSTEN
MICHAEL E. PHILLIPS
DOUGLAS E. PIERCE
JASON D. PIFER
MATTHEW G. POLLOCK
PAUL H. PORTER
CRAIG D. PRATHER
CHRISTOPHER I. PRICE
CAMERON S. PRINGLE
NORMAN W. PRUE, JR.
ANTHONY L. PUENTE
DAVID M. PUGH
ANDREW MICHAEL PURATH
VARUN PURI
CHRISTOPHER S. PUTMAN
EDUARDO A. QUERO
ERIK N. QUIGLEY
SEAN A. RAESEMANN
GERALD I. RAY, JR.
SAMANTHA D. RAY
WILLIAM F. RAY
NICHOLAS J. REED
GREGORY T. REICH
ADAM D. REIMAN
MATTHEW W. RENBARGER
LENDY G. RENEGAR
STEPHEN G. RENY
KEITH REPIK
KYLE A. REYBITZ
JON M. RHONE
GLYNN E. RICHARDS
ROBERT B. RIEGEL
ROBB N. RIGTRUP
MICHAEL S. RIMSKY
RAMIRO RIOJAS
MARK A. RISELLI
JOSE L. RIVERAHERNANDEZ
JASON I. ROBERSON
BRANDON J. ROBINSON
MARK S. ROBINSON
KEITH M. ROESSIG
DAVID P. RONDEAU
WILLIAM T. RONDEAU, JR.
LEONARD T. ROSE
MICHAEL S. ROWE
JON K. RUCKER
CHRISTOPHER J. RUSSELL
CHRISTOPHER J. RUSSELL
TIMOTHY H. RUSSELL
ANDREW P. RUTH
MATTHEW J. SANDELIER
STEPHEN T. SANDERS
GLENN V. SANTOS
BRIAN M. SCHAFER
GEORGE F. SCHEERS, JR.
JOCELYN J. SCHERMERHORN
THOMAS M. SCHRAMEL
FRANK B. SCHREIBER
JEFFREY T. SCHREINER
JOHN D. SCHULIGER
JOHN M. SCHUTTE
GEORGE H. SEBREN, JR.
KEVIN L. SELLERS
JASON E. SEYER
JEFFREY R. SGARLATA
BRIAN R. SHAFFER
DOUGLAS S. SHAHAN
GENE S. SHERER
THOMAS S. SHIELDS
BRIAN D. SIDARI
COREY A. SIMMONS
TRAVOLIS A. SIMMONS
COLIN J. SINDEL
PAUL M. SKIPWORTH
ERIC A. SMITH
MICHAEL S. SMITH
CHRISTOPHER J. SPINELLI
ERIN M. STAINEPYNE
MICHAEL R. STAPLES
SHANE D. STEINKE
KAYLE M. STEVENS
BRITTANY D. STEWART
TRACE B. STEYAERT
MARC A. STITZEL
ADAM J. STONE
DANIEL W. STONE
MELISSA A. STONE
KRISTOPHER W. STRUVE
JEFFREY A. STYERS
GERALD D. SULLIVAN, JR.
DAVID E. SUMERA
PATRICK J. SUTHERLAND
JAMES A. SWEENEY
RYAN S. SWEENEY
PAUL E. SWENSON
THOMAS K. SWOVELAND
RICHARD C. TANNER
BRYAN E. TASH
MARK E. TATE
BEVERLY L. H. TEMPLEMAN
TIMOTHY W. THURSTON II
MICHAEL D. TIEMANN
DOUGLAS F. TIPPET
STEVEN J. TITTEL
RICARDO L. TRIMILLOS
TIMOTHY W. TRIMMELL
SCOTT A. TRINRUD
KEITH R. TURNER
BRIAN V. UCCIARDI
WILLIAM K. UHRIG
MICHELLE VANCOURT
TRICIA A. VANDENTOP
SERGIO J. VEGA, JR.
DAVID G. VERNAL
SCOTT A. VICKERY
STEVEN E. VILPORS
MARK J. VITANTONIO
JASON D. VOORHEIS
ROBERT J. WAARVIK
SEAN C. WADE
EUGENE M. WALL
TREVOR A. WALL
DAVID C. WALLIN

DANIEL P. WALLS
TERRENCE L. WALTER
PATRICK A. WAMPLER
JASON T. WARD
TRACY T. WARD
JESSE F. WARREN
MAX C. WEEMS
THERESA E. WEEMS
CHRISTOPHER S. WELCH
SEAN T. WELSH
ROBERT D. WESTOVER
JON S. WHEELER, JR.
JEFFREY J. WHITE
NATHAN A. WHITE
STEPHEN D. WIER
DAVID E. WILLIAMS, JR.
KEVIN L. WILLIAMS
DAVID A. WILLIAMSON
ROCKIE K. WILSON
LORI L. WINN
PATRICK C. WINSTEAD
STEPHANE LAINE WOLFGEHER
PAUL J. YUSON
CHRISTOPHER J. ZUHLKE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

GEOFFREY E. ANDERSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

FANY L. RIVERA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

BRUCE H. ROBINSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C. SECTION 624:

To be major

MATTHEW B. BOOTH
DONALD W. MOYER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ROBERT L. CRONYN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

DARRELL W. COLLINS

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

DARREN J. DONLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

STEPHANIE M. SIMONI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

JENNIFER L. SHAFER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

JUSTIN K. CONROY
ANDREW G. MONTALVO
REBECCA L. YOUNG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

BRICE A. GOODWIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

BRIAN J. HAMER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

SCOTT F. GRUWELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

SHANNON D. LORIMER

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AS MEMBERS OF THE COAST GUARD PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 188:

To be lieutenant

JONATHAN P. TSCHUDY
MATTHEW B. WILLIAMS

PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

JAMES XAVIER DEMPSEY, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2022. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 17, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JANINE ANNE DAVIDSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. KARL L. SCHULTZ

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TODD A. WEILER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. JOSEPH L. VOTEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. RAYMOND A. THOMAS III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. PATRICK D. SARGENT
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT D. TENHET

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. JEFFREY J. JOHNSON
COL. RONALD T. STEPHENS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. DENNIS P. LEMASTER
COL. MICHAEL J. TALLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL K. NAGATA

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRADLEY S. JAMES
COL. KURT W. STEIN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. AUSTIN S. MILLER

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAMES B. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH HYRAL B. WALKER, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEREMY V. BASTIAN AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER A. WATSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER F. ABBOTT AND ENDING WITH DEVIN LEE ZUFELT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER T. STEIN, TO BE MAJOR.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF GREGORY L. BOYLAN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DEREK G. BEAN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ADRIAN R. ALGARRA AND ENDING WITH GREGORY B. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH PHILIP O. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH BENJAMAN M. WUNDERLICH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JULIA N. ALVAREZ AND ENDING WITH APRIL D. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WENDY M. ADAMIAN AND ENDING WITH D012433, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF VERNITA M. CORBETT, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW H. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH D012453, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF WILLIAM D. ROSE, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MARK W. MANOSO, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ERIC F. SABETY, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ANDREW R. MCIVER AND ENDING WITH GERARD C. PHILIP, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 3, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH AARON R. CRAIG AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER T. STEINHILBER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JIMMY W. DARSEY AND ENDING WITH GERALD E. PIRK, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW T. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH JOSHUA F. ZIMMER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RICHARD W. LANG AND ENDING WITH BRADLEY E. SHEMLUCK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF MICHAEL L. HIPP, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF RONALD H. NELLEN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ASHLEY A. HOCKYCKO, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERIC DEL VALLE AND ENDING WITH RYAN TRUXTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 7, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHERYL L. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH MELISSA A. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENNIFER M. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH SUNIL SEBASTIAN XAVIER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DARYL ARTHUR BREHM AND ENDING WITH MELINDA D. SALLYARDS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 19, 2016 .

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SCOTT D. HOCKLANDER AND ENDING WITH CATHERINE MARY TRUJILLO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 19, 2016 .

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF HOLLY S. HIGGINS.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF JOHN MCCASLIN.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LAURIE FARRIS AND ENDING WITH JAMES RIGASSIO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive message transmitted by the President to the Senate on March 17, 2016 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

BRAD R. CARSON, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS, VICE JESSICA GARFOLA WRIGHT, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JULY 8, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL CEREAL DAY

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Cereal Day, which occurred last week on March 7th. As several cereal producers have facilities in my district, I want to recognize the importance cereal has played in the everyday lives of Americans since the 19th century.

According to recent polling data, cereal is America's most popular breakfast food. Not only is cereal a part of a nutritious way to wake up, but it can be enjoyed at all times during the day alone or used to create delicious cuisine.

I am proud that the First District of Iowa is home to two prominent cereal facilities which have provided tasty cereal to Americans for generations. The largest cereal plant in the world, located right in Cedar Rapids, and owned by Quaker Oats, employs around a thousand hardworking Iowans and produces many of the products in your bowl on a daily basis. Just across town, General Mills has a facility which makes Cheerios and other delicious staples of your morning breakfast. Both of these companies are important to the economy of Cedar Rapids and I celebrate their contributions to the community.

I raise a spoon and a glass of milk to all fellow cereal lovers and the hardworking Iowans in the First District which produce healthy, wholesome, and nutritious products for families around the world.

ST. JOSEPH-OGDEN BOY'S BASKETBALL TEAM STATE CHAMPIONS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the outstanding success of the St. Joseph-Ogden Boy's Basketball Team.

The St. Joseph-Ogden Spartans defeated Rockridge 61–43 on March 11 to give the school its first ever Class 2A boys' basketball state title. After struggling for much of the season, and their season on the brink, the Spartans put together an improbable ten-game winning streak which culminated in a state championship.

I would like to congratulate boys athletic director Dick Duval, head coach Brian Brooks, assistant coaches Kiel Duval, Mike Bialeschki, and Isaiah Olson, and athletic trainer Casey Hug, who worked hard to help St. Joseph-Ogden achieve this victory.

Members of the state championship team include: Ty Brown, Brandon Trimble, Brandon Dable, Drayke Lannert, Kolten Taylor, Garrett Grimsley, Aaron Schluter, Tegan Poole, Jake Pence, Kohlten Johnson, Jordan Brooks, Brody Trimble, Eli Oltean, and Ryan Ferriman.

I look forward to the continued success of the St. Joseph-Ogden Boy's basketball team and I extend my best wishes for another outstanding season next year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, 2016, I regret that I was otherwise detained and unable to cast a vote on roll call vote no. 118, on an amendment offered by Rep. PALLONE to H.R. 3797, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE THE NATIONAL NORDIC MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution to designate the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington as the National Nordic Museum of the United States.

The museum celebrates a heritage with strong and proud ties to the region, with many Seattleites claiming ancestry from Nordic countries.

As the only museum in the United States that encompasses a broader focus on all Nordic countries—including Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden—the museum's prominence as a source of exhibits on Nordic culture and history is unparalleled. The museum's collections include not only items brought by Nordic immigrants from 1840 to 1920, but also contemporary objects from their descendants.

The Nordic Heritage Museum has outgrown its current location, now undertaking the laudable albeit considerable effort to modernize its setting to suit its growing needs. The new location will include upgraded facilities and enable a broader series of exhibits in a more spacious setting. I am looking forward to seeing the museum expand its reach and thrive in its new location.

I am fortunate and proud to represent a district that is home to such a rich array of cultural and historical gems. The Nordic Heritage Museum adds to the city's—indeed the region's—wealth of museums, and I am pleased to support an effort to strengthen its national esteem and recognition. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to designate it as the National Nordic Museum of the United States.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. HARRY D. JOHNSTON

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the self-described "Last of the country doctors," Dr. Harry D. Johnston, who passed away on March 15, 2016 at Pinnacle Health in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Johnston, a native of McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, was a general practitioner in his hometown for nearly 46 years. In 2013, he was named the "Outstanding Citizen" of his community for his untiring dedication as a community leader and care-giver, healer, and one who makes every effort to ease a person's pain. In the community he was thought of as a trusted, extended family member. Over the years Dr. Johnston took an interest in all the individuals he came in contact with, paying special attention to their concerns, medical treatment, and everyday issues.

He also was a community leader serving on the Boards of the First National Bank of McConnellsburg, the Arthur Schmidt Charitable Trust, the Fulton County Medical Center, and the Fulton County Home Nursing Services Association. His vision led to the creation of the Tri-State Community Health Center, the county's 9-1-1 system, and the funding of a state-of-the-art hospital with modern equipment, staff and specialty physicians.

His interests included antique cars, farming, hunting and flying.

Dr. Johnston was born on September 19, 1936, was graduated from the Mercersburg Academy, attended the University of London, was graduated from Washington and Jefferson College, and the University of Health Sciences in Des Moines, Iowa.

He is survived by his wife Darlene Pierce Johnston, a son Harry Pierce Johnston (husband of Winter), two granddaughters Ella and Maggie, a sister Alice Walker and nephews William and Kenneth Walker.

HONORING ALEX JOSEPH NELSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alex Joseph Nelson. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex scraped and spray painted 28 fire hydrants in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alex Joseph Nelson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus, I'm proud to support Brain Awareness Week to highlight the importance of neuroscience research as one of the most promising and productive areas of science today. Understanding the brain is not only important for understanding speech, memory, pain, or decision-making, but could lead to treatments that have a transformational impact on millions of individuals who suffer from neurological and psychiatric disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. We must continue to make robust and sustained investments in agencies like the NIH to continue the tremendous progress we've already made, both to improve public health, and to maintain our leadership in the scientific enterprise.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on March 14th & March 15th, 2016, I was unavoidably detained because I was attending to matters in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On roll call no. 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, I would have voted NO.

On roll call no. 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 123, I would have voted YES.

HONORING MS. LINDA PARKS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda Parks, whom I have named Woman of the Year in Napa County, California. For more than four decades, Ms. Parks has worked to build Napa-based Lixit Animal Care Products into the major manufacturer and employer it is today.

Currently serving as President and CEO of the company, Ms. Parks joined Lixit in 1971 as a buyer, three years after the company's founding. At the time, it employed only ten people. In 1994, Ms. Parks and other employees purchased the company using an Employee Stock Ownership Plan, allowing employee stakeholders to participate in the business's future and success.

Under Ms. Parks's leadership, Lixit maintains international markets in Canada and Mexico, and employs more than 100 people in its downtown Napa, California location. Lixit employs many people with developmental disabilities, helping them participate in the workforce and gain independence through the company's Adults with Disabilities program.

Ms. Parks has earned a distinguished reputation in the California business community. In 2015, the North Bay Business Journal named her one of the Women in Business award winners of the year. A graduate of the Building a Minority Business program at the Tuck School of Business, Ms. Parks has led Lixit to become a certified women-owned company.

Mr. Speaker, we thank Linda Parks for her dedication to building a successful business and diverse workforce that enlivens the Napa County business community. For this reason, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

RECOGNIZING BISHOP ALFRED A. OWENS, JR.

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bishop Alfred A. Owens, Jr., who this week is celebrating 50 years of pastoral ministry in the District of Columbia at Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church, where he has provided outstanding service to not only residents of the District, but throughout the country.

As pastor of one the largest churches in the District, for five decades, Bishop Owens has been among the nation's most prominent pastors. His reputation for serving his community, humor, and messages of hope has allowed him to grow from a membership of only seven members in 1966 to more than 7,000 today.

Bishop Owens, a native Washingtonian, has a heart for the community, establishing, among other social service programs an alcohol and drug abuse program and free mental and emotional counseling through certified professionals, and becoming one of the first church HIV/AIDS healthcare programs in the nation. In addition, he is passionate about helping our returning citizens and making them productive community members. He lives by his mantra, ''It's just nice to be nice.'' But, he understands the responsibility he has as a pastor to ensure his ministry goes beyond the four walls of the church and serves those most in need.

Among Bishop Owen's many accomplishments are serving as the Dean of the Joint College of African American Pentecostal Bishops since 2000. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Howard University School of Divinity.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues know of the ministry of Bishop Owens and many congressional staff attend his church. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Bishop Alfred A. Owens, Jr., for 50 years of extraordinary contributions to the national capital region and the nation and to wish him many more years of service.

RECOGNIZING THE WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL—WASHINGTON, DC

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of the World Affairs Council—Washington, DC (WAC–DC). WAC–DC is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to expanding awareness among the American public and international community of geopolitical, business, and civil society issues in our interconnected world.

Since its founding in 1980, the World Affairs Council—Washington, DC has positively impacted the professional development of hundreds of thousands of teachers, educators, and students (high school and college) in the DC metro area, across the United States, and internationally through its global education, international affairs, and global communications programs. In 2009, WAC–DC launched its own weekly one hour international affairs program, World Affairs TODAY, that is filmed in front of a live audience in the Horizon Ballroom of the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center and broadcast nationally throughout the United States.

The Council provides a neutral, independent and non-partisan forum for speeches by presidents, prime ministers, cabinet officials, Members of Congress, and other prominent political leaders. Additionally, economists, diplomats, scholars, corporate leaders, authors, governors, researchers, journalists, and Nobel laureates are invited to participate. American and international speakers join Council members, VIP guests, online and television audiences, and the public for in-depth discussions on major foreign policy and education issues that have a global impact.

To prepare young people to compete in the 21st century, the Council educates students on international affairs and encourages a national dialogue on ''The Importance of Global

Education.'' The Council's teacher development workshops and seminars, youth leadership forums, Academic World Quest competitions, internships, and international study abroad programs foster a balanced view of global issues. The programs facilitate worldwide knowledge transfer, multicultural understanding, and analytical insights for American and international educators, teachers, and high school and college students.

The March 29, 2016 World Affairs HONORS: Global Education Gala is an annual event that recognizes organizations that demonstrate their commitment to best practices in global education, international affairs, and global communications. The WAC–DC will present five distinguished honorees with awards that exemplify the global education mission of the Council, which is to empower educators, students and citizens to effectively compete, communicate, travel and lead in our diverse and interconnected world.

The Republic of South Africa will receive the Distinguished Diplomatic Service Award that will be accepted by H.E. Mninwa J. Mahlangu, Ambassador to the United States. The IBM Corporation will receive the Global Education Award that will be accepted by Daniel S. Pelino, General Manager—Global Public Sector. The George Mason University will receive the Educator of the Year Award that will be accepted by Dr. Angel Cabrera, President. The National Geographic Society will receive the Global Communications Award that will be accepted by Gary E. Knell, President and CEO. The Keynote Address will be delivered by the United States Secretary of Defense, the Honorable Ashton Carter, who will also receive an International Public Service Award.

The World Affairs Council—DC Board of Directors is composed of an outstanding and dedicated voluntary group of individuals, many of whom are nationally and internationally recognized civic, corporate, education, and former diplomatic and government leaders. Along with a dedicated professional staff, strategic partners, members, and volunteers, the WAC–DC is committed to helping make our nation and world a better place for this and future generations through its global education, international affairs and global communications programs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the outstanding programs that are being provided nationally and internationally by the World Affairs Council—Washington, DC.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, I missed Roll Call Votes 124 through 126 due to my necessary attendance in Massachusetts at a memorial service for Ms. Tiffany Johnson, who ably served the House of Representatives and the nation as my Democratic Counsel for the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations of the Committee on the Judiciary. Had I been present I would have voted as follows:

1. On Roll Call 124, I would have voted AYE—(Final Passage of H.R. 4596, Small Business Broadband Deployment Act).

2. On Roll Call 125, I would have voted AYE—(H.R. 4416, To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project).

3. On Roll Call 126, I would have voted AYE—(H.R. 4434, To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project).

HONORING KELLAN CAMPBELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kellan Campbell. Kellan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 394, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kellan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Kellan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Kellan contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Kellan remarked 131 curbs for Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Raytown, Missouri. Since the cemetery has no headstones, the curbs markers assist families in locating their deceased loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Kellan Campbell for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE LIBERTY COUNTY MEN'S HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Liberty County men's high school basketball team on their State Championship title.

On March 3rd, 2016, the Panthers defeated Jonesboro High School from north Georgia to win the Class AAAA State Championship and the school's first ever State Championship in any sport.

Davion Mitchell, an impressive player for the team all year, scored 14 points—all in the second half. The Macon Coliseum crowd erupted during the game when Mitchell, who has already committed to play basketball at Auburn University, scored his first points of the game in the second half.

The team's scoring was led by Richard LeCounte with 20 points and Will Richardson with 19 points. Jaalon Frazier helped the team tremendously on the defensive end by grabbing 15 rebounds.

I would like to congratulate each member of the Liberty County men's basketball program as well as their coach, Julian Stokes, on all of their hard work this year. I wish them the best of luck in future seasons and many more State Championships to come.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RICHARD G. LUGAR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE SERIES

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Richard G. Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series in celebration of its 25th anniversary. The Lugar Series is a political leadership development program aimed at increasing the number and influence of Hoosier Republican women in local, state, and national elected and appointed offices. It is my privilege to honor this strong Hoosier organization as it celebrates 25 years of excellence.

The Lugar Series is named after former Indiana Senator Richard Lugar, but his involvement with the group goes far beyond his namesake. In 1989, Judy Singleton, an Indiana businesswoman and volunteer on Senator Lugar's campaign, shared her dream of seeing more women in key roles in our government and in the Republican Party with Senator Lugar. She told him about her idea to start a program to educate women on the ins-and-outs of getting involved with public service. He was immediately enthusiastic and from there the Richard G. Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series was born. Senator Lugar, Judy, and fellow co-founders Teresa Lubbers, Melissa Martin, Barbara Mayes, and Sue Ann Gilroy put this idea into action and in 1990 the Lugar Series graduated their first class of 12 women.

Since its creation, 449 women have graduated from the Lugar Series. Women who are accepted in this program have demonstrated long-term success and leadership ability in their careers or in community service and have a keen interest in participating in public service. Hundreds of these women have gone on to serve in an elected or appointed office. They have served on and led numerous boards and commissions, served as staff members in various political and governmental offices, and/or been elected mayors, state legislators, county clerks and treasurers, school board members, city and town councilors, county commissioners, superior court judges, State Treasurer, State Auditor, and Lt. Governor of Indiana. Additionally, the success of the Lugar Series in Indiana led to the implementation of 19 similar programs across the country. To date, there are over 2,000 graduates nationwide.

As a long-time advocate for women in public service and a current Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I am familiar with

the history of women in politics and the barriers to entry women face. When the Lugar Series was founded in 1990, there were 29 women serving in Congress out of 535 members, with only 13 being Republican. Today, there are 104 women serving in Congress, including 28 Republicans. State legislatures, local offices, and other elected and appointed positions see similar trends. We have made small strides, but there is still much work to be done.

As part of their program, the Lugar Series selects one outstanding Hoosier woman each year to receive the Nancy Maloley Outstanding Public Servant Award. Recipients have served in the public sector for a minimum of 5 years and display dedication to public service, a creative approach to problem solving, intellectual competency, and effective management and leadership. I was humbled and honored to receive this award in 2014. While there is still progress to be made, I am thrilled at the Lugar Series continued growth and success and look forward to seeing more women leaders emerge.

On behalf of all women, I would like to extend a huge thank you to Judy, Teresa, Melissa, Barbara, Sue Ann, and particularly Senator Lugar for recognizing the importance of educating and empowering women to enter public service and starting this exemplary organization. The Lugar Series has experienced an exceedingly successful 25 years and I look forward to many more dreams being realized for years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF LOUDOUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES PLACIDO SANCHEZ AND ERICK AMBROISE

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Loudoun County Sheriff's Deputies Placido Sanchez and Erick Ambroise. On February 10, 2016, these deputies responded to a home in Western Loudoun County. At this location, they located an adult male who was unconscious and indications were the incident was drug-related.

The deputies observed the individual go in-and-out of consciousness before becoming completely unresponsive. Based on his training, Deputy Ambroise recognized the symptoms of a potential heroin overdose. Deputy Ambroise then utilized his agency issued naloxone to help revive the man. The individual was taken to the Cornwall Campus of Inova Loudoun Hospital where hospital personnel advised the actions taken by the deputies likely saved the man from a fatal overdose. This is the first-time naloxone was administered by a Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Deputy.

I would like to commend Deputies Placido Sanchez and Erick Ambroise in potentially saving the life of a man who was overdosing on heroin by putting their new training into action and using naloxone. The use of heroin is gripping our community; we will continue to fight this scourge on all fronts with law enforcement action and community involvement.

H.R. 3716, THE ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act, which would improve the integrity of Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and expand access to patients.

Today's bipartisan bill would strengthen our federal and State healthcare systems by ensuring patients are protected from fraudulent health providers that have been terminated from participating in Medicaid or CHIP. If a bad actor is terminated from CHIP due to fraudulent practices in one state, this legislation guarantees that provider is prohibited from crossing state lines and opening a practice elsewhere. This fraud is unacceptable and jeopardizes not only patients but States' health programs to waste and abuse. Additionally, H.R. 3716 would create a patient friendly electronic provider database for Medicaid beneficiaries. The database would make it easier for patients to know and choose health care options that work best for them.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that this commonsense legislation, which builds on our health care system, would reduce direct spending by $28 million over the next ten years. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING MS. EVELYN CHEATHAM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Evelyn Cheatham whom I have named Woman of the Year in Sonoma County, California. Since Ms. Cheatham moved to Sonoma 27 years ago, she has served Sonoma residents in a variety of ways, including opening a culinary training program that focuses on empowering young people to pursue a successful future.

After establishing her reputation as a high-profile chef cooking for celebrities, Ms. Cheatham decided to start a new venture that would help the young people of Sonoma County. She started Worth Our Weight (W.O.W.), which provides free training to individuals 16 to 24 years old who have dealt with challenges such as foster care, homelessness, or legal trouble. In addition to enabling young people to pursue a skilled profession in culinary training, Ms. Cheatham offers a social circle to the young people at the restaurant, where they are less likely to be exposed to gangs or violence. Furthermore, she ensures the young people get at least one solid meal a day, a necessity many of her students lack.

Her work has not been limited to teaching cooking. Ms. Cheatham serves on the Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force, where she facilitates communication between law officers and citizens of Sonoma County.

Mr. Speaker, Evelyn Cheatham has selflessly invested her time and energy into bettering the futures of many of Sonoma County's most vulnerable young people. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we thank and honor her dedication here today.

CONGRATULATING TIM HAWKINS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate a longtime member of my staff, Tim Hawkins, on his new position as Government Relations Administrator with the State of Indiana's Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning.

Tim is a dedicated public servant who has worked diligently on behalf of the people of the 6th District. Tim has been on our team from the very beginning and helped set up our district operations when I was first elected to Congress. During his time as a Congressional staffer, Tim has helped countless individuals navigate the complex federal bureaucracy and receive the help they need. He was instrumental in developing the Lawrenceburg job fair and continuing the long tradition of the Muncie job fair. These events have connected hundreds of people to employers and have helped many of our constituents find jobs.

Tim has always been a fun member of our team—from his affinity for bow ties and all things IU to his legendary hair styles. He is a pleasure to work with and was always ready to lend a helping hand. Although I will miss having Tim on my staff, I know the State of Indiana has gained an excellent public servant.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to join me in congratulating Tim Hawkins as he begins the next chapter in his career of public service. I know he will bring the same devotion and enthusiasm that he has shown as part of my staff to his new position with the State of Indiana.

IN HONOR OF BERT STEPHEN CRANE

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved leader in the Merced Community, Bert Stephen Crane. Bert passed away at the age of 84 on Sunday, March 13, 2016 surrounded by his loving family.

On November 29, 1931, Bert was born to fourth generation California farmers and

ranchers. Raised on a cattle ranch, he was up before the sun and out until it came down. During his youth, Bert achieved the rank of Eagle Scout as a member of Boy Scout troop Number 101.

At Merced High School, Bert was the drum major in band and played basketball. After high school Bert studied at Stanford University and obtained his Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics from U.C. Davis.

During his college years Bert met Nancy Magnuson who he fell in love with and later married in 1957. They remained married for over 58 years and raised three children who would follow the family tradition of ranching and farming. Bert spent most of his life farming walnuts which he ventured into in the early 1970's after his early career in the beef industry. Bert went on to own and operate a successful walnut processing plant.

Bert lived an impressive and inspirational life. He was known to have ridden horses with Ronald Reagan, was extremely involved in the community, and had a passion for healthcare. He led fundraising events for Mercy Hospital and was instrumental in the development of the Mercy Cancer Center. Bert served on the Merced County Planning Commission for 28 years. His service to his community, agriculture and research is one of great respect and integrity.

Bert valued and treasured the time he was able to spend with his family above all else. He is survived by his loving wife Nancy, and their three children, Bert A. Crane, Jr., Mary Crane Couchman, and Karen Crane-McNab and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the life of Bert Stephen Crane for his unwavering leadership, and recognizing his accomplishments and outstanding contributions to the community. God bless him always.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID PRINGLE

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations and best wishes to an exceptional business leader and outstanding citizen, Mr. David Pringle, on the occasion of his retirement as Aflac's Senior Vice President of Federal Relations.

David earned a bachelor's degree in insurance and risk management from Mississippi State University and then built an impressive career in this industry. As a representative of Aflac and the insurance industry, David's ability to work with everyone, regardless of political leanings, made him a familiar face on Capitol Hill and a source of counsel for Members of Congress and their staffs.

David has worked for Aflac for a remarkable 36 years. For nine of those years, he worked with Aflac's sales forces in the states of Mississippi, North Carolina and West Virginia, where he was a state sales coordinator. As Senior Vice President of Federal Relations, David is primarily responsible for coordinating Aflac's government relations and lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C.

As one of Georgia's most renowned and respected companies, Aflac, which is based in my district, exemplifies the meaning of corporate citizenship. Aflac has consistently found its name on prestigious lists such as Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For and Ethisphere's list of World's Most Ethical Companies. I am proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of Aflac and its people on behalf of the citizens of my district.

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays often said: ''You make your living by what you get; you make your life by what you give.'' David never hesitated to offer his guidance, knowledge, or advice on the nuanced aspects of the complex insurance industry. A man of great integrity, his efforts, his dedication, and his expertise in his field are unparalleled, but his heart for helping others is what makes these qualities truly worthy.

David has accomplished much in his life, but none of it would be possible without the love and support of his wife, Linell, their children, and their grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to David Pringle upon the occasion of his retirement from an outstanding career spanning 36 years at Aflac.

TRIBUTE TO LILLIE ALMA PATTON DEVLIN

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Lillie Alma Patton Devlin, a lifetime resident of Greenwood County, South Carolina, on the occasion of her upcoming 100th birthday.

Born April 13, 1916 into the Jim Crow South, Mrs. Devlin overcame obstacles that often seemed insurmountable to lead a remarkable life. She and her late husband, John C. Devlin, raised their family with strong determination that their children would have a better life than they had experience and enjoy a greater slice of the American dream. It is very clear that they were successful. Six of their surviving children, earned college degrees, three of them have earned Masters' Degrees and one has earned a doctorate. These accomplishments were made possible by the selfless sacrifices and perseverance of Lillie and John.

Throughout her life, Mrs. Devlin has maintained an unwavering faith, which has emboldened her through good times and sustained her through difficult periods. She has combined her faith with works, serving her beloved Mount Sinai African Methodist Episcopal Church with unwavering dedication, and boundless energy. She continues to serve as a Sunday school teacher, steward, and trustee.

Mrs. Devlin has been equally committed to serving her community. During her tenure as the delegate to the State Education Association from the former Promised Land Elementary School, her reports to the PTA were meticulous, informative, and engaging. When Lillie Devlin embarks upon any task, she completes it enthusiastically and with excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in wishing Mrs. Devlin a very happy 100th birthday. It is a remarkable milestone and she is a remarkable woman. I wish her continued good health and Godspeed.

HONORING CAMERON PRATER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Cameron Prater. Cameron is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Cameron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Cameron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Cameron has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Cameron scraped and spray painted fire hydrants in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Cameron Prater for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF THOMAS S. KAHN

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Thomas S. Kahn, a long-tenured staffer who is retiring from federal service after 32 years of dedicated, trusted work for the House of Representatives. He has spent the last 19 of those years as the Staff Director for the House Budget Committee Democratic staff, and Democrats here in the House have come to rely on Tom's work on the ins and outs of federal budgeting. We will miss his experience and insight, along with his good humor and friendship.

Tom is a loyal Boston Red Sox fan from Massachusetts but started and ended his career on Capitol Hill with Members from the Maryland delegation. Tom came to Capitol Hill as legislative assistant to then-Representative BARBARA MIKULSKI. After time out to earn his law degree from Georgetown University and a brief foray into the private sector, Tom returned to Congress to begin his long service to Representative John Spratt as legislative counsel. Tom served Mr. Spratt throughout the remainder of Mr. Spratt's tenure in Congress,

working on both the Government Operations Committee and then later becoming Staff Director and Chief Counsel for the House Budget Committee in 1997. I was pleased when he agreed to stay on as Staff Director when I joined the Budget Committee as Ranking Member.

This year marks Tom's 19th year of service to the Committee as Staff Director, and during that time he has been instrumental in advancing major legislation, including the 1997 budget agreement with President Clinton that led to the first budget surplus in 30 years. He also played a pivotal role in crafting the 2010 budget resolution which paved the way for passage of the Affordable Care Act.

Those of us who have had the pleasure of knowing Tom inevitably also know about the lights of his life: his sons, Benjamin and Daniel—regularly displayed in photos on Tom's tie—and his accomplished wife, Susana Sanchez. If Tom isn't talking about the budget, he's likely conversing about his family.

While Tom is retiring from federal service, he will maintain his dedication to public service in his new role leading government affairs for the American Federation of Government Employees. I thank Tom for his service to our nation and the difference he will continue to make in fighting for federal employees.

HONORING MS. JOSEPHINE OROZCO

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Josephine Orozco, whom I have named Woman of the Year in Contra Costa County, California. During her more than two decades living in Rodeo, California, Ms. Orozco has freely offered her talents to improve her community through numerous community endeavors, all while managing a successful restaurant.

A California native and graduate of The University of California at Berkeley, Ms. Orozco and her husband run El Sol Restaurant in Rodeo, California. As a business owner herself, she has worked to revitalize the downtown community and local small businesses. During her tenure as President of the Rodeo Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Orozco drew on her expertise as a planning and landscape designer to launch an improvement project enhancing small business connectivity and providing recreational space.

Her community work and events engage many Rodeo residents and offer city residents opportunities both to contribute to worthy causes and connect with their neighbors. Ms. Orozco chairs committees for occasions such as the Community Holiday Tree Lighting, and she plans events such as the Rodeo Crab Feed and Chili Cook-Off and Car Show to raise funds to provide local young people with scholarships. In the past, she has also served on the Rodeo Municipal Advisory Council and the R10 Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, Josephine Orozco has spent more than two decades generously offering her talent, time, and resources to improve the lives of her neighbors in Rodeo and Contra Costa County. For this reason, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF DOWNRIVER FAMILY YMCA

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Downriver Family YMCA on their 75th anniversary.

The Downriver Family YMCA was established in Wyandotte, Michigan on January 7, 1941. It was the very first "family" YMCA branch including both boys and girls, and men and women in its mission to build healthy spirits, minds, and bodies for all. Committed to these principles of unity and togetherness, in 2003 the Downriver Y expanded its facilities and currently resides in the Southgate Fun and Fitness Centre. Over the past 75 years, the Downriver Y has served as the place where the community gathers and its newest facility continues to extend the reach of its impact.

The Downriver Family YMCA serves as an inclusive organization committed to nurturing potential in our children and fostering a sense of social responsibility. The organization models the belief that providing an environment in which citizens can grow and thrive is the best way to promote lasting personal and social change. From athletics to education to health services to safe spaces, the programs offered by the Downriver Family YMCA help people from all walks of life improve their well-being and, through this, builds a stronger community.

The celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Downriver Family YMCA is a testament to the YMCA's service to over 16,000 members of the Downriver community and daily support of over 175 children. Through its longstanding partnerships with organizations and business in our neighborhoods, the Downriver Y commits to mentoring our youth and instilling in them the values of citizenship. The Y's investment in our children is vital to ensure a healthy future. All our lives are enriched by the Downriver Family YMCA.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in gratitude to honor the Downriver Family YMCA and congratulate them on their 75th anniversary and wish them many more years of success.

RECOGNIZING W. BRUCE BEATON

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, W. Bruce Beaton has been honored as "Person of the Year" by the Feasterville Business Association, which is celebrating its 67th year. As president of his family-owned insurance business for many years, Bruce Beaton established a respected reputation as a local business owner, while being involved in the activities of the Feasterville Business Association. He also was honored this year for his participation in other regional Chambers of Commerce, the local Police Advisory Board, Centennial Education Foundation and Community Care of the Northeast. In addition, Bruce Beaton has been an elder and treasurer of Bridesburg Presbyterian Church for the past 15 years. His combined work for the betterment of the community, coupled with his business activities demonstrates his dual sense of citizenship and service and so we join in congratulating this year's FBA honoree and thank him for setting an example for others to follow.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JUSTICE BRENT DICKSON FOR HIS 30 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE ON THE INDIANA SUPREME COURT

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Indiana Supreme Court Justice Brent E. Dickson on the occasion of his retirement. Justice Dickson was appointed to the Indiana Supreme Court in 1986, served as Chief Justice for two years, and is the second longest-serving justice in the history of the Indiana Supreme Court. The people of Indiana's Fifth Congressional District are forever grateful for Justice Dickson's contributions to the Hoosier community and it is my privilege to honor him today.

A lifelong Hoosier, Justice Dickson was born in Gary, Indiana, attended the public schools of Hobart, Indiana, and received his Bachelor's degree from Purdue University in 1964. He later attended Indiana University's Robert H. McKinney School of Law, of which I am also a proud alumna. Justice Dickson worked full-time as an insurance claims adjuster during law school and took classes at night. He received his Juris Doctorate in 1968.

Prior to his time on the Indiana Supreme Court, he worked as a general practice lawyer in Lafayette, Indiana for seventeen years. In addition to private practice, Justice Dickson dedicated himself to serving others as an educator and a mediator. Upon graduating from law school, Justice Dickson worked as an adjunct professor at both of Indiana University's law schools—the Maurer School of Law in Bloomington and the Robert H. McKinney School of Law in Indianapolis. He taught evening classes specializing in Indiana Constitutional Law.

Justice Dickson became the Indiana Supreme Court's 100th justice when he was appointed to the court in January of 1986 by then-Governor Robert Orr. During his tenure on the Indiana Supreme Court, Justice Dickson has served with 12 other justices. He served as chairman of multiple committees throughout the years and served as Chief Justice to the Indiana Supreme Court from May 15, 2012 to August 18, 2014.

In total, Justice Dickson wrote 884 opinions in civil and criminal cases, many of them precedent-setting opinions. He authored opinions that led to major reforms of Indiana's property tax system and upheld the state's school voucher program. Among the significant contributions he is most known for was the court's adoption of a rule that kept police interrogations of suspects from being presented in court unless they were recorded. He also is known for his efforts to encourage civility among attorneys and increase legal services for Hoosiers who can't afford them.

During his time on the bench he also cofounded the Sagamore Chapter of the American Inns of Court, was elected to be a member of the American Law Institute, and continues to be an active participant in a host of local, state, and national judicial and legal organizations.

Throughout his career, Justice Dickson served Indiana with commitment and honor. His decades of hard work and public service did not go unnoticed; he received the Indiana State Bar Association's Litigation Section Civility Award in 2015 and the Indianapolis Bar Association's Silver Gavel Award in 2014. He's also an accomplished legal writer, having published several articles during his judicial career on constitutional law, capital punishment, and a variety of other issues in the justice system.

Anyone who knows Justice Dickson knows that his partner in life, his wife Jan, has been an integral part of his success. As founder of the Judicial Family Institute, Jan is a nationally recognized leader in the judicial world. The two of them are passionate about their work with the Institute, which is a national organization dedicated to providing information on topics of concern and importance to the families of judges. They work as a team and Jan is an equal partner in her husband's long and illustrious career.

Justice Dickson is a truly wonderful example of public service and has left a profound and lasting impact on the court. Though I am sad to see Justice Dickson retire from the court, I am happy to know he will continue his work as a mediator and have more time to focus on one of his favorite hobbies, playing the piano. On behalf of all Hoosiers, I'd like to congratulate Justice Dickson on his success and wish him, his wife Jan, and his entire family the best as he enjoys a well-deserved retirement.

HONORING LIAM ANDREW HUNTSUCKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Liam Andrew Huntsucker. Liam is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Liam has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Liam has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Liam has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Liam scraped and spray painted fire hydrants in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Liam Andrew Huntsucker for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on March 15, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: NO on Roll Call Number 118.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RECREATION NOT RED-TAPE ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, along with my colleague in the Senate and fellow Oregonian Senator RON WYDEN, I am pleased to introduce the Recreation Not Red-Tape (RNR) Act. This bill helps to support and promote sustainable outdoor recreation on public lands by removing barriers to access and making recreation more of a priority for federal land managers.

In Oregon and across the country, an increasing number of Americans enjoy recreating outdoors. In fact, at least two thirds of Oregonians participate in outdoor recreation each year. Recently, I joined Senator WYDEN for a portion of his tour of Oregon's Seven Wonders—some of our state's most treasured outdoor recreation destinations—and we heard from dozens of Oregonians about how important open spaces, trails, and recreation areas are to individuals, families, businesses, and communities. From the magnificent Columbia River Gorge to lesser known trails and creeks throughout our forests, canyons, and deserts, having access to these places for hiking, nature-watching, biking, and other activities is good for our souls and for our economy.

Outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands in Oregon and nationwide support healthy communities, create jobs, generate tax revenue, and support a high quality of life. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, Americans spend $646 billion per year on outdoor recreation gear, vehicles, trips, and more. In Oregon, outdoor recreation generates over $12 billion in consumer spending, tens of thousands of jobs, and $4 billion in wages and salaries. Not only that, but supporting sustainable outdoor recreation on public lands can also help protect important ecological, watershed, and fish and wildlife values that underpin high quality recreation experiences.

While public lands are open to all Americans, unfortunately sometimes it's not as easy as it should be to enjoy the great outdoors. Recreation permitting can involve confusing, complicated, and lengthy processes, and federal land managers need support in maintaining trails to facilitate use. We need to prioritize sustainable outdoor recreation for the important, powerful role that it plays in our economy, in our communities, and in our environment.

This bill helps to promote and support sustainable outdoor recreation on public lands by simplifying recreation special use permitting, facilitating access for our youth, seniors, and veterans, prioritizing maintenance of trails through collaborative partnerships, making environmentally responsible outdoor recreation a priority for land management agencies, and more. These changes will help get more people outside to enjoy our environment, nurturing our important bond with the natural world. The next step will be to complement these efforts by continuing to conserve and protect the special places that provide us with recreation opportunities, so that those opportunities can be available for generations to come.

GOVERNMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN'S COMMITMENT TO NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Kazakhstan has been tireless in its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. The steadfastness their government has shown in this area is a key part of our bilateral relationship and a clear example of Kazakhstan's leadership to the global community. This issue is particularly timely as the President of Kazakhstan; Nursultan Nazarbayev will be participating in the upcoming Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC on March 31st and April 1st.

President Nazarbayev's efforts to lead Kazakhstan to unilaterally surrender its nuclear stockpile under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program were historic and helped to create today's non-proliferation framework. More recently, Kazakhstan together with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other outside partners established the world's first Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU) Fuel Bank. This Fuel Bank, which Kazakhstan has committed to support through facilities and resources as the host nation, provides a secondary market for LEU to guarantee that all nations have an energy source for peaceful civilian nuclear power—and as importantly—have no reason to develop nuclear enrichment technologies of their own.

Additionally, Kazakhstan is preparing to host an international exposition in the city of Astana next year titled, Expo 2017. The theme will be ''future energy'' and include contributions from national governments, non-governmental organizations and private companies on how mankind can provide the power to support ever increasing levels of human development.

Lastly, this year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence after the Soviet Union and the start of bilateral relations with the United States. We mark this occasion in celebration of what has been achieved and note the areas where will can seek progress. The U.S. commitment to Kazakhstan and the region will continue to endure and taking steps such as repealing the outdated Jackson-Vanik restrictions will help to maintain the strong relationship. As we mark this occasion I look forward to a bright future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call 124, I would like to be recorded as voting Yea. On Roll Call 118, I would like to be recorded as voting No.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 16, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''YEA'' on Numbers 124, 125, and 126.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT CONNER CHAPPELL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Conner Chappell of Van Meter, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. For his project, Conner cleaned the hiking trails and painted the shelter ceiling at Trindle Park in Van Meter. The work ethic Conner displayed all throughout his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Conner and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING MS. MONICA ROSENTHAL

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Monica Rosenthal, whom I have named Woman of the Year in Lake County, California. In her two decades living in Middletown, California, Ms. Rosenthal has dedicated countless hours to community service, even while running a successful business.

Born in Hawaii and raised in towns across the country, Ms. Rosenthal settled in California after meeting her husband Dave. Together, Monica and Dave manage their 40 acre vineyard in Lake County. Beyond her business experience, Ms. Rosenthal invests her time and resources to improve the lives of her neighbors.

No stranger to organizing her neighbors in support of a cause, Ms. Rosenthal has served on two Save the Lake campaigns and assisted her community with recovery efforts after the Valley Fire devastated the southern portion of Lake County. Ms. Rosenthal drew on her experience as a small business owner and a community servant to plan a successful Economic Outlook and Forecast event in December 2015, which brought together government, business, education, and healthcare leaders to stimulate the economic recovery process.

Ms. Rosenthal has supported a wide range of both local environmental and social programs. She represented District 1 on the Lake County Planning Commission from 2007 to 2009, and, for the past five years, has represented District 1 on the Lake County Farm Bureau, lending her practical expertise to County leadership. Additionally, she supports foster youth and senior programs such as Redwood Children's Services and the Middletown Senior Center.

Mr. Speaker, Monica Rosenthal is a key part of the Lake County community and we thank her for her dedication to community service and her active participation in social programs. For this reason, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

CONGRATULATING COLUMBUS NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Columbus North High School on its 2016 IHSAA state championship in girls' gymnastics.

The Bull Dogs faced off against two-time defending champion Valparaiso High School on March 12th at Ball State University's Worthen Arena. During their tenth straight appearance at the state meet, the team made their mark by breaking the state record for total points and beating the runner-up Valparaiso Vikings 114.850 to 113.250. In fact, three of Columbus North's female gymnasts placed in the top five performances in Saturday's meet and Senior Katrina May was notably awarded the Mildred M. Ball Mental Attitude Award.

I am proud of these young women for not only their remarkable win, but also for the Hoosier sportsmanship that they displayed throughout their undefeated season. I want to commend Coaches Sandy Freshour and Bob Arthur as well as all of the assistant coaches who led these young women through this historic victory.

Congrats, Bull Dogs, on a perfect season.

HONORING JACOB MATTHEW PEARSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob Matthew Pearson. Jacob is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacob has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jacob constructed a brick patio under an existing bench and pavilion in the playground at First Presbyterian Church of Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob Matthew Pearson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR VS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I speak today in defense of the Little Sisters of the Poor in their stand for religious liberty in America. Next week, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case between the Little Sisters of the Poor and the federal government. The Little Sisters' ministry is to care for the elderly poor all over the world. The Little Sisters here

in the United States run a nonprofit to take care of America's elderly poor. They are now fighting the federal government in order to be able to preserve their ministry.

The federal government's argument is this: The Little Sisters of the Poor must violate the tenets of their Catholic faith and authorize their third-party health care administrators to provide contraception, sterilization, and abortifacients to recipients of their health insurance. Never mind that the government has granted complete exemptions of this mandate to massive, secular companies such as Exxon and Pepsi. The government would rather force the Little Sisters of the Poor to reject their sincere and righteous religious beliefs than grant them a full exemption like larger, secular companies have received. The government would rather force the Little Sisters out into the streets when they can't pay the oppressive fines if they don't comply with this unjust mandate. It's morally disgusting, and it's insulting to any lover of freedom.

I urge my colleagues to pray with me that the Supreme Court upholds religious freedom in America and sides with the Little Sisters of the Poor.

CONGRATULATING GARY GRINNELL

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Gary Grinnell on his recent appointment to the Board of Directors at the National Association of Federal Credit Unions.

Mr. Grinnell currently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Corning Credit Union, located in my hometown of Corning, New York. Prior to this appointment, he served as Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Grinnell has nearly 25 years of experience in the financial services industry and has held numerous positions involving internal audit, consumer and real estate lending operations, risk management, and member services.

Mr. Grinnell serves on NAFCU's Legislative Committee and has testified before Congress on behalf of the Association. He has a deep understanding of legislative and regulatory issues facing credit unions across the county. I am confident that his expertise and years of experience will benefit the NAFCU Board and local credit unions for years to come.

Mr. Grinnell has lived in the Corning community for 18 years, where he and his wife Melissa have raised their three children. Mr. Grinnell's commitment to our community is evident by his leadership on the Southern Tier Economic Growth Board of Directors and the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Gary Grinnell and wishing him the best of luck in his new role on the NAFCU Board of Directors.

CONGRATULATING THE CARMEL HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SWIM TEAM ON THEIR NATIONAL RECORD BREAKING 30TH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Carmel High School Girls Swim team for winning the 2015–2016 Girls Swimming State Championship title. Last year, I was proud to honor this team for their 29th consecutive state championship title, which tied the national record for the most consecutive state championship wins in any sport. This year's win is even more momentous, as it marks their 30th consecutive state title and broke the national record for most consecutive state championship wins in any high school sport.

This tremendous national record breaking win has been 30 years in the making. This state championship concluded the Greyhounds' already impressive season, and marked the teams' place in history as the best sports program in our nation's history. The Lady Greyhounds won 9 out of 11 events at the State Championship for a total of 438 points, far overshadowing the second-place team, which finished with 193.5 points. In accomplishing their 30th state title, there were other notable individual achievements. Senior Veronica Burchill broke her own state record in the 100-yard butterfly event, which she set at last year's state championship. Senior Claire Adams won the 100-yard backstroke, making her the first woman to win the 100-yard backstroke all four years of her high school career and the first swimmer in Indiana history to win 16 state titles (4 team championships and 12 individual). Claire also took home the Mental Attitude Award.

Throughout the years, the Lady Greyhounds have demonstrated incredible dedication to their sport—training year-round and putting in countless hours in the pool and the weight room. They have been supported by their committed parents, coaches, and trainers, and led by head coach Chris Plumb. Coach Plumb has been coaching the Lady Greyhounds since 2006, leading them to 10 of their last 30 consecutive titles. He works tirelessly to inspire, teach, and motivate his swimmers to dream big and reach their goals. High school sports are a special experience. They teach discipline, build character, and allow young men and women to have experiences they will remember for a lifetime. This team exemplifies the wonderful attributes that high school sports teach, and I am proud to represent such a hardworking and highly regarded group of young women and coaches.

The Greyhounds' 30th state championship title is momentous for each and every member of the Carmel High School swim team, both past and present. This team has been building a legacy for decades and I am thrilled that the current coaches and swimmers and all those that came before them are able to see this legacy come to fruition. I look forward to cheering the team on through another great season next year.

INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN STEM BOOSTER ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Women and Minorities in STEM Booster Act—important legislation to address the troubling underrepresentation of these groups in growing career fields.

Companies that harness America's advantages in science and technology continue to grow and create high-paying jobs, yet the pipelines for these careers often leave out women and under-represented minorities. Indeed, according to the American Community Survey, women make up half of the workforce but hold only 26 percent of STEM-related jobs.

The STEM Booster Act tackles this disparity head-on through efforts to include women and minorities in the STEM workforce. The bill authorizes a competitive grant program so that professional organizations, universities, nonprofits, and others can develop innovative programs to foster interest and participation in these subjects among young women and minorities.

Studies have shown that women and minorities have just as much interest in science and math as other students, but are much less likely to declare a STEM major or complete a degree in one of these subjects. Mentoring programs, internships, and outreach efforts can help to ensure that these students can translate an interest in STEM into a degree and a career.

I want to thank Sen. HIRONO for her partnership on this issue, and urge my colleagues to support this important effort.

HONORING JEFFREY ALAN MACKEY, JR.

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeffrey Alan Mackey, Jr. Jeffrey is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1309, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeffrey has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeffrey has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jeffrey has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and become a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow. Jeffrey has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jeffrey coordinated the reconstruction of a large retaining wall in the resident's courtyard at the Excelsior Springs Convalescent Center in Excelsior Springs, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeffrey Alan Mackey, Jr., for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING DR. QUENTIN YOUNG'S LIFE AND LEGACY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember my mentor and precious friend Dr. Quentin Young, who passed away last week.

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle called him, ''a relentless advocate of fairness and justice for all citizens.'' In his book, County, Dr. David Ansell describes Dr. Young as a ''legend,'' a role model who attracted residents from all over the country to train with him at Chicago's Cook County Hospital. I am proud to have known Quentin Young as an advocate and as my personal physician.

Throughout his life, Quentin Young fought to eliminate discrimination and to create a society rooted firmly in justice. As a young doctor, he was deeply troubled by the segregation he saw in Chicago hospitals, and he founded the Committee to End Discrimination to end it. He founded the Medical Committee for Human Rights to provide medical care to civil rights and anti-war advocates. He served as president of the American Public Health Association. And he helped lead other physicians in the push for universal health care, creating the Physicians for a National Health Program, which continues his legacy for medical care where ''everyone is in, and nobody is left out.''

Quentin Young inspired many of us to agitate for social and economic change, to literally go the extra mile. In 2001, he walked 167 miles across Illinois to champion the call for universal health care.

Where Quentin Young saw problems, he also saw solutions. When patients came to him after suffering serious medical problems from back-alley abortions, he joined the battle to win legal abortion. Today, at a time when abortion rights continue to be attacked, it is important to remember his words to us, ''It's not a choice of abortion or no abortion, but safe abortion or unsafe abortion.''

Quentin Young also understood that the fight for universal health care is part of a larger fight: to eliminate poverty, to make sure that every child receives quality education and to guarantee democracy throughout our society. As a young man, he registered African American voters during Mississippi Freedom Summer and participated in one of the 1965 marches from Selma to Montgomery. Throughout his life, he pushed for voting rights and to make our electoral system responsive to the needs of voters, not the demands of the wealthiest campaign contributors.

In Chicago and across the country, there are countless individuals like me whose lives have been made better because of Quentin Young and who are committed to paying-forward the lessons he taught us. He has inspired us not just to fight for economic and social justice but to build the movements that will bring results. While he will be greatly missed, we will continue that fight.

HONORING MS. MARIA GUEVARA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Maria Guevara, whom I have named Woman of the Year in Solano County. Ms. Guevara is a tireless advocate for the rights and needs of homeless individuals in Vallejo, California.

Ms. Guevara has spent much of her life in California, and attended Solano Community College, Napa Valley College, and St. Mary's College of California. From volunteering with Filipino American Social Services to serving as a board member for Vallejo Community Access Television, Ms. Guevara has dedicated her time to causes close to her heart. She also enjoys volunteering in her faith community as a religious education teacher at St. Basil the Great.

In 2010, Ms. Guevara founded Vallejo Together, a group of dedicated volunteers, to address the unmet needs of homeless people in her community. Vallejo Together provides many services, including serving meals, connecting individuals to resources, and sponsoring events such as a ''Youth and Parent Expo'' and ''Unity Day'' to celebrate Vallejo's diversity and families. The volunteer group aims to empower those in need to become self-sufficient so they can enjoy an independent and fulfilling life.

Mr. Speaker, Maria Guevara selflessly spends her time and energy caring for others in our community. Everyone Ms. Guevara works with enjoys her warm and compassionate nature, and Vallejo continues to benefit from her inspiring dedication to service. For this reason, it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

CELEBRATING THE PLANTING OF A TREE ON THE U.S. CAPITOL GROUNDS HONORING CONGRESSMAN EDWARD R. ROYBAL

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I led the planting of a tree on the U.S. Capitol Grounds in honor of my father, the late Congressman Edward R. Roybal. The tree, a red oak (Quercus rubra), was planted on the south side of the House of Representatives along Southwest Drive, near the intersection of Independence Avenue SW and South Capitol Street.

For helping to make this planting a reality, I extend my most sincere thanks to Speaker PAUL RYAN, Senate Rules Committee Chairman ROY BLUNT, Architect of the Capitol Stephen R. Ayers, and all my congressional colleagues who signed the letter in support of the tree planting ceremony.

On behalf of my family, I also extend my deep gratitude and appreciation to three congressional leaders who spoke at yesterday's ceremony: Senator HARRY REID, whom my father admired and considered a very dear friend; Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI, whom my father often referred to as the gentlelady from California and predicted would one day become a great leader; and Minority Whip STENY HOYER, whom my father respected and proudly served with as a member of the Appropriations Committee. I also want to offer my heartfelt thanks to House Chaplain Fr. Patrick J. Conroy, S.J., who blessed the tree during the ceremony.

In celebration of the centennial of my father's birth, I can think of no greater tribute than the planting of this red oak tree on the U.S. Capitol Grounds.

Adding to this occasion is that it is also the 40th anniversary of my father's founding of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, better known as NALEO.

If my father were alive today, of all the tributes he has received, including the Medal of Freedom from President Obama, the Presidential Citizens Medal from President Clinton, the naming of the CDC Campus in his honor, and many others, this would be among his most cherished, because this tree is being planted between the House of Representatives, which my father truly believed is the people's house, and the Rayburn Building, where he spent much of his 30 years in Congress doing the people's work.

The magic of this tree is that it will be a living testimony of my father's work to ignite beacons of hope and opportunity for all Americans.

As a poet once wrote, ''A tree is the greatest human service provider. It provides shade while standing, comfort when converted, and fire when burned.''

To all who made yesterday possible, and to those who honored us with your presence and made this occasion even more special, my family and I are extremely grateful, and we thank you.

CELEBRATING RICHARD A. LEYENDECKER

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Richard A. Leyendecker, a decorated war hero and successful business owner.

Mr. Leyendecker was born to Peter P. Leyendecker, Jr. and Emma Jordan Leyendecker. A lifelong resident of Laredo, Texas, he attended St. Peter's Memorial School and Martin High School. He enrolled in Texas A&M University until, at the age of 19, he enlisted into the Army Air Corps to serve his country during World War II.

Mr. Leyendecker was a heavy bomber in the European Theater during World War II. In August of 1944, while he was flying a mission in support of the Normandy invasion, he was shot down and declared missing in action. He endured prisoner of war camps for nearly a year before American troops were able to liberate him. In recognition of his service and sacrifice, Mr. Leyendecker received the Prisoner of War Medal, the European-African Middle Eastern Ribbon with 4 bronze stars, and the WWII Victory Ribbon, among other honors.

After returning home, Mr. Leyendecker resumed his studies at Texas A&M University, earning a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering. Upon graduation he began working with his father at their family construction business in Laredo. He and two of his four sons, Gary and Mark, founded Leyendecker Construction, Inc. in 1980. Another son, Paul, also joined the company in the 1990's. Mr. Leyendecker worked tirelessly to build a successful family business and valued the work of his employees.

In addition to his many accomplishments, Mr. Leyendecker was a proud husband and father. He is survived by his wife, Blanche Flores, and their four sons Richard, Gary, Paul and Mark.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to remember the legacy of Richard A. Leyendecker: a hero to his country, a successful business leader, and a loving family man.

RECOGNIZING MARTIN E. HELLMAN AND WHITFIELD DIFFIE, RECIPIENTS OF THE TURING AWARD

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Martin E. Hellman and Whitfield Diffie for receiving the 2015 Association of Computing Machinery's A.M. Turing Award for their major contributions to modern cryptography.

Mr. Hellman is Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering at Stanford University and Mr. Diffie is former Vice President and Chief Privacy Security Officer of Sun Microsystems. Named in honor of Alan M. Turing, the influential British mathematician who articulated the mathematical foundation and limitations of computing, this annual award is often described as the Nobel Prize of computing.

Forty years ago, Mr. Hellman and Mr. Diffie's groundbreaking paper, ''New Directions in Cryptography,'' introduced the idea of public-key cryptography, which has proven critical for safely transmitting information across the Internet. Public-key cryptography ensures that a message can be securely transmitted online such that only the intended recipient is able to view the message. This is achieved through a pair of mathematically related keys, one that is public and one that is private. Although anyone wishing to send a message to a certain recipient can use that recipient's readily available public key to encrypt the message, the message can only be decrypted with the recipient's securely held private key. Today, thanks to Mr. Hellman and Mr. Diffie's crucial work, we are able to send emails, submit payments on e-commerce websites, and use online tools to check our bank statements and health records, while ensuring that the information transmitted remains private.

Mr. Hellman and Mr. Diffie have also received the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Hamming Medal, the Marconi International Fellowship Award, the Franklin Institute's Levy Medal, and the IEEE Donald G. Fink Award for their work on public-key cryptography. Additionally, they have each been recipients of other prominent awards and honors for their significant contributions to the important area of digital security.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Hellman and Mr. Diffie and thanking them for their outstanding work.

HONORING KYLE ANTHONY DOWNES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kyle Anthony Downes. Kyle is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kyle has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Kyle has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Kyle contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Kyle refurbished several terrace steps on the White Tail Trail in the Parkville Nature Sanctuary, making the trail safer for hikers.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Kyle Anthony Downes for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

SENATE—*Monday, March 21, 2016*

The Senate met at 10 and 05 seconds a.m., and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN CORNYN, a Senator from the State of Texas.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 21, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN CORNYN, a Senator from the State of Texas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CORNYN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2016

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2016.

Thereupon, the Senate at 10 and 39 seconds a.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 24, 2016, at 11 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Monday, March 21, 2016*

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 21, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

WORLD WATER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is World Water Day. It is an opportunity to learn more about water-related issues and find ways to make a difference.

Growing up in the mountains of North Carolina, I lived in a house without electricity or running water. That experience taught me very quickly and very early in life that water is a valuable and precious resource when you have to carry it home from a spring twice a day, and that lesson has stayed with me.

Many of us take for granted that when we turn on our taps or faucets, water will always be there. However, more than 660 million people lack access to safe water and 1.2 billion people live in areas with inadequate water supply.

There are many organizations throughout our country and throughout the world that are working to change that situation. We can support the many organizations that aim to preserve and defend this vital natural resource, but it is also important that we evaluate how we use water as individuals.

On World Water Day, I hope all of us will explore how we can take steps to preserve this fundamental resource and make it safe and accessible for the world's population.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, today is World Down Syndrome Day. This is a day that creates a global voice for the rights and inclusion of people with Down syndrome.

According to the National Down Syndrome Society, there are more than 400,000 Americans living with Down syndrome. This is an issue that hits very close to home for me and my family.

On June 21, 2008, my grandson, Stanley, was born with Down syndrome. I have 10 grandchildren and one on the way. Each one is unique and special, but let me tell you about Stanley.

Stanley loves more than you can ever imagine. There is nothing more fun than coming in and looking up and seeing Stanley say: Hey, Grandpa Mike, I need a hug.

I can tell you that when families find out that one of their children or grandchildren will have Down syndrome, you are worried and you are concerned, but it is not something to be afraid of. It is something that, yes, they will have special needs, but children and adults with Down syndrome can be trained and educated to a level where they can become self-supportive, active members of society, and be a great part of not only this Nation, but this world.

As I said earlier, there is no one that loves more, stronger, and so unconditionally. Maybe we should take a lesson from them, Mr. Speaker. Our family and all families that have members with Down syndrome are blessed beyond measure.

JUDGE MERRICK GARLAND NOMINATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, President Obama nominated Judge Merrick Garland to replace the late Justice Antonin Scalia on the Supreme Court of the United States.

Judge Garland is an extraordinarily qualified candidate, highly esteemed within the legal community, and highly accomplished as a prosecutor and appellate judge. He was confirmed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1995, by a vote of 76–23, with a majority of Republicans voting in favor of his confirmation. Indeed, an even larger number of Republicans said he was well qualified, and I will speak to that.

Under normal circumstances, Judge Garland would now be sitting down this week for one-on-one meetings with Senators on both sides of the aisle in preparation for his confirmation hearings, but Senate Republicans, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, have made it clear that they will not be operating under normal procedure. Instead, they are refusing even to meet with Judge Garland. Let me suggest they are refusing to do their duty.

Their approach is inconsistent with the expectations of our Founding Fathers and a disservice to the American people, to the Court, to American justice, and to the American people, and their justification has no basis in fact.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, who sits now on the Court, was confirmed during the final years of President Reagan's second term. In fact, he is one of the 14 Justices in our history who have been confirmed during a Presidential election year, including Louis Brandeis and Benjamin Cardozo.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is hardly precedent that a lame duck President must allow a Supreme Court vacancy to sit unfilled for months. We do not allow that for the House of Representatives and, for the most part, we don't allow it for the United States Senate. There is a timeframe, indeed, in every State to fill seats in the House of Representatives so that the American people will be represented. To politicize this process is irresponsible and jeopardizes the proper functioning of our Supreme Court.

In 1988, during the Kennedy confirmation process, President Reagan said, ''The Federal judiciary is too important to be made a political football.'' I agree, and I hope Senate Republicans would, too, because we all know that their decision has nothing to do with Judge Garland's qualifications.

Senator HATCH, a Republican from Utah, in 1997, called Judge Garland ''highly qualified'' and said, ''his intelligence and his scholarship cannot be questioned.'' When put forward for the D.C. Circuit Court, Judge Garland was

cited by Senator HATCH as ''a fine nominee.'' He ultimately voted to confirm Judge Garland to the D.C. Circuit Court.

While Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY, who chairs the Judiciary Committee on the Senate—also a Republican—opposed Judge Garland's nomination to the Circuit Court, it ought to be noted that it was only because he thought there were already too many judges on that bench, not because Judge Garland lacked qualifications. In fact, Senator GRASSLEY made this clear by saying, ''I have nothing against the nominee. Mr. Garland seems to be well qualified and would probably make a good judge on some other court.''

Senator JEFF SESSIONS, a conservative Republican from Alabama, agreed with Senator GRASSLEY about too many judges on the Circuit Court, and said of Judge Garland: ''I would feel comfortable supporting him for another judgeship.'' Although he didn't say it, but another judgeship would be a Justice on the Supreme Court of the United States. Now, Senator GRASSLEY and Senator SESSIONS have an opportunity to put Judge Garland on another court—one that has a vacancy needing to be filled.

Our Founding Fathers set up a Court of nine Justices, cognizant of the problem that would occur if there were a 4–4 tie. That is the situation that exists today, and it can be remedied by the United States Senate now.

Let's not play political games. If Republicans don't want Judge Garland on the Court, schedule a vote and cast their votes accordingly.

Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said just yesterday on ABC's This Week: ''Under the Constitution, we have a shared responsibility. This is not something he''—referring to the President—''does alone. He nominates; we confirm.''

That, of course, is absolutely accurate. I would say to Senator MCCONNELL that the President has met his responsibilities. Now it is time for the Senate to do so as well.

Some Senate Republicans, Mr. Speaker, agree. Senator MARK KIRK of Illinois said on Friday: ''Cast a vote. The tough thing about these senatorial jobs is you get 'yes' or 'no' votes. Your whole job,'' Senator KIRK observed, ''is to either say 'yes' or 'no' and explain why.'' That is democracy. That is responsibility.

Furthermore, in February, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, Republican of Maine, said: ''I think the obligation of the Senate is to carefully consider any nominee whom the President submits. The best way to do that, in my judgment, is public hearings.'' Senator COLLINS was absolutely right.

Under pressure from within their own ranks, Senate Republican leaders can only stall for so long before they must face up to their responsibility to give Judge Garland the fair hearing he deserves and that the American people expect.

I believe Judge Garland will make a fine Supreme Court Justice, Mr. Speaker, and I thank President Obama for selecting someone so ''highly qualified,'' intelligent, and whose ''scholarship cannot be questioned,'' ''a fine nominee.'' All of those, of course, are Senator HATCH's words.

I hope that Judge Garland will be swiftly confirmed. Leaving the Supreme Court with the possibility of gridlock, as we have seen the Congress at gridlock, is not good for our country, not good for the American people, and does not serve our democracy well.

Senator MCCONNELL, hold hearings. Reflect upon Judge Garland's competency, intellect, and suitability to serve on the Supreme Court. Do your duty.

SUNY POTSDAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK) for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate a tremendous milestone for a school in my district, the State University of New York at Potsdam.

On March 25, 1816, the document that would establish what is now known as SUNY Potsdam was signed, making it one of our Nation's first 50 colleges and the oldest institution in the SUNY system. Since that time, this school has developed a well-deserved reputation for providing a topflight education, especially in the liberal arts and science fields, and is the proud home of the world-renowned Crane School of Music, which I toured last year.

As the cochair of the Congressional STEAM Caucus, I am proud that SUNY Potsdam is leading the way in incorporating the arts into the traditional science, technology, engineering, and math curriculum.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to stand on the House floor today to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of SUNY Potsdam.

□ 1215

AMERICANS BEING UNJUSTLY HELD IN IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, these faces are not household names, faces; no one knows who these unknown Americans are. And that is because they have been held in Iran for so long.

September 18, 2015, and also detained in 2015.

Of course they were not detained the 444 days that Iran, a totalitarian dictatorship and theocracy, held 52 American diplomats, and the world is not watching the same as they did then. That is how this President could make a deal with Iran and not include these victims of this dictatorship.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to remind people that in the years, the decades, since I was a young lieutenant in 1979, when the Ayatollah Khomeini blamed students for somehow doing something—not his government—and continued to blame them and blames them in many ways until today, the Iranian Government, today, would still hold our Embassy hostage. It still is a shell waiting for a return, a return that I fear this President wants to do by executive order. He has already thrown aside so much of what was working to stop this regime from spreading terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, as we speak today, these people are held hostage, and the American people are being held hostage by a President who chooses to use the pen and the phone over the democratic means at his side.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue coming to the floor and pointing out that Iran continues to be a dictatorship spreading violence throughout the region; continues to fund Hamas and Hezbollah; continues to, in fact, destabilize countries in the region, and now does so with 140 billion more dollars.

Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important that we stand firm in this House that this cannot be tolerated; that, ultimately, this body must stand and do what it is obligated to do, which is, in fact, to demand freedom for Americans held involuntarily and illegally around the world, and particularly in Iran.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S SUPREME COURT NOMINATION

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I will close by commenting on the Democratic Whip's statements. He is demanding that the Senate do its job.

At a time in which the political season is well underway and politicians are campaigning around America for President, at a time in which two sides have two different visions of the Constitution—one is that the original intent of the Constitution be adhered to and changed only by the will of the people, as it has been 27 times; or, that it be simply cast aside the way the current nominee for the Supreme Court would do with the Second Amendment and others—I respect the minority leader's right to an opinion; but, of course, we all, on this floor, have a right to be wrong from time to time. Mr. Speaker, he clearly was when he went on for more than 10 minutes, telling us that we have to confirm a Supreme Court Justice in the middle of a political season.

I wish he had joined me in saying that this President should not make agreements that circumvent the Constitution, that circumvent this body and leave Americans stranded abroad.

LADIES IN WHITE AND PRESIDENT OBAMA'S TRIP TO CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, when President Obama announced his efforts to normalize relations with Cuba in December 2014, many of us believed that his decision would only embolden the regime and end up hurting the Cuban people. Well, almost a year and a half later, we can say, unfortunately, as expected, that our suspicions have been warranted. This is indeed what has happened.

President Obama is only worried about legacy shopping and is willing to ignore the plight of the Cuban people who continue to suffer under Castro, and this normalization effort has been an abject failure for freedom and democracy on the island.

The lives of the Cuban people have not improved. A record number of them are fleeing the island to escape Castro's tyranny; and freedom and liberty, unfortunately, no longer seem to be the goals of this administration for the people of Cuba.

In December 2015, President Obama said in an interview that he would go to Cuba only when the human rights situation on the island had improved. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is what human rights looks like on the island, the valiant Ladies in White, who walk peacefully in Cuba to their church—and you see one being dragged away in the lower corner. This is what happens to them every week in Castro's Cuba. They are harassed. They are beaten. This is not what an improved human rights situation looks like at all, Mr. President.

Hours before the President arrived in Cuba, hundreds of pro-democracy advocates were arrested. Listen to that, ladies and gentlemen. Hundreds of pro-democracy advocates were arrested just hours before the President's Air Force One touched down. Many of them were members of the Ladies in White, Las Damas de Blanco.

The Ladies in White are mothers, wives, daughters, sisters of current or former political prisoners. These brave women continue to speak out for justice and freedom against the regime that oppresses them daily and arrests them every Sunday when they walk peacefully to church.

Two weeks ago, the Ladies in White leader, Berta Soler—and we saw her in one of the posters—asked President Obama very pointedly—and there they are getting arrested, harassed, as they do all the time. She said: Please visit Gandhi Park, where we meet. Meet with the victims of Castro's repression.

Well, President Obama responded by stating: ''No one should face harassment, arrest, or physical assault simply because they are exercising a universal right to have their voices heard.''

That is absolutely true.

And then he added that he would raise these issues directly with their oppressor, Raul Castro.

But once you have already embraced the oppressor of the Ladies in White and legitimized his regime on the world stage, what does this empty rhetoric and phrases matter to any of them?

In February 2015, Berta Soler testified before our House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and she stated: ''Our demands are quite concrete: freedom for political prisoners, recognition of civil society, the elimination of all criminal dispositions that penalize freedom of expression and association, and the right of the Cuban people to choose their future through free, plural elections.''

Elections in Cuba? Fidel Castro famously said, elections for what? They don't have any political system at all. There is only one party that is allowed to operate; that is the Communist Party. They have selections, not elections.

The Cuban people deserve more than just lip service and platitudes from the White House. They are demanding actions and reforms in Cuba to unclench the fist of the Castro control.

But solely a meeting with Cuban civil society is a very low bar, Mr. Speaker. It is not enough to help the Cuban people, especially after shaking the hand of a murderous tyrant like Raul Castro.

However, even this meeting with civil society is being undermined by Castro's thugs, even this low bar. Gee, if I just meet with dissidents—check off the list—then my trip will have been a success.

Many civil society members have stated that they are now under house arrest, as I speak, and that Castro's security agents are preventing them from leaving their own homes until President Obama leaves Cuba.

In Cuba's communist newspaper, called Granma, the regime noted that President Obama's trip to Havana dispels the myth that human rights are being violated on the island. They are no fools. They understand the image is worth a thousand words. The image of President Obama in Cuba says no human rights are being violated. And the regime knows that all of the concessions that President Obama has given come with no strings attached.

I will end with this, Mr. Speaker:

No reforms are needed. No changes need to be made. In fact, the Castro regime has already stated that it will not change one bit after all of these concessions.

The Cuban people deserve better.

The American people deserve better.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day.

The Psalmist could not find enough words to express trust in You. Personal experience of Your presence, care, and abiding guidance gave rise to his song: ''O Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer. My God, my rock of refuge, my shield, the fullness of my salvation, my stronghold.'' Psalm 18:2.

Stir in our hearts today Your Spirit. Touch the soul of this Nation that we may see Your saving work in our work and the work of this House. Your strength behind our weakness, Your purpose in our efforts at laws of justice, Your peace drawing all of us and the entire world to lasting freedom.

You are ever faithful, O Lord, worthy of all of our trust, now and forever. May everything we do this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POLIQUIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WATER STORAGE IN CALIFORNIA

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, after years of extreme drought, California is finally receiving, thanks to the Good Lord and Mother Nature, significant rain and snowfall, perhaps enough to return to near normal conditions.

However, despite continued mandatory statewide rationing, Federal agencies are still making decisions that result in the loss of massive amounts of water that could be stored, or decisions that will be harmful to agriculture. Just 5 days ago, the Sacramento River ran so high that enough water to supply over 54,000 people for an entire year flowed past each hour.

While recent storms have improved our water supplies, our largest reservoirs are not yet full. They soon could be, but are not yet full. It is precisely during these times that water agencies need to be very cautious and very careful in managing these water supplies so that, as our reservoirs do become full, we can carry through until maybe the next drought.

So will they allow these reservoirs to become full, or will they let water flow down because of bad flood data or fish needs?

We will see.

RECOGNIZING BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize March 2016 as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month. This month marks the 30th anniversary of President Reagan's declaration of March 1986 as Hemophilia Awareness Month.

One of the most troubling bleeding disorders is hemophilia. Hemophilia affects roughly 20,000 people in the U.S. and 1 in 5,000 newborns. Treating the disorder is complicated, as well as expensive, as there is no known cure, and treatment may cost $250,000 a year.

Another bleeding disorder is Von Willebrand disease, or VWD, which results in bruising, nosebleeds, and excessive bleeding following surgical procedures. VWD occurs equally in men and women and is estimated to affect more than 3 million Americans.

Through this greater awareness of bleeding disorders, we can work toward earlier diagnoses and the prevention of complications, unnecessary procedures, and disabilities.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL SHINAY

(Mr. POLIQUIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, our proud State of Maine has sent many hardworking, principled leaders to the national stage.

Senator Margaret Chase Smith brought common sense and courage to Washington as the first woman to serve in both the U.S. House and in the Senate.

Now, many other Mainers have served our country with distinction, but have seldom made the headlines.

Michael Shinay grew up in a middle class family in Waterville and was a loyal alum of the University of Maine. He was an immensely talented public servant who, every day, helped American families and businesses during his 30 distinguished years at the U.S. Postal Service. Mike served as postmaster in Burlington, Vermont, and in the Postmaster General's Office here in Washington.

In 1992, Mr. Shinay accepted the thankless job of cleaning up the theft and inside dealings right here at the House Post Office. He then cut costs and introduced new technology that streamlined this huge, complex mail system.

In 1999, Mike retired from the Postal Service and consulted on global mail systems to some of the world's most successful companies.

Two months ago, on January 23, Michael J. Shinay peacefully passed away, surrounded by his loving wife, Jeanne, of 39 years, and their two wonderful children, Katie and Jonathan. Two months ago, Maine and America lost a cheerful, hardworking public servant, full of fairness, integrity, and goodness.

We will miss Mike Shinay.

CONGRATULATING VALOR CHRISTIAN GIRLS SWIMMING AND DIVING TEAM

(Mr. COFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Valor Christian High School's varsity girls swimming and diving team on their 4A State championship win.

It was a thrilling win for Valor. The team scored 320 points to catapult past their competitors in the quest for the State championship title.

Senior Brooke Stenstrom showed tremendous leadership and dedication in her record-breaking 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle, and 200 medley relay, earning her the title of ''Swimmer of the Year'' in the State's 4A classification.

Freshman Abbie Erickson finished fourth in the diving portion of the competition, contributing to the team's total points and ultimate State win.

Ms. Lori Stenstrom, the swim team's head coach, led a tremendous effort all season long to get the team ready for their State championship performance, earning her the title of ''Swimming Coach of the Year.''

I am honored to congratulate these young women on their State championship win.

CUBAN PRO-DEMOCRACY LEADERS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Raul Castro's thugs arrested or detained many Cuban pro-democracy leaders in anticipation of the President's time in Cuba.

Berta Soler, the leader of the Ladies in White, was detained; Antonio Rodiles, detained; and some of these activists were invited to participate in the meeting with President Obama.

Antunez and his wife, Yris, arrested; musician Gorki Aguila, arrested; former political prisoner Angel Moya, arrested. Pastor Mario Felix Lleonart Barroso was arrested yesterday.

The Castro brothers have shifted their strategy to a catch-and-release program to intimidate activists who have been placed under house arrest by the repressive apparatus of the regime.

President Obama says that human rights are important to him, but empty words with no actions to back them up sends the message to the Castro regime to continue with his repression, and Castro continues to do so. No surprise there.

Shame on us, Mr. Speaker.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

(Mr. BENISHEK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, today, March 21, is World Down Syndrome Day. This internationally recognized event is set aside to raise public awareness of what Down syndrome is and about the important role that people with Down syndrome play in our lives and our communities.

According to the National Down Syndrome Society, there are currently about 400,000 people living with Down syndrome in the United States alone. These people are faced with elevated risks for many other health conditions and must confront obstacles every day of their lives.

Organizations like the Upper Peninsula Down Syndrome Association in northern Michigan help to raise awareness of this condition. Through hosting events like the Buddy Walk, these organizations help to educate the general public and raise funds for programs that benefit those living with Down syndrome.

In my own life, my family and I are blessed to have my youngest grandson, Archie, in our lives. We want Archie to have the ability and the freedom to be the best Archie that he can be.

While we have made tremendous strides in helping those with Down syndrome, it is my hope that we continue to improve the quality of life and the opportunity for kids like Archie.

MEDIA SILENT ON LACK OF GLOBAL WARMING

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the media were quick to cover a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration study last year where scientists altered global surface temperature data to try and refute the two-decade halt in global warming. The L.A. Times, The New York Times, and USA Today all headlined NOAA's announcement that there was not a halt in global warming.

However, a new peer-reviewed study, published in the journal Nature, confirms the halt in global warming. According to one of the study's lead authors, it ''essentially refutes'' NOAA's study. But the many well-respected scientists and their findings were ignored by much of the national media, including those that had previously reported there never was a halt in global warming.

Americans deserve all the facts that surround climate change, not just those that fit the view the liberal national media wants to promote.

RED TIE CHALLENGE FOR BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. LONG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take the National Hemophilia Foundation's Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month Red Tie Challenge, in recognition of more than 3 million Americans who suffer with debilitating bleeding disorders like hemophilia or Von Willebrand disease, which prevent blood from clotting naturally.

It is currently estimated that more than 400,000 people worldwide suffer from hemophilia alone, and 75 percent of them either lack adequate treatment or have no access to treatment.

Also, Von Willebrand disease occurs genetically and is believed to be the most common bleeding disorder. It is estimated to affect 1 percent of the United States population.

If these problems are not treated effectively, these problems can result in extended bleeding after injuries, surgery, or trauma, and can be fatal for those suffering with them.

This March is the first Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, which further underscores the need for legislation like the 21st Century Cures package, which will spur greater medical research and innovation when it becomes law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow colleagues to also take the Red Tie Challenge so these millions of Americans suffering with bleeding disorders will be helped.

□ 1415

REMEMBERING ELIZABETH GARRETT, CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

(Mr. REED asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of a great lady from our district, Elizabeth Garrett, Cornell University President.

Ms. Garrett lost her battle with cancer on March 6, 2016, at the age of 52.

We were all deeply saddened, Mr. Speaker, to learn of her passing, and our hearts go out to her loved ones, including her husband, her two stepdaughters, her parents, and her sister.

Mr. Speaker, following a distinguished career where she served as legislative director and tax counsel for Senator David L. Boren of Oklahoma and served as a clerk for United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, she rose through the ranks of academia to become Cornell University's first female president.

We are very proud of President Garrett. She was a remarkable leader who led our community in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all of those in the 23rd Congressional District to extend our condolences and our thoughts and prayers to her family and to our entire community.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 17, 2016 at 5:16 p.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 4721.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 18, 2016 at 10:26 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 483.

That the Senate passed S. 2143.

That the Senate passed S. 2512.

That the Senate agreed without amendment H. Con. Res. 111.

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 34.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 4 o'clock p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NATIONAL POW/MIA REMEMBRANCE ACT OF 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1670) to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1670

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) In recent years, commemorative chairs honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing

in Action have been placed in prominent locations across the United States.

(2) The United States Capitol is an appropriate location to place a commemorative chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

SEC. 3. PLACEMENT OF A CHAIR IN UNITED STATES CAPITOL HONORING AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION.

(a) OBTAINING CHAIR.—The Architect of the Capitol shall enter into an agreement to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families under such terms and conditions as the Architect considers appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

(b) PLACEMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Architect shall place the chair obtained under subsection (a) in a suitable permanent location in the United States Capitol.

SEC. 4. FUNDING.

(a) DONATIONS.—The Architect of the Capitol may—

(1) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

(2) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(b) COSTS.—All costs incurred in carrying out the purposes of this Act shall be paid for with private donations received under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1670.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the measure before the House today directs the Architect of the Capitol to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families and to prominently place it on display in the U.S. Capitol.

As Members of Congress, certainly we each represent diverse congressional districts, but one of the things that ties us together are the many brave men and women we represent who stood on the battle lines in defense of our Nation's freedom, our liberty, and our way of life.

This legislation introduced by our colleague, Representative STEPHEN LYNCH of Massachusetts, honors American prisoners of war and Americans missing in action. The chair will serve as a permanent reminder of the enormous sacrifice made by those who served our country and were taken as POWs or listed as MIA.

The importance of remembering and honoring their great sacrifice can never be overstated. Our Nation has a responsibility to them and to their families who have shared in their sacrifice, and we must never forget.

Our heroes deserve to be honored, especially in the U.S. Capitol, which is itself a symbol of our American beliefs and the liberties and freedoms that they sacrificed to defend.

This chair will honor veterans like SAM JOHNSON, one of our colleagues here in the House. Sam is one of the most stalwart protectors of those who have served and who himself endured nearly 7 years as a POW, including 42 months in solitary confinement, in the infamous Hanoi Hilton.

Forty-three years ago SAM JOHNSON returned to the United States to be reunited with his loved ones, and we are so honored to have the privilege to serve with him today here in this House.

In addition to SAM JOHNSON, Mr. Speaker, when I think about the meaning behind this memorial, I think about an individual who lives in my district. His first name is Donald, but we all call him Digger, Digger O'Dell.

Digger enlisted in 1952 into the Air Force. He was shot down in October of 1967, and he, like Sam, was a prisoner in the Hanoi Hilton, in Digger's case, for 5½ years.

Thankfully, Digger made it home, as Sam did, after all of those years in a North Vietnamese camp. He is now in his eighties and serves as a member of our local air base community council and chairs a fundraising event for the Special Olympics. Digger is a remarkable man. He is one of many who selflessly served our Nation facing enormous adversity.

I might even mention my husband, who was a fighter pilot and is a proud member of Vietnam Veterans of America and is now a proud member of Chapter 154 of the VVA in Macomb County, which is actually one of the largest chapters in our entire Nation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these heroes who so bravely served our Nation deserve to be honored, especially in the U.S. Capitol, and certainly this chair with the MIA/POW logo on it will forever demonstrate that we will never forget.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for her kind words in support of this bill.

And I want to thank Mr. BRADY, the ranking member on the House Administration Committee, for his support as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 1670, the National POW/MIA Remembrance Act. Before I begin, I want to thank House Administration for their great support and staff support as well.

Mr. Speaker, this bill actually comes from the recognition we all share that, in our country, oftentimes the families of POWs and MIAs suffer alone.

And it is through the efforts of groups like Rolling Thunder and other veterans' groups who have brought to the forefront the fact that we should carry more immediately the memory of the sacrifice of those families.

In my own life, I came to know a man named James Fitzgerald, who was a member of Operating Engineers Local 4 in Boston. I worked on a job with him. I remember at noontime, when everyone would go off to lunch, he would go off into his pickup truck and eat his sandwich by himself.

Day after day in his lap he would have a tri-corner flag that this country gave him in remembrance of his son, who went down as a result of enemy fire in Vietnam in the early 1960s.

It was not until the late 1980s, early 1990s, that his son was actually recovered, returned to his family, and buried in Massachusetts. For many, many years, the Fitzgerald family carried that burden by themselves. They carried it alone.

I had a chance to travel with JPAC, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, to Vietnam, to Korea, and to the South Pacific, the Philippines.

We have 83,000—83,000—men and women from this country that died in the Second World War, in Korea, and in Vietnam who are still there.

About 1,000 remain in Vietnam. About 5,000 remain in North Korea up around the Chosin Reservoir. And then the great majority of those MIA are buried at sea as a result of the great naval battles in World War II. They are buried in place, and their resting places are our sacred ground.

We have an opportunity here to place within the Capitol a remembrance, a shrine, in effect, to their sacrifice in remembrance of their service to this country. H.R. 1670 would honor them by authorizing a placement of a POW/MIA Chair of Honor on the grounds of the United States Capitol.

That chair will forever stand unoccupied as a solemn reminder of the over 83,000 brave Americans from as far back as World War II who are still waiting to be brought home.

Chairs of honor carrying the POW/MIA insignia have already been placed in public spaces in cities and towns around the country. It is only fitting that the Capitol, the seat of the U.S. Congress, should do so as well.

Mr. Speaker, when our fellow Americans go to war, we make them a promise never to leave them behind. That vow is sacred. When we pass this chair every day, we will be reminded of our commitment to our POW/MIAs and their families that we have not forgotten them, we will never forget them,

and we will not rest until they all come home.

I want to take a moment to thank Joe D'Entremont, who first approached me about undertaking this initiative a couple of years ago. He is a past president of Rolling Thunder of Massachusetts Chapter 1 and is now a Rolling Thunder, Incorporated, National member.

I want to thank all the members from all the chapters of Rolling Thunder from across the country who have kept this idea alive.

Joe D'Entremont is a passionate advocate on behalf of our veterans and our POWs and MIAs. Joe has worked with my office from the very beginning on this effort.

I also want to thank Gus Dante, also with Rolling Thunder National, who has worked steadfastly at Joe's side to see this through.

Finally, I want to thank the members of Rolling Thunder Massachusetts Chapter 1 and all of the Rolling Thunder chapters around the Nation. Their efforts were integral to bringing us here today.

After today, H.R. 1670 will move to the Senate for its consideration. I want to recognize and thank my Massachusetts colleague, Senator ELIZABETH WARREN, for introducing her Senate companion bill and for making this truly a bicameral effort.

I look forward to continuing to work with her to get this past the finish line and have the National POW/MIA Remembrance Act signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER.)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 1670, the National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015, which would direct the Architect of the Capitol to place a commemorative chair paid for by private donations in the United States Capitol to honor American prisoners of war and those missing in action. This bill is a way to acknowledge and remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

One of the groups supporting this bill is the Rolling Thunder, as was just mentioned. The mission of the Rolling Thunder is to educate the public of the American prisoners of war who were left behind. I am happy to state that this bill is not a cost to the American taxpayers.

In coordination with the Rolling Thunder, I have also introduced H. Res. 590, which calls for a selective committee on POW and MIA affairs.

As a minister for nearly two decades, I can tell you that these situations are sometimes not always resolved, but the closure that it provides and benefits to the families is immeasurable.

I am proud to once again stand with my colleagues today in honoring our brave men and women.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the chairwoman for her willingness to put such a wonderful piece of legislation forward, something that truly should be unanimous in its bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in strong support of H.R. 1670, the National POW/MIA Remembrance Act. This bipartisan bill, as many of those who have spoken before me have said, authorizes the placement of a commemorative chair on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol that is going to be a reminder to all of us of the great sacrifice that our brave men and women in uniform have made to keep our country safe and promote our values around the globe.

These commemorative chairs, which carry the POW/MIA insignia and are purchased with privately raised funds, remain perpetually unoccupied as a solemn reminder of the 91,000 brave servicemembers still waiting to be brought home.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor for me to be able to serve with some in this institution who were POWs and made it home. They need to be commended for their service, like Congressman SAM JOHNSON from Texas, who spent way too many months—48, I believe, to be exact—as a guest at the Hanoi Hilton.

He was able to make it home. But so many more—so many more—families experience tragic losses because they never know what happened to their family members.

Mr. Speaker, ensuring that our veterans are properly cared for is one of my top priorities as a Member of this great institution.

And while the Veterans Administration continues to require significant reforms, having a commemorative chair in the Capitol will remind all Members—all Members—of this great institution of the commitments we have made to those who have fought so hard and ensure that we hold the VA accountable for their actions, too.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1670 so that families of POW/MIA servicemembers know also that the United States will never forget the sacrifices their loved ones who served this country with such valor and honor made.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, in support of H.R. 1670, I do want to share in the acknowledgment of SAM JOHNSON's service and sacrifice on behalf of this country.

In fairness, I have to say that, when we went to the Hanoi Hilton, they did have a reconstructed version of what Senator JOHN MCCAIN went through in Hanoi. It is a sanitized version of what he suffered there, but I also want to recognize his service. He is truly an American hero as well.

I thank my Republican colleagues on the other side of the aisle for their support. I am glad we can work on this together. I think we owe it to all our MIA and POWs and their families to get this done.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1670.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, I just want to reiterate again that these brave men and women who served as POWs or those missing in action are our Nation's patriots and heroes, and they certainly do deserve to be honored. I am just proud to be a part of this effort to install this fitting memorial recognizing those who sacrificed so that we could all be free.

I certainly want to thank our colleague from Massachusetts, STEPHEN LYNCH, who introduced this bill. He came to me and asked that we would work together on this.

I am delighted to do so because there is absolutely nothing more bipartisan and important, I think, than how we remember our veterans and those who are currently serving as well. This is a very, very important piece of legislation.

□ 1615

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to join us in passing this measure today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1670, "National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015" which directs the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

I support this legislation sponsored by Congressman STEPHEN LYNCH of Massachusetts, because all soldiers should be commemorated for their heroic efforts.

This important bill directs the Architect of the Capitol to enter into an agreement to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families, and place it in the U.S. Capitol in a suitable permanent location within two years after enactment of this Act.

The Architect of the Capitol may enter into an agreement with any tax-exempt, charitable organization to solicit private donations to carry out this Act; and accept resulting donations of funds, property, and services.

An astonishing 83,000 American service personnel are still missing in action—from previous wars—and 142,233 Americans have been Prisoners of War (POW).

Thankfully, revolutionary new communications, information management and surveillance technologies, the total dominance of the

air dimension, better training, and the nature of the adversary and geography has halted the increase of POWs and soldiers missing in action.

It is our duty as Americans to remember those who have bravely fought for our beloved country.

Having this chair at our Nation's capital will serve as a continuous reminder that our freedom was fought for.

This bipartisan bill stands as a testament that our soldiers should be honored for their efforts in protecting our freedom and rights as Americans.

Our nation has a proud legacy of appreciation and commitment to the men and women who have worn the uniform in defense of this country but for those who never reunite with their families it is our duty as citizens to keep their memory alive.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 1670.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1670.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 192) to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 192

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) The term 'abuse' means the knowing infliction of physical or psychological harm or the knowing deprivation of goods or services that are necessary to meet essential needs or to avoid physical or psychological harm.'';

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) The term 'adult protective services' means such services provided to adults as the Secretary may specify and includes services such as—

''(A) receiving reports of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation;

''(B) investigating the reports described in subparagraph (A);

''(C) case planning, monitoring, evaluation, and other casework and services; and

''(D) providing, arranging for, or facilitating the provision of medical, social service, economic, legal, housing, law enforcement, or other protective, emergency, or support services.'';

(3) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) The term 'Aging and Disability Resource Center' means an entity, network, or consortium established by a State as part of the State system of long-term care, to provide a coordinated and integrated system for older individuals and individuals with disabilities (as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102)), and the caregivers of older individuals and individuals with disabilities, that provides—

''(A) comprehensive information on the full range of available public and private long-term care programs, options, service providers, and resources within a community, including information on the availability of integrated long-term care services, and Federal or State programs that provide long-term care services and supports through home and community-based service programs;

''(B) person-centered counseling to assist individuals in assessing their existing or anticipated long-term care needs and goals, and developing and implementing a person-centered plan for long-term care that is consistent with the desires of such an individual and designed to meet the individual's specific needs, goals, and circumstances;

''(C) access for individuals to the full range of publicly-supported long-term care services and supports for which the individuals may be eligible, including home and community-based service options, by serving as a convenient point of entry for such programs and supports; and

''(D) in cooperation with area agencies on aging, centers for independent living described in part C of title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 796f et seq.), and other community-based entities, information and referrals regarding available home and community-based services for individuals who are at risk for residing in, or who reside in, institutional settings, so that the individuals have the choice to remain in or to return to the community.'';

(4) in paragraph (14)(B), by inserting ''oral health,'' after ''bone density,'';

(5) by striking paragraph (17) and inserting the following:

''(17) The term 'elder justice' means—

''(A) from a societal perspective, efforts to—

''(i) prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and

''(ii) protect older individuals with diminished capacity while maximizing their autonomy; and

''(B) from an individual perspective, the recognition of an older individual's rights, including the right to be free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.''; and

(6) in paragraph (18)(A), by striking ''term 'exploitation' means'' and inserting ''terms 'exploitation' and 'financial exploitation' mean''.

SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATION ON AGING.

(a) BEST PRACTICES.—Section 201 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3011) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''202(a)(21)'' and inserting ''202(a)(18)'';

(B) in subparagraph (K), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (L)—

(i) by striking ''Older Americans Act Amendments of 1992'' and inserting ''Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016''; and

(ii) by striking ''712(h)(4).'' and inserting ''712(h)(5); and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(M) collect and analyze best practices related to responding to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation in long-term care facilities, and publish a report of such best practices.''; and

(2) in subsection (e)(2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting '', and in coordination with the heads of State adult protective services programs and the Director of the Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs'' after ''and services''.

(b) TRAINING.—Section 202 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3012) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by inserting ''health and economic'' before ''needs of older individuals'';

(B) in paragraph (7), by inserting ''health and economic'' before ''welfare'';

(C) in paragraph (14), by inserting ''(including the Health Resources and Services Administration)'' after ''other agencies'';

(D) in paragraph (27), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(E) in paragraph (28), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(F) by adding at the end the following:

''(29) provide information and technical assistance to States, area agencies on aging, and service providers, in collaboration with relevant Federal agencies, on providing efficient, person-centered transportation services, including across geographic boundaries;

''(30) identify model programs and provide information and technical assistance to States, area agencies on aging, and service providers (including providers operating multipurpose senior centers), to support the modernization of multipurpose senior centers; and

''(31) provide technical assistance to and share best practices with States, area agencies on aging, and Aging and Disability Resource Centers, on how to collaborate and coordinate services with health care entities, such as Federally-qualified health centers, as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B)), in order to improve care coordination for individuals with multiple chronic illnesses.'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (5)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) when feasible, developing, in consultation with States and national organizations, a consumer-friendly tool to assist older individuals and their families in choosing home and community-based services, with a particular focus on ways for consumers to assess how providers protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights, including the rights provided under section 314, of older individuals;'';

(B) in paragraph (8)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''to identify and articulate goals of care and'' after ''individuals'';

(ii) in subparagraph (D)—

(I) by inserting ''respond to or'' before ''plan''; and

(II) by striking ''future long-term care needs; and'' and inserting ''long-term care needs;'';

(iii) in subparagraph (E), by adding ''and'' at the end; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) to provide information and referrals regarding available home and community-based services for individuals who are at risk for residing in, or who reside in, institutional settings, so that the individuals have the choice to remain in or to return to the community;''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) The Assistant Secretary shall, as appropriate, ensure that programs authorized under this Act include appropriate training in the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and provision of services that address elder justice and the exploitation of older individuals.''.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 205 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C.3016) is amended by striking subsection (c).

(d) REPORTS.—Section 207(a) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3018(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''202(a)(19)'' and inserting ''202(a)(16)''; and

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking ''202(a)(17)'' and inserting ''202(a)(14)''.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 216 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3020f) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$40,063,000 for each of the fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019.'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) There are authorized to be appropriated—

''(1) to carry out section 202(a)(21) (relating to the National Eldercare Locator Service), $2,088,758 for fiscal year 2017, $2,132,440 for fiscal year 2018, and $2,176,121 for fiscal year 2019;

''(2) to carry out section 215, $1,904,275 for fiscal year 2017, $1,944,099 for fiscal year 2018, and $1,983,922 for fiscal year 2019;

''(3) to carry out section 202 (relating to Elder Rights Support Activities under this title), $1,312,904 for fiscal year 2017, $1,340,361 for fiscal year 2018, and $1,367,817 for fiscal year 2019; and

''(4) to carry out section 202(b) (relating to the Aging and Disability Resource Centers), $6,271,399 for fiscal year 2017, $6,402,551 for fiscal year 2018, and $6,533,703 for fiscal year 2019.''; and

(3) by striking subsection (c).

SEC. 4. STATE AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS ON AGING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 303 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3023) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$356,717,276 for fiscal year 2017, $364,456,847 for fiscal year 2018, and $372,196,069 for fiscal year 2019.'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$459,937,586 for fiscal year 2017, $469,916,692 for fiscal year 2018, and $479,895,348 for fiscal year 2019.''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$232,195,942 for fiscal year 2017, $237,233,817 for fiscal year 2018, and $242,271,465 for fiscal year 2019.'';

(3) in subsection (d), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$20,361,334 for fiscal year 2017, $20,803,107 for fiscal year 2018, and $21,244,860 for fiscal year 2019.'';

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking ''(1)'' and all that follows through ''(2)''; and

(B) by striking ''$166,500,000'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$154,336,482 for fiscal year 2017, $157,564,066 for fiscal year 2018, and $160,791,658 for fiscal year 2019.''

(b) ALLOTMENT.—Section 304 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3024) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking subparagraph (D) and inserting the following:

''(D)(i) For each of fiscal years 2017 through 2019, no State shall be allotted an amount that is less than 99 percent of the amount allotted to such State for the previous fiscal year.

''(ii) For fiscal year 2020 and each subsequent fiscal year, no State shall be allotted an amount that is less than 100 percent of the amount allotted to such State for fiscal year 2019.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''subpart 1 of''.

(c) PLANNING AND SERVICE AREAS.—Section 305(b)(5)(C)(i)(III) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3025(b)(5)(C)(i)(III)) is amended by striking ''planning and services areas'' and inserting ''planning and service areas''.

(d) AREA PLANS.—Section 306 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3026) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''establishment, maintenance, or construction of multipurpose senior centers,'' and inserting ''establishment, maintenance, modernization, or construction of multipurpose senior centers (including a plan to use the skills and services of older individuals in paid and unpaid work, including multigenerational and older individual to older individual work),''; and

(B) in paragraph (6)—

(i) in subparagraph (G), by adding ''and'' at the end; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''(H) in coordination with the State agency and with the State agency responsible for elder abuse prevention services, increase public awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and remove barriers to education, prevention, investigation, and treatment of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as appropriate;''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (J), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (K) as subparagraph (L); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

''(K) protection from elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and''.

(e) STATE PLANS.—Section 307(a)(2)(A) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3027(a)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''202(a)(29)'' and inserting ''202(a)(26)''.

(f) NUTRITION SERVICES INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—Section 311(e) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030a(e)) is amended by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$164,055,664 for fiscal year 2017, $167,486,502 for fiscal year 2018, and $170,917,349 for fiscal year 2019.''.

(g) SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.—Section 321 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or referral services'' and inserting ''referral, chronic condition self-care management, or falls prevention services'';

(B) in paragraph (8), by striking ''(including'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''(including mental and behavioral health screening and falls prevention services screening) to detect or prevent (or both) illnesses and injuries that occur most frequently in older individuals;'' and

(C) in paragraph (15), by inserting before the semicolon the following: '', and screening for elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation'';

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by inserting ''or modernization'' after ''construction'';

(3) in subsection (c), by inserting before the period the following: '', and pursue opportunities for the development of intergenerational shared site models for programs or projects, consistent with the purposes of this Act''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) In this section, the term 'adult child with a disability' means a child who—

''(1) is age 18 or older;

''(2) is financially dependent on an older individual who is a parent of the child; and

''(3) has a disability.''.

(h) HOME DELIVERED NUTRITION SERVICES PROGRAM.—Section 336(1) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030f(1)) is amended by striking ''canned'' and all that follows through ''meals'' and inserting ''canned, or fresh foods and, as appropriate, supplemental foods, and any additional meals''.

(i) NUTRITION SERVICES.—Section 339 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030g–21) is amended

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''solicit'' and inserting ''utilize''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (J), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (K), by striking the period and inserting '', and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(L) where feasible, encourages the use of locally grown foods in meal programs and identifies potential partnerships and contracts with local producers and providers of locally grown foods.''.

(j) EVIDENCE-BASED DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES PROGRAM.—Part D of title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030m et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the part heading, by inserting ''EVIDENCE-BASED'' before ''DISEASE''; and

(2) in section 361(a), by inserting ''evidence-based'' after ''to provide''.

(k) OLDER RELATIVE CAREGIVERS.—

(1) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Part E of title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030s et seq.) is amended by striking the subpart heading for subpart 1.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—Section 372 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3030s) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or who is an individual with a disability''; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY.—The term 'individual with a disability' means an individual with a disability, as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102), who is not less than age 18 and not more than age 59.

''(3) OLDER RELATIVE CAREGIVER.—The term 'older relative caregiver' means a caregiver who—

''(A)(i) is age 55 or older; and

''(ii) lives with, is the informal provider of in-home and community care to, and is the primary caregiver for, a child or an individual with a disability;

''(B) in the case of a caregiver for a child—

''(i) is the grandparent, stepgrandparent, or other relative (other than the parent) by blood, marriage, or adoption, of the child;

''(ii) is the primary caregiver of the child because the biological or adoptive parents are unable or unwilling to serve as the primary caregivers of the child; and

''(iii) has a legal relationship to the child, such as legal custody, adoption, or guardianship, or is raising the child informally; and

''(C) in the case of a caregiver for an individual with a disability, is the parent, grandparent, or other relative by blood, marriage, or adoption, of the individual with a disability.''; and

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking ''subpart'' and all that follows through ''family caregivers'' and inserting ''part, for family caregivers'';

(ii) by striking ''; and'' and inserting a period; and

(iii) by striking paragraph (2).

(l) NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM.—Section 373 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3030s–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by striking ''grandparents or older individuals who are relative caregivers.'' and inserting ''older relative caregivers.'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''grandparents and older individuals who are relative caregivers, and who'' and inserting ''older relative caregivers, who''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ''to older individuals providing care to individuals with severe disabilities, including children with severe disabilities'' and inserting ''to older relative caregivers of children with severe disabilities, or individuals with disabilities who have severe disabilities'';

(3) in subsection (e)(3), by striking ''grandparents or older individuals who are relative caregivers'' and inserting ''older relative caregivers'';

(4) in subsection (f)(1)(A), by striking ''for fiscal years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011'' and inserting ''for a fiscal year''; and

(5) in subsection (g)(2)(C), by striking ''grandparents and older individuals who are relative caregivers of a child who is not more than 18 years of age'' and inserting ''older relative caregivers''.

(m) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Part E of title III is amended by striking ''this subpart'' each place it appears and inserting ''this part''.

SEC. 5. ACTIVITIES FOR HEALTH, INDEPENDENCE, AND LONGEVITY.

(a) GRANT PROGRAMS.—Section 411 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3032) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (12), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (13) as paragraph (14); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following:

''(13) continuing support for program integrity initiatives concerning the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) that train senior volunteers to prevent and identify health care fraud and abuse; and'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''out'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting the following:

''out—

''(1) aging network support activities under this section, $6,216,054 for fiscal year 2017, $6,346,048 for fiscal year 2018, and $6,476,043 for fiscal year 2019; and

''(2) elder rights support activities under this section, $10,856,828 for fiscal year 2017, $11,083,873 for fiscal year 2018, and $11,310,919 for fiscal year 2019.''.

(b) NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAMS.—Section 418(b) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3032g(b)) is amended by striking ''a national meeting to train'' and inserting ''national trainings for''.

(c) LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR OLDER AMERICANS.—Section 420(c) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3032i(c)) is amended by striking ''national''.

(d) REPEALS.—Sections 415, 419, and 421 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3032d, 3032h, 3032j) are repealed.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 417(a)(1)(A) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3032f(a)(1)(A)) is amended by striking ''grandparents and other older individuals who are relative caregivers'' and inserting ''older relative caregivers (as defined in section 372)''.

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS TO COMMUNITY SERVICE SENIOR OPPORTUNITIES ACT.

(a) OLDER AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.—Section 502 of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by striking ''513(a)(2)(D)'' and inserting ''513(a)(2)(E)''; and

(B) in subparagraph (N)(i) by striking ''Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.)'' and inserting ''Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.)'';

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by inserting ''and the local workforce development board'' after ''service area''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' after ''State agency'' and inserting '', the local workforce development board, and''; and

(3) in subsection (e)(3), by inserting '', with the State workforce development board and local workforce development board,'' after ''aging''.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—Section 503 of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (6), (7), and (8) as paragraphs (7), (8), and (9), respectively;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking ''paragraph (7)'' and inserting ''paragraph (8)'';

(C) in paragraph (4), by striking subparagraph (F) and inserting the following:

''(F) how the activities of grantees in the State under this title will be coordinated with activities carried out in the State under title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111 et seq.) and other related programs (referred to in this subparagraph as 'WIOA and related activities'), and how the State will reduce unnecessary duplication between the activities carried out under this title and the WIOA and related activities.''; and

(D) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following:

''(6) COMBINED STATE PLAN.—In lieu of the plan described in paragraph (1), a State may develop and submit a combined State plan in accordance with section 103 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3113). For a State that obtains approval of such a combined State plan, that section 103 shall apply in lieu of this subsection and a reference in any other provision of this title (other than this subsection) to a State plan shall be considered to be a reference to that combined State plan.''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(B)(i), by striking ''Workforce Investment Act of 1998'' and inserting ''Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act''.

(c) COORDINATION.—The heading of section 511 of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056i) is amended by striking ''**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 1998**'' and inserting ''**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**''.

(d) PERFORMANCE.—Section 513 of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056k) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''AND INDICATORS'';

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''AND INDICATORS''; and

(ii) by striking ''and additional indicators of performance'' each place it appears;

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''(A)'' and all that follows through ''The'' and inserting ''(A) COMPOSITION OF MEASURES.—The''; and

(II) by striking clause (ii);

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B);

(iii) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) by striking ''(C)'' and inserting ''(B)''; and

(II) in the first sentence, by striking ''(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(A)''; and

(III) by striking the second sentence; and

(iv) by striking subparagraphs (D) and (E) and inserting the following:

''(C) AGREEMENT ON EXPECTED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(i) FIRST 2 YEARS.—Each grantee shall reach agreement with the Secretary on levels of performance for each measure described in subparagraph (A)(i), for each of the first 2 program years covered by the grant agreement. In reaching the agreement, the grantee and the Secretary shall take into account the expected levels proposed by the grantee and the factors described in subparagraph (D). The levels agreed to shall be considered to be the expected levels of performance for the grantee for such program years.

''(ii) THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR.—Each grantee shall reach agreement with the Secretary, prior to the third program year covered by the grant agreement, on levels of performance for each measure described in subparagraph (A), for each of the third and fourth program years so covered. In reaching the agreement, the grantee and the Secretary shall take into account the expected levels proposed by the grantee and the factors described in subparagraph (D). The levels agreed to shall be considered to be the expected levels of performance for the grantee for such program years.

''(D) FACTORS.—In reaching the agreements described in subparagraph (B), each grantee and the Secretary shall—

''(i) take into account how the levels involved compare with the expected levels of performance established for other grantees;

''(ii) ensure that the levels involved are adjusted, using an objective statistical model based on the model established by the Secretary in accordance with section 116(a)(3)(A)(viii)) of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141(a)(3)(A)(viii)); and

''(iii) take into account the extent to which the levels involved promote continuous improvement in performance accountability on the core measures and ensure optimal return on the investment of Federal funds.

''(E) ADJUSTMENTS BASED ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND INDIVIDUALS SERVED DURING THE PROGRAM YEAR.—The Secretary shall, in accordance with the objective statistical model developed pursuant to subparagraph (D)(ii), adjust the expected levels of performance for a program year for grantees, to reflect the actual economic conditions and characteristics of participants in the corresponding projects during such program year.''; and

(D) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and to report information on the additional indicators of performance'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''(a)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(A)''; and

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (B) through (E) and inserting the following:

''(B) the percentage of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the project;

''(C) the percentage of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the project;

''(D) the median earnings of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the project;

''(E) indicators of effectiveness in serving employers, host agencies, and project participants; and

''(F) the number of eligible individuals served, including the number of participating individuals described in subsection (a)(3)(B)(ii) or (b)(2) of section 518.'';

(B) by striking paragraph (2);

(C) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2); and

(D) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated, by striking ''paragraphs (1) and (2)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking ''shall—'' and all that follows through ''annually evaluate'' and inserting ''shall annually evaluate'';

(B) by striking ''(a)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(B)'';

(C) by striking ''(a)(2)(D)); and'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(E)).''; and

(D) by striking paragraph (2);

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''2007'' and inserting ''2016'';

(II) in clause (i)—

(aa) by striking ''(a)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(B)'';

(bb) by striking ''(a)(2)(D)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(E)''; and

(cc) by striking ''described'' and all that follows and inserting a period;

(III) by striking clause (ii); and

(IV) by striking ''2006'' and all that follows through ''(i) met'' and inserting ''2016, met''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in clause (i), by striking ''(A)(i); or'' at the end and inserting ''(A),'';

(II) by striking clause (ii);

(III) by striking ''2006—'' and all that follows through ''(i) failed'' and inserting ''2016, failed''; and

(IV) by striking ''and achieve the applicable percentage'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''(a)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(B)''; and

(II) by striking ''(a)(2)(D)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(E)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(iii)—

(I) by striking ''(beginning with program year 2007)''; and

(II) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) USE OF CORE INDICATORS.—For purposes of assessing grantee performance under this subparagraph before program year 2017, the Secretary shall use the core indicators of performance in effect at the time of the award and the most recent corresponding expected levels of performance.'';

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''(a)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(B)''; and

(II) by striking ''(a)(2)(D)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(E)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(iii), by striking ''(beginning with program year 2007)''; and

(D) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall implement the core measures of performance described in this section not later than December 31, 2017.''; and

(5) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

''(e) IMPACT ON GRANT COMPETITION.—Effective on January 1, 2018, the Secretary may not publish a notice announcing a grant competition under this title, or solicit proposals for grants, until the day on which the Secretary implements the core measures of performance.''.

(e) COMPETITIVE REQUIREMENTS.—Section 514(c)(4) of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056l(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and addressing additional indicators of performance''; and

(2) by striking ''and additional indicators of performance''.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 517 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056o) is amended—.

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$445,189,405 for fiscal year 2017, $454,499,494 for fiscal year 2018, and $463,809,605 for fiscal year 2019.''; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the 1st sentence—

(i) by inserting ''Federal'' after ''available for''; and

(ii) by striking ''July'' and inserting ''April''; and

(B) by inserting after the 1st sentence the following:

''Such amounts obligated to grantees shall be available for obligation and expenditure by grantees during the program year that begins on July 1 of the calendar year immediately following the beginning of the fiscal year in which the amounts are appropriated and that ends on June 30 of the following calendar year.''.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—Section 518(a) of the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056p(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (8) as paragraphs (6) through (9), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD; STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD.—The terms 'local workforce development board' and 'State workforce development board' have the meanings given the terms 'local board' and 'State board', respectively, in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).''.

SEC. 7. GRANTS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS.

Section 643 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3057n) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the semicolon, and inserting ''$31,934,018 for fiscal year 2017, $32,601,843 for fiscal year 2018, and $33,269,670 for fiscal year 2019;''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$7,718,566 for fiscal year 2017, $7,879,982 for fiscal year 2018, and $8,041,398 for fiscal year 2019.''.

SEC. 8. VULNERABLE ELDER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACTIVITIES.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 702 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3058a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''such sums'' and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting ''$16,280,630 for fiscal year 2017, $16,621,101 for fiscal year 2018, and $16,961,573 for fiscal year 2019.'';

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) OTHER PROGRAMS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out chapters 3 and 4, $4,891,876 for fiscal year 2017, $4,994,178 for fiscal year 2018, and $5,096,480 for fiscal year 2019.''; and

(3) by striking subsection (c).

(b) OMBUDSMAN DEFINITIONS.—Section 711(6) of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3058f(6)) is amended by striking ''older''.

(c) OMBUDSMAN PROGRAMS.—Section 712 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3058g) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following: ''The Ombudsman shall be responsible for the management, including the fiscal management, of the Office.'';

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) are made by, or on behalf of, residents, including residents with limited or no decisionmaking capacity and who have no known legal representative, and if such a resident is unable to communicate consent for an Ombudsman to work on a complaint directly involving the resident, the Ombudsman shall seek evidence to indicate what outcome the resident would have communicated (and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, shall assume that the resident wishes to have the resident's health, safety, welfare, and rights protected) and shall work to accomplish that outcome; and'';

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''regular and timely'' and inserting ''regular, timely, private, and unimpeded'';

(iii) in subparagraph (H)(iii)—

(I) by inserting '', actively encourage, and assist in'' after ''provide technical support for''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(iv) by redesignating subparagraph (I) as subparagraph (J); and

(v) by inserting after subparagraph (H) the following:

''(I) when feasible, continue to carry out the functions described in this section on behalf of residents transitioning from a long-term care facility to a home care setting; and'';

(C) in paragraph (5)(B)—

(i) in clause (vi)—

(I) by inserting '', actively encourage, and assist in'' after ''support''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(ii) by redesignating clause (vii) as clause (viii); and

(iii) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

''(vii) identify, investigate, and resolve complaints described in clause (iii) that are made by or on behalf of residents with limited or no decisionmaking capacity and who have no known legal representative, and if such a resident is unable to communicate consent for an Ombudsman to work on a complaint directly involving the resident, the Ombudsman shall seek evidence to indicate what outcome the resident would have communicated (and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, shall assume that the resident wishes to have the resident's health, safety, welfare, and rights protected) and shall work to accomplish that outcome; and'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''access'' and inserting ''private and unimpeded access''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in clause (i)—

(aa) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''the medical and social records of a'' and inserting ''all files, records, and other information concerning a''; and

(bb) in subclause (II), by striking ''to consent'' and inserting ''to communicate consent''; and

(II) in clause (ii), in the matter before subclause (I), by striking ''the records'' and inserting ''the files, records, and information''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) HEALTH OVERSIGHT AGENCY.—For purposes of section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (including regulations issued under that section) (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note), the Ombudsman and a representative of the Office shall be considered a 'health oversight agency,' so that release of residents' individually identifiable health information to the Ombudsman or representative is not precluded in cases in which the requirements of clause (i) or (ii) of paragraph (1)(B), or the requirements of paragraph (1)(D), are otherwise met.'';

(3) in subsection (c)(2)(D), by striking ''202(a)(21)'' and inserting ''202(a)(18)'';

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''files'' and inserting ''files, records, and other information''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''files and records'' each place such term appears and inserting ''files, records, and other information''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking ''files or records'' and inserting ''files, records, or other information''; and

(II) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) notwithstanding subparagraph (B), ensure that the Ombudsman may disclose information as needed in order to best serve residents with limited or no decisionmaking capacity who have no known legal representative and are unable to communicate consent, in order for the Ombudsman to carry out the functions and duties described in paragraphs (3)(A) and (5)(B) of subsection (a).''; and

(5) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

''(f) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—

''(1) INDIVIDUAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—The State agency shall—

''(A) ensure that no individual, or member of the immediate family of an individual, involved in the designation of the Ombudsman (whether by appointment or otherwise) or the designation of an entity designated under subsection (a)(5), is subject to a conflict of interest;

''(B) ensure that no officer or employee of the Office, representative of a local Ombudsman entity, or member of the immediate family of the officer, employee, or representative, is subject to a conflict of interest; and

''(C) ensure that the Ombudsman—

''(i) does not have a direct involvement in the licensing or certification of a long-term care facility or of a provider of a long-term care service;

''(ii) does not have an ownership or investment interest (represented by equity, debt, or other financial relationship) in a long-term care facility or a long-term care service;

''(iii) is not employed by, or participating in the management of, a long-term care facility or a related organization, and has not been employed by such a facility or organization within 1 year before the date of the determination involved;

''(iv) does not receive, or have the right to receive, directly or indirectly, remuneration (in cash or in kind) under a compensation arrangement with an owner or operator of a long-term care facility;

''(v) does not have management responsibility for, or operate under the supervision of an individual with management responsibility for, adult protective services; and

''(vi) does not serve as a guardian or in another fiduciary capacity for residents of long-term care facilities in an official capacity (as opposed to serving as a guardian or fiduciary for a family member, in a personal capacity).

''(2) ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The State agency shall comply with subparagraph (B)(i) in a case in which the Office poses an organizational conflict of interest, including a situation in which the Office is placed in an organization that—

''(i) is responsible for licensing, certifying, or surveying long-term care services in the State;

''(ii) is an association (or an affiliate of such an association) of long-term care facilities, or of any other residential facilities for older individuals;

''(iii) provides long-term care services, including programs carried out under a Medicaid waiver approved under section 1115 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315) or under subsection (b) or (c) of section 1915 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396n), or under a Medicaid State plan amendment under subsection (i), (j), or (k) of section 1915 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396n);

''(iv) provides long-term care case management;

''(v) sets rates for long-term care services;

''(vi) provides adult protective services;

''(vii) is responsible for eligibility determinations for the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

''(viii) conducts preadmission screening for placements in facilities described in clause (ii); or

''(ix) makes decisions regarding admission or discharge of individuals to or from such facilities.

''(B) IDENTIFYING, REMOVING, AND REMEDYING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The State agency may not operate the Office or carry out the program, directly, or by contract or other arrangement with any public agency or nonprofit private organization, in a case in which there is an organizational conflict of interest (within the meaning of subparagraph (A)) unless such conflict of interest has been—

''(I) identified by the State agency;

''(II) disclosed by the State agency to the Assistant Secretary in writing; and

''(III) remedied in accordance with this subparagraph.

''(ii) ACTION BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—In a case in which a potential or actual organizational conflict of interest (within the meaning of subparagraph (A)) involving the Office is disclosed or reported to the Assistant Secretary by any person or entity, the Assistant Secretary shall require that the State agency, in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the State agency under subsection (a)(5)(D)(iii)—

''(I) remove the conflict; or

''(II) submit, and obtain the approval of the Assistant Secretary for, an adequate remedial plan that indicates how the Ombudsman will be unencumbered in fulfilling all of the functions specified in subsection (a)(3).''; and

(6) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(A)(i), by striking ''older'';

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking all that precedes ''procedures'' and inserting the following:

''(4) strengthen and update'';

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (9) as paragraphs (5) through (10), respectively;

(D) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) ensure that the Ombudsman or a designee participates in training provided by the National Ombudsman Resource Center established in section 202(a)(18);'';

(E) in paragraph (6)(A), as redesignated by subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, by striking ''paragraph (4)'' and inserting ''paragraph (5)'';

(F) in paragraph (7)(A), as redesignated by subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, by striking ''subtitle C of the'' and inserting ''subtitle C of title I of the''; and

(G) in paragraph (10), as redesignated by subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, by striking ''(6), or (7)'' and inserting ''(7), or (8)''.

(d) OMBUDSMAN REGULATIONS.—Section 713 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3058h) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 712(f)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 712(f)(1)''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''subparagraphs (A) through (D) of section 712(f)(3)'' and inserting ''clauses (i) through (vi) of section 712(f)(1)(C)''.

(e) PREVENTION OF ELDER ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION.—Section 721 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3058i) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''(including financial exploitation)'';

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (12) as paragraphs (6) through (13), respectively;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) promoting the submission of data on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation for the appropriate database of the Administration or another database specified by the Assistant Secretary;'';

(D) in paragraph (10)(C), as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph—

(i) in clause (ii), by inserting '', such as forensic specialists,'' after ''such personnel''; and

(ii) in clause (v), by inserting before the comma the following: '', including programs and arrangements that protect against financial exploitation''; and

(E) in paragraph (12), as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph—

(i) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) supporting and studying innovative practices in communities to develop partnerships across disciplines for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and''; and

(2) in subsection (e)(2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking ''subsection (b)(9)(B)(i)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(10)(B)(i)''; and

(B) by striking ''subsection (b)(9)(B)(ii)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(10)(B)(ii)''.

SEC. 9. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH.

The Older Americans Act of 1965 is amended—

(1) in section 102 (42 U.S.C. 3002)—

(A) in paragraph (14)(G), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental'';

(B) in paragraph (36), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental''; and

(C) in paragraph (47)(B), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental'';

(2) in section 201(f)(1) (42 U.S.C. 3011(f)(1)), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental'';

(3) in section 202(a)(5) (42 U.S.C. 3012(a)(5)), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental'';

(4) in section 306(a) (42 U.S.C. 3026(a))—

(A) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental''; and

(B) in paragraph (6)(F), by striking ''mental health services'' each place such term appears and inserting ''mental and behavioral health services''; and

(5) in section 321(a) (42 U.S.C. 3030d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), as amended by section 4(g), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental'';

(B) in paragraph (14)(B), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental''; and

(C) in paragraph (23), by inserting ''and behavioral'' after ''mental''.

SEC. 10. GUIDANCE ON SERVING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Because the services under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) are critical to meeting the urgent needs of Holocaust survivors to age in place with dignity, comfort, security, and quality of life, the Assistant Secretary for Aging shall issue guidance to States, that shall be applicable to States, area agencies on aging, and providers of services for older individuals, with respect to serving Holocaust survivors, including guidance on promising practices for conducting outreach to that population. In developing the guidance, the Assistant Secretary for Aging shall consult with experts and organizations serving Holocaust survivors, and shall take into account the possibility that the needs of Holocaust survivors may differ based on geography.

(b) CONTENTS.—The guidance shall include the following:

(1) How nutrition service providers may meet the special health-related or other dietary needs of participants in programs under the Older Americans Act of 1965, including needs based on religious, cultural, or ethnic requirements.

(2) How transportation service providers may address the urgent transportation needs of Holocaust survivors.

(3) How State long-term care ombudsmen may address the unique needs of residents of long-term care facilities for whom institutional settings may produce sights, sounds, smells, emotions, and routines, that can induce panic, anxiety, and retraumatization as a result of experiences from the Holocaust.

(4) How supportive services providers may consider the unique needs of Holocaust survivors.

(5) How other services provided under that Act, as determined by the Assistant Secretary for Aging, may serve Holocaust survivors.

(c) DATE OF ISSUANCE.—The guidance described in subsection (a) shall be issued not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 192.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of S. 192, the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, for decades, the Older Americans Act has been a vital resource for the Nation's seniors. It established and has sustained a number of services, including nutrition services, family caregiver support, community service employment, and elder abuse prevention.

These and other services have allowed seniors to stay active and independent. They have helped them live healthy, independent lives in their homes and their communities, and in many cases, they have enabled older Americans to remain out of institutional care.

This bill updates and improves the law to ensure it continues to serve a senior population that has changed significantly since the Older Americans Act was first enacted more than 50 years ago.

One of the hallmarks of the original law—and something that this reauthorization maintains and strengthens—is the flexibility it provides States and local entities to serve the specific needs of seniors in their communities. This bipartisan legislation maintains that strong commitment to State and local control and makes a number of commonsense reforms to the law.

For example, the bill includes specific measures to better protect seniors from abuse and neglect. Among those measures is a provision to strengthen a program designed to investigate and resolve complaints from residents of nursing home facilities and other adult care homes. It also clarifies responsibilities related to the development and implementation of programs related to the health and economic welfare of older individuals.

The bill also continues support for Senior Medicare Patrol, a program that helps train senior volunteers to prevent and identify healthcare fraud and abuse. Congress should continue to fund this important initiative because it is good for seniors and it helps save taxpayer dollars by protecting the integrity of healthcare programs.

Additionally, this legislation improves alignment between existing programs designed to provide employment and community service opportunities to older Americans. It simplifies and clarifies how services are funded and includes responsible and defined authorization levels.

These are just a few of the important changes and updates this bill makes, in addition to the many vital services it continues, to help seniors age with dignity and independence.

I urge my colleagues to support the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to start by thanking Chairman KLINE and Ranking Member SCOTT for working to bring this important legislation to the floor today. Reauthorizing the Older Americans Act has been one of my top priorities. Over the years, I have sponsored legislation to strengthen essential programs that help keep seniors healthy and independent. Seniors in Oregon and across the country know how important the Older Americans Act programs are, so I have met with them to discuss ideas for improving the law, and I have advocated for funding for Older Americans Act programs and services.

All along, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been committed to reauthorizing this important law.

On behalf of seniors across the country, I thank my colleagues for their support for this legislation before the House—a 3-year reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

I also want to thank the advocacy community and service delivery groups for their ongoing support for a strong, bipartisan reauthorization. Backing from a wide range of groups that are dedicated to the well-being of America's seniors helped make possible the legislation we are considering today.

Every day in our country, about 10,000 people turn 65. As the population of older adults continues to grow, we

have a responsibility, as policymakers, to reevaluate and bolster the programs that keep seniors healthy, active, and engaged in their communities. The legislation we are considering will help older Americans from all backgrounds lead meaningful lives with dignity by continuing to support the delivery of health, transportation, and nutrition services to seniors in every State.

This legislation includes modest increases in authorization levels, building on the amounts appropriated in the Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations Act. Investments for currently funded Older Americans Act programs are overdue and will help meet the growing demand placed on these programs and services.

Increasing investments in programs like Meals on Wheels, which serves thousands of seniors, many of whom are homebound or low-income, will allow more adults to stay in their homes, where they can remain connected to their communities and avoid costlier long-term care.

For many adults, the hot meal they get from Meals on Wheels is the only one they will get that day. The volunteers who deliver the meal may provide their only social interaction, which is important for all seniors, but especially for those in isolated or rural areas.

Significantly, this legislation provides tools to curb both financial and physical elder abuse by promoting proven strategies for responding to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

According to the Elder Justice Coalition, there are more than 6 million victims of elder abuse every year—roughly 1 out of every 10 people over age 60. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, victims of elder financial abuse lose an estimated $2.9 billion a year, and too often they lose their entire life savings. I am pleased that this legislation continues to address the problem of elder abuse and takes steps to make sure older adults are not robbed of their resources or denied the dignity they deserve.

In addition, my colleague from Florida has expressed support for the Senior Medicare Patrol, a program that helps train senior volunteers to prevent and identify healthcare fraud and abuse. I want to reiterate support for this program and note that the Education and the Workforce Committee supports full funding for this important initiative, which should not come at the expense of funding other programs.

The Senior Medicare Patrol saves taxpayer dollars by protecting the integrity of healthcare programs. The return on investment for Older Americans Act programs is undeniable, and this is certainly the case for Senior Medicare Patrol as well.

Americans are living longer, more productive lives, and our policies need to keep pace. Older adults should not have to struggle to afford reliable transportation, nutritious food, and high-quality supportive services. Congress will need to continue to invest in and modernize services for seniors so all older adults, including LGBT elders and older individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, have access to programs that keep them healthy and engaged in their communities.

This legislation is an important step forward. I am glad that Congress is coming together today with bipartisan support to recognize the valuable role that Older Americans Act programs play across the country. These programs work. Reauthorizing them means that America's seniors and their caregivers will continue to receive the services, resources, and support they need.

Mr. Speaker, the reauthorization we are considering today is an important way to recognize that in the United States of America, our seniors—our parents and grandparents across the country—deserve to live healthy, fulfilling lives and live them with dignity.

I, again, thank Ranking Member SCOTT and Chairman KLINE for their leadership. I also want to thank the hardworking staff on both sides of the aisle for their dedication to improving the lives of all Americans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, who has worked tirelessly on this reauthorization.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

I rise today in strong support of this legislation reauthorizing the Older Americans Act.

Since it was first enacted, this act has been a vital resource for America's seniors and their caregivers. Through a wide range of services, it has helped older individuals enjoy their independence and stay active, both in their homes and in their communities.

However, much has changed in the last 50 years. Today, Americans are living longer, and the senior population is significantly larger and more independent than it once was. What hasn't changed is the responsibility we have to take care of our seniors. That is why, in addition to continuing the vital support established by the Older Americans Act, this reauthorization makes a number of important improvements to ensure the law is still providing the kind of help American seniors need.

First, it provides better protections for our most vulnerable seniors. The bill promotes best practices for responding to abuse, neglect, and exploitation, strengthens protections for all residents of long-term care facilities, and improves the coordination of activities between State and local aging offices.

Other important updates include measures to streamline and improve how the programs under the law are administered. Too often taxpayer dollars go to programs that are outdated, ineffective, or simply not being used as they could be. That is why this bill streamlines programs and makes improvements to ensure program coordination and efficiency.

The legislation also makes changes to nutrition services programs to account for geographic changes in the senior population.

Furthermore, the bill better aligns job training services for older Americans with the broader workforce development system. In 2014, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide a more efficient, streamlined workforce training system that would help put Americans back to work. This legislation builds on that law by providing seniors access to a less confusing and more seamless workforce development system.

These are just some of the things this bill does to better serve those individuals the law is intended to support. We have made a commitment to help those who want and deserve to enjoy independence and contribute to their communities as they grow older. This bill will help ensure that we are not only honoring that commitment, but that we are honoring it well.

In closing, I want to thank my colleagues—Representatives CARLOS CURBELO, VIRGINIA FOXX, SUZANNE BONAMICI, and RUBÉN HINOJOSA—for their continued leadership on this issue and in helping move this important piece of legislation forward. We are grateful for their efforts.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the legislation today, which provides for a 3-year reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Education and the Workforce has been committed to seeing this legislation through. I want to particularly thank, on our side, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Representative BONAMICI. I want to thank them and Chairman KLINE, Representative CURBELO, and all of the members of our committee, for making the passage of this bill a reality.

As ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I have the privilege of working on legislation that affects Americans

throughout their lives, from childhood into advanced age. The Older Americans Act was first passed 50 years ago as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty to help older Americans live in dignity and stay connected to their communities by receiving essential social and nutrition services.

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Today, the commitment to our Nation's seniors is more important than ever. One in 10 Americans over the age of 65 lives in poverty, and older Americans are also working longer—some because they want to but many because they have to so that they can secure their financial futures in the face of retirement insecurity. The spectrum of services provided through the Older Americans Act, in conjunction with Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, ensures that our Nation's older Americans are not left behind in their golden years.

The Pew Research Center reports that the elderly population is expected to double by 2015, and without meaningful investments in services for our seniors, too many Americans who have worked hard all of their lives will be left struggling in their later years.

Unfortunately, since 2009, the Older Americans Act's funding has actually dropped. Failing to invest in the Older Americans Act is bad for seniors, and it is bad for our country. Providing our seniors with health services, nutrition, and the supportive services they need makes them less likely to suffer illness or injury, less likely to incur expensive hospital visits, and more likely to live independently. These investments bring dignity to the lives of our seniors, and they, ultimately, will result in a significant savings to taxpayers.

I am proud that we were able to agree on increased funding for these important programs. Had our investments in these programs kept up with inflation and the growing population, the funding levels would have actually been higher, but, thankfully, we can finally say that we are moving in the right direction.

Vice President Hubert Humphrey once stated that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, our children; those who are in the twilight of life, our elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life. It is my hope that, by protecting and enhancing the Federal statutes to support our older Americans, we will be passing this test.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their support of this legislation.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her work, and thank the subcommittee chair and chair regarding this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I might be the only Member of Congress who has ever worked under the Older Americans Act. Another young man and I—obviously, many years ago—started the first Senior Companion Program in region 6, the Pacific Northwest.

These employment programs are fabulous. There are two things that we need to keep in mind for seniors. The first is the vulnerability of many: the economic vulnerability, the nutritional vulnerability, their medical vulnerability, and the needs that have to be served there. The other is that a lot of people are retired—over the age of 60—who still have a tremendous amount to contribute to this country.

Through the Older Americans Act and these Senior Community Service Employment Programs, we are, actually, utilizing their talents. The particular program I ran employed 60 low-income seniors to go out and work in the community with other even more vulnerable seniors, who were in their homes, in order to try and keep them in their homes, to keep them independent—a better quality of life for them and a heck of a savings for the taxpayer—because nobody can afford nursing homes in America except the richest among us. Inevitably, when seniors have to go into nursing homes, they are going to end up on Medicaid at some point, which is very expensive. So, if we can keep them at home, they are happier, and we save money.

On the other vulnerabilities, nutritional vulnerability is the largest bulk. The single largest category under the Older Americans Act goes to the nutrition programs, which are the senior Congregate Meal sites and the Meals on Wheels. I would urge anybody who is not particularly familiar with these programs to go to one or the other and see how important this is to so many millions of older Americans every year. Often, the only time they will see other people in a day is if they are at the senior Congregate Meal sites or if they are at home and someone shows up with Meals on Wheels. I have delivered Meals on Wheels and have seen seniors, basically, just cry to be getting a little bit of attention at home and getting a meal that will get them through the day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. BONAMICI. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DEFAZIO. It is wonderful that we are reauthorizing this, but the funding levels are inadequate. If you look at it over time, the senior population has grown dramatically, and those in need have grown dramatically; yet the funding, if you look back 10 years or so, in adjusted dollars, is actually less today. It is great we are reauthorizing it, but we do need to look for more funding.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, in San Diego and across the country, seniors depend on the programs for health care, for meals, and for other essential services that are included in the Older Americans Act. These programs help ensure that our seniors age successfully and with dignity.

Serving Seniors, which is here today from San Diego to support the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, will be able to continue to provide meals and other services to seniors at the Gary and Mary West Center. Meals-on-Wheels of Greater San Diego will have the certainty that it needs to keep delivering meals to seniors in their homes, and the County of San Diego will have more resources and information to combat elder abuse.

Together, we will continue to hold senior scam seminars in San Diego to equip members of our senior community with the tools they need to avoid being scammed. For many seniors, an important part of aging with dignity is having the support of caregivers in their families. Improving the National Family Caregiver Support Program will continue to give these caregivers a network of information and services to care for their loved ones.

As an active member of the House Seniors Task Force, I am committed to protecting the viability of Medicare and Social Security, which seniors have earned over lifetimes of hard work. By preventing Medicare fraud and abuse, this legislation will save on long-term costs and help keep Medicare viable.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for seniors and support the passage of the bipartisan Older Americans Act. I thank leadership on both sides of the aisle for working on this.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In the United States, its population of older adults is projected to increase from approximately 57 million people, who were aged 60 and older in 2010, to about 76 million older adults by our next census in 2020. Despite the rapid rise in the population of seniors and the growing strain that has been placed on important services for older individuals, Congress allowed the Older Americans Act to expire in 2011. Fortunately, today, the House has the opportunity to pass a reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, and it is not a moment too soon.

This legislation increases the Federal investment in Older Americans Act programs, which serve millions of seniors in towns, in cities, and in rural areas across the United States. Reauthorizing these programs means that older adults will continue to receive

nutritious meals, legal assistance, preventative health care, and other essential services that make it possible for them to live independently and to age with dignity.

I agree with my colleague from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) that, if one hasn't been to one of these programs, one should definitely go and spend some time with the people who are receiving these services. It is very meaningful. It changes their lives.

I also thank my friend and colleague from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) as well as Ranking Member SCOTT and Chairman KLINE for their commitment to America's seniors.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan measure to reauthorize the Older Americans Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The important services that are provided by the Older Americans Act help us to achieve a goal that we can all get behind—that of supporting the country's seniors in helping them maintain the active, productive lives they desire. As I see it, that is not just a goal—it is our responsibility. The seniors we are talking about are veterans, parents, grandparents, teachers, caregivers, laborers, job creators. They are individuals who have worked hard all of their lives, who have helped this country grow and expand, and who, in a lot of ways, have supported many of us throughout our own lives.

It is now on us to help support them in their senior years. This reauthorization will do just that, which is why it has support from Members on both sides of the aisle and from nearly 50 groups, including the AARP, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Meals on Wheels America, and the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities.

It will enable older Americans to remain independent, to continue contributing to their communities, and to remain in their homes with their families and among their friends. Many seniors are fortunate enough to have loved ones who are already helping them stay active and who are already looking out for their best interests. Unfortunately, there are many seniors who are not so fortunate. This bipartisan bill will help those individuals live out their years with dignity whether they are in their homes or in long-term care facilities. I believe that is an effort we can all support.

I thank Chairman KLINE, Ranking Member SCOTT, and my friend and colleague from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI). This is a wonderful model for bipartisan work—for working together—to help vulnerable people in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the House Amendment to S. 192, the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015. It has been nearly ten years since Congress last reauthorized the Older Americans Act (OAA), making today's amendment and the reforms in the underlying bill long overdue.

Last year marked the 50th Anniversary of the OAA and its many social services and programs that continue to provide a critical safety net for seniors around the country. This includes supportive services, nutrition services—whether at group sites or home-delivered programs such as ''meals on wheels''—family caregiver support, community service employment, and services to protect seniors from and prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

In New Jersey, the Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services uses OAA funds to serve more than 500,000 individuals. From 2000 to 2010, New Jersey saw a 15 percent increase in individuals age 60 and older, representing 19 percent of the state population. By 2030, it is projected that those 60 and older will represent over 25 percent of the state population, making OAA services and programs more critical than ever.

Among many reforms, S. 192 contains provisions to reduce elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation in long term facilities, improve federal collaboration with state and local agencies and service providers on the modernization of senior centers, and improve care coordination for those with multiple chronic conditions with services through health care entities such as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).

It reforms funding allocations to ensure that money follows the person, helping maximize the number of seniors reached by the OAA's services and programs. It permits state grant programs to begin providing support services for chronic condition self-care management and falls prevention. It also requires states to utilize a dietician in its nutrition projects and encourage the use of locally grown foods—as well as partnerships and contracts with local producers and providers—in meal programs.

The ad-hoc means of funding these programs over the last several years has made them less secure and efficient. As our population ages, it is imperative that we preserve access to these and other services that enable senior citizens to live healthy and productive lives, and give seniors the security and confidence they need when planning for their future medical care and financial security. Today's vote will protect and improve OAA's vital programs to assist and protect older Americans, allowing them to maintain their independence and quality of life during retirement.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 192, the ''Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015,'' which amends the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA), to require the Director of the Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs to collect and analyze best practices to prevent and respond to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation in long-term care facilities, and to publish a report to document best practices to achieve these goals.

S. 192 also requires the administration to provide information and technical assistance to State and local agencies on aging as well as service providers.

S. 192 also mandates the development of a consumer-friendly tool to assist older individuals and their families in choosing home and community-based services, with a particular focus on ways for consumers to assess how providers protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of older individuals.

S. 192 directs the administration to ensure that programs authorized under the OAA include training in the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and provision of services that address elder justice and exploitation of older individuals.

S. 192 also reauthorizes appropriations for specified supportive services, congregate nutrition services, home delivered nutrition services, disease prevention, health promotion services, and family caregiver support.

Mr. Speaker, S. 192 will increase public awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and remove barriers to education, prevention, investigation, and treatment of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, it has been noted often that the moral test of government is how it treats those in the dawn of life, our children; those in the shadows of life, the sick and infirm; and those in the twilight of life, the elderly.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 192 because it makes a significant contribution to meeting our obligations to our senior citizens who have done so much to make our country great.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the House amendment to S. 192, Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, which passed by unanimous consent in the Senate. I commend my chairman, Mr. KLINE, and Ranking Member SCOTT for their leadership and bringing this bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, about one (1) in every seven (7) Americans or 14 percent of the population is considered an ''Older American''—aged 65 or older. As more ''baby boomers'' enter retirement, it is critical for Congress to update this law as the major vehicle for the delivery of social and nutritional programs for older persons and their caregivers—and to help seniors maintain their independence and dignity.

According to a national survey of Older Americans Act participants, 91 percent indicated that the home-delivery nutrition program helped them stay in their own home. Additionally, 60 percent of participants indicated that a single home-delivered meal provided one-half or more of their total food for the day.

In my Congressional District, access to these transportation services is sometimes the only way our seniors can go to the doctor's office or to the grocery store. I am pleased that this bill also provides community service employment, adult day care, respite care, transportation services, legal assistance, long-term care and a range of programs protecting the rights of vulnerable seniors from fraud and exploitation.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for the House amendment to S. 192. America's seniors deserve nothing less.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 192, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COUNTERTERRORISM SCREENING AND ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4314) to require a plan to combat international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters, accelerate the transfer of certain border security systems to foreign partner governments, establish minimum international border security standards, authorize the suspension of foreign assistance to countries not making significant efforts to comply with such minimum standards, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4314

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. FOREIGN PARTNER ENGAGEMENT PLAN.

(a) FINDINGS.—Consistent with the final report of the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives bipartisan ''Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel'', Congress makes the following findings:

(1) It is important for the national security of the United States to assist foreign partners in closing security gaps which may allow terrorists and foreign fighters to travel internationally, avoiding detection.

(2) Building foreign partner capacity to combat terrorist travel helps extend the United States security beyond its border to mitigate threats before they reach the United States.

(3) United States Government departments and agencies have spent billions of dollars to help foreign partners improve their security against terrorist travel since the attacks of September 11, 2001, including through the provision of technical assistance, equipment, training, and other tools.

(4) The lack of a United States Governmentwide, risk-based approach increases the odds that systematic security gaps abroad may persist and that United States response efforts will not be maximized in order to close these gaps.

(5) Failure to effectively coordinate capacity-building activities also results in greater risk of overlap, waste, and unnecessary duplication between the United States and international programs.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States Government must ensure capacity-building assistance is coordinated both among United States Government departments and agencies as well as with foreign implementing partners, and assistance should be prioritized for the highest-risk countries for travel by terrorists and foreign fighters.

(c) PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and every two years thereafter at the time of the President's budget submission to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, until 2022, the Secretary of State shall, in accordance with the protection of intelligence sources and methods, develop and submit to the appropriate congressional committees unclassified and classified versions of a foreign partner engagement plan which catalogues existing capacity-building initiatives abroad to combat travel by terrorists and foreign fighters and identifies areas for adjustment to align ongoing efforts with risk-based priorities.

(2) COORDINATION.—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall be developed in coordination with all relevant United States Government departments and agencies and in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(3) CONTENTS.—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) include an assessment of all countries and whether each country is high-risk, medium-risk, or low-risk for travel by terrorists and foreign fighters based on the minimum standards described in section 4(b), as well as—

(i) an identification of the number of flights that originate from last points of departure in each country to the United States;

(ii) visa waiver program status or visa application and denial rates for each country;

(iii) recent threats, terrorist and foreign fighter travel trends, and the overall terror threat environment in each country; and

(iv) other criteria as determined by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security;

(B) detail existing United States Government programs, projects, and activities which are intended to or have the substantial effect of building the capacity of such countries to combat travel by terrorists and foreign fighters, including estimated spending levels by country where practicable; and

(C) outline a plan for prioritizing United States Government resources toward high-risk and medium-risk countries, including—

(i) identifying efforts which should be reformed, consolidated, or eliminated; and

(ii) detailing new programs, projects, or activities that are requested, being planned, or are undergoing implementation and associated costs.

SEC. 3. SHARING SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT TO OBSTRUCT TRAVEL BY TERRORISTS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS.

(a) BORDER SECURITY AND COUNTERTERRORISM SCREENING TOOLS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (d), the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State shall accelerate the provision of appropriate versions of the following systems to foreign governments:

(A) U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Automated Targeting System—Global.

(B) The Department of State's Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System.

(2) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State shall coordinate to prioritize the provision of the systems specified in paragraph (1) to countries determined to be high-risk and medium-risk in the foreign partner engagement plan required under section 2.

(b) EQUIPMENT TRANSFER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to provide, with or without reimbursement, excess nonlethal equipment and supplies owned by the Department of Homeland Security to a foreign government.

(2) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security is authorized to provide equipment and supplies pursuant to paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that the provision of such equipment and supplies would—

(A) further the homeland security interests of the United States; and

(B) enhance the recipient government's capacity to—

(i) mitigate the risk or threat of terrorism, infectious disease, or natural disaster;

(ii) protect and expedite lawful trade and travel; or

(iii) enforce intellectual property rights.

(3) LIMITATION ON TRANSFER.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may not—

(A) provide any equipment or supplies that are designated as items on the United States Munitions List pursuant to section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778); or

(B) provide any vessel or aircraft pursuant to this subsection.

(4) RELATED TRAINING.—In conjunction with a provision of equipment or supplies pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security may provide such equipment-related or supplies-related training and assistance as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

(5) MAINTENANCE OF TRANSFERRED EQUIPMENT.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may provide for the maintenance of transferred equipment or supplies through service contracts or other means, with or without reimbursement, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(6) REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—The Secretary of Homeland Security is authorized to collect payment from the recipient government for the provision of training, shipping costs, supporting materials, maintenance, supplies, or other assistance in support of provided equipment or supplies under this subsection.

(7) RECEIPTS CREDITED AS OFFSETTING COLLECTIONS.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, United States Code, any amount collected under this subsection—

(A) shall be credited as offsetting collections, subject to appropriations, to the account that finances the activities and services for which the payment is received; and

(B) shall remain available until expended for the purpose of providing for the security interests of the homeland.

(8) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed as affecting, augmenting, or diminishing the authority of the Secretary of State.

(9) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this section, the term ''excess nonlethal equipment and supplies'' means equipment and supplies the Secretary of Homeland Security has determined is either not required for United States domestic operations, or would be more effective to homeland security if deployed for use outside of the United States.

(c) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 days before providing any systems or equipment or supplies under this section, the Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State shall provide notification to the appropriate congressional committees of such provision.

(2) CONTENTS.—A notification required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The specific vulnerability that will be mitigated by the provision of any systems or equipment or supplies under this section.

(B) An explanation as to why the recipient is unable or unwilling to independently acquire such systems or equipment or supplies.

(C) An evacuation plan for any sensitive technologies in case of emergency or instability in the country to which such systems or equipment or supplies is being provided.

(D) How the United States Government will ensure that such systems or equipment or supplies are being maintained appropriately and used as intended.

(E) The total dollar value of such systems, equipment, and supplies.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority provided under this section shall be exercised in accordance with applicable provisions of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.), the Export Administration Regulations, or any other similar provision of law.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''Export Administration Regulations'' means—

(A) the Export Administration Regulations as maintained and amended under the authority of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) and codified in subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations; or

(B) any successor regulations.

SEC. 4. ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES THAT FAIL TO MEET MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SERIOUS AND SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO COMBAT TERRORIST AND FOREIGN FIGHTER TRAVEL.

(a) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than April 30 of each year through 2021, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report with respect to the status of efforts of foreign governments to combat terrorist and foreign fighter travel. The report shall include the following:

(A) A list of those foreign countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for serious and sustained efforts to combat terrorist and foreign fighter travel as described in subsection (b) are applicable and whose governments comply with such standards.

(B) A list of those foreign countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for serious and sustained efforts to combat terrorist and fighter travel as described in subsection (b) are applicable and whose governments do not yet fully comply with such standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance.

(C) A list of those foreign countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for serious and sustained efforts to combat terrorist and foreign fighter travel as described in subsection (b) are applicable and whose governments do not fully comply with such standards and are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance.

(D) A description for each foreign country identified in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of the areas in which the government of the foreign country does not meet the minimum standards for serious and sustained efforts to combat terrorist and foreign fighter travel as described in subsection (b).

(2) FORM.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex, if necessary.

(3) INCLUSION IN COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, should incorporate the report required by paragraph (1) into the annual country reports on terrorism submitted pursuant to section 140 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f).

(b) MINIMUM STANDARDS DESCRIBED.—The minimum standards for serious and sustained efforts to combat terrorist and foreign fighter travel applicable to the government of a foreign country are the following:

(1) The government of the country makes meaningful efforts to identify and monitor terrorists and foreign fighters operating within the territory of the country.

(2) The government of the country regularly exchanges substantive counterterrorism information with other foreign governments, including the United States Government, through bilateral or multilateral channels and international organizations such as INTERPOL, and cooperates with other foreign governments in the investigation and prosecution of terrorists and foreign fighters.

(3) The government of the country implements effective border controls or participates in an existing border-crossing control regime that has been determined by the United States Government to employ effective border-crossing oversight.

(4) The government of the country has controls and systems in place to prevent and report upon counterfeiting, forgery, and, fraudulent use or possession of false, stolen or lost identity papers and travel documents.

(5) The government of the country collects air passenger data and employs evidence-based traveler risk assessment and screening procedures, including collection and analysis of travel data.

(6) The government of the country appropriately screens travelers, including vetting of travelers at air, sea, and land ports of entry, against counterterrorism and other criminal databases, as appropriate.

(7) The government of the country submits information to INTERPOL databases and screens travelers against INTERPOL databases at ports of entry and exit.

(8) The government of the country has established and implemented domestic laws criminalizing material support to foreign terrorist organizations and has the ability and willingness to prosecute cases involving such material support to foreign terrorist organizations.

(9) The government of the country takes measures to prevent individuals in its territory from traveling abroad to enlist with or provide material support to foreign terrorist organizations.

(10) The government of the country takes measures to ensure a minimal level of corruption and likelihood that corruption could impact the veracity of security and intelligence reporting from the country, a minimal likelihood that such corruption could adversely affect the legitimacy of national identity papers of the country, and the country does not shelter suspects from investigation and prosecution.

(11) The government of a country is not determined to be a high-risk program country under section 217(c)(12) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8. U.S.C. 1187(c)(12)).

(c) SUSPENSION OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the heads of other Federal agencies, as appropriate, is authorized to suspend nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance to any government of a foreign country if the foreign country is identified in subparagraph (C) of subsection (a)(1) in the most recent report submitted to the appropriate congressional committees under such subsection.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION.—The term ''foreign terrorist organization'' means an organization that is designated as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189).

(3) NONHUMANITARIAN, NONTRADE-RELATED FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.—The term ''nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance'' has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

SEC. 6. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on H.R. 4314.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me begin by thanking Mr. ZELDIN of New York for his work on H.R. 4314, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act, as well as to thank the other members of the Committee on Homeland Security's bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.

Under the leadership of Chairman MCCAUL and with the significant contributions of Mr. KATKO of New York and the Foreign Affairs Committee, we unanimously approved this measure in January. Mr. Speaker, the reason we did goes back to a little bit of history.

Al Qaeda planned the 9/11 attacks from Afghanistan because they had the capacity to do so—to plan an attack there on the United States. Now, ISIS controls significant territory. They control that territory in Syria, in Iraq, in Libya. As long as terrorist groups maintain these safe havens abroad, where they can work on new forms of munitions, bombing, and go through

trial runs on how they carry out an attack, as a consequence, we are under a threat here on our homeland, much like the situation prior to 9/11.

□ 1645

The perpetrators of the horrific attack that we all saw on that coverage out of Paris that killed 130—those killed were European nationals. Those who did those murders had trained to fight in Syria. They had traveled by train. They returned to Europe through Greece and through Turkey.

Despite the fact that many of those local attackers were known by authorities, they were still able to move across borders. They moved without detection. In some cases, they moved with those fraudulent passports from Syria.

Given the high number of foreign fighters returning home from that ISIS stronghold in Syria and from the ISIS training camps in Iraq—and, frankly, from Libya as well, we have now heard—there is a recognized and urgent need for improved border security and information sharing between governments.

This bill is a way to get there because this threat is not just limited, by the way, to us in the United States and to Europe.

Earlier this month terrorists who had received training inside Libya were killed by Tunisian security forces during an attempted attack inside Tunisia.

So these attacks now demonstrate how easy it has become for terrorists and for foreign fighters to move across open borders.

This legislation makes several important changes to how border security is administered. It improves the tools deployed at the border. It increases the border security coordination between Allied states.

It does it in the following way: This legislation requires the Departments of State and Homeland Security to produce an annual scorecard assessing the border security efforts of countries around the world.

This is going to identify the weaknesses and areas for improvement abroad. It will also mandate a streamlining of our own efforts to assist partners overseas with their border security programs. The administration will then submit a plan to Congress for prioritizing U.S. assistance on this.

This bill requires the establishment of minimum standards for border security on the part of our Allied states. Countries that fail to meet these minimum standards can have U.S. foreign assistance suspended, cut off, employing the same incentive already in place that we use today in order to force compliance against human trafficking overseas, against those states that commit human rights violations.

Many of the Members here are familiar with how we leverage those states to force them to pass legislation and change the way in which they address these issues. We are going to deploy the same leverage here.

So this bill reflects the recommendations made by our colleagues on the Homeland Security's bipartisan task force on combating terrorists and foreign fighter travel, which we have worked together on. The Foreign Affairs Committee has worked with the Homeland Security Committee on that.

I again thank Mr. LEE ZELDIN for his leadership and for his work to make our Nation safer against this terrorist threat.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2016.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 4314, the ''Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016,'' which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 4314 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 4314 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4314, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 4314.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 4314, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, and for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of that bill.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 4314 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2016.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Homeland Security in H.R. 4314, the ''Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016.'' The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security.

I recognize and appreciate the desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Homeland Security will forego consideration of this bill. The Committee takes this action with the mutual understanding that by foregoing action at this time we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation.

This waiver is also given with the understanding that the Committee on Homeland Security expressly reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provision within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference on this or any similar legislation, and requests your support for such a request.

I ask that a copy of this letter and your response be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2016.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 4314, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, and for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of that bill.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 4314 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of this measure.

Let me thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee and, also, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for bringing this bill forward.

Violence in recent months has shown us that the threat of violent extremism isn't isolated to particular countries or regions. More and more we see the danger posed by terrorists and foreign fighters when they can cross borders unimpeded.

So the United States, along with our allies and partners, need to do whatever we can to stop those dangerous individuals as they cross from country to country. This bill would help us move in that direction.

Here at home, this legislation would ramp up coordination among government agencies dealing with this problem. I would call on the administration for a specific plan laying out how we are going to meet this challenge.

Around the world, it would help governments by speeding the transfer of software and technology we can use to track people entering a country, to collect biometric data, and to figure out what sort of risks they might present. It would prioritize the sharing of specific border security systems with foreign partners.

It would put a particular focus on countries where this danger is particularly acute. It would establish minimum standards for international border security and makes it clear that governments that don't take this problem seriously are putting their American foreign assistance at risk. This legislation provides commonsense steps to ensure our own security and that of our allies and partners.

I again thank Mr. ZELDIN for all his hard work. I am pleased to support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN). He is a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. He is also the author of this bill.

Again, we appreciate the expertise he has brought in crafting this legislation as it relates to border security because of his experience, his distinguished career in the U.S. Army and, also, as an intelligence officer, a former prosecutor in the Army, and a military magistrate.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee as well as his great staff for all of their incredible assistance in making sure that this legislation not only came to the House floor for a vote, but came to the House floor for a vote swiftly and, fortunately, with very strong bipartisan support.

So I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, especially to Chairman ROYCE and to Chairman MCCAUL as well of the House Homeland Security Committee, for all of their efforts.

I rise today in support of my bill, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016. This legislation is about protecting America's security at home and abroad.

Foreign fighter movement is a very serious challenge that has resulted in the well-recognized need for improved border security around the world and better information sharing between governments.

The horrific terror attacks in Paris that killed over 100 people showed us just how easy it is for terrorists to move undetected across borders.

This attack was largely carried out by European nationals, many of whom traveled to train and fight in Syria and then later returned to Europe through Greece and Turkey.

Although local authorities already knew some of the attackers, they were still able to move across borders without detection and, in some cases, using fraudulent passports.

It is essential that the United States work with the international community to monitor and stop the movement of terrorists abroad.

Additionally, this legislation helps us counter the spread of infectious diseases like Zika. With the recent outbreak of the mosquito-borne Zika virus which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, we must take action now.

As evidenced with the Ebola outbreak in 2013, which decimated populations across Western Africa, if the proper effort is not implemented proactively, the consequences can be truly devastating.

The Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act recently passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously with bipartisan support.

This bill would establish international border security standards to close security gaps that currently exist that allow terrorists and foreign fighters to travel internationally.

These standards would be developed in coordination with all relevant U.S. Government departments and agencies in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Director of National Intelligence, and Director of the FBI.

Our resources would be utilized in the most efficient way possible, with a special focus on high-risk and medium-risk countries to boost security.

A reporting system would also be established to monitor efforts of foreign governments to combat terrorism and foreign fighter travel and to suspend foreign assistance to countries not making significant efforts to comply.

Furthermore, the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks, which will help quarantine viruses by authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide the necessary equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika, a disease that has caused widespread alarm as it has continued to spread across the global community.

I also thank Congressman JOHN KATKO for his assistance as well.

The Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016 is a bipartisan measure long overdue to not only protect our homeland from terrorism, but also ensure the U.S. is always prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases.

I strongly encourage my colleagues in Congress to join me in this important effort to address a serious national security threat and vote today to pass the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016 to keep America safe.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this commonsense legislation.

Thousands of Europeans who have traveled to fight alongside ISIS and other terrorist groups throughout the world pose a serious threat to our national security.

One of the problems is making sure that those terrorists who go fight in Iraq, Syria, and other places don't go back to their home countries in Europe undetected because, once a person gets in Europe, it is easier for Europeans to travel to the United States from Europe than it is from some other countries. Terrorists often travel through a number of countries before they get home, and some of these countries have very good border security and others not so good.

The United States has the technology to help our friends and our allies track down these bad guys. But our bureaucracy, of course, has gotten in the way of national security. This bill expedites the process, cutting through the red tape and giving our partners the tools they need to track terrorist travel throughout the world and in their countries.

Terrorist travel is not a problem we can solve by ourselves. We must stop terrorists before they show up in America. We must work with our partners overseas.

I strongly support this legislation.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again I thank the Congressman from New York, Major LEE ZELDIN, for authoring this bill.

Let me also again express my appreciation for the cooperation of Ranking Member ENGEL and to commend his work and, also, that of our colleague from California (Mr. BERA), on this legislation.

The 9/11 Commission states in their report to the Congress on recommendations: ''The U.S. Government cannot meet its own obligations to the American people to prevent the entry of terrorists without a major effort to collaborate with other governments. We should do more to exchange terrorist information with trusted allies, and raise U.S. and global border security standards for travel and for border crossing over the medium and long term through extensive international cooperation.''

This bill does that. It adds another component, and that is as it relates to the collateral benefit, which will come through trying to prevent infectious diseases borne by these exotic vectors, like these mosquitoes that bring the Zika virus or like Ebola.

So this bill, H.R. 4314, increases collaboration with our allies through improved information sharing, tightened border security screening methods overseas, and the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security are required to accelerate the delivery of certain border security systems and prioritizing delivery to countries deemed to be at high or medium risk for foreign fighter or terrorist travel.

□ 1700

It also establishes minimum border security standards. The Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security are required to submit an annual report to us in Congress detailing how countries are meeting the minimum border security standards established there.

The annual report will not only assess partner country efforts over the previous 12 months, but it is also going to identify those areas that are most necessary for improvement. Countries that don't meet border security standards could have their nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related U.S. assistance suspended, cut off. Suspension of assistance is meant to ensure that countries take the necessary steps to improve their border security.

I again want to thank Mr. ZELDIN and other members of the Committee on Homeland Security's bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel and all the bipartisan cosponsors for their support for this bill, which deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4314, as amended

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FORECLOSURE RELIEF AND EXTENSION FOR SERVICEMEMBERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2393) to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2393

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.

Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 50 U.S.C. 3953 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''December 31, 2015'' and inserting ''December 31, 2017''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''January 1, 2016'' and inserting ''January 1, 2018''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous materials on S. 2393.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2393, the Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2015. This bill was introduced by our colleague from Rhode Island, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and passed the Senate in December.

This bill would extend, through December 31, 2017, mortgage-related protections for servicemembers who are called to Active Duty under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. Specifically, these protections would prohibit a bank or mortgage company from selling, foreclosing, or seizing a property owned by a servicemember without a court order for 1 year after a servicemember returns from Active Duty.

This protection allows servicemembers the opportunity to avoid foreclosure or seizure during this 1-year period following their service, giving them the opportunity to hopefully get back on track with mortgage payments.

In 2008, the report produced by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves found that the threat of foreclosure is a stressor that should not be placed on members of the Armed Forces upon their return to civilian life.

Today, as a shrinking Active Duty force leaves more and more operational responsibilities to the Guard and Reserves, these home foreclosure protections are more important than ever. This year it is expected that more than 10,000 members of the Army National Guard and Army Reserves will cycle through to Europe, nearly double the number of last year. Many thousands more will serve in other theaters of operation all over the globe.

I believe it is essential that we ensure members of the military returning home have plenty of time to regain their financial footing, particularly when they have selflessly given up their civilian jobs to deploy with their Guard or Reserve units.

This protection has been extended several times by Congress and has been considered a noncontroversial extension of existing authorities. Without our action on this bill, the protection would slip to only a 90-day period of foreclosure protection and could impact servicemembers as early as the end of this month.

I would also note that the mortgage industry is supportive of this extension. I thank them for their advocacy and for their continued support of veterans and active and reserve servicemembers.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the work of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FINCHER) for their work on this issue, as they also had similar bills to S. 2393 pending before this body.

Once again, I urge all Members to support S. 2393.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 2393, the Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2015.

This bill provides a 2-year extension of current protections so veterans

transitioning out of the military don't lose their homes that they owned before beginning their military service, if they are experiencing financial hardships for up to a year after they leave the service.

S. 2393 allows courts to pause proceedings to foreclose on or seize a home for 1 year following service, allowing time for transitioning soldiers to adjust their financial situations, as well as all other aspects of their lives, to civilian life.

We owe our veterans the benefit of the doubt when they may have missed payments while facing the tough realities of serving our Nation. There is broad support for this provision in both Chambers of Congress, and I urge my colleagues to support it today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Millions of people are losing their homes and have lost their homes to foreclosure. I have worked with the banking community, Federal HUD, and NACA. Our veterans and other individuals are still losing their homes, and now many churches in my district are closing and losing their properties through foreclosure.

I am pleased that we have this bipartisan legislation, but this bill is a temporary fix. We need to work together, as a Congress, to find a permanent fix so that our veterans, other individuals, and churches are protected from foreclosure.

Again, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), for bringing this legislation forward. I urge the passage of S. 2393.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support S. 2393.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2393, the ''Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Service Members Act of 2015,'' which amends the ''Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012'' by extending through December 31, 2017, the provisions that protect service members from actions to foreclose on a mortgage for one year after their service.

S. 2393 prohibits the sale, foreclosure, or seizure of a service member's mortgaged property without a court order or a waiver from the service member.

In 1940, Congress passed the ''Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act'' (SSCRA) to provide protections and rights to individuals based on their service in the U.S. armed forces.

In 2003, Congress passed the ''Service Members Civil Relief Act,'' which was modernized and reauthorized the protections and rights previously available to service members under SSCRA.

The Service Members Civil Relief Act protects service members in the event that their military service impedes their ability to meet financial obligations incurred before entry into active military service.

In 2012, the ''Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012'' amended the SCRA to extend the timeframe from nine months to one year in which service members are protected from the sale, foreclosure, or seizure of mortgaged property and any actions filed against them for an inability to comply with the terms of the mortgaged obligation.

The ''Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Services Members Act of 2014,'' which passed the House by voice vote, extended this provision through December 31, 2015.

Mr. Speaker, our service members keep us safe from all manner of threats around the globe, so the least we can do is to keep them and their families safe from foreclosure as they transition back to civilian life.

I urge my colleges to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2393.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''$2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were $3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 20.83 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016,''.

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(b) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$8,193,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

(d) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(e) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(f) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(g) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(h) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by amending subparagraph (E) to read as follows:

''(E) $7,711,387,500 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(5) $2,058,333,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(9) $124,093,750 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.''.

SEC. 106. COMPLIANCE WITH AVIATION FUNDING REQUIREMENT.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,'' and inserting ''$122,708,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,''.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting ''or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016;''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''April 1, 2016'' and inserting ''July 16, 2016''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''March 31, 2016'' and inserting ''July 15, 2016''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4721.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill, as amended by the Senate, extends the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration programs and the revenue collection authorities for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through July 15, 2016.

The current FAA reauthorization expires at the end of this month. Without this bill, the authority to collect aviation taxes will lapse, depriving the trust fund of more than $40 million per day. That is funding for air traffic control, airport development, and other aviation programs that can never be recovered.

Additionally, the airports will be unable to receive grant money that has already been awarded to them, putting dozens of construction projects at risk.

H.R. 4721 will avoid these unnecessary consequences while Congress works to finish a long-term aviation bill. I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4721.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, here we are a week later, and now we are doing another extension, which of course I support. This one will go to July 15, which is truly a drop-dead date. Congress will be out for the longest summer break since probably the 1950s, starting just after July 15, so we must get the long-term bill done by then.

There is substantial agreement between the bill that came out of committee in the House and the Senate bill, with the exception of the tombstone rule on lithium batteries, a difference on flight attendants' rest hours, and, of course, the issue of privatization of the air traffic organization.

I would hope that we can move ahead and preconference the many other titles and begin working on those, the differences on the flight attendants' rest time, and I will continue to push on lithium batteries. I would hope that this is the last extension.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, again, I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this piece of legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 4721.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1180) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1180

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM MODERNIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 311 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 526. INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM MODERNIZATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—To provide timely and effective warnings regarding natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters or threats to public safety, the Administrator shall—

''(1) modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States (in this section referred to as the 'public alert and warning system') to help ensure that under all conditions the President and, except to the extent the public alert and warning system is in use by the President, Federal agencies and State, tribal, and local governments can alert and warn the civilian population in areas endangered by natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters or threats to public safety; and

''(2) implement the public alert and warning system to disseminate timely and effective warnings regarding natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters or threats to public safety.

''(b) IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

''(1) establish or adopt, as appropriate, common alerting and warning protocols, standards, terminology, and operating procedures for the public alert and warning system;

''(2) include in the public alert and warning system the capability to adapt the distribution and content of communications on the basis of geographic location, risks, and multiple communication systems and technologies, as appropriate and to the extent technically feasible;

''(3) include in the public alert and warning system the capability to alert, warn, and

provide equivalent information to individuals with disabilities, individuals with access and functional needs, and individuals with limited-English proficiency, to the extent technically feasible;

''(4) ensure that training, tests, and exercises are conducted for the public alert and warning system, including by—

''(A) incorporating the public alert and warning system into other training and exercise programs of the Department, as appropriate;

''(B) establishing and integrating into the National Incident Management System a comprehensive and periodic training program to instruct and educate Federal, State, tribal, and local government officials in the use of the Common Alerting Protocol enabled Emergency Alert System; and

''(C) conducting, not less than once every 3 years, periodic nationwide tests of the public alert and warning system;

''(5) to the extent practicable, ensure that the public alert and warning system is resilient and secure and can withstand acts of terrorism and other external attacks;

''(6) conduct public education efforts so that State, tribal, and local governments, private entities, and the people of the United States reasonably understand the functions of the public alert and warning system and how to access, use, and respond to information from the public alert and warning system through a general market awareness campaign;

''(7) consult, coordinate, and cooperate with the appropriate private sector entities and Federal, State, tribal, and local governmental authorities, including the Regional Administrators and emergency response providers;

''(8) consult and coordinate with the Federal Communications Commission, taking into account rules and regulations promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission; and

''(9) coordinate with and consider the recommendations of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Subcommittee established under section 2(b) of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015.

''(c) SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.—The public alert and warning system shall—

''(1) to the extent determined appropriate by the Administrator, incorporate multiple communications technologies;

''(2) be designed to adapt to, and incorporate, future technologies for communicating directly with the public;

''(3) to the extent technically feasible, be designed—

''(A) to provide alerts to the largest portion of the affected population feasible, including nonresident visitors and tourists, individuals with disabilities, individuals with access and functional needs, and individuals with limited-English proficiency; and

''(B) to improve the ability of remote areas to receive alerts;

''(4) promote local and regional public and private partnerships to enhance community preparedness and response;

''(5) provide redundant alert mechanisms where practicable so as to reach the greatest number of people; and

''(6) to the extent feasible, include a mechanism to ensure the protection of individual privacy.

''(d) USE OF SYSTEM.—Except to the extent necessary for testing the public alert and warning system, the public alert and warning system shall not be used to transmit a message that does not relate to a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other manmade disaster or threat to public safety.

''(e) PERFORMANCE REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015, and annually thereafter through 2018, the Administrator shall make available on the public website of the Agency a performance report, which shall—

''(A) establish performance goals for the implementation of the public alert and warning system by the Agency;

''(B) describe the performance of the public alert and warning system, including—

''(i) the type of technology used for alerts and warnings issued under the system;

''(ii) the measures taken to alert, warn, and provide equivalent information to individuals with disabilities, individuals with access and function needs, and individuals with limited-English proficiency; and

''(iii) the training, tests, and exercises performed and the outcomes obtained by the Agency;

''(C) identify significant challenges to the effective operation of the public alert and warning system and any plans to address these challenges;

''(D) identify other necessary improvements to the system; and

''(E) provide an analysis comparing the performance of the public alert and warning system with the performance goals established under subparagraph (A).

''(2) CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives each report required under paragraph (1).''.

(b) INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM SUBCOMMITTEE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (in this subsection referred to as the ''Administrator'') shall establish a subcommittee to the National Advisory Council established under section 508 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 318) to be known as the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Subcommittee (in this subsection referred to as the ''Subcommittee'').

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—Notwithstanding section 508(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 318(c)), the Subcommittee shall be composed of the following members (or their designees):

(A) The Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(B) The Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission.

(C) The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce.

(D) The Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information of the Department of Commerce.

(E) The Under Secretary for Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security.

(F) The Under Secretary for the National Protection and Programs Directorate.

(G) The Director of Disability Integration and Coordination of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(H) The Chairperson of the National Council on Disability.

(I) Qualified individuals appointed by the Administrator as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act from among the following:

(i) Representatives of State and local governments, representatives of emergency management agencies, and representatives of emergency response providers.

(ii) Representatives from federally recognized Indian tribes and national Indian organizations.

(iii) Individuals who have the requisite technical knowledge and expertise to serve on the Subcommittee, including representatives of—

(I) communications service providers;

(II) vendors, developers, and manufacturers of systems, facilities, equipment, and capabilities for the provision of communications services;

(III) third-party service bureaus;

(IV) the broadcasting industry, including public broadcasting;

(V) the commercial mobile radio service industry;

(VI) the cable industry;

(VII) the satellite industry;

(VIII) national organizations representing individuals with disabilities, the blind, deaf, and hearing-loss communities, individuals with access and functional needs, and the elderly;

(IX) consumer or privacy advocates; and

(X) organizations representing individuals with limited-English proficiency.

(iv) Qualified representatives of such other stakeholders and interested and affected parties as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall serve as the Chairperson of the Subcommittee.

(4) MEETINGS.—

(A) INITIAL MEETING.—The initial meeting of the Subcommittee shall take place not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) OTHER MEETINGS.—After the initial meeting, the Subcommittee shall meet, at least annually, at the call of the Chairperson.

(5) CONSULTATION WITH NONMEMBERS.—The Subcommittee and the program offices for the integrated public alert and warning system for the United States shall consult with individuals and entities that are not represented on the Subcommittee to consider new and developing technologies that may be beneficial to the public alert and warning system, including—

(A) the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency;

(B) entities engaged in federally funded research; and

(C) academic institutions engaged in relevant work and research.

(6) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Subcommittee shall—

(A) develop recommendations for an integrated public alert and warning system; and

(B) in developing the recommendations under subparagraph (A), consider—

(i) recommendations for common alerting and warning protocols, standards, terminology, and operating procedures for the public alert and warning system; and

(ii) recommendations to provide for a public alert and warning system that—

(I) has the capability to adapt the distribution and content of communications on the basis of geographic location, risks, or personal user preferences, as appropriate;

(II) has the capability to alert and warn individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited-English proficiency;

(III) to the extent appropriate, incorporates multiple communications technologies;

(IV) is designed to adapt to, and incorporate, future technologies for communicating directly with the public;

(V) is designed to provide alerts to the largest portion of the affected population feasible, including nonresident visitors and tourists, and improve the ability of remote areas to receive alerts;

(VI) promotes local and regional public and private partnerships to enhance community preparedness and response; and

(VII) provides redundant alert mechanisms, if practicable, to reach the greatest number of people regardless of whether they have access to, or use, any specific medium of communication or any particular device.

(7) REPORT.—

(A) SUBCOMMITTEE SUBMISSION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Subcommittee shall submit to the National Advisory Council a report containing any recommendations required to be developed under paragraph (6) for approval by the National Advisory Council.

(B) SUBMISSION BY NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.—If the National Advisory Council approves the recommendations contained in the report submitted under subparagraph (A), the National Advisory Council shall submit the report to—

(i) the head of each agency represented on the Subcommittee;

(ii) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(iii) the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(8) TERMINATION.—The Subcommittee shall terminate not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

(d) LIMITATIONS ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''participating commercial mobile service provider'' has the meaning given that term under section 10.10(f) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this Act, including an amendment made by this Act, shall be construed—

(A) to affect any authority—

(i) of the Department of Commerce;

(ii) of the Federal Communications Commission; or

(iii) provided under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.);

(B) to provide the Secretary of Homeland Security with authority to require any action by the Department of Commerce, the Federal Communications Commission, or any nongovernmental entity;

(C) to apply to, or to provide the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency with authority over, any participating commercial mobile service provider;

(D) to alter in any way the wireless emergency alerts service established under the Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act (47 U.S.C. 1201 et seq.) or any related orders issued by the Federal Communications Commission after October 13, 2006; or

(E) to provide the Federal Emergency Management Agency with authority to require a State or local jurisdiction to use the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1180.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has a long tradition of tackling FEMA and emergency management issues in a bipartisan manner.

□ 1715

I would like to acknowledge Chairman BARLETTA and Ranking Member CARSON of the Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Subcommittee for leading efforts in the House to improve our Nation's Emergency Alert System.

Public alerts save lives. And their efforts, along with this bill, will save even more. This committee was the first to introduce legislation in 2008, and every Congress since, to modernize the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, also known as IPAWS, because we recognized the critical need to provide timely and effective disaster warnings to our citizens and communities. Modernizing the alert and warning systems will help save lives.

At the committee's request, the GAO issued a report in 2009 detailing key problems with FEMA's development of IPAWS. GAO's findings supported the need for legislation to ensure consultation and coordination with key stakeholders, strategic planning, and the timely rollout of the new system. GAO issued a subsequent report in 2013 identifying a continued need for guidance and testing of the system.

We also heard from many stakeholders, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and industries like the broadcasters and wireless industry, that FEMA was not giving them a seat at the table as FEMA modernized the system. Involving these stakeholders who are the primary users and owners of the infrastructure is key. Without them, alerts couldn't go out.

I am happy to stand here and support the culmination of that work in S. 1180, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015. I commend the chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee for continuing to advocate for a nationwide integrated and interoperable system.

The IPAWS Modernization Act modernizes and integrates the Nation's alert and warning infrastructure to provide public safety officials with an effective way to alert and warn the public about serious emergencies.

This legislation sets a clear framework to ensure money is not wasted, while making certain key stakeholders are a part of FEMA's modernization of the system. The bill will also ensure that the ongoing development and modernization of our Nation's alert system is done effectively and efficiency.

As technologies change, the legislation will ensure that this system adapts and continues to work toward the most effective alert and warning system possible. This system impacts everyone in America, Mr. Speaker. Whether it is a hurricane, tornado, flood or wildfire, unless we can ensure the public can be effectively alerted, lives will be at risk.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO); Chairman BARLETTA; and my good friend, Ranking Member PETER DEFAZIO.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure today. The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015 directs the administrator of FEMA to codify the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, commonly known as IPAWS.

With IPAWS, Mr. Speaker, public safety officials are able to warn the public of impending hazards using multiple communications platforms, such as radio and television broadcasts, mobile devices, and other Internet services. These warnings, Mr. Speaker, can even be geographically targeted so that only those in harm's way will receive the messages. All of this leads to saving lives, Mr. Speaker, and reducing property damage.

During the months of May and June, tornados are most likely to strike the great Hoosier State. Getting citizens to safety or even alerting them to shelter in place before a tornado strikes can ultimately be the difference between life and death. Success in that effort, Mr. Speaker, depends largely on access to timely and precise information.

During 2011, a violent storm caused the sudden collapse of a concert stage at the Indiana State Fair. This tragic incident killed seven and severely injured dozens more. It could have been

much worse. Timely alerts enabled fair officials to clear the midway minutes before the storm struck, potentially saving hundreds of lives.

Our committee has primary jurisdiction over IPAWS, and we have worked hard, Mr. Speaker, on this issue for several Congresses. While this bill is similar to another bill—H.R. 1472—that the Transportation Committee reported last year, I am very disappointed that regular order was not followed in S. 1180. It should have been referred to the committee of jurisdiction so that the House of Representatives can do the job we were elected to do: consider the details and implications of all the different provisions and how they impact our alert and warning system. Despite the lack of regular order, Mr. Speaker, I still support this measure greatly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN).

Mr. DONOVAN. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise today in support of S. 1180, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015. This important legislation was introduced by the chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Senator RON JOHNSON.

IPAWS provides public safety officials with a mechanism to alert and warn the public about emergencies using multiple communication platforms, including the Emergency Alert System, Wireless Emergency Alerts, and NOAA Weather Radio.

The bill we are considering today authorizes the IPAWS program and provides it with needed direction to help ensure that we can make available as much information to the public as possible to get them out of harm's way in the event of a terror attack, natural disaster, or other threat to public safety.

We know that these alerts can help to save lives. IPAWS was used after the Boston Marathon bombings to direct residents to shelter during the manhunt. In my district, IPAWS was used to warn people during Hurricane Sandy. Elsewhere, IPAWS has been vital to locating missing children through the AMBER Alert system.

We also know that the system is not without its challenges. While I understand that in a recent test of the Emergency Alert System, a component of IPAWS, worked for stations in my home State of New York, there were challenges in other States. The test was canceled in several States due to weather concerns. However, a number of those States were not informed of the cancellation, leaving their broadcasters to wonder why the test didn't occur.

We must ensure better communication between IPAWS and relevant stakeholders. That is why the IPAWS subcommittee of the National Advisory Council, established in this bill, is so important.

This advisory committee will provide stakeholders with a mechanism to provide input into the program. Ensuring stakeholder engagement and feedback will serve to enhance the effectiveness of IPAWS.

The Committee on Homeland Security has a long history of oversight of the IPAWS program, having held a number of hearings and briefings. Legislation similar to the bill we are considering today was approved by the Committee on Homeland Security just last year.

Like the legislation passed out of the Committee on Homeland Security, this legislation is supported by the National Association of Broadcasters, the National Alliance of State Broadcasters Association, and CTIA—The Wireless Association. We thank these organizations for their continued engagement on this bill to improve the text and get us to this point.

The enactment of legislation to authorize IPAWS has been a long time coming. I urge all Members to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation so that we can send it to the President's desk to be signed into law.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), a good friend of mine and the ranking member of the committee.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank my friend and the ranking member of the subcommittee for yielding to me on this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed, we have spent a number of years overseeing, holding hearings, and working to push for a more modern public alert warning system. So this legislation is somewhat overdue. In fact, we passed similar legislation last year in the House.

I do support the legislation. However, I will point out that it is a bit irregular because we passed it a year ago, and suddenly we are passing a version which just happens to have come from a Senator who just happened to be one of the most vulnerable Republicans up for reelection so that he can get a notch on his belt. But that is the way things work around here: we get good things done for sometimes the wrong reasons. It should have been done a year ago. The Senate should have taken up our version.

That said, this will modernize the system tremendously. We are well past the days of CONELRAD alerts. Yet, technology has not moved as far as it could for the 21st century.

In particular, I was in Japan with a congressional delegation observing what they have done post the dramatic earthquake and tsunami events. They estimated the wave heights and were able to get the message out, to some extent, on public broadcasts and with sirens before further shocks brought down the grid and silenced, for the most part, the sirens.

Unfortunately, the first estimates were off. When the waves reached the nearshore monitoring devices, they found that they were considerably higher and a much more vigorous evacuation should have been conducted. Unfortunately, at that point they had no way to get the word out to the people who had gone to high ground, but not high enough, or those who had sheltered in place when they believed the height of the tsunami would be less. So they lost many lives, they feel, unnecessarily, because of a lack of redundancy in the system.

This will move us toward a redundant system. They have now moved to a cellular-based system so that individuals can be alerted.

I was just at a tsunami event in the town of Florence, Oregon, called the Blue Line, where they have evacuation routes and people say: When do I stop running or driving?

And so they are painting lines on those critical routes showing what point where you are safe from the highest predicted tsunami. They did, essentially, a drill while we were there, but you couldn't even hear the siren. These are World War II-era raid sirens. Some work, some don't.

So we need a much more robust and redundant system because we know that in the Pacific Northwest and northern California, it is only when—not if—we will have a dramatic earthquake, potentially with a magnitude up to 9, with a subsequent tsunami.

We need in place both deep ocean detection to give more warning time, wave detection, and a robust system to inform the people where to go and how far they need to go in these events. This is overdue legislation, and I do urge its adoption.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1180, the Integrated Public Alert Warning System, or IPAWS, Modernization Act.

Modernizing our alert and warning capabilities is essential to keeping us safe. We must effectively communicate important information to the public during national emergencies, and our warning efforts must evolve with the growing and emerging threats of today.

During my time as chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, this was a top priority of mine. I have worked to update our alert and warning systems and utilize innovative new technologies.

Since the 112th Congress, I have introduced and advocated for the passage and enactment of this important piece of legislation, which is very similar to my bill, H.R. 1738.

During my work on the Integrated Public Alert Warning System Modernization Act, I heard from many stakeholders and experts who highlighted the need to ensure alert systems are available to the largest number of people, including individuals with disabilities and those living in rural areas.

In 2006, FEMA implemented the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, which improved public safety by quickly disseminating emergency messages and lifesaving information to the public. However, these systems have not been modernized in decades, which is why I have consistently reintroduced this bill. With congressional oversight, we can ensure our constituents have alert systems that work reliably, effectively, and efficiently.

S. 1180 provides authorization to update our communications infrastructure to allow important information and alerts for instantaneous message delivery over cell phones, text messaging, the Internet, and broadcasting.

□ 1730

Additionally, this bill improves our capabilities and communications network by creating a national public warning working group to bring State and local officials together. This will ensure systems developers, regulators, users, and relay participants meet on a regular basis. This important legislation allows us to uphold our responsibility in the protection of the people we serve.

I want to thank Senator JOHNSON for his work and advocacy on this issue.

I also want to thank my colleagues: Representative SUSAN BROOKS; chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Chairman MCCAUL; and Subcommittee Chairman DONOVAN, for their support in cosponsoring my bill, H.R. 1738.

This is a great step in the right direction, and we must continue this progress of modernizing our capabilities with the passage of this bill. I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF STATE BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATIONS,
April 29, 2015.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The undersigned, who are the chief executive officers of the fifty State Broadcasters Associations in the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, are pleased to offer our support and endorsement for H.R. 1738, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015.

If passed, this bill will ensure that more people receive life-saving information in more parts of America, more of the time, through current and future alert and warning technologies, while strengthening broadcasters' role as the backbone of America's public alerting system.

Many of us serve as chairs or members of our respective State Emergency Communications Committees, which are charged with managing the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in our states. We have all worked tirelessly to ensure that a robust, reliable alerting system is available when it is needed.

We have observed over the years that the system needs a higher level of coordination among the various federal, state and local public safety and emergency management agencies as ''message originators'' on the one hand, and the broadcast, cable and satellite ''message relayers'' on the other hand; and that the absence of any formal, ongoing training of state and local public safety and emergency management personnel on the proper use of EAS has hampered state and local officials' willingness and ability to use it efficiently in times of emergency, thus putting lives and property at risk.

This bill will address these problems and will make giant strides toward improvement of alert and warning capability in our states and across our nation. We look forward to the successful passage of this important measure.

Very truly yours,

THE UNDERSIGNED CEOS OF THE FIFTY STATE BROADCAST TRADE ASSOCIATIONS.

Alabama Broadcasters Association, Sharon Tinsley; Alaska Broadcasters Association, Cathy Hiebert; Arizona Broadcasters Association, Art Brooks; Arkansas Broadcasters Association, Doug Krile; California Broadcasters Association, Stan Statham; Colorado Broadcasters Association, Justin Sasso; Connecticut Broadcasters Association, Michael C. Rice; Florida Association of Broadcasters, C. Patrick Roberts; Georgia Association of Broadcasters, Bob Houghton; Hawaii Association of Broadcasters, Jamie Hartnett; Idaho State Broadcasters Association, Connie Searles; Illinois Broadcasters Association, Dennis Lyle; Indiana Broadcasters Association, Joe Misiewicz; Iowa Broadcasters Association, Sue Toma; Kansas Association of Broadcasters, Kent Cornish; Kentucky Broadcasters Association, Gary White; Louisiana Association of Broadcasters, Polly Prince Johnson; Maine Association of Broadcasters, Suzanne Goucher; Maryland/D.C./Delaware (MDCD) Broadcasters Association, Lisa Reynolds.

Massachusetts Broadcasters Association, Jordan Walton; Michigan Association of Broadcasters, Karole L. White; Minnesota Broadcasters Association, Jim duBois; Mississippi Association of Broadcasters, Karla Hooten; Missouri Broadcasters Association, Mark Gordon; Montana Broadcasters Association, Dewey Bruce; Nebraska Broadcasters Association, Jim Timm; Nevada Broadcasters Association, Mary Beth Sewald; New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters, Jordan Walton; New Jersey Broadcasters Association, Paul Rotella; New Mexico Broadcasters Association, Paula Maes; New York State Broadcasters Association, David Donovan; North Carolina Association of Broadcasters, Wade Hargrove, Esq.; North Dakota Broadcasters Association, Beth Helfrich; Ohio Association of Broadcasters, Chris Merritt; Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters, Vance Harrison; Oregon Association of Broadcasters, Bill Johnstone; Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters, Rich Wyckoff.

Radio Broadcasters Association of Puerto Rico, Jose A. Ribas Dominicci; Rhode Island Broadcasters Association, Lori Needham; South Carolina Broadcasters Association, Shani White; South Dakota Broadcasters Association, Steve Willard; Tennessee Association of Broadcasters, White Adamson; Texas Association of Broadcasters, Oscar Rodriguez; Utah Broadcasters Association, Michele Zabriskie; Vermont Association of Broadcasters, Jim Condon; Virginia Association of Broadcasters, Doug Easter; Washington State Association of Broadcasters, Mark Allen; West Virginia Broadcasters Association, Michele Crist; Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, Michelle Vetterkind; Wyoming Association of Broadcasters, Laura Grott.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time is remaining on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Indiana has 13½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 10½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1180, the ''Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015.''

I support this bill because it would address interoperability deficits among information technology systems and radio communications systems used by emergency services to exchange voice, data, disasters, and video in real time.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I am intimately aware, as are many of my colleagues, of the essential and lifesaving role of communications during a crisis.

S. 1180 directs FEMA to establish the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Subcommittee to develop and submit recommendations for an integrated public alert and warning system to the National Advisory Council through: establishing common alerting and warning protocols, standards, terminology, and operating procedures for the system; include in such system the capability to adapt the distribution and content of communications on the basis of geographic location, risks, and multiple communication technologies and to alert, warn, and provide equivalent information to individuals with disabilities, access and functional needs, or limited English proficiency; ensure that specified training, tests, and exercises for such system are conducted and that the system is resilient, secure, and can withstand external attacks; and conduct public education efforts and a general market awareness campaign about the system.

The bill requires the system to: be designed to adapt to and incorporate future technologies for communicating directly with the public, provide alerts to the largest portion of the affected population feasible, and improve the ability of remote areas to receive alerts; promote local and regional public and private partnerships to enhance community preparedness and response; provide redundant alert mechanisms; and protect individual privacy.

Because the tragedies of September 11, 2001, were compounded by communication failures among first responders who entered

the burning towers that comprised the World Trade Center it has been an imperative of the Homeland Security Committee to address first responder communication interoperability challenges.

S. 1180 amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated U.S. public alert and warning system to help ensure that under all conditions the President, federal agencies, and state, tribal, and local governments can alert and warn the civilian population in areas endangered by natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters or threats to public safety.

Hurricane Katrina is an example of the need for emergency response agencies to be connected.

After the storm the majority of the rescue operations were being conducted by the U.S. Coast Guard locating people who were on the roofs of their houses.

The coast guard was not aware of the individuals who were stuck in their home calling 9-1-1, because they could not reach their roofs, causing about 986 Louisiana residents to perish after the storm due to the lack of effective communication.

An estimated 1,836 lives were lost as a result of the hurricane.

The City of Houston covers over a 1,000 square mile region in Southeast Texas. It has a night-time population of nearly two million people, which peaks with over three million daytime inhabitants.

The city of Houston's 9-1-1 Emergency Center manages nearly 9,000 emergency calls per day. The volume of emergency calls can easily double during times of inclement weather or special City social/sporting events like Hurricanes Ike in September 2008; and Katrina as well as Rita, which occurred in September and October of 2005.

The types and severity of potential emergencies can encompass floods, hurricanes, and industrial incidents which would require multiple emergency agencies to respond.

On the average, EMS responds to a citizen every 3 minutes. Each EMS response is made by one of 88 City of Houston EMS vehicles.

There are over 200,000 EMS incidents involving over 225,000 patients or potential patients annually.

In 2013, the City of Houston's fire Department lost Captain EMT Matthew Renaud, Engineer Operator EMT Robert Bebee, Firefighter EMT Robert Garner and Probationary Firefighter Anne Sullivan when they responded to a hotel fire.

Throughout the history of the Houston Police Department over 110 officers have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Each member of the House of Representatives knows of the loss of a first responder who was going to the aid of those in harm's way.

S. 1180 will offer additional resources that can save the lives of first responders and those they help.

S. 1180 will ensure that FEMA's response to a crisis is organized with state and local resources.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of S. 1180.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1180.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2745, STANDARD MERGER AND ACQUISITION REVIEWS THROUGH EQUAL RULES ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 24, 2016, THROUGH APRIL 11, 2016

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–461) on the resolution (H. Res. 653) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2745) to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 24, 2016, through April 11, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COUNTERTERRORISM SCREENING AND ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4314) to require a plan to combat international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters, accelerate the transfer of certain border security systems to foreign partner governments, establish minimum international border security standards, authorize the suspension of foreign assistance to countries not making significant efforts to comply with such minimum standards, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 371, nays 2, not voting 60, as follows:

[Roll No. 130]

YEAS—371

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
Denham
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Mullin
Mulvaney

Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Norcross
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—2

Amash
Massie

NOT VOTING—60

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Cárdenas
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
Davis, Danny
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
Duckworth
Edwards
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Gallego
Gowdy
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Nolan
Nugent
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rohrabacher
Rush
Sanford
Schakowsky
Scott, David
Sherman
Smith (WA)
Speier
Tsongas
Velázquez
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Young (IN)

□ 1850

Ms. KUSTER changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, today, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall vote No. 130. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 130.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I missed the following vote: H.R. 4314–Counterterrorism/Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, as amended. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on this bill.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for votes on Monday, March 21, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 130.

PLYMOUTH CITIZENS AWARD FOR URIAS JAH

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroics of Plymouth's 17-year-old Urias Jah, who was recently recognized with the Citizens Award from Plymouth fire officials.

After hearing shouts of ''Fire,'' Urias ran out of his apartment to see a fire spreading on the third floor of the complex and a woman on the second floor yelling for help. Urias was able to jump and pull himself up onto the second floor balcony and the third floor balcony with a fire extinguisher attached to his hips.

He then was able to extinguish the flames, saving property and, potentially, lives. Two hundred people, Mr. Speaker, reside in the complex. When firefighters arrived, they were flabbergasted that the 5½-foot Urias would actually be able to scale the building.

Mr. Speaker, Urias' selfless actions are heroic and brave. While our firefighters and fire departments do tremendous work, they can't be everywhere all of the time. His quick thinking stopped a fire that could have been devastating to so many. His Citizens Award is well deserved.

RECOGNIZING WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of World Down Syndrome Day, which seeks to draw awareness to Down syndrome and how people with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and our communities.

All of us know someone who lives with Down syndrome, and we know that in spite of some extra challenges, they live full and robust lives surrounded by family and friends.

In order to provide those living with Down syndrome and other disabilities the best start possible, I was happy to cosponsor, along with a majority of my colleagues in the House, the Achieving a Better Life Experience, or ABLE, Act, which was signed into law in 2014. This law empowers people with disabilities and their families to create a flexible account to help save for medical and dental care, education, community-based employment, community-based support, training, housing, and transportation.

My office participates in the Congressional Internship Program for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities. This program, which is a partnership with George Mason University's Mason LIFE program, gives students with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to gain congressional work experience. We have welcomed several bright young men and women who have made significant contributions to our office, and I am proud to participate in this vital program.

CUBAN MILITARY ENRICHED

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the President's failing visit to Cuba was dismissed by the Communist foreign minister, who declared ''under no circumstance is the realization of internal changes in Cuba on the negotiation table.''

Since the President's outreach to the Castro dictatorship, the consequence has been a surge in dissident arrests of patriots who overestimated the hope and change that a relationship might bring. Sadly, by doing business with the Castro regime, the benefits of trade will not reach the Cuban people. It will enrich the Cuban military, which stole about 70 percent of companies in the most profitable industries.

This failure follows the Iranian nuclear deal, providing over $100 billion to a regime that proclaims ''death to America'' and ''death to Israel.''

By failing to stop ISIL-Daesh, the President's legacy has led to Syrians fleeing, children drowning at sea, and chemical weapons attacks killing Iraqi children in their homes. The President can still change course to promote a strong America with peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

STEVEN STEINER IS A CREDIT TO THE GRANITE STATE

(Mr. GUINTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a New Hampshire hero.

Conway's Steven Steiner, an emergency medical technician, has devoted his life to helping others. Off duty in Manchester one day, he noticed a commotion. A car had stopped in traffic. Steven saw that the man behind the wheel had lost consciousness. He pulled

the man from his car and successfully administered CPR, not once, but twice, after the man lost consciousness a second time. He had overdosed, unfortunately, on heroin.

Steven, who lost his own son to an OxyContin overdose, saved that man's life. ABC News happened to be there to document New Hampshire's fight against opiates and heroin, capturing the life-or-death moment.

Steven is a credit to the Granite State. He started Dads and Moms Against Drug Dealers to stop the spread of opiates and heroin in our great State of New Hampshire.

Most heroin enters our country across the southern border, where I will visit this April to investigate. As Steven knows from experience, we must stop deadly drugs like heroin from entering our country, just as we must help those who are struggling with this addiction.

□ 1900

PRESERVE CASTNER RANGE

(Mr. O'ROURKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask for the support and help of my colleagues to preserve a very special place in my community known as Castner Range.

Castner Range is 7,000 acres in the Chihuahuan Desert wilderness, where you have unique flora and fauna and human history dating back to 10,000 years before our time. These 7,000 acres are a jewel to our binational region of 3 million people and a treasure to the United States.

For that reason, I ask Congress to join my community in its grassroots efforts to preserve Castner Range as a national monument so that this generation and those that follow can enjoy this national treasure in perpetuity.

IRAN AND NORTH KOREA COCONSPIRATORS IN MISCHIEF

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a satellite flying in space over the Super Bowl, a long-range missile test, 15 other missile launches, the test of a so-called hydrogen bomb, and threats to destroy Manhattan. This is North Korean saber rattling in 2016 alone.

It is safe to assume the Iranians were on site as witnesses to these latest violations of international law.

Why? Because the Iranian scientists have been present nearly every time the North Koreans have issued or launched missiles for decades.

The rogue nations of Iran and North Korea have been working together since the 1980s on missile development. During the 1990s, they started developing long-range ballistic missiles. By the 2000s, the Iranians were giving North Korea sensitive data from their own tests to improve North Korean missile systems.

Mr. Speaker, North Korea already has the ability to attack South Korea, and Iran has the ability to attack Israel. These long-range missiles are intended for the United States.

The American people should understand the threat we face. We should be prepared. Our Nation must sanction these belligerent powers and develop a robust missile defense system to protect our homeland.

And that is just the way it is.

FAILURES OF WMATA

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address an issue of grave concern to my constituents.

Last week's unprecedented closure of the entire Metrorail system demonstrated Metro's ongoing safety failures. This week, the Federal Transit Administration launched its safety blitz of Metro, focusing on the training and oversight of inspectors and the maintenance workers, as well as the management of track defect data.

Paul Wiedefeld, the new general manager of Metro, issued a letter to the public several weeks ago identifying many of the problems, including management problems. First and foremost, he said: ''The safety culture at Metro is not integrated with operations, nor well-rooted at all levels.''

For example, although this has already been noted, he noted that there were more red lights blown through in 2015 by its operators than in either 2013 or 2014. Clearly, we are going the wrong direction, and we need to improve Metro.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important measure to protect the Metro system of the Nation's capital.

STOP SEXUAL ABUSE OF AFGHAN CHILDREN

(Mr. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, last fall, it was reported that sexual abuse of children by members of the Afghan military has been rampant for years, and that, in some instances, U.S. servicemembers have been punished for attempting to stop such abuse.

As our mission in Afghanistan reaches 15 years, our troops should not feel that our strategy is undermined by Afghan forces committing human rights violations against innocent children.

Along with 94 of my colleagues in both the House and the Senate, I requested a full inquiry into the U.S. Government's experience with allegations of sexual abuse of children by members of the Afghan security and police forces. This investigation has been launched by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, who will evaluate the Department of Defense's and State Department's policies and procedures for ensuring U.S. funds do not support human rights violators.

Sexually harming innocent children should not be condoned in any part of the world, and the children of Afghanistan deserve the same protection as any of God's children.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CHAFFETZ (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and for the balance of the week on account of a family obligation that requires him to be in his home State of Utah.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 22 on account of official business.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 22 on account of official travel with President Barack Obama to Cuba.

Mr. JEFFRIES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 22 on account of traveling to Cuba with the President.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2143. An act to provide for the authority for the successors and assigns of the Starr-Camargo Bridge Company to maintain and operate a toll bridge across the Rio Grande near Rio Grande City, Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

S. 2512. An act to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1831. An act to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 22, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4666. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Mark I. Fox, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4667. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2015 annual report on mining activities as required by the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006, Public Law 109-236; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4668. A letter from the Secretaries of the Departments, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report to Congress from the Departments entitled ''Notifications of Thefts, Losses, or Releases of Select Agents and Toxins for Calendar Year 2014'', pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 8401(k); Pub. L 107-188, Sec. 212(k); (116 Stat. 656); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4669. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's Revision 2 of RG 1.127 — Criteria and Design Features for Inspection Water Control Structures Associated with Nuclear Power Plants received March 16, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4670. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-124, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4671. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a semi-annual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses during the period from July 1 through December 31, 2015, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6); Public Law 102-484, Sec. 1705(e)(6) (as amended by Public Law 104-114, Sec. 102)(g)); (110 Stat. 794); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4672. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4673. A letter from the Executive Director, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's 2014 Annual Report to the President and Congress, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 2076(j); Public Law 92-573, Sec. 27(j) (as amended by Public Law 110-314, Sec. 209(a)); (122 Stat. 3046); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4674. A letter from the Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities, transmitting the Endowment's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a); (104 Stat. 2849); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4675. A letter from the Human Resources Specialist (Executive Resources), Office of Advocacy, Small Business Administration, transmitting notification of action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4676. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''RPTAC Has Improved the Appeal Assessment Process''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4677. A letter from the Administrator, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a notification that the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3375-EM in the State of Michigan has exceeded the $5 million limit for a single emergency declaration, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193(b)(3); Public Law 93-288, Sec. 503(b)(3) (as amended by Public Law 100-707, Sec. 107(a)); (102 Stat. 4707); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4678. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Bureau's 2015 Transportation Statistics Annual Report, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 6312; Public Law 112-141, Sec. 52011(a); (126 Stat. 894); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4679. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2014 Methane Hydrate Program Report to Congress, pursuant to 30 U.S.C. 2003(c)(1)(C); Public Law 109-58, Sec. 968(a); (119 Stat. 897); to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

4680. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Extension of Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological and Ethnological Materials From the Republic of Colombia (RIN: 1515-AE08) received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4681. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of the Loess Hills District Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0009; T.D. TTB-135; Ref: Notice No.: 153] (RIN: 1513-AC20) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4682. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Flights to and from Cuba [USCBP-2016-0015] (RIN: 1651-AB10) received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

4683. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting the draft of proposed legislation entitled the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017''; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, Education and the Workforce, Veterans' Affairs, Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, Foreign Affairs, House Administration, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, and Rules.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. MILLER of Florida: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 4336. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery; with an amendment (Rept. 114–459, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Texas: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 4472. A bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–460). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 653. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2745) to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 24, 2016, through April 11, 2016 (Rept. 114–461). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Armed Services discharged from further consideration. H.R. 4336 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. POMPEO:

H.R. 4815. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to

the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. HARPER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. POSEY, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. WESTMORELAND):

H.R. 4816. A bill to reform laws relating to small public housing agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. SEWELL of Alabama (for herself, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. PALMER):

H.R. 4817. A bill to establish the Birmingham Civil Rights National Historical Park in Birmingham, Alabama, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 4818. A bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to modernize the funding of wildlife conservation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. DESJARLAIS):

H.R. 4819. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a grant program for States that provide flexibility in licensing for health care providers who offer services on a volunteer basis; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FLEISCHMANN (for himself, Mr. KATKO, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. VELA):

H.R. 4820. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to use the testimonials of former or estranged violent extremists or their associates in order to counter terrorist recruitment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4821. A bill to make supplemental appropriations to provide additional funds to Americorps for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself, Mr. STEWART, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. ROSS, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. BUCSHON):

H.R. 4822. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for reporting and disclosure by State and local public employee retirement pension plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TROTT (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4823. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for special procedures for P-2 nonimmigrants who are Canadian citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 4824. A bill to prohibit restrictions on possession, storage, or use of firearms in Federal programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HANNA:

H. Res. 654. A resolution recognizing and supporting the goals of ''World Sleep Day'', on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself and Mr. CURBELO of Florida):

H. Res. 655. A resolution expressing concern regarding the preventable loss of life associated with sports-related sudden death of student athletes in the United States, and emphasizing the importance of rigorous, evidence-based pre-participation physical examinations for student athletes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H. Res. 656. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Senate should not confirm a nominee to the United States Supreme Court whose professional record or statements display opposition to the Second Amendment freedoms of law-abiding gun owners, including the fundamental, individual right to keep and bear arms as affirmed in the District of Columbia et al. v. Heller and McDonald et al. v. City of Chicago, Illinois, et al. cases; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

180. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 6, memorializing the Congress of the United States to appropriate funds from the Nuclear Waste Fund for the establishment of a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste or reimburse electric utility customers who paid into the fund; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

181. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8, urging the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to fulfill their obligation, as provided by law, to establish a permanent repository for high-level nuclear waste; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

182. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Colorado, relative to Senate Joint Memorial No.: 16-004, urging the Congress to reauthorize the federal ''Older Americans Act of 1965'' and to ensure that the reauthorization of the OAA treats all older adults fairly by eliminating the ''hold harmless'' provision; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

183. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Arizona, relative to House Concurrent Memorial 2001, urging the United States Congress to enact legislation to repeal the tax on health insurance; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. POMPEO:

H.R. 4815.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 4816.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: ''The Congress shall have Power . . . To make Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof . . .''

By Ms. SEWELL of Alabama:

H.R. 4817.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H.R. 4818.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Because this legislation adjusts how a state may spend federally appropriated funds, it is authorized by the Constitution under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, which grants Congress its spending power.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 4819.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power * * * To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. FLEISCHMANN:

H.R. 4820.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4821.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 4822.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 4823.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 4824.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section 8, Clause 18:

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

Second Amendment to the United State Constitution:

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 292: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 303: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 551: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 563: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 581: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 664: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 699: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 793: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 814: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 816: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 953: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. FORBES, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 997: Mr. MICA.
H.R. 1062: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 1111: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 1135: Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 1174: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
H.R. 1220: Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. MENG, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, and Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 1247: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1427: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1449: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1492: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1499: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 1549: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1559: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 1608: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 1655: Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 1713: Mr. MACARTHUR.
H.R. 1769: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1854: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1859: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 2068: Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 2102: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2114: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 2137: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 2197: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 2283: Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 2515: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2521: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 2589: Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 2622: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 2638: Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 2656: Mr. POCAN and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 2666: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 2726: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2752: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 2817: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 2861: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 2903: Mr. HARDY and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 2932: Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 2939: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2947: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2976: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3081: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3119: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 3235: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3377: Ms. CASTOR of Florida and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3514: Mr. WALZ, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3632: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 3660: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3673: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 3675: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3691: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 3706: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 3713: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3751: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 3817: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 3880: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H.R. 3929: Mr. OLSON, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HARPER, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3952: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 4087: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4276: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 4305: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4314: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 4333: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 4336: Ms. NORTON, Mr. KIND, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. PERRY, and Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 4352: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4365: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 4376: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 4456: Mr. YARMUTH and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 4479: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 4503: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4505: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4514: Mrs. NOEM, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 4519: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 4534: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 4544: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 4567: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 4602: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 4609: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 4612: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 4615: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 4622: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 4625: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4626: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4636: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 4640: Mr. ROSS, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4667: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 4675: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4681: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 4694: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 4715: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4717: Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 4731: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. COOK.
H.R. 4742: Ms. SINEMA, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. RIGELL, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 4764: Mr. PERRY and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 4776: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 4785: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4787: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4810: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. NORCROSS.
H.J. Res. 1: Mr. ROKITA.
H.J. Res. 2: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi and Mr. ROKITA.
H.J. Res. 22: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.J. Res. 84: Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.J. Res. 85: Mrs. NOEM.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H. Res. 12: Mr. LAHOOD.
H. Res. 130: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H. Res. 584: Mr. KEATING.
H. Res. 591: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. FARR, and Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H. Res. 642: Ms. TITUS.
H. Res. 645: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H. Res. 650: Mr. ROYCE.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

53. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Polk County Board of Commissioners, Tennessee, relative to Resolution No. 1–1–16, supporting Governor Haslam's Insure Tennessee Initiative; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING CHIEF JUDGE MICHAEL DAVIS

HON. KEITH ELLISON
OF MINNESOTA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the years of service of U.S. District Court Chief Judge Michael Davis as he retires and assumes senior status in August 2015. Educated at Macalester College in St. Paul, and the University of Minnesota Law School, Chief Judge Davis has dedicated his career to advancing the highest justice and integrity within the legal community. From his early work as law clerk for the Legal Rights Center from 1971 to 1973, to his time as an attorney in Social Security Administration in Baltimore, to a criminal defense lawyer for the Neighborhood Justice Center in 1974, Chief Judge Davis has upheld the principled defense of equal justice under the law.

Returning to the Legal Rights Center as an attorney in 1975, and in his later work as an attorney for the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission, he continued his commitment to legal excellence. As a Judge for the Hennepin County Municipal Court, he earned a reputation as a strong legal mind with a firm devotion to justice. His service to the community and legal profession has helped to ensure open and equitable access to justice.

Davis's contribution to the founding of the Pro Se Project in May 2009, which helps provide litigants in Minnesota with a volunteer attorney, demonstrates his passion for fair access to legal counsel for all. His influence in the international arena has taken him to Egypt, Uganda, and Senegal, where he has offered insight on intellectual property law from an American perspective. His travels to Saudi Arabia, which facilitated the travel of a group of Saudi Judges to the United States to learn about the United States justice system, has no doubt enriched the understandings of the global judicial community.

As a leader in the community, Davis has championed the court's involvement in outreach and education, including the 2013 Dred Scott Project. This collaboration between the Minnesota District Court, the Minnesota chapter of the Federal Bar Association, the Bloomington Human Rights Commission, and the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department included bringing historical presentations to high school classrooms in Bloomington and the installation of a new plaque for the Dred Scott Playing Fields.

Chief Judge Davis has worked tirelessly to educate and inspire future generations of attorneys and judges as an instructor and professor at the William Mitchell School of Law, the University of Minnesota Law School, and the Minnesota Institute of Legal Education. In 1993, he was nominated for federal judicial service as a Judge in the U.S. District Court of Minnesota by President Bill Clinton. He has served as the first African-American Chief Judge of the District of Minnesota since 2008. As Chief Judge of the district, Judge Davis has brought diversity and compassionate deliberation to the courts, while presiding over pressing budgetary issues and a demanding case-load.

Chief Judge Davis has led an outstandingly impactful career, defined by his impassioned pursuit of integrity under the law and service to his community. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE JOHNS HOPKINS BLOOMBERG-KIMMEL INSTITUTE FOR CANCER IMMUNOTHERAPY

HON. MARK TAKAI
OF HAWAII
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize the establishment of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg-Kimmel Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy. I personally look forward to all of the innovative programs that they will establish and the lives they will save. This cutting-edge treatment will revolutionize cancer treatment. This form of medicine works to harness the body's existing immune system to destroy cancerous cells, without harming healthy ones, as an effective treatment against nearly all solid tumors.

This year funding for the National Institutes of Health was $32.1 billion, a $2 billion increase over the year before. This increase is in no small part due to the diligence and perseverance of Vice President BIDEN who is spearheading the White House's Cancer Moonshot. Increased funding in cancer research will allow for more research into precision medicine programs, which will help develop even more personalized technologies expand their reach. I know this generation can be the one to cure cancer, and it is due to outstanding research institutions such as the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg-Kimmel Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy.

Once again, I would like to thank Johns Hopkins for their commitment to fighting cancer and congratulate them on the establishment of this new center. I look forward to witnessing their important strides and breakthroughs in the field of cancer research. Thank you (Mahalo).

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 60TH AIR MOBILITY WING

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Women Airforce Service Pilots, known as WASPs.

These women were remarkable, flying 78 different types of military aircraft for the United States Army Air Forces during World War II. They were stationed throughout the United States—281 WASPs served at 16 Army Air Bases in my home state of California. And of the 1,074 graduated pilots, 193 of them were Californians. WASPs contributed invaluably to the War effort, answering their nation's call when there was a shortage of male pilots. They flew over 60 million miles of operation flights, right alongside their male counterparts. But despite their patriotism and selfless service, they did not receive Veteran's Status until 1977.

''Service to country'' is the common thread that binds all who are remembered and honored at Arlington National Cemetery. Yet even today, these heroes are not afforded the tribute of being laid to rest there. I have cosponsored bipartisan legislation that would allow the Women Airforce Service Pilots to be inurned at Arlington. And I will continue to advocate for the rights of these pioneers.

March is Women's History Month, and these women shaped our history in so many ways. They were fearless aviators, they proved that they were just as capable as male pilots, and they began to knock down gender barriers. They paved the way to opening up all combat roles to women in the military.

It is my distinct honor to recognize these women, their accomplishments, and the impact they have had on our Nation's history.

WELCOMING HOME OUR VIETNAM VETERANS

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable Americans who served in the Vietnam war. These heroes never received the proper ''welcome home'' they deserved, so I want to take a moment to recognize each of them and thank them for their service and sacrifice.

Over three million Americans fought in Vietnam, in addition to countless others who served in various support roles. These individuals left the loving arms of their families and

the comfort of their homes to fight for a cause greater than any one person. The fight was not an easy one and the conditions were especially daunting, but they chose to put their lives on the line in defense of freedom and so others may live.

Sadly, some of these American heroes never made the return home. Over 55,000 patriots paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving our great nation. These individuals are now enshrined in our nation's history on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in our nation's capital, and their legacy will never be forgotten.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the sacrifice of our military families who saw someone they loved go away to war. I'm talking about the newlywed wife whose husband departed just months after their marriage. I'm talking about the young toddler who barely knew their father before they deployed. I'm talking about the mom and dad who shed tears as their young child left to join the fight. I'm talking about each and every family member who had someone they loved fight in Vietnam. They sacrificed so much and deserve to be commended as well.

Mr. Speaker, today we salute those who served our nation in Vietnam, and, on behalf of a grateful nation, we thank them for their patriotism and service. May we never forget their sacrifice, may God bless our veterans, and may God always bless the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be at votes on the evening of March 14, 2016 because my flight from Portland, Oregon, was delayed. If I had been present, I would have voted for passage of S. 2426, H. Con. Res. 75, and H. Con. Res. 121, all of which passed the House under suspension of the rules.

S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, would move Taiwan closer to having access to the International Criminal Police Organization's (INTERPOL) global police communication system. In November 2015, I voted for a similar bill, H.R. 1853, and I support policies that further Taiwan's participation in international relations.

H. Con. Res. 75, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that atrocities committed by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities are ''war crimes,'' ''crimes against humanity,'' ''genocide'' passed the House unanimously. I support the resolution, and I would have voted for it if I had been present.

H. Con. Res. 121, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, passed the House by a vote of 392–3, and I would have voted for the bill if I had been present. The atrocities committed against the citizens of Syria are appalling and inhumane, and I strongly condemn them.

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP OF NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE

HON. CRESENT HARDY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of five of the most outstanding leaders in our United States Air Force.

These five men, Major General Jay Silveria, Brigadier General Christopher Short, Colonel Richard Boutwell, Colonel Thomas Dempsey, and Colonel Aaron Steffens, have all served with honor and distinction at Nellis Air Force Base back in my district in southern Nevada.

For those who do not know, Nellis Air Force Base is the most important asset in our Air Force. So important, in fact, that there is the oft repeated slogan that, ''As goes Nellis, so goes the United States Air Force.''

And this isn't just some clever saying. Nellis is home to the Air Force's most advanced and realistic schools and training exercises. It is truly the epicenter of the three T's: testing, tactics, and training.

With the vast array of resources and missions carried out at the base, our Airmen are able to take the fight to our enemies with the full force and power of the world's greatest Air Force.

As a freshman Member of Congress, I could not have asked for a better cadre of officers to lead the many young servicemembers who call my district home. Their principled leadership and dogged determination to achieve excellence in every facet of their mission is truly an inspiration to everyone in our community.

It has been a privilege to develop strong working relationships with each of these commanders, and to seek their informed counsel on some of the most pressing issues affecting the readiness and capabilities of our Air Force as well as our national security priorities.

While I am sad to see them go, I know that they will bring the same integrity and leadership to their new commands.

To Tonto, Junior, Chase, Vader, and Fangs, the nation is grateful for your service, and I wish you all the best.

Aim High.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in this critical fight to ensure full voting rights for all Americans.

I'd like to thank my colleagues, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY, and Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES for organizing this special order and for their dedicated leadership in protecting the right of all Americans to vote.

I'd also like to thank Chairman G. K. BUTTERFIELD for his leadership of our caucus as we work to ensure equality and democracy for all American families.

Mr. Speaker, since 2013, when the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in their Shelby County v. Holder decision, too many Americans have seen their voting rights weakened and undermined.

This year, as we celebrated the 51st anniversary of the historic civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, the very progress we celebrated was under attack.

This year, 16 states have enacted new voting restrictions for the first time in a presidential election since the Voting Rights Act was made law more than 50 years ago. These new barriers range from unnecessary voter ID laws, to ending same-day voter registration, and reducing or completely eliminating early voting.

Since 2010, 21 states have implemented new restrictions. This is a crisis.

While states have put up barriers, Speaker RYAN, Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE and some Congressional Republicans have ignored the clear, bipartisan consensus to fix the Voting Rights Act and restore voting rights protections for all Americans.

Republican Congressman JAMES SENSENBRENNER has introduced the bipartisan Voting Rights Amendment Act (H.R. 885), which I am proud to co-sponsor with more than 100 other Members of Congress. This is a good first step to restoring voting protections for all Americans.

But let me be clear—simply fixing the Voting Rights Act isn't enough.

We need to empower voters and Congresswoman SEWELL's bill—the Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 2867)—would do just that.

It's past time that Congress got serious about protecting voting rights and passing the Voting Rights Advancement Act—and we are here to support these efforts.

Our work is not over until the voice of every American is heard. So I join my colleagues in the CBC tonight to implore our colleagues in the House to work harder to protect the bedrock of our democracy—the right to vote.

HONORING BLM UKIAH FIELD DIRECTOR RICH BURNS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Director Rich Burns for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Director Burns to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

MILESTONES AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following biographies.

BAKER O'BRIEN

This year's Milestones Award Recipient for the Arts category is Baker O'Brien, an established world-class glass artist and long-time supporter of the arts in Toledo, Ohio. Ms. O'Brien was the sole apprentice of legendary glass-master Dominick Labino and has been mixing, melting, blowing and casting vividly colored glass for over 30 years.

Her work is part of private collections around the world, and some of the more well-known recipients of her work include Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand, Former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Former Mayor of New York City Rudy Guliani, Dr. C. Everett Koop, China Wildlife Conservation Association of Beijing, Beijing, China, and concert pianist André Watts.

Ms. O'Brien has also donated her work to a wide variety of local organizations for fundraising. Over nearly 30 years, she has further supported the development of the arts in the Toledo area by educating docents from the Toledo Museum of Art. These docents, who are primarily women, are on the front lines of public arts education. Ms. O'Brien passionately ensures that they have correct and accurate information to pass along to museum patrons regarding both the art and science of glass. Her lectures and demonstrations include a combination of not only the science and history of glass art, but also the Labino Studio. She has served as a guest artist for the museum on numerous occasions.

Outside of her work creating and supporting the arts, Ms. O'Brien has a passion for animals and owns several horses and purebred dogs. This community is truly fortunate to have a local champion for the arts and art education.

KATHLEEN ZOUHARY

Kathleen M. Zouhary is this year's Milestones Awards Recipient for her work advancing women in Business. Ms. Zouhary is a lawyer by trade and became one of the first female partners in the law firm of Fuller and Henry in 1981.

Her distinguished legal career is punctuated by other firsts, such as becoming the first Vice-President and General Counsel for St. Luke's Hospital in Toledo. She also served as the Vice-President and General Counsel for Ohio Care Health System, Inc. Her wisdom and expertise assisted physicians, board members, and executives in fulfilling the mission of providing healthcare to Toledo-area residents. Ms. Zouhary currently owns her own business, Zouhary Dispute Resolution, which provides many forms of dispute resolution services to the financial and health care communities.

In addition to her professional work, Ms. Zouhary has served on the Susan G. Komen Board for many years, the Miami University Board of Trustees, and the Toledo Legal Aid Society Board of Trustees. She has selflessly given her time and expertise to organizations which support health, education, and access to legal services. She has served as a mentor to other women and is known for her inspiring perseverance, patience, and professionalism in eliminating barriers to success for women of all walks of life. She is an active member of the Toledo Women's Bar Association, Ohio Women's Bar Association, and several other professional groups.

Her colleagues have described her approach as ''grace under fire,'' and she is certainly an inspiration to business-women in the Toledo community. Ms. Zouhary's dedication and integrity make her an outstanding role model for Toledo women, including her two daughters Katie Marie and Alexis, who are now both successful attorneys in their own right.

JULIE RUBINI

Julie K. Rubini is the 2016 Milestones Award Recipient in the field of Education. She is the founder of Claire's Day, which is the largest Children's Book Festival and literacy awards program in the Toledo community.

Ms. Rubini is an author with published books such as ''Hidden Ohio'' and ''Missing Millie Benson.'' Her work has provided children and families the opportunity to be lifelong readers.

Her daughter, Claim Lynsey Rubin, passed away suddenly in 2000 as a result of a rare heart condition. To honor her daughter's legacy, Ms. Rubini established Claire's Day in 2001. At that time, Claire's Day was a one-day free family book festival to encourage reading, storytelling, music and education. In 2011, in conjunction with her husband Brad, Claire's Day formed a board of trustees to provide oversight, governance, and long-term leadership for the organization. The organization has brought many female authors to speak at local schools.

In 2015, Claire's Day merged with Read for Literacy, and Ms. Rubini continues to serve on the Emeritus Board of Read for Literacy. She also volunteers her time to advance literacy programming in all of Northwest Ohio. She received the Jefferson Award for Community Service for this work. In addition, Ms. Rubini serves on Maumee City Council.

Ms. Rubini's work, both professionally and philanthropically, is dedicated to helping others and supporting literacy among children and families. Out of tragedy she was inspired to use her time, talent, and determination to support literacy in the Toledo area and beyond.

MAYOR PAULA HICKS-HUDSON

Paula Hicks-Hudson is the 2016 Milestones Awards Recipient for her contributions to Government in Toledo, Ohio. Throughout her 35-year career she has worked with underserved women in various governmental capacities, culminating in her recent role as the first African-American woman to serve as Mayor of Toledo.

Paula Hicks-Hudson's path to Mayor has consistently shown her dedication to the underrepresented populations of Toledo. She worked to protect the rights of young women and juveniles when serving as assistant Lucas County Prosecutor, Assistant Public Defender, and Assistant State Attorney General. From 1998 to 2002 she served as the Legislative Director of the Toledo City Council. Afterwards, she was the Director and Deputy Director of the Lucas County Board of Elections, ensuring access to the electoral process for Lucas County residents. Additionally, Mayor Hicks-Hudson worked as the chief legal counsel to the Ohio Office of Budget and Management under Governor Ted Strickland. She is most recently known for serving on the Toledo City Council for four years, prior to becoming Mayor of Toledo.

Outside of her contributions through her career, Mayor Hicks-Hudson has served as variety of organizations in support of women and minorities, including the Coalition for Quality Education, the NAACP, the Fredrick Douglass Community Center, the African-American Law Enforcement Agents, and the state and national Federations of Business and Professional Women, Inc. Her work has earned her recognition by the Urban Minority Alcohol and Drug Outreach Program.

In addition to these roles Mayor Hicks-Hudson has also volunteered her time to the YWCA in support of empowering women. She has maintained the highest levels of service in leadership and truly improved the quality of life for all those in our community, especially women and children.

DR. PAM OATIS, MD

Dr. Pamela Oatis is this year's Milestones Award Recipient in the Sciences category, but her contributions to this area go far beyond scientific endeavors. Dr. Oatis has been a pediatrician, primary and palliative care provider for Toledo-area patients for the past 30 years.

Dr. Oatis's contributions to this area have achieved significant recognition outside of the YWCA. She was selected by the American Chapter of Pediatrics as the 2011 Outstanding Physician of the Year for the entire state of Ohio. She also developed the CATCH program, which ensures community access to child health, and provides oversight to the Healthy Tomorrow program.

She is involved in the development of medical ethics and has also led several hundred workshops, groups and classes for women's health on a national and international level. Dr. Oatis also devotes her time to teaching and providing regional leadership for Re-evaluation Counseling—a community peer listening program. In addition to this work, she was the initiating physician champion for the Medical-Legal Partnership for Children and is a certified instructor of Building Emotional Understanding from the international Hand in Hand Parenting.

Dr. Oatis, like her mother, Ruth, has been a lifelong advocate for women. She works tirelessly to advance and empower women of all ages to take charge of their health. For recreation, she competes in Olympic distance triathlons and has competed on a national and international level.

DR. CELIA WILLIAMSON

Celia Williamson, Ph.D. is the 2016 Milestones Awards recipient in the field of Social Services. Dr. Williamson received her B.A. in Social Work from the University of Toledo, and went on to earn a Masters Degree in the field from Case Western Reserve University as well as her Ph.D from Indiana University. She has used this training to devote the past 20 years toward responding to social injustice, particularly the abuses of women who are victims of human trafficking.

Dr. Williamson founded the first anti-trafficking program in Ohio in 1993, long before the human trafficking conversation came to the forefront. As a social worker, Dr. Williamson founded the Second Chance program, now known as RISE, in Lucas County. RISE continues to work with women and girls who were victims of the human trafficking industry. Her academic work includes 9 completed studies, 17 articles, and 2 edited books on sex trafficking. Her work was recognized via federal funding from 2002 through 2012 to conduct research in this area. In fact, she has been awarded research grants totaling over $1 million to assist vulnerable women and trafficked youth.

As an activist and community organizer, Dr. Williamson founded the International Human Trafficking and Social Justice Conference, and chairs the Research and Analysis Subcommittee for the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission. Her devotion to helping the most vulnerable women in our community is undeniable, as she was instrumental in securing an FBI task force in Lucas County to address the issue of rescuing children from Toledo's sex trade. Dr. Williamson also devotes her time to teaching interns who are interested in addressing the issue of human trafficking, and she has been a lifelong educator on oppression and social justice.

Dr. Williamson has received much recognition for her work in social services, and truly embodies the YWCA's mission. Her work to address the issue of ''modem slavery through human trafficking has cemented her status as an inspiration to women in Toledo and throughout the country.

ADRIENNE GREEN

This year's Milestones Award recipient for Volunteerism is Adrienne Green. Ms. Green was selected for her outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in raising awareness about the importance of volunteerism in the Toledo community.

Although Ms. Green is not originally from Toledo, she is deeply passionate about the impact volunteers play in improving the lives of Toledo-area residents, especially women in need, and has consistently demonstrated her commitment by serving in a variety of volunteer leadership roles. For example, Ms. Green has had an active role in the ProMedica Toledo Hospital board, the Women's Initiative of the United Way, Read for Literacy, Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity, Toledo Chapter of the Links, Zonta Club Toledo I, International, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Many of these endeavors overlap with the mission of the YWCA by providing services and opportunities for women, especially those with limited resources. In addition to this work, Ms. Green works as a project manager at Owens Corning. She has consistently been willing to take on difficult tasks to support the community when others may be reluctant to do so. Her friends and colleagues have described her as ''always helping someone, without hesitation.'' In 2015, she served on the Girl Scouts of Western Ohio Women of Distinction Committee, which selects exceptional women honorees leading the way for future female leaders.

Ms. Green is a role model for women everywhere, proving that one can combine both professional and philanthropic goals to help her community. She is truly a leader by example and has generously invested her time and resources to support volunteer efforts in Toledo and beyond.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RUTH REVELS

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Ruth Revels who passed away on March 14, 2016, at the age of 79. Throughout her life, Mrs. Revels was an unwavering advocate for the Lumbee Tribe and American Indians in the state of North Carolina, and she will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing her. I send my prayers and sincerest condolences to Mrs. Revels' family and the entire Lumbee Tribe during this difficult time.

Mrs. Revels was born in Robeson County, North Carolina during the 1940's, a period that was marked by segregation and the unequal treatment of minority communities, including American Indians. Her personal experiences during her childhood, along with her desire to help young people reach their full potential, inspired Mrs. Revels to become a teacher at her former high school, Pembroke High School, which at the time was the only school in the area where Indian students could attend. She later went on to teach at Ragsdale High School in Jamestown, North Carolina for 14 additional years.

Mrs. Revels was a recognized leader in the state of North Carolina for her lifelong efforts on issues important to the Lumbee Tribe and American Indians. In addition to becoming the Executive Director of the Guilford Native American Association, where she served for over 20 years, Mrs. Revels was a member of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs since 2003. In a testament to her leadership on this issue, Governor Pat McCrory appointed Mrs. Revels as the Chairwoman of the Commission in 2013. Mrs. Revels was a pillar of the American Indian community in North Carolina, and her work will long be remembered for having a profound impact on many generations.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in remembering the life of Ruth Revels and celebrating her legacy that undoubtedly offers American Indians in North Carolina a brighter and more prosperous future.

HONORING BLM CENTRAL CALIFORNIA DISTRICT MANAGER ESTE STIFEL

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor District Manager Este Stifel for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with District Manager Stifel to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

WELCOMING PRESIDENT NAZARBAYEV TO WASHINGTON, DC

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to Washington, DC for the Nuclear Security Summit. I have been a supporter of Kazakhstan for many years now, not only in regards to their admirable work in the area of nuclear non-proliferation, but also in advocating for their opportunity to Chair the Organization for Security

and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)—a position the country attained and served ably in 2010. There are of course myriad reasons to celebrate the strong relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan, but certainly we would all agree that Kazakhstan's work to rid our world of nuclear weapons, and its work to develop safe nuclear power, are foremost among them.

Countries like the United States and Kazakhstan come together at Nuclear Security Summits to work toward securing vulnerable nuclear materials, countering nuclear smuggling and thwarting attempts at nuclear terrorism. This is a mission in which Kazakhstan has been a welcomed world leader. Indeed, just four short years after achieving independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan had destroyed all of their nuclear weapons and joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear weapons state. By the year 2000, it had destroyed its nuclear testing infrastructure at Semipalatinsk. Not only has Kazakhstan, under President Nazarbayev's strong leadership, taken the lead in eliminating nuclear weapons, it has also worked tirelessly to create a system in which nuclear energy may be used in a safe, secure and peaceful manner. This was most recently witnessed in Kazakhstan's willingness to host the International Atomic Energy Agency's low-enriched uranium fuel bank.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that our continuing friendship with Kazakhstan is of the utmost importance. President Nazarbayev and the people of Kazakhstan made a principled decision years ago to lead the effort in ridding the world of nuclear weapons. This effort deserves the unqualified praise and support of not only the United States, but the entire international community. Again, I welcome President Nazarbayev to Washington, DC for the Fourth Nuclear Security Summit and wish all involved great success as they work to make our world a safer place for future generations around the world.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROMOTING NATIONAL SERVICE AND REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Promoting National Service and Reducing Unemployment Act, to address one of the greatest workforce tragedies resulting from today's economy—our unemployed young people—and to spur economic growth and alleviate strain on state and local governments. This tragedy is not only hurting our young people, it is costing our government $25 billion each year through lost tax revenue and other costs. Unemployment has reached a new low of 4.9 percent, but my bill targets the 2.2 million young people who have not had a fair chance to ever use their high school and college education, which this nation has strongly urged them to get.

What is particularly disappointing is the high unemployment rate for young people who heeded our advice to graduate from high school and college, only to try to enter the workforce in the worst economy in generations. The total unemployment rate is currently 10.6 percent for young adults aged 16 to 24, and hundreds of thousands now compete for unpaid internships wherever they can find them. By significantly expanding AmeriCorps, my bill would need no new administrative structure or bureaucracy, and would allow unemployed young people to earn a stipend, obtain work experience, and develop a good work history to help them secure future employment. The net cost of the expansion would be low, because these young people would be providing urgently needed local services that are being dropped or curtailed because of federal, state, and local budget cuts, such as after-school programs, tutoring, and assistance for the elderly.

The bill would significantly expand job opportunities for young people who have played by the rules but despite their best efforts remain unemployed in this economy. Participants receive a living allowance and are also eligible for an education award equal to the value of a Pell grant, for school-loan forbearance, health care benefits and child care assistance. By expanding the AmeriCorps program, we would reduce the number of unemployed young people, provide them with work skills and experience, and help cash-strapped states and local governments provide services that they would otherwise have to cut.

For some time, it has been clear that policies to address the most stubborn forms of unemployment need to be targeted in order to be effective. Without significant targeting, young graduates will continue to face their first years as adults without jobs and with no way to acquire work experience. They deserve better. I ask my colleagues to support this urgently needed targeted assistance for young, unemployed Americans.

HONORING ACTING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE BLM NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS, ABBIE JOSSIE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Assistant Director Abbie Jossie for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Assistant Director Jossie to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote number 111, 112 and 113. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote number 111, 112 and 113.

CONGRATULATING THE ROMEO BULLDOGS HOCKEY TEAM ON WINNING THE DIVISION 2 MICHIGAN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to recognize a special achievement recently accomplished by the Romeo Bulldogs High School Hockey Team. Romeo capped off a remarkable and extremely memorable 2015–2016 season by taking home to Macomb County the school's first ever Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Division 2 State Championship. After a hard fought season, the Bulldogs finished with an overall record of 27–2–1 and charged into the playoffs facing off against tough competition before stunning the Livonia Stevenson Spartans at the USA Hockey Arena in Plymouth.

In his second year as head coach, Nick Badder and his team have had great success. Last year's team won 20 regular season games for the first time in school history and was crowned the regional champion. But,

Coach Badder and the rest of the team knew they could achieve more. There is always a learning curve for head coaches, but Coach Badder did not waste much time in turning the Romeo Bulldogs into champions. With hockey in his veins from playing NCAA hockey for the Central Michigan Chippewas, Coach Badder used both his youth and hockey experience to relate and teach the 22 young men to be better players, teammates and students. Coach Badder knew he had a fast and physical team, but they needed to focus on the details and play a better defensive game. All of these attributes came together at precisely the right time and the Romeo Bulldogs are now State Champions.

Before making it to the State Championship game, the Romeo Bulldogs faced many competitors in the tournament. The Bulldogs faced a Davison team coming off of a 6–0 win over Lapeer and defeated them 8–3 in the pre-regional final. Next, Romeo faced Port Huron Northern and beat them by a score of 7–1 in the regional final. From there, the Romeo Bulldogs faced the Anchor Bay Tars at Suburban Ice Arena and bested them 8–3 in the quarterfinal. In the semifinals, Romeo faced a tough Ada Forest Hills Eastern team. This was Romeo's toughest test yet, but the Bulldogs remained unscathed in the playoffs with a 5–2 victory. With their sights on the championship, the Romeo Bulldogs would play in one final game and face their toughest challenge of the season. The Livonia Stevenson Spartans were now the only team that separated them from history.

The Livonia Stevenson Spartans won the state championship in 2013 and finished as last year's runner-up, while the Romeo Bulldogs had never appeared in a championship game. The perennial powerhouse Spartans had the wind at their backs and history on their side, but history was about to change. Seven minutes into the game, Junior forward Brett Lanski scored to give Romeo a 1–0 lead. Stevenson scored less than four minutes later to even the score. Not long after, Logan Jenuwine scored a power play goal to give Romeo a 2–1 lead. In the next five minutes, Stevenson would score three goals to take a 4–2 lead. Coach Badder decided to call a crucial time out at this point to settle his team and slow the pace of the game. This decision proved to be a critical turning point in the game. Brett Lanski went on to score his second goal of the game, putting the Bulldogs within one shot of a tie. Less than a minute later, Luke Kaczor deflected defenseman Logan Ganfield's shot to tie the game with a minute and a half left in the period. In the third period, Stevenson received a five minute major for head-butting that put Romeo on a critical power play. The Bulldogs took advantage and Logan Jenuwine scored his second of the game giving Romeo a 5–4 lead. Steven Morris capped off the comeback victory with an empty net goal that sealed the 6–4 victory for the Romeo Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs throughout the season exhibited all the qualities that make up a championship hockey team: heart, discipline and a positive attitude. As legendary Hall of Fame Defenseman Paul Coffey once said, ''Hockey's a funny game You have to prove yourself every shift, every game. It's not up to anybody else. You have to take pride in yourself.''

I applaud these young men for remaining both mentally and physically ready to compete. In addition, I want to commend the Bulldogs for staying energized and focused each time they stepped on to the ice. I understand this can be an extremely difficult task considering the numerous pressures and distractions high school student-athletes can encounter.

I wish to recognize the hard work and sportsmanship displayed by all the members of this hockey team. These individuals are: Harrison Hunt, Brett Lanski, Zach Peters, Lorenzo Evangelista, Frank Ruffino, Logan Ganfield, Blake Gabler, Jacob Sunderlik, Chase Gillem, Andrew Cate, Luke Kaczor, Ryan Peters, Joey Morris, Jake Petri, Dan Geffert, Nick Blankenburg, Nolan Kare, Garrett Ganfield, Steven Morris, Max Citro, Logan Jenuwine, and Grant Williams along with Head Coach Nick Badder, and Assistant Coaches Adam Krefski, Brennan Cavanagh, and Kyle White, Athletic Trainer Kim Ostrolencki and Manager Kim Gamble.

I also want to congratulate administrators, teachers, cheerleaders, parents, students and fans alike for their assistance and for making this an unforgettable season. The Bulldogs proved they had the skill, heart and resilience to rise to the challenge and accomplish their ultimate goal—a State Championship. Teamwork, perseverance and friendship all contributed to this title as well. I know the community takes great pride in what these young men were able to achieve.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I share that same pride. I want to offer my personal congratulations. All the accolades, awards and trophies are rightfully deserved. Way to go Bulldogs.

HONORING DISTRICT DIRECTOR FOR THE HONORABLE SENATOR BARBARA BOXER, TOM BOHIGIAN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Director Tom Bohigian for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Bohigian. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

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IN RECOGNITION OF BILL ROTCH'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of one of my distinguished and active constituents, Mr. Bill Rotch, on his 100th birthday; he is a beloved member of the Peterborough, NH community that I am proud to represent in Congress. On March 28, 2016, Bill will celebrate his 100th birthday. We commemorate Bill's birthday with awe and inspiration as he is a true example of what has made the Granite State such a strong and vibrant place.

Bill Rotch was the publisher and editor of The Cabinet, an iconic New Hampshire newspaper, for many decades. Last year Mr. Rotch was recognized with the Boston Post Cane, an honor bestowed upon the oldest resident of Peterborough.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the 100th birthday of one of my most engaged constituents, Bill Rotch. I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating this milestone in his remarkable life.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WALLA WALLA FRONTIER DAYS

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Walla Walla Frontier Days.

I am extremely proud to represent Walla Walla in Congress. The Walla Walla Valley is one of the most fertile agricultural areas in the nation, producing crops such as wheat, asparagus, strawberries, and of course, Walla Walla Sweet Onions. Yet, with more than 100 wineries, the area is also known as world-class wine country.

The Walla Walla Frontier Days is the oldest fair in the state of Washington. According to the history of the Walla Walla County Fair and Fairgrounds:

In 1866, the Walla Walla Agricultural Society staged a large agricultural and industrial exposition to showcase the valley crops and the latest farming methods. This event, the first county fair, was held on the horse-track racing grounds which had been built in 1862 three miles west of the then city limits. Throughout the years, the fair was known by many names, hosted at many locations throughout the county, and governed by many civic organizations in the area.

In 1906, the historic pavilion was built for a fruit exhibit and concert hall. In 1913, the management decided to inaugurate a new order of business and as a result the ''Frontier Days'' came into existence with its spectacular display of bull dogging, relay races, stagecoach races, cowboys, cowgirls and other local participants representing one of the last stands of the ''Wild West.''

Walla Walla County purchased the present Fairgrounds in 1923 and after two years of the successful pageant ''How the West was Won,'' the fair came back under sponsorship of the Walla Walla County Farm Bureau. The next year, the Farm Bureau was joined by the Chamber of Commerce as the two sponsoring groups.

In 1935, Fair royalty was an added element and young ladies from the region competed and this tradition has continued to date, with the exception of the World War II years. In 1939, as an acknowledgment of commitment to the Fair, the committee added an annual parade marshal to the Frontier Days parade.

In 1974, world class country entertainment was added to the annual fair. In 2008, the Rodeo Legends award was implemented acknowledging the outstanding men and women of the valley who have attained a high level of achievement in the sport of Rodeo.

Throughout the years, the 4–H and Future Farmers of America programs have become the annual showcase of the region's younger population, fostering the next generation of the agricultural community.

The remarkable legacy of the Walla Walla Frontier Days would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the Fair's board members and managers, elected officials, community leaders, businesses, sponsors, and most importantly, thousands of community volunteers who collectively have maintained a steadfast commitment to ensuring its success. Although much has changed about the Frontier Days over the past 150 years, its importance to communities throughout Southeastern Washington has remained constant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of our colleagues join me in celebrating the sesquicentennial anniversary of the oldest fair in the state of Washington, the Walla Walla Frontier Days.

HONORING THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE CHIEF TOM TIDWELL

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Chief Tom Tidwell for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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MEDIA IGNORES DISMISSAL

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the national liberal media routinely ignore scandals that involve Democrats and fail to provide all the facts when a Republican is involved.

In 2014, the media hyped the indictment of Texas Governor Rick Perry. According to the Media Research Center, ABC, CBS and NBC spent 25 minutes on the subject over the course of two days.

Governor Perry's charges recently were dismissed. This significant event was not covered by any of the three networks' evening news shows or their morning news shows. Not a single minute.

Apparently, when it comes to a high profile Republican, only the alleged bad news counts.

The media's bias is obvious. Maybe that's why 60 percent of Americans have little or no confidence in the national media to report the news fully, accurately and fairly, according to Gallup.

INYO COUNTY CELEBRATES 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 150th anniversary of Inyo County, California, which was established by the California State Legislature on March 22, 1866. Inyo County is home to many famous landmarks, including Death Valley National Park and Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the continental United States.

On March 22, 2016, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors will be hosting a formal ceremony in celebration of this remarkable milestone. While I won't be able to attend this special event, I look forward to visiting this beautiful part of our country later this year for the world famous Mule Days celebration. Again, congratulation to the citizens of Inyo County, who will be celebrating the 150th anniversary on March 22, 2016.

HONORING MENDOCINO NATIONAL FOREST SUPERVISOR ANN CARLSON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Supervisor Ann Carlson for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

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HONORING BISHOP CHARLIE GREEN, JR.

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bishop Charlie Green, Jr., of Sikeston, Missouri for his admirable career of service to the community. He has been an exemplary religious leader, businessman, and civil activist in Sikeston for over three decades.

Growing up in Sikeston, Bishop Green attended Lincoln High School where he was the captain of the basketball team. After high school, he served as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army before working as a clerk typist in the Army Material Command for Captains.

Following his military service, Green earned his degree in marketing and management from Missouri University in St. Louis, as well as his degree in Life Underwriter Training Council from St. Louis University. He also holds bachelor's and master's degrees in theology from Cross Roads Divinity School, and earned his doctorate in theology from Triune Biblical University in Kelso, Washington.

In 1974, Green returned to Sikeston after the death of his father to serve as the pastor of Green Memorial Church of God in Christ. After six years as pastor, he was elected as presiding bishop of the Church of God in Christ in 1981. He is also the founder and president of Green Memorial Biblical University. Additionally, he has served the community as president of the Sikeston Branch of the NAACP, member of the Board of Directors of Bootheel Legal Services, and founder of the Sikeston Community Credit Union where he serves as chairman of the Board of Directors.

For these accomplishments and contributions to his community, it is my great pleasure to recognize Bishop Charlie Green, Jr., before the U.S. House of Representatives.

SOUTHEASTERN MARINE CORPS LEAGUE CONFERENCE

HON. RICK W. ALLEN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary service of our Marine Corps. The 12th District of Georgia is extremely proud of our strong military presence and the role that all the military men and women play in keeping our nation free. The Marines here in Georgia and all around the world make incredible sacrifices every day and we could not be more thankful for them and their families. It is with great honor that Augusta hosts the Southeastern Marine Corps League Conference this year. The conference is sponsored by the Jimmie Dyess Chapter of the Marine Corps League and features a performance by the Parris Island Marine Corps Band.

The Lt. Col Jimmie Dyess MCL Detachment 921 is a proud sponsor of the 2016 MCL Southeast Regional Division Conference in Augusta, Georgia. The Detachment is named for Lt. Col Aquilla James ''Jimmie'' Dyess, a remarkable Georgian who is the only American to have received both the Medal of Honor and the Carnegie Medal for Civilian Heroism. A graduate of Clemson University, Dyess accomplished many great things in his too short life. He was appointed a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1936, and one year later was awarded the bronze star as a shooting member on the Marine Corps Rifle Team. He was killed by enemy gun fire on February 2, 1944 while leading his infantry in an attack against the Japanese on the island of Namur.

The Lt. Col Jimmie Dyess MCL Detachment 921 and many other Southeast Divisions support various programs that promote and honor the spirit and traditions of the Marines, including the Boy Scouts of America, the U.S. Marines Youth Physical Fitness Program, and Marines-for-Marines: Wounded Marines Program.

Performing at the Conference this year is the Parris Island Marine Band, from Parris Island, South Carolina. Consisting of one officer and 50 enlisted Marines, the band is one of the leading musical units in the United States military. The band was founded in 1915 and has continued to perform for their country in exciting and versatile concerts ever since. They perform all around the United States, always displaying their dedication to upholding the high standards and traditions of the United States Marine Corps. Their dignified musical expertise, culminated with great military pride and efficiency, sets the United States Marine field bands apart from any other military unit.

The valiant efforts made by our Marines and all of the United States military do not go unnoticed. The support we can offer them is nothing compared to the contributions they make for this great nation every day. Every active duty soldier, veteran, and military family member has devoted themselves to the United States, and it is an honor to pay them the respect they deserve.

HONORING U.S. FOREST SERVICE REGIONAL FORESTER RANDY MOORE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Forester Randy Moore for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

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OPPOSE THE AIRR ACT PROTECT MEAL AND REST BREAKS AND FAIR PAY FOR TRUCKERS

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today the House considers a clean extension of aviation programs through July 15, 2016. While I have no objection to H.R. 4721, I do have serious concerns with H.R. 4441, the ''Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act of 2016'' (AIRR Act), the controversial Federal

Aviation Administration reauthorization bill. My remarks focus on one provision in H.R. 4441, Section 611.

Section 611 of H.R. 4441 pre-empts intrastate laws related to meal breaks, rest breaks, and hourly tracking of wages for truck drivers. Specifically, Section 611(a)(3) states:

(A) A State, political subdivision of a State, or political authority of 2 or more States may not enact or enforce a law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law prohibiting employees whose hours of service are subject to regulation by the Secretary under section 31502 from working to the full extent permitted or at such times as permitted under such section, or imposing any additional obligations on motor carriers if such employees work to the full extent or at such times as permitted under such section, including any related activities regulated under part 395 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

(B) A State, political subdivision of a State, or political authority of 2 or more States may not enact or enforce a law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law that requires a motor carrier that compensates employees on a piece-rate basis to pay those employees separate or additional compensation, provided that the motor carrier pays the employee a total sum that when divided by the total number of hours worked during the corresponding work period is equal to or greater than the applicable hourly minimum wage of the State, political subdivision of the State, or political authority of 2 or more States.

Section 611 pre-empts State laws in two parts. Part (A) is specific to meal and rest breaks, which are in effect in 21 States. Part (B) allows companies to continue to pay by the load or on a piece-rate basis, and to disregard State laws that require hourly tracking of wages.

Additional language in Section 611 makes these legislative changes retroactive to 1994. This retroactivity language will wipe out at least 50 pending lawsuits regarding wage and hour laws.

PART A: PREEMPTING STATE MEAL AND REST BREAK LAWS

Section 611 is being pursued by a coalition of large trucking companies following a recent Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision that upheld the State of California's meal and rest break laws for all workers, including truck drivers. See Dilts v. Penske Logistics, LLC, 769 F.3d 637 (9th Cir. 2014), cert. denied, 135 S. Ct. 2049 (2015). The trucking companies supporting Section 611 claim that the language in part (A) is needed to prevent a patchwork of State hours of service laws. In reality, Section 611 goes far beyond this stated purpose.

DILTS V. PENSKE LOGISTICS DECISION

Section 611 pre-empts existing State meal or rest break laws, many of which have been on the books for decades, in 21 States. If enacted, Section 611 will prevent truck drivers who work exclusively within a single State from being protected by that State's wage and hour laws. I agree that if a truck driver is operating long haul, through several States, having to comply with new rest or meal break requirements every time the driver crosses a State line is confusing and impedes interstate commerce. The Dilts case was not a case that affected drivers moving goods from coast to coast—it was a case involving local appliance delivery drivers who never left California.

The trucking companies supporting Section 611 argue that a driver would have to pull off the road at inconvenient times or in potentially unsafe situations to take a break. That is simply not true. In fact, case law has specifically established that employers do not have to require employees to take a break—they simply must permit it by relieving employees of duties or pay employees for the time.

Moreover, it is disingenuous for some in the trucking industry to imply that the need for this legislative fix was caused by one ''rogue'' Ninth Circuit court decision. California changed its meal and rest break law in 2000—16 years ago—to provide a monetary remedy of an additional hour of pay to an employee if an employer does not allow for a meal or a rest break.

The 2014 Dilts decision regarding meal and rest breaks cites multiple cases setting the precedent for the decision. In addition, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) filed an amicus brief in this case in support of the drivers, marking the first time the Federal Government has taken a position on intrastate pre-emption. DOT argues that there is a presumption against preemption in areas of traditional State ''police power'' or control, and that labor laws are a clear area of traditional State control. DOT also notes that Federal rules requiring a 30-minute rest break do not apply to short-haul drivers. Therefore, if Section 611 were enacted, short-haul intrastate drivers would not receive any rest break protection under Federal or State law.

DOT's brief also cites a finding from a decision by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, well known for its pro-business decisions, in a trucking case that found that any changes to economic inputs may raise the cost of doing business, but that does not rise to the level of challenging pre-emption. In S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. v. Transport Corp. of America, Inc., 697 F.3d 544 (7th Cir. 2012), the Seventh Circuit found:

[L]abor inputs are affected by a network of labor laws, including minimum wage laws, worker safety laws, anti-discrimination laws and pension regulations. Capital is regulated by banking laws, securities rules, and tax laws, among others. Technology is heavily influenced by intellectual property laws. Changes to these background laws will ultimately affect the cost of these inputs, and thus, in turn, the price . . . or service of the outputs. Yet no one thinks that the ADA or the FAAAA preempts these and the many comparable State laws. S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., 697 F.3d at 558.

The Ninth Circuit's Dilts decision very clearly spells out that California's labor laws, particularly related to intrastate truck drivers in this case, are not be preempted under the 1994 F4A pre-emption provision:

Although we have in the past confronted close cases that have required us to struggle with the ''related to'' test, and refine our principles of FAAAA preemption, we do not think that this is one of them. In light of the FAAAA preemption principles outlined above, California's meal and rest break laws plainly are not the sorts of laws 'related to' prices, routes, or services that Congress intended to preempt. They do not set prices, mandate or prohibit certain routes, or tell motor carriers what services they may or may not provide, either directly or indirectly . . . They are normal background rules for almost all employers doing business in the state of California. Dilts, 769 F.3d at 647.

Therefore, Part (A) of Section 611 goes far beyond addressing the concern that drivers may face different rules in different States in interstate commerce. If enacted, it would deny drivers who operate under one set of rules, in one State, coverage under laws designed to ensure adequate rest on the job. The language also legislatively overturns a body of case law that has consistently upheld labor protections for truck drivers.

PART B: PREEMPTING FAIR PAY FOR TRUCKERS

Part (B) of Section 611 restricts the ability of States to improve truck driver working conditions and pay. The language dictates that the ''piece rate'' (or pay-by-the-load) a trucking company offers as compensation to a driver supersedes State laws that require compensation for time a driver spends doing tasks such as loading or unloading or being detained—in other words, any time a truck's wheels are not turning.

CALIFORNIA PIECE-RATE PAY

Several Federal district court and California State appellate court decisions between 2011 and 2013 have redefined piece-rate pay in California. Piece-rate or per-trip pay is common in many industries, such as trucking, agriculture, automotive repair shops, and others. Prior to 2011, employers who paid by the trip or piece were considered to be in compliance with Federal and State minimum wage laws provided that an employee's average hourly wage (total compensation over a work period divided by total hours worked) was at the minimum wage level or higher.

The problem, however, was that ''non-productive'' work hours—such as a truck driver waiting at a loading dock, or a strawberry picker waiting to be transported to and from the field, or an auto repair shop employee waiting in between jobs—was untracked and unpaid. A series of class action cases brought against employers for unpaid time all were found in favor of employees. In each decision, employers were found to be in violation of California's minimum wage law if they calculated average hours worked through piece rate because, if non-productive time is not separately compensated, the employees were not compensated at all. Two cases involved truck drivers—one for Safeway and one for Con-way Freight—and the courts specifically found that pay by the load (as calculated in the trucking industry) did not provide compensation for activities such as loading and unloading because they were not included in the piece-rate.

In response to these decisions, California passed a new law (effective January 1, 2016) requiring the following for anyone paid on a piece-rate basis:

Separate tracking of compensation for the time to take rest and recovery breaks, which must be paid at an hourly rate of the greater of the State minimum wage or the employee's average hourly wage for the week (Importantly, based on a separate 2012 court decision, employers do not have to require employees to take a break—employers must permit it and relieve the employees of duties or pay them for the rest break)

Separate compensation for ''non-productive'' time under the employer's control that is not being compensated in the piece-rate formula, at an hourly rate no less than minimum wage.

The effect of this new law is employers will have to begin tracking non-productive time, which gets at the heart of the detention time issue in trucking.

If part (B) of Section 611 is enacted, interstate and intrastate truck drivers in California will be stripped of these protections that specifically track pay for time detained. Congress should be looking at ways to help the men and women in the trucking industry to earn living wages, not passing laws that further put the squeeze on drivers as they fight gridlock to deliver loads.

CONGRESSIONAL INTENT

Finally, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have argued that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Dilts decision undermines Congressional intent. In fact, Section 611 represents a sweeping expansion of Federal pre-emption that Congress enacted in 1994. The Conference Report (H. Rept. 103–677) accompanying the 1994 law (P.L. 103–305) very clearly lays out the background and situation Congress was intending to address—direct economic regulation of intrastate trucking by States, through direct actions such as ''entry controls, tariff filing and price regulation, and types of commodities carried''.

The trucking industry was deregulated by Congress in the Motor Carrier Act of 1980. The Conference Report accompanying the 1994 law notes that, in 1994, 41 States continued to regulate intrastate prices, routes, and services of motor carriers and 26 States strictly regulated trucking prices. The Report further states that such regulations were usually designed to ensure that prices ''are kept high enough to cover all costs and are not so low as to be 'predatory'. Price regulation also involves filing of tariffs and long intervals for approval to change prices.'' In other words, States were still directly dictating the rates and prices motor carriers could charge for movement of goods through the particular State.

The broad pre-emption language was added in Conference. The House bill had no provision, and the Senate bill had a provision narrowly tailored to apply pre-emption to intermodal all-cargo air carriers. The Senate provision was inserted to address an inequity in which the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, in a separate decision, determined that Federal Express (FedEx) was not subject to intrastate economic regulations for motor carriers because FedEx could rely on preemption under the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 because it was an air carrier. See Fed. Express Corp. v. Cal. Pub. Utils. Comm'n, 936 F.2d 1075 (9th Cir. 1991), cert denied, 112 S.Ct. 2956 (1992). UPS, however, remained regulated as a motor carrier, ''putting it at a competitive disadvantage in a number of States.'' H. Rept. 103–677. After the Federal Express Corporation decision, California and other States began to enact laws extending the preemption to other carriers affiliated with direct air carriers, but some segments of the motor carrier industry, such as owner-operators, were still subject to regulation. Therefore, Congress was attempting to fix a glaring competition issue that placed certain companies at an advantage.

The law in 1994, which still stands today, also enumerated that States could continue to exercise regulatory authority in areas such as safety, vehicle size and weight, insurance requirements, and hazardous materials routing. Almost all of the 21 laws that would be preempted by Section 611 were in place in some form in 1994, yet Conferees never mentioned meal or rest break laws as problematic, or part of what was being contemplated under the types of troublesome activity at the State level that was impeding commerce.

Therefore, it is disingenuous to imply that Section 611 is simply a restoration of Congressional intent in 1994, because Congress never contemplated meal and rest breaks when enacting the law.

CONCLUSION

Section 611 has no place in a Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill. This is a trucking issue. Last year, the Conference Committee on the FAST Act (P.L. 114–94) rejected this identical language. I strongly opposed this provision in the FAST Act and continue to strongly oppose it in this bill.

Section 611 is strongly opposed by the Teamsters, safety advocates, and the American Association for Justice. The trucking industry is split on Section 611. Smaller owner operators—which represent more than 90 percent of the companies in the industry—strongly oppose Section 611.

If the intent is really to solve an interstate commerce problem, this language completely—and purposefully—misses the mark. It is an expansive hacking away at the ability of a State to promote healthy working conditions for truck drivers.

IN RECOGNITION OF JAY M. ROBINSON HIGH SCHOOL WINNING THE NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION 3A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Jay M. Robinson High School Bulldogs for winning the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3A Men's Basketball Championship on March 12, 2016. The Bulldogs won the game by a score of 59–55, finishing the season with an impressive 29–3 record.

The season could not have started better for the Bulldogs, who entered the 2015 HighSchoolOT.com Holiday Invitational tournament having won their first eight games and were playing fantastic team basketball. However, the Bulldogs lost two of the three games they played during the tournament and lost another game just a week later in overtime. Many teams would not be able to regroup after such a disappointing stretch of games, but these Bulldogs are not like many other teams. The team rallied around one another to win every remaining game during their regular season, winning the South Piedmont Conference championship, and earning a berth in the NCHSSA 3A Men's Basketball Tournament.

After battling through five challenging games in the tournament, the Bulldogs met Terry Sanford High School, the defending state champions, in the state championship game. What was an entertaining contest quickly turned into a character-defining moment for the Bulldogs. With only fifteen seconds left in the game, the Bulldogs took their first lead of the second half and defended their basket as Terry Sanford made one final attempt to tie or win the game. After a third shot from Terry Sanford missed the mark, both teams franticly scrambled to secure the rebound. With less than one second left in the game, a Bulldog came up with the rebound and was immediately fouled by a Terry Sanford player. During the ensuing scuffle between the teams after the foul, a fan ran onto the court and struck Jay M. Robinson's Rashon Gray in the head. Rather than escalate the situation and retaliate, the Bulldogs once again rallied around one another. The Bulldogs hit two free throws to clinch the victory and secure the state championship.

This moment was a microcosm of the Bulldogs' entire season and the young men who worked so hard to earn this championship. Whenever the Bulldog's faced adversity, the players and coaches never wavered from their commitment to the team and kept their eyes on their goal of capturing Jay M. Robinson's first 3A Championship. In addition to their talent—led by three 1,000 point scorers—the Bulldogs time and again showed the chemistry and mental toughness needed to become champions. Needless to say, this season will long be remembered by the Bulldogs' players, coaches and fans.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating the Jay M. Robinson High School Men's Basketball team for winning the 2016 NCHSAA 3A Championship. I look forward to the Bulldogs defending their title next season.

HONORING CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY SECRETARY JOHN LAIRD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Secretary John Laird for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Secretary Laird. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists

for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Secretary Laird to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote number 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, and 123. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted ''no'' on roll call vote number 114, 115 and 123. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted ''yes'' on roll call vote number 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121 and 122.

IN TRIBUTE TO MARTIN OLAV SABO, FORMER CONGRESSMAN FROM THE GREAT STATE OF MINNESOTA AND A CHAMPION OF BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Martin Olav Sabo, a great American who served his country with distinction as a Member of this House who passed away on March 13, 2016 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the age of 77.

Martin Sabo was born on February 28, 1938, in Crosby, North Dakota, the son of Norwegian immigrants.

While growing up he worked the wheat farm that his family owned and operated.

In 1959, Martin Sabo earned his baccalaureate degree at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

The following year, 22-year old Martin Sabo was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives, where he served for the next 22 years.

In 1963, Martin Sabo met Sylvia, who became his wife and the love of his life, and together they had two wonderful children, Julie and Karin Sabo.

In 1973, Martin Sabo was elected by his colleagues to become the 45th Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives, and served in that position until 1979, when he was elected to serve the people of the 5th Congressional District of Minnesota in the U.S. House of Representatives.

During his time in Congress Martin Sabo chaired the House Committee on the Budget.

Congressman Martin Sabo was a champion of bipartisan legislation.

A shining example of his ability to work across the aisle is the effort he led as Budget Chairman to put together and pass the 1993 federal budget and deficit reduction package that resulted in the budget surplus in 1998, the first in almost 30 years.

Martin Sabo characterized this collective effort as one of his proudest legislative accomplishments.

Despite the sharp increase in divisive political discourse, Congressman Sabo never publicly disparaged another colleague in Congress, Republican or Democrat.

Congressman Sabo said that, ''I've also tried to treat my colleagues with respect.''

On March 13, 2016, surrounded by loving family members, Martin Sabo died peacefully at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.

Mr. Speaker, as a former colleague and friend of Martin Olav Sabo, I will miss this great man who put aside partisan politics to focus on great governance.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to observe a moment of silence in memory of our beloved former colleague, Congressman Martin Olav Sabo.

IN MEMORY OF ALEXANDRA BAKER PATTERSON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the 27th birthday of the late Alexandra Baker Patterson.

On March 21, 1987, Alexandra was born at Arlington Hospital to Jim and Sheryl Patterson of Auburn, Alabama. Within minutes of birth, Alexandra was rushed to Georgetown University Hospital for surgeons to repair a complex cardiac abnormality.

After surgery and an extended hospitalization due to complications, Alexandra lived at home with nursing care. She eventually attended public school.

Alexandra was fascinated by photographs of eagles in flight and once told her father she wanted to grow up to be an eagle.

Today would have been her 27th birthday. For her parents and brother James, Alexandra is forever an eagle.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life of Alexandra Baker Patterson.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR LOIS WOLK

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Senator Lois Wolk for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Senator Wolk. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Senator Wolk to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOMENIC LALLI

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Domenic Lalli, principal for the Xaverian Brothers High School, on the day of his retirement.

Mr. Lalli began his illustrious forty year career at Xaverian Brothers High School as a Physical Education teacher after attending Boston University where he was captain of the football team. During his tenure, he also

coached the track and football teams at the high school. His talents for working with students did not go unnoticed. In 1984, he was appointed the Administrator of Students where he excelled at directing student life at the school. After spending 7 years in this role, Mr. Lalli became the Principal of Xaverian where he worked alongside the current Headmaster, Brother Daniel Skala. Together they have had a significant positive impact on the lives and education of the thousands of students that have passed through the halls of Xaverian Brothers High School.

Mr. Lalli's influence on education and athletics is not limited to Xaverian. He is also a former member of the Board of Trustees at Malden Catholic High School in Malden, Massachusetts, Mount St. Joseph High School in Baltimore, Maryland, and St. Bernard School in Uncasville, Connecticut. Additionally, he has served as a member of the Sportsmanship Committee, the Tournament Management Committee, and District H Chair of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association while also coaching football at Watertown High School. For his contributions to high school athletics, Mr. Lalli was inducted into the Watertown High School Athletics Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Domenic Lalli for his lifetime of dedication to shaping young minds and promoting athleticism. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating him on his retirement and wishing him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on March 14th, my vote on Roll Call 112 was inadvertently not recorded. As a cosponsor of H. Con. Res 75, the resolution being voted on expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons are committing ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'', I intended to vote YES.

HONORING BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT CALIFORNIA STATE DIRECTOR JERRY PEREZ

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 21, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Directory Jerry Perez for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Director Perez to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 5

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the effects of consumer finance regulations.

SD–538

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine recent Iranian actions and implementation of the nuclear deal.

SD–419

APRIL 6

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Seapower

To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine Federal disaster response and Small Business Administration implementation of the RISE Act.

SR–428A

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 2304, to provide for tribal demonstration projects for the integration of early childhood development, education, including Native language and culture, and related services, for evaluation of those demonstration projects, S. 2468, to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a 5-year demonstration program to provide grants to eligible Indian tribes for the construction of tribal schools, S. 2580, to establish the Indian Education Agency to streamline the administration of Indian education, and S. 2711, to expand opportunity for Native American children through additional options in education.

SD–628

APRIL 7

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.

SD–538

APRIL 13

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Seapower

To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

APRIL 14

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.
SD–538

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Seapower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''
SD–628

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Tuesday, March 22, 2016*

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 22, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE BOST to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

CIVILITY IN GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, ''I look with increasing horror, along with a growing number of other Americans, at the great and bitter division that is taking place in our politics and the cynicism that is the end result of power for power's sake. We are losing sight of civility in government and politics. Debate and dialogue is taking a back seat to the politics of destruction and anger and control. Dogma has replaced thoughtful discussion between people of differing views.''

Mr. Speaker, these words were spoken by then-Governor Jim McGreevey in his farewell address to the State of New Jersey in 2004, and I fear that they are truer today than ever before.

With Congress back in town for just 3 days before a 2½-week break, all anyone wants to know is if, not even when, we might actually get some real work accomplished for the American people.

We are 3 months into the Second Session of the 114th Congress, and what do we have to show for it?

Sadly, our record of accomplishment is short.

To top it off, all our constituents are hearing in the media is the hateful rhetoric and vengefulness spewing from the mouths of the candidates in the Presidential debates. And now, unfortunately, our third branch of government can't escape the partisanship that is choking our Federal Government.

This is not a new struggle for our great democracy. In fact, John Adams wrote to his wife about the same issue over 200 years ago. He wrote: ''I fear that in every assembly, Members will obtain an influence by noise, not sense; by meanness, not greatness; by contracted hearts, not large souls.''

Adams urged: ''There must be decency and respect, and veneration introduced for persons of authority of every rank, or we are undone. In a popular government, this is our only way . . .''

I couldn't agree more. Our constituents, our allies, and this world deserves much more from us. But all hope is not lost.

Governor McGreevey finished his farewell address with these wise words: ''I urge you, my fellow citizens, to seek those who will build bridges between us, those who do not need to shout in order to be heard. We must have leaders who value their words as much as they do their actions and who, above all, believe in their heart what they say and do . . . Demand good and effective government from wise leaders who speak softly, with great ideas, who inspire people to work together for a common purpose. We, as a Nation, have done this in the past, and I know we can do it again.''

As the leaders of this great country, I urge my fellow colleagues in the House, Governors, and candidates alike to hold ourselves to a higher standard, because, as Herbert Hoover once said: ''When there is a lack of honor in government, the morals of the whole people are poisoned.''

100TH ROTARY ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Rotary Club of Key West, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this April.

The Rotary Club was chartered in our Florida Keys community in 1916 under the principle of ''service above self,'' an excellent reminder to all of the importance we have of helping our fellow Floridians.

The Rotary Club of Key West is compromised of active members of our south Florida community who find it not only important, but also absolutely necessary to give back to their local neighborhoods. They provide scholarships to local school children, including $25,000 to one graduating senior, and have even established a Rotary Dental Program to help children who otherwise would not be able to receive dental care.

I would also like to recognize Rotary legends Jefferson B. Browne, Robert Carraway, Edward B. Knight, Gerald ''Moe'' Mosher, Greg O'Berry, John G. Parks, Jr., Paul J. Sher, Edward Toppino, Robert Walker, and Alton Weekley.

Their dedication to remaining loyal to the Rotary Club's vision has helped to shape it into the wonderful organization it is today. We are fortunate to have experienced their leadership.

Once again, congratulations to the Rotary Club of Key West on an advantageous 100 years. May the next 100 be even more prosperous.

VASUNDARA GOVINDARAJAN, SPELLING BEE WINNER

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Vasundara Govindarajan of Archimedean Academy, who will be representing Miami-Dade County in the Scripps National Spelling Bee held in Washington, D.C., this May.

The two-time winner comes from a family of excellent spellers. Her older brother, Vaidya, has even competed on the national stage.

Vasundara won the Miami Herald's 76th Annual Spelling Bee with the word ''epulation,'' meaning feasting or banqueting—a word not typically found in your average sixth-graders' vocabulary. But Vasundara is clearly not your typical sixth-grader, and was able to take home the trophy over approximately 150 other students who were vying for this prestigious prize.

Congratulations, Vasundara, on this accomplishment. We are all very proud of you and look forward to watching you represent Miami-Dade County on the national stage. And don't forget to stop by my office when you come to Washington.

SEA LEVEL RISE SOLUTIONS CONFERENCE

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Sea Level Rise Solutions Conference, which will be held by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce this April.

The conference brings together members from across Florida to have a constructive dialogue about ways to confront sea level rise in our communities. Attendees will also have the opportunity to be updated on the South Florida Regional Climate Compact and receive recommendations from the Miami-Dade Sea Level Rise Task Force on the best ways to incorporate new methods to deal with climate change in our daily lives.

The individuals who attend this conference have a passionate desire to keep our south Florida communities safe and viable for generations to come. Sea level rising is an important issue not only in south Florida, but a topic that should be discussed in a bipartisan manner at the national level as well.

I commend the attendees of the Sea Level Rise Solutions Conference for their leadership and for taking proactive steps to address rising sea levels.

COAL ASH LANDFILL SAFETY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, power companies are closing down old, air-polluting, coal-fired power plants as we move toward cleaner, more sustainable ways to generate electricity.

As these small producing plants close, they leave behind a toxic substance known as coal ash. The coal ash is a public health hazard if it is not disposed of properly. Coal ash is toxic and can cause sickness and death. It is a dangerous substance that must be kept out of our drinking water. Coal ash contains known carcinogens such as arsenic, mercury, and lead. That is why coal ash is being regulated by the EPA.

As power companies shut down or upgrade their facilities while closing existing coal ash ponds, where much of this toxic material has been temporarily stored, the need to permanently dispose of this hazardous byproduct is growing.

We now know that some waste disposal companies have been quietly exploiting a loophole in the new EPA rules, which allow them to dump toxic coal ash into municipal solid waste landfills. So far, these waste disposal companies have dumped millions of tons of coal ash into unlined municipal solid waste landfills across America. These landfills, which are often located near neighborhoods and schools, are simply not built or constructed or equipped to safely handle this toxic material.

EPA rules do not require sufficient commonsense protections for people who live nearby these landfills. Unfortunately, many of these landfills are disproportionately located in low-income and minority communities.

Today I introduced the Coal Ash Landfill Safety Act to close the loopholes in the EPA rules to ensure that landfills receiving coal ash are properly equipped with the necessary safeguards that will protect the public from the health risks caused by drinking water contaminated with the coal ash components.

In addition to ensuring that landfills accepting coal ash are lined properly to protect groundwater, the Coal Ash Landfill Safety Act would also protect communities by working to minimize coal ash dust in the air, which is also toxic. It will require groundwater monitoring, mandate proper cleanup requirements, and require weekly, monthly, and annual inspections, thereby keeping the public informed by posting the monitoring data, corrective action plans, and inspection reports on a publicly accessible Web site.

As we saw in Flint, Michigan, we need to act at the Federal level before our failure to do so results in irreversible damage to the health and environment of the communities we represent. I don't want American families, regardless of income level, to be unfairly and unreasonably exposed to toxic chemicals because dangerous materials, such as coal ash, are being deposited into inadequately protected facilities in their neighborhoods.

Together, we can find sensible solutions to all of these problems that we face, but we must deal with the regulations, the shortcomings. We must protect the American people.

A TRIBUTE TO DOLPH SCHAYES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the great life of Dolph Schayes.

Dolph was born in New York, New York, in 1928, and lived most of his life in Syracuse, New York. At the young age of 19 years old, he entered the National Basketball Association, where he went on to have a truly remarkable career.

In his over 15 years of playing in the NBA, Dolph earned many records and many awards. He was, without a doubt, one of the best players who ever played the game at the National Basketball Association level, and he helped mold the NBA in its early years.

While Dolph may be best known for his talents on the court, some of his most impressive moments happened off the court. He was a very giving member of the Syracuse community, working with youth on a constant basis, starting one of the earliest basketball camps in America. Dolph's legacy lies not only in the records he holds, but also in the many lives he touched.

On March 26, just a few days from now, Dolph's jersey will be retired and his son, Danny—another great NBA player in his own time—will be accepting it on his behalf.

I am truly honored to pay tribute to this incredible athlete and man who contributed greatly to the sport and to the community he loved so much.

God bless you, Dolph, for a great life and a great NBA career.

U.S.-INDIA DEFENSE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, the United States is fortunate to have allies and partners across the world that we work with every day to combat terrorism and our other security challenges.

One of these relationships that I work closely on is the strategic partnership between the United States and India. Together, the U.S. and India face a set of common security challenges, and there can be no question that closer defense and security cooperation between our two democracies will greatly benefit all of our people.

Over the last few years, Mr. Speaker, we have seen substantial growth in this partnership, most recently formalized last year with the 10-year renewal of the defense framework. This partnership is also highlighted by forums such as the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative. I firmly believe that Congress should be supporting and offering more opportunities for the U.S.-India defense partnership to succeed.

□ 1015

That is why today I will be introducing the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Partnership Act. This legislation will cement the progress that has already been made and will lay the foundation for future cooperation and growth.

Additionally, this legislation will elevate India's status by shortening the time required for the notification of sale or export of defense articles from the United States to India.

It will also bring our defense establishment closer together by encouraging more joint contingency planning and will require the U.S. Government to review and assess India's ability to execute military operations of mutual interest.

Just as important as efforts like the legislation I am introducing today, I believe, is Congress' closer examination and oversight of other actions that impact the U.S.-India partnership.

One that certainly comes to mind, Mr. Speaker, is the delicate and, at times, seemingly confused policy with Pakistan. Pakistan has proven time and time again that it is an unreliable partner.

While Pakistan has taken some, but very limited, action to disrupt terror elements that operate within their borders, their demonstrated unwillingness to fulfill and execute counterterrorism efforts should leave no question as to their true intentions.

So why, Mr. Speaker, last month, did the administration notice a sale of eight F–16s to Pakistan? What, I ask, is the benefit of the sale to our national security and the security of the region and our partners?

This is one question, Mr. Speaker. But the request to use taxpayer dollars to finance the sale of these F–16s to Pakistan is entirely another question. What has Pakistan actually done to deserve these fighter jets, let alone financing from the United States taxpayers? Certainly not enough, in my view, as I firmly oppose the sale from start to finish.

Every year since 2011, the administration has been required to utilize a waiver to continue providing security assistance to Pakistan. Why, you might ask, does the administration need to continually use a waiver? Well, it is because Pakistan has failed to be an honest and real partner in the efforts to combat terrorism that is exported from its borders.

On this front, Mr. Speaker, I have joined with Congressman BERA to seek a restriction on the availability of security assistance to Pakistan next fiscal year. We are not seeking to completely prohibit the use of the Presidential waiver—although, I might add, this is a debate worth having here in the House. We are simply asking that 30 percent of the funds should not be subject to a waiver. This is a commonsense step that will, hopefully, after years of trying, get the Pakistani Government to cooperate and meet the requirements set in law.

Mr. Speaker, India should know that they have a strong and committed partner in the U.S. Congress, and I believe that steps such as passing the appropriations fence I just outlined and passing the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Partnership Act would send a strong message and certainly enhance our strategic partnership with India.

Mr. Speaker, we have a tremendous opportunity in front of us right now to further build an enduring defense and security partnership with India that will endure for years to come and, indeed, benefit both of our great democracies.

LACK OF LIBERTY AND FREEDOM IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, in 2014, President Obama said he wanted to go to Cuba if, and I quote, ''I, with confidence, can say that we are seeing some progress in liberty and freedom. If we are going backwards,'' President Obama said, ''then there is not much reason for me to be there. I am not interested in just validating the status quo.''

Well, look at this poster, Mr. Speaker. These are human rights dissidents who were rounded up and beaten. If Obama's Cuba policy is not going backwards, I don't know what is, because the oppressive Cuban apparatus of repression only seems to be emboldened.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Havana, Raul Castro was asked by a reporter if he would release political prisoners in Cuba. Castro looked uncomfortable. Why? Because in Cuba, there is no free press. Reporters are not allowed to ask real questions to regime leaders.

Castro said, well, there are no political prisoners in Cuba at all, and if there were, he would free them by nightfall.

That's a good one. Well, there are 11 million people imprisoned by Castro's communist regime—the entire island.

But here is a list, Mr. Speaker, of over 50 political prisoners, and this is a list comprised by the Cuban Democratic Directorate. Some of these individuals have been in jail for over 20 years. Others are constantly detained, released, and rearrested.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to enter this list into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

PRELIMINARY LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, CUBAN DEMOCRATIC DIRECTORATE, MARCH 21ST, 2016

1. Yasiel Espino Aceval/Condemned 4 years/Ariza Prison
2. Alexander Palacio Reyes/Cerámica Roja Prison
3. Alexis Serrano Avila/Condemned 3 years prison
4. Andrés Fidel Alfonso Rodríguez/Melena Sur prison
5. Ernesto Borges Pérez/Combinado del Este prison
6. Carlos Amaury Calderin Roca/Valle Grande prison
7. Maria del Carmen Cala Aguilera/Pendiente/Provincial Women's Prison Holguín Province
8. Enrique Bartolomé Cambria Diaz/Kilo 8 prison
9. Misael Canet Velázquez/Kilo 8 prison
10. Santiago Cisneros Castellanos/Pendiente/Aguadores prison
11. Leonardo Cobas Pérez/Moscú prison
12. Felipe Martin Companione/Cerámica Roja prison/Condemned to 8 years in prison
13. Orlando Contreras Aguiar/Aguacate prison
14. Yeri Curbelo Aguilera/Condemned 3 years prison/Guantanamo Prison
15. Pedro de la Caridad Alvarez Pedroso
16. Jordys Manuel Dosil/Condemned 3 years prison
17. Carlos Manuel Figueroa Álvarez/Combinado del Este Prison/Condemned to 6 years prison
18. David Fernández Cardoso/Bungo Ocho Prison
19. José Daniel Gonzalez Fumero/Nieves Morejón Prison
20. Ricardo González Sendiña/condemned 6 years/Combinado del Este
21. Ariel González Sendiña/condemned 6 years/Combinado del Este
22. Eglis Heredia Rodríguez/Boniato Prison
23. Mario Alberto Hernández Leiva/Melena del Sur prison/Condemned to 3 years prison
24. Geovanys Izaguirre Hernández/Aguadores Prison
25. Rolando Erismelio Jaco García/Cerámica Roja Prison
26. Javier Jouz Varona/Social Dangerousness prison/Condemned to 3 years prison
27. Isain López Luna/Valle Grande Prison
28. Noel López Gonzalez/Condemned 12 years prison
29. Michael Mediaceja Ramos/Condemned 6 months/Guanajay prison
30. Osmaní Mendosa Ferrior/Las Mangas prison
31. Mario Morera Jardines/Condemned to 3 years prison/Guamajal prison
32. Ernesto Ortega Sarduy/Valle Grande prison
33. Alexander Palacio Reyes/Cerámica Roja prison
34. Ricardo Pelier Frómeta/Condemned to 3 years jail/Combinado de Guantanamo prison
35. Fernando Isael Peña Tamayo/Condemned to 5 years/El Típico prison
36. Silverio Portal Contreras/Campamento Ochimán prison
37. Humberto Eladio Real Suarez
38. René Rouco Machin/Melena del Sur prison
39. Laudelino Rodriguez Mendoza/Granjita prison, Santiago de Cuba
40. Leoncio Rodriguez Poncio/Condemned to 42 years and has served 28 years in prison/Guantanamo Prison
41. Alfredo Luis Limonte Rodriguez/Condemned 4 years/Ariza Prison
42. Elieski Roque Chongo/Condemned 5 years/Ariza Prison
43. Alexander Alan Rodríguez/Sentence Pending/Valle Grande Prison
44. Reinier Rodríguez Mendoza/Condemned to 2 years of prison/San José Prison
45. Mario Ronaide Figueroa Reyes/Condemned to 3 years prison/Prision 1580
46. Yoelkis Rozábal Flores/Condemned to 4 years/Combinado de Guantánamo prison
47. Daniel Santovenia Fernandez
48. Emilio Serrano Rodríguez/Valle Grande Prison
49. Armando Sosa Fortuny/Camaguey Prison
50. Liusban John Ultra/Condenado a 7 años/Jailed in the Province of Las Tunas/La Granjita Prison
51. Armado Verdecía Díaz/Condemned to 5 years of prison/Malverde Prison

Sources: Directorio Democrático Cubano; Andry Frometa Cuenca, former political prisoner; Yordan Marrero, Partido Democráta Cristiano de Camagüey; Librado Linares Garcia, General Secretary of the Movimiento Cubano Reflexión; Unión Patriótica de Cuba (UNPACU).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. During his time in Cuba, President Obama failed to announce any substantive changes on policies, such as the fugitive policy.

Is there any news on returning New Jersey cop killer Joanne Chesimard or any of the other fugitives of U.S. justice, such as Charles Hill, William Guillermo Morales, or Victor Manuel Gerena? No news.

On confiscated property, there was no positive announcement about the Castro regime paying back Americans who had their properties confiscated.

There was no announcement by Castro about improving human rights on the island. Castro denied that human rights violations occur in Cuba. Again, look at this poster.

As predicted, Castro also demanded the return of the naval station at Guantanamo Bay. This Congress has been very clear that it strongly opposes relinquishing GTMO or transferring detainees to the United States.

Now, President Obama incorrectly keeps calling the Communist strongman Castro ''President Castro''—wrong. He is not President of Cuba. There have never been elections. There are no political parties, except the Communist Party, in Cuba. There are no free and fair elections. He is not President. Stop calling a dictator President.

The President, our President Obama, proclaimed that this trip to Cuba would be fun. That is his word. It has not been fun for all of the Cubans who have been beaten leading up to the President's visit. It hasn't been fun for all the Cubans who have been prevented from leaving their homes until the President departs Cuba because they are human rights activists.

Now let me show you this other poster, Mr. Speaker. This is a poster of President Reagan with Gorbachev in 1987. And what happened there? President Reagan said: ''Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.''

In Havana, 2016, President Obama says: Thank you, President Castro, for your spirit of openness.

Spirit of openness? And again, President what? He is not a President. What openness, when press is prohibited in Cuba? What openness, when the Cuban people are jailed for dissenting views? What openness, when the economy is controlled by one entity, the communist regime?

America, under the Obama administration, has forsaken those who suffer under Castro's oppression. That is a sad fact. And this will be President Obama's legacy, Mr. Speaker, the President who abdicated America's role as a defender of international human rights, all for a narcissistic play at building a legacy as the President who restored America's relations with dictators and tyrants who will do anything to undermine our country and harm our interests and our citizens.

And that is all there is about Cuba.

SMALL PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce bipartisan legislation that addresses the administrative burdens facing small and rural housing authorities across this country.

The Small Public Housing Agency Opportunity Act of 2016, H.R. 4816, being introduced by myself, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. ASHFORD), is the House companion to Senators TESTER and FISCHER's S. 2292. If enacted, this bill would simplify inspection and compliance requirements and eliminate excessive paperwork for public housing authorities that support fewer than 550 households.

Small PHAs represent 80 percent of all agencies but administer only 20 percent of the units and receive only 10 percent of the public housing and Housing Choice Voucher funds. Under current law, these small public housing agencies are required to follow the same reporting and inspection rules as large, urban housing authorities, even though they have far fewer resources.

Speaking from experience with my work as a CFO and deputy executive director of a small housing authority prior to serving in Congress, there is a big difference between housing needs in small town Mississippi, Georgia, or Nebraska, and those in cities like New York City. This legislation removes that one-size-fits-all approach and gives small housing authorities the flexibility to operate more effectively and efficiently.

Simply put, small housing authorities are being crushed by the regulatory burdens of the Federal Government. It doesn't take a CPA to see the cost significantly outweighs the benefits of HUD mandates and regulations.

Specifically, this bill limits HUD's inspections of housing and voucher units to once every 3 years, unless the small PHA is classified as ''troubled'' by HUD. It eliminates certain paperwork, including the submission of plans or reports not required of owners and operators of Section 8 private properties, and it also eliminates unnecessary yearly environmental reviews for agencies that are not undergoing new construction.

As we all know, recent Federal budgets have reduced support for public housing, and cuts have disproportionately impacted small and rural housing agencies. Deep prorations in the operating funds have forced housing authorities to reduce staff and cut services and maintenance.

Any revenue source is crucial; that is why this bill also takes a balanced, commonsense look at the inspections, requirements, paperwork, and regulations that our directors are doing year round.

Five decades ago, President Johnson announced a war on poverty, and it was believed during that time that one of the first bills to be introduced in the 89th Congress would be an updated version of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1964. President Johnson, in his State of the Union that year, proclaimed a desire for ''a decent home for every American family.''

This goal is today, as it was in 1964, a very real one that must be addressed. That is why I applaud Speaker RYAN for creating the Task Force on Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility, to strengthen America's safety net to help those in need.

I also commend Representative LUETKEMEYER and the committee for the successful drafting and passage of the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016.

We have a model out there for public housing, and we can debate the pluses and minuses in terms of government efficiency; but at the end of the day, we cannot forget what the main focus here is: affordable housing for America's lowest income families.

This bill's exemptions and reforms will not have an adverse impact on the quality of living for these families. On the contrary, by removing just a fraction of the burden placed on the backs of our housing directors, we benefit the lives of the residents. With some directors and employees allotting over 30 hours a week to just one report or program or assessment, we take that time away from the residents.

This bill does not aim to reform the entire model or oppress one party involved but, rather, aims to ensure that the time and thousands of dollars spent on assessments here and there are absolutely necessary and that it ultimately benefits the residents in these units. So this bill really does what Congress oftentimes fails to do, which is to provide some much-needed regulatory relief. It simplifies, rather than complicates, the process.

I ask my colleagues to join me in this bipartisan effort to ensure that low-income families have a decent home, regardless of their location. This begins by giving agencies the resources and the flexibility they need to better serve their communities.

WATER CRISES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to once again rise to address the water crises that are facing not just California, but our Nation and throughout the world.

Today, global communities and business organizations have joined together, and the White House is holding a water summit to raise awareness of the 650 million people around the world who don't have access to safe drinking water, urging leaders to focus on ways in which we can increase access to safe, sanitary water. This is appropriate, but it is long overdue.

On the Web site, waterday.us, it states: ''Water stress is the impact a lack of water has on a particular sector or population. Water stress affects nutrition, public health, environmental services, housing and urban growth, and national security.''

□ 1030

And national security is directly related to our ability to grow food to ensure that American consumers are independent and have sufficient nutrition for their daily consumption.

Water, therefore, is a resource issue of the future not only for our Nation, but throughout the world. These impacts of not having a reliable and safe water supply are all too familiar for those of us who live in the San Joaquin Valley in California and my colleagues who represent that area.

So while I believe it is fitting and appropriate that we recognize that there is a nationwide and worldwide issue regarding our water resources and how we manage them—with the planet having 7 billion people last year and by the middle of this century another 2 billion, or 9 billion people—we need to look at both short-term and long-term comprehensive solutions to our water needs not just throughout the world, but here in the United States, specifically, in California.

So I find it extremely disappointing that California's San Joaquin Valley is not at the forefront of this discussion after 4 years of devastating drought.

While I empathize with those in Flint, Michigan, and other areas of the country, like those of us in the San Joaquin Valley, we have been facing water shortages for 4 years; it is getting much worse; and there is less national attention being focused on our plight.

In the valley, instead of lead poisoning due to the failure of all levels of government, as we have seen in Flint, Michigan, we are dealing with waters that have high nitrate levels in drinking water. In addition to that, in many places, we don't have access to water at all.

The solutions are clear. We need to increase Federal funding for infrastructure to build resiliency during drought periods and reduce the impacts of water quality using all the water tools in our water toolbox.

We need to increase coordination between local, State, and Federal agencies to reduce the impacts of communities impaired by water quality or a lack of access to water.

Finally, we need to increase our focus on ensuring that regulations, where they are in place, achieve their intended purpose while minimizing negative impacts that they have with contradictory results.

For instance, due to the decisions made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Bureau of Reclamation is required to operate pumps in California's water system under what I believe are scientifically flawed provisions, biological opinions, which have lost, as a result, hundreds of thousands of acre-feet of water.

This year, if the Federal agencies had operated within the flexibility provided even in those flawed biological opinions, San Joaquin Valley communities could have been provided an additional 2- to 300,000 acre-feet of additional water. In addition to that, that would have benefited over 400,000 households.

As a result of the drought and the inability to capture water that is flowing in the system, over 600,000 acres of prime productive agricultural land have gone unplanted, and we have seen families impacted. Families that literally do not have access to water have had to bottle in water.

There is a very certain human toll—the impact—that is taking place to provide highly uncertain benefits for species. This is unacceptable, it is avoidable, and it is immoral.

I urge the Federal agencies to take action to do experimental increases in pumping with increased detection and monitoring so we can find out if, in fact, delta smelt and salmon traveling through the delta are even being harmed by the exact pumping levels under discussion.

So while I appreciate the comprehensive plan the administration is trying to implement to solve our Nation's water crisis, we need short-term solutions now so that farmers, farm workers, and farming communities in the San Joaquin Valley do not go without a water supply under the Federal project for a third year in a row.

Additionally, we must do everything possible to get Federal legislation passed and signed into law that would not only deal with our short-term needs, but to deal with our long-term needs as well. We passed the House bill last year.

We need to get Senator FEINSTEIN's bill passed so we can go to conference because, if the Federal agencies don't act—and they have not been doing the job that I would like to see them do—then Congress must act.

HONORING BERT STEPHEN CRANE, A BELOVED LEADER IN THE MERCED COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved leader in the Merced community, Bert Stephen Crane. Bert passed away at the age of 84 on Sunday, March 13, 2016, surrounded by his loving family.

On November 29, 1931, Bert was born to fourth-generation California farmers and ranchers. Raised on a cattle ranch, he was up before the Sun and out until it came down. During his youth, Bert achieved the rank of Eagle Scout as a member of Boy Scout troop 101.

At Merced High School, Bert was the drum major in band and played basketball. After high school, Bert studied at Stanford University and obtained his bachelor of science degree in agricultural economics from UC-Davis.

During his college years, Bert met Nancy Magnuson, whom he fell in love with and later married in 1957. They remained married for over 58 years and raised three children who would follow the family tradition of ranching and farming.

Bert spent most of his life farming walnuts, which he ventured into in the early 1970s after his early career in the beef industry. Bert went on to own and operate a successful walnut-processing plant.

Bert lived an impressive and inspirational life. He was known to have ridden horses with Ronald Reagan, was extremely involved in the community, and had a passion for health care.

He led fundraising events for Mercy Hospital and was instrumental in the development of the Mercy Cancer Center. Bert served on the Merced County Planning Commission for 28 years. His service to his community, agriculture, and research is one of great respect and integrity.

Bert valued and treasured the time he was able to spend with his family above all else. He is survived by his loving wife, Nancy, and his three children and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the life of Bert Stephen Crane for his unwavering leadership and recognizing his accomplishments and outstanding contributions to the community. God bless him always.

HONORING JAMES ''JIM'' WEST, A BELOVED LEADER IN THE MODESTO COMMUNITY

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved leader in the Modesto community, James ''Jim'' West, who died at the age of 81 on Sunday, March 13, 2016, surrounded by his loving family.

Jim was born on January 22, 1935, to Donald and Ruby West. He grew up in the heart of the Central Valley, Modesto, California, and graduated from Modesto High School in 1953.

Jim furthered his education at Menlo College before attending Kansas State University, where he obtained his bachelor's degree in feed technology.

In 1958, Jim joined the thriving and successful company his grandfather had started in 1909, the J.S. West Milling Company. The family-owned business is known for their production of eggs, feed, and propane.

Through years of hard work and dedication, Jim became shareholder, secretary, and vice president of the J.S.

West Milling Company board. Jim's reputation as an honest businessman helped build the J.S. West Milling Company's successful and trustworthy name.

Jim was also dedicated to improving the community he lived in. He was active in several industry and civic groups, most notably as president of the Pacific Egg and Poultry Association in 1993 and chairman of the American Egg Board in 1997.

He was an active member of the Western Poultry Scholarship and Research Foundation, Memorial Hospital Foundation, Delta Blood Bank, and Modesto Junior College Foundation. He was also a proud member of the Modesto Rotary since 1969 and later served as president.

Jim had a genuine love for the people and the community he worked tirelessly to help. He was known for his kindness, generosity, and strong family values. Succeeding Jim are his wife of 44 years, Jessie West, their two sons, and three daughters.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing the life of Jim West for his unwavering leadership, many accomplishments, and contributions to the community. God bless him always.

NASCC 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Naval Air Station at Corpus Christi as it celebrates its 75th anniversary this month.

NASCC or, as it was once known, the University of Air, has been training pilots, navigators, aerologists, gunners, and radio operators since 1941.

NASCC was founded in 1938 under the 75th Congress to train new pilots and technical crew to bolster our Nation's air forces. The air base serves the southeastern portion of the United States, from Texas to Florida, and trains naval aviators nationwide along with other pilots from our foreign allies.

Today NASCC is not just a naval base. It includes tenant commands for the U.S. Army, Coast Guard, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The Corpus Christi Army depot rebuilds and updates rotary winged aircraft—helicopters—and is saving our country millions of dollars. The depot facility and other tenants make the base extremely cost effective for both the Army, Navy, and taxpayers.

The Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Patrol operate a variety of aircraft from the base, including predator drones surveilling our border, which is great because we have a new generation of pilots interacting with UAVs getting their training at NASCC.

NASCC's current commander officer is Captain Randolph F. Pierson, who joins a long line of leaders to serve in Corpus Christi.

During World War II, it was said there wasn't a naval aviator who hadn't earned their wings at the air station. These World War II naval aviators were critical members of the U.S. military, giving the U.S. an edge in battles across the Pacific and over Europe with our superior air power.

It was American air power, combined with U.S. naval power, that played a critical role in turning back the tide of Japanese at the Battle of Midway.

It was American air power that dealt a decisive blow against the Japanese in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, winning one of the last largest air battles in history.

After World War II, it was American air power that flew food supplies to the starving people of Berlin during the Berlin Airlift.

This was all accomplished with graduates of the Corpus Christi University of Air, NASCC.

Today the training program is approximately 18 months and, due to the increased complexity of modern aircraft, it just takes longer. Six hundred people per year are trained at the facility and go on to serve their country in the U.S. Navy and Marines as pilots, engineers, and technical crew.

These folks learn skills through the program that propel them through a successful life in the military and a successful life in the private sector after their service ends.

Some of the notable flyers who have earned their wings at NASCC include former President George H.W. Bush, who was in the third graduating class. He was commissioned just 3 days before his 19th birthday.

Naval Air Station Corpus Christi graduates also include several Members of Congress, including fellow Texas Representative PETE OLSON, Representative JOE WILSON of South Carolina, and Senator JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona.

Some NASCC grads are not content to remain in the blue skies of the Earth. Many astronauts who led the charge into space after getting their wings at NASCC include Neil Armstrong and John Glenn.

Other notable graduates include game show host Bob Barker, actor Tyrone Power, Vice Admiral James Stockdale, and Medal of Honor winner Edward ''Butch'' O'Hare.

The Navy's distinguished flying team, the Blue Angels, were headquartered in Corpus Christi until 1955. Today, CNATRA, the Chief of Naval Air Training, now Admiral Bull, based in NASCC, commands the Blue Angels.

The people of the United States owe much to the graduates of NASCC. These heroes have fought for our country since the construction of the base in 1941.

I believe it is important to not only honor the men and women in uniform who serve at bases like NASCC and those around the country, but also to honor their families and the civilian workers who make it all possible.

Due to its importance to our country during World War II and over the years until today, it is my privilege to let you know about NASCC.

After 75 years of operation, the Naval Air Station is still training pilots, still serving the country, and still being a symbol of pride to Texas and the entire Nation.

PUTIN'S INFLUENCE IN EUROPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, in the tumult of a Presidential election, a lot of important and newsworthy events don't get enough attention.

One such event last week was the Czech Republic's release of Ali Fayyad, a dangerous Hezbollah terrorist who was indicted in 2014 by the United States for conspiracy to kill officers and employees of the United States.

The United States had requested Mr. Fayyad's extradition to the United States, and the Czech courts had approved that extradition request. But the Czech Minister of Justice, who is aligned with Vladimir Putin, refused to honor that decision and released this terrorist.

Fayyad has deep ties with the Russian black market for weapons and was an adviser to the former President of Ukraine and a close ally of Vladimir Putin.

It appeared at one point that Mr. Fayyad was exchanged for several Czech nationals being held hostage in Lebanon, but journalists have since shown that the hostage situation was a sham staged by his family and defense team.

This episode is significant for several reasons. First, Mr. Fayyad's presence and influence in Central Europe are yet more evidence—as if we needed more—that Iran, through its proxies like Hezbollah, has tentacles throughout world.

More importantly, the event demonstrates Vladimir Putin's increasing influence with an important member of NATO. And it is not just the Czech Republic.

This is a trend, and it is more concerning. Mr. Putin appears to be quietly undermining NATO by leveraging his cronies in influential positions in a number of European nations.

Several months ago I asked the Congressional Research Service to look into the connections between Putin and high-ranking officials in Europe, particularly NATO members. The findings are alarming.

The report tracks pro-Russian rhetoric and actions of leaders in the Czech

Republic and Slovakia and Hungary as well as the increasingly evident ideological link between Europe's far-right parties and the leadership of Russia.

□ 1045

Mr. Speaker, though I won't read the entire report at this time, I will include it in the RECORD.

I say all this, recognizing that Russia is a much more proximate threat to our European allies than they are to us. It would be foolish not to acknowledge that European leaders are in a different position than we are. The democratic institutions that we take for granted are still fragile in many of these countries, and Putin knows that. However, what makes it all the more important is the fact that we, as the world's superpower, do more than offer simple condemnations of Putin's actions.

Both the House and the Senate held hearings last year exploring Russian propaganda efforts. This was a good start, but now we need to dig deeper to understand all of the levels of Russian pressure, including agents of Russian influence who occupy high political offices and own national and regional media outlets.

More than anything, we need the President to get off of the sidelines and show that he is serious about countering Putin. That could start with a serious effort to determine who cooperated with Russia in releasing Mr. Fayyad, and then issue targeted sanctions on those officials.

Mr. Fayyad is likely to continue plotting to harm the U.S., and his release isn't a simple oversight that we should ignore.

MEMORANDUM

DECEMBER 8, 2015.

To: Representative Chris Stewart.

Subject: Pro-Russia Viewpoints Among Selected Leaders in Central and Eastern Europe.

This memorandum responds to your request for information about Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe, with a focus on selected political leaders. It provides additional information about Russian influence through ties with European far-right parties. Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.

Introduction

One of the main ways analysts have to gauge Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe is by looking at the reactions of regional political leaders to the conflict in Ukraine and European Union (EU) debates about Ukraine-related sanctions against Russia. While some patterns may be discerned, it is difficult to assess the degree to which various data points are directly attributable to Russian influence, as opposed to a variety of other factors and interests. Economic relationships and energy ties can be expressed in monetary amounts, but less straightforward is how to translate such figures into identifiable political and policy influence. Other aspects of Russian influence can be even more difficult to quantify. Russian involvement in political and corporate dealings is not always a transparent process that is reflected in available open source information, frequently making for some degree of speculation when seeking to reach conclusions about the motivations driving various statements and actions.

Overall, attitudes toward Russia in Central and Eastern Europe are colored by historical experiences, geographic proximity, economic ties, and energy dependence. Many officials and analysts in Central and Eastern Europe relate that they have not been especially surprised by Russia's actions in Ukraine and assert that their past efforts to convey concerns about President Putin's revanchist ambitions went largely unheeded in the United States and Western Europe. In light of European history, especially the Soviet Union's domination of the region during the Communist era, Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe is not a new phenomenon brought on in relation to the Ukraine crisis. In 2009, for example, analysts alleged that Czech President Václav Klaus, influenced by Moscow, worked to destabilize the Czech government and undermine passage of the EU's Lisbon Treaty.

As the Visegrád Four (V4) group, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary have attempted to engage in regional cooperation with one another on a range of issues, and to form common positions on foreign policy and EU matters. The countries have struggled to find any group coherence with regard to Russia and the conflict in Ukraine, however. Poland's consistent and forceful advocacy of a robust response to Russia's actions made it something of an outlier in Central and Eastern Europe. Whether owing to a desire to preserve energy and economic ties with Russia, concerns about provoking Russia further, or the perception that Russia's actions in Ukraine are distant and do not pose a direct threat to their countries, the governments of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary have tended to be more ambiguous and reserved on the topic. Some observers note that at times the leaders of these countries appear to have prioritized short-term national economic interests over wider strategic concerns.

Nevertheless, while many in the V4 countries and elsewhere in Europe may remain skeptical about the wisdom and utility of sanctions as an attempt to deter Russia's actions in Ukraine, the measures have been adopted by the unanimous agreement of all 28 EU member states. Observers assert that this consensus was based on a common assessment by the member state governments that sending a strong message to Russia's leadership through meaningful sanctions was a political imperative outweighing economic disruption and discomfort. Observers further note that action must at times be viewed separately from rhetoric and political ''doublespeak'' that may be aimed at a domestic audience.

The Czech Republic

Opinions on Russia and the Ukraine crisis among Czech political elites are fractured. At one end of the spectrum is the pro-Kremlin position of Czech President Miloš Zeman, which appears to accept Russia's claims about the conflict and opposes all sanctions. In June 2014, Zeman stated, ''I cannot see any reason why to isolate the Russian Federation from the European Union, why to speak about sanctions, blockade, and embargo. There is a chance of increasing the level of our cooperation. . .'' At the other end of the spectrum is the position of the center-right opposition TOP 09 party, led by former Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg, which has advocated tougher sanctions and providing military aid to Ukraine.

In between them is the view characterized by Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka of the center-left Social Democratic Party, who accepted sanctions but sought exemptions based on economic interests and called for early removal of the measures. Following the adoption of wider EU sanctions in July 2014, Sobotka stated, ''Neither for the European Union, nor for Russia, is it favorable to get into a drawn-out trade war and that some new economic and political Iron Curtain appears on Ukraine's eastern border.'' There is also a multilateralist view characterized by Foreign Minister Lubomir Zaorálek, who argued that the Czech Republic should belong to the EU mainstream and support the sanctions as an efficient tool.

The Czech foreign and defense ministries ''view Russia as a country which is destabilising the European security architecture and . . . making attempts to revise the international order,'' whereas ''the minister for industry and trade sees Russia as a key non-EU economic partner for the Czech Republic, with whom cooperation needs to be enhanced.'' Prime Minister Sobotka has attempted to balance these competing viewpoints, but the splits have left the Czech government without a clear stance on Russia.

Two-thirds of the natural gas consumed in the Czech Republic comes from Russia, accounting for nearly 15% of the country's primary energy supply. In the context of sanctions and Russia's economic slowdown, the Czech economy has been negatively affected by a substantial decline in Russian imports of Czech goods and reduced numbers of Russian tourists visiting the Czech Republic. Russia accounts for only 4% of Czech exports and 0.3% of foreign investment in the Czech Republic, however. By contrast, over 80% of Czech exports go to EU countries, and the Czech economy is tied most closely to Germany.

President Zeman and Deputy Prime Minister/Finance Minister Andrej Babiš, in particular, have been recently cited by one prominent commentator as leading politicians who ''frequently echo or repeat Russian slogans.'' Zeman previously served as prime minister from 1998–2002 at the head of the Social Democratic Party, which he left in 2007, before he became the Czech Republic's first popularly elected president in 2013 (the president was formerly chosen by parliament). The powers of the Czech presidency are largely ceremonial, and the power to lead the government falls squarely on the prime minister. Nevertheless, the president is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, exerts an influence on foreign policy, and makes a number of formal appointments to the central bank and judiciary. Some analysts assert that Zeman has sought to push the boundaries of his powers to influence government policy and legislation.

Although Zeman has also been strongly pro-EU and supported close security ties with the United States through NATO, his history of outspoken statements has labeled him as one of the most pro-Russian leaders in Europe. He has condemned the EU sanctions against Russia, strongly criticized the Ukrainian government's approach to the conflict, and termed the conflict in Ukraine a ''civil war.'' Analysts assert that such statements have countered and undermined the Czech government and foreign ministry and threatened to alienate Czech allies in NATO, including the United States, and its partners in the EU.

In May 2015, Zeman, who speaks fluent Russian, defied calls for the diplomatic isolation of Russia by joining Slovak Prime Minister Fico as one of the few European leaders attending the 70th anniversary commemoration of the end of World War II in Moscow. Opposition leaders asserted that the visit seemed ''choreographed by Kremlin propagandists,'' with President Putin commenting, ''I want to say that it pleases us that there are still leaders in Europe who are able to express their opinion, and who follow an independent political line.''

While some observers maintain that Zeman is on balance an outspoken personality who is not afraid to speak his mind, others point to his close ties with businessmen connected to Russia as a potential source of influence. Martin Nejedlý, the head of Russian energy company Lukoil's Czech subsidiary, and Miroslav Slouf, a lobbyist for Lukoil, reportedly financed much of Zeman's presidential campaign, were part of his campaign team, and remain close advisers. Zeman has also previously asserted that he is a ''long-time friend'' of Vladimir Yakunin, a former KGB agent who was head of Russian Railways and a close associate and ally of President Putin until his retirement earlier this year. Yakunin was included on the list of Russian officials placed under U.S. sanctions following the annexation of Crimea.

Andrej Babiš is reportedly the Czech Republic's second-richest man, worth an estimated $2.4 billion. Babiš, who is of Slovak origin, founded the ANO party (ANO stands for Action of Dissatisfied Citizens in Czech, although ''ano'' also means ''yes'' in Czech) in 2011, initially as a personal political vehicle. Promoting populist, anti-corruption messages, ANO came in second place in the 2013 Czech election, and Babiš became deputy prime minister and finance minister in a coalition government led by Prime Minister Sobotka's Social Democrats. Babiš has continued to position himself and his party as outsiders to the Czech political establishment, and as a ''movement'' that eludes left-right characterization rather than a political party (ANO belongs to the centrist-liberal Alliance of Liberals and Democrats, ALDE, in the European Parliament). With recent polls showing ANO to be the Czech Republic's most popular party and Babiš its most trusted politician, he is considered a leading possibility for prime minister following the 2017 election.

The intersection between Babiš' continued business interests and his political career has been controversial. In the early 1990s, while an executive with the state-owned trading company Petrimex, Babiš took over ownership and control of a newly founded Petrimex subsidiary, Agrofert, using a still-undisclosed source of foreign financing channeled through Switzerland. Reportedly aided by the use of political connections to acquire state-owned enterprises using state-guaranteed loans that were not always paid back, Babiš grew Agrofert into an agriculture, food, and chemical giant that is now the Czech Republic's fourth-largest company and has over 200 subsidiaries of its own. Babiš has been accused of using his government position to benefit his private business interests, for example in a May 2015 parliamentary vote to continue state subsidies of biofuels, a policy of strong benefit to Agrofert.

In 2013, Agrofert acquired the MAFRA media group, housing two of the country's most widely read newspapers, most popular radio station, and a leading television channel. Observers assert that these media outlets have subsequently avoided any criticism of Babiš, promoted his activities, and increased criticism of political opponents. Some analysts have argued that Babiš' combination of political, economic, and media power threatens the stability of the Czech Republic's democratic institutions. In March 2015, Prime Minister Sobotka told his party's congress:

''The problem is, however, that Andrej Babiš, chairman of our coalition partner, did not give up his economic and media influence after he became deputy prime minister and finance minister. He now concentrates political, economic and media power whose extent has been unprecedented in this country since 1989. He is at permanent risk of conflict of interest.''

Babiš' past has also caused controversy. The Czech Republic maintains a ''lustration law'' passed in 1991 to keep former high-level communists and secret police collaborators out of top government posts. Babiš has been waging a court battle with Slovakia's Nation's Memory Institute, which oversees communist-era secret police files. With Babiš' secret police file having gone missing long ago, the institute presented a case in 2013 piecing together files it asserted as circumstantial evidence that Babiš was an informant code named ''Bureš.'' In June 2014, a Slovak judge ruled in favor of removing Babiš from the list of secret police collaborators after two former agents testified in his defense, finding there was not sufficiently clear documentary evidence of deliberate collaboration. The institute is reportedly continuing the investigation, however, after an appeals court ruled the agents' testimony inadmissible. Allegations of Babiš' ties to communist-era security and intelligence agencies are additionally fueled by his close association with Agrofert board chairman Libor Široký, a former member of a Czechoslovak secret police unit that had close ties with the KGB.

Babiš has repeatedly criticized the EU sanctions against Russia, and has been variously quoted stating that NATO ''cannot stay on this idea that Russia is the biggest problem,'' ''Ukraine is not ready for the European Union and Ukraine was always under the influence of Russia,'' and, with regard to responsibility for Crimea and the conflict in Ukraine, ''What is true or not true, who knows?'' Babiš has asserted that such skepticism is a legitimate part of the European debate and that he and his party are strongly pro-NATO and pro-EU, refuting allegations that he is ''pro-Russian'' or has secretive ties to Russia. Nevertheless, with Babiš considered a possible future prime minister of the Czech Republic, his oligarchic profile and communist-era past, combined with his statements on sanctions and the Ukraine crisis, have caused speculation and concern about possible Russian connections and influence.

Slovakia

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico has been an outspoken critic of EU sanctions against Russia and has pursued cordial relations with Moscow during his time in office. Fico has been prime minister since 2012, and previously from 2006–2010, at the head of the center-left Direction-Social Democracy party (SMERSD). Fico (with Czech President Zeman) was one of only two European leaders to attend events in Moscow in May 2015 commemorating the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, and returned to Moscow in June 2015 with a government delegation to discuss economic and energy ties. Analysts and commentators asserted that these visits played into Russian propaganda by allowing the Kremlin to show it has partners in Europe who are inclined toward cooperation, undermining U.S. and European attempts to portray Russia as diplomatically isolated.

Slovakia is one of the EU countries most exposed economically to Russia: Slovakia depends on Russia for 98% of the natural gas it consumes (accounting for over 27% of the country's primary energy supply), imports oil and nuclear fuel from Russia, and its state budget relies to a significant extent on revenue from transit fees associated with Russian gas (via Ukraine). Slovakia is the main conduit for Russian gas to Europe. In September 2014, Slovakia began providing gas supplies to Ukraine, leading Russia to cut gas flows to Slovakia by a reported 50% the following month. The Slovak military also remains heavily dependent on Russian armaments. At the same time, Russia accounts for only 3–4% of Slovakia's exports, with the vast majority going to other EU countries.

Fico drew particular attention in June 2014 when he compared the idea of U.S. and NATO troops being stationed in Slovakia to the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia: ''I cannot imagine that there would be foreign soldiers on our territory in the form of some bases . . . Slovakia has its historical experience with participation of foreign troops. Let us remember the 1968 invasion. Therefore this topic is extraordinarily sensitive to us.''

Analysts assert that Slovak attitudes toward Russia are a complicated mixture of interests and emotions that make it hard to understand and predict Slovak policy toward Russia. Some analysts perceive Fico's Russia policy as an attempt to balance the competing imperatives of relations with NATO and the EU with Slovakia's energy and economic relationship with Russia, while attempting to appeal to public opinion, business interests, and a Russophile wing of his party. For example, Fico has criticized EU sanctions but not blocked them, and he strongly criticized Ukrainian measures that have threatened the flow of gas, but also provided ''reverse flow'' gas supplies to Ukraine. Moscow opposes the ''reverse flow'' of gas from Europe back to Ukraine and considers it illegal.

Overall, national economic interests appear to be paramount in Fico's approach. Slovakia did not block the expansion of EU sanctions in July 2014 after securing exemptions for sectors important to its economy (such as the export of automobiles to Russia), but Fico has maintained that his government might ''reject certain sanctions that would hurt national interests.'' Following the adoption of the wider EU sanctions and the announcement of Russia's retaliatory measures, Fico stated, ''Why should we jeopardize the EU economy that begins to grow? If there is a crisis situation, it should be solved by other means than meaningless sanctions. Who profits from the EU economy decreasing, Russia's economy having trouble, and Ukraine economically on its knees?''

Hungary

Alongside Hungary's commitment to NATO and a close security partnership with the United States, the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orban has emphasized that it has other foreign policy interests, including building closer relations with Russia. Some analysts assert that the Hungarian government appears to be the most ''pro-Russian'' government of the NATO and EU countries. Although Hungary is still a democracy and Russia is not, ideological similarities between Prime Minister Orban and

President Putin contribute to cordial relations to a certain extent: both leaders have been organizing their respective states in contrast to the ''liberal, Western model,'' with Orban naming Russia (along with Singapore, China, India, and Turkey) in a July 2014 speech as the type of state model likely to be successful in the future. In addition, Putin's doctrine of ''protecting'' ethnic Russian populations that live outside the borders of Russia closely evokes the nationalist view in Hungary of ethnic Hungarian minorities that live outside the borders of the country. According to some Western observers, Hungary has played an unhelpful role in the Ukraine crisis by advocating greater autonomy for a region of western Ukraine inhabited by approximately 150,000 ethnic Hungarians. Breaking with European attempts to portray Russia as diplomatically isolated, Orban hosted Putin in a state visit in February 2015. Orban has been prime minister since 2010, and previously from 1998–2002, at the head of the conservative Fidesz party.

Hungary has considerable ties to Russia in the energy sector. Russia provides over 76% of the natural gas consumed in Hungary, accounting for one quarter of the country's primary energy supply, and Hungary was a strong supporter of Gazprom's now-cancelled South Stream pipeline that would have crossed Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, and Slovenia (bypassing Ukraine) to reach Austria and Italy. Russia also supplies the fuel for Hungary's Paks nuclear power plant, which provides about 40% of the country's electricity. Under a controversial deal reached in early 2014, Russia will loan Hungary €10 billion to finance the construction by Russia's state-owned Rosatom of two new units at the Paks plant.

Although it joined its EU partners in condemning the annexation of Crimea as illegal, and signed on to the multiple rounds of sanctions imposed against Russia by the EU, Hungary has been among the countries most reluctant to impose sanctions in response to Russia's actions in the Ukraine conflict. In an August 2014 interview, just two weeks after the adoption of expanded sectoral EU sanctions and one week after the announcement of retaliatory Russian measures against European food products, Prime Minister Orban called for a re-think of the EU's sanctions, stating, ''The sanctions policy pursued by the West, that is, ourselves, a necessary consequence of which has been what the Russians are doing, causes more harm to us than to Russia . . . In politics, this is called shooting oneself in the foot.'' Although Russia is Hungary's largest non-EU trading partner, with Hungarian exports to Russia represent less than 3% of Hungary's total exports. The Hungarian economy is tied much more closely to the German economy.

Russia and European Far-Right Parties

In recent years, there has been an increasingly evident ideological link between European far-right parties and the leadership of Russia. Far-right parties in V4 countries that now take openly pro-Russia positions include: Jobbik in Hungary; the Slovak National Party (SNS) and People's Party Our Slovakia (L'SNS); the Czech Workers' Party of Social Justice (DSSS); Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland (SRP) and Polish Falanga.

Elsewhere in Europe, pro-Russia positions are held by: France's National Front (FN); Italy's Lega Nord and the New Force party in Italy; the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD); the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ); the Flemish Interest (VB) party in Belgium; the Order and Justice (TT) party in Lithuania; Golden Dawn in Greece; the Nationalist Party of Bulgaria (NPB) and Bulgaria's Ataka Party; and the British National Party (BNP).

While many of these parties remain well on the fringes of their countries' political scene, Jobbik, FPÖ, FN, Golden Dawn, Lega Nord and TT have had significant electoral successes in winning seats in national parliaments and the European Parliament.

Analysts assert that supporting far-right parties serves as a way for Russia to work against European unity. Among other elements of far-right ideology (typically including some combination of extreme nationalism, ''law and order'' and the preservation of ''traditional'' conservative or family values, and anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, or anti-Islam sentiments), most of these parties tend to be anti-establishment and anti-EU. Some can be characterized as anti-NATO/U.S. or isolationist, and some focus on problems with neighboring countries. Jobbik, for example, in addition to promoting strongly anti-Roma, anti-Semitic, xenophobic, and anti-Western stances, promotes the idea that Slovakia and Romania are enemies of Hungary due to the ethnic Hungarian minorities living across the border in those countries.

Although direct evidence of Russian financial support for far-right parties remains for the most part difficult to identify, there is a widespread belief that Russia has covertly funneled money to parties such as the FN and Jobbik. In November 2014, news outlets reported the discovery that the FN had received a potentially illegal €9 million loan from a Russian bank with close ties to President Putin. Jobbik has also long been under suspicion of receiving Russian (and Iranian) money, and the party's finances have been questioned in the Hungarian Parliament and investigated by the Hungarian government. After publishing an annual budget of approximately $10,000 per year for 2004–2008, Jobbik ran a well-financed campaign in the 2009 European Parliament election and reportedly spent over $100,000 in the 2010 national election, when it won nearly 16% of the vote. Analysts argued that the sudden increase in funding could not have been due to domestic contributions. As Jobbik began running a nationwide party operation, it also abandoned its previous anti-Russian rhetoric to advocate both good relations with Russia and Hungary leaving the EU to join Russia's Eurasian Union. Jobbik now receives a state allowance allotted to parties in parliament and has an official budget of over $2.3 million. Suspicions of additional private financing from abroad persist, however. A potentially key figure in Jobbik's ties to Moscow is Bela Kovács, a Jobbik Member of the European Parliament who played a central role in the party's rise in 2009 and has been a vocal supporter of Russia in the European Parliament. In October 2015, the European Parliament granted a request by the Hungarian government to lift Kovács' immunity from arrest in order to face allegations of spying for Russia.

Russian support for far-right parties is not merely financial. The Russian government has also been proactive in offering organizational expertise, political know-how, and media assistance to parties on Europe's far-right. Russian support has reportedly included establishing and coordinating pro-Russian parties, non-governmental civil organizations, and think tanks, and providing support to friendly media outlets. Russian diplomacy also offers far-right parties access to political networks, including by sponsoring forums and conferences that develop and coordinate national doctrines and policies and encourage the formation of party groups or families. To some extent, analysts attribute ties between a number of European far-right parties and parallels in the policies of parties in a range of countries to this type of Russian-sponsored network-building.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi John Linder, Temple Solel, Paradise Valley, Arizona, offered the following prayer:

God of all people and all understanding, give us strength and reason during these perilous times; bring consolation to the bereaved in Belgium. Be with our public servants here as they represent these great United States.

Collectively, brothers and sisters, you are a tapestry of America, a beautiful quilt of diversity, the best of who we can be. Our respective faiths remind us that the measure of society is how we treat the most vulnerable: the orphan, the widow, the stranger in our midst.

God bless the Members of this House, their families and staff, and all those workers who humbly serve to care for and protect these hallowed Halls.

May these deliberations reflect the best of humanity, honoring the divine spark in one another. ''Long may our land be bright, with freedom's holy light,'' as we continue to shine as a beacon of hope to those within our borders and around the world.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING RABBI JOHN LINDER

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize my good friend, Rabbi John Linder, as the guest chaplain today.

Throughout his life, Rabbi Linder has demonstrated commendable commitment to his family, to his faith, and to the cause of social justice.

After graduating with honors from Amherst College, Rabbi Linder spent his early years as a community and labor organizer, and later helped run his family's scrap metal recycling business before entering rabbinic school.

In Arizona, he has demonstrated inspired leadership of Temple Solel, my temple, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Rabbi Linder has also continued his work to advance social justice as a leader in the Union for Reform Judaism, the Jewish Family and Children's Services, and many other local service and faith-based organizations.

Rabbi Linder is also engaged in building a strong interfaith community in Arizona. He has been instrumental in connecting Temple Solel to other faiths, and he has invited a variety of other clergy members to participate in the temple's services.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming Rabbi Linder to the House of Representatives and thanking him for his dedicated service.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

(Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Supreme Court will hear arguments in Little Sisters of the Poor v. Burwell, and today, I stand in support of the Little Sisters.

Mr. Speaker, this is an order of Catholic nuns who serve the elderly poor in 31 countries. We talk a lot about public service up here. Well, these are the people who live it. They are the definition of public service. In fact, I had the honor of hosting two of the Sisters at the State of the Union address this January, and I was amazed to hear all the good work that they do.

So the last thing the Federal Government should do is make their jobs harder, but that, unfortunately, is exactly what this administration is doing. Under the healthcare law, the Department of Health and Human Services is insisting on a regulation that requires the Sisters to offer benefits that violate their religious beliefs.

The administration claims to have offered them an ''accommodation,'' but it is just a fig leaf. So this is the choice that they are facing: either violate your faith, or pay up to $70 million a year in fines.

Mr. Speaker, there is no good reason for any of this. A full one-third of the American people are exempt from this regulation, so why insist that the Sisters, of all people, follow it? There are other ways to protect people's health that do not violate people's faith.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear to anyone with eyes to see that this regulation is a violation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. A broad bipartisan majority in Congress voted for that law, and what Congress said was this: the burden is not on your faith to obey government mandates; the burden is on the government to respect your faith.

Mr. Speaker, that is the very meaning of religious liberty. That is one of our founding principles, and that is why we should do everything we can to let people live out their faith. That is why many colleagues of mine and I have joined in an amicus brief asking the Court to grant the Sisters the relief that they deserve; and that is why I am here today: to stand in defense of the Sisters, to stand in defense of the law, and to stand in defense of religious liberty.

TODAY NIAGARA FALLS WILL RECLAIM ITS WATERFRONT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today the people of Niagara Falls will reclaim what was taken from them 50 years ago: access to, arguably, the world's greatest waterfront, Niagara Falls.

Since 1964, the Robert Moses State Parkway has cut off the city from its waterfront. The highway is one of several ill-conceived projects rammed through cities 50 years ago that have kept western New York from realizing its full economic potential.

Three years ago, I issued a report that detailed the role of the New York Power Authority, which planned the parkway, evicted homeowners, and owns the land on which it sits, justifying the New York Power Authority's responsibility to fix what they had broken.

Shortly thereafter, work began on the removal of the southern portion, and now, as we proposed, the New York Power Authority will fund the next phase, a $42 million project that takes down the parkway and builds up this city.

Two weeks ago, I stood with Mayor Paul Dyster to demand the complete removal of the parkway. With today's announcement, Niagara Falls will reclaim its waterfront and all of the promise that comes with it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DEPUTY CARL KOONTZ

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Deputy Carl Koontz, who was shot and killed Sunday while serving a warrant.

A 3-year veteran of the Howard County Sheriff's Department, he was more than a deputy; he was a husband to Kassie, a father to baby Noah, a son, and a friend to his many fellow law enforcement officers.

Yesterday, hundreds of Hoosiers lined the procession route from Indianapolis back to his hometown of Kokomo to pay their respects and honor his sacrifice.

He was only 27 years old, and in his short life he served Howard County with courage and distinction. He was passionate about his job as a deputy, particularly his role as a school resource officer for the Northwestern School Corporation, where he was a role model as well as a protector of Hoosier children.

I would also like to recognize Sergeant Jordan Buckley, who was also shot and injured, and wish him a speedy recovery.

Law enforcement officers and first responders put their lives on the line each and every day.

In memory of Deputy Koontz, I would ask everyone to please stand and thank all of our officers, the courageous law enforcement officers and first responders, for their service and sacrifice because on Sunday, Deputy Koontz paid the ultimate sacrifice.

CELEBRATING SALLIE BALDWIN HOWARD'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 100th birthday of Sallie Baldwin Howard, a friend and legendary citizen of Wilson, North Carolina.

Tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, Sallie B. Howard will be honored at a grand birthday celebration at the charter school named in her honor, the Sallie

B. Howard School for the Arts and Education.

Sallie Howard has lived an extraordinary life. Her contribution to the arts and education is immeasurable.

Mrs. Howard graduated as valedictorian from Charles H. Darden High School. She later graduated from Kittrell Junior College, the Anderson School of Dance, New York City's School of the American Negro, and received her master's degree in elementary education from Hunter College.

As an academic, writer, playwright, avid traveler, and elementary school teacher, Sallie B. Howard has used her vast array of talents and expertise to make a lasting impact on our Nation's children.

She is an active member of St. John AME Zion Church.

Mr. Speaker, the founder and executive director of the Howard School, Dr. JoAnne Woodard, remarks of Mrs. Howard that she is a ''phenomenal woman who inspires us to be our best.''

I ask my colleagues today to join me in celebrating Sallie B. Howard's 100 years of life and recognizing her selfless service to humanity.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF POLICE OFFICER SCOT FITZGERALD

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a policeman who was tragically taken from us too soon.

In my district of South Jacksonville, Illinois, Police Officer Scot Fitzgerald was on duty on the evening of Friday, March 4, responding to a call for medical assistance, when his car was hit by an ambulance. The 32-year-old father of two passed away several hours later.

In his funeral procession, hundreds of citizens and admirers came to remember the officer who had personally aided them in times of need.

Sobering events like this remind us that our law enforcement officers put their lives on the line when they put on their uniforms.

I offer my prayers and condolences to Officer Fitzgerald's family, his wife, and his two young children, a 4-year-old boy and a 4-month-old girl, as they grieve their loss.

I also want to offer my sincere gratitude to all of our law enforcement officers for their crucial role in keeping us safe.

The community of South Jacksonville has set up a scholarship fund for his children and also a memorial 5K run in his name. I applaud these displays of compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the citizens of my district and elsewhere to consider supporting these efforts.

I would ask, at this time, that the House rise to pay tribute to Officer Fitzgerald for his public service.

TRI-FAITH INITIATIVE

(Mr. ASHFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, as I rise, my prayers are with the victims of the terrorist attacks in Brussels.

Today, I would like to pay tribute to a multifaith religious organization that rises above the divisive elements in our Nation and around the world. Each day, Omaha's unique Tri-Faith Initiative makes it clear that what unites us far outweighs what divides us.

The Tri-Faith Initiative is made up of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religious groups practicing respect, acceptance, and trust. Omaha's Temple Israel, Countryside Community Church, and the American Muslim Institute literally work side by side to realize the dream of three houses of worship on adjacent land.

In three-part harmony, Tri-Faith strives to challenge stereotypes, learn from each other, and counter the flames of fear and misunderstanding. This initiative couldn't come at a more critical time in our history.

America's greatness begins with its diversity. I am beyond proud that my hometown is home to this most important melting pot. Jews, Christians, and Muslims working and praying side by side, that is America.

□ 1215

PRESIDENT'S BIZARRE TRIP TO CUBA

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in a letter to the President, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE revealed, ''Since your administration announced normalized relations with Havana, the regime's repression of basic human rights has gone from bad to worse. In the first 2 months of 2016 alone, the Cuban Commission for Human Rights has documented a staggering 2,588 political arrests. In spite of this, reports suggest that you will soon announce . . . more one-sided concessions that will serve to shore up the communist Castro regime.''

While visiting Havana, the President supports plans to end the embargo, yet ignores the fact that increased trade will not reach the Cuban people. It will benefit the Cuban military and intelligence agencies which have stolen Cuba's most profitable industries. The President's bizarre legacy has led to more repression as the failed socialist dictatorship is propped up.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the people of Belgium and Prime Minister Charles Michel as the global war on terrorism continues.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. PETERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Jacksonville, Florida, November 13, 2015: Travis James Hiatt, 49 years old; Hayden Rose Hiatt, 5 months old; Kayden Reese Hiatt, 5 months old.

Glendale, Arizona, February 23, 2016: Vic Buckner, 50; Kimberly Buckner, 49; Kaitlin Buckner, 18; Emma Buckner, 6.

Roswell, New Mexico, August 21, 2015: Mere Contreras, 31 years old; Shelly Bird, 25; Damon Oswald-Newman, 19.

Indianapolis, Indiana, February 20, 2014: Walter Burnell, 47; Jacob Rodemich, 43; Kristy Mae Sanchez, 22; Hayley Navarra, 21.

Chesapeake, Virginia, January 27, 2016: Doris Dooley, 74 years old; Lori Dooley, 54; Todd Dooley, 50; Landon Dooley, 22; Brooke Dooley, 17.

Oakland, Maine, November 4, 2015: Amanda Bragg, 30 years old; Michael Muzerolle, 29; Amy Derosby, 28.

IN MEMORY OF ANN PRIDE

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the life of Ann Pride, a beloved daughter of Arkansas and a good friend.

Ann served as the director of Federal Government Relations at Entergy, where she had been employed since 1991. She worked closely with the entire Arkansas delegation to support energy programs for low-income Arkansans.

Ann dedicated her life to serving the people of Arkansas and previously served as staff to Representative Bill Alexander and Senator David Pryor, first during his term as Governor of Arkansas and later in the United States Senate.

Ann had a friendly demeanor and was well respected among the Arkansas delegation and on both sides of the aisle. She was a consummate professional.

Her knowledge and experience were indispensable to her fellow colleagues, and I know that she will be greatly missed by those who had the privilege to know her.

DEMOCRATS OUTPERFORM REPUBLICANS ON ECONOMY

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, Republicans often

claim that they can manage the economy better than Democrats, but the facts show something very different entirely.

Research by economists Alan Blinder and Mark Watson finds that, by virtually every measure of economic growth and economic health, including GDP growth and job creation, the economy has performed better under Democratic Presidents than Republican Presidents.

Alan Blinder and Professor Watson put it simply: ''The U.S. economy performs much better when a Democrat is President than when a Republican is.''

The Democratic staff on the Joint Economic Committee updated and expanded on their analysis and found that, on average, since World War II: real GDP has grown about 1.6 times faster under Democrats than Republicans, and private sector job growth has grown nearly 2.5 times faster under Democrats.

This chart tells a story. The Democratic line is blue, and the red is Republican. It shows clearly that job growth was higher and better under Democratic Presidents.

OBAMACARE'S UNCONSTITUTIONAL CONTRACEPTIVE MANDATE

(Mr. FLEISCHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to echo the remarks of Speaker PAUL RYAN. We must protect the sanctity of the lives of the unborn.

The Little Sisters of the Poor v. Burwell is a landmark case that rightfully challenges ObamaCare's unconstitutional contraceptive mandate. I wholeheartedly agree with the Little Sisters of the Poor and believe that life begins at conception.

Mother Teresa once said: ''I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child—a direct killing of the innocent child—murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another?''

The unborn are the most innocent and vulnerable members of our society. The Constitution already protects life, and I have sworn to uphold that Constitution. I will continue to serve all east Tennesseans by consistently voting for life.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF EARLINE PARMON

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize my colleague and friend, former North Carolina State Senator Earline Parmon, who departed this life last week on Super Tuesday.

Earline was a true trailblazer, public servant, and humble leader. She was Forsyth County's first Black State senator. She also served more than a decade in the North Carolina House and on the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners.

Earline was instrumental in helping victims of North Carolina's eugenics program receive restitution, and she did so much more. She dedicated her life to fighting for justice and fighting for our communities.

I was more than honored when Earline joined my staff as my outreach director, expanding her territory to serve North Carolina's 12the Congressional District.

She was loving, kind, and respected. She broke barriers, and she was inspirational. Earline Parmon has left an indelible mark on North Carolinians across our State and Nation. I have known Earline for many decades, and I am proud to have called her my friend and one of my closest confidantes.

Her legacy will continue to live on for generations to come. We salute her and her service to our State.

MIDDLE EAST CHRISTIANS FACE EXTINCTION

(Mr. BYRNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of Holy Week, one of the most important time periods for the Christian faith.

Sadly, in too many places around the world, Christians are under attack simply because of their religious beliefs. The stories of rape, assault, and murder are heartbreaking.

Just look at some of the numbers from the Middle East. In 2003, there were 1½ million Christians in Iraq. Now that number is down to 275,000 and falling. In the very land where Jesus once walked, Christians are becoming extinct.

This Holy Week, may we, as the people's House, reaffirm our commitment to fighting Christian persecution abroad. May we not become discouraged or angry, and may we keep fighting to encourage religious tolerance in the Middle East and all around the world.

And, Mr. Speaker, may we remember what is written in the Gospel of John: ''The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.''

ONE OF AMERICA'S WORST FOREIGN POLICY MISTAKES

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solemn observance today of the 13th anniversary of the week that one of the worst foreign policy mistakes of the 21st century was made, the invasion of Iraq, March 20, 2003.

The human cost of the invasion: 4,491 U.S. servicemembers who gave their lives and countless more who were injured or who came back with difficulties facing the challenges of everyday life.

Iraqi deaths were between 151,000 and 500,000, including many innocent women and children, and millions more were driven from their homes.

The economic cost of the war in Iraq: $1.7 trillion are the estimates of that cost, money that was taken out of the hands of U.S. taxpayers, away from our roads, bridges, infrastructure, and schools to send to Iraq. And the national security cost of that colossal mistake: namely, the creation of ISIS and, in fact, arming ISIS with weapons that were paid for by American taxpayers, supplied to the failed Iraqi military.

''When will we ever learn?'', in the words of the late, great Pete Seeger.

LIVINGSTON PARISH NEWS

(Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, in recent months, Livingston Parish has lost two important leaders. On October 26 of last year, Jeff McHugh David passed away. Earlier this month, on March 3, Michael Dowty also passed away.

Jeff was the longest serving owner/publisher in the history of Livingston Parish News, and Mike was the 28-year managing editor of the newspaper. Together they had nearly 90 years of newspaper experience.

The Livingston Parish News was established in 1898. It has a 118-year history. During that history, it has been awarded over 600 State and national awards for its journalism excellence.

Mr. Speaker, the Livingston Parish News covered important events like the 1983 floods, which resulted in the Comite diversion authorization, and the LIGO project, which recently discovered for the first time ever gravitational waves.

It is really an amazing newspaper that has done a phenomenal job. They have 1,200 subscribers and over 60,000 online subscribers.

The past 6 months have been a challenging time for the paper. Jeff is survived by his son, McHugh David, who carries on his father's legacy of the Livingston Parish News, as Leesha calls him behind his back, McCutie.

Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and honor these men's service and contribution to our community and to the great State of Louisiana. Both men were institutions in Livingston Parish, and both will be missed.

HONORING JAMIE MICK

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Women's History Month to highlight an outstanding woman in my district. My district has many female role models giving back to our communities. One example of a woman dedicated to service is Jamie Mick.

Jamie has served our district through her role in the Rotary Club, the American Cancer Society, West Pasco Chamber of Commerce, Florida Gulf Coast Association of Commercial Realtors, and other organizations.

Jamie is a cofounder of Women IN Charge, helping to empower women by supporting them in managing their businesses, furthering their professional goals, and promoting their health and financial independence.

Jamie is one of the many role models I am proud to have in our community.

This month we have the opportunity to celebrate women like Jamie, making history now for tomorrow's generation of innovators, news makers, and community leaders.

CHE GUEVARA POSTER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, a picture is worth a thousand words. This poster shows President Obama with the Che Guevara image behind him, coming soon to a T-shirt near you.

Che was a sadistic murderer and killer who executed Cubans during his reign of terror. Che, along with Fidel and Raul Castro, is responsible for the suffering, misery, and oppression of the people of Cuba.

But it seems that some people just don't care. Yesterday President Obama said in an interview that he would be happy to meet with Fidel Castro, and President Obama believes that Raul Castro ''truly wants change in Cuba.''

Really? What is stopping Castro from holding free and fair elections? Let's start with that little change.

This continued effort to legitimize this regime and its atrocities is appalling. It is appalling for those people who love freedom. It is appalling for those who have been political prisoners in Castro's gulags. It is appalling for those families who have lost their loved ones because of this communist regime.

Today is a sad day, indeed, and this poster says it all. Smile in front of Che Guevara. Get the T-shirt now.

CONDEMNING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the terrorist attacks in Brussels, Belgium, that took place early this morning. These brutal acts of violence have claimed the lives of at least 30 people and have injured at least 170 more.

The people of Brussels woke up this morning, ready for another day in their life, only to have their world rocked by this sudden and unexpected attack. Some wished their loved ones goodbye for the day, only to never return.

This is now the second time in just 5 short months that our friends and allies in Europe have been struck with a wide-scale terrorist attack. It is another chilling reminder that we are at war against radical Islamic terrorism.

But it is also a reminder of the goodness in people. We saw people run into the flames, into the smoke, and against the flow of the terrified masses to give aid and comfort to the wounded. It is a reminder that we are right and just and that we must be ever-vigilant.

Mr. Speaker, we must stand together in solidarity with the Belgian people as they recover, and we must stand together as a world against this ever-increasing threat to our freedom and way of life.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2745, STANDARD MERGER AND ACQUISITION REVIEWS THROUGH EQUAL RULES ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 24, 2016, THROUGH APRIL 11, 2016

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 653 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 653

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2745) to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from March 24, 2016, through April 11, 2016—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar day for purposes of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 5. The Committee on Energy and Commerce may, at any time before 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2016, file a report to accompany H.R. 2666.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on House Resolution 653, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring this rule forward on behalf of the Rules Committee.

The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 2745, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015, or the SMARTER Act.

The rule also provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, and also provides a motion to recommit. I would like to point out that the Rules Committee put out a call for amendments, but none were submitted for consideration.

Yesterday the Rules Committee received testimony from the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial, and Antitrust Law. A subcommittee hearing was held on this legislation and it was marked up and reported by the Judiciary Committee. The bill went through regular order and enjoyed discussion at both the subcommittee and full committee level.

H.R. 2745 is supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the American Hospital Association because it is a matter of basic fairness and reducing uncertainty.

This legislation makes two key changes to the procedures by which the Federal Trade Commission litigates

merger cases. First, it requires the FTC to satisfy the same standards that the DOJ must meet in order to obtain a preliminary injunction in Federal Court.

Second, it requires the FTC to litigate merits of contested merger cases in Federal Court under the Clayton Act—just as the DOJ does—rather than before its own administrative tribunals.

Currently the FTC is authorized to obtain preliminary injunctive relief, whereas the DOJ must satisfy the generally applicable test for obtaining preliminary injunction in Federal Court if it wants to block a merger. Courts have sometimes held that there is a lower burden on the FTC to obtain an injunction than the DOJ would have to face under the traditional test.

Additionally, if the FTC loses a preliminary injunction in Federal Court, it is able to litigate the merits of the cases in an administrative proceeding ultimately adjudicated by its commissioners. However, the DOJ does not have this power.

The SMARTER Act addresses these disparities, as recommended by the Antitrust Modernization Commission.

Parties to a merger should not be subject to different treatment and standards based on the reviewing antitrust enforcement agency. Antitrust agencies are charged with reviewing transactions efficiently and fairly in order to ensure that competition is preserved. But current law leaves the impression that there is a divergence of procedure and that whether or not a merger can proceed depends on which agency reviews that particular transaction.

Importantly, this bill does not make it easier for mergers to be approved. H.R. 2745 does increase fairness and efficiency by ensuring that the antitrust enforcement agencies are not imposing unequal burdens on the merging parties.

I thank the full committee, Chairman GOODLATTE, Chairman MARINO, Congressman FARENTHOLD, and their staff for their work bringing these important reforms today. Again, as we look forward, I would encourage all to support this rule and the underlying legislation as it will bring some streamlined modern efficiencies to this program as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

That was complicated. My colleague from Georgia, Mr. Speaker, explained a lot of stuff. There were definitely a lot of big words in there, and words that we do not use too often in Colorado.

It seems to me that this bill is designed to make it easier for very big companies to merge and reduce the oversight in making sure that those big mergers do not hurt consumers. Most mergers do not even go through this. I think it was in our Rules Committee yesterday where Mr. MARINO testified it was maybe 3 percent of mergers. So only if both companies are very, very, very big companies, multinational conglomerates, then it goes up for review. This bill says that maybe there should be a little less review. I think even the proponents say there still should be review. There are several government agencies involved.

But it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that what this bill is really doing—the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015—it almost takes a few breaths to even say it. It is one of the longer bill titles that I have heard, very technical—it is really the stalling on the floor of the House bill until the Republicans can figure out a budget. That is exactly what we are doing here, Mr. Speaker.

I would hope that, as we stall, we could offer more substantive bills that we could do in the meantime. This bill, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules bill, is really, truly a solution in search of a problem.

Where does this bill come from?

I am certainly very pro-business. I founded several businesses before I came here. I took a long and hard look at this bill today. I am all for streamlining government processes, but I just can't imagine what problem we are even trying to solve here. I don't know. I wonder where the idea for this bill came from. Maybe it came from a town hall. I know a lot of the best ideas that I get start from my constituents and small businesses back home. That was the argument we heard very passionately orated when we talked about brick kilns for an entire week the other week.

Maybe Members are fighting for people back home. Maybe a constituent approached somebody in Mr. COLLINS' district and said: We truly wish review processes for the larger corporate mergers were streamlined; something must be done about the FTC's administrative adjudication authority.

Maybe that was the call that was resounding in town halls across the country, but it did not come up in any of mine. In Colorado's Front Range it simply was not the issue that my constituents were raising, but I will certainly give my colleagues the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps there is a groundswell for addressing the FTC's administrative adjudication authority for the largest companies and their mergers that simply has not reached Colorado. Perhaps that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, there is an important point I want to make. Time is very precious here on the House floor. Taxpayers are paying for this time. In fact, apparently tomorrow will be the last day. This will be the last bill we vote on before we all get sent home for a 3-week vacation. We have very limited time to pass bills that benefit the American people.

Six years ago, nearly to this day, the House took this workweek in late March and passed a little something called the Affordable Care Act. Now, that might not be popular with my friends on the other side of the aisle, but it certainly was consequential. In fact, 15 million more Americans have coverage today because of what we did this same week 6 years ago. We passed the first major piece of healthcare reform in a generation. Like it or not, we had conviction, and we passed bills that helped Americans every day solve problems.

Now here we are 6 years later and we are debating a measure that helps a few large corporations merge with each other to become even larger. Look, if we want to help American business, let's find a backbone, let's look at tax reform, let's look at comprehensive immigration reform, let's invest in our infrastructure and in our schools to have a better prepared workforce. Be courageous. Let's present solutions to problems, not solutions in search of a problem.

Here we are passing yet another bill the Senate won't consider and that will never become law, and then go reward ourselves with 3 weeks of vacation. Look, maybe someday this bill will help one conglomerate purchase another conglomerate, or save them a few dollars in legal fees along the way.

Is that exciting, Mr. Speaker, to you? Is that something that resounds across our country or would even contribute one iota to our country's economic growth?

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not solve any of the problems this Congress needs to take on.

What should we be doing this week?

We should be talking about making college more affordable. We should be talking about growing our economy, investing in infrastructure, reforming our bloated Tax Code, and simplifying taxes. We should be talking about passing a budget.

Mr. Speaker, most households have a budget. My household has a budget, but this Congress does not have a budget. Instead of having a budget, everybody is going on a vacation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not find a solution to the 11 million undocumented people in our country and fix our broken immigration system. This bill does not secure our borders or does not make college more affordable. It is a shame that we are spending an entire week debating this nonsolution in search of a problem that maybe some years hence will help one large company merge with another and reduce their paperwork to the detriment of

the public interest and consumer interest in the American people.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think it is interesting. It does not help. As we come down here and debate—and this is a floor to do that, Mr. Speaker—let's just be very clear, this does not help companies merge. I am not sure why we are putting forth a statement that helps companies merge. It simply takes and it streamlines the process so that you are not having two divergent paths in which the scrutiny of a merger takes place.

If we want to at least be faithful to the bill, which is what this does, it does not make substantive changes to antitrust law. Rather, this legislation standardizes the process between the two antitrust enforcement agencies.

Look, I grew up in north Georgia, and there were a lot of times especially—I have had some small businesses, and I appreciate the gentleman from Colorado, but I bet there are many times in his businesses that the things that you do every day, it is like being a part of a family. It is doing chores, it is doing the work that needs to be done. It may not hit the front page of the paper, it may not be the glamorous piece that anybody would want to talk about. Those things are getting discussed and those things are moving forward. Maybe not at the pace that some would like to see, but we are moving forward with legislation.

The question is if a bill that simply streamlines and provides some efficiency that even this current Department of Justice assistant attorney general for the antitrust division stated, I don't think that there is a real practical difference in how courts assess the factual legal basis for enjoining a merger challenged by the FTC on the one hand or the Department on the other.

□ 1245

Basically, we are doing some of the administrative work that needs to be done to lay the groundwork so that we don't have divergent opinions, so that we don't have two processes out there. If that is not exciting enough, then I am sorry. There are a lot of things that we do that do affect business, that do affect the streamlining of government. There are a lot of things that I would like to see us work on and that we are continuing to work on.

On this issue of ''will the Senate take it up or not?'' I, frankly, Mr. Speaker, don't care. If they don't want to do their job, that is their problem. If they have other agendas, then that is their problem. That is why there are two separate bodies on the Hill—there is the House, and then there is the Senate. We must work in tandem when we can, but we also must work with our own individual agendas to move forward what, in our perspective, is a conservative agenda for this country.

The other thing that is very concerning is—and there are a lot of issues here, and I appreciate the gentleman's speaking, Mr. Speaker, about where ideas come from. I am very concerned—and I know the Speaker is as well—about where ideas and processes come from for bills here. The best place, as the gentleman stated, is from back home—being with members and being with constituents and being with the businesses and being with the school groups and being with the folks in the places which we come from. I am born and raised in my district. As is the old saying, good Lord willing, by August, it will have been 50 years I will have lived in my district. I know my district and have gotten to know their concerns.

Do I believe there are a lot of things we can do up here? Yes, but I get to go home to my district, and I get to listen to people. I will be happy to read my schedule for the next few weeks while I am in the district, and if that sounds like a vacation to you, maybe we will have a different opinion on what a vacation looks like, because I am going to be going to businesses which, over the past few years, have been hurt by a healthcare policy that was put in place, and they don't know if they can hire new members. They have had to downsize—they have had to stop progress—and they are just being, all the time, encircled with regulations that keep them from hiring and from providing good jobs in the Ninth District of Georgia.

I don't know about what others do on their time back in their districts. I go to talk to school groups who ask the question: What do their futures look like with an ever-increasing pile of debt? They look at their futures, and they ask: What is this country? They look at the future around the world when they see attacks, such as this morning in Brussels, and they ask where their place is in the world. What is America's role? These are the kinds of things that are discussed on my time when I am in the district.

I believe we could work up here every day, and I will be supportive of that; but when I go back home to the district, when it is scheduled for us as Members to go home, then, frankly, maybe there is just a definitional difference in vacations. For me, it is to go home and listen and to be a part and to, yes, spend some time with my family. At the same point in time, every day, I get up and go out and talk to the district, and I talk to these people who have issues with Washington, D.C.: with their tax burdens, with their regulatory burdens, with their healthcare burdens, and with all of these supposed fixes.

Many times, like I said, I believe the Republican majority, in the last 5 years, has had to undo and fix the problems that were so forcefully allocated. We have got a banking system in our district that is still having trouble with banks being able to make loans, banks being able to do the things that they are supposed to be doing to help our business community, because they are strangled with regulatory burden.

You see, these are the issues that we can discuss here, and I appreciate the argument. Also, as we go back to the bill before us, sometimes it may not make the front page of whatever you read, but when you have two agencies that do, basically, a similar function in the merger arena and when they do it differently—and even the current Department of Justice and the chairwoman for the mergers and acquisitions were looking at this and were saying that this just needs to be better—this bill is a positive step forward. As we move forward to the debate that will happen this afternoon, I look forward to the debate of the committee as it discusses the ins and outs of this bill.

Before we go any further, I think we just need to be honest with the American people and say that these are ideas that are worth having and that also, when we are back in the districts, their ideas are worth having, because that is where the best ideas come from. That is where our homes are, and that is who we represent up here. It is never a burden to go home. Many times, it is a burden to come up here and fight against values that you have in your district that are not valued on the other side of the aisle. That is the burden that we will continue to fight. We will continue to stand as a conservative bearer on this side to say that this is a government that needs to work for the people and not at the people. That is the biggest difference that you will see on this floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think the American people deserve to know what Members of Congress are doing to earn their salaries.

This week—3 days—this bill is the only bill under a rule that this Congress is even considering. Let me tell you how Congress calculates days, Mr. Speaker, because most Americans think, ''Okay. A day, maybe I go to work at 9 o'clock and come home at 5 o'clock. That is a day.'' Let me tell you that Congress has a different definition of a day for Members of Congress.

Monday, we started at 6:30 p.m.—not a.m. but p.m. Now, Mr. COLLINS and I got to come in at 5 p.m. to start. We started early. Mr. COLLINS and I worked an extra hour and a half. I asked the Speaker if Mr. COLLINS did, and he did start at 5 o'clock with me. We worked an extra hour and a half; but you, Mr. Speaker—I don't think

you started until 6:30. That is when the votes occurred.

On Tuesday—that is today—that is a real day. I will give you that. We are working on Tuesday. I started this morning at around 8 o'clock, and I fully expect we will go until 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock. That is a good day. That is good. I can be proud of that for my kids that I worked a good day and can tell anybody back home.

Tomorrow, Wednesday—this day, we are working today. I would ask my colleague from Georgia: Does the gentleman know what time we expect to finish tomorrow? I would ask Mr. COLLINS if he knows what time we are scheduled to finish tomorrow.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. It is the majority leader's prerogative, as the gentleman from Colorado is well aware.

Mr. POLIS. What is that?

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. After the final votes are cast tomorrow, it is the majority leader's prerogative, as the gentleman from Colorado is well aware.

Mr. POLIS. I heard it was around noon or, maybe, 12:30. I think I heard a lot of Members discussing whether they could catch their flights at around 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock. I don't know if they are going off to the Caribbean for their vacations or what. So, in this week, in which the Republicans are claiming we are working 3 days, I call it 1 day—Tuesday—and maybe half a day on Wednesday and maybe an hour or two on Monday.

Look, that is not the kind of job that the American people expect us to do here. They want us to work full days. Why aren't we here all week? Why aren't we bringing up more than one bill? Fine. This bill can have its day in the Sun, and, as Mr. COLLINS said, not every bill is glamorous. Maybe there are some really big companies that want to be merged with other really big companies, and they feel it is too much paperwork to do it. Let's discuss it. Let's do that in a half a day. I mean, let's do that on Monday. Instead of coming in at 6 o'clock, maybe we come in at noon and sleep until 11 o'clock—that should be late enough for Members of Congress to sleep—and debate it for a few hours. Then let's do something else on Tuesday. Let's do a budget on Tuesday. Let's do something about the Zika virus on Tuesday. Let's do something about the Puerto Rico virus on Tuesday. On Wednesday, let's get to work and do more, right? I mean, let's roll up our sleeves and get to work. Let's not go home at noon.

Mr. Speaker, I have a very exciting motion I will be able to make here. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to prohibit the House from starting a 2-week recess tomorrow unless we do our job and pass a budget.

I ask unanimous consent to insert that amendment in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Now, this is very exciting, Mr. Speaker, because I am giving my colleagues an opportunity. As to this previous question vote, if we vote it down—a ''no'' vote—it will mean ''Congress, don't go on vacation. Do your job and pass the budget.'' A ''yes'' vote means ''go on vacation, and forget about a budget.'' With this motion that I am introducing here, if we defeat the previous question, I am really calling on Members of Congress to account as to whether they think we should do our job or whether we should go home after making it easier for very big companies to merge.

I hope that the answer is the one that the men and women who are listening at home would agree is the logical answer: that we should stay here and do our jobs. We will see here in a few minutes what my colleagues want to do: whether they agree with me that we should stay here and do our jobs or whether they think that we should allow bigger companies to have facilitated mergers and then go home.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I am interested in whether the gentleman from Colorado has any more speakers or if he is ready to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close.

I yield myself the balance of my time.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that my good friend and colleague Mr. COLLINS from Georgia said that maybe this bill is important, that maybe it is one of those things that might not be glamorous but that has to be done, that it is important. Yet I think it speaks volumes, Mr. Speaker, that not a single person even showed up to this debate besides Mr. COLLINS and me, who have to be here. No Republicans who, I guess, support this bill and no Democrats—and there might even be some Democrats, I think, who support this bill or oppose this bill—I mean, no one even came.

That is because everybody knows this bill is not going anywhere. The Senate won't consider it. The President won't sign it. The American people have not been crying out for it. Big multinational corporations are perfectly able to merge today as long as they are not blocked by the FTC or the DOJ for antitrust. This bill doesn't solve any problems. Not a single Republican even came to the floor to argue about why we needed this bill, with the exception, of course, of my good friend and colleague Mr. COLLINS and me, who have to be here because we are running the debate.

What does that mean when even the proponents of this bill don't even come here to tell us why they want it? I think it shows a certain moral bankruptcy, Mr. Speaker, and it exposes the veneer off the fact that this is, simply, a time-stalling bill because Republicans don't have a budget, and they want us to go on vacation right away.

Look, as to this bill that is being considered, I will address some of its merits. It would alter the process in which the Federal Trade Commission acts to regulate mergers and guarantee a competitive marketplace and protect consumers. I am sure there are valid and important arguments on both sides of this bill. The FTC was created in 1914 as an independent, bipartisan agency, and it has unique tools to look after consumers in order to make sure that when two large companies merge that it doesn't hurt consumers. Of course, because the FTC and the DOJ have overlapping responsibilities, there are issues between them. If there is a pressing problem, I would be happy to consider this bill under an open rule.

Now, what does that mean?

It means that I believe—and the Democrats on the Rules Committee yesterday made a motion to this effect—that we should allow Democrats and Republicans to offer amendments on this bill to say: Do you know what? Maybe there is a problem. Maybe we need to improve it. Maybe we need to change it. Do you know what? That motion for an open rule was voted down on a partisan vote.

Perhaps that is the reason, Mr. Speaker, that no Republicans or Democrats bothered to come in on this bill, because the Republicans have locked us out of participating. They have locked out the Democratic and Republican rank-and-file Members, who represent great districts across our country, like from Texas and California and New York and Wisconsin—Democrats and Republicans. No one with any good ideas can even try to make this bill better. No wonder people aren't bothering to come to the floor in droves. It is because their ideas—and they are good ideas, and good ideas even come from Republicans, Mr. Speaker—are locked out of inclusion in this bill.

Do you know what? In 2007, Congress established the Antitrust Modernization Commission, which released 80 recommendations for revisions to antitrust law and policy. Of those recommendations, one of them advocated for the elimination of the FTC's administrative adjudication authority, and another proposed the adoption of a uniform preliminary injunction standard. Those are two things that are in this bill. To date, Congress has not considered the other 78 ideas that came out of this obscure Commission that were reported back that only affect the world's largest companies that merge with one another.

If we had an open rule, I could bring forward some of those other 78 ideas. If this is such a pressing problem and if we need to spend our full day in session here this week in talking about making it easier for corporations to buy one another, why not go all out and allow a discussion of the other 78 ideas that the Antitrust Modernization Commission recommended?

Mr. Speaker, this is a half measure that is a solution in search of a problem. Instead of debating bills like the one here today, we should be tackling problems that the American people sent us here to work on. We should work an honest workweek rather than an hour on Monday, a full day on Tuesday, a half a day on Wednesday, and take Thursday off and take Friday off. The American people deserve an honest week.

They deserve us to get the budget done. Just like our households have a budget, Congress deserves a budget. I am sure, in the past, my colleague and many others have reminded us that Democrats, at times, have also failed to produce budgets. I am saying neither side is perfect. I am not proud that the Democrats, in the past, have failed to produce a budget, but what we are talking about today are the Republicans who are failing to produce a budget.

I remember very distinctly that, when the Democrats had difficulty producing a budget, the Republicans said: How dare you. Produce a budget. Our households rely on budgets. Why can't the Congress have a budget?

That was one of the arguments that my colleagues made to the American people, and the American people, for that reason and perhaps others, gave control of this body to the Republicans. Now here we are with the Republicans, who, instead of producing a budget, are sending every Member of Congress home on vacation for 2½ weeks after working a very taxing 1½-day week, making it easier for multinational corporations to merge.

□ 1300

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. As I mentioned earlier, when we do defeat the previous question on the vote, the amendment I have offered into the RECORD will amend the rule to prohibit the House from starting our vacation tomorrow, unless we do our job and pass a budget.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule, vote ''no'' on the underlying bill, and, instead, work to pass a budget and find solutions to the big problems that we were sent here to face, like improving our national security, like securing our border and replacing our broken immigration system into one that reflects our values as a Nation of laws and a Nation of immigrants, one that makes prescription drugs more affordable and improves upon the Affordable Care Act, improves our schools, invests in infrastructure, and so many of the other issues that I hear about from my constituents at our town halls, on the phone, and in letters.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule and the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I always try to be positive. There is one thing I do agree on with my friend from Colorado just now, and that is that we can do better.

We can do better about explaining what is actually going on here and talking about it in derisive terms, especially about a bill in which there was—I serve on the Judiciary Committee—there was one amendment brought to committee. This bill seems to be fairly tight because there seems to be general agreement here.

There was one committee amendment brought to the committee, and it was withdrawn. Then there was an amendment process put out.

It is interesting that, from this Antitrust Modernization Commission, there were 78 other ideas. And then, when my friend just spoke about the fact that, if we had an open rule on the floor, they might bring up 78.

I would just ask him where was he yesterday. We have talked about showing up for work. Maybe he didn't punch in last night. He could have brought 78 amendments last night to the Rules Committee. He chose not to.

So we can do better. We can honestly discuss the procedures and the fact that right now, while he and I are on the floor discussing this rule and preparing for this rule, the rest of the 433 Members of the House of Representatives—432 now—I think we still have one open seat—are in committees right now.

They are meeting constituents. They are marking up bills. They are going through regular order, which is the Republican Congress' way of doing the people's business.

Also, as we have already discussed, whether the Senate signs something or not—then he brought up the fact that the President would never sign this piece of legislation.

Well, let's just remind the people what the administration doesn't also sign. They won't also sign the Keystone Pipeline, which takes away jobs from Americans.

He won't also sign a refugee bill that actually would just put an extra measure of protection for protecting the American homeland from possibly infiltration through the refugee program. They refuse to sign that.

Yet, we will have the results of the world looking at that. He won't sign that, Mr. Speaker. The administration doesn't seem to want to hold Iran accountable for the testing that it is doing with its missiles.

So we can discuss what this administration doesn't want to sign. I think using that as an excuse not to move a bill is an abdication of responsibility.

So as we look forward, again, I have never thought anything that I do up here, especially when it comes to my office or in committee work, was not working.

I think, frankly, it is sort of disrespectful to the folks who come to our offices and meet with us or the committee work that we do to say that the only ''work'' is here before the cameras making speeches. If that is what work is about up here, maybe we have just found the problem with this Congress.

So, Mr. Speaker, parties to a merger should expect and receive the same treatment and processes, regardless of the reviewing antitrust enforcement agencies.

These parties should not be subject to attempts to extract concessions or threat of administrative litigation by the FDC simply because that is the agency reviewing the merger.

The underlying bill preserves key standards of review while removing disparities. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and H.R. 2745.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 653 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 6. It shall not be in order to consider a motion that the House adjourn on the legislative day of March 23, 2016, unless the House has adopted a concurrent resolution establishing the budget for the United States government for fiscal year 2017.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to

yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

PROMOTING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACT

Ms. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4742) to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4742

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce, but less than 25 percent of the workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professions;

(2) women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate study;

(3) only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs;

(4) there is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery commercialization;

(5) studies have shown that technology and commercialization ventures are successful when women are in top management positions; and

(6) the National Science Foundation's mission includes supporting women in STEM disciplines.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAMS.

Section 33 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (10);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (11) and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(12) encourage its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4742, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to offer a bipartisan bill Ms. ESTY and I introduced, H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

We were also joined by the chairman and ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Congressman LAMAR SMITH and Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, who are original cosponsors of this measure.

I am pleased that the consideration of this bill occurs during Women's History Month. Our bill amends the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act to authorize the National Science Foundation to use its entrepreneurial programs to recruit women and to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.

The bill also includes a number of findings regarding women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, also known as the STEM fields.

One finding in this bill notes that only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields ultimately work in STEM jobs. We want to improve these statistics, and we believe this bill is a step in the right direction.

Again, I am happy to collaborate with my colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. This bill would expand the mission of the National Science Foundation to support and strengthen women entrepreneurs. I drafted this legislation because we can and we must do more for women in science, technology, engineering, and math, the so-called STEM fields, to extend their efforts beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.

Women have the potential to be remarkable entrepreneurs, job creators, and innovators. Unfortunately, women remain an underutilized force for starting small businesses that sustain the middle class.

Women make up roughly half of the labor force. But according to the Department of Commerce, women only own 30 percent of private businesses in the United States.

Why is it that women aren't starting their own businesses more often? The sad truth is that women still face significant barriers to entrepreneurship, including limited access to capital, a lack of women mentors in STEM fields, often difficult or unmanageable expectations for work-life balance, and a subconscious bias against women in STEM.

Now, an increasing number of women are earning STEM degrees. However, women are still largely underrepresented in all STEM fields, including significantly the ones that have the highest entrepreneurship rates.

For example, in 2012, women earned only one in five Ph.D.'s granted by U.S.

institutions in computer science. We must do better at increasing representation of women in all STEM fields.

Now, I may be biased, but my own State of Connecticut is a great example of how far women can go with a STEM background.

We have women engineers who are designing life-support packs for our astronauts at the International Space Station. We have women scientists conducting cutting-edge research in STEM cell work at Yukon and at Yale.

We have women inventors and entrepreneurs making life-changing discoveries and literally altering the course of history. We have wonderful local companies with women entrepreneurs, such as Bedoukian Research and Jonal Labs, who are not only creating quality products, but are fostering the next generation of women leaders in STEM. I think we might have had one in the gallery who was excited about our introduction of this bill.

It is not enough to promote women in STEM careers. We must also work to increase the number of women who become entrepreneurs. The benefits of encouraging and supporting women entrepreneurs could be tremendous.

According to the Department of Commerce, between 1997 and 2007, privately held women-owned businesses added 500,000 jobs. During that same period, other privately held firms lost over 2 million jobs.

Women have unique experiences and perspectives to bring to the table. We simply cannot afford in this increasingly global economy to overlook the valuable and talented resource of over half our citizens.

We must do more to promote women entrepreneurs and to better support women who are commercializing great ideas, starting small businesses, and creating jobs.

I know, when I hear from the women and the men who are part of my STEM advisory committee in Connecticut about the challenges and, yet, the great opportunities that women in the STEM fields have to create the next new exciting business, develop the next new cure to help Americans.

H.R. 4742 would help do that by supporting programs focused on helping more women, commercialize great ideas, start businesses, stimulate 21st century careers, and strengthen the middle class.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ranking Member JOHNSON, and Chairman SMITH, for working with us together on this bill.

I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to make reference to occupants of the gallery.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, innovation rises up from all parts of this country. One of the main purposes of the Innovation Initiative is to empower people to make new discoveries and guide our country into the future. When we do that, we ensure America remains a global leader and everyone in America and abroad benefits.

We have two bills today to build innovation from the ground up, focusing on future women leaders in America. Because when you look back on history, you see women at the forefront.

You look at Grace Hopper, who was one of the first programmers of our earliest computers. Stephanie Kwolek invented Kevlar. Shirley Ann Jackson laid the foundation for amazing advancements in communication, like fiber optic cables and portable fax machines.

These are all women who fueled positive disruption with their ideas. This is the positive disruption America needs to prosper.

So we should encourage a learning environment where young women continue to have the opportunities to explore the interests in STEM subjects.

Today we will pass a bill by Congresswoman BARBARA COMSTOCK to enable retired NASA astronauts, engineers, and scientists to work with female STEM students who will lead the next generation.

We are also voting to authorize the National Science Foundation to work with its entrepreneur programs to recruit more women who can be the top innovators in the lab and beyond.

With these two items, the Innovation Initiative continues to empower the American people for the sake of the American people, removing obstacles to success while bringing innovation into government.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

Mr. Speaker, for over the past year, STEM education has been a critical part of many debates we have had here on the House floor.

We have discussed it in the context of reauthorization of critical education programs and with respect to how it can drive American innovation in research and technology.

□ 1315

The discussion we are having here today—a dialogue as to how we can encourage more women who wish to pursue a course of study in STEM fields to follow through beyond the classroom and build successful careers in science, math, and technology fields—is very important for economic growth in this country and to ensure young women help pioneer new innovation in this country for generations to come.

We have heard the statistics, Mr. Speaker. Women make up half of the U.S. workforce and half of the college-educated workforce, yet only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields end up working in STEM jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I rise today in strong support of this simple, commonsense legislation. By encouraging entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world, we can take a significant step in the right direction.

Further, by having this debate and discussion here today and by encouraging all of our best and brightest to pursue the education and career path of their dreams, we are taking a necessary step to include this as part of our ongoing dialogue with respect to the delivery of STEM education in our classrooms and what it will take to develop American innovation for future generations.

I would like to commend Representative ESTY and Representative COMSTOCK for their efforts on this legislation. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, as the mom of a daughter with a biology degree major and with a master's degree in forensic science who is now working in the STEM fields, I ask that my colleagues support this bipartisan legislation to promote women in the workforce and in STEM fields.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4742 the "Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act."

As a Senior Member on the House Committee on Homeland Security who sits on the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies, I know well of the need to encourage and train women to thrive in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

Promoting diversity in the STEM professions is more than just an idea; it requires an understanding that there is a need to have a process that will ensure the inclusion of all minorities and women in all areas of American life.

Studies have found that women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce.

Studies note that 23 percent of STEM workers are women; however, women make up 48 percent of workers in all occupations.

Only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

According to the most recent available data women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate studies.

In 1991, women received 29.6 percent of computer science B.A.'s, compared to just 18.2 percent in 2010.

Jobs in computer systems design and related services, a field dependent upon high-level math and problem-solving skills, are projected to grow 45 percent between 2008 and 2018.

There are approximately 6 million women and minority owned businesses in the United States, representing a significant aspect of our economy.

My home city of Houston, Texas, the energy capital of the world, knows the importance of professionals in the STEM industries.

It has been reported that the highest-paying STEM occupations are petroleum engineers with an annual salary of $147,520, architectural and engineering managers with an annual salary of $138,720, natural sciences managers with an annual salary of $136,450, computer and information systems managers with an annual salary of $136,280, and physicists with a reported annual salary of 117,300.

There is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery and commercialization.

Women deserve a fair shot in the STEM programs in this nation.

In addition, I believe that work needs to be done to modernize key contracting developmental programs designed to increase opportunities for women, minorities and low-income individuals who pursue STEM degrees and STEM job training.

I support programs at the National Science Foundation that have worked to reduce the current barriers and ensure women have the support they need in the STEM fields.

Mr. Speaker, we should encourage women to pursue degrees and careers in the STEM fields so we can continue to compete in the global economy.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. Now more than ever STEM fields are dictating the way business in the United States is conducted. The successful commercialization of technology has expanded opportunities for those with STEM degrees. It is imperative that we promote women as part of this crucial expansion in order to promote equality in the advancing technological age.

A Harvard Business Review article released last March described the top biases pushing women out of STEM fields. To women in any workplace this comes as no surprise. The constant need to prove ourselves more times over than our male counterparts, the tightrope of navigating a masculine workspace while holding true to our feminine identity and, the general isolation of being a woman in a male-dominated field are all too common in today's workplaces. In my District, Wayne State University has a program called GO–GIRL, Gaining Options–Girls Investigate Real Life. The mission of this program is to increase the competence and confidence of adolescent girls by engaging them in experiences that promote an interest in STEM education while building their capacity to pursue STEM-related careers. While programs like this are currently helping girls nationwide, we must continue the progress that has been made and expand upon our success.

The Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act amends Section 33 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act by including a key phrase that ''encourage[s] its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.'' The commercialization of STEM fields has created a vast new sector of jobs and careers, a sector that must include women professionals. This Act does just that, ensuring the inclusion of women in one of America's most important and fast developing industries.

I would like to close by saying that I am proud of our chamber for coming together to ensure that women continue to achieve success in STEM fields. I also want to thank my colleagues for considering two bills today that highlight the importance of reaching out to young women who otherwise may not be inspired to pursue a career in a STEM-related field.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. I thank my Science Committee colleagues Ms. ESTY, who authored the bill, and Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their initiative on this issue.

H.R. 4742 authorizes the National Science Foundation (NSF) to use its existing entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women and help them develop their research and technology ideas for the marketplace.

STEM education is critical to our country's economy and global competitiveness. A well-educated and trained STEM workforce promotes our future economic prosperity.

These STEM workers have the potential to develop technologies that could save thousands of lives, jump-start new industries, or even discover new worlds.

That's why I authored with Ms. ESTY the STEM Education Act, a new law that strengthens science, technology, engineering and mathematics education efforts at federal science agencies. It also, for the first time, expands the definition of STEM to include computer science. The bill was signed by the President last October.

Unfortunately, studies show that only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

H.R. 4742 encourages NSF to tackle this problem. It enhances women's ability to translate their enthusiasm, scientific expertise and research ideas into tangible products and businesses.

Inspiring American students to seek science and math careers is a goal shared by Republicans and Democrats alike. Some of the most energizing and exciting moments of my Science Committee chairmanship have been interactions with young people who want to pursue STEM studies and careers.

At various Committee hearings and robotics competitions in my district, I have encountered motivated, talented young people who want nothing more than an opportunity to pursue their dreams. And, in some cases, change the world with their ideas.

Their passion for learning and science reminds me of why I enjoy serving in Congress and on the Science Committee.

I again thank Ms. ESTY and Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their work on this bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 4742.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4742.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

INSPIRING THE NEXT SPACE PIONEERS, INNOVATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND EXPLORERS (INSPIRE) WOMEN ACT

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4755) to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4755

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS are virtual mentoring programs using commercially available video chat programs to pair National Aeronautics and Space Administration mentors with young students anywhere in the country. NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS give young students the opportunity to interact and learn from real engineers, scientists, and technologists.

(2) The Aspire to Inspire (A2I) program engages young girls to present science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA.

(3) The Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research (SISTER) program at the Goddard Space Flight Center is designed to increase awareness of, and provide an opportunity for, female middle school students to be exposed to and explore nontraditional career fields with Goddard Space Flight Center women engineers, mathematicians, scientists, technicians, and researchers.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE FIELDS OF AEROSPACE AND SPACE EXPLORATION.

The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall encourage women and girls to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, pursue careers in aerospace, and further advance the Nation's space science and exploration efforts through support of the following initiatives:

(1) NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS.

(2) Aspire to Inspire.

(3) Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research.

SEC. 4. PLAN.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a plan for how NASA can best facilitate and support both current and retired astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators, including early career female astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators, to engage with K–12 female STEM students and inspire the next generation of women to consider participating in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and to pursue careers in aerospace. This plan shall—

(1) report on existing activities with current and retired NASA astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators;

(2) identify how NASA could best leverage existing authorities to facilitate and support current and retired astronaut, scientist, engineer, and innovator participation in NASA outreach efforts;

(3) propose and describe a program specific to retired astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators; and

(4) identify any additional authorities necessary to institute such a program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4755, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise again to offer another bill, H.R. 4755, the INSPIRE Act. I am pleased to lead this effort along with the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, LAMAR SMITH and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, as well as Congresswoman ESTY.

This bill authorizes the NASA Administrator to encourage young women to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, known as the STEM fields, and to pursue careers that will further advance America's space science and exploration efforts through support of NASA initiatives, such as NASA GIRLS, Aspire 2 Inspire, and the Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research, SISTER.

The goal of NASA GIRLS is to create a virtual mentoring project that offers a one-of-a-kind experience to middle school students using online capabilities. I should mention there also is a NASA BOYS.

NASA's vision for Aspire 2 Inspire was to reach out to young girls and present some of the science, technology, engineering, and math career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA.

The SISTER program is designed to increase awareness of and provide an opportunity for female middle school students to be exposed to and explore nontraditional career fields with Goddard Space Flight Center women engineers, mathematicians, scientists, technicians, and researchers.

According to NASA, 58 women have traveled in space. Forty-nine of those have flown with NASA. Most Americans are familiar with Sally Ride, the first American woman in space. We all remember that special moment when this true trailblazer literally raised the bar of achievement to new heights. She accomplished this milestone in 1983.

In a lecture she gave at Berkeley later, Ride said she saw an ad for being an astronaut in the student newspaper. She said: ''The moment I saw that ad, I knew that's what I wanted to do.''

Now, imagine how so many young girls can now see so many other women and be exposed to that kind of leadership.

We cannot discuss female firsts in space without also discussing Mae Jemison, who was the first African American woman in space, also an inspired leader.

She was inspired by Sally Ride's achievement; so, she applied to the astronaut program in 1983. It was 4 long years before she received the call from NASA, and she was selected as one of 15 candidates out of roughly 2,000 applicants.

Her trip to space was aboard the Endeavor in 1992. She served as a mission specialist on *STS–47*, which was a cooperative mission between the U.S. and Japan, during which 44 life science and materials processing experiments were conducted. *STS–47* also happened to be the 50th shuttle mission for NASA.

Later in 1995, it was Eileen Collins who became the first female to command and pilot a spacecraft, *STS–63*. She also commanded two more space missions, one in 1997 aboard *STS–84*, and one in 2005 aboard *STS–114*.

This mission, *STS–114*, was another first, as she became the first astronaut—male or female—to fly a space shuttle through a 360-degree pitch maneuver so that individuals inside the International Space Station could inspect the belly of the shuttle for damage.

When asked to give advice for future astronauts, Collins stated: ''My advice to young people is go into the field you are most interested in. If you love your job, you'll do well in your job.''

I know, Mr. Speaker, from my Young Women Leadership Program, where we are able to get young girls in junior high and high school to come and hear from young leaders, hearing from these young astronauts—which we have been privileged to hear from often about all their work and the many different areas that they work in—has been one of the most popular programs.

There are many other women who have contributed to America's space-related endeavors, and we want to continue to make sure that that path is widened for them.

These women are physicists, chemists, pilots, astronauts, doctors, biologists. The list goes on. According to the women@nasa Web site today, there are more opportunities than ever before to join as we reach for the stars.

I urge you to visit the Web site—it is women.nasa.gov—to learn more. It is in these areas in the sciences that we can help ensure America remains a world leader.

These are the jobs for the 21st century that we very much want young American women to be engaged and involved in. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4755, the Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers Women Act.

This bill calls on the NASA Administrator to support initiatives that encourage girls and young women to study STEM fields and pursue careers in aerospace.

Unfortunately, women are still underrepresented in many STEM fields, including aerospace, but NASA is working hard to change that.

They have developed a number of innovative programs that aim to inspire and encourage young girls and women to pursue STEM degrees and STEM careers.

These include the NASA GIRLS program, the Aspire 2 Inspire program, and the Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research, or SISTER, program.

The NASA GIRLS program is a virtual mentoring program where middle school students are mentored by NASA employees online.

The Aspire 2 Inspire program is another online program where girls and young women can watch films of women who have exciting careers at NASA. This program gives young girls a firsthand look at what a STEM career at NASA could actually entail.

The Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research, the so-called SISTER program, is an intensive 1-week program where middle school girls can explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and math fields with NASA women researchers.

It is almost impossible to overstate the value of exposing young students to STEM role models who look like them.

I have seen the impact that a single encounter can have on a young person when I helped arrange a direct link between an astronaut and 3,000 students in my district when he was in the International Space Station.

It was electric and exciting and inspired everyone in that room to think about reaching beyond what they had seen and what they knew.

Without these sorts of experiences, students, especially young girls, may think careers in STEM fields are not available to them.

I am particularly supportive of this bill because it has a focus on middle school girls. Research has shown that this is a crucial time to engage girls in considering pursuing careers in science.

I have to say I myself got inspired to pursue more about science when, as a middle schooler, I was at camp and joined my fellow campers staring up at the Moon for the first spacewalk and landing on the Moon. So I know the impact that this can have on a 12- or 13-year-old.

H.R. 4755 instructs the NASA Administrator to support these programs and other programs that encourage women and girls to study science, technology, engineering, and math, as well as to pursue careers in aerospace.

The bill also calls on NASA to submit a plan to Congress on how it can best facilitate and support current and retired astronauts, scientists, engineers, and innovators to engage girls studying STEM at the K–12 grade levels.

Although retired astronauts, scientists, and engineers can help inspire the next generation of NASA scientists, early career women—astronauts, scientists, engineers and innovators—are really instrumental to the success of this plan.

It is really invaluable for young women to have experiences interacting with role models who are close to their age who are pursuing careers in the STEM fields.

I really want to thank my Committee on Science, Space, and Technology colleagues—the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) for her leadership on this bill; the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. Clark); the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), the ranking member; and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman—for joining together in bringing this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bill. Seeing as we have no other speakers on this side, I am prepared to close.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, while overall employment is only projected to grow by 10 percent between 2008 and 2018, careers in STEM-related fields are expected to grow at a much faster rate of 17 percent over that same time period.

Unfortunately, current statistics show that women are less likely to focus on STEM-related studies in college and, of the women who pursue these areas of study, only 26 percent will ultimately work in STEM-related fields.

Recognizing the need not only for more women in the workforce, but for women to be leaders in the workforce, particularly in the STEM fields, I established the Young Women Leadership Program, which I previously mentioned, where we have been so thrilled to be able to have astronauts come and speak and other people in the science and STEM-related fields and aerospace.

This has been an effective tool in guiding young women into STEM fields. I appreciate the opportunity today to join with my colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY), to support both of these bills.

I ask you to support H.R. 4755, the Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers Women Act, or INSPIRE Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4755, the Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers Women Act (INSPIRE Act).

As a senior Member of the House of Representatives who has served on the House Committee on Science I am well aware of the excellent work that NASA has done to bring diversity to the space program.

Houston, where my district is located, is proud that the Johnson Center calls our city home.

Earlier this year, I offered two amendments that were adopted for inclusion in H.R. 2262, the SPACE Act, which improve diversity in future space programs.

One Jackson Lee Amendment facilitates the participation of HBCUs, Hispanic Serving Institutions; National Indian institutions, in fellowships, work-study, and employment opportunities in the emerging commercial space industry.

The second Jackson Lee Amendment requires work with small business concerns owned and controlled by women and minorities.

One of the most enduring difficulties faced by underrepresented populations in the STEM field is a lack of awareness and understanding of the connection between STEM and employment opportunities.

In 2012, a survey found that despite the nation's growing demand for more workers in science, technology, engineering, and math grows, the skills gap among the largest ethnic and racial minorities groups remain stubbornly wide.

Blacks and Latinos account for only 7 percent, of the STEM workforce despite representing 28 percent of the U.S. population.

I have worked hard to help small business owners to fully realize their potential.

That is why I support entrepreneurial development programs, including the Small Business Development Center and Women's Business Center programs.

Statistics show that women remain underrepresented in the science and engineering workforce, although to a lesser degree than in the past, with the greatest disparities occurring in engineering, computer science, and the physical sciences (NSF, Science & Engineering Indicators, 2014).

Female scientists and engineers are concentrated in different occupations than are men, with relatively high shares of women in the social sciences (58 percent); biological and medical sciences (48 percent); relatively low shares in engineering (13 percent); computer and mathematical sciences (25 percent) (NSF, Science & Engineering Indicators, 2014).

According to the U.S. Labor Department, although women make up nearly 50% of the total U.S. workforce their representation in science and engineering occupations is much less. 39 percent of chemists and material scientists are women; 27.9 percent of environmental scientists and geoscientists are women; 15.6 percent of chemical engineers are women; 12.1 percent of civil engineers are women; 8.3 percent of electrical and electronics engineers are women; 17.2 percent of industrial engineers are women; and 7.2 percent of mechanical engineers are women.

These statistics show that measures need to be taken in order to promote women participation in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and to pursue careers in aerospace.

H.R. 4755 is intended to establish paths for success at NASA for girls and boys, such as establishing the following programs: NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS, virtual mentoring programs, that give young students the opportunity to interact and learn from real engineers, scientists, and technologists; Aspire to Inspire (A2I) program, which engages young girls to present science, technology, engineering, and mathematics STEM career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA; and Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research (SISTER) program at the Goddard Space Flight Center, which is designed to increase awareness of, and provide an opportunity for, female middle school students to be exposed to and explore nontraditional career fields with Goddard Space Flight Center women engineers, mathematicians, scientists, technicians, and researchers.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to pass H.R. 4755.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, science, technology, engineering and math are critical to America's future prosperity.

Women are unfortunately underrepresented in STEM careers. Despite representing nearly half of the college-educated and total U.S. workforce, women account for less than 25 percent of America's STEM workforce.

Supporting women's involvement in the fields of aerospace and space exploration should be an important part of NASA's mission.

Current NASA programs such as NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS are important and

give young students the opportunity to interact and learn from real NASA engineers, scientists, and technologists.

They provide virtual mentoring that use commercially available video chat programs to pair NASA innovators with young students across the country.

H.R. 4755 builds upon this success. It leverages NASA's talent pool of current and retired astronauts, and early career female scientists, engineers, and innovators to inform and inspire young women to pursue their dreams in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. One day, these young people will push the boundaries of space.

Space can be a catalyst for inspiring young girls to enter the STEM fields. By doing our part to support their engagement in space with this legislation, we are investing in the futures of our daughters, nieces, and grandchildren.

I again want to thank the bill sponsor, Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman COMSTOCK for her leadership on this topic. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4755.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1330

OCMULGEE MOUNDS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK BOUNDARY REVISION ACT OF 2016

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 482) to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 482

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Ocmulgee National Monument Proposed Boundary Adjustment, numbered 363/125996'', and dated January 2016.

(2) HISTORICAL PARK.—The term ''Historical Park'' means the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park in the State of Georgia, as redesignated in section 3.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. OCMULGEE MOUNDS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—Ocmulgee National Monument, established pursuant to the Act of June 14, 1934 (48 Stat. 958), shall be known and designated as ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to ''Ocmulgee National Monument'', other than in this Act, shall be deemed to be a reference to ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park''.

SEC. 4. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of the Historical Park is revised to include approximately 2,100 acres, as generally depicted on the map.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service, the Department of the Interior.

SEC. 5. LAND ACQUISITION; NO BUFFER ZONES.

(a) LAND ACQUISITION.—The Secretary is authorized to acquire land and interests in land within the boundaries of the Historical Park by donation or exchange only (and in the case of an exchange, no payment may be made by the Secretary to any landowner). The Secretary may not acquire by condemnation any land or interest in land within the boundaries of the Historical Park. No private property or non-Federal public property shall be included within the boundaries of the Historical Park without the written consent of the owner of such property.

(b) NO BUFFER ZONES.—Nothing in this Act, the establishment of the Historical Park, or the management of the Historical Park shall be construed to create buffer zones outside of the Historical Park. That an activity or use can be seen or heard from within the Historical Park shall not preclude the conduct of that activity or use outside the Historical Park.

SEC. 6. ADMINISTRATION.

The Secretary shall administer any land acquired under section 5 as part of the Historical Park in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

SEC. 7. OCMULGEE RIVER CORRIDOR SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the Ocmulgee River corridor between the cities of Macon, Georgia, and Hawkinsville, Georgia, to determine—

(1) the national significance of the study area;

(2) the suitability and feasibility of adding lands in the study area to the National Park System; and

(3) the methods and means for the protection and interpretation of the study area by the National Park Service, other Federal, State, local government entities, affiliated federally recognized Indian tribes, or private or nonprofit organizations.

(b) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall conduct the study authorized by this Act in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(c) RESULTS OF STUDY.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate—

(1) the results of the study; and

(2) any findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Secretary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 482, introduced by Representative SANFORD BISHOP of Georgia, would redesignate the Ocmulgee National Monument in Georgia as the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park and adjust the boundary of the historical park to include approximately 2,100 new acres.

Additionally, the bill directs the Department of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the feasibility of adding the Ocmulgee River corridor to the National Park Service. The study will also examine the national significance of the site, as well as the best methods and means for ensuring protection and interpretation of this area.

This bill passed out of the committee by unanimous consent, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 482, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2016.

First, I want to thank the coauthor of this legislation, my friend and colleague, Representative AUSTIN SCOTT. He has been a tireless advocate on behalf of this legislation, and we would not be where we are today without his help, advice, and collaboration.

I would also like to thank Chairman ROB BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIJALVA of the full House Natural Resources Committee for their work in bringing this bill to the House floor this afternoon.

Chairman TOM MCCLINTOCK and Ranking Member NIKI TSONGAS of the Federal Lands Subcommittee have been extremely helpful, and I want to commend them and their staffs, especially Terry Camp and Brandon Bragato, for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, there are few, if any, historic sites in the United States that have evidence of continuous human habitation from so long ago, when the first nomadic people came to North America to hunt Ice Age mammals and began to settle the Macon Plateau.

It is what makes the Ocmulgee National Monument so unique. On its 702

acres, one can find archeological evidence from these first nomads, the mound builders of the Mississippian Period, British traders of the late 17th century, and the Civil War.

Our bipartisan legislation consists of three parts. First, it will expand the boundaries from approximately 702 acres to over 2,800 acres, providing protection to additional archeological resources, linking two noncontiguous areas, and improving the site's connection to the city of Macon-Bibb, Georgia.

Most of the land will be donated from nonprofit associations and government agencies. Property would also be acquired only from willing donors or sellers, subject to the availability of funding.

Second, the bill will change the name from Ocmulgee National Monument to Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park, which would increase name recognition and draw additional visitors from across the country.

Finally, H.R. 482 would authorize a resources study to explore the possibility of expanding the park even further and include additional opportunities for hunting, camping, fishing, and other recreational activities.

The legislation enjoys widespread local support, including Macon-Bibb Mayor Robert Reichert, the Macon-Bibb Chamber of Commerce, the Macon-Bibb Business Bureau, the Macon-Bibb Commission, the Macon-Bibb Economic Development Commission, the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Association, and the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes: Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters in support of this legislation.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR,
Macon-Bibb County, June 12, 2015.

Re HR–482 Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental, House Committee of Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

Hon. NIKI TSONGAS,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental, House Committee of Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK AND MS. TSONGAS: Please accept this letter as an enthusiastic endorsement of HR–482! Ocmulgee National Monument became a part of the National Park Service in the 1930's after an archeological excavation revealed evidence of continual human habitation since the last ice age, 12–14,000 years ago. In addition, Native Americans built an earthen floor council chamber which is now 1,000 years old and is one of the best surviving examples of their culture.

On behalf of the 155,000 people living in Macon-Bibb County and the 122,799 people from 48 states and 41 countries covering six continents that visited the Ocmulgee National Monument last year, I am writing to urge you to support HR–482 when it comes before your subcommittee on June 16. Its passage would:

Expand the park boundary to more than 2,000 acres from its current 700 acres; and include additional artifacts and sites which deserve federal protection; (There is no federal funding for land acquisition; this bill merely authorizes inclusion of additional property that may be voluntarily contributed or acquired with private funds into the boundary of the Park.)

Change the name from Ocmulgee National Monument to ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park'' to better describe the site;

Authorize a resource study (again to be privately funded) to determine if the Park could be incorporated, along with other properties, into a Natural Preserve along the Ocmulgee River to provide hunting and fishing opportunities and promote environmental education, health and wellness, and public enjoyment.

The expansion and reclassification of the National Monument went through a very highly-publicized community input process, and it was overwhelmingly supported by thousands of people from our community, our region, and our state. We know the people of Georgia are excited and anxious to take this step and have this treasure in their backyard, both for their own enjoyment and for the enjoyment of their families, friends and visitors.

The expansion of the Ocmulgee National Monument would be a very positive development for our entire region, and it is one of several initiatives Macon-Bibb County is undertaking to provide additional green space and passive recreational opportunities within our community. This effort is so important to us. It is one of our top projects detailed in our new government's first Strategic Plan,

HR–482 will be a significant part of, not only preserving and protecting our heritage, but also, developing miles of trail, greenspace, and a park along our Ocmulgee River. Your support of this legislation will dramatically improve Middle Georgia, and I hope it will receive your favorable consideration,

Thank you.

Yours truly,

ROBERT A. B. REICHERT,
Mayor.

OCMULGEE NATIONAL
PARK & PRESERVE INITIATIVE,
Macon, GA, June 12, 2015.

Please support HR 482: The Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS: The Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve Initiative (ONPPI) is a community-based group of Middle Georgia citizens working together to further protect the current Ocmulgee National Monument and eventually expand the current site into the first National Park and Preserve east of the Mississippi River. I am writing on behalf of myself and our 190 members to urge your support of HR 482: The Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015, when it comes before the subcommittee on Tuesday, June 16th.

HR 482 would: 1) expand the current park boundary from approximately 700 acres to over 2,000 acres; 2) change the name from ''Ocmulgee National Monument'' to ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park''; and 3) authorize a resource study to determine if the park should be expanded further to consolidate existing public lands, protect hunting, and fishing, and provide additional opportunities for education, recreation and public enjoyment.

The Ocmulgee National Monument was authorized by Congress in 1934 to protect a unique Native American cultural landscape that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has declared as ranking among the nation's richest archaeological areas. Unfortunately, when the park was created during the Great Depression, only a fraction of the area could be preserved and many significant resources were left unprotected. The current bill seeks to fulfill the original intent of Congress by preserving a larger portion of the area.

This legislation has already received the endorsement of over 15 local governments, chambers of commerce, and other civic organizations in Georgia as they all recognize the potential economic impact for their community and the state. In addition, resolutions of support have been passed by Oklahoma's Muscogee Creek Nation, as well as the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations), representing more than 500,000 Indian people across the United States.

As you may know, Georgia's National Park units are major drivers of the state's recreation and tourism economy. In 2013, they attracted nearly 7.5 million visitors and generated over $375 million in visitor spending. The National Parks receive just 1/15th of 1–percent of the federal budget, or around $3 billion annually, yet the parks generate over $30 billion in economic activity related to travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation, drawing visitors from around the globe to local gateway communities.

HR 482 will honor the ancestral story of the Muscogee Creek and other southeastern Native peoples, will promote tourism and boost economic growth, and will provide new opportunities for education and public enjoyment. For these reasons, we urge you to cosponsor and support passage of this bill.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

BRIAN P. ADAMS,
President, Board of Directors,
Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve Initiative.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2015.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, House Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. NIKI TSONGAS,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, House Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK AND RANKING MEMBER TSONGAS: I write in support of H.R. 482, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015, This important piece of legislation would, if enacted: 1) rename and give National Historical Park status to the Ocmulgee National Monument; 2) considerably expand the park's boundaries; and 3) commission a special resource study of the Ocmulgee corridor that focuses on how best to protect and develop this area of land in the future, and in such a way as to allow for expanded recreational activities such as hunting and fishing.

Because of its rich archeological significance—which chronicles the history of man and womankind from the last Ice Age, through the Mound Builder period, and onwards to today—this land should be preserved so that future generations can learn

from, and enjoy, its cultural treasures. And for many southeastern Native peoples, including the Muscogee (Creek), who were forcibly removed from these lands and relocated to the West, this land is of inestimable value. In fact, in October of 2014, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations), representing over 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States, voiced its support of the measures in this Act.

Accordingly, I urge you to help ensure that this legislation is enacted. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

MARY FALLIN,
Governor of the State of Oklahoma.

STATE OF GEORGIA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Atlanta 30334–0900, August 26, 2015.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, House Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NIKI TSONGAS,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, House Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK AND RANKING MEMBER TSONGAS: I am writing at the request of Congressman Austin Scott and Congressman Sanford Bishop, in my capacity as Governor of Georgia, to express my support for H.R. 482, the ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015'' and to request your careful consideration and approval of this legislation.

The Ocmulgee National Monument, authorized by Congress in 1934 and created by land donations in 1936, preserves the unique Native American history of the southeast, documenting 17,000 years of human presence in the region, from the last Ice Age, up through the era of the Mississippian mound builders, and on into the periods of Spanish exploration, English colonization, and the early American frontier. In addition to this incredible history, Georgia's national park units are important drivers of a State recreation and tourism economy that is valued at roughly $24 billion annually.

The bipartisan bill now before Congress will achieve numerous goals supported by the State, including the following.

Enhanced historical preservation for exceptional cultural resources in a place described by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as ranking among the nation's richest archaeological areas, thereby honoring the ancestral story of the Muscogee Creek and other southeastern Native peoples.

Re-designation of the unit as a National Historical Park, increasing the park's name recognition and the region's standing as a national and international travel destination, and enriching recreational amenities and the quality of life for Georgia residents and military personnel stationed at nearby Robins Air Force Base; all in keeping with actions outlined in Georgia's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

Augmented protection within an extended area of important wildlife habitat and natural resources that has been identified as one of the highest priority landscapes for conservation under Georgia's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP).

Authorization of a special resource study of the Ocmulgee River corridor between the cities of Macon and Hawkinsville that will, among other things, provide a mechanism for examining options to safeguard public hunting areas and hunting as an important recreational activity, as well as ways that conservation of public hunting lands might contribute toward enhancing base-compatible land use along the eastern boundary of Robins Air Force Base, ensuring its continued viability as a regional military and economic hub; all in conformity with resolutions passed by both chambers of the Georgia General Assembly in 2004 (Georgia HR 1256 & SR 755), urging ''. . . the Congress of the United States to consider creating a national preserve . . . to protect land and other natural resources and promote hunting and fishing . . . in a continuous corridor of the Ocmulgee and Altamaha Rivers . . .''

Responsiveness to resolutions and letters in support of H.R. 482 submitted by the following entities:

the City of Macon-Bibb County Commission & Mayor,
the City of Centerville Council & Mayor,
the City of Perry Council & Mayor,
the City of Hawkinsville Commission,
the City of Warner Robins Council & Mayor,
the Wilkinson County Board of Commissioners,
the City of Jeffersonville & Twiggs County Development Authority,
the Middle Georgia Regional Commission,
the Peach County Development Authority;
the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce,
the City of Hawkinsville-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce,
the Georgia Small Business Lender Board of Directors,
the Houston County Development Authority,
the Historic Macon Foundation,
the City of Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority,
the Southeast Tourism Society,
the Macon-Bibb County Convention & Visitors Bureau,
the Macon Economic Development Commission, and
NewTown Macon;

as well as resolutions passed by the following tribal governmental organizations in Oklahoma representing over 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States:

the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and
the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes.

In closing, companion legislation to H.R. 482 has been introduced in the United States Senate (S. 1696) by senior Georgia Senator Johnny Isakson and co-sponsored by Georgia's junior Senator David Perdue (S. 1696). In view of this extraordinary level of support, I ask for your assistance in gaining the timely enactment of H.R. 482.

Thank you for your consideration.

NATHAN DEAL.

GREATER MACON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Macon, Georgia, June 11, 2015.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Protection, House Committee of Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK: I am writing in strong support of H.R. 482, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015 which states that the Ocmulgee National Monument shall be known and designated as ''Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park''.

The boundary of the Historical Park will be revised to include approximately 2,100 acres and will provide protection of important archaeological resources. This revision will provide additional recreational opportunities, leading to increased visitation thus more economic impact. Macon citizens are understandably proud to have this grand park within the city limits, and are thankful that city leaders realized the importance of the mounds back in 1936. That was the year that the Ocmulgee National Monument was established as a memorial to some of the original settlers on the North American continent. We believe that adding the word ''mounds'' to the monument's name will help Americans more quickly understand the monument's connection to the Mississippians and later, to the Creeks. After all, it is ''mounds'' that attract visitors who come to learn about the cultures that were here hundreds of years before the Europeans came.

Recently the National Park Service did an economic impact study based on Ocmulgee's 2014 visitation and determined that the park had a $6,887,000 impact on our local community. Macon and its people are proud of the Monument, and we believe that this change will help encourage even more tourism and economic activity in the area.

The Chamber fully supports H. R. 482 and appreciates your support as well.

Sincerely,

JAMES M. DYER,
President & CEO.

THE INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UNITED STATES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S EXPANSION OF OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT AND REQUESTING CONGRESSIONAL ENACTMENT OF AUTHORIZED LEGISLATION

Resolution No. 14–31

Whereas, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (ITC) is an organization that unites the tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations, representing over 500,000 Indian people throughout the United States; and

Whereas, the ITC strongly supports actions of its member nations to preserve and to protect historic properties and traditional cultural properties within respective ancestral homelands in the American Southeast; and

Whereas, the historic Ocmulgee Old Fields, an expansive, culturally defining historic landscape on the Fall-line of the Ocmulgee River at Macon, Georgia is of significant importance to the Muscogee (Creek) people; and

Whereas, the United States Congress, in recognition of the significance of the many historic Muscogean properties existing within the Ocmulgee Old Fields region, in 1934, authorized the United States National Park Service to establish the Ocmulgee National Monument as a means to preserve the historic landscape; and

Whereas, in 1966 the Ocmulgee National Monument was listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

Whereas, in 1997 the National Park Service designated the Ocmulgee National Monument as a Traditional Cultural Property and the first recognized Traditional Cultural Property east of the Mississippi River; and

Whereas, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, was amended in 1992 to ensure that Tribes are provided a meaningful role in federal decisions under Section 106 of the Act; and

Whereas, the National Park Service has now introduced legislation within both houses of the United States Congress requesting authorization to extend its protective stewardship over a broader area of the

historic Ocmulgee Old Fields through its proposed incorporation of 2100 acres of the Ocmulgee Old Fields landscape into the Ocmulgee National Monument; and

Whereas, the Government of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation has determined that the proposed National Park Service expansion of the Ocmulgee National Monument boundary within the historic Ocmulgee Old Fields region is consistent with and is in accord with preservation interests within the Ocmulgee Old Fields; and

Whereas, the Government of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation has supported the proposed National Park Service expansion of the Ocmulgee National Monument and is now engaged in active support for legislation pending in Congress to authorize said action.

Now therefore be it resolved that, the ITC does hereby support the proposed National Park Service expansion of the geographic boundaries of the Ocmulgee National Monument within the historic Ocmulgee Old Fields region and hereby requests of the United States Congress deliberate and quick action toward enacting authorizing legislation.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting in Durant, Oklahoma on this 10th day of October, 2014, by a vote of 5 for, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.

BILL ANOATUBBY,
Governor, The Chickasaw Nation.
GARY BATTON,
Chief, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
BILL JOHN BAKER,
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation.
GEORGE TIGER,
Principal Chief, Muscogee (Creek) Nation.
LEONARD M. HARJO,
Principal Chief, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. In short, I believe that H.R. 482 will strengthen the current Ocmulgee National Monument and bolster the economy and cultural life of Georgia, and beyond. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), my friend and the cosponsor of this measure.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 482, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Act of 2016.

I would like to thank my colleague, Congressman SANFORD BISHOP of Georgia. We have had many meetings in Washington, as well as back in the district, on this particular issue. Certainly I have enjoyed working with him on it.

Today's vote marks an important milestone in many years of effort to bring about increased recognition and enhance cultural preservation of the Ocmulgee National Monument.

The Ocmulgee National Monument was originally authorized by Congress in 1934 to protect the Old Ocmulgee Fields, which includes a network of very well-preserved Indian mounds of great historical importance. The history of the fields can be traced back to Native Americans who first came to the site during the Paleo-Indian period to hunt Ice Age mammals.

The park is unique in that it vividly displays the story of many stages of prehistoric cultural development, including the Mound Builder period, and highlights the important role of agriculture in the region.

I am proud to represent this area of middle Georgia, along with Congressman SANFORD BISHOP. Our offices have worked, along with many regional community partners, to advance this goal.

By expanding the current Ocmulgee National Monument from 700 acres to over 2,000 acres and redesignating the area as a National Historic Park, this legislation will provide significant economic, educational, and cultural benefits to middle Georgia.

Additionally, H.R. 482 will reauthorize a study for future expansions and include increased opportunities for hunting, fishing, camping, and other recreational activities.

The expansion of the Ocmulgee National Monument area provides for critical preservation of additional archeological locations through the Old Ocmulgee Fields. Because of its significant historical and archeological importance, the future Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park must be preserved.

The expanded park also will generate additional tourism in middle Georgia, while educating visitors on the fascinating history of the many civilizations that have thrived in the region. However, it should be noted that the property in the proposed expansion area would be acquired only from willing donors or sellers using private funds, and that no Federal dollars will be used to achieve expansion.

I want to take this time to thank Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIJALVA, as well as all the members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, for their work to bring this legislation to the floor today.

I want to close by noting that this legislation is a true example of what can be achieved when local, State, and Federal leaders work together towards a common goal.

The Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Act was created from the ground up with many letters of support from the Macon-Bibb area and well over 3,000 comments from individuals and community groups in support of the expansion. Without this collaboration at every level, none of this would be possible.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 482, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Act of 2016.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, due to its rich and diverse history, it is really only fitting that the future Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park be preserved as a lasting memorial to the native cultures, historic structures, and priceless natural resources that reside on the land.

I want to thank Representative SANFORD BISHOP, who worked in partnership with Representative AUSTIN SCOTT—both of Georgia—for their work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to recommend this bill to the House, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 482, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDMENT TO COLTSVILLE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK DONATION SITE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2857) to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2857

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO COLTSVILLE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK DONATION SITE.

Section 3032(b) of Public Law 113–291 (16 U.S.C. 410qqq) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ''East Armory'' and inserting ''Colt Armory Complex''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS.—No non-Federal property may be included in the park without the written consent of the owner. The establishment of the park or the management of the park shall not be construed to create buffer zones outside of the park. That activities or uses can be seen, heard or detected from areas within the park shall not preclude, limit, control, regulate, or determine the conduct or management of activities or uses outside of the park.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2857, introduced by Representative JOHN LARSON of Connecticut, modifies a condition that the Park Service acquire 10,000 square feet of space in East Armory to allow the NPS to acquire that space within any part of the Colt Armory Complex in Hartford, Connecticut.

Coltsville was the home of Samuel Colt's industrial enterprise, the Colt Firearms Company. In Hartford, Samuel Colt developed the use of the assembly line and highly mechanized techniques. Colt Manufacturing not only transformed the firearms industry, but was a major contributor to the industrial revolution by pioneering the use of interchangeable parts and precision manufacturing.

This small modification to current law would provide the Park Service flexibility in selecting a location for park administrative offices and visitor services at the Coltsville site. I am grateful for Mr. LARSON's hard work to establish the Coltsville Historical Park, and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Thanks to the leadership and hard work of my colleague, Representative LARSON of Connecticut, Congress established the Coltsville National Historical Park at the end of 2014.

The law that established the park authorized the National Park Service to utilize a 10,000 square foot building known as the East Armory for the purposes of park administration. However, during the planning phase for establishing this new park, local stakeholders and the Park Service have determined that the Colt Armory Complex is better suited for this purpose. This bill simply makes that change and authorizes the use of the Colt Armory Complex.

I support this simple fix to the enabling legislation that responds to the on-the-ground dynamics of this particular park, and I want to thank the majority and my colleagues on the Natural Resources Committee for expedited review of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1345

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), my distinguished colleague.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Massachusetts for yielding this time. And I say, with a note of pride, that Lowell, Massachusetts, served and continues to serve as a model for urban national parks upon which we based Coltsville becoming a national historic park.

I want to thank Chairman MCCLINTOCK also for his words. Both he and Representative TSONGAS have outlined what this does. This has been great work by a number of people on this committee in a nonpartisan way.

I would just add, Mr. Speaker, that in Chairman MCCLINTOCK's brief history of Coltsville, that Samuel Colt died in 1862, and not many people realize this. So it was actually Elizabeth Colt, though she could not vote at the time, who was in charge of what was one of the top five corporations in America at that time.

As the chairman alluded to, it was, as a lot of New England was, the center of the industrial revolution. It is also where Mr. Ford came to study and looked at the assembly line. And Pratt & Whitney did internships, the famous Pratt & Whitney aircraft company, and it spawned the bicycle, the automobile, and the typewriter, all of which came from the great city of Hartford at the time.

I want to thank the neighborhood for the collaborative effort, but especially the Governor of the State, Governor Malloy, for his hard work; former-Mayor Segarra; Mayor Luke Bronin, the current mayor; Park Superintendent James Woolsey, who, as Representative TSONGAS rightly pointed out, when they went to the site and looked at the spectacular site, in the review, realized that there was a better way to facilitate people seeing it and locating a section in this historic brownstone area, which this technical change in the legislation allows them to do.

As Representative TSONGAS said, this was done in an expedited manner, so I greatly appreciate the work of the committee on this, and the staff of the committee as well.

Chairman BISHOP has been a strong supporter of this from the start and, I daresay, as we struggled to get this legislation passed for almost a decade, it was his leadership and that of Ranking Member GRIJALVA that brought this to fruition.

So this is, again, yet another demonstration of what can happen when everybody pulls together. And certainly, on the 100th anniversary of our National Park Service, to preserve this historic landmark and to do it in a manner that is consistent with making sure that our national treasures here, whether they be our enormous national parks in the West or on the East Coast, a number of our treasures, historic treasures.

I would note that, at the confluence of a national historic river, a Blueways and Greenways national historic endeavor, that this national park is located. It is that confluence and the work of this committee in recognizing the historic achievement of Samuel and Elizabeth Colt that we are so dearly proud of, not only in Hartford, but across this Nation.

I thank, again, Chairman MCCLINTOCK, and I want to thank, again, my dear friend, the ranking member, Ms. TSONGAS.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would only add that I look forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle on those reforms to restore the free market principles that made America the manufacturing capital of the world, so that those great days that gave birth to success stories like Colt and the prosperity they meant for our Nation can be reproduced in this generation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to commend this measure to the House and ask for its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2857, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE LAND EXCHANGE ACT OF 2016

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4119) to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4119

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. LAND EXCHANGE, GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE, JACKSON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

(a) LAND EXCHANGE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service (in this section

referred to as the ''Secretary'') may convey to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5699 (in this section referred to as the ''Post'') all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property, consisting of approximately 1.542 acres and located within the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Jackson County, Mississippi, section 34, township 7 north, range 8 east.

(b) LAND TO BE ACQUIRED.—In exchange for the property described in subsection (a), the Post shall convey to the Secretary all right, title, and interest of the Post in and to a parcel of real property, consisting of approximately 2.161 acres and located in Jackson County, Mississippi, section 34, township 7 north, range 8 east.

(c) EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE.—The values of the parcels of real property to be exchanged under this section are deemed to be equal.

(d) PAYMENT OF COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—

(1) PAYMENT REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall require the Post to cover costs to be incurred by the Secretary, or to reimburse the Secretary for such costs incurred by the Secretary, to carry out the land exchange under this section, including survey costs, costs related to environmental documentation, and any other administrative costs related to the land exchange. If amounts are collected from the Secretary in advance of the Secretary incurring the actual costs and the amount collected exceeds the costs actually incurred by the Secretary to carry out the land exchange, the Secretary shall refund the excess amount to the Post.

(2) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS RECEIVED.—Amounts received as reimbursement under paragraph (1) shall be credited to the fund or account that was used to cover those costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out the land exchange. Amounts so credited shall be merged with amounts in such fund or account and shall be available for the same purposes, and subject to the same conditions and limitations, as amounts in such fund or account.

(e) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The exact acreage and legal description of property to be exchanged under this section shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Secretary and the Post.

(f) CONVEYANCE AGREEMENT.—The exchange of real property under this section shall be accomplished using a quit claim deed or other legal instrument and upon terms and conditions mutually satisfactory to the Secretary and the Post, including such additional terms and conditions as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(g) TREATMENT OF ACQUIRED LAND.—Land and interests in land acquired by the United States under subsection (b) shall be administered by the Secretary as part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

(h) MODIFICATION OF BOUNDARY.—Upon completion of the land exchange under this section, the Secretary shall modify the boundary of the Gulf Islands National Seashore to reflect such land exchange.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4119, introduced by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO), authorizes the Park Service to convey to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 5699, 1½ acres located within the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Jackson County, Mississippi, in exchange for a 2.2-acre parcel of land opened by the VFW post.

This bill benefits both the VFW post and the Park Service, as it provides the VFW post with permanent access to their facility via a long driveway currently owned by the Park Service, while adding land contiguous to Gulf Islands National Seashore. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4119 is a simple, bipartisan bill that authorizes the exchange of two small parcels of land to provide needed access for our veterans in Mississippi.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5699 is located adjacent to a portion of Gulf Islands National Seashore. And while have having a national park in your backyard is a desirable condition, the post has found themselves landlocked and in need of direct access to their facility.

To solve this issue, the Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act will exchange approximately 2 acres of land owned by the VFW with 1.5 acres owned by the Federal Government. The acreage acquired by the VFW will be used to establish a short driveway directly to the post, while the land given in exchange to the Federal Government will be managed as part of Gulf Islands National Seashore.

This exchange is supported by both the VFW post and the National Park Service and is a simple and logical solution to a local issue. I am pleased to see the National Park Service and the VFW working together to form a solution for this issue.

I urge all Members to support this commonsense, bipartisan bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO), the sponsor of this bill and my friend.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4119, the Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act.

The Gulf Islands National Seashore is a national park that draws millions of visitors to the islands in the northern Gulf of Mexico. It includes the Mississippi barrier islands of Petit Bois Island, Horn Island, East and West Ship Island, and Cat Island, as well as the Davis Bayou Area.

I am proud to have this important park and its natural beaches, historic sites, and wildlife sanctuaries within my district.

The Gulf Islands National Seashore has been a part of the Mississippi Gulf Coast community since Congress established the park in 1971. Since that establishment, the Gulf Islands National Seashore has worked closely with the Mark Seymour Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW Post 5699. In fact, the post has shared a road with the seashore for the better part of the last 30 years.

The Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act would make permanent a 30-year easement that has provided an access road and driveway for the VFW. In exchange, the VFW will give the Gulf Islands National Seashore some of its acreage, which includes wetlands.

The Gulf Islands National Seashore and the VFW both strongly support this land exchange, but the Department of the Interior needs congressional approval before it can make the land exchange official. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I encourage the House to pass this bill today.

I would also like to thank Chairman BISHOP, Ranking Member TSONGAS, as well as Subcommittee Chairman MCCLINTOCK, and the Committee on Natural Resources, for their support and help in bringing this bill to the floor and seeing it across the finish line.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, if only the budget were this easy. I would ask for the adoption of this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4119, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MODERNIZING THE INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE ACT

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4472) to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4472

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) when a child in foster care cannot return safely home, the child deserves to be placed in a setting that is best for that child, regardless of whether it is in the child's State or another State;

(2) the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) was established in 1960 to provide a uniform legal framework for the placement of children across State lines in foster and adoptive homes;

(3) frequently, children waiting to be placed with an adoptive family, relative, or foster parent in another State spend more time waiting for this to occur than children who are placed with an adoptive, family, relative, or foster parent in the same State, because of the outdated, administratively burdensome ICPC process;

(4) no child should have to wait longer to be placed in a loving home simply because the child must cross a State line;

(5) the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) was launched in August 2014 in Indiana, Nevada, Florida, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia, and is expected to be expanded into additional States to improve the administrative process by which children are placed with families across State lines;

(6) States using this electronic interstate case-processing system have reduced administrative costs and the amount of staff time required to process these cases, and caseworkers can spend more time helping children instead of copying and mailing paperwork between States;

(7) since NEICE was launched, placement time has decreased by 30 percent for interstate foster care placements; and

(8) on average, States using this electronic interstate case-processing system have been able to reduce from 24 business days to 13 business days the time it takes to identify a family for a child and prepare the paperwork required to start the ICPC process.

SEC. 3. STATE PLAN REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 471(a)(25) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 671(a)(25)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''provide'' and insert ''provides''; and

(2) by inserting '', which, not later than October 1, 2026, shall include the use of an electronic interstate case-processing system'' before the 1st semicolon.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply to payments under part E of title IV of the Social Security Act for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date.

(2) DELAY PERMITTED IF STATE LEGISLATION REQUIRED.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) is required in order for a State plan developed pursuant to part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to meet the additional requirement imposed by the amendments made by subsection (a), the plan shall not be regarded as failing to meet any of the additional requirements before the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter beginning after the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. For purposes of the preceding sentence, if the State has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session is deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

SEC. 4. GRANTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC INTERSTATE CASE-PROCESSING SYSTEM TO EXPEDITE THE INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE OR GUARDIANSHIP, OR FOR ADOPTION.

Section 437 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 637) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) GRANTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC INTERSTATE CASE-PROCESSING SYSTEM TO EXPEDITE THE INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE OR GUARDIANSHIP, OR FOR ADOPTION.—

''(1) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subsection is to facilitate the development of an electronic interstate case-processing system for the exchange of data and documents to expedite the placements of children in foster, guardianship, or adoptive homes across State lines.

''(2) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—A State that desires a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Secretary an application containing the following:

''(A) A description of the goals and outcomes to be achieved during the period for which grant funds are sought, which goals and outcomes must result in—

''(i) reducing the time it takes for a child to be provided with a safe and appropriate permanent living arrangement across State lines;

''(ii) improving administrative processes and reducing costs in the foster care system; and

''(iii) the secure exchange of relevant case files and other necessary materials in real time, and timely communications and placement decisions regarding interstate placements of children.

''(B) A description of the activities to be funded in whole or in part with the grant funds, including the sequencing of the activities.

''(C) A description of the strategies for integrating programs and services for children who are placed across State lines.

''(D) Such other information as the Secretary may require.

''(3) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may make a grant to a State that complies with paragraph (2).

''(4) USE OF FUNDS.—A State to which a grant is made under this subsection shall use the grant to support the State in connecting with the electronic interstate case-processing system described in paragraph (1).

''(5) EVALUATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the final year in which grants are awarded under this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to the Congress, and make available to the general public by posting on a website, a report that contains the following information:

''(A) How using the electronic interstate case-processing system developed pursuant to paragraph (4) has changed the time it takes for children to be placed across State lines.

''(B) The number of cases subject to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children that were processed through the electronic interstate case-processing system, and the number of interstate child placement cases that were processed outside the electronic interstate case-processing system, by each State in each year.

''(C) The progress made by States in implementing the electronic interstate case-processing system.

''(D) How using the electronic interstate case-processing system has affected various metrics related to child safety and well-being, including the time it takes for children to be placed across State lines.

''(E) How using the electronic interstate case-processing system has affected administrative costs and caseworker time spent on placing children across State lines.

''(6) DATA INTEGRATION.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretariat for the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and the States, shall assess how the electronic interstate case-processing system developed pursuant to paragraph (4) could be used to better serve and protect children that come to the attention of the child welfare system, by—

''(A) connecting the system with other data systems (such as systems operated by State law enforcement and judicial agencies, systems operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of the Innocence Lost National Initiative, and other systems);

''(B) simplifying and improving reporting related to paragraphs (34) and (35) of section 471(a) regarding children or youth who have been identified as being a sex trafficking victim or children missing from foster care; and

''(C) improving the ability of States to quickly comply with background check requirements of section 471(a)(20), including checks of child abuse and neglect registries as required by section 471(a)(20)(B).''.

SEC. 5. CONTINUATION OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDING TO PROMOTE SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES.

Section 437(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 637(a)) is amended by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2017''.

SEC. 6. RESERVATION OF FUNDS TO IMPROVE THE INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN.

Section 437(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 637(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) IMPROVING THE INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN.—The Secretary shall reserve $5,000,000 of the amount made available for fiscal year 2017 for grants under subsection (g), and the amount so reserved shall remain available through fiscal year 2021.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4472, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of key points I would like to emphasize to explain how this legislation came to be and why I believe it is so important at this critical juncture.

First, my wife, Jenny, and I have four young children of our own. As a parent, I know I speak for millions when I say that every child deserves to grow up in a stable, loving home.

When the bond between parent and child is broken and children cannot safely return home, they deserve to be placed in a setting that is best for them, regardless of whether that is a home within their State or across a State line. However, due to various factors, children are languishing in the child welfare system, waiting to be placed with an adoptive family, a relative, or foster parents in another State.

One contributor is the fact that today, in order to place a child with a grandparent across a State line, caseworkers must literally print out hundreds of pages of paperwork, package it up, and mail case files to another State. The receiving State responds in kind, completing their portion, and then mailing the case file back. It is an antiquated process that, on average, takes more than 5 months to complete. At a time when communities, courts, and caseworkers across the country are already overwhelmed, this inefficient, paper-based placement process is simply unacceptable.

For children, the sooner we get them placed into a forever home, the better. I say this as someone with experience. Before entering Congress, I provided pro bono legal services for adoptive couples. These situations I have seen can be extremely hard on all parties, but none more so than the child.

□ 1400

You don't have to take my word for it. Statistics show that the longer a child remains in the child welfare system, the less likely they are to have successful outcomes later in life.

When proven interventions that can help these children present themselves, I believe it is our moral imperative to act. It is this belief that led to the solution we are discussing here today.

The Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act would incentivize States to connect to an electronic interstate case processing system that has already been tested in a handful of States, including my home State of Indiana and the District of Columbia.

These pilot programs achieved substantial reductions in the time it took to place these children into forever homes, reducing the time a child waited by 30 percent. For a child, that means a month and a half less time being shuffled from foster home to foster home and from being taken in and out of school without a set routine.

In one pilot scenario, Indiana had an emergency request to place a child with a relative in Florida. Use of the system allowed both pilot States to exchange their case information the very same day, which, under the current system, could have taken weeks.

In another scenario, an urgent matter came to Florida's attention where a placement was breaking down and the child needed to be moved.

The way the interstate placement process currently works, this child could have been sent back into the overloaded foster care system and back into temporary care arrangements for another couple of months. Instead, Florida's use of this electronic system made a long-term placement of the child possible within 48 business hours.

We can expect to see more of these positive results as use of this electronic system is expanded.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join Congressman TODD YOUNG in leading H.R. 4472, the Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

I joined my friend from Indiana in introducing H.R. 4472 because it would help us make progress on an important issue: reducing the barriers and delays that continue to exist when the best new home for a child is in a different State than the unsafe home the child had to leave.

Given that my Congressional District has one of the highest percentages of grandparents raising grandchildren in the Nation, followed closely by two other Congressional Districts in Illinois, child welfare issues are very personal to my constituents, to Chicago, and to my home State.

Removing barriers that delay or prevent interstate child placements is a long-time, bipartisan goal within Congress. This bill addresses an important factor in those delays: the ability of State computer systems to link up to process the paperwork. The current paper-based system is antiquated and slow.

As part of an HHS pilot project, seven States and the District of Columbia currently participate in the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise, or NEICE, an online tool that allows State office systems to talk to each other and process interstate placements more quickly. I am very proud of the fact that Illinois is one of these States.

An early evaluation found that this system reduced waiting times for affected children by about one-third. Ten other States have already announced plans to join the exchange over the next 2 years. H.R. 4472 would accelerate the number of participating States in the short run and ensure that all States participate in the long run.

The Director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, George Sheldon, often emphasizes that we need to operate in kid time, not adult time, meaning that we need to recognize the urgency of restoring permanency for children in child welfare, rather than allowing adult bureaucracy to impede permanency.

Modernizing the technology to increase efficiencies and quicken placements is common sense and respects the urgency of finding permanent, loving homes for children.

I am grateful to Mr. YOUNG of Indiana for ensuring that the bill expands upon existing progress on modernization within States and includes tribal foster care systems.

This is a good bill. I thank Mr. YOUNG and his staff for their excellent work. I am indeed pleased to join them.

I urge support to move forward on H.R. 4472.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague, Mr. DAVIS, and his staff for their hard work and his leadership on this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the State of Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), who represents Notre Dame country. She is a hardworking Member from my home State.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

This bill will reduce the amount of time kids wait to be adopted, placed with relatives, or placed with foster parents when they are going to a home in another State.

The current paper-based process keeps children waiting while caseworkers mail physical documents. This bill incentivizes States to connect to an electronic system that has been pilot-tested in a handful of States, including my home State of Indiana.

Getting at-risk kids into a stable, permanent environment as quickly as possible is critical to allowing them to thrive and reach their full potential. Each day they spend waiting for paperwork to be mailed back and forth is time wasted unnecessarily.

I want to thank my colleague, Congressman YOUNG of Indiana, for his leadership on this issue. I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4472 and do everything possible to get our most vulnerable children placed in a safe environment.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, while we are discussing H.R. 4472, reducing the time that it takes to process a child who might come from a different State for adoption or foster care placement, there are other issues of child welfare, one that I will mention.

The issues of child welfare have a long history of bipartisanship. In addition to the Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act, I hope to engage my colleagues in addressing the substance abuse needs of families involved in child welfare.

Aside from neglect, alcohol and other drug use is the number one reason for removal from the home. More specifically, approximately one-third of cases list alcohol or other drug use as the reason for the child's removal.

What is exciting is that we have good, clear empirical evidence that certain strategies have demonstrated effectiveness. Specifically, these quality interventions help children and families affected by substance abuse experience fewer days in care, higher reunification rates, less recurrence of child maltreatment, and better permanency over time.

I am preparing to introduce a bill that scales up these successes from smaller targeted interventions into full-scale interventions while building the research to better inform Federal policy overall.

My bill does two key things. First, it dedicated staff under Title IV-E for the coordination of substance abuse prevention and treatment services with child welfare services.

Secondly, it creates grants to expand the lessons learned from the research on smaller scale efforts to the State level, funding additional research to improve related Federal policy.

My home State of Illinois has led the Nation in addressing substance abuse issues in child welfare. We know that we need to do more to address this problem. We know that it works. And, of course, I look forward to being engaged in the development of programs and activities that would further enhance that kind of success.

Again, I want to thank Mr. YOUNG for his tremendous work on H.R. 4472.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT). He is one of the outstanding members of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I want to salute the gentleman and Mr. YOUNG for their bipartisan initiative here that would eliminate some of the current paperwork barriers that are preventing abused and neglected children from being quickly placed in safe, loving homes, which happen to be on the other side of a State border. Their coming together in this bipartisan initiative is constructive in helping some of the most vulnerable children in America.

It is unacceptable for children who already face so many challenges to have to deal with this additional hardship because the process, as it exists now, just is not working.

Based on the experience we have had with those States that were involved in a pilot program, we know that waiting times there were reduced by almost one-third.

I think, with that experience, we can move forward under this bill for an electronic information exchange that will work and will improve the times that these young people face.

While this bipartisan step is a welcome one, it should also serve as a reminder to us of all the work that remains.

Last week the National Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities, a commission that was created with legislation that I authored back in 2012, issued its final report entitled ''Within Our Reach: A National Strategy to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities.''

However you count them and however you may focus on the data needed to adequately describe this problem, there are far too many children in America today who do suffer, including many who actually are killed, by abuse and neglect.

Our committee, much in the tradition of this piece of bipartisan legislation, has addressed these issues on a bipartisan basis in the past. I hope that we can do the same with the report of the Commission, that we can move forward to consider some of its recommendations, like its unanimous recommendations.

This was a bipartisan Commission appointed by President Obama and by House and Senate Democratic and Republican leaders. They came together with unanimous recommendations on a number of pieces of legislation, such as the importance of renewing the home visiting programs that go out and work with young parents that strengthen families and help them be the kind of parents they want to be.

We need an ongoing conversation here about foster care financing. The reauthorization of programs like the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program is coming up this year, and the Home Visiting Program, fully known as the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, is up for renewal this next year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I hope we can find ways to work together to advance what has been done here and to advance specific legislation that will help reduce the number of children that suffer from abuse and neglect.

I must note, though, that at the same time this legislation was approved in our committee, under the Republican budget, the Social Services Block Grant was terminated. I hope that is not done by the Congress as a whole.

The Social Services Block Grant is a major source of funding for prevention of child abuse and neglect today, used by State and local governments to focus on prevention with far too little focus on prevention overall.

One of the major conclusions of this Commission on Child Fatalities is that we focus our attention so much on the end, after the abuse has occurred, and not on the beginning, to try to prevent abuse. We need to focus on prevention. So at the same time this bill was approved, that support was cut.

Hopefully, Congress will reject the bill to eliminate the Social Services Block Grant and we can come together to find more resources to do what must be done to prevent us from just lurching from one tragedy to another and help stabilize and support families working to see that children are protected. I thank the gentlemen again for their effort.

□ 1415

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to associate my remarks with those just made by Mr. DOGGETT relative to continuing the Social Services Block Grant funding, which has provided a tremendous amount of resources, and continues to do so, for social welfare programs, including those affecting children.

I also want to associate myself with the comments made relative to the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities. It just happens that one of the judges from my district, the presiding judge of the Child Protection Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County, serves on that commission and, of course, had some findings that were different than the commission report.

I think we need to consider all of those things as we move forward. But I am pleased to note that we are indeed making progress dealing with the issues of child welfare.

Again, I want to commend Mr. YOUNG and his staff for their work on H.R. 4472. I am pleased to join, and urge strong support for it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bipartisan, bicameral bill was developed through a yearlong process, consulting with key stakeholders to make sure that there would be broad support. It involved a whole lot of painstaking work from staff members on the committee, both Republican and Democrat, and from Mr. DAVIS, who I commend once again for his leadership on this issue, and his staff. And I want to thank all of the stakeholders involved.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from the American Public Human Services Association, the Children's Home Society of America, the Partnership for Strong Families, the Child Welfare League of America, the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, and the County Welfare Directors Association of California.

ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATORS OF THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2016.

Re Support for H.R. 4472, ''Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act''.

Hon. TODD YOUNG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. DANNY DAVIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES YOUNG AND DAVIS: The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), and its affiliate, the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC), which represents state executives responsible for overseeing the interstate placement of children, would like to thank you for introducing and co-sponsoring H.R. 4472, Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

This legislation will facilitate state participation in the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE), which is modernizing the now antiquated Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) administrative process. The bill complements our efforts to transform the ICPC by promoting policy changes and providing funding so that states may connect to the NEICE. Once fully operationalized, the NEICE will also be a valuable tool for addressing societal challenges that put children at risk, including the opiate and heroin epidemic, illegal rehoming of children, and sex trafficking.

Thank you again for introducing and cosponsoring H.R. 4472, and for your steadfast leadership to improve the lives of children waiting for safe, permanent families. We strongly support your efforts to modernize the interstate placement of children through this legislation, and intend to work vigorously for its passage.

Sincerely yours,

TRACY WAREING EVANS,
Executive Director,
APHSA.
MICAL ANNE PETERSON,
President, AAICPC.

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF AMERICA,
Chicago, IL, January 19, 2016.

Congressman TODD YOUNG,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN YOUNG: Children's Home Society of America (CHSA) is proud to support the efforts of Congressman Young as he proposes to modernize and expedite the ability of states to place children across state lines and into forever homes.

The Modernizing and Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act will replace an antiquated paper based system enabling not only greater efficiencies in the legal process of placing children but also create greater transparency and accountability in the overall process. By utilizing a nationwide computer based system, states will actually save money by reducing the administrative costs associated with complying with the ICPC, expedite communication between states and their placement systems and most importantly, reduce the time that children spend in the foster care system.

CHSA looks forward to supporting Congressman Young as he understands that no child should have to wait to be placed in a loving home simply because they must cross state lines.

Sincerely,

SHARON OSBORNE,
Board Chair,
Children's Home Society of America.

STRONG FAMILIES, INC.,
Gainesville, FL, March 4, 2016.

Re Support for H.R. 4472, Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

Hon. TODD YOUNG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. DANNY DAVIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES YOUNG AND DAVIS: First, many thanks for introducing and cosponsoring H.R. 4472, Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act. As the Immediate Past President of the Association of Administrators of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, it generates much excitement to see this legislation introduced. In a past position, I was the ICPC Compact Administrator for the State of Florida and had the opportunity to help develop the prototype for the electronic transmission process now realized through NEICE. It was our dream in Florida that one day this system could become a national reality. Good or bad, I must also confess that the acronym NEICE was my suggestion so in a couple of ways I feel like a parent to NEICE.

There is no doubt in my mind that implementation of this system in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands will change the lives of thousands of children who await placement with relatives or adoption finalization in another state. The additional uses for NEICE are subject only to the minds of those who can identify other possibilities such as combating human trafficking cases and unregulated custody transfers (rehoming).

Thank you again for introducing and cosponsoring H.R. 4472, and for your steadfast leadership to improve the lives of children waiting for safe, permanent families. The child welfare community strongly supports your efforts to modernize the interstate placement of children through this legislation, and intends to work vigorously for its passage.

Sincerely yours,

STEPHEN PENNYPACKER, Esq.,
President and CEO.

MARCH 4, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. TODD YOUNG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN YOUNG AND SENATOR GRASSLEY: The Child Welfare League of America offers its endorsement of your legislation, H.R. 4472 and S. 2574, The Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

We have long recognized the critical role that interstate placement of children has played in the timely placement of children in foster care and kinship care as well as its importance in promoting adoptions. Over the years it has become increasingly clear that these placements have been delayed to the significant detriment of children in need of permanence.

The recent efforts by the Department of Health and Human Services through the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise or NEICE pilot project has demonstrated significant speed up in these interstate placements with some children seeing there wait times reduced by weeks and months. In addition, the system has reduced cost and paper work. The six pilot states that utilized NEICE demonstrated wait times reduced by 30% with participating states savings of $1.6 million per year in reduced copying, mailing, and administrative costs.

We solute your leaders on this legislation and are equally pleased by the bipartisan spirit as represented by the original co-sponsorship of Congressman Davis, Congresswoman Brooks, Senator Gillibrand, Senator Franken and Senator Peters.

Thank you for your work and advocacy on behalf of children.

Sincerely,

CHRISTINE JAMES-BROWN,
President/CEO,
Child Welfare League of America.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ADOPTION ATTORNEYS, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY ATTORNEYS,
Washington, DC, February 16, 2016.

Hon. TODD YOUNG,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: I write as the President of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys to enthusiastically endorse H.R. 4472 on behalf of our organization. H.R. 4472 is a bill that provides swift stability and permanency to vulnerable children who are being placed in foster/adoptive homes or with guardians across state lines.

Drafted in 1960, the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (''ICPC'') exists to ensure protection for children in interstate placements. The ICPC requires every placement to be scrutinized for legality and appropriateness. It requires that children remain in the state of origin for weeks, or even months, while the required paperwork is mailed from the placing state ICPC's office to the new parent's home state's ICPC office.

The ICPC is well meaning, but by its very nature, slows down the process due to the paperwork and mailing burdens. A uniform legal framework offers valuable protections, but such protections must be weighed against the significant burden it imposes on children and families. With the advances in technology that have been used by other state and federal agencies for over a decade, the process can be significantly shortened and the most vulnerable members of our society can be provided permanency in stable loving homes. The centralized electronic system created by the passage of H.R. 4472 will be a victory for children, by expanding an electronic pilot program to all state and U.S. territories.

The pilot program has been an unqualified success. Since the pilot program was launched, the placement time for children placed through those pilot states has been reduced by 30 percent. Placement time has been reduced by 11 days. As a truly centralized system evolves, the efficiencies should be better and better.

The current slow ICPC process causes weeks, and sometimes months, of children languishing in their states of original residence. Social science and neuroscience research has confirmed that children need stable families to thrive. The paperwork barrier to quick foster/adoptive placements creates unnecessarily delays. One month in the life

of a child at this vulnerable stage is an eternity. Further, the delay caused by an outdated mailing system can result in significant developmental issues and treatment costs. In many instances, such treatment costs are incurred by local, state and federal governments. Prospective parents willing to provide homes to children in need of families have been subjected to placement processes that are extraordinarily difficult, risky, expensive and time consuming; often requiring months of persistence and intervention by members of Congress. Most significantly, the number of unparented children able to find families has been severely limited while the life potential of those fortunate enough to find families through foster care, guardianship and adoption has been impaired by weeks and months of needless delay.

Reform must begin with our government's acknowledgement that every child has a fundamental human right to be raised in a permanent loving family and that foster care, guardianship and adoption are an important means for providing such families to children living outside of parental care. Additionally, by eliminating this unnecessary delay, H.R. 4472 will reduce the treatment costs incurred by local, state and federal governments.

We have come together as a community of child advocates to identify a process that will reform interstate adoption. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our request with you and members of your staff. Please note, the changes we are endorsing would have little budget impact. We look forward to working with you in support of swift passage of this bill. To simplify your communication with us, please feel free to contact our Director of Adoption, Denise Bierly on behalf of our group.

Sincerely,

HERB BRAIL,
President,
American Academy of Adoption Attorneys.

COUNTY WELFARE
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION,
Sacramento, CA.

Re Support for H.R. 4472, ''Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act''.

Hon. TODD YOUNG,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. DANNY DAVIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES YOUNG AND DAVIS: The County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), representing the human services directors in California's 58 counties, supports the Modernizing the Interstate Placement of Children in Foster Care Act.

The bill will modernize the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) administrative process by replacing it with a successfully tested web-based electronic case processing system. The new National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) will change policies and provide funding to enable states and counties to connect to the NEICE to exchange data and documents across state jurisdictions so that our agencies may meet the unique needs of foster care children who may reside in another state. The proposed data exchange will enable state and counties more efficiently meet federal mandates for the timely services, placement and permanence of children in the foster care system, and will improve outcomes for children in foster care and their families.

Thank you again for introducing and cosponsoring H.R. 4472. Please contact Tom Joseph, Director of CWDA's Washington Office, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

FRANK J. MECCA,
Executive Director.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank those stakeholders once again for all their help in getting this across the finish line.

I am hoping for broad and fulsome support from all Members of this Chamber. I hope we can all agree here today that we should do everything possible to get our most vulnerable children immediately placed into the setting that is best for them, regardless of State boundary lines.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4472, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOT ARLINGTON INURNMENT RESTORATION ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4336) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4336

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. BURIAL OF CREMATED REMAINS IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY OF CERTAIN PERSONS WHOSE SERVICE IS DEEMED TO BE ACTIVE SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2410 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c)(1) The Secretary of the Army shall ensure that under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the cremated remains of any person described in paragraph (2) are eligible for inurnment in Arlington National Cemetery with military honors in accordance with section 1491 of title 10.

''(2) A person described in this paragraph is a person whose service has been determined to be active duty service pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to—

(A) the remains of a person that are not formally interred or inurned as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) a person who dies on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) FORMALLY INTERRED OR INURNED DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''formally interred or inurned'' means interred or inurned in a cemetery, crypt, mausoleum, columbarium, niche, or other similar formal location.

SEC. 2. REPORT ON CAPACITY OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs and the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the interment and inurnment capacity of Arlington National Cemetery, including—

(1) the estimated date that the Secretary determines the cemetery will reach maximum interment and inurnment capacity; and

(2) in light of the unique and iconic meaning of the cemetery to the United States, recommendations for legislative actions and nonlegislative options that the Secretary determines necessary to ensure that the maximum interment and inurnment capacity of the cemetery is not reached until well into the future, including such actions and options with respect to—

(A) redefining eligibility criteria for interment and inurnment in the cemetery; and

(B) considerations for additional expansion opportunities beyond the current boundaries of the cemetery.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous material on H.R. 4336, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all Members to support H.R. 4336, as amended.

This bill, which was introduced by our colleague, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), would ensure that Active Duty designees, including women Air Force pilots, are eligible for inurnment with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Active Duty designees are members of civilian groups who served alongside the regular Armed Forces during World Wars I and II. These brave men and women were often located in combat zones, where they risked their lives to protect the freedom that we should never take for granted.

Their contributions to the war effort was so vital that they have been granted the most prestigious title our Nation can bestow—that of veteran. As

such, they are eligible to be laid to rest in any cemetery administered by the National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

However, Arlington National Cemetery is run by the Department of the Army. Between 2002 and last year, the Army inurned Active Duty designees with military honors in Arlington National Cemetery. Unfortunately, last March, then-Secretary McHugh, reversed this policy, which means that many of those courageous individuals can no longer choose to be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

H.R. 4336, as amended, would reverse this decision and require the Army to provide Active Duty designees inurnments with military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, it is our duty as a Nation to ensure that those who have served our Nation are treated with the utmost respect and dignity, especially after they pass on.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4336, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4336, as amended.

Arlington National Cemetery has been called our Nation's most hallowed ground. Since the first military burial took place on May 13, 1864, Arlington is the final resting place for over 400,000 Active Duty servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

H.R. 4336, as amended, would overturn a recent change in Army policy and restore the right of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II, or WASP, to be buried in Arlington. These brave women volunteered for duty, and their service made a major contribution to our victory in World War II.

In addition, H.R. 4336 would restore the right of others who assisted in the war and whose service and sacrifice was recognized with the enacting of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977.

I applaud my colleagues, Representatives MARTHA MCSALLY and SUSAN DAVIS, for introducing this important bill and leading the fight, a fight that has widespread support and bipartisan support, to recognize the service of these brave women and others who helped us defeat the Axis Powers in World War II.

That we are bringing this to the floor during Women's History Month is a fitting tribute to women who served our Nation in the past and the women who today serve in our Active Duty forces. This is a matter of justice and a matter of fairness.

In 2009, we recognized the service and sacrifice of these brave men and women when we awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots. Today, we have the opportunity to do it again.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), the sponsor of this legislation, a combat veteran herself, a pilot of the A–10 Warthog from the Second District of Arizona.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in wholehearted support of H.R. 4336, the Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act. This is the right thing to do.

I want to thank the chairman for quickly moving this through the committee and to the floor, and Chairman THORNBERRY for signing off on it, so that we could do the right thing to allow these amazing women and these pioneers who went before us and who opened the door for so many of us women in the military to serve, that they could be laid to rest in a place of honor and a place of rest for the most hallowed, the most amazing men and women who have served and gone before us. The fact that these women were denied this right is unconscionable and, quite frankly, infuriating when we heard about it.

Let me tell you a little bit about the WASPs. The WASPs during World War II raised their right hand and said: I will support.

We needed pilots, we needed men and women to do whatever it took for the war effort. So these women went through training—1,074 of them went through training. An additional 28 actually already had flying experience and were directly brought in. So it was actually 1,102 that said: I am going to be a pilot. I am going to support the effort.

General Hap Arnold, at the time the head of the Army Air Corps, had intended that they be militarized. They went through military training, they marched, and they slept in barracks. They went through everything that the men alongside them did. The intent was to be militarized. The only reason they weren't militarized was because of hang-ups and sexism about the role of women in the military back then. Heaven forbid we have women military pilots. We couldn't handle it back then.

These women served anyway. They flew 60 million miles ferrying airplanes all over the theater. They towed targets for the ground gunners to practice shooting at targets. They trained male pilots to then head off to the war effort. Thirty-eight of them perished in training in the line of duty. Yet they still were in this quasi-civilian military status. They had no veterans benefits. They were passing the hat around to support getting their bodies back to their families. There was no recognition at the time, but they still served.

At the end of the war, they were discharged and told to go home—the men needed the cockpits. It wasn't until 1977 that this Congress passed a law finally giving them veterans' rights so that they would be treated as veterans. After the fact, they were given honorable discharges and they were given the medals that they deserved at the time.

We thought that this was finally over, the fight was over, that they would be recognized for all that they deserved, and they would be able to be laid to rest with full military honors. But a bureaucratic, technocratic glitch created another door that shut to them.

This is an extraordinary example, by the way, of somebody taking action to bring a wrong to our attention and for us to be able to make it right.

I want to highlight Elaine Harmon, who passed away, as one of the WASPs. She passed away last year. I met with her family and I read her hand-written will. She wanted to have her ashes in Arlington. She requested it. We thought that they were allowed, so the family put in a request. It wasn't until they got a letter back saying, ''Denied, WASPs are not allowed in Arlington,'' that they didn't just accept that no.

In the legacy of Elaine Harmon—and, by the way, these women were feisty; they were strong; they were not going to take no for an answer. In that spirit, her children and her granddaughter—and Erin Miller is with us in the gallery today—said, ''We are not going to take no for an answer. We are going to get awareness on this, and we are going to get my grandmother and the WASPs the right that they deserve.''

I first heard about this through the media in early January. We sprung into action working with our colleague, SUSAN DAVIS, getting sponsors. We are over 190 right now. This has been fast-tracked through the committee in order to allow them to be laid to rest there. Elaine Harmon's ashes are sitting on a shelf in her granddaughter's closet. We need to make this right as quickly as possible.

Let me just say, Mr. Chairman, this isn't just about the pioneers that we read about in history books. These WASPs were personal mentors to me. When I first went through combat training, we didn't really have any women we could look up to, and these amazing women came alongside me as wing-women to encourage me and to mentor me. I had three of them sitting in my front row at my chain of command ceremony when I took over command of an A–10 squadron. Dawn Seymour, Ruth Helm, and Eleanor Gunderson, they personally supported and encouraged me along the way. It is because of their service that the doors were opened for those of us in the military to serve. It is ridiculous that Arlington would close the gates to them at the very time they were opening up all positions to women in the military.

□ 1430

This is the right thing to do. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, especially during Women's History Month. The least we can do is allow the WASPs, including Elaine Harmon, to be laid to rest in Arlington as quickly as possible. Let's get this passed today. Let's get it through the Senate and onto the President's desk so that she can be laid to rest.

As for the rest who remain who choose to have their ashes laid to rest in Arlington, this is their right. The only reason they were not Active Duty at the time was due to sexism. It is time for us to shut this remaining door and give them this final resting place.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to not make references to occupants of the gallery.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER), who is on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for acknowledging the Women Airforce Service Pilots.

My father was a P–47 fighter pilot in World War II, and he was able to access the benefits that were due him in terms of his military career. It is only fitting now, during Women's History Month, that we begin to finally get the opportunity for the WASPs to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

I acknowledge my colleague Representative MCSALLY, in her great service to this country, and my colleague TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a combat helicopter pilot. I also acknowledge the veterans who serve on our Veterans' Affairs Committee's staff.

We recently had a ceremony with Brigadier General Wilma Vaught. She was the first woman to reach the brigadier general status and was the first woman to deploy within the Air Force bomber unit. She is an inspiration to us.

One of the important reasons for doing this bill now is that we learned recently during a hearing in the Veterans' Affairs Committee that women are the fastest growing group of veterans but that, often, our women veterans do not access the VA benefits, including health benefits and cemetery benefits, to which they are entitled. We need to encourage women who have served the country. You have served us, and now it is our turn to serve you. We need to encourage our women veterans to come forward for the benefits they deserve.

I thank my colleague from Arizona, and I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for bringing this bill forward. It is an important bill, and it is a great time to do it.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Sixth District of Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), another combat veteran and a member of our Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4336.

In Colorado Springs, Colorado, a monument stands to honor the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs. With this legislation, we salute them today, and we recognize that we neglected to salute them for far too long.

During World War II, more than 1,000 WASPs flew over 60 million air miles. Without official military recognition, families were forced to pay out of pocket to send 36 fallen comrades home. After the war, the United States continued to deny them military status despite their extraordinary service to our country.

Today, we can help correct some of that injustice. H.R. 4336 would restore the right for these women to be buried at Arlington. These women paved the way for the women in uniform today. They endured gender-based discrimination for years, and they served and died just as other members of the military did. I believe they belong in Arlington.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for giving me this opportunity to stand up here during Women's History Month and to say this is a bipartisan piece of legislation that is well done and overdue.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that there were women who went before me who were brave and who were courageous and who did all of the jobs that were asked of them in a manner that was of high standard. They gave and sacrificed on my behalf, and now we have the opportunity to eliminate some of the last vestiges of disparate treatment or secondary treatment, or treating them as second-class citizens.

I rise in support of this legislation, and I congratulate my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for having brought this to our attention and for giving us the opportunity to express our support.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM), a veteran himself and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation that recognizes the services of certain groups of men and women who have valiantly served their country.

When the GI Bill Improvement Act became law in 1977, it contained language that was championed by Senator Barry Goldwater and by Louisiana's own Lindy Boggs that deemed certain groups of women, civilians, and foreigners who served the United States as Active Duty in order to qualify for benefits administered by the VA. Ultimately, nearly 35 groups have been made eligible for benefits through that law. These include the Women Airforce Service Pilots, the U.S. merchant seamen who served on blockships in Operation Mulberry on D-Day, male civilian ferry pilots, U.S. civilians of the American Field Service, and many, many more.

In recognition of their service, the cremated remains of these groups may be inurned in all cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the VA. However, Arlington National Cemetery is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense, not of the VA. This bill recognizes all of the individuals who are eligible to have their cremated remains inurned in Arlington National Cemetery to include groups that have been given veteran status in the GI Bill Improvement Act, including the WASPs.

Decades after Congresswoman Boggs championed this legislation, I am proud to continue Louisiana's long tradition of support for these groups by cosponsoring this bill.

I thank, most greatly, Congresswoman MCSALLY for introducing this very important piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it. It is long past due that we recognize these women and men who have served this country.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the 12th District of Illinois (Mr. BOST), a marine and a member of our Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. BOST. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, World War II was a time when Americans came together to defend this Nation against evil. Entire families enlisted in this effort, which included many brave and dedicated women of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs.

The WASPs flew military aircraft in noncombat roles, and they served as instructors for male pilots. When the WASP program was created, it was intended that these women would receive full military status. Sadly, this goal has not been achieved. That is why H.R. 4336 is so important. It overturns a previous Army directive and restores the burial rights in Arlington National Cemetery for WASP veterans.

I ask that all of my colleagues join me in supporting these women's rights of putting them in the place they need to be and in receiving those full military benefits.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from the Second District of Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the chairman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, during the peak of World War II, Sandy Thompson, now a Houston resident, left her teaching job and received her aviation wings on September 11, 1943. She had just volunteered for the Women Airforce Service Pilots, known as the WASPs.

These pilots had towed targets for live antiaircraft practice. Think about that, Mr. Speaker. They are in the air, and these young teenagers are learning how to shoot antiaircraft guns and to aim them at the targets behind these female pilots who are pulling these—a dangerous occupation. These pilots helped deliver planes to overseas bases, and they tested new aircraft that was used in the Pacific and used in Europe, and, of course, they trained male pilots who went overseas.

Of the 1,000 women who were WASPs, 38 were killed during their missions, and 16 of these original pilots of World War II now live in my State of Texas.

They were considered civilians until 1977. Then Congress gave them veteran status. In 2002, the WASPs were allowed to be cremated and have their ashes placed in Arlington National Cemetery—right down the street from this building. Now bureaucrats have decided that these veterans are not worthy of a proper military burial, and they have revoked the burial rights at Arlington because of space. This is disgraceful, shameful, and is a sorry excuse to dishonor them.

Find space to permanently honor these women. As a former member of the United States Air Force Reserves, I urge that we show respect to these pilots—give them proper burials, and pass this legislation.

And that is just the way it is.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE).

Ms. FUDGE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank all of the men and women who have sacrificed and served this Nation.

I can't imagine why any person of sound mind would deny women the right to the same benefits, to the same recognition that men get who serve this Nation. I would think that not one person would deny them this right. I cannot imagine why those who serve would have to fight for the dignity that each and every single person who serves this country should have.

I support this legislation, and I support the people who support it. Anybody who doesn't should not be in this building.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from the 27th District of the Lone Star State, Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, it shouldn't take an act of Congress for these women to be inurned in Arlington National Cemetery. We have heard from numerous people on both sides of the aisle that this is simply the right thing to do. The Army should have just said, ''Yes, let's get them buried there.'' The President should have used his pen and phone and ordered the Army to do it if they wouldn't. Guess what. We are here now, and it is going to take an act of Congress, and it is going to be a very strong act of Congress. I can't imagine not passing this out of this House unanimously, and I suspect we will see similar results in the Senate.

The remains of this woman should not have to rest in her granddaughter's closet. They should be inurned in Arlington now. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill unanimously. I urge the Senate to act quickly. I urge President Obama to sign this into law. It is, simply, the right thing to do. We have just got to do it.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In recent hearings, many of the service organizations have indicated that this was one of their top priorities. Women have served in every single war in this country, and they deserve the same benefits and recognition as men.

I urge my colleagues to support this important and timely bill in order to honor those brave women and others whose efforts were essential in the victory of World War II.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Again, I encourage all my fellow colleagues to support H.R. 4336, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4336, ''Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act of 2016'' which directs the Department of the Army to ensure that the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots are eligible for interment in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

I support this legislation sponsored by Congresswoman MARTHA MCSALLY of Arizona, because the women who have devoted their lives to the armed services deserve appropriate recognition and praise for their sacrifice.

This important bill provides the remains of a person who dies on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, and whose service has been determined to be active duty, eligibility for inurnment in Arlington National Cemetery.

The Secretary of the Army shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs and the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the interment and inurnment capacity of Arlington National Cemetery.

With respect to the unique and iconic meaning of the cemetery to the United States, the Secretary of the Army determines necessary considerations for additional expansion opportunities beyond the current boundaries of the cemetery.

The Secretary of the Army must submit the estimated date the cemetery will reach maximum interment and inurnment capacity.

The Secretary of the Army has the ability to redefine eligibility criteria for interment and inurnment in the cemetery.

Implementation of the arrangements necessary to facilitate the burial of the cremated remains should be a priority.

It is our responsibility to ensure that the suitable recognition is provided to Americans who have devoted their time and physical assistance towards our freedom.

This bill actively displays our gratitude towards all who participated in the armed services.

Even after death, we reflect on their contributions with our hearts and minds for those who put themselves in harm's way to protect our nation.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 4336.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4336, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 653;

Adopting House Resolution 653, if ordered; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4742, H.R. 4755, and H.R. 4336.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2745, STANDARD MERGER AND ACQUISITION REVIEWS THROUGH EQUAL RULES ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 24, 2016, THROUGH APRIL 11, 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 653) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2745) to

amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 24, 2016, through April 11, 2016, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 231, nays 154, not voting 48, as follows:

[Roll No. 131]

YEAS—231

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—154

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Beatty
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—48

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
DeLauro
DelBene
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Green, Al
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Murphy (PA)
Nolan
Nugent
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rush
Sanford
Scalise
Schakowsky
Smith (WA)
Speier
Welch
Westmoreland
Wilson (FL)

□ 1506

Mr. CUMMINGS changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE BRUSSELS TERRORIST ATTACKS

The SPEAKER. The Chair would ask all present to rise for the purpose of a moment of silence.

The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks in Brussels.

Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the adoption of House Resolution 653.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 233, noes 154, not voting 46, as follows:

[Roll No. 132]

AYES—233

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher

Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—154

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Beatty
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—46

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
DeLauro
DelBene
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Green, Al
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Nolan
Nugent
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rush
Sanford
Scalise
Schakowsky
Smith (WA)
Speier
Welch
Wilson (FL)

□ 1514

Mr. TONKO changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROMOTING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4742) to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 383, nays 4, not voting 46, as follows:

[Roll No. 133]

YEAS—383

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Gene
Griffith
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Norcross
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—4

Amash
Gohmert
Grothman
Massie

NOT VOTING—46

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
DeLauro
DelBene
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Green, Al
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Nolan
Nugent
Payne
Pelosi

Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rush
Sanford
Scalise
Schakowsky
Smith (WA)
Speier
Welch
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1521

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

INSPIRING THE NEXT SPACE PIONEERS, INNOVATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND EXPLORERS (INSPIRE) WOMEN ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4755) to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 380, nays 3, not voting 50, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

YEAS—380

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Norcross
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—3

Amash
Gohmert
Massie

NOT VOTING—50

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Brady (TX)
Bustos
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
DeLauro
DelBene
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Green, Al
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Nolan
Nugent
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rokita
Rush
Sanford
Scalise
Schakowsky
Smith (WA)
Speier
Walker
Welch
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1527

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 134, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOT ARLINGTON INURNMENT RESTORATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4336) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 0, not voting 48, as follows:

[Roll No. 135]

YEAS—385

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver

Clyburn
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Norcross
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—48

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bustos
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Cicilline
Cohen
DeLauro
DelBene
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Farr
Fincher
Green, Al
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Kelly (IL)
Labrador
Lee
Love
Lowenthal
McGovern
Meeks
Moulton
Neal
Nolan
Nugent
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rush
Sanford
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schweikert
Smith (WA)
Speier
Welch
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1534

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial in Arlington National Cemetery of the cremated remains of certain persons whose service has been determined to be active service.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I missed the following votes:

1. Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule for H.R. 2345. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

2. H. Res. 653—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2745—Standard Merger and Acquisitions Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

3. H.R. 4742—Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on this bill.

4. H.R. 4755—Inspiring the Next Space Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on this bill.

5. H.R. 4336—Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act, as amended. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on this bill.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

PENNSYLVANIA WILDFIRE WEEK

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Pennsylvania's Wildfire Prevention Week, which will be observed through this Saturday.

As chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry and the Representative of Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which includes the Allegheny National Forest, I know how quickly simple brush fires can get out of control at this time of the year, often devastating acres of forest. In Pennsylvania, it is estimated that nearly 7,000 acres of State and private land are burned each year. Additionally, nearly all brush fires, an estimated 85 percent, occur in the months of March, April, and May.

Because of the prevalence of fires at this time of the year, I also want to praise the efforts of our fire departments across the Commonwealth. These men and women, the vast majority of whom are volunteers, volunteer their time and service to their communities and often put their lives on the line to save property and homes impacted by fires which grow out of control.

Nearly all wildfires are caused by human activity, which is why it is so important that we continue to educate the public on commonsense ways to stop them before they start.

COUNTDOWN TO EARTH DAY 2016

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, to mark this first week of spring, this week I launched a Countdown to Earth Day 2016 across our congressional district, a district that encompasses the largest watershed in the entire Great Lakes, that flows into Lake Erie.

With greater rainfall causing rising nutrient runoff and with millions of people and livestock inhabiting this watershed, the persistent and growing challenge of algal blooms into Lake Erie threatens our precious freshwater supply.

This 21st century challenge is one we must meet. Thus, each week until Earth Day, April 22, I intend to focus on practical ways citizens can help to restore our ecosystem.

This week our focus is people helping pollinators, as pollinators—bees, butterflies, hummingbirds—are key to

abundant plant growth in a region that needs less erosion, more wetland filtration, better land and plant management. And one of three foods you eat is dependent on pollinators.

Citizen plantings of staple garden standards such as parsley, dill, fennel, and other herbs contribute to pollinator support and ecosystem health. They are landing pads for the growth of caterpillars and other beneficial insects.

Everyone can help. For that reason, I encourage all Americans to get outside, enjoy the new spring, restore our environment, and plant helpful herbs in your gardens and properties to pass on a healthier ecosystem to the next generation.

TERRORIST ATTACK IN BRUSSELS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as passengers boarded their early morning flights and commuters boarded the train to work, multiple bombs exploded in Brussels.

Days after Belgian law enforcement captured alive ISIS terrorist Salah Abdeslam, one of the suspected ringleaders in the Paris attacks, ISIS terrorists struck again. At least 30 civilians were murdered and more than 200 others were injured.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the U.S.' current strategy against ISIS, which has allowed terrorist organizations to retain havens from which to plan and launch attacks for nearly 2 years, is inadequate. Empty words claiming progress, containment, and success are meaningless.

The latest attack is not surprising. Attacks will come to our soil if our leaders continue to refuse to define the enemy—radical Islam. Jihadists have promised to bring terror to the United States. They will deliver on that promise if we do not use our full resources to eliminate them. They are at war with us. Whether we are at war with them is still very unclear.

So as we mourn for the people of Belgium, the United States should work with all free people to eliminate this evil group, this terrorist group, ISIS.

And that is just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING DAVID PRINGLE FOR 37 YEARS OF SERVICE TO AFLAC INSURANCE COMPANY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize David Pringle on his retirement and to congratulate him on his 37 years of service to Aflac Insurance Company.

Mr. Pringle began his work with Aflac as a sales associate in Mississippi, North Carolina, and West Virginia. Through hard work and dedication to the company, he was promoted to the senior vice president of government relations in 1990. He has maintained that position ever since.

One of Mr. Pringle's most notable accomplishments for Aflac is Aflac's State employee training program, which he developed while working at Aflac's global headquarters.

Through his years of service, Mr. Pringle has established himself as an expert in the field of health care, writing several publications on healthcare reform and insurance policies.

Mr. Pringle's dedication to Aflac and his service to the betterment of the entire insurance industry will certainly be missed. I wish him the best with his future endeavors.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF FIVE OUTSTANDING UNITED STATES AIR FORCE LEADERS

(Mr. HARDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of five of the most outstanding leaders in the United States Air Force. These five men—Major General Jay Silveria, Brigadier General Christopher Short, Colonel Richard Boutwell, Colonel Thomas Dempsey, and Colonel Aaron Steffens—have all served with honor and distinction at the Nellis Air Force Base back in my district in southern Nevada.

As a freshmen Member of Congress, I couldn't have asked for a better cadre of officers to lead the many young servicemembers who call my district home.

It has been a privilege to develop strong working relationships with each of these commanders and to seek their informed counsel on some of the most pressing issues affecting the readiness and the capabilities of our Air Force, as well as our national security priorities.

While I am sad to see them go, I know that they will bring the same integrity and leadership to their new commands.

To Tonto, Junior, Chase, Vader, and Fangs, the Nation is grateful for your service, and I wish you the best.

Aim high.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GROTHMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, in 1981, we started a national celebration in the United States honoring women. Congress passed legislation which authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week of March 7, 1982, as Women's History Week.

□ 1545

Throughout the next 5 years, Congress continued to pass joint resolutions designating a week in March as Women's History Week.

In 1987, Congress passed a new statute which designated the entire month of March, 1987, as Women's History Month.

Between 1988 and 1994, Congress passed additional resolutions requesting and authorizing the President to proclaim March of each year as Women's History Month.

Since 1985, Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as Women's History Month.

We have so many women all throughout our country and each one of our congressional districts who have gone above and beyond and have etched their place into history through their outstanding service to their community and their country.

We have women who serve in our military, who are teachers in our classrooms, women who are first responders, artists, and businessowners.

I certainly wouldn't be able to be where I am today, standing here in this Chamber, if not for all the women in my life, especially my two daughters, Mikayla and Arianna.

There are two women who have strong New York-1 roots. One is from Setauket. Anna Strong was an American patriot and a member of the Culper Spy Ring, George Washington's military intelligence unit.

As part of George Washington's network of spies, she literally put it all on the line for liberty during the American Revolution, hanging different garments on her clothesline as a signal to other patriots on the movements of the British forces throughout Long Island.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis was the First Lady to our 35th President, John F. Kennedy. Jackie O was born on the east end of Long Island in Southampton. In addition to her role as First Lady, she is also remembered for her contributions to the arts and historic preservation.

In each one of our districts, we can personalize what Women's History

Month means to our individual districts because etched in the history going back in generations there is so much sacrifice to be able to not only take care of their families, but to advance their communities and their country.

The freedom and liberty that we cherish here in this Chamber would not be possible without the sacrifices of so many whom we honor throughout the year at different times, but it is the month of March in particular that we take an extra special pause to say thank you.

Before I served in Congress, I served in the New York State Senate. During my time there, there were countless measures to be supported ensuring that women are protected and given access to opportunity, security, and prosperity. As one of our colleagues, VIRGINIA FOXX, recently pointed out, every issue is a woman's issue.

In 2012 and 2013, while serving in the State senate, I had the opportunity to vote in favor of the New York State Senate's Women's Equality Agenda, which passed the senate in both years.

It was a robust package of legislation to help with various protections, including what I am supportive of: equal pay for equal work.

I also voted to create a workforce training program within the Department of Labor. I fought for this program because, with the current state of the economy, many women and their families are struggling.

This program would help women to obtain higher paying jobs and give them access to better opportunities to provide for themselves and their families.

In State houses all across this country and local governments as well, there are opportunities to provide more of a chance for that woman and her family to be able to achieve truly the American Dream.

But sometimes government, regulations, and laws can block and prevent that access, access to educational opportunities, the ability to maybe own your own small business and grow it into something greater.

It is our duty, whether you are serving as a village mayor or a local town supervisor or if you are a Member of the United States Congress, to seek out opportunities to best represent those for whom we are elected to be their voice and ensure that they are given maximum opportunity to succeed.

I am pleased to be joined this afternoon by Mrs. DIANE BLACK, who is an amazing, exceptional woman in her own right.

I am sure that, at some point, there will be a Women's History Month Special Order in this Chamber a couple of generations from now where they will be talking about all of your outstanding service. You have not only served your district well, but have served our entire country well.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, Mr. ZELDIN, for yielding to me.

I have been sitting here listening to the gentleman's words, and I will say that I am honored to have the gentleman here talking about the women in his life, particularly his wife and his two daughters, and what the future may bring for them.

Mr. Speaker, it is often said that every issue is a woman's issue, and it is true. I know Representative ZELDIN just made that comment.

When we talk about tax reform for our small businesses, this directly impacts 30 percent of small business-owners who are women.

When we talk about repealing ObamaCare's harmful 30-hour rule that is depressing hours and wages, we do so with the knowledge that the majority of those harmed by this rule are women.

When we talk about preserving and protecting the American Dream for future generations, we do so with the hope that young girls like my two granddaughters would be able to live a life that they choose for themselves, not that someone else chooses for them.

For me, this topic is deeply personal. I spent the first years of my life living in public housing, the daughter of parents with no more than a ninth grade education. I know how matters of poverty acutely impact women because I lived it.

I came from a background where people didn't always know how to dream, and as a result, I was prepared to settle for a life of unfilled potential.

I had started to believe that, as a young woman growing up in the 1950s and 1960s who literally lived on the other side of the track, that maybe the American Dream wasn't for me.

But, in time, Mr. Speaker, doors of opportunity were opened that helped me realize a plan for my life that was greater than I could ever imagine.

I became the first person in my family to earn a college degree. I fulfilled my desire to become a registered nurse, and I became privileged to serve the State of Tennessee in the legislature and now in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I have traveled to far corners of the world, and I have seen the struggle that women endure for access to education, a paycheck, and for real independence.

I am also keenly aware that only here in this country is this story of mine possible. Only here could someone like me go from living in the halls of a public housing complex to serving in the Halls of the United States Congress. That is why we call it the American Dream.

On this Women's History Month, we must resolve to ensure that stories like mine aren't unique. The work we do here in Congress must reach today's young women with the truth that they have God-given gifts waiting to be used and that the American Dream is theirs to share in as well.

I again thank Congressman ZELDIN for bringing us together for this important conversation.

Mr. ZELDIN. I thank Mrs. BLACK for her important words and again for all her service.

One of the things that I will forever be inspired by with regard to Mrs. BLACK's service here in this Chamber is how much she values family and the strength of a strong family and the need for champions at all levels of government to fight on their behalf.

I mentioned earlier my two daughters, Mikayla and Arianna, identical girls. They are 9½. They are finishing fourth grade. When they were born, they were less than a pound and a half. They were born 14½ weeks early.

I was actually in Iraq in 2006, and a Red Cross message came out and said that my wife, Diana, went into labor and the babies weren't going to make it. It was a sad time. It was the 22nd week.

The doctors at Georgetown University Hospital were amazing. Somehow they managed to keep my daughters alive for 3 more weeks. They were born in the 25th week.

These girls went through more in their 3½ months in the hospital than I would ever wish upon anyone to have to experience. You learn a lot about prayer.

I hope this is okay. We probably accepted prayers in about 16 different religions during that experience. We would see these twins on one side of our girls, and the twins might be growing faster than ours. We might say to ourselves why aren't our girls growing as quickly as those two. But then on the other side there might be triplets, and you are watching parents mourn the loss of one of their triplets.

You learn to count your blessings, understanding that it is not about you. It is about them. Thanks to the miracle of prayer and modern medicine, they were able to come home.

They were on about a dozen medications each and heart monitors. It wasn't easy. They didn't hit 8 pounds until they were about 13 months old. But these girls were so strong. What they experienced during their time in the hospital was absolutely amazing to me and my wife.

They had multiple surgeries while they were there. There was a time where one of my daughters went into what is call septic shock, which has a 80, 90 percent mortality rate. While she was in septic shock, she had a stroke.

The doctors actually recommended that my wife and I discontinue treatment. Mikayla wasn't getting any better, but she wasn't getting any worse

for about 24 hours, up to this point where the doctors were recommending that we discontinue treatment and let her go.

We decided that, if she was going to keep fighting, we would keep fighting with her. We elected to do this really risky brain surgery. My wife and I went to her and said goodbye. We went to the waiting room expecting the worst and hoping for the best.

The doctors came to us when surgery was done and said that Mikayla is not out of the woods yet, but things went better than expected. With a whole lot of fight, strength, prayer, and a lot of amazing medicine and expertise at that hospital, they are doing great. They are doing great.

Now, Mikayla ended up getting some early intervention when she was younger. My two daughters are equals with their peers. They have caught up to them. Just think of how many opportunities were provided to these girls from the moment they went into the hospital to today to be able to survive and to succeed.

Now, there are a lot of decisions that get made here in this Chamber that impact women, future women leaders of our country, young girls and boys who aren't old enough to vote.

Yet, some of the most important consequences of the decisions made in this Chamber impact not just the women of today, but those of tomorrow who don't even have a vote.

There are women in this Chamber now. I have a few freshman colleagues who come to mind. And there are several women who were elected.

ELISE STEFANIK is the youngest woman ever elected to Congress. She just turned 31 years old.

MARTHA MCSALLY is the first female fighter pilot in American military history. She is serving here now as a freshman. I believe a happy birthday is in order to her.

I would say maybe happy 27th birthday, if you are listening. I don't want to get myself into trouble, but happy birthday to Martha.

MIA LOVE is the first Black Republican woman, but she is Mormon and Haitian. She is all sorts of firsts and is inspiring so many.

All of the three women I have just mentioned—and there are more that I could mention—are inspiring my daughters' generation to aim high because you may be a veteran, you might become a teacher, you might some day be an elected official or an artist or a businessowner.

□ 1600

It is good to have role models. That is why I speak about Anna Strong, an American patriot, who is part of that story of how our Nation was founded. Or, as I mentioned, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who was born in the First Congressional District of New York.

The decisions that we make here in this Chamber impact that next generation not even old enough to vote. So when we talk about the economy and budgets and debts and deficits, do you know what? I am not as concerned about the person who is part of making that decision or has a voice as much as a strong passion and emotion for that young girl who is going to be inheriting the consequences of passing the buck off to people who aren't even old enough to vote.

I spoke of my daughters, I talk about health, I talk about prayer, I talk about education, and the decisions that are made in this Chamber, in State houses, and local governments that provide opportunities for the business owners and the teachers while we pause on Women's History Month to honor those who have come before us. It is every day while we serve, every day that we serve, that we should pursue those opportunities in any way possible for anyone around now or that future generation.

I am proud to say that the highest ranking Republican woman in the United States of America is standing right next to me. We all deeply admire CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS on so many levels for her outstanding leadership in this Chamber. I know that some of the women's names I just mentioned who now serve here, or my daughters who are looking for role models in life, that so many look up to you as they do Mrs. BLACK, who spoke just before you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS).

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate his service and his leadership on behalf of the people of New York and for being an advocate to make history move forward for women.

As we walk these halls of Congress, it is hard to miss the bronze and marble reminders of women who blazed the trail before us. We follow their lead, remember their struggles, and enjoy the rights and freedoms they have helped us secure. Perhaps the most lasting tribute we can make for them is through our effort to make history for the next generation of trailblazers.

Friends, we are nearing the end of Women's History Month, and I have reflected on the words of our beloved First Lady Nancy Reagan, who passed away earlier this month: ''Feminism is the ability to choose what you want to do.'' Her words remind me just how much young girls need role models. They need to be able to look up to courageous women in every field who inspire them to dream so that they can say: She's cool. That's what I want to do, too.

Women like Dr. Shelley Redinger, the Superintendent of Spokane Public Schools in Spokane, who has been on the forefront of significantly improving graduation rates. She represents the school district by serving on several community boards, yet still finds time to visit or teach a class in one of the district's 50 schools.

Women like Dr. Patricia Butterfield, the dean of the WSU College of Nursing, who is recognized both in nursing and health sciences as a regional, national, and international scholar, and takes time to inspire her own students to have a sense of discovery.

Women like Brooke Martin, a 15-year-old from eastern Washington, who 3 years ago developed the idea for iCPooch to solve her dog's separation anxiety using video chat. After coming in second in a prestigious science competition, her invention is now sold on three continents.

It is my honor to represent these inspirational women. As the second chairwoman of the House Republican Conference, it is a privilege to serve alongside my passionate, accomplished, and talented House Republican colleagues, who are as diverse as the regions we represent.

RENEE ELLMERS and DIANE BLACK were nurses.

MIMI WALTERS was a stockbroker.

MARTHA MCSALLY was a colonel in the Air Force and the first female fighter pilot.

BARBARA COMSTOCK juggled starting a family with completing law school before she became chief counsel of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

SUSAN BROOKS was a U.S. attorney in Indiana, prosecuting high-profile cases of mortgage fraud and online child exploitation.

VIRGINIA FOXX was the first in her family to go to college. She later earned a master's degree and a doctorate in education and served as president of a community college.

KAY GRANGER was the first woman to be elected mayor of Fort Worth and is the first and only Republican woman elected from Texas to the House of Representatives.

MARSHA BLACKBURN was the first woman to sell books door to door for Southwestern Company. After working her way up in the company, Marsha left to build a small business of her own.

VICKY HARTZLER was raised on the farm, served in the Missouri State House until taking time off after adopting a baby daughter, and then became the second Republican woman elected to Congress from Missouri.

JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER is the first Hispanic in history to represent Washington State in the House, and her daughter is the first child to survive Potter's Syndrome.

LYNN JENKINS was raised on a dairy farm, and she is a certified public accountant.

CYNTHIA LUMMIS was the youngest woman elected to the Wyoming Legislature.

CANDICE MILLER served as Michigan's first female secretary of state.

KRISTI NOEM left college early to help run her family's ranch after her father died, but later earned her bachelor's degree in 2012, while serving in Congress.

MARTHA ROBY worked at a law firm, and she is one of the first two women elected to Congress from Alabama.

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN is the first Cuban American Latina elected to Congress.

ANN WAGNER was the United States Ambassador to Luxembourg.

JACKIE WALORSKI wore many hats. She was a television reporter, a missionary, and even the executive director of her local Humane Society.

ELISE STEFANIK, at 30, was the youngest woman ever elected to Congress.

MIA LOVE is the first African American Republican woman to serve in the House.

AMATA RADEWAGEN is the first woman elected to serve in Congress from American Samoa.

Each story is unique and incredible, and our presence in Congress is a reminder that all issues are women's issues.

For women in every corner of the country, we care about achieving a better life for ourselves and our children.

As Congresswoman BLACKBURN so aptly put it: It is a poetic coincidence that Mrs. Reagan passed away during this month of remembrance. She will go down in history as one of the most influential and consequential first ladies in American history, and a permanent fixture in our memories.

The onus is now on us as women leaders to show girls across this country that with hard work, they can achieve anything. No dream is too big and no goal too farfetched. We take seriously this responsibility to encourage and empower the next generation of female leaders with how we interact, how we present ourselves as leaders, and the policies we choose to pursue.

That is why House Republicans are building an agenda to restore a confident America, where every American feels secure in their lives and in their futures. Let's focus on a bright future for every American, every woman, to live courageously, follow their hearts, see potential in others, and be risktakers. That is where women can keep making history for generations to come.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS for being a strong leader, a trailblazer, and a role model to many women who serve here in this Chamber and to, I am sure, countless women inside of her district and all around this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS), who was referenced by Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, for her role taking on incredible responsibility inside of our Justice Department ensuring that America and her community was safe. She continues her service here today as an important leader and voice in this Chamber.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding, and I thank him for leading this Special Order. I want to also thank and commend him for his service to our country in his many years of service in the armed services.

I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, as have those who have gone before me.

One hundred years ago, the very first woman was elected to Congress. Her name was Representative Jeannette Rankin. She was elected by the people of the great State of Montana to serve in the House of Representatives. This was even a few years before women were given the right to vote in this country.

Since then, 313 women have served in Congress as United States representatives, delegates, or Senators. So think about that: 100 years and only 313 women have been elected to represent their home districts and States in this country.

I am very proud to be here with the gentlewoman from Tennessee, and we just heard from the gentlewoman from the State of Washington, and I am proud to be one of these 313 women.

When I was elected, I joined my colleague from Indiana, JACKIE WALORSKI, and we were, in fact, the first Republican women elected to represent the State of Indiana in 53 years. It had been 53 years since a representative—her name was Cecil Hardin—represented the western part of our State. She served in Congress for 10 years from 1949 to 1959.

One hundred years after Representative Rankin made history by winning the first congressional seat held by women, women like me are still making history by running and winning elected office. Today, I serve in the House of Representatives with 84 women. As you have just heard, we are as diverse as the places we represent. Yet, as I talk to my colleagues, we all agree on one thing: We have much more work to do. Even though there are a record number of women in Congress, we are still just 20 percent of the total.

We are not alone, however, in that gender disparity. From Congress to State legislatures, to governors and mayor's offices, women represent about one in five elected officials. That figure has remained relatively consistent since the 1990s. We have plateaued.

It is not just in Congress. That same gender disparity can be seen at the Emmy Awards, in the executive boardroom, and in the newsroom.

This Women's History Month, instead of just focusing on all of the incredible accomplishments and achievements of the women that have come before us, I also want to mention for a short time about our hopes and our goals for the future, our dreams for what women will be able to accomplish in the next 100 years.

More women are now earning college degrees—associate's, bachelor's, and doctoral—than men today. These women, as they graduate, are actually more likely than their male counterparts to have a job lined up. These young women are the future history makers who will work on the front lines to fight cancer and to find a cure to cancer. They will serve with dignity in this Chamber and they will serve in leadership levels at all levels of government. They will be the women who will lead in the board room, and they will be the women who will build the next generation of technology.

We know that there are women coming behind us who will be making a difference. I look forward to future Women's History Months when we can talk about those women and what they have achieved.

Again, I want to thank Mr. ZELDIN for giving us the opportunity to talk about women, both past, present, and future.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. BROOKS for being here. Hopefully, for all of those young girls who come home from school and, as part of their routine, they are watching C–SPAN right now, looking for inspiration on what to do with their life—high school, college—you try to figure out what the right path is for you and you search around for role models.

□ 1615

I can only imagine how many women have asked the gentlewoman: How? What is the path? Tell me. There really isn't one path to get to this Chamber or to be that teacher or that veteran; but the gentlewoman has pursued a path that, I am sure, inspires so many in her home district, and I greatly thank her for her service to our country.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I thank the gentleman.

I must say that, certainly, when I started my path right out of college, I would not have ever guessed that I would have been here in the United States House of Representatives. I think, when people approach you and ask you to consider this type of public service, I hope that a lot of young women look to the women who are here and see that we have been able to do it and that they can as well.

It is an honor to serve with the gentleman.

Mr. ZELDIN. I would also venture to guess, during the gentlewoman's time as a prosecutor in our judicial system, that there have been countless women whom she has seen firsthand who have searched for that advice on how to go through that really tough challenge in

their lives and their feeling vulnerable or trapped but with that strength of character of knowing there is someone around to help them out of tough times.

The gentlewoman's experiences throughout that path must give her an incredible perspective for those women who might, right now, be in abusive relationships or who have suffered something traumatic in their lives and don't know where to go. They feel trapped.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I have to tell the gentleman that I think there have been a number of women role models in my life, women who have served as judges—Federal judges, State court judges—who have been tremendous mentors to the women of the bar. I have been an attorney for 30 years, and there is a sisterhood of those who practice law and who work to uphold the laws. We work together to try to support each other, not just in the courtrooms but on our professional career paths. They are women like Federal Judge Sarah Evans Barker, who is about to retire, and another Federal judge, Sue Shields, who was the first female judge in the State of Indiana. She was the first female judge at the State court level, and then she also served on the Federal bench as a magistrate.

They have been strong role models and have helped us as lawyers to deal with our colleagues or with those we are bringing up through the ranks and offering that hand up as they have offered that hand up to me. We are, often, trying to make sure that women can overcome whatever obstacles they might have in continuing their career paths.

Mr. ZELDIN. I am witnessing, firsthand, the gentlewoman's giving back many times over. I thank her for participating in honor of Women's History Month and for all she does in creating her own legacy and trailblazing herself, which I am sure will be spoken about for many years to come.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I thank the gentleman.

I only hope to make Cecil Harden's legacy proud, who served from 1949 to 1959, as a Member who is severing in this great Chamber from the great State of Indiana.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, as Mrs. BROOKS departs, I think of CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS' words in that this has been an inspiring hour. I just think of these three women who are standing before me and what they have accomplished. Gosh.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK). I thank her for being here and for making this an important hour and important message on so many different levels.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I have the honor of recognizing someone who mentored me when I was back in the State senate and had the honor of serving there with a Lieutenant Governor who was a very fine man and who is retiring.

I thank the gentleman for yielding in order for me to recognize him and to let him know how much we have appreciated his service to the State of Tennessee. I thank him for his mentorship to me as a young senator back at the State level.

Mr. ZELDIN. I can only imagine how many stories the gentlewoman might have along the way of the people with whom she came in contact.

Mr. Speaker, for me, my parents were divorced and remarried, so I grew up with four parents. I went through a few divorces with them. Now, my grandparents were married for over 71 years. If they lost everything—if they didn't have a home, if they didn't have any money, if they didn't have any friends—and if they only had each other, they would have been happy. They found success in life as soon as they had found each other.

Before the gentlewoman leaves, I just want to let her know how much so many Members of this Chamber appreciate everything she does. Whatever it is that she has experienced or encountered in life in her path to get here today, she makes the most of every minute of being in this Chamber on behalf of keeping our families strong, and I value that very much.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentleman for that. I appreciate his saying that.

Mr. Speaker, my family is number one in my life. I have two granddaughters, and I am hoping that everything that I teach them—that includes cooking and sewing and fishing—they will remember fondly as they grow into young women as well. I encourage them to be all that they can be, and I think, given their strong personalities that I see right now, we are going to see them as being leaders when they grow up as well.

Mr. ZELDIN. After this hour is over, at another time, maybe the gentlewoman can give me advice, since I have two 9-year-old girls at home, as to what is in store for me in 2 or 3 years. I hear these vicious rumors that things might change.

Mrs. BLACK. I will tell the gentleman, no matter what phase they go through, they will always be your little girls. The thing that the gentleman needs to do, every day, every night, every moment, is just let them know how much he loves them, and they will grow up to be fine young women.

Mr. ZELDIN. If they ever give me a hard time, I will say that DIANE BLACK told me that this was only going to be temporary.

Mrs. BLACK. You send them to see Mama Black.

Mr. ZELDIN. All right. Hopefully, I won't be doing that as a last resort. I might make that plan A.

Mrs. BLACK. I have a feeling that the gentleman is going to be quite a good daddy—that he is and that he will be—as they grow through those difficult years, which all little girls do; so the gentleman will have those years. Just remember, on the other end, they will come out to be beautiful young women.

Mr. ZELDIN. I thank the gentlewoman. In all seriousness, she really does provide inspiration for so many in how much she values a strong family.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Mr. TED POE, who is well respected in this Chamber for not just his straight talk and his intellect, but as someone who is a fierce champion of American security and of our Constitution. It is obvious that he also has a soft spot in his heart for the importance of honoring those in our lives and in our country who have come before us and who serve today to make this place extra special.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here, as the gentleman says, to recognize the people who have influenced our lives. Of course, we are talking about the women who have influenced our lives to help us be what we turned out to be. I want to talk specifically about some Texas women whom I consider to be a rare breed. They are tenacious, strong-willed, nurturing, and also kind.

One of those is my mother. I am blessed that my mom and dad are both alive. They are 90 years of age. My mom was a Red Cross volunteer during World War II. She met my dad. He was in World War II, in Germany, coming back to the United States. He was being re-equipped for the invasion of Japan. They met at a Wednesday night prayer meeting. We call that ''church'' in Texas. They got married, and they have been married now for 70 years. She not only started out as a volunteer, but she has done all remarkable things, including being a schoolteacher, raising my sister and me, and doing other wonderful things.

In the State of Texas, we are proud, as other States are. We have many modern-day influential women, including former First Ladies Laura Bush and Barbara Bush and our late Governor, Ann Richards. These women were influential, powerful, and successful in their own right, but they were not the first of their kind. There was another generation of pioneers who came before them, women like my grandmother, Lady Bird Johnson, and Ma Ferguson, who paved the way for future generations of Texas women.

My grandmother, really, was more influential in my life than were my own parents. She lived to the age of 99. She raised me to be in public service, and I always have been in public service because of her: I taught school; I was in the Air Force Reserves; I was a

prosecutor; then I was a judge and a Member of Congress—all because of my grandmother. She taught me many lessons, and she made it very simple. Not only did she inspire me to be in public service—I took that good advice—but she said, until the day she died, that she had failed, for my grandmother was, as we say in the South, a Yellow Dog Democrat. She could not believe that I had crossed over to the other side and become a Republican, and I am not sure that she ever forgave me for being a Republican.

She was a strong-minded, no nonsense individual. She used to always say, ''There is nothing more powerful than a woman who has made up her mind,'' and that is true. For a woman who has made up her mind, get out of the way. We find that true even today. That has proven to be one of the most valuable lessons she ever taught me.

President Lyndon Johnson was a hard-nosed politician, but his contributions to Texas as President were really surpassed, in my opinion, by his dogged First Lady or, as we called her, Lady Bird Johnson. She was one of the finest Southern and politically astute women we have ever had in the State of Texas. While she is best remembered for her love of the environment and the preservation of our natural resources, she was no wallflower in the business and political world either. She was her husband's strongest supporter and was with him, giving advice, step for step, throughout his entire career while, at the same time, carving out a path for herself in the business world. She turned a debt-ridden Austin radio station into a multimillion-dollar broadcast empire. Her resume reads like that of a superwoman.

Among her many achievements, she played a pivotal part in shaping legislation by lobbying and speaking before Congress in support of the highway beautification bill, better known as Lady Bird's Bill. She oversaw every detail in the creation of the Presidential library, which became a model for other Presidential libraries today. Of course, she served faithfully, and often in awe of her colleagues, as a regent of her alma mater, the University of Texas.

Every spring—this time of the year—people head up from Houston to Austin on Highway 290. They see the wildflowers, and there are bazillions of them everywhere at this time of the year. Every bluebonnet we see throughout Texas Hill Country and every tree we plant here at home, along a place called Will Clayton Parkway, is a tribute to Lady Bird Johnson and her determination that we are going to keep Texas beautiful.

Before there was a Lady Bird, Texas was home to another fiery, inspirational woman. You may have never heard about her. Her name was Ma Ferguson. The year was 1899—over 100 years ago—when Miriam Amanda Wallace married James Ferguson, who later became the Governor of Texas. Ma Ferguson served as the first lady of Texas from 1915 until 1917, which was about 2½ years, until Pa Ferguson got himself in a little trouble. He was impeached by the State of Texas and the legislature during his second term and was barred from ever running for office anywhere again.

Then Ma changed history. She did the unthinkable and ran for Governor of Texas—as a woman. Texas had only been run by men before, but Ma didn't care—she was going to run. She ran on a platform of two Governors for the election of one. Of course, Ma was not in prison like Pa was, but, apparently, they did work together. She ran against Klan-supported Felix Robertson in the Democratic primary and claimed victory with the Democratic nomination. Back in those days, there were no Republicans in Texas. Everybody was a Democrat. The handful of Republicans never admitted it. Winning the Democrat primary was tantamount to winning the general election in November. Ma later became the first female Governor of Texas and only the second female Governor of the whole United States. She defeated a little known candidate in 1924 called George Butte, a Republican.

The two Fergusons became known as ''Ma and Pa,'' and—no surprise—Ma ran the show. However, Ma's Governorship was tainted by the criticism of her loose policy of pardoning people in the penitentiary. She was not above her critics—she pardoned thousands of inmates during her Governorship. To many, the motive behind the pardons was a little questionable, and allegations of bribery, ultimately, led to her next Governor's race and its defeat. After she lost the next election, Ma continued her political fight, and she regained her Governor's seat in 1932—again, for a second term.

□ 1630

One of her best achievements was the signing of Texas House Bill 194. It established the University of Houston as a 4-year institution.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I went to the University of Houston Law School. I am glad it got established. Ma would be proud to see the University of Houston today. The Ferguson name lived long after the retirement of both Ma and Pa.

My grandmother, Lady Bird Johnson, Ma Ferguson, Ann Richards, and the Bush women came from a generation of women that were strong and influential. They possessed the grace of an angel, yet led with both forceful and effective political genius.

Few women of their later generation worked outside of the home, but few men succeeded without the backing of those ladies. These women did it all. They effortlessly backed their husbands while changing the world all at the same time.

March, this month, is Women's History Month. So it is time we honor those women who lived years and years ago, honor those women who lived back during the Greatest Generation's time and, of course, the women who live today.

All those women now are in every profession, as stated earlier, including the legal profession, acting as judges and prosecutors and, not only that, Members of Congress, Members of Cabinets, and ladies that give a lot of their time and money to the community. So we are thankful for them.

I appreciate the time that the gentleman from New York has given me so we could talk about some of these iron-willed, strong-willed women that have made up their minds.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas.

I would imagine anyone who was wondering what Women's History Month was all about should just listen to your remarks as you pay exceptional tribute to some amazing women from your home State of Texas who all left a mark not only in your life, but in others' lives as well.

These are women who, I am sure, are getting celebrated all throughout your State and this country not just by you, but by others as well.

In my home State of New York, it is tough. They give us a month and here tonight they give us an hour. There really are so many different women who gave us this opportunity to take us to today where the two of us can stand here on this particular House floor and speak to each other about such an important topic that apparently 25 years ago didn't even happen. It wasn't even until the early 1980s that we even started recognizing a women's history week.

So here we are, and I am glad that you are part of it. I can see that there is a lot of inspiration from women in your life.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York.

I agree with him. A month is really not enough time to celebrate and honor women in our history that just made a big difference in a lot of people's lives.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people here in this Chamber who all find different issues that interest them that they focus heavily on and move the ball forward in a very positive way.

The one thing that I have experienced during my time serving here—and I am in my first term and serve on the House Foreign Affairs Committee—is that, as the subcommittee chairman of the Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee, what I have experienced is that you do a lot to keep

America safe, to keep the women and men of your district and this country safe.

So I really do appreciate your service. Because this is not just about reflecting on service in the past, but challenging ourselves to do even more and to provide more opportunity forward.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), who has a very special guest here she would like to recognize.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RON RAMSEY

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Tennessee's Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey, who is going to be retiring after his years of service.

Today I rise to honor my friend, Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey, on his upcoming retirement from the Tennessee State Senate. It is not an exaggeration to say that Lieutenant Governor Ramsey changed Tennessee history. He was, after all, our first Republican Lieutenant Governor in over 140 years.

His legacy will be one of preserving that which makes Tennessee special: our low tax burden, our commitment to fiscal responsibility, and our tradition of defending life.

It was among one of the great honors of my professional career to serve as chairman of the State Republican Caucus under his leadership and to partner with him as we laid the groundwork for the conservative supermajority that we enjoy today in Tennessee.

I will never forget being in the Senate Chamber the moment that Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey was elected. He came to the well of the Senate floor and, before doing anything else, paid honor to God, telling all of us in the room and everyone else watching that it is to Him we owe our very being.

He then thanked his family, including his wife, Sindy, who has served Tennessee with distinction as our Second Lady for nearly a decade.

In that moment, Lieutenant Governor Ramsey reminded all of us of his priorities. He loves our State. He loves public service. But as anyone who knows him can attest, his faith and his family are of the greatest importance. I will always be thankful to him for setting that example.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that Lieutenant Governor Ramsey arose to his post in the State leadership shortly after a dark time in Tennessee history, which saw the very public failings of legislators on both sides of the aisle.

He was an example of character and personal integrity at that moment when we needed it the most and, in time, he made us believe that government could do right by its people. Lieutenant Governor Ramsey often reminded us, ''It matters who governs.'' Indeed, it does.

As we reflect on where Tennessee has come from and where we are headed, we can say with certainty that our State is stronger because of Ron Ramsey's leadership. I count it a privilege to call him my friend.

I wish him, his wife Sindy, and his beautiful family all the best in this next chapter of their lives.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, as we come toward the end of our hour remembering and celebrating the women who have come before us and who serve today, trying their hardest to create more opportunities going forward, I would like to mention eight young ladies from the First Congressional District of New York who I was proud to nominate to service academies this year:

Taya Coniglio, Skylar Grathwohl, and Gabriella Franco were nominated to the U.S. Naval Academy.

Ally McFayden and Dana Fasano were nominated to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

Chelsea Chamberlin, Isabella Cortes, and Emma Fasolino were nominated to the U.S. Military Academy.

These eight young ladies have stepped up wanting to raise their hand to defend our country. Going off to a service academy comes with an obligation to wear that uniform and serve on Active Duty afterwards.

For anyone who signs up post-9/11, you understand what it is that you are signing up for. To just think that these young ladies were 2, 3 years old on September 11, 2001, all that they know is the post-9/11 America and world. Yet, they are signing up to want to serve our country as officers.

There are over 2 million women veterans. So as we consider legislation in this House, I cosponsored H.R. 1356, the Women Veterans Access to Quality Care Act, which assists our women veterans.

While we try to provide more access to health care for our women veterans, there are many opportunities available to us that still have not yet been achieved and pursued to victory.

Women make up 15 percent of the U.S. military's Active-Duty personnel and 18 percent of the National Guard and Reserve forces.

H.R. 1356 will improve VA facilities for women veterans, hold VA medical facility directors accountable for performance measures, ensure the availability of OB/GYN services in VA medical centers, and calls for a GAO study on the VA's ability to meet the needs of women veterans.

Whether it is the eight young ladies I mentioned who wanted to go to U.S. service academies or those who are currently, as we stand here, over in harm's way in the Middle East and elsewhere, away from their families and who have sons and daughters here at home—and they may not just be on their first deployment. They may be on their fourth or fifth or sixth deployment.

When they come home, whether they come home in one piece, whether they come home with the physical or mental wounds of war, whether they need assistance pursuing educational or vocational opportunities, I want to thank our women veterans for their service to our Nation.

We honor all women during this hour, but I wanted to close by paying an extra special tribute and thank you to our women veterans and, once again, to all of the women in my life.

I yield back the balance of my time.

WORLD WATER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 30 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome the Congressman and doctor, DAN BENISHEK, from Michigan's First District, which encompasses Marquette and Mackinac Island and Traverse City, to name a few famous towns and island. I welcome him to participate this evening as well as our other colleagues from the Great Lakes.

I rise tonight to mark the occasion of World Water Day. As such, I would like to discuss the Great Lakes, an American freshwater treasure, irreplaceable on our globe. Actually, it is the largest source of freshwater in the United States and represents about 20 percent of the world's freshwater supply.

The district that I represent, which is a little south of Michigan, down in Ohio, sits nestled across Lake Erie's entire south coast, extending from Cleveland all the way west to Toledo and encompasses all of Ohio's ports but for one.

There should be a sign, actually, on the Ohio Turnpike nearby that marks our shoreline as the step-off point, since Lake Erie is the most southern of all the lakes, as the largest body of freshwater on the face of the Earth.

I see our dear colleague, the co-chair of the Great Lakes Task Force with me, Congressman MIKE KELLY of Erie, Pennsylvania, who has joined us. It is also a great port city, nestled along these Great Lakes.

Let me begin by saying, since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, Lake Erie itself has been on a path to recovery. It got very sick back in the 20th century.

Point sources of pollution, such as inadequate wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure and industrial outfalls have been slowly coming. Since back then and the passage of the Clean Water Act and the establishment of Earth Day, they have been coming into EPA compliance.

One needs no further proof in tracking the rebirth of America's symbol, the bald eagle, than to really track

Lake Erie's health. Lake Erie is the shallowest of the lakes; and, therefore, it is kind of the canary in the coal mine. What happens there will happen in the other lakes subsequently.

The bald eagle had actually become an endangered species by the time of the 1970s, and only two eagles were left on our great lake, Lake Erie. There were no eaglets being born.

Due to the Clean Water Act's passage and literally the banning of DDT and the repair of many of the industrial outfalls, which we are still working on, and the combined sewer overflows, what happened, as we moved into the 21st century, was human progress.

Today hundreds of baby eaglets are being born across Lake Erie, and they are flying other places around the country. Amazingly, the bald eagle has been taken off the endangered species list. So progress is possible. Humans can really repair the environment if they are dedicated to us.

For those of us who live in Lake Erie's western basin, which is the far western part of the State, the health of our lake is a living reality and access to freshwater has become the background noise of our daily lives, becoming more pronounced when tragedy strikes, as it did most recently in Flint, Michigan, and Sebring, Ohio, with lead in freshwater.

□ 1645

Our region works and plays with a new normal that includes very frequent water quality reports now, updates on beach postings—whether you can swim or not—water utility fee increases, and a general concern about a troubling set of scientific questions that still go unanswered.

Unfortunately, this administration has not recognized these concerns and seeks to cut Federal support to Great Lakes States by $148 million for next year. Some would call that an oxymoron; it makes no sense in view of what is happening across our region, but it is happening.

This evening—and I am going to yield to my colleagues before I get into these topics—I would like to address the water infrastructure needs of the Great Lakes, harmful algal blooms, which literally shut down the city of Toledo's water system a year-and-a-half ago, denying fresh water for 3 days to citizens, to businesses, and to institutions in that region because of something called microcystin, which is the toxic part of certain types of algal blooms which we are trying to address. So harmful algal blooms will be one of my topics.

Another topic will be the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is so important to all of us in helping to improve our Great Lakes.

Stopping the Asian carp is another topic.

The next topic will be the Great Lakes navigation system itself, an antiquated system that has to be updated for this 21st century.

Finally, I will discuss the harbor maintenance fund. These are all major issues across the Great Lakes region, which we would like to place on the RECORD this evening.

I would like to ask my colleagues to join me. Congressman BENISHEK, I thank you again so very much for being a leader for the Great Lakes and for coming down this evening.

I now yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. I thank Ms. KAPTUR very much for setting up this time for us to come together on the floor to talk about the importance of the Great Lakes. I also thank Mr. KELLY for being here as well.

It is nice to know there are some issues that are truly bipartisan. I believe that protecting our Great Lakes is really one of those.

The Great Lakes are a vital part of our life in Michigan, particularly my district. I have more Great Lakes frontage than any other district in the country. I have three Great Lakes in my district with over 1,500 miles of frontage on three of the Great Lakes. We have more shoreline than any district in the country other than the State of Alaska, but that is all saltwater up there.

I do not think there is a person in my district who does not consider the lakes a vital part of their lives, whether it is fishing or swimming or sailing or kayaking or just plain sitting by the water. We love our lakes. It is a pure Michigan experience. I encourage you all to visit.

Since coming to Congress, one of my top priorities has been working to keep the Great Lakes clean so that future generations may also enjoy them. I want my grandkids and their kids to experience the joy of their first local fishing derby on a summer day or going ice fishing with their buddies in the winter. The joys of living on or near the Great Lakes inspire us all to ensure that they stay clean for future generations.

However, we treasure our Great Lakes not only for their beauty and recreation they provide, but the incredible value they provide to our economy. In Michigan alone, outdoor recreation generates $18.7 billion in consumer spending and supports nearly 200,000 jobs.

Protecting the Great Lakes requires action on many fronts, which only makes sense. As Ms. KAPTUR said, these five Great Lakes represent more than 20 percent of all the fresh water in the world. That is why I have worked along with so many other of my midwestern colleagues to provide adequate funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, something the President always seems to cut back on in his budget.

This bipartisan effort, which must be renewed every year to guarantee that this important program continues, gives local communities across the Great Lakes the ability to clean up local beaches, preserve natural wildlife habitats, and to restore local watersheds, among many other useful products for the Great Lakes.

In my district alone, GLRI funds support projects like the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Protection Project and the Beaver Island Archipelago Invasive Species Initiative. These programs help protect the Great Lakes while at the same time providing a boost to the local economy.

The Soo Locks also have a major impact on our economy. Maintaining the integrity of the current lock system and ensuring the construction of a second lock is vital for both our national economy and our national security. Some people do not even realize that these locks exist. They are basically the Panama Canal of America. Much of the iron ore that is made into steel, which a lot of the industry in America depends on, passes through this lock. It would cause a major crisis if it should fail.

I am proud to have led a trip with other Members of Congress to the Soo Locks last summer to raise the importance about the importance of these locks. While we have secured funding for a new Economic Reevaluation Report from the Corps of Engineers, we must continue to raise awareness about the importance of this project while we await the publication of this report.

Another issue that concerns all of us in the Great Lakes region is the threat of invasive species. From sea lampreys to quagga mussels that are already present in the Great Lakes, to the Asian carp which we are currently trying to prevent from gaining access, invasive species present a constant threat to this precious resource.

I have worked closely with the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) to reorganize the Congressional Invasive Species Caucus, and we are working to make invasive species a priority in this Congress.

While I will be leaving Congress at the end of this term, it is my hope that we can continue to work together this year in a bipartisan and constructive manner to protect the Great Lakes. I am willing to partner with anyone who is willing to do that. I thank Ms. KAPTUR for doing this Special Order hour.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank Congressman BENISHEK very, very much. I thank him for his leadership on Great Lakes issues. That is a vast district that he represents and one that is vital to our country. I thank him for participating this evening.

Before I yield to Congressman MIKE KELLY of the Third District of Pennsylvania, I just want to say that the region that we are talking about, the

Great Lakes, actually, if it were a country on its own, would be the third largest economy in the world. We are talking about a vast and important part of our Nation with more fresh water than any other part of the continent.

The Great Lakes navigation system, including the Soo Locks that Congressman BENISHEK referenced, encompasses this vast region, and the Seaway that is a part of this that was actually built by President Eisenhower—it was built back in the 1950s—constitutes through the locks the shortest distance between the heartland of America and the ports of northern Europe and many other global destinations.

Most people have never been through the Soo Locks because we tend to move commerce through the locks. We have some tourism, obviously, but it really is a busy industrial corridor and has the lowest cost transportation. Waterborne transportation is the lowest cost mode of transportation. So you have the big containers and so forth that move through the Seaway, and then we have the interlake trade, which is heavily industrial, as Congressman BENISHEK referenced.

In recent years, the number of passages through the locks that go all the way from Duluth all the way out through Massena, New York, going throughout these Great Lakes, this whole system has averaged about 10,000 vessels per year. That is down a bit from prior years because what has happened is the vessels got larger and they could carry more freight. But the system exists. It operates every day.

The ports and channels of the Great Lakes-Saint Lawrence Seaway System support over 226,000 jobs in both the United States and Canada because the Seaway is operated by both countries, and it brings a total of $33.5 billion in business revenue to the United States and Canada annually. For Ohio, our largest trading partner is Canada, and some of those goods move across the water.

In the United States alone, the system supports over 128,000 jobs and produces a total of $18.1 billion in business revenue annually. Over 42,000 of these jobs are direct jobs in the iron ore and steel industry, which Congressman BENISHEK referenced. The Great Lakes region produces 90 percent—90 percent—of America's iron ore, and the Great Lakes region also manufactures 58 percent of automobiles on the roads in the United States and Canada. I think Congressman KELLY knows a whole lot about the automobile industry. So this manufacturing and commodity supply chain can only function through the Great Lakes navigation system, which needs modernization.

I am more than pleased to yield to the co-chair of the Great Lakes Task Force here in the House of Representatives, the very esteemed gentleman from Pennsylvania's Third District (Mr. KELLY) centered at Erie.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentlewoman. I often refer to the gentlewoman not as Representative KAPTUR, but as ''Our Lady of the Lakes'' because, truly, we share a lot of the same concerns when it comes to an absolutely incredible gift from God that has been given to us. It is in our stewardship now. It was put in our care and custody with the idea that we are going to pass it on to the next generation in better shape than what we received it.

I think when we look at the Great Lakes, there are so many things you can say about the Great Lakes. Oftentimes it is hard to sit back and say, what is it exactly that the Great Lakes represent?

We have already said it is one-fifth of the world's fresh water, not one-fifth of America's fresh water, not one-fifth of the continent's fresh water, but one-fifth of the world's fresh water.

It is 6 quadrillion gallons of fresh water. I have absolutely no idea what that figure would look like other than this: if you were to look at the lower 48 States and you were able to pour the water from the Great Lakes over the lower 48 States, it would cover it to a depth of 9½ feet.

So when you put it in that perspective, all of a sudden it starts to make sense and you start to focus on it, and you say this truly is a gift from God. This is truly a gift that we have to look after.

Too often it is said, well, you know, just let things go, because if you let them go, they will usually work out on their own.

My goodness, nothing could be further from the truth. We have seen the great damage to the Great Lakes, and we have also seen that over the years we all of a sudden have become very much aware of it.

I would just like to say in the district that I represent, Pennsylvania's Third District, Erie, Pennsylvania, Presque Isle was on the list, and it was one of those things that said this is an area of concern. So the attention was turned to what do we have to do to save Presque Isle.

Now, in 2012 it was the first one of these properties that was taken off the list of concern through the efforts of not only the Erie community, but through the efforts of Congress, and also through the efforts of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Now, we stand here today, and as I have said, I have always referred to the gentlewoman as ''Our Lady of the Lakes.'' There is nothing more precious to us than this great amount of water that we have, potable water. If we were to turn our backs on it or for some reason to think that it is not important or that it is not critical or that it is not a gift from God that has been put in our care and custody and is up to us to protect, then we have fallen far from where we are as a people and as a nation.

I would like to read one excerpt. A friend of mine named Art Grayhead is an Army veteran, Special Ops guy. He is also a Native American. To him, the Great Lakes represent not only a body of water, but also something precious and also something that has a much deeper religious meaning. He gave me a book called ''The Living Great Lakes.'' It is written by Jerry Dennis. I am going to read it because I think it is worded so magnificently by Mr. Dennis:

> To appreciate the magnitude of the Great Lakes you must get close to them. Launch a boat on their waters or hike their beaches or climb the dunes, bluffs, and rocky outcrops that surround them, and you will see, as people have seen since the age of the glaciers that these lakes are pretty darn big. It is no wonder they are sometimes upgraded to the ''Inland Seas'' and the ''Sweetwater Seas.'' Calling them lakes is like calling the Rockies hills.

So when you see them and conceptualize in your head what it is that we are talking about and what it is that we are concerned about and what it is that has been put in our care and custody, none of us can ever turn away and say: ''This doesn't fall on our watch'' or ''We don't have to worry about the Great Lakes.''

We have to worry about the Great Lakes, we have to guard the Great Lakes, and we have to pass it on to the next generation so they, too, can enjoy all the benefits from it.

We talk about the economic consequences and the environmental consequences. There is nothing in the life of everyday Americans that is more important than our Great Lakes.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio. She certainly has fought this battle for a long, long time. She has always been a great champion of the Great Lakes. So many of our Members who live around the Great Lakes champion it every day. But it is not just for us, it is not just for those States around the Great Lakes. It is for every single American. I thank the gentlewoman so much for her concern, her dedication, and more than anything her passion.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank Congressman KELLY so very much. I thank him for his passion and for participating this evening and for all the effort he puts forward on our Great Lakes Task Force to try to elevate this region of the country as so vital to our future.

□ 1700

And when the gentlemen were talking about Great Lakes and the word ''lakes,'' there are some people who have said they should have been named the Great Seas.

I had an experience with schoolchildren a few years back. I loaded up

a schoolbus with children who came from a region that wasn't close to the lake, and I took them out to Lake Erie. Their first reaction was actually fear when they saw how big it was. They said: Oh, the ocean.

So, it isn't like a little puddle jumper. These lakes are vast. You have described them well. Most Americans have not visited them, so they don't have a complete understanding of how massive these lakes really are. There is nothing else like them on the face of the Earth.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I can remember as a child my parents taking us to Lake Erie for summer vacation. I had no idea what I was going to see, but as we got closer to Erie, my dad said: See, Mike, there it is. There is the lake. I said: It looks like it is going to come crashing on us.

Because, you know, as you get closer to those bodies of water, as the horizon, the water and the sky meet together, and as you are approaching it, it looks like: My goodness, I can't imagine anything this big.

In the eyes of a child, I looked at it and I was completely taken away. I couldn't believe it. That has only increased as I have aged and I have watched that marvelous, marvelous gift from God that we have and that we have to protect.

Again, I thank the gentlewoman. It is always a pleasure being with her on the floor talking about our Great Lakes. It is always a pleasure working with her. The passion she has to protect our Great Lakes is absolutely incredible.

Ms. KAPTUR. The gentleman has the same passion.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. KAPTUR. This is a moment I am glad that is actually being broadcast because we are down here tonight on a bipartisan basis discussing a vital resource that this Nation shares with Canada. We work well together. Most of the news is about how Members of Congress don't work together, they don't do this, and here we are participating, after hours—we are not required to be here—and we are talking about something we believe to be truly irreplaceable for our country.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership, and I will share this story with him.

When I was a little girl, I still remember the seventh grade when our grandparents and parents took us to Erie, Pennsylvania, to Presque Isle. I remember that. It was such a big deal. It was a long trip from Toledo, Ohio, to Erie, Pennsylvania, and I still remember our relatives there and understanding how big that waterway really is, how we went swimming at Presque Isle back in those days—the 1950s, I guess.

So I have always had an affinity for Erie, Pennsylvania, remembering back to those early times and what a good time we had. The people of Erie were so hospitable.

It is great to have the gentleman as a leader in the Great Lakes Task Force and coming down here this evening to make time for the Great Lakes. I thank him very much. I thank him for his concerted leadership and all he has done to be a champion not just for Presque Isle, not just for Lake Erie, but for our entire Great Lakes system.

I yield to gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), the vice chair of the Great Lakes Task Force, who has come to Congress with all this energy and intelligence and capacity to make a difference for the country. And then what was handed him in this last 2 months was the terrible tragedy in his hometown of Flint, Michigan, with lead in the water pipes and the water system there. So many people in Flint are so unnecessarily ill and the community is damaged. All of America wants to help Flint.

I thank Congressman KILDEE so much for coming down tonight.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her leadership. Congresswoman KAPTUR has always been a great ally for me and even my predecessor, my uncle, on working to preserve and protect this incredible natural asset that we have—the Great Lakes.

Listening to Congresswoman KAPTUR and Congressman KELLY refer to your childhood, we all—those of us from the Great Lakes region—remember and recall, from our childhood, our introduction to the Great Lakes.

The very shape of my home State of Michigan is defined by the lakes. Lake Huron is on the east, Lake Michigan is on the west, a touch of Lake Erie, and, of course, Lake Superior to the north. It defines the shape of our State.

As a child, I still remember the first time experiencing the lakes, and they did seem as though they were something that were so big, they was almost impossible to comprehend. But it was also something that, as a child, I took for granted. We all took for granted that the lakes would always be there, that they would always be pure, that they would always be clear and cold—the way we recalled them as children.

Of course, what we come to know, as policymakers, is that we can't be put in a position to take that for granted. We have to actively protect that incredible gift that has been handed to us simply as a creation of God. We have this enormously special stewardship.

Two things I want to point out that I think are part of the stewardship responsibility that we have to and for the Great Lakes. One, of course, is to defend the lakes against any threat that might manifest now or might manifest generations from now, whether that is working to protect the lakes from invasive species like Asian carp or a very special obligation that I think we have right now, working with our friends across the border on the Canadian side, and that is to protect the lakes from unnecessary and unwarranted threats.

There has been, in the planning stages, the possibility of a nuclear waste storage facility that would be on the eastern shore of Lake Huron. It would be six-tenths of a mile from the shore of that lake. I am pleased to see that our friends within the new Canadian Government have sort of taken a pause to reevaluate whether that site is the best site. Of course, my position and the position of many Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, has been that there is a special line that we must draw when it comes to protecting the lakes.

We have a chance to ask that—in this case, the Canadian Government, and specifically the Ontario Power Generation—they reconsider the location of a nuclear waste storage facility so that now, 100 or 200 years from now, if some event may occur that would release some of that material, we would never put the lakes at risk.

That is something that we can do. It is a tangible set of steps that we can take. But it is just an example of the special responsibility that I know I now have as a Member of Congress representing the Great Lakes region.

It is not until you are sworn into office and take an oath to uphold the Constitution and represent the people that you live with back home that you come to understand the magnitude of that responsibility, especially for maintaining the lakes.

Of course, the other point that Congresswoman KAPTUR mentioned is that we also have a special responsibility to continue to take advantage of the fact that we have been given this gift, and we have to use it in a way that is sustainable but also allows us to use the pure and clear lake water in a way that protects us.

Of course, the very bad decisions that were made at the State government level that led to the crisis in my hometown of Flint were decisions to move temporarily away from using lake water for our drinking water to using river water in the Flint River as our primary drinking water source. It is almost unimaginable that that would happen, considering that we are literally surrounded by the greatest source, the largest source of surface freshwater on the planet and that a community would temporarily use that drinking water.

It also makes the point that the protections of our water resources are special protections that we have to make sure are adhered to. This crisis in Flint, or any other crisis, such as the issue that I know Congresswoman KAPTUR is very familiar with—you may have already addressed the algal bloom

that you dealt with in the lake that affected drinking water in Toledo and other places—we have a special responsibility to make sure that we are, through our Environmental Protection Agency and State environmental quality agencies, aggressively defending the Great Lakes, not just to maintain their natural beauty, not just to maintain them as recreational assets, but to make sure that, when we use that water for something as fundamental as drinking water, we know it will always be safe and protected.

I want to thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on the issue of the Great Lakes and for including me as a part of this bipartisan effort to make sure that we always take care of this unique and special stewardship responsibility to protect the greatest freshwater source on the planet.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank Congressman KILDEE so very, very much for coming down. He has his hands full in trying to repair the damage in Flint. We respect him so much for the leadership he has shown there, because that could happen anywhere. Sadly, it happened in Flint, Michigan, and he and the delegation and the entire Great Lakes region have really provided stellar leadership.

We all are here to try and help him and the citizens of Flint. He is focusing national attention on the importance of water infrastructure and what can happen when systems age. You have brought this to the attention of the American people. We can all learn from the experience in Flint.

I want to thank my colleagues for coming to the floor tonight to discuss the important challenges that still remain in the Great Lakes of water infrastructure improvement, addressing the harmful algal blooms, making sure there is significant support in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, stopping the Asian carp from coming into the Great Lakes, improving our Great Lakes navigation system, and making sure that the harbor maintenance trust fund is available for the Great Lakes.

I yield back the balance of my time.

MAJOR OVERHAUL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any question that, if you go anywhere in this country, the American people believe that this town, Washington, and this institution in particular need a major overhaul.

The Founding Fathers conceived of a system in which individual Americans, individual citizens would stand for election and they would go up as representatives of the people, but they were no better than the people. They didn't live under different rules than the rest of the people. They were not part of a ruling class, but, really, part of a servant culture. That was the idea.

Well, we have come a long way. Washington, D.C., is really the bane of the existence for many, many people in our society. It hinders our economy. You have people here who engage in self-dealing. It is not acting consistently with how this system was envisioned.

So there are a lot of things I would like to do:

I think Congress needs to be forced to live under all the laws they pass and enact for other people.

I think you need to get rid of a lot of the perks that Members of Congress get, including pensions for Members of Congress.

But I think if there was one thing that, I think, really cries out for reform, it is that we need to have term limits for Members of Congress. I don't think there is any way you are ever going to be able to overhaul this culture unless we do that.

There was a time when people would get elected and the Founders didn't think anyone would want to be here that long. You would go, you would serve, then you would go back and live under the laws that you passed and continue your pursuits as a citizen. Well, somewhere along the line, that really changed. Then people come in, and it is almost like that is the main thing that they focus on: just staying here, sometimes in perpetuity. People have served 40, 50 years, and I don't think that that has turned out well for our country.

I think if you had term limits, I think you would really open up the process for new blood. I think people would come in here with a reformer spirit, new ideas, and really be part of a reform movement in Washington, D.C.

It is often said: Well, gee, term limits. But the American people get their choice. They get to vote in the election. The fact of the matter is, the way that our electoral system works, millions and millions of Americans have no functional choice simply because maybe their district is only going to elect someone from one party. Maybe you have the power of incumbency that just makes it so that challengers are never going to be able to get traction.

□ 1715

The whole campaign finance system is orchestrated to benefit incumbents, so we don't really just have where the American people have a choice. I think you have a structured choice, which typically leads to only one outcome. So I am not really somebody that thinks that this is all just that the American people are so happy that people are getting returned here all the time.

Another, I think, objection that some people said for term limits is that: Well, gee, if you term-limit people, you have new people in who don't necessarily know how the system works. It is just going to be all the staff that are going to run it or the lobbyists that are going to run it.

I have got news for you. That is pretty much what happens already. I mean, a lot of these omnibus bills, those get done by staff behind closed doors. Staff wields a lot of power on these committees. And these are not elected individuals. Many of them work hard. I respect a lot of them, but they are exercising, in many ways, authority that should be exercised by the Members, themselves. So I think that problem is real, but I think it is already here.

I think if you had new people coming in, I think a lot of those people would probably want to bring in some of their own staff that would be more reflective of their ideas and principles rather than rely on people that have been here a long time who really become accustomed to a system that is not working very well.

I am proud to have cosponsored the bill to enact term limits on Members of the House and Members of the Senate. We do three terms for the House, and two terms for the Senate. So if someone wants to serve in the House then serve in the Senate, they could serve 18 years. That is a long time, and I think you would be able to really do some good things during that period.

I think what it does is it really shifts the focus of somebody that comes here, because right now, if you get elected to the House, you are on the low end of the pecking order in terms of seniority. I mean, you almost have to just sit around here for 10, 15, 20 years to be in a position where you could really make a huge difference. I think what that does is that creates a culture in which people want to stay here, and that is kind of the main thing that happens once you get here.

I think, if you had term limits, the main thing that people would be thinking about is: Okay. You know you are term-limited. Your time is limited. Let's make the most of that. I think you would see a lot of people really, really perform much better. You would have people who could come in as freshmen and have more of an impact because the system wouldn't be dominated by seniority. There would be less favoritism, less backroom dealing. So I think it is a very, very positive reform.

We have been voting on random things here lately. I think it would be great if we could come here and offer some reforms to the system, constitutional reforms, like term limits, like a balanced budget amendment, like an amendment making Congress live under the laws that everybody else does. I think that would be a breath of fresh air for the American people.

Here is the thing. We talk about how we have the division and the rancor in

our politics, and even in this institution; but if you look, term limits is something that, regardless of party, regardless of ideology, regardless of age, regardless of gender, regardless of race, Americans support in overwhelming numbers.

So I think that is an example of where the American people are actually very united for this. But when you have the governing class in Washington, that is where the divisions are, because many people don't want to see those types of reforms here.

But there is agreement throughout American society, and so if we want to start having a more unified country, we should be listening to the American people. When they are speaking loudly and consistently over 20, 25 years that term limits is something they want, we should heed that call, and we should be voting on that, and we should enact it, passing it out of the House, passing it out of the Senate, and then sending it to the States for ratification. What a win-win it would be, both for this institution, to show the American people we are listening, and then, obviously, it would be a very positive reform to have enacted.

I am really happy that, as new people come in, that they have the reformer's spirit. One of the guys who just got elected this last year—it is pretty clear when people get up here whether they are in it for the right reasons or not, and I think there are probably few people in the whole House who have been more dedicated to reform and making this institution serve the American people rather than rule over the American people. It is a great honor for me to be able to yield to my friend from Iowa (Mr. BLUM), the chairman of the House Term Limits Caucus.

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) for hosting this Special Order on term limits and giving me the opportunity to speak on this most important subject.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over again, yet expecting different results. That quote sums up Washington, D.C. We keep sending the same people back here over and over and over, yet we expect things will improve; we expect things will change.

Congressional approval ratings, if you haven't checked, are in the single digits. It is clear that the American people aren't happy with the job we are doing. They want change in Washington, D.C.

But, if we truly want to change Washington, we need to heed Albert Einstein's advice. We need to send different people here. We need to do things differently.

Changing the way Congress operates should start with enacting term limits. I firmly believe congressional term limits would restore the public's confidence in the legislative branch and return this body back to the design intended by our Founding Fathers.

I have just been here, as my friend, Mr. DESANTIS said, for over a year, and I can confidently say that term limits for our politicians would be a huge step forward in changing the culture here in Washington, D.C., and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense reform.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first elected office I have ever held. I am a career small-business person. In the private sector, if we don't listen to our customers, we go out of business.

In Congress, our customers are the American people, and they are strongly in favor of term limits. Recent polls show overwhelming support. Over 75 percent of Americans want term limits. This support, as Mr. DESANTIS said, crosses party lines, with strong majorities from Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike.

Unfortunately, Congress has not listened to our customers. Legislation to institute term limits continues to sit in committee, without receiving a vote. While many Members of Congress profess support for term limits back in their districts, when their plane crosses the Potomac, something seems to change.

One of the first things I did after being sworn in was to launch the bipartisan Term Limits Caucus, along with my colleague from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE). I also cosponsored legislation from my colleagues, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS), limiting House Members to serving no more than three terms and Senators to serving no more than two terms.

I did this because, as someone coming to Congress from the private sector, I believe Washington suffers from a lack of fresh, innovative ideas. Also, Washington suffers from a lack of political courage on the part of career politicians to implement those changes.

The root of our problem is that our politicians are incentivized by this system to care more about staying in office rather than doing what is best for the country.

Most candidates campaign for the U.S. House and they say something to the effect, ''Washington, D.C., is broken. Washington, D.C., is broken. It must change.'' They say this during the campaign. Most come here for the right reasons, but, over time, the system grinds them down. The special interests get their proverbial ''nose under the tent,'' and before long, special interests own a Congressman.

It seems to me, the only special interest group not represented in Washington is ''We, the People.'' The end result is most become part of the very problem they came to Washington, D.C., to fix.

Our Founding Fathers never intended for public service to be a career. Serving in Congress was supposed to be a temporary sacrifice made for the public good, not a profitable, long-term profession treated like a family business.

By limiting terms politicians can serve in office, we can realign the incentives. When Members of Congress know they will only serve for a short amount of time, they will be incentivized to actually tackle the big problems facing America today: tackling our $19 trillion debt that is growing, tackling the looming insolvency of Social Security and Medicare, and tackling the securing of our borders and the ever-growing Federal bureaucracy that stifles economic growth and holds down wages for your average American.

Mr. DESANTIS, I recognize the long odds of Congress voting to place term limits on themselves. As I often say, that is much like asking turkeys to vote for Thanksgiving, and we know how that would end up. But I will keep pushing Congress to act, because it is what the American people want.

In the meantime, there are some positive active developments at the State level that I would like to highlight.

Florida recently became one of the first States to officially call for an Article V constitutional term limits convention thanks to the hard work of Florida activists and fantastic groups like U.S. Term Limits. I commend the Florida Legislature and hope other States will soon follow suit.

As President Reagan once said, a ''convention is a safety valve giving the people a chance to act if Congress refuses to.''

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to criticize individual Members of Congress, and not all of my colleagues who have been in office for decades are part of this problem; but it is time Congress listened to our customers and gives our customers what they want: a vote on term limits. It is the right thing to do, and it may be our last and best chance to restore trust in government and make Congress work for the American people once again.

Once again, I thank Mr. DESANTIS for the opportunity to discuss this most important subject. I urge my colleagues to listen to the American people and join the Term Limits Caucus and cosponsor term limit legislation.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Iowa.

The thing is that you bring up a good point. It is very difficult to get people to want to term-limit themselves. So you and I are on a bill together that tries to be reasonable about it and say: Look, you know, we are willing to compromise to get term limits. You have

Members who have been here for 12, 14 years and they are trying to put themselves in a position for a chairmanship, whatever, and they joined under certain rules, they kind of played the game, and they are preparing for maybe this to be the pinnacle of their career. I get why someone in that situation would not want to do it.

Our proposal says: Okay. Let's do term limits, but then we will phase it in as new Members come. So that is a kind of a gradual term limit enactment, and within a short while you would have term limits across the board. I mean, that is something that is a reasonable compromise to deal with some of the Members that have misgivings.

I think my friend from Iowa points out, I mean, if this were something that were to be done via Article V of the Constitution and submitted through the States around Congress, that would be enacted in a New York minute. I mean, that will sail through every State legislature without question, and you would end up having term limits.

So I think there are two different routes to take, but I think knowing that there is a desire for this, I think it would be good for this institution to say: Okay. We hear you. Let's debate it; let's put everyone on record. Then the American people can hold people accountable accordingly.

That is really, I think, what is frustrating. It would be one thing if term limits just failed every year, but, really, it gets bottled up every year because people don't want to be on record against term limits. I think that those days need to be over.

I ask my friend from Iowa, as you go around your district—you have Republicans, Democrats; you have a very politically diverse district—I mean, is there anybody who is out there saying don't do term limits?

Mr. BLUM. In 3 years of campaigning, I have not yet, Mr. DESANTIS, met one person in my district in northeast Iowa that is against term limits. Everyone wants us to hold a vote on term limits.

And I consistently say this gets buried in committee because the worst nightmare of anybody in this body is to have to go on record as voting against term limits because, as I said in my speech, they go back to their districts and they say they are for reforming Congress.

They are against the pension program. They are against first-class air travel. They are against $1,200-a-month luxury car leases. They are against becoming lobbyists when they retire from this body. They say they are for term limits. Their plane crosses the Potomac. They get in this body. They don't want to vote on those things because I think they are not really against them.

People are tired of that. They are seeing through it. They are demanding that we have this vote. All we ask—all you are asking, all I am asking—is let's get this out of committee. Let's have a vote on this floor and see what happens. It may fail, but at least we got the vote; at least the people in my district and in your district in Florida were represented and had the chance to have a voice.

□ 1730

I think this is an overwhelmingly bipartisan issue. I am Republican, and my district is Democratic. But Democrats want a vote on term limits as well.

I come from the private sector, RON, and we listen to our customers. Our customers are the American voters, the American citizens.

We are not listening to them. We are ignoring them. I think we are seeing it now in this political season, that people are upset with what goes on in Washington, D.C.

Our approval rating—and it has been well earned—is in the single digits. I think it would go so far if we would just hold some votes and try to reform this body because people often tell me: Before you tell me to reform the way my family spends their money, why don't you clean up your own House first? I couldn't agree with them more.

Mr. DESANTIS. I think that, if we were to approach it and say that we need to do term limits, we have to make sure Congress lives under the same rules, no special treatment under ObamaCare, none of that, let's eliminate the pensions for Congress—and the thing is you brought up people being lobbyists after they are in Congress.

If you did term limits, guess what. Then you are going to increase the supply of former Members of Congress. So being a lobbyist wouldn't be as lucrative because there would be a lot more people who are out there.

I think actually more people would say: Maybe I will go back to my home State and start working in business there and maybe have to come to terms with some of the laws that I imposed on the private sector and see how that works.

So I think it would be good for the performance in office, but I also think, as Members left office, it probably would drive more people to the actual private sector rather than being inside the Beltway because you will just have too many former Members and I don't think the pay will be as lucrative.

Right now, I don't know if this is accurate, but I have seen statistics where it is upwards of 80 percent of people who serve in the Congress go on to be lobbyists in Washington. So you understand the system, then you go out and are lobbying to grease the skids in that system. That is not the way I think that we want this system to be operating.

So let me ask you this: In terms of getting a vote, what do you think we need to be doing to impress upon other colleagues so that we can start to develop some momentum to try to get a vote on this?

Mr. BLUM. Some of them need to lose their reelection campaigns. I have consistently said, RON, that true change never comes from inside the Beltway in Washington, D.C. It always comes from out in America.

What we need are grass-roots activists, people that follow what we are doing, to call, to email, and to text to let our Representatives know that you want a vote on term limits.

As a Representative, and I am sure you would agree that those matter. We listen. I listen. We track every phone call, and I get a report at the end of the day saying:

Here is who called from your district, and here is what they wanted.

So it makes a difference. Change never comes from in Washington, D.C.

I would also like to follow up on another point that you made earlier. It was a great point, and that is seniority.

I came here as a freshman 14 months ago and I quickly found out that everything in Congress is based on seniority. Not to take anything away from these fine people that have been here a long time, they have worked very hard, they have paid their dues, and it is nothing personal, but people wonder why change can't happen in Washington, D.C.

It is because we have the same people running the show year in, year out, term in, term out, because it is based on seniority.

A young person like my—well, I shouldn't say young. A young politician—I am 60 years old—doesn't really have a chance to impact change much because the power structure is all based on seniority here.

I wish they would look at seniority out in the real world, in the private sector. What did you do to build a company? What did you do to educate children? What did you do in the medical community?

That seniority should count as well, just not your time spent in this body. So that is a great point. That is why I think things don't change. We need change. Change is good. We need new ideas and fresh ideas and people with political courage.

Another thing that has been a little bit disappointing to me is the lack of political courage, to take a stand and to plant the flag even if it is going to be unpopular in the district. If you think it is the right thing to do, go for it. Have political courage.

People have said to me: How do we know you won't change if we send you to Washington?

I have consistently said: Because I am not afraid to be unelected. I want to be reelected. I will work hard. I will

want to win a second term. But I am not afraid to lose an election.

We need more people like that, RON. We need people who don't want to stay here a lifetime and turn this, the United States Congress, into a family business.

Mr. DESANTIS. It is interesting with the seniority discussion. I was in the Navy. In the military, your time in service matters for pay purposes and other, but along the line you have to actually promote. You have to earn a promotion.

So there will be some people who are commanders, O–5s, who have been in for—I don't know—I guess you could probably get that after 12 or 13 years. And then there are some people who are lieutenant commanders, O–4, who have been in 20 years.

Well, if you have been in 20, you have more seniority in the sense that you have been there longer, but the person who achieved the higher rank through merit is superior to you in the military chain of command. I think the problem with the way the congressional system operates is it is purely based on years staying here.

Some of the best Members who have ever served here have served for 30, 35 years. So this is not uniform. But I think, if you compared the good that those Members have done with the negatives of all the other folks who have just made this their fiefdom, I think the negatives outweigh the positives.

I think that Congressman BLUM is right. Ultimately, the American people need to force this issue. Part of it is calling the offices. I review the phone calls every day, too.

I think one of the most effective things is in a public forum to just pointblank ask a Member of Congress if they will vote for SALMON's bill or RON DESANTIS' term limit bill and put them on the record.

The more people that are on the record as for it, it makes it easier for us to then take the case to the leadership and say that we need to do this.

I think it would be a breath of fresh air. I think people are so frustrated and so sick of the same old games being played in Washington that, if we started coming out with some of these reforms, leading with term limits, I think people would be reading the newspaper and shaking their heads and saying: Really? These guys are finally getting it.

Really, this is something that, if you take the long view when you are doing the right thing like that, then voters will have more confidence in your views on other things.

So maybe you are interested in tax reform. Maybe you are interested in welfare reform. Guess what. You are doing term limits. You are doing those things. I bet you a lot of voters would be less cynical about what you are trying to do on a whole range of issues.

So I think it would be a win-win both in terms of structural reform, but also potential policy reforms down the line.

Let me ask my friend from Iowa: Is there anything else you want to add to the discussion? I really appreciate your time. I think it has been worthwhile. I think we need to keep fighting the good fight.

Mr. BLUM. I agree with you. We will always storm the hill, my good friend, and plant that flag, regardless of how many times we need to do it.

But I would just like to mention some of the bills I have been involved with:

Eliminating first-class airline travel for congressional Members paid for by taxpayers. Most of the people in my district have never flown in first class. There is no reason I should be flying first class on taxpayer dollars.

Eliminating the $1,200-a-month luxury car leases that we can lease back in our districts. That is more than most house payments in northeast Iowa. It would eliminate that.

We need to eliminate the congressional pension program. We need to eliminate the ability to become a lobbyist after you have served in this body.

We need to tie our pay to the pay of the average American. The average American has not had a pay raise in over 20 years. The average American's pay has gone backwards.

This body's pay should go backwards just like the average American's. The words used in polls is that we are out of touch. I wonder if this body is not out of touch, if we are not tone deaf. We need to be tied to the average American.

I recently introduced a bill that, if we didn't balance the budget, then we would get a pay cut; if it is not balanced next year, we get a deeper pay cut; and if we keep not balancing it, we are going to end up making no money. Maybe this way it will get through everyone's head that this is a serious issue and we need to balance the budget.

I agree with you, RON, that any of these reforms voted on would go so far, I think, to the American people to say:

Finally, finally, Washington, D.C. is listening to us. They finally get it.

The frustration is palpable in my district. It probably is in yours. People are really upset. They say that they don't listen, the laws don't apply to us like they do the rest of Americans.

I couldn't agree more. As a citizen, I am every bit as frustrated as well. So you can always count on me to storm the hill with you, my friend.

Mr. DESANTIS. I appreciate it. In your bill, when you said, hey, balance the budget or else face a pay cut, I signed up on that immediately. I think that is a great idea.

We need to have personal skin in the game because what happens is, when you are here in Washington, particularly dealing with spending and debt, it is a lot easier politically for most Members to just put it off on the next generation.

These are people that can't vote you out of office. They are not going to call your office and complain about it. So it is usually the path of least resistance to do that.

So there is not a lot of immediate skin in the game short of us eventually having a debt crisis. Obviously, we don't want it to come to that. We want to make responsible decisions now.

So I applaud you for that. I thought that was a very thoughtful reform. I am happy to be signed up with you. Term limits, as part of a larger government reform package, I think would be a home run. I look forward to working with you on it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friends, Congressman BLUM and the future Senator DESANTIS, for great words and great insights.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to answer a couple of questions that people have had about a couple of votes that my friends, JUSTIN AMASH and THOMAS MASSIE, and I had.

One is on H.R. 4742. It is described to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

Since my wife and I have been blessed with three beautiful daughters, inside and out, all three of them absolutely brilliant—these type of things are important to me—but I note that it says, ''studies have shown that technology and commercialization ventures are successful when women are in top management positions.''

It also puts into law that the requirement that, under the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act, it is required that the National Science Foundation encourage its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.

Now, it just seems like—and I know these are incredibly well intended. Both H.R. 4742 and H.R. 4755 are very, very well intended. Wonderful people put them forward. I understand that.

But just from my experience and from the common sense I hear as I get all over east Texas, it just seems like Washington is always a step behind or—an old saying—a day late and a dollar short.

Now we are $19 trillion short. But we want to take time from our $19 trillion in debt to demand that the National Science Foundation discriminate based on gender.

There may be some young boy who needs encouragement from a tough family situation, but this program is designed to discriminate against that young, poverty-stricken boy and to encourage the girl. Forget the boy. Encourage the girl.

It just seems that, if we are ever going to get to the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr., that he spoke just down the Mall, he wanted people to be judged by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin.

I know after race has been an issue that needed attention, then gender appropriately got attention, because the whole Constitution of the United States, when it is properly read verbatim, means men, women, race, creed, color, national origin, and gender.

Those things are not supposed to matter. It just seems like, when we come in and we say that it is important that for a while we discriminate, we end up getting behind.

And then probably 25 years from now boys are going to have fallen behind in numbers, and then we are going to need to come in and say: Actually, when we passed that bill forcing encouragement of girls and not encouraging of little boys, we were getting behind the eight ball. We didn't see that we were going to be leaving little boys in the ditch, and now we need to start doing programs to encourage little boys.

We are always going to be behind until we get around to saying from this House floor that we don't care where you are from, we don't care what your gender is, and we don't care what you like look. You may be as homely as Abraham Lincoln. We don't care what you look like.

We don't care about the color of your hair or the lack of hair. We don't care. We want you not to have an equal outcome, but to have an equal opportunity to excel, and then let the best person do the best job and excel. That is what has made free market systems work so well.

□ 1745

I was reminded to check out a lady that is known as Madame Curie, Marie Sklowdowska Curie, Madame Curie. It says she was born in Warsaw, then the Kingdom of Poland.

Her achievements included the development of the theory of radioactive isotopes and the discovery of two elements: polonium and radium. Under her direction, the world's first studies were conducted into the treatment of neoplasms, using radioactive isotopes; she founded the Curie Institutes in Paris and in Warsaw; and she won the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in radiation.

So as I think about it, it has got to be millions and millions of lives that this brilliant woman, Madame Curie, has saved because of her work. She died early at 66 because of her work in the laboratory—she had aplastic anemia, apparently from her work with radioactive isotopes—but the lives that woman saved by her work in the laboratory.

However, if our bill, H.R. 4742, had been in law back in Poland or France as she tried to move forward, the Science Foundation there would have been required to tell Madame Curie: Do you know what? You are pretty good in the laboratory, but under this law from the wisdom of Congress, we are supposed to tell you to go into commercial enterprise and make a whole bunch more money because you are better off not being in the laboratory but being out in the commercial world because you will be a better businessperson than men. You need to get out there.

I thank God that there wasn't a program like this that distracted her. This brilliant, caring woman basically gave her life to save many, many millions by the phenomenal work she did in the laboratory.

But according to the bill that we passed today, we are requiring the Science Foundation to encourage entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world. Thank God that is not what Madame Curie did.

We did have another bill. Part of the program is good for boys and girls, but then there is a part, Aspire to Inspire, that engages young girls to present science, technology, engineering, and mathematics career opportunities, et cetera.

And on the next one, provide an opportunity for female middle school students. We don't want to provide an opportunity under this bill for boys. Let the boys fight, let them get into gangs; but the women, the young girls, that is who we want to encourage.

In section 3, NASA shall—not just may, but shall—encourage women and girls to study science, technology, and engineering.

I was inspired in a little town in Mount Pleasant, Texas, growing up by people who encouraged boys and girls equally. We had some very, very smart girls and we had some smart guys. Our teachers really didn't care whether we were boys or girls. They wanted us to work hard and they wanted us to excel. They were incredibly good teachers, and I learned so much. I learned so much in math that in college algebra at Texas A&M, I didn't have to open my book but for 15 minutes for the final. That is all I had to do for the whole semester because of the incredible bases I got in math from my seventh grade teacher, Ms. Edwards, and my high school math teachers were terrific.

But, anyway, I hope that we can get beyond pandering and try to get to the point where we, as a Congress, will say: We don't care what you look like. The things you can't help, how you look, your gender, we don't care about those. We want you to have an equal opportunity with everybody else.

I hope and pray that is the direction we go.

I also hope and pray that those who are suffering in Europe, in Brussels, after the horrendous attacks by radical Islamists, will be comforted by friends and by God himself. For those who have lost loved ones, we need to reach out to the families and be for them, with them, and encourage them. But the best legacy we could provide would be to stop the insane efforts to win over radical Islamists by trying to be this phenomenal friend to them.

An article today by Greg Botelho from CNN says, and these are the highlights: ''A U.S. official speculates ISIS is 'trying to make an international statement' by attacking the home of NATO, the EU.''

He also points out: ''Two explosions rock the Brussels airport, another rips through a subway station in the Belgian capital.''

This article from CNN, unfortunately, says: ''While jarring, the carnage wasn't altogether surprising. Belgium has been going after terrorist threats for months, as illustrated by last week's capture of Europe's most wanted man, Salah Abdeslam, in a bloody raid in Brussels.''

Apparently if you stand up against radical Islam to stop these people who would take us back to the Dark Ages of despotism, book burning, and horrors of basic slavery if you don't believe as you are told, we will be better off if we can be nice to them.

We have an administration that said Iran is the biggest supporter of terrorism in the world, so we think maybe if we cut a deal where we release to them $100 billion to $150 billion, that they will surely start being nice to us.

And those Castros, Fidel and Raul Castro, down in Cuba, they have been dictators. They have tortured, they have been horrendous in the harm that they have brought to the people of Cuba.

How do we know, even though people like Sean Penn and others have told us how wonderful it is, they have the best health care in the world?

Well, it turns out, actually, they are really wanting to get to the United States. It turns out they are wanting to come in droves to the United States because it is not so good living under a dictator like the Castros.

What the President has done, unknowingly, is put his stamp of approval on a dictatorship that has been incredibly brutal, just as this administration did to the terrorists in charge in Iran. People will further suffer, just as they

have in the last few days while the President visited Cuba.

The administration in charge in Cuba, the dictators, were brutalizing people who had the gall to come out and want to act as if they had freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. One poor woman was beaten, stripped naked, and dragged off to jail. Apparently that is okay under the new approach of the U.S. administration if we are trying to outreach to them and they are wanting our outreach to go better.

The fact is it is one thing to have relations commercially with another country, but when we, as the United States, the freest country that has ever existed until we began to lose our freedoms here more recently, when we yield to dictators, to terrorist leaders like in Iran, the world suffers. We have been given a massive responsibility by being the freest and, up until recently, possibly the most powerful country in the world.

China has come on strong. Others have nuclear weapons that will use them and want to use them. Our position is in jeopardy. To whom much is given of them, much will be required. We should be more faithful so that when a country like Nigeria begs help to deal with radical Islam and Boko Haram, we should not have to hear from a Catholic bishop in Nigeria that the Obama administration is demanding that they change their laws to embrace same-sex marriage against their religious beliefs, appropriate for abortion even when it violates their religious beliefs, chide the leader of Kenya or other countries to give up their religious beliefs, and follow the amoral teaching of whoever happens to be in charge in America.

There are consequences for using the power of the United States to bully other countries and to allow them to suffer immeasurably while we act haute as if, because of their Christian beliefs, they are not as worthy as those in the United States that do not follow Christian beliefs.

More Christians are suffering and being persecuted, but Jesus said: You will suffer for my sake.

As we see also in Israel in the latest attack there, people are suffering and being killed. FOX News had this article regarding the Peninsula Group based in Tel Aviv. There is massive suffering at the hands of radical Islam.

As Europe suffers dreadfully at the hands of radical Islam and at the hands of people who have poured into their countries illegally due to their naive but permissive policies, the last thing they need to hear is from the United States President that they need to be careful, not to be biased or prejudiced against the radical Islamists that want to kill them and have killed their family members, because according to this administration, the far bigger danger is bias against those who want to kill us and eliminate our civilized way of life. God help us all.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DONALD M. PAYNE, Jr., (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of medical.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 4721. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations or the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 23, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4684. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's withdrawal of direct final rule — Approval of Iowa Air Quality Implementation Plans; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule; Polk County Board of Health Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Revisions [EPA-R07-OAR-2016-0045; FRL-9943-89-Region 7] received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4685. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Findings of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for Attainment of the 2010 1-Hour Primary Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) [EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0098; FRL-9943-90-OAR] received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4686. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: The 2016 Critical Use Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide; Correction [EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0369; FRL-9943-91-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS44) received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4687. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to Ambient Monitoring Quality Assurance and Other Requirements [EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0619; FRL-9942-91-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS00) received March 17, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4688. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's Major final rule — Interagency Cooperation — Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat [Docket No.: FWS-R9-ES-2011-0072; Docket No.: 120106026-4999-03] (RIN: 1018-AX88; 0648-BB80) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4689. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FTA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — State Safety Oversight [Docket No.: FTA-2015-0003] (RIN: 2132-AB19) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4690. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31061; Amdt. No.: 3682] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4691. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31059; Amdt. No.: 3680] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4692. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31058; Amdt. No.: 3679] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4693. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31060; Amdt. No.: 3681] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4694. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31063; Amdt. No.: 3684] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4695. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2016-2843; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-003-AD; Amendment 39-18392; AD 2016-03-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4696. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0755; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-080-AD; Amendment 39-18414; AD 2016-04-20] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4697. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2455; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-108-AD; Amendment 39-18415; AD 2016-04-21] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4698. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1417; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-159-AD; Amendment 39-18369; AD 2016-01-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4699. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3778; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-27-AD; Amendment 39-18391; AD 2016-03-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4700. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1270; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-222-AD; Amendment 39-18412; AD 2016-04-18] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4701. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3144; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-110-AD; Amendment 39-18403; AD 2016-04-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4702. A letter from the Senior Attorney Advisor, Regulations Officer, FHWA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Performance Management Measures: Highway Safety Improvement Program [Docket No.: FHWA-2013-0020] (RIN: 2125-AF49) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4703. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3805; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-28-AD; Amendment 39-18389; AD 2016-03-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4704. A letter from the Senior Attorney Advisor, Regulations Officer, FHWA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Highway Safety Improvement Program [Docket No.: FHWA-2013-0019] (RIN: 2125-AF56) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4705. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-0467; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-008-AD; Amendment 39-18395; AD 2016-04-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4706. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model 757-200 Series Airplanes Modified by Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01529SE or STC ST02278SE [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1423; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-173-AD; Amendment 39-18418; AD 2016-04-24] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4707. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; ATR-GIE Avions de Transport Regional Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1280; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-064-AD; Amendment 39-18404; AD 2016-04-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4708. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; B-N Group Ltd. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4803; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-034-AD; Amendment 39-18399; AD 2016-04-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4709. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2460; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-163-AD; Amendment 39-18396; AD 2016-04-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4710. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1983; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-020-AD; Amendment 39-18388; AD 2016-03-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4711. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3704; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-005-AD; Amendment 39-18413; AD 2016-04-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4712. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3630; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-253-AD; Amendment 39-18397; AD 2016-04-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4713. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Payment for Physician and Other Health Care Professional Services Purchased by Indian Health Programs and Medical Charges Associated with Non-Hospital-Based Care (RIN: 0917-AA12) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. HOLDING:

H.R. 4825. A bill to enhance defense and security cooperation with India, and for other

purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. COSTA, Mr. LONG, Mr. HARPER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BARTON, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 4826. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Energy to provide technical assistance to the Armed Forces of the United States with respect to ongoing activities of the Armed Forces to address energy resources that are being utilized by the Islamic State or would be beneficial to the Islamic State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Ms. PLASKETT):

H.R. 4827. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to review regulations for municipal solid waste landfills to determine if such regulations are, with the respect to the disposal of coal combustion residuals in such landfills, protective of health and the environment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FLEMING (for himself and Mrs. HARTZLER):

H.R. 4828. A bill to prevent governmental discrimination against providers of health services who decline involvement in abortion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARDENAS (for himself and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4829. A bill to amend section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 with respect to requirements for domestic industries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. BERA, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. KILMER, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. DESJARLAIS):

H.R. 4830. A bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain membership status for India in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HILL (for himself and Mr. NEUGEBAUER):

H.R. 4831. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make an exception to the 100 shareholder S corporation limitation in the case of shareholders whose shares were acquired through certain crowd-funding or small public offerings; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself and Mr. BERA):

H.R. 4832. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude certain health arrangements from the excise tax on employer-sponsored health coverage; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PLASKETT, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 4833. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make grants to States to support the establishment and operation of grocery stores in underserved communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself, Mr. VELA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 4834. A bill to authorize United States participation in a general capital increase for the North American Development Bank; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Mr. TONKO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. VELA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. CLAY):

H.R. 4835. A bill to facilitate nationwide availability of volunteer income tax assistance for low-income and underserved populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 4836. A bill to require the United States to oppose the provision by the International Monetary Fund of a loan to a country whose public debt is not likely to be sustainable in the medium term, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 4837. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify that caregivers for veterans with serious illnesses are eligible for assistance and support services provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4838. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to disallow the issuance of tax-exempt bonds any proceeds of which are used to provide professional entertainment facilities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4839. A bill to prohibit the Government from requiring any person to assist in devising a method for breaking the encryption of a wire or oral communication; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 4840. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the maximum wages allowed under the work opportunity tax credit for ex-felons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota):

H. Res. 657. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of the Honorable Martin Olav Sabo as an outstanding public servant dedicated to the State of Minnesota and the United States; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Res. 658. A resolution condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL):

H. Res. 659. A resolution expressing support for the designation of March 30, 2016, as ''World Bipolar Day''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. HOLDING:

H.R. 4825.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 4826.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 4827.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Necessary and Proper Clause, clause 18 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution; and the Commerce Clause, clause 3 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 4828.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill makes specific changes to existing law in a manner that provides conscience protections in accord with the 1st Amendment of the United States Constitution. Further, this bill creates a private right of action in federal court in accord with Clause 9 of Section 8 of Article I and Clause 18, Section 8 of Article I, of the United States Constitution. Similarly, this bill provides for preventing disbursement of all or a portion of certain Federal financial assistance in accord with Clause 1, Section 8 Article 1.

By Mr. CARDENAS:

H.R. 4829.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 and 8 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4830.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4831.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 4832.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3—Business/Labor Regulation—The Congress shall have

Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 4833.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 and clause 18 of Article I of section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 4834.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4835.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 4836.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, that no money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of Appropriations made by Law, and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be made from time to time.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 4837.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4838.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4839.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment IV: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 4840.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 244: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 292: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 295: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 353: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 448: Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 525: Mr. TAKAI.

H.R. 592: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 605: Mr. TED LIEU of California and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 703: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 793: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 863: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 879: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 885: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 921: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FARR, and Mr. TAKAI.

H.R. 932: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 953: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 986: Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 1062: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1151: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1192: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 1197: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. BARTON.

H.R. 1220: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 1221: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 1247: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1293: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1336: Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 1421: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1439: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 1538: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 1571: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 1604: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 1733: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 1736: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1784: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 1854: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1859: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 1933: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2197: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 2210: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 2293: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 2334: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 2460: Mr. LANCE and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2488: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 2589: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 2646: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 2660: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 2799: Mr. BERA.

H.R. 2805: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2817: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 2896: Mr. MARINO, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HILL, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 2903: Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 3071: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 3095: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3099: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 3119: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 3222: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 3235: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 3299: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3300: Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 3326: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 3381: Mr. TURNER, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3390: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3406: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3423: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 3514: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 3546: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3619: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 3687: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3694: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 3706: Mr. LEWIS and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 3770: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 3799: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 3926: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3986: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4041: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4057: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 4065: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

H.R. 4167: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 4177: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 4223: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 4225: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 4277: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 4320: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 4352: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 4428: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 4442: Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 4457: Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 4460: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 4499: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 4514: Mr. LATTA and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 4515: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 4538: Ms. MCSALLY and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 4550: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 4567: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 4599: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 4613: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 4626: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. VELA, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 4633: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 4636: Mr. COLE and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4640: Mr. HILL, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 4653: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 4668: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 4676: Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 4681: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 4682: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 4703: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4715: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HILL, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 4730: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. HARRIS, and Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 4731: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 4737: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 4755: Mr. RIGELL, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. KNIGHT.

H.R. 4763: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 4764: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 4771: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 4773: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. HILL, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 4775: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 4776: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 4778: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 4786: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 4792: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEYER, and Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4796: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4807: Mr. CONYERS and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 4820: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 4822: Mr. CALVERT.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. SESSIONS.

H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H. Res. 28: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H. Res. 62: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H. Res. 156: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H. Res. 220: Mr. DENT.

H. Res. 343: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. SIRES.

H. Res. 371: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H. Res. 638: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H. Res. 647: Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF PAUL A. GRAF, JR.

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud Paul A. Graf, Jr. for his swift and courageous action to protect a family and their pets from an apartment fire.

Mr. Graf is a letter carrier for the United States Postal Service. On February 16, 2016 while on his route, he noticed smoke coming from an apartment. He called 9-1-1 and took immediate action to make sure that there was no one inside the apartment.

Mr. Graf's actions prevented a possibly life-threatening tragedy. The Ridley Park community he serves and the greater Philadelphia area are grateful for his vigilance and hard work on the job.

SUPPORTING THE AIRR ACT

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as the House continues its work on long-term reauthorization and reform of the Federal Aviation Administration and related programs, I would like to reiterate my support for commonsense provisions included in H.R. 4441, the Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act of 2016, which would ensure the safety of our commercial aircraft and passengers.

Mr. Speaker, early last year I met with my constituent, Justin Madden, who is the National Secretary/Treasurer for the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), which represents the aircraft maintenance technicians of both Southwest Airlines and Alaska Airlines. During the course of our conversation, we discussed many issues impacting the aviation industry, including safety. Justin brought to my attention that he and his colleagues are subject to background checks, as well as pre-employment and random drug tests, yet their counterparts at foreign aircraft repair stations are not required to meet the same safety precautions.

As the amount of maintenance work performed on U.S. aircraft at foreign repair stations increases, we must do more to ensure that the employees at these stations are also held to the same level of professional standards as their counterparts at U.S. repair stations.

On October 31st of last year, Russian Metrojet Flight 9268 disintegrated over the Sinai Peninsula. All 224 people on board the flight tragically died that day. On January 29, 2016, Reuters reported that a mechanic had been detained and was suspected of planting a bomb, which he had been given by his cousin, who was a member of ISIS. Two policemen and a baggage handler were also suspected of helping the mechanic. This incident alone should give us pause as we think about the safety of American aircraft and the American flying public.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER for his commitment to safety and for working with me and Representative DAN LIPINSKI and Representative LOU BARLETTA to include Section 402 in the Aviation, Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act.

This provision marks a bipartisan, commonsense step forward in ensuring that background checks and drug tests are required of employees at foreign repair stations who work on U.S. commercial aircraft, strengthening America's commitment to protecting its citizens and ensuring safe air travel.

COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS OF SERVICE TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THOMAS BUILT BUSES

HON. ALMA S. ADAMS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, every school day, around 450,000 school buses transport more than 24 million children to and from schools and school-related activities, making school buses the largest mass transit program in the U.S. (National Wildlife Federation).

I rise today to recognize Perley A. Thomas and his family who have aided in the transportation system for many generations.

Thomas Built Buses started in 1916 in High Point, North Carolina and since then, the Thomas children and grandchildren have built a national reputation among the school bus business.

In 2011, Thomas Built Buses became the first, and remains the only, school bus manufacturer to achieve Zero-Waste-to-Landfill operations, demonstrating its industry leadership as a driving force in facility waste management and environmental commitment.

Today, a decade into the school bus occupation, Thomas Built Buses offers school, activity, green, childcare, specialty and commercial buses across the nation.

As the United States Congresswoman for North Carolina's 12th Congressional District, I am proud to offer my congratulations for 100 years of service and best wishes to you. Thank you for making such a positive impact in this country and for many years to come.

HONORING CHIEF DEPUTY JERRY RICE

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Deputy Jerry Rice of Henderson County, North Carolina. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, I would like to thank Chief Deputy Rice for his dedication to Henderson County, and congratulate him on his retirement after three decades of faithful service.

Chief Deputy Rice's long career in law enforcement began in 1986 with a position as a tele-communicator for the Brevard Police Department. That same year he completed Basic Law Enforcement training and subsequently worked as a patrol officer with the Brevard Police Department. In July 1987, Chief Deputy Rice began service with the Henderson County Sheriff's Office. There, he spent time in a wide range of roles, working at different points as a patrol deputy, a field training officer, a detective, and an undercover narcotics investigator. Later in his career, he held several supervisory positions in the Sheriff's Office serving as Detective Sergeant over Drug Enforcement, Detective Lieutenant supervising Property Crimes, Operations Lieutenant in CID, Chief Administrator of the Henderson County Detention Facility, and Operations Major. Over the course of his career, Chief Deputy Rice also spent six years as a member of SWAT, became a Rifle Marksman and a general and specialized firearms instructor, earned a license as a polygraph examiner, and became an airplane and rotary wing law enforcement pilot.

Throughout his time with the Henderson County Sheriff's Office, Chief Deputy Rice was known for friendship, helpfulness, and dedication to the mission of his office. He earned a reputation for his clear understanding of the issues facing Henderson County and for his reasoned voice and counsel. I am proud to honor Chief Deputy Jerry Rice for his lifelong commitment to public service and to express the gratitude of myself and the people of Western North Carolina.

IN HONOR OF POLICE CHIEF JOHN FOSTER, 35 YEARS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on behalf of myself and Mr. LAMALFA,

to honor the service of Police Chief John Foster, who has kept the citizens of Grass Valley, California, safe for 17 years.

As a police officer for 35 years, Chief Foster has dedicated his life to public welfare and safety. He began his career as a police officer in Palo Alto, California. Over the course of 13 years, he was promoted to Sergeant and then Lieutenant. His demonstrated leadership resulted in the position of Police Captain in Corvallis, Oregon.

John Foster became the Chief of Grass Valley Police in July 1998. He has been a mainstay of the community ever since that time. He has been a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Rotary International, League of Cities, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters. He currently serves as a Blue and Gold Officer for the United States Naval Academy.

Chief Foster has been the standard-bearer for public safety and leadership training. He is a member of the POST Instructor Standards Council, a Pointman Leadership Institute Instructor, an Allied to Benefit Law Enforcement Consultant/Trainer, a Sierra College Administration of Justice Committee member, a Drug Free Coalition Steering Committee member, a Nevada County Law Enforcement and Fire Council and a Leadership Institute Advisory Council member.

Mr. Speaker, Chief John Foster has dedicated his life to the protection of his fellow citizens. He is an example of leadership for us all.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT WORK OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS AND SUPPORTING INCREASED ACCESS TO HOME HEALTH

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many nurse practitioners (NPs) in Oregon and nationwide who work hard to provide quality health care to patients. Today, I'm meeting with Nancy Cavanaugh, a pediatric NP from Central Point, Oregon. Nancy practices at La Clinica's school-based health centers, including at Crater High School in Central Point. NPs like Nancy are the health provider of choice for millions of Americans seeking primary care, pediatric care, disease education, and other preventative services. Along with clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), and physician assistants (PAs), NPs serve many patients as their main source of care, especially in rural areas where a physician isn't always readily available.

Despite this important role, these clinicians remain unable to order home health services for the Medicare patients under their care. This impediment results in an administrative and paperwork burden, creating an unnecessary step in care delivery. That is why I introduced H.R. 1342, the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2015, which would ensure that our Medicare beneficiaries get the home health care they need in a timely manner by allowing NPs, CNSs, CNMs and PAs to order home health services, if their state allows it.

By easing administrative burdens and permitting nurse practitioners like Nancy to order and certify home health services, the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act would help deliver needed care to patients, especially in areas where access to health care is limited. Oregon's seniors should be able to receive this important care in a timely fashion, because no one should be forced to choose between receiving health care and remaining in his or her home. Please join me in thanking Nancy and her fellow NPs for their hard work on behalf of patients.

HONORING MERLE LEWIS

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of my constituent Merle Lewis, recognizing the celebration of his 90th birthday on April 8th.

An upstanding resident of Pennsylvania, Merle resides in Glenburn Township with his wife Hilda. Merle and Hilda have been happily married for over 50 years.

Merle has led a successful life as a dairy farmer and is a committed advocate for the agriculture community. Merle serves as a Director of the Wyoming-Lackawanna Farm Bureau as well as a SafeMark dealer for the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. He is the former Director of the Lackawanna County Dairy Herd Improvement Association.

Along with his many responsibilities to the Farm Bureau, Merle is a member of the Oriental Grange in Lake Winola and a past member of the Green Grove Grange in Scott Township.

I want to wish Merle a very happy 90th birthday and thank him for his service to all of the farmers in Pennsylvania.

RESTORE THE VOTE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge today as Restoration Tuesday and to honor the role of the brave men and women who fought in the ongoing battle to protect our most sacred constitutional right, the right to vote.

Today, 51 years ago, courageous men and women stood tall and moved forward on what would be the final march of the peaceful protest marches from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in March of 1965. This final march only occurred after countless Americans were left beaten, bloody and bruised on "Bloody Sunday" in pursuit of their fundamental right—the right to have their voices heard and their vote counted. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 would never have been possible without their sacrifices; but still today old battles have become anew and the struggle for equal voting rights continues.

It is reprehensible that still in 2016, Americans across the nation continue to face modern day barriers to the ballot box. A number of states, including Alabama, quickly passed restrictive laws designed to suppress the vote after the Supreme Court struck down Section 4 pre-clearance and federal protection for vulnerable communities in 2013. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was reauthorized nearly a decade ago and it is shameful that still today, people across the nation do not enjoy full and free access to exercise their right to vote. The time is always right to do what is right. As we continue to progress throughout this election year, it is especially critical that all Americans have fair and equal access to the ballot box. Our very democracy is built on the ability of every citizen being able to have their voices heard and vote counted.

We must learn from the lessons of the past and honor those who sacrificed for our nation's progress. Just recently, I introduced legislation to honor voting rights icon, Amelia Boynton Robinson, by renaming the Selma, Alabama post office in her honor. Mrs. Boynton Robinson was a voting rights hero and one of the Foot Soldiers on the front lines of the 1965 voting rights marches. She made the clear and compelling statement through her campaign motto when running for Congress as the first woman from the State of Alabama that "A Voteless People Is A Hopeless People." We cannot continue to repeat the errors of the past. Amelia Boynton Robinson, like so many others literally shed blood for the right to vote. Fifty-one years later, no one should have to face violence or shed blood for a fundamental right.

Also, just today I introduced legislation to designate several civil rights and voting rights sites in Birmingham, AL as a national park in order to commemorate their historical significance. While these pieces of legislation are important gestures, the best way to commemorate and recognize their legacy is to pass meaningful voting rights legislation that would restore key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Now is the time. Congress must act. The American people cannot wait any longer. On this Restoration Tuesday, we honor the men and women who stood for our fundamental right and take up the cause to continue the fight. The right to vote is worth fighting for and we must fight until the battle is won.

We must Restore the Vote.

CONGRATULATING THE ALIQUIPPA QUIPS FOR A PERFECT SEASON

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the Aliquippa Quips boys basketball team for claiming the PIAA Class AA title after an undefeated season with a perfect 30–0 record. Their extraordinary accomplishment makes the entire community proud.

It is history in the making. They're only the 13th WPIAL team to ever win a state basketball title with a perfect record, and the 33rd undefeated boys basketball state champion. This is Aliquippa's first state title since 1997, and their first undefeated state championship since 1949.

Athletics endow young people with many of the virtues and skills they will need to succeed not only on the court, but in every other endeavor. These young men are being rewarded for their hard work, dedication, athleticism, and team unity.

I wish the seniors luck in their future endeavors, and I extend my best wishes to the coaches and the team for another outstanding season next year.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT ''BOB'' McGLOTTEN

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable gentleman and longtime workers' rights icon in Washington, D.C., Mr. Robert ''Bob'' McGlotten, who departed this world on March 12th, 2016. He was a labor rights trailblazer, champion for positive social change, beloved husband, father, and dedicated public servant. He set a standard of excellence in labor reform, social justice, and national leadership that has been equaled by few other people.

Bob was a trailblazer who made history and changed America for the better. He served the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO) in many capacities including as its Legislative Director, the first African American to serve in that high position, where he championed the rights of millions of working men and women for nearly three decades. One of his key accomplishments was to increase union involvement in employment programs across the country.

His career included his exceptional service as a board member for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation as well as his work as a special assistant to former Secretary of Labor Peter Brennan. Bob came from humble beginnings, but rose to become one of the nation's most powerful and effective union leaders. He stood shoulder-to-shoulder with my father, former Congressman Bill Clay, as they worked tirelessly to promote and protect the rights of the American worker.

I have known him since I was a child. A grand and gracious gentleman, he was a visionary. My Mom and Dad, and indeed our entire family, have wonderful memories of him. We always regarded him as a person of great integrity, a gentleman and a scholar, and a man who possessed both a warm smile and a caring heart.

My thoughts and prayers are with Bob's family, associates, and colleagues at this painful hour. He is survived by his beloved wife of 23 years, Cheryl; his dear daughters Karen, Darlene and Roben; and his cherished sisters Patricia and Teresa Sparks; along with 10 grandchildren and a host of great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, family and friends.

I too have a heavy heart, as I reflect on our many years of enduring friendship. Bob was an incredible person who touched the hearts of people throughout the country that he served so ably and so well.

May God bless him with perfect peace and eternal rest and may He bless all who mourn him with strength, faith, and renewed dedication to continue his good works.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members of Congress to join me in honoring the memory of Bob McGlotten for his legacy of honor and his strong commitment to confront injustice and inequality wherever he found it.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire. I am pleased to join previous volunteers, mentors, program participants and supporters of the program to recognize the commitment and hard work the ''Bigs'' have made in the lives of the ''Littles'' they have impacted in the Granite State over the past 50 years.

The belief of Big Brothers Big Sisters is very simple. They believe that every child has the ability to succeed in life, and for some it takes the extra guidance of a mentor to help them on their way to success. Their mission is more difficult as we sadly know that many children come from difficult situations, single parent households, or have challenges in learning and socializing unlike other kids their age. The ''Bigs,'' or adult mentors, become a consistent presence in the lives of their ''Littles'' and help lend structure, support and confidence to these kids in their everyday lives. Many kids who have come up through Big Brothers Big Sisters have given testimony over the years that they wouldn't be where they are today were it not for the help and support of their Big Brother or Big Sister, and I thank these men and women for taking time out of their lives to help support the children of our great state.

I am proud to join with my fellow Granite Staters in recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire, and wish them all the best in their future years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY AND VOICE OF AMERICA

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our civilian U.S. international media organizations, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America, for the dramatic work they have done in jointly creating and developing their Russian language television news venture, ''Current Time.''

''Current Time'' draws upon a uniquely informed network of reporters and commentators to provide timely and credible news. It has expanded since its debut in October 2014 from a 30-minute, daily broadcast into a brand that combines daily and weekly programs on numerous platforms to bring audiences all along Russia's borders—from the Baltic countries, through Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova, to the Caucasus countries and on into Central Asia—the information they need.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating and supporting the ''Current Time'' team, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America. Their work makes a critical contribution to supporting the freedom of the press for Russian speakers in critical regions around the world.

THE GREAT LAKES—A NATIONAL TREASURE

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, Teddy Roosevelt, America's original conservationist said, ''We are prone to speak of the resources of this country as inexhaustible. This is not so.''

This could not be more true for our nation's water: the lakes, rivers, streams, and oceans that enrich our land and people.

That's why, today, World Water Day, I would like to address the importance of protecting one of our national treasures, the Great Lakes. I have had the opportunity to represent parts of both Lake Erie and Lake Ontario during my time in Congress and serve as co-chair of the House Great Lakes Task Force. I know first-hand just how important the lakes are to my district, the region, as well as the country and planet.

The Great Lakes represent 20 percent of the world's fresh water supply and 95 percent of our nation's fresh water supply. They are a source of drinking water, jobs, and recreation for millions of Americans. They are one of our country's most precious resources.

We have an obligation to protect and rehabilitate this precious resource. From historic problems which have risen from mistakes made generations ago to new threats, like climate change, there are so many matters endangering the health of our Great Lakes. This is why programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative are so important to our region. The GLRI has funded the cleanup of toxic substances and has helped to combat the threat to our lakes from invasive species.

We are all aware of the threat Asian Carp and other invasive species pose to the Great Lakes water system. The Asian Carp have been destructive to the rivers and streams that they have invaded and we must do everything in our power to prevent them from entering the Great Lakes at all. They have no natural predators to keep their populations in check and

we cannot afford to let these fish wreak havoc on the ecosystems of the Great Lakes.

I have consistently supported efforts to proactively protect our systems from dangerous invasive species and will continue to do so. I encourage my colleagues to join me. We need to make sure to hold Congress responsible for adequately funding the programs such as the GLRI and to work proactively to prevent the introduction of pollutants and species that threaten the safety and security of our water.

In fact, humans can only survive four days without water. Ensuring the safety and availability of our water is truly life or death.

These magnificent bodies of water are truly precious and we must do all that we can to protect these national treasures for future generations.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROSE RANDAZZO, THE SUNDAY DISPATCH'S 2015 PERSON OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rose Randazzo, who has been named the Sunday Dispatch's Greater Pittston Person of the Year for 2015. Since 2000, the Sunday Dispatch selects a person annually who has a positive impact in the Greater Pittston Community over the course of the previous year. Rose has been a key figure to Pittston's efforts to revitalize the city's Main Street.

In 2010, Rose was named the Main Street Manager, a volunteer position to help attract new businesses and arts to downtown Pittston. The most recent major art project is the Inspirational Mural, completed by muralist Michael Pilato and located on the side of the Newrose Building. The mural is dedicated to the residents of Greater Pittston and depicts more than forty local figures who have had an impact on life in the area. In addition to Pilato's mural, downtown Pittston implemented Second Friday Art Walks in May 2013. Every second Friday during the summer months, craft and art vendors populate Pittston's Main Street. Due to the success of the art walks and other endeavors taken on by Rose, ''American Craft Week'' named Pittston the 8th best town for craft lovers in 2015.

Rose's agenda also includes rehabilitation of the city's aging buildings. The first building Rose helped revitalize as Main Street Manager was the building at 26 Main Street, which houses Napoli's Pizza. Completed in November 2011, it is the first and only building with Italianate architecture in Pittston. Another one of Rose's success stories is the Christopher Building. Before Rose intervened, the City of Pittston was considering demolishing this historic building. Rose purchased the building and had it renovated. Today, the Christopher Building houses one of Pittston's most successful restaurants.

It is an honor to recognize an individual who is ushering in a new renaissance for the City of Pittston. Rose truly has great vision for the historic town. I wish Rose continued success in her efforts to bring new life to Pittston.

HONORING CORTINA RANCHERIA CHAIRMAN CHARLIE WRIGHT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Chairman Charlie Wright for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Wright. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Wright to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

H.R. 4742 PROMOTING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACT AND H.R. 4755 INSPIRING THE NEXT SPACE PIONEERS, INNOVATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND EXPLORERS WOMEN ACT

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act and H.R. 4755, the Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers Women Act.

These two bills would support entrepreneurship programs for women and encourage young girls and women to pursue STEM degrees and careers.

Throughout my career in Congress and my time as the Ranking Member of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I have been passionate about ensuring opportunities for women in STEM fields.

More women are pursuing STEM degrees and careers overall, but they are still underrepresented in many STEM fields. This is especially true in STEM fields with high entrepreneurship rates, such as engineering and computer science.

Along with STEM training, women face other barriers to entrepreneurship, including access to credit.

Due to such barriers, it is important to support entrepreneurship programs focused on women. H.R. 4742 does that by supporting programs at the National Science Foundation that recruit and promote women who are looking to move beyond the laboratory and enter the commercial world.

I want to thank my colleague, Representative ESTY, for her work on this bill.

H.R. 4755 would support existing programs at NASA that encourage young girls and women to study STEM fields and pursue careers in aerospace. These programs include NASA GIRLS, a virtual mentoring program; Aspire to Inspire, a program connecting young girls with women with STEM careers at NASA; and a summer institute program that increases awareness and exposes middle school girls to the STEM careers at NASA.

Additionally, H.R. 4755 calls on NASA to submit a plan to Congress on how to best use their current and retired workforce to mentor female K–12 students. Utilizing our retired STEM workforce can multiply the opportunities for mentorship, but I appreciate Mrs. COMSTOCK's agreement to include current NASA employees, especially early career women at NASA. Seeing a young female scientist or engineer might be the best way to show young girls that STEM careers are possible for them.

I would to thank my colleague, Representative COMSTOCK, for her work on this bill and for working with me to broaden the scope of the plan.

I strongly support both H.R. 4742 and H.R. 4755 and I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL FERDINAND CLARENCE ''FRED'' BIDGOOD

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my constituent, Colonel Ferdinand Clarence ''Fred'' Bidgood, a retired United States Army officer, a patriot, and a true leader. After his birth in 1938 in Fort

Benning, Georgia, Fred went on to live in London, England where he graduated from Central High School in 1955. He matriculated into the United States Military Academy's Class of 1960 where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. Fred later earned a Master's degree in civil engineering from Texas A&M, and graduated from the Armed Forces Staff College.

Following his graduation from the United States Military Academy, Fred was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the Army and served around the world in command and staff positions in both Artillery and Engineer units. Throughout his career, he served as Associate Executive Director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America in Washington, DC and Chief of Staff for the National Victory Celebration, where his duties included welcoming home troops from the Gulf War. He also served as Director on the Board of Governors of the World United Services Organization and Chairman of their Human Resources Committee, and he was a member of the Board of Advisers of National Handicapped Sports.

Fred lived much of his life in South Run Forest community in Springfield, Virginia. On Veterans Day, Flag Day, and Memorial Day, Fred enjoyed distributing flags across his entire community to share his patriotic spirit with his neighbors in honor of our country and all those who have served it bravely with him. Fred will be remembered dearly across the South Run Forest community by all those he touched on a daily basis. He was well known by many of his neighbors for having a witty sense of humor. One of Fred's neighbors, Norman Bayne, once told me about a time when he was mowing his lawn and wearing shorts, Fred came out and shouted, ''If I had legs like that I would wear pants.'' Fred always had a way to brighten the day of those around him.

Fred's final assignment in the military was as an Executive Assistant to the Administrator of the Veterans Administration. He passed away a decorated veteran, having earned four awards of the Legion of Merit, The Bronze Star, two awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal. He was preceded in death by his daughter Kerri. He is survived by his wife Marilyn of 55 years, two sons Mark and Matthew, and four grandchildren, Damon, Haley, Aidan, and Brianna. I am honored to commemorate Fred today for his life of leadership, service, and selfless contributions to our great nation. We are fortunate to have citizens like Fred who are willing to put their life at risk to serve the United States of America.

HONORING ED NORTON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN rise to recognize and honor Ed Norton for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Norton. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Norton to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

WELCOME BRYNLEE ELIZABETH LUMLEY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Sarah Lumley and her husband, Nick Lumley, on the birth of their new baby girl. Brynlee Elizabeth Lumley was born at 4:27 p.m. on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at University Hospital in Augusta, Georgia. Brynlee weighed seven pounds and ten ounces and measured 20 and 3/4 inches long. She is the first child for the happy couple and I have no doubt her talented parents will be dedicated to her well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Brynlee's grandparents, Jerry and Dawn Barber of Jackson, South Carolina, and John and Valerie Zentz of North Augusta, South Carolina. Congratulations to her entire family as they welcome their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 130, I regretfully missed this vote due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLYMAN BILL DODD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Assemblyman Dodd for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Assemblyman Dodd. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

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RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN DON WILLIAMS, USN (RET.)

HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to memorialize the life and career of Captain Donald Edward Williams, United States Navy, Retired.

Captain Williams, a resident of the Sun City Anthem community in my district, passed away on February 23, 2016 at the age of 74.

His life and service to the United States was truly remarkable and worthy of our recognition in this House.

After graduating with a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Purdue University, Captain Williams received a commission in the United States Navy through Purdue's NROTC program.

He went to flight training in 1964 and earned his pilots wings in 1966.

Captain Williams made four combat deployments during Vietnam; two with Attack Squadron 113 and two with Attack Squadron 97, both aboard the USS *Enterprise.* In all, Don Williams flew 330 combat missions in Vietnam.

For his service he was awarded the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, 2 Navy Commendation Medals with Combat V device, the Vietnam Service Medal, a Vietnamese Gallantry Cross, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Following the war, Captain Williams continued his service as a Navy test pilot, logging more than 6,000 hours flying time, which includes 5,700 hours in jets and 745 carrier landings.

In 1978, Captain Williams was selected by NASA and one year later became an astronaut qualified for assignment as a pilot on future Space shuttle flights.

Captain Williams made two space flights.

His first was in 1985 aboard the Space Shuttle *Discovery* and his second was in 1989 aboard the shuttle *Atlantis,* where he served as spacecraft commander. Aboard the *Atlantis,* Captain Williams and his crew successfully deployed the *Galileo* spacecraft, starting its journey to explore Jupiter.

During his time with NASA, Captain Williams was awarded the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, NASA Space Flight Medal, and NASA Exceptional Service Medal. In total he logged more than 287 hours in space and orbited Earth 188 times.

I do not make such statements lightly, Mr. Speaker, but Captain Donald Williams was the epitome of an American hero. He served our country during war and peace and on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank him.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,202,994,410,080.31. We've added $8,576,117,361,167.23 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING CITY OF WINTERS MAYOR CECILIA AGUILAR-CURRY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Mayor Aguilar-Curry for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mayor Aguilar-Curry. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mayor Aguilar-Curry to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SGT. LOUIS F. ''LOUIE'' CARDIN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a hero from my congressional district, United States Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Louis F. ''Louie'' Cardin. Today we ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember this incredible young man who died in service to our country.

SSG Cardin was from Temecula, California, where he graduated from Chaparral High School. He was the second youngest of seven siblings, siblings whom he looked up to and followed including following one brother into military service. Staff Sergeant Cardin is remembered fondly by family and friends, who knew him for his humor and love of family and life. He is survived by this parents and siblings.

SSG Cardin was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He was killed in action in Makhmur, Iraq on March 19, 2016. Staff Sergeant Cardin was 27 years old. He had an illustrious military career where he was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, three Afghanistan Campaign medals, an Iraq Campaign Medal, and three Sea Service Deployment ribbons.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like Staff Sergeant Cardin, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day the Cardin family learned of their son and brother's death was probably the hardest day they have ever faced and our thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude for Staff Sergeant Cardin's sacrifice go out to them. There are no words or actions that can ease their grief. What words we can offer only begin to convey our deep respect and highest appreciation for the sacrifice Staff Sergeant Cardin made for our great nation. His sacrifice is forever etched in the history of freedom triumphing over oppression.

Staff Sergeant Cardin's family has given a part of themselves in the loss of their loved one and we hope they know that the goodness he brought to this world and the sacrifice he has made will never be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 21st, 2016, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on roll call no. 130.

HONORING NAPA COUNTY SUPERVISOR DIANE DILLON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Supervisor Dillon for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Supervisor Dillon. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Supervisor Dillon to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Naperville, which was founded on March 31, 1941. The Rotary Club of Naperville is a chartered member of Rotary International, which boasts an impressive membership of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, and community leaders who come together to create positive, lasting change in our communities and around the world.

Since its inception, the Rotary Club of Naperville has been a major supporter of charitable and community causes, and has contributed over $1 million to deserving programs that serve those in need throughout our community. Moreover, its members have devoted immeasurable hours in volunteer and humanitarian service, not only in our community but across the globe. The Rotary Club of Naperville and its members truly live the Rotary motto, ''Service Above Self.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Naperville and in commending it as it continues its long tradition of fellowship and service.

RECOGNIZING FIESTA'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to recognize the more than 75,000 individuals who donate their time and talents to organizing Fiesta San Antonio. Fiesta San Antonio started in 1891 as a one-parade event, and it has evolved into one of the nation's premier festivals with an economic impact of more than $284 million dollars for the Alamo City. The 125th anniversary of Fiesta will take place this year in a 10-day celebration from April 14 through 24; the festival commemorates the Battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto and the birth of multiethnic heritage of the Alamo City. The area non-profit organizations that stage more than 100 Fiesta events held throughout the city include churches, schools, arts groups, health organizations, athletic associations, and many others; local units of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines offer their support to many of these gatherings while also presenting events of their own.

Fiesta San Antonio has become a popular attraction for visitors from far and wide, and more than three million party-goers enjoy Fiesta San Antonio from across the state, nation and world each year. Fiesta is the Party With A Purpose as the funds raised by official Fiesta events provide services to San Antonio citizens throughout the year. An undertaking of this magnitude depends on the efforts of many volunteers. Deserving of special recognition are the officers and staff of the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, including president Vonzetta Hickman, president-elect Erwin DeLuna, senior vice president Bill Mitchell, vice president Byron LeFlore, Jr., vice president Virginia Van Cleave, treasurer Marcie Ince, secretary Joe Ramirez, presidential appointee Marsha Hendler, immediate past president Fernando Reyes, and executive director Amy Shaw.

Fiesta San Antonio brings together people from all walks of life to join in a spirited celebration of the city's rich history, culture, and traditions. In appreciation of all they have done, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues join me in thanking them for their efforts.

HONORING DAN SMUTTS

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN rise to recognize and honor Dan Smutts for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Smutts. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Smutts to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

AHMADIYYA-INDONESIA

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the men and women of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community are peaceful followers of Islam. Ahmadis around the world work tirelessly to counter violent extremist propaganda and defend their religion against terrorists. But for years they have suffered systematic oppression, ruthless attacks, and false imprisonment.

Since 2008, the Ahmadiyya community has been the subject of deadly attacks from militant Islamists in Indonesia simply because

they have different beliefs. Following a Presidential decree ordering the Ahmadiyya community to ''stop spreading interpretations and activities that deviate from the principal teachings of Islam,'' Ahmadis in Indonesia have faced escalating threats of violence.

In the most recent attack on Bangka Island, top elected officials told the Ahmadiyya community that they must convert to Sunni Islam or be forcibly removed from the island. This campaign of intolerance was compounded by letters warning that Bangka residents ''won't want to be held accountable if ugly things happen'' should the Ahmadiyya refuse to leave. The government followed through on these expulsions and on February 5th eleven Ahmadis were forced to leave their families and homes. Nine other victims remained behind and are currently living at the Ahmadiyya Secretariat Office, unable to return to their homes out of fear.

The rights of all Indonesian citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs, should be protected. The right to worship is not a right granted by man but by our Creator. And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF MONTEREY

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Housing Authority of the County of Monterey's celebration of 75 years of service in the 20th Congressional District of California. I have long argued that the biggest issue facing the economic future of my Central California region is affordable workforce housing. The Housing Authority of the County of Monterey was created on March 17, 1941. Its original purpose was to provide low-income rentals in the County of Monterey as an independent public agency. However, in the last 75 years, the Housing Authority has gone well beyond its original design.

The Housing Authority has proven to be an invaluable asset in times of both war and peace. At the close of World War II, the Housing Authority's performance was exemplary in locating emergency housing for returning veterans and their families and they have continued to show this support for Monterey County for over seven decades. Throughout the years, the Housing Authority has expanded its programs to include low-income rental apartments, low-income Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to the private market, and development of affordable housing in concert with related non-profits. In addition, the Housing Authority provides property management services and tax-exempt bond financing for housing construction to its related non-profits.

The Housing Authority is contributing to the reduction of homelessness in the County of Monterey through its collaboration with other local non-profits and governmental jurisdictions. The Housing Authority has provided transitional and permanent supportive housing to local residents who have found themselves homeless.

The Housing Authority provides permanent and migrant housing for low-income farmworkers who support the agricultural economy of the County of Monterey. The Housing Authority also provides housing for low-income persons with disabilities and senior citizens. As the population of seniors and the disabled grow in the County, the Housing Authority has risen to the challenge of housing these populations of citizens.

Finally, the cost of rental housing has grown substantially in the last years, the need for affordable housing has also burgeoned. In partnership with its affiliated nonprofit development corporation, the Housing Authority has rehabilitated its housing units to insure that they remain an affordable housing option for generations to come. The Housing Development Corporation has assisted other housing authorities in the redevelopment of their obsolete housing units and has led the way in reuse of property.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House in recognizing the achievements of the Housing Authority of the County of Monterey. The Housing Authority has made endless contributions to Monterey County for the services it has provided for the residents of the 20th Congressional District of California.

HONORING MATT KELLER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Matt Keller for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Keller. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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HONORING MARK VAN TINE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mark Van Tine, Vice President of Digital Aviation for The Boeing Company and Chief Executive Officer of Jeppesen, who is retiring after 35 years with the company. Mr. Van Tine is a true champion of the aviation industry and an inspiration to young people considering an aviation career.

Since 1981, Mr. Van Tine has held numerous positions at Jeppesen, including serving as its Chief Information Officer, before being named CEO in 2002. In 2012, he added responsibilities as the leader of Boeing's new Digital Aviation organization. In recent years, Mr. Van Tine took on the tremendous challenge of overseeing Jeppesen's digital transformation, moving the entire global aviation industry to electronic charts. This process reduced from 2.5 billion sheets of navigational paper for the worldwide aviation and maritime industries annually to around 475 million sheets annually today. He leads more than 3,800 employees at Jeppesen, headquartered in Englewood, Colorado, who serve four key customer markets—general, business, military, and commercial aviation—of which there are more than 100,000 customers. In his role with The Boeing Company, Mr. Van Tine oversees more than 4,400 employees in developing and delivering cutting-edge information solutions.

Mr. Van Tine is also an active contributor to the general aviation community. He sits on the boards of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). In 2009 he served as GAMA's Chairman and has since chaired the association's Security Issues Committee for five years. In this capacity, he skillfully testified before the House Homeland Security Committee's Transportation Security Subcommittee in 2011, offering the general aviation industry's perspectives on reauthorization of the Transportation Security Administration.

His greatest passion, however, is instilling a love of aviation in young people and encouraging them to become the next generation of aviation leaders. A naturally gifted mentor, Mr. Van Tine devised a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) competition for high schoolers with an annual prize being a two-week build of a Glasair Sportsman airplane. This June marks the third year Mr. Van Tine will join students to assemble an aircraft in the GAMA/Build A Plane Aviation Design Challenge. He also chairs the Jeppesen Aviation Foundation, which honors the legacy of

Captain Elrey B. Jeppesen by supporting educational institutions, organizations, and students in the aviation community. In addition, he helps to teach character, leadership, and life skills to urban youth as a Board member with Colorado UPLIFT, a non-profit youth service organization.

I congratulate Mark Van Tine on his many accomplishments and years of outstanding service to the aviation community on this milestone occasion. He is truly an asset to the people of Colorado and to those millions of passengers around the globe who are safe in the skies and at sea each year through the use of his navigation services.

CONDEMNING THE 22-YEAR SENTENCE ISSUED AGAINST NADIYA SAVCHENKO

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I condemn the verdict and 22-year sentence issued today against Nadiya Savchenko by Russian authorities. The verdict shows disregard for the rule of law and is completely unjust. I once again call on Russian authorities to release her immediately.

Throughout Savchenko's detention and trial, I have been deeply troubled by the serious violations in due process. Since her capture and imprisonment in July 2014 on trumped-up charges, her trial and hearing dates were repeatedly delayed, and her trial venue were moved to a remote region in Russia, difficult for observers to reach. Savchenko also endured interrogations, solitary confinement, and forced psychiatric evaluations.

Since her capture, Savchenko has come to represent the spirit of an independent Ukraine, free from interference and eager to embrace the will of its own people. I join the people of Ukraine in expressing my deep concern for her well being, and in protesting her verdict and sentence.

I continue to call on Russian authorities to release Nadiya Savchenko immediately.

HONORING BOB SCHNEIDER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Bob Schneider for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Schneider. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resource. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Schneider to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4314, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, as amended (Roll Call No. 130), I would have voted ''aye.''

The bill would require the State Department and other federal agencies to develop a plan that boosts the ability of U.S. allies to block international travel of terrorists and foreign fighters and to accelerate the transfer to partner nations of certain U.S. systems that help identify terrorists and other high-risk individuals. It also would establish minimum international border security standards and allows the suspension of U.S. foreign aid to nations that fail to make significant efforts to comply with those minimum standards.

HONORING JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Mr. González for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr González. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on March 21, 2016, on Roll Call No. 130 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4314, Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, as amended, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on H.R. 4314.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN BRUSSELS AND SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF BELGIUM

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the innocent victims who lost their lives, and those who were seriously injured, this morning in the barbaric attacks perpetrated by terrorists in Brussels, Belgium.

Our hearts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the victims and our thanks and appreciation go to the first responders who selflessly came to the aid of their fellow members of the human family.

Brussels will emerge from today's attacks stronger than ever and more firmly committed to the values and principles that have made it so great.

And as Brussels recovers and responds, I hope its people take comfort in the certain knowledge that the people of the United States stand in solidarity with them.

Today's attacks are a reminder of the common danger the free, democratic, and peace loving nations of the world face from those who reject the norms of civilized society and abuse the liberties and freedoms afforded them by free societies.

Those responsible for today's crime against humanity should make no mistake; they will be held to account in this life and the next.

But today our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Brussels, which represents everything terrorists despise: a symbol of the modern world where persons of differing faiths, creeds, races, and cultures live together in peace, harmony, and freedom.

That symbol is recognizable to Americans because it also represents the American heart and spirit.

The terrorist attacks in Brussels were horrific acts on innocent civilians perpetrated by depraved individuals who misuse the peaceful religion of Islam for their own misguided purposes.

Their horrible and heinous acts are their responsibility, and theirs alone, and for which they can be assured that they alone will be held accountable.

But that will come another day; today I ask a moment of silence for the victims killed and injured in the terrorist attacks in Brussels.

HONORING PAUL SPITLER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Paul Spitler for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Spitler. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

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The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Spitler to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Wednesday, March 23, 2016*

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 23, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we thank You for giving us another day.

Send Your spirit upon the Members of this people's House to encourage them in their official tasks. Assure them that in the fulfillment of their responsibilities, You provide the grace to enable them to be faithful in their duties, and the wisdom to be conscious of their obligations, and fulfill them with integrity.

As the Congress looks to the upcoming Holy celebrations of millions of Americans, may they—and may we all—be mindful of Your love for us. May we be faithful stewards not only of Your creation, but also Your desire that all people would be free from whatever inhibits them being fully alive.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

PEACE CORPS MEDICAL ISSUES

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Nick Castle was a bright, energetic 23-year-old who decided to teach in China, following his graduation from UC Berkeley.

Tragically, Nick became seriously sick after becoming a Peace Corps volunteer in China in 2012. He was the victim of an inefficient, under-equipped, and unresponsive Peace Corps-led medical team there.

After being prescribed a broad antibiotic, Nick began to experience drastic weight loss, but was told he was fine. He was then confined to bed, but his doctor never recommended he go to the hospital.

After experiencing dangerously low blood pressure, Nick was finally sent to the hospital. As the ambulance made its way to him, it got lost. Then, after picking him up, Nick stopped breathing before the ambulance arrived at the hospital. Nick died a few weeks later, in early 2013.

Investigations revealed the Peace Corps medical team misdiagnosed his illness. This heartbreaking death of a young man serving our country and the world could have been avoided had the Peace Corps staff assisted in having a properly trained, equipped, and responsive team.

Mr. Speaker, Peace Corps volunteers are America's angels abroad. They are some of the best that we have. They are the spirit of humanitarian assistance, and America must make sure to take care of these amazing people when they serve in lands far, far away so that there are no more deaths like Nick Castle's.

And that is just the way it is.

CRISIS IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, the ongoing crisis in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, is a real tragedy. This failure of government has affected 100,000 people—adults and children—who, after months and months, still do not have clean drinking water.

It is my view that the State of Michigan bears the principal responsibility for this crisis and should step up and do more. It was the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality that failed to a great extent.

I know there are Members who share my view that there is responsibility at every level of government. We could argue about how we apportion that responsibility, but in the meantime, people in Flint still can't drink the water, and they need help. They deserve help from the State and from the Federal Government. They are citizens of Michigan, but also citizens of the United States, who are facing a disaster, a crisis, and have every right to expect that their government will step in to help them, especially when it is clear that it was the government that made the decisions that led to this crisis.

So I ask that we not recess until we take up legislation to provide direct help to the city of Flint. It is something that I think is our moral responsibility. It is unconscionable that we would leave this body without acting.

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR V. BURWELL

(Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today the High Court is considering the Little Sisters of the Poor v. Burwell, a most important case regarding religious liberty and the First Amendment.

The Little Sisters of the Poor is a religious institution dedicated to assisting the elderly poor, but an unfair and unjust dilemma has been forced upon them. They must choose whether to violate their religious beliefs by complying with the HHS mandate or pay massive fines.

The government cannot compel people to violate their conscience and their religious faith. But today we are watching the government force people to choose between their faith or a government decree. To place citizens of this country in this inescapable position is not only reprehensible, but also a direct violation of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I pray that the Court be granted the wisdom and discernment necessary to resolve this case in support of religious liberty and conscience

rights. People must not be forced by the government to violate their faith.

LATIN EXPRESS BAND 40TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a legend since 1976 on the Dallas-Fort Worth music scene. The Latin Express Band is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

The Latin Express Band, founded by Carlos and Leo Saenz, comes a long way from their humble roots of playing high school dances. Over the past 40 years, they have played in music venues throughout the Dallas-Forth Worth metroplex and the country. In 2001, they were one of the music groups invited to perform at the Presidential Inaugural Ball. They were recently inducted into the Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame in 2008.

Along with their musical accolades, the Latin Express Band has inspired future generations of local musicians through their support of music education for children, youth, and adults.

On March 31st, the Saenz brothers will perform at Forth Worth's historic Casa Manana Theatre in honor of Cesar Chavez' birthday. Carlos and Leo have come a long way from their days playing at Sadie Hawkins dances back in the day, and I am honored to recognize their achievements.

Congratulations to the Latin Express Band.

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

(Mr. GIBBS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this week regarding the Second Amendment.

By overturning the decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court, the Court has reaffirmed not only that Americans have the right to self-defense, but also that stun guns are covered under the Second Amendment.

The case began when a woman named Jaime Caetano was continually threatened by an abusive ex-boyfriend who, at one point, put her in the hospital. At the urging of a friend, she began carrying a stun gun for protection.

After an incident that a restraining order against her ex-boyfriend failed to prevent, the threat of a nonlethal device prevented any harm of Ms. Caetano. Yet, Massachusetts had previously outlawed the ownership of stun guns, and she was arrested.

Massachusetts' highest court sided against the Supreme Court's Heller decision, which set clear standards for the Second Amendment. The Supreme Court Justices clearly saw the foolishness in the State court's decision and reversed it this week, reasserting that the right to bear arms ''extends to all instruments that constitute bearable arms, even those that were not in existence'' when our Nation was founded.

This is a reminder that the rights of all Americans must be defended vigilantly by every generation. I commend the Supreme Court for its decision and Justice Alito for his concurring opinion that gives individuals in all States a necessary nonlethal option for protection against violence.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF CONXITA MARTORELL CARRIÓN

(Mr. GUTIÉRREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great woman of Puerto Rico, Conxita Martorell Carrión. Along with my wife Soraida and my family, we are deeply saddened by her loss.

Conxita was raised in Barcelona, but truly adopted Puerto Rico as her homeland. She loved Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans like few people I have ever met. From the beaches to the narrow streets of Old San Juan, the island was deeply loved by Conxita.

Conxita and Richard raised a beautiful family, but what I remember most about her is her passion and compassion for her adopted island home, and especially how she donated her time and love to shelter abused and battered girls.

She is in the thoughts and prayers of all Puerto Ricans.

And now, just a line or two in Spanish.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

Mr. Speaker, my wife and our daughters will deeply miss the great generosity and welcoming spirit Conxita Carrión shared with our family. Here in the House I wanted to offer my humble thanks and my sincerest condolences to her husband Richard and their family.

Sr. Presidente, mi esposa y nuestras hijas profundamente extrañarán la gran generosidad y el espíritu acogedor que Conxita Carrión compartió con nuestra familia.

Aquí, en la cámara quisiera ofrecer mi humilde agradecimiento y mis más sinceras condolencias a su marido Richard y a su familia.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois will provide the Clerk a translation for the RECORD.

HONORING MARY SMITH

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, as I travel throughout Michigan's Seventh District, I have had the privilege of getting to know some incredible women who have made a lasting mark on our communities. Mary Smith from Coldwater is one of them. If you live in Branch County, you know Mary. She is family.

Over the last 40 years, Mary has spent countless hours volunteering at the Community Health Center of Branch County. She also helped lead the effort to restore the beautiful Tibbits Opera House, and is a passionate advocate for this iconic theater. At 97, she rode to the Tibbits on the back of my Harley.

Mary will turn 101 in June, and I continue to be inspired by her lifelong service to the community. This Women's History Month—and every month—we say thank you to women like Mary Smith, who have made invaluable contributions to Michigan, this country, and made our State a better place to live.

HONORING BEVERLEY YACHNIN

(Mr. BISHOP of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge an outstanding pharmacist in my district, Beverley Yachnin.

A resident of Rochester Hills, Beverley has recently been named the 2016 Pharmacist of the Year by the Michigan Society of Community Pharmacists. This is a huge honor, and Beverley is actually the first pharmacist from my district to be awarded this prestigious distinction.

This is not, however, Beverley's first time being recognized for her work as a pharmacist. She was previously honored by the American Pharmacy Association with a One to One Patient Counseling Recognition Award in 2012, and two honorable mentions for the same award in 2008 and 2010.

Pharmacists play an important role in all of our lives. Our community is greatly enriched by Beverley's dedication to customer service and patient safety. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have such an outstanding pharmacist working and living in my district.

Thank you, Beverley Yachnin, for your commitment to the people you serve and our entire Rochester community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

CONDEMNING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN BRUSSELS

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 658) condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 658

Whereas, on March 22, 2016, at least three Islamist terrorists conducted coordinated attacks against two sites in Brussels, Belgium, resulting in the loss of more than 30 innocent lives and the severe wounding of many more innocent civilians;

Whereas a number of American citizens are among those wounded;

Whereas the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has claimed responsibility for the attacks;

Whereas the brutal attacks at the Brussels airport and the Maelbeek metro station are the latest in a series of assaults by ISIS in Europe, including the November 13, 2015, terrorist attacks in Paris, France, that were deliberately aimed at killing and maiming as many innocent people as possible;

Whereas Belgian first responders and law enforcement reacted swiftly and heroically, caring for the wounded and taking immediate measures to prevent additional attacks and the further loss of life;

Whereas at least two of the terrorists were killed in the suicide bombings, and Belgian intelligence and law enforcement are pursuing others possibly connected to these attacks and to those in Paris;

Whereas Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel called the attacks ''a black moment'' for the country and urged his fellow citizens to stay united in their response;

Whereas Belgium and its capital Brussels are the symbolic center of the alliance between the United States and Europe that was created following the devastation of World War II, including by hosting on its territory the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the institutions of the European Union;

Whereas Belgium and the United States have maintained strong ties based on shared values since Belgium's independence in 1831;

Whereas Belgium was a founding member of NATO in 1949 and has been a steadfast ally of the United States in the decades since;

Whereas, on September 12, 2001, for the first time in the history of the Alliance, Belgium joined our NATO allies to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty that states ''an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all'';

Whereas Belgium has been a steadfast partner of the United States in the international effort to defeat ISIS and other terrorist threats;

Whereas the coordination of these attacks, following the terrorist assaults in Paris and in several other countries, demonstrates that ISIS members continue to plan and execute attacks, targeting United States interests and allies;

Whereas continued and enhanced intelligence cooperation, law enforcement engagement, and information sharing on emerging threats and identified Islamist extremists is essential to enhancing security for the people of the United States, Europe, and our allies around the world;

Whereas the loss of innocent lives in Brussels strengthens our resolve to defeat ISIS and its terrorist affiliates which pose a growing threat to international peace and stability; and

Whereas we stand in solidarity with our Belgian allies in their time of national mourning, ready to provide assistance in bringing to justice all those involved with the planning and execution of these attacks, as well as identifying and disrupting any plans to undertake similar assaults in the future: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more;

(2) expresses its deepest sympathies and condolences for those killed and injured in the attacks and for their families and friends;

(3) pledges support for the Government of Belgium in its efforts to bring to justice all those involved with the planning and execution of these terrorist attacks;

(4) declares that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) poses a fundamental threat to the universal value of freedom in all countries;

(5) remains concerned regarding the flow of foreign fighters to and from the Middle East and West and North Africa and the threat posed by these individuals; and

(6) expresses its readiness to assist the Government and people of Belgium to respond to the threat posed by ISIS and its terrorist affiliates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

□ 0915

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 658, condemning the series of terrorist attacks in Belgium carried out by Islamic extremists yesterday.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution, condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels carried out by Islamist extremists yesterday.

ISIS terrorists have once again struck in Europe, and this time in Belgium. The murderers coldly chose crowded areas at the Brussels Airport and at the metro system in order to kill and maim as many innocent men, women, and children as possible. And the latest numbers are 31 dead and 270 wounded, including a number of Americans.

ISIS has claimed responsibility for the attacks, the latest in a series that includes an horrific attack in Brussels, the attack in Paris, a double suicide bombing in Beirut, Lebanon, and the boast of responsibility for downing a Russian passenger jet in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. The list of atrocities is far longer, including those by ISIS affiliates elsewhere, such as the recent attack in Ivory Coast.

As these and other assaults show, ISIS is rapidly expanding its reach beyond its bases in Syria and in Iraq. Over 30,000 fighters from more than 100 countries have joined ISIS, including more than 250 Americans. We had a young Yazidi girl tell us that she was taken as a concubine by one of these Americans who had been recruited 4 years ago on the Internet by ISIS.

More than 4,500 of this terrorist diaspora hold Western passports and are but a plane ride away, a plane ride away from the United States and from Europe.

This resolution puts the House on record as condemning the attacks in Brussels and extends our sympathies to those affected by this tragedy, and it reaffirms our support for the people of Belgium in their time of national anguish.

But we must do more than just express our sorrow. We must take decisive action to eliminate the threat, including expanding information-sharing with our friends and allies, putting stronger border checks in place, combating the online propaganda and hate speech of ISIS extremists, and sharpening coalition efforts to destroy ISIS itself.

I will remind the Members that our committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, has held a series of hearings on this. When ISIS came out of Raqqa in the first place and headed towards the border and headed towards Fallujah, that was the time to hit this so-called JV team.

This group of guys in pickup trucks, as the President called them at the time, were an open target on the open desert as they headed to Fallujah and, after that, as they headed to city after city after city without us using our airpower to hit them early on. They finally took Mosul and, with it, they took the Central Bank of Iraq.

At this point, they have to be destroyed, and it is going to take a strategic plan to make certain the United States leads in that effort. We need to get it done.

Mr. KEATING. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 658, a resolution condemning yesterday's tragic attack in Brussels, Belgium.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague from Texas, Judge TED POE, chairman of the Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee, on which I serve as the ranking member, in expressing my deepest condolences to the victims, families, and loved ones of those affected by yesterday's brutal attacks.

The resolution before us today strongly condemns the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Brussels yesterday and expresses the sympathy of the House of Representatives for the people of Belgium. With the strength of the U.S. intelligence community, we pledge our support for the Belgian Government in its efforts to investigate and to bring to justice all those involved with the planning and execution of these deadly plans.

Belgium remains one of our strongest allies, a nation with which we have worked closely in bilateral and multilateral arenas. Belgium was on our side as an active participant in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, as a leader in the European Union mission in Mali, and as an ally in the 2010–2011 NATO operations in Libya.

As host of the European Union and NATO headquarters, Belgium—Brussels, in particular—represents both a symbolic and a concrete role in promoting transatlantic cooperation between our two countries and our allies.

It is not by accident that the Maelbeek metro station and the Brussels Airport were selected as the site for such heinous violence. Nearby, a mere stone's throw from the Maelbeek station, sits the headquarters of the European Union and numerous government offices, including the U.S. Embassy, which is less than a mile away.

Daily, hundreds, if not thousands of civil servants and public interest sector workers cross through the station on the way back and forth to work. And at Brussels Airport, dozens of innocent travelers and family members were drawn into a bloodshed that has spread from Iraq and Syria to the surrounding region and beyond.

I visited both while in Europe last year on a security codel, and I saw, firsthand, the strong police presence providing a sense of security for Brussels residents and visitors.

Due to the bravery, courage, and preparedness of Belgian law enforcement authorities and emergency response teams, many families were spared the pain of losing a loved one. And we honor, today, their quick action and their bravery.

These terrorist attacks are misguided attempts to divide the global coalition that has come together to degrade and defeat ISIS and their affiliates. From Ankara, to Istanbul, to Beirut, to Baga, we recognize that the prominent sentiment across the Middle East identifies ISIS rhetoric and actions as contrary to the tolerance and teachings of Islam.

While this remains an open investigation, the nature of yesterday's attacks hit close to home. Whether it is New York City, San Bernardino, or whether it is Boston—where I saw, firsthand, the resilience in spirit come forward that any physical attack can never conquer—we see that same spirit and resolve in the people of Brussels and Belgium today.

The flow of foreign fighters, the traveling that they do, and the extenuating threat that they pose have been our top security-related concerns here in Congress. Congress and the administration have taken actions to address these issues and prevent the risk of such an attack here at home. We have tightened security restrictions for travelers from visa waiver countries who are known to have traveled to Iraq and Syria. We have sealed intelligence-sharing gaps between Federal, State, and local law enforcement, as well as our international partners in the intelligence community. And we are in the process of an unprecedented top-to-bottom review of airport security threats that will ensure our airports are safer than ever.

The international community, including governments and prominent organizations throughout the Middle East and Muslim-majority nations, have spoken out against these heinous attacks. With passage of this resolution, the U.S. Congress joins these communities around the world in its condemnation of the terrorist attacks yesterday in Brussels.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) for his comments, for his support of this legislation, and also for the privilege to work with him on our Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee, where we have had numerous hearings on the issue of ISIS and other terrorist groups that are lurking throughout the United States and the world.

Mr. Speaker, the attacks began shortly before 8 a.m., with an explosion at a departure terminal at the Brussels Airport. The area was between two American airlines—American Airlines and Delta Air Lines—American companies. It was believed to be a luggage bomb, followed by another bomb shortly thereafter.

Then, at 9:11 a.m., Brussels time, a bomb tore through the last car of a subway train as it was pulling out of a station in central Brussels.

Belgian officials have said that the bombings killed at least 10 at the airport and at least 20 at the subway station. More than 230 others were wounded. Details are still surfacing, but we now know that at least 10 Americans were wounded in the attacks. One of those was a member of the United States Air Force.

Later in the afternoon, a news agency affiliated with ISIS issued a report bragging and claiming responsibility for the murders. Reports said that the attacks were in retaliation for Belgium's participation in a coalition against ISIS.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS, this group that is relatively new in the terrorist industry, has already committed 70 terrorist attacks worldwide in 20 countries, as of January 1 of this year, and yet this is one more. These attacks in Belgium occurred just 4 days after the capture of one of Europe's most wanted terrorists, Salah Abdeslam, the sole survivor of the 10 men who carried out the November horrific attacks in Paris that killed 130 people.

The attacks in Belgium made it clear to all that ISIS still maintains operational networks in Europe, capable of carrying out attacks abroad, even as security services are on highest alert. The bombing in downtown Brussels occurred just steps away from major institutions, as the ranking member, Mr. KEATING, has pointed out.

Brussels is the capital of Belgium. It is the headquarters of the European Union. It is the headquarters of NATO. This bombing attack occurred near the U.S. Embassy that is there. This area, Brussels, Belgium, stands and represents, really, the free world's endeavor to work together under democracy and liberty and those ideals that we value. It was no accident that Brussels was picked for the attack.

The fact that ISIS could operate cells in Europe and manage to strike at the heart of European society only a few months after the Paris attacks should make us cognizant that our current strategy against ISIS is really not successful. ISIS has been able to hold on to territory for close to 2 years. It is from this territory in Iraq and Syria that it trains its fighters, recruits foreigners, and plans to launch attacks against not only Europe, but other countries, like the United States.

Words claiming progress and success against ISIS are meaningless when confronted with devastating carnage like what we saw in the United States, in San Bernardino, and what occurred in Paris and now in Brussels. The United States must change its strategy against ISIS. We must allow ISIS no safe haven anywhere in the world. We must take away their capabilities to strike American cities.

This resolution shows that the people of the United States stand alongside our European and Belgian allies in solidarity. The American people extend their deepest sympathies to those affected by the tragedy. Let the people of Belgium know that the United States

will support them through this time in every way possible, and we must be more united in the face of this terrorist onslaught that threatens the very freedoms that we hold dear.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), my colleague and fellow New Englander.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank both the gentleman from Massachusetts and the gentleman from Texas for their extraordinary leadership on this important resolution.

Yesterday, the world saw the face of evil in a series of cowardly and despicable terrorist acts that claimed the lives of 34 innocent people in Brussels.

I, too, extend my thoughts and prayers to all of the families affected by this horrific violence.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, here in Congress, we must renew our commitment to keep Americans safe from terrorism, continue to support our intelligence services and law enforcement agencies in their critical work, and do all that is necessary to defeat and destroy these terrorists wherever they are.

□ 0930

Today the United States and the entire world are standing shoulder to shoulder with the people of Belgium. The ISIS terrorists who perpetrated these attacks did so in an attempt to strike fear into the heart of anyone who does not share their radical world views.

We have seen these same tactics tried before in our own country: in San Bernardino, at the Boston Marathon, the Pentagon, the World Trade Center, and in a field in Pennsylvania.

But for each time they have tried, terrorists have failed to shake the resolve of those they have targeted, and we will not allow them to succeed this time.

The motto of the country of Belgium is ''eendracht maakt macht,'' ''unity makes strength.'' Let there be no doubt.

We stand today united and strong with the people of Belgium. We will do whatever it takes, no matter how long it takes, to help Brussels rebuild and to bring all those responsible to justice.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the ranking member of the full committee.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts and the gentleman from Texas. I am pleased to join with them on this matter. I am pleased to support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, with this resolution, we are sending a clear message that we stand with the people of Belgium. Like my colleagues and like so many around the world, I am angry, I am outraged, and I am deeply, deeply saddened by the terrorist attacks that ripped through Brussels yesterday.

My heart goes out to those whose loved ones were killed or injured, and I am mindful there are families here in the United States that have been directly touched by this violence and that we are still uncertain how many Americans are themselves victims.

For me, as a New Yorker, let me speak personally because September 11, 2001, is a scar and a stain that will never go away as long as I live and as long as other New Yorkers live.

We know how it feels when hatred and violence take aim at our home. We know what it feels like when innocent people are killed by pure evil. So today we grieve with our brothers and sisters in Belgium.

But in the midst of grief, we cannot lose focus on our work to stop this kind of violence. We need to stand with our Belgian friends not just in spirit, but in action, to figure out who was responsible for these attacks, how they were able to carry them out, and what it will take to hold them accountable.

We need to look for new areas for collaboration in terms of prevention, surveillance, and information sharing. Along with our coalition partners, we need to press ahead in our effort to destroy ISIS, which has claimed responsibility for yesterday's attacks.

How horrific, the thought that human life is so worthless to these terrorists. It is just absolutely amazing that they claim to be religious people but, instead, they are pure evil.

ISIS terrorists and other violent extremists target democratic societies because they want to shatter our spirit and force us to live in fear. We will not allow them to succeed.

Going forward, we will work with our Belgian partners and our other allies to move past this tragedy to fight terrorism, to enhance security, and to promote justice and democracy around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. Again, I commend my good colleagues from Massachusetts and Texas.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers and just will briefly close.

Again, I want to thank my colleague from Texas.

In a Congress that is often divided, we speak as one. In a country that is sometimes divided, today we speak as one. With the citizens of the world who value freedom and abhor violence and value human life, we speak as one.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. I thank again the ranking member of our full committee as well as the chair of the full committee for joining with us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of the time.

Mr. Speaker, our hearts do go out to the people of Brussels and the people who were killed and their families that are throughout the world, including those that are injured from the United States. We cannot bring back those lives from yesterday, but we can do something about the murder that occurred yesterday in Brussels.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the ISIS terror network is successful. ISIS exists for one reason, to murder people and, because of that murder and violence that they incur, to scare and to bring fear and terror to countries that are attacked by ISIS.

As I mentioned earlier, they have committed terror attacks in now 20 countries. To some extent, it seems to me that it is working because every time there is a terrorist attack, free people react in the sense that we find more security.

I am concerned that we are getting into the bunker mentality, people afraid to go anyplace and afraid to leave. Why? Because some terrorist attack may occur.

It is obvious that we need to react to the crimes and these murders as a people that are affected by it. But we can't just be defensive against ISIS and other terrorist organizations. We can't just defend ourselves.

We have to eliminate ISIS. They are at war with the world and people who don't agree with them. They are at war. Now, we probably need to understand that their goal is to not only kill and maim, but to cause fear—fear—individual fear. They use every possible way they can do it, from social media to bragging about the murders on YouTube.

So we, as a people, need to understand that we are going to have to eliminate ISIS. We are going to have to track them down, go get them, and eliminate them. You can't negotiate with these people. That is out of the question.

So we either just react and try to defend ourselves when they commit crimes or we go after them. So I hope that the United States presents a better strategy and lets those folks know that, to just kill anybody that disagrees with ISIS, their days are numbered because we are going to go eliminate them. We have to.

Because they have attacked us, our response must be more than defensive. We must be offensive. We must let them know: you can't do this. You can't kill people because you don't like them, no matter where that occurs in the world.

So I would hope that the United States, with our partners in other

countries, finds an overall strategy that is successful and that eliminates these people who kill because of a perverted sense of their religion.

But today we do mourn the loss and we show the support of our country with our neighbors across the seas for the crimes that have been committed against them.

As the ranking member has pointed out, this is an issue that is totally supported by both sides of the House. The Foreign Affairs Committee works together on almost all issues, and this is another example of that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, that is just the way it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise n strong support of H. Res. 658 and in remembrance of the innocent victims who lost their lives, and those who were seriously injured, this morning in the barbaric attacks perpetrated by terrorists in Brussels, Belgium.

Our hearts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the victims and our thanks and appreciation go to the first responders who selflessly came to the aid of their fellow members of the human family.

Brussels will emerge from today's attacks stronger than ever and more firmly committed to the values and principles that have made it so great.

And as Brussels recovers and responds, I hope its people take comfort in the certain knowledge that the people of the United States stand in solidarity with them.

Today's attacks are a reminder of the common danger the free, democratic, and peace loving nations of the world face from those who reject the norms of civilized society and abuse the liberties and freedoms afforded them by free societies.

Those responsible for today's crime against humanity should make no mistake; they will be held to account in this life and the next.

But today our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Brussels, which represents everything terrorists despise: a symbol of the modern world where persons of differing faiths, creeds, races, and cultures live together in peace, harmony, and freedom.

That symbol is recognizable to Americans because it also represents the American heart and spirit.

The terrorist attacks in Brussels were horrific acts on innocent civilians perpetrated by depraved individuals who misuse the peaceful religion of Islam for their own misguided purposes.

Their horrible and heinous acts are their responsibility, and theirs alone, and for which they can be assured that they alone will be held accountable.

But that will come another day; today I ask a moment of silence for the victims killed and injured in the terrorist attacks in Brussels.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 658.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

STANDARD MERGER AND ACQUISITION REVIEWS THROUGH EQUAL RULES ACT OF 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 653, I call up the bill (H.R. 2745) to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 653, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2745

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAYTON ACT.

The Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by striking section 4F and inserting the following:

''SEC. 4F. ACTIONS BY ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES OR THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.

''(a) Whenever the Attorney General of the United States has brought an action under the antitrust laws or the Federal Trade Commission has brought an action under section 7, and the Attorney General or Federal Trade Commission, as applicable, has reason to believe that any State attorney general would be entitled to bring an action under this Act based substantially on the same alleged violation of the antitrust laws or section 7, the Attorney General or Federal Trade Commission, as applicable, shall promptly give written notification thereof to such State attorney general.

''(b) To assist a State attorney general in evaluating the notice described in subsection (a) or in bringing any action under this Act, the Attorney General of the United States or Federal Trade Commission, as applicable, shall, upon request by such State attorney general, make available to the State attorney general, to the extent permitted by law, any investigative files or other materials which are or may be relevant or material to the actual or potential cause of action under this Act.'';

(2) in section 5—

(A) in subsection (a) by inserting ''(including a proceeding brought by the Federal Trade Commission with respect to a violation of section 7)'' after ''United States under the antitrust laws''; and

(B) in subsection (i) by inserting ''(including a proceeding instituted by the Federal Trade Commission with respect to a violation of section 7)'' after ''antitrust laws'';

(3) in section 11, by adding at the end the following:

''(m)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), in enforcing compliance with section 7, the Federal Trade Commission shall enforce compliance with that section in the same manner as the Attorney General in accordance with section 15.

''(2) If the Federal Trade Commission approves an agreement with the parties to the transaction that contains a consent order with respect to a violation of section 7, the Commission shall enforce compliance with that section in accordance with this section.'';

(4) in section 13, by inserting ''(including a suit, action, or proceeding brought by the Federal Trade Commission with respect to a violation of section 7)'' before ''subpoenas''; and

(5) in section 15, by inserting ''and the duty of the Federal Trade Commission with respect to a violation of section 7,'' after ''General,''.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ACT.

The Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41) is amended—

(1) in section 5(b), by inserting ''(excluding the consummation of a proposed merger, acquisition, joint venture, or similar transaction that is subject to section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18), except in cases where the Commission approves an agreement with the parties to the transaction that contains a consent order)'' after ''unfair method of competition'';

(2) in section 9, by inserting after the fourth undesignated paragraph the following:

''Upon the application of the commission with respect to any activity related to the consummation of a proposed merger, acquisition, joint venture, or similar transaction that is subject to section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18) that may result in any unfair method of competition, the district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction to issue writs of mandamus commanding any person or corporation to comply with the provisions of this Act or any order of the commission made in pursuance thereof.'';

(3) in section 13(b)(1), by inserting ''(excluding section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18) and section 5(a)(1) with respect to the consummation of a proposed merger, acquisition, joint venture, or similar transaction that is subject to section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18))'' after ''Commission''; and

(4) in section 20(c)(1), by inserting ''or under section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18), where applicable,'' after ''Act,''.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Except as provided in subsection (b), this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.—The amendments made by this Act shall not apply to any of the following that occurs before the date of enactment of this Act:

(1) A violation of section 7 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18).

(2) A transaction with respect to which there is compliance with section 7A of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18a).

(3) A case in which a preliminary injunction has been filed in a district court of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and

ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 2745, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in 1914, Congress passed the Federal Trade Commission Act, marking the beginning of a dual antitrust enforcement regime in the United States.

Because both the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission enforce our Nation's antitrust laws, companies may and often do have different experiences when interacting with one agency relative to the other.

One area in which the disparity can be the most striking and troubling is in the merger review process. When a company wishes to merge with or purchase another company, it must notify both antitrust enforcement agencies of the proposed transaction.

The Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission then determine which agency will be responsible for reviewing the transaction. As there are no fixed rules for making this determination, it can appear that the decision is made on the basis of a flip of the coin.

There are two substantive differences that companies face based on the identity of the antitrust enforcement agency that reviews the company's proposed transaction.

The first difference arises if the agency seeks to prevent the transaction by pursuing a preliminary injunction in Federal court. A different legal standard is applied to a preliminary injunction request based solely on the identity of the requesting antitrust enforcement agency.

The second difference lies in the process available to each antitrust enforcement agency to prevent a transaction from proceeding. The FTC may pursue administrative litigation against a proposed transaction even after a court denies its preliminary injunction request. In contrast, the Department of Justice cannot pursue administrative litigation.

There is no justification for these disparities in the merger review processes and standards. The bipartisan Antitrust Modernization Commission recommended that Congress remove these disparities, and the bill before us today, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act, or SMARTER Act, does just that.

I applaud Mr. FARENTHOLD of Texas for introducing this important legislation that will enhance the transparency, predictability, and credibility of the antitrust merger review process.

By enacting the SMARTER Act into law, Congress will ensure that companies no longer will be subjected to fundamentally different processes and standards based on the flip of a coin.

Notably, the legislation has garnered the support of former and current FTC Commissioners, including former Chairman David Clanton, former Commissioner Josh Wright, and sitting Commissioner Maureen Ohlhausen.

The SMARTER Act is an important step toward ensuring that our Nation's antitrust laws are enforced in a manner that is fair, consistent, and predictable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this good government bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the so-called SMARTER Act, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act, which really should—I mean, it is a misnomer.

We should rename this bill. Instead of that, we should rename it the Sadly More Acronyms for Really Terrible and Esoteric Requirements Act.

□ 0945

I know a lot of people around the country are wondering: Well, what is this all about? It must be important that they are doing this.

I will tell you what is important about it. It is a piece of legislation that would impact the largest and most consequential of corporate mergers, of multinational corporate mergers. Those things have to go through a review process with our Federal Trade Commission. Also, the Department of Justice has an antitrust division.

What this piece of legislation would do would be to gut one of the agency's—the FTC's—ability to oversee and deal with merger review issues that affect the largest and most consequential of their mergers, of these big corporate mergers.

Does this piece of legislation benefit the people? Or does it benefit the 1 percent of large multinational corporations that, I guess, need help avoiding regulatory authority by our government?

Well, it looks like that is what it is. It is something that is going to help out big business at a time when people in this country are very angry about the fact that the playing field is not level. The corporations and the wealthy have been doing pretty well over the last couple of generations, but people are seeing their wages stand right there where they were. They are working harder, they are more productive, but yet they can't even take a vacation. They can't even afford to take a day off to see about a sick child.

This is why people are so angry. It is because they look at Congress and they see us doing this kind of work benefiting 1 percent of the largest multinational corporations when there are other things like passing a budget, dealing with the Zika crisis which is unfolding, dealing with the Flint water crisis, dealing with the opioid addiction crisis in this country.

We can't even pass a budget. Here we are going to pass the so-called SMARTER Act today, and then we are going to go home for almost 3 weeks. They call it a district work period, but it is actually a period where folks are out campaigning, trying to retain their seats. People are angry about that.

Congress first established the Federal Trade Commission in 1914 to safeguard consumers against anticompetitive behavior by empowering the Commission with the authority to enforce, clarify, and develop antitrust law. President Woodrow Wilson later described the creation of the Commission as specifically providing for tribunals that would ''determine what was fair and what was unfair competition; and to supply the business community not merely with lawyers in the Department of Justice who could cry, 'Stop!', but with men in such tribunals as the Federal Trade Commission who could say, 'Go on,' who could warn where things were going wrong and assist instead of check.''

Today, under the process of administrative litigation, also known as part 3 litigation, the Commission does just that. Under this authority, it may seek permanent injunctions in its own administrative court in addition to its ability to seek preliminary injunctions in Federal District Court. This authority is a unique mechanism that takes advantage of the Commission's longstanding expertise to develop some of the most complex issues in antitrust law.

But the SMARTER Act would upend this century of precedent and expertise by creating a uniform standard for preliminary injunctions in cases involving significant mergers and other transactions and, alarmingly, eliminating the Commission's ability to administratively litigate antitrust cases.

Proponents of the SMARTER Act argue that divergent standards for enjoining mergers may undermine the public's trust in the efficient and fair outcome of merger cases. They also state that the outcome of a transaction

comes down to a coin flip between the agencies to determine which will review a transaction. That claim is ridiculous and it is not borne out by the evidence.

The American Antitrust Institute, a consumer-oriented antitrust organization, conducted a lengthy study of workload statistics compiled by both antitrust agencies and found that the concerns of the bill's sponsors are without foundation.

Jonathan Jacobson, a leading antitrust attorney who served on the Antitrust Modernization Commission, testified that in his 39 years of practice, the outcome of a merger has never turned on the differences that the SMARTER Act seeks to address in antitrust law.

Indeed, of the 3 percent of transactions requiring second requests for information from the antitrust agencies, only about 1.5 percent of those cases are stopped or modified. An even smaller percentage of these cases go to trial for an administrative hearing. We should hesitate before making wholesale changes to the law based on theoretical concerns involving about 1 percent of mergers, which also happen to be some of the largest and most consequential.

In the absence of any meaningful evidence suggesting a material difference in the enforcement of the antitrust laws, it is difficult to upending longstanding antitrust practices at the FTC for consistency's sake alone based on speculative harms. But even assuming that there are material differences in cases brought under these standards, we should strike a balance in favor of competition by lowering the burden of proof in cases brought by the Justice Department, not by raising the Commission's burden for obtaining preliminary injunctions.

Courts already require a lower burden of proof in cases brought by the Commission and Justice Department precisely because both are expert agencies equipped with large staffs of economists who analyze numerous mergers on a regular basis and who may only bring cases that are in the public interest. To the extent that we should address perceived differences in the standard for preliminary injunctions in merger cases, legislation should favor increased competition, not the interests of merging parties.

The SMARTER Act would eliminate the FTC's authority to administratively litigate mergers and other transactions under section 5(b) of the FTC Act. Leading authorities in antitrust across party lines have expressed serious reservations with eliminating the Commission's administrative litigation authority.

For instance, Bill Kovacic, a former Republican chair of the Commission, has referred to this aspect of the bill as ''rubbish,'' noting that the Commission has used administrative litigation to win a string of novel antitrust cases that courts have ultimately upheld where the ''Commission has had to fight for every single foot along the way.''

Edith Ramirez, the chairwoman of the FTC, likewise wrote last Congress that eliminating the FTC's administrative litigation authority would ''fundamentally alter the nature and function of the FTC.''

Mr. Speaker, 2015 was the year of the merger, megamergers, mergermania. There was over $3.8 trillion in merger spending, a record that far exceeded expectations. While fewer than 20 percent of mergers raise competition concerns, it is clear that a vote for H.R. 2745 is a vote for concentrated, private economic power. At a time of increased consolidation in key industries, we can't afford more Republican attacks on government, which is what H.R. 2745 is, plain and simple.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD), a member of the Judiciary Committee, and the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial, and Antitrust Law.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be here today to be the sponsor of the SMARTER Act.

This is just good government. We have a situation now that if you want to merge your company with another company, you could go before the Federal Trade Commission or you could go before the Department of Justice.

Now, you would think that the Clayton Act that governs antitrust law would say: All right. Well, we are going to get treated the same, no matter which way we go, the law is the law.

But that is not how it works. A big piece of this is the procedural aspect of it. If your merger is reviewed by the Department of Justice and they have a problem with it and they need a preliminarily injunction to stop it, they go to Federal Court before a judge, as the Founding Fathers intended, the executive branch agency, and there is a dispute, and it is litigated in front of a Federal court.

But if you go before the Federal Trade Commission, they could go to Federal court like the Department of Justice, but they can also go to their own court. They have got their own court with an FTC employee as the judge. Now, we have got administrative law courts that work, but they can also do both.

You have got a situation that the merger could be delayed. In these business transactions, as in life, time is money. Just the threat of going through this administrative process has the effect of giving the FTC the ability to extract concessions that the DOJ wouldn't.

Look, we need to be treated fairly no matter which agency reviews it. This is the main gist of the SMARTER Act. Let's make it the same if you go to the DOJ or the FTC.

This isn't just something that we, Republicans, pulled out of our hats. This is a recommendation from the bipartisan Antitrust Modification Commission. They have testified that this is part of what they think needs to be done to make a better, more efficient government.

Listen, nobody wants to be tied up in red tape. As you go through a merger and you draw the short straw and end up in front of the FTC, you have got another spool of red tape that you could very possibly get rolled up in. I don't think that is fair and I don't think the American people think that is fair.

Now, my colleague on the other side of the aisle, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), says this guts the antitrust laws. It doesn't. It just makes them fairer. It makes the review the same no matter where you go. It is commonsense, good government.

I don't have anything else to say. I don't see how you can be against fairness.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, before I recognize the Honorable BILL PASCRELL from New Jersey, who serves on, by the way, the Budget and the Ways and Means Committees here in Congress, I would like to point out that we have got a severe problem that we are confronting this morning. It is the big, bad FTC, which is treating the big multinational corporations unfairly. It is abusing them, and something needs to be done. The American people are demanding it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) so that he can explain further how important this bill is to the American people.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding.

This bill is terrible. The Federal Trade Commission is tasked with protecting consumers from anticompetitive mergers. What I just heard from the gentleman is that this is all about getting rid of red tape. Baloney. This is about money, this is about keeping money in your own pocket and protecting yourself against the consumers.

□ 1000

Concessions we are talking about here.

The Federal Trade Commission is tasked with protecting consumers from anticompetitive mergers. That is what the job is. Corporate mergers can make industries more efficient and bring benefits to customers, but in some cases, they have the potential to increase costs and hurt competition. Mr. Speaker, if you deny that, then you

don't have the facts, and I am going to lay them out right now.

Government should not be in the business of setting prices for healthcare services or anything else for that matter—for airline tickets, cable Internet services, or anything else. I hope we agree on that. That is why we need to rely on robust market competition—to keep the prices of goods and services down and ensure that consumers are getting a fair deal.

I tell my friends on the other side of the aisle, with due respect, that we are pretty good fans of competition; yet here we are, after Bloomberg dubbed 2015 the ''Year of the Mergers,'' weakening a key FTC tool to ensure healthy competition in a variety of markets.

Mr. Speaker, I have been particularly concerned with this issue, and I mentioned four areas here. I am very, very concerned about the mergers we have seen in many sectors of the healthcare industry. Read my lips: look at the facts through the Speaker. In my left hand, a recent report by the Health Care Pricing Project, which was written up in The New York Times late last year, found that monopoly hospitals have prices that are 15.3 percent higher than hospitals in an area with four or more hospitals—even after controlling for costs in each area.

Don't you really believe in competition, or do you just say that? Is that simply a bumper sticker, a slogan, or do you mean that?

Two pending mergers in the insurance industry, between Anthem and Cigna and Aetna and Humana, set the stage for major consolidation in this industry as well. In other words, what this report did was establish the fact—I hope you are interested in the facts—that the reason we have increasing healthcare costs—a major reason—is for the merger and the reduction in competition in health care.

Then there are the mergers that are motivated by U.S. tax dodging, Mr. Speaker, and we have talked about this, which have major implications on competition but also on the United States tax base. One pending merger would see a major United States company slash its United States tax bill by moving its headquarters overseas and creating the largest drug company in the universe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I yield the gentleman an additional 1½ minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Working Americans across the country do not have the benefit of hiring consultants, of shifting their earned income around the globe to find the lowest tax rate. And you are standing there, saying you want to help the consumer? It is just the opposite.

Many multinational corporations do just that. Corporate inversions allow companies to renege on the obligation to America, eroding the United States tax base and hurting American competitiveness. Who are you with anyway? If you live in a neighborhood and one house—let's say the biggest house on the block—doesn't pay its property taxes, what happens? Everyone understands that the rest of the houses on the block have to make up the difference.

The Treasury has taken steps to address inversions, but it is up to Congress to pass legislation that addresses this problem immediately. In the meantime, the bill before us today would weaken the FTC's ability to monitor and enforce against unfair, anticompetitive mergers, and they are all over the place. I blame, partially, the administration, as the former Attorney General did nothing about mergers. While people were trying to get him to resign for other reasons, that would have been a darned good reason.

This is not Republican or Democrat, my friends. These are simply the facts, and I can tell you this one report will very, very much crystallize what those facts are.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey's commitment to the free market, because I think we all believe a free and fair market is in the best interest of America and in the best interest of every American consumer, but we have got to take a look at the procedure.

This is, primarily, procedural in nature so that those companies that are seeking mergers, whether they go through the FTC or through the Department of Justice, are simply treated the same. If the gentleman is concerned about the fact that there are too many mergers—that we are getting bigger and bigger companies and that it is stifling competition—that is a legitimate conversation for us to have in the context of changing the law with respect to monopolies, mergers, and acquisitions.

What we are trying to do here is not change that law, but make that law fairer and applied equally, regardless of whether one is in front of the Department of Justice or whether one is in front of the Federal Trade Commission. If the gentleman takes that argument, then he is saying, right now, the FTC has an advantage in stopping these mergers because it has all of these other procedures in place, as opposed to the Department of Justice.

Why should one get stuck with a tougher row to hoe based on which agency one goes in front of? That is just not fair.

Mr. PASCRELL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, what we need to understand is that we are not only talking about the FTC, we are talking about the Justice Department, which oversees these mergers regardless of whether we are talking about health or airlines, which is a catastrophe. I only brought up health care today. We are having that discussion you just talked about.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. In reclaiming my time, I think the gentleman has a problem with the fact that there are so many mergers and that he thinks it is anticompetitive and not good for folks. That is an opinion that the gentleman is, certainly, entitled to, but that is, I think, out of the scope of what this bill is trying to do.

Mr. Speaker, this bill takes existing law and says, look, let's apply it the same regardless of which agency one is before. I think that is the difference there. I would be happy to meet with the gentleman in his office and see if we can find some ways that we can agree so that we might reform the overall antitrust system.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I am mainly concerned about this piece of legislation because you have determined—you have defined—a nonexistent problem while applying a less consumer friendly standard. That is my position.

What I brought up here is part of the mix. It is putting it in context as to what has happened. The consequences of what has happened are higher prices for us—for you and me—and I know you are concerned about that.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. In reclaiming my time, my point is that, if the gentleman thinks we have too many mergers, let's change the law, but let's have a fair procedure. What this bill is designed to do is to have a fair procedure for those who are engaged in that activity.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to my friend from Texas.

We went through a period of time in the first decade of this century of U.S. prosecutors and attorneys looking at the subject of deferred prosecutions. I am talking about justice here. That is the bottom line. That is what we are talking about here.

Instead of bringing corporations to trial that had violated the law—and I am not an attorney. I am not the reason for two of my sons being attorneys, but I am not an attorney—they worked out a proposition. This is what they are trying to do, and this is what this is all about, if I could draw a comparison,

which is you slap a corporation on the wrist, it pays a fine, and the fine becomes the cost of doing business.

Mr. Speaker, this is going in the wrong direction. It is attacking a problem that does not exist instead of attacking a problem that does exist.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am anguished in listening to the pleas of my friend from Texas to help these megamergers, to help these big, multinational corporations. They need us so badly because the big, bad FTC is treating them too tough. It is too rough on them. Therefore, we have to make the law fairer for them. They have all of these silk stocking lawyers off of Wall Street, but we need to help them. We are not doing anything else here in Congress other than helping multinational corporations, hearing the plea that these folks need help when it is the folks in Flint, Michigan, who need help, who are crying out for help, but their voices can't be heard in this Congress because we are too busy trying to protect these big, multinational corporations.

The only thing we want to do, according to my friends, is to harmonize the standard of proof between the DOJ and the FTC so that the big, bad corporations which need our help only have to deal with one standard of proof. They are not telling you what they are really wanting to do, which is to gut administrative review by the FTC, under section 5(b) of the FTC Act. That is where the real harm comes in, but they don't want to tell you about that. They don't want to let you know what kind of impact that has when a prescription drug company seeks to merge again with another large company and make a humongous company that is too big to fail and, also, too big to regulate your drug prices out there.

Why are your drug prices going up? What kind of policies are we implementing here in Congress to protect them? Absolutely none. We are making it easier for prices to go up with insurance, in the travel industry, in trying to get a hotel. In trying to book a hotel room on the Internet, they have got it all rigged up because there are only a couple of companies you can go through to get the room.

These are the policies that are affecting the lives of the people whom we represent. I don't represent many big, multinational corporations. I don't think I have any, as a matter of fact, in my district, but I guess there are some folks around here who have a bunch of them.

□ 1015

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 20½ minutes remaining.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, since I have one speaker remaining, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from the great State of Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, and I thank the chairman of the full committee and the author of this bill.

I rise in combination of speaking on this bill, but also offering my deepest sympathy to the people of Brussels, the people of Belgium which, some would say, is the heart of the civic participation of Europe—they are certainly dear friends of the United States—though we would mourn any who have been impacted by the dastardly deeds of terrorism.

I know in our committee, Mr. JOHNSON and Mr. GOODLATTE are working on these issues. I would hope that we could move the no fly for foreign terrorists bill as quickly as possible as we make our way through these issues of determining how we disrupt the ideology and then the actions that result in the deaths of innocent persons. So I offer that.

Mr. Speaker, I am struck by the name of this bill because I don't know who gets smarter. I know that the consumers get poorer and that there are opportunities for victimizing the consumers. This bill does not create equal rules or implement smarter legislation.

But if I might take up the comment about the increasing cost of prescription drugs, that is clearly a result of not allowing the FTC to pursue and to proceed because it is our arm of equalizing and balancing the consumer.

On this day, when we acknowledge the sixth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act that has brought health insurance to 20 million people, we know that what we need to fix is the rising cost of prescription drugs.

So this bill is about attacking the administrative authority of the Federal Trade Commission. It is an unnecessary measure that would fundamentally undermine the FTC's independent enforcement authority and ability to prevent anticompetitive mergers.

As a law student, I remember in my antitrust classes how the FTC was highlighted as one of the anchors of balance and the anchors of protection of innocent civilians.

Specifically, if enacted, the SMARTER Act would strip the FTC of power by eliminating the agency's authority to enforce antitrust laws in larger merger cases and by blocking its ability to use its administrative proceedings to stop a harmful merger transaction.

Why is that? The FTC is where you can engage and have discussion. The bill seeks to do so by requiring that the FTC use the same enforcement process as the DOJ. There is more ability for the little guy to be heard at the FTC.

This proposed sweeping change undercuts the FTC's administrative litigation process for contested mergers or acquisitions and effectively removes a very core and functioning character of the agency, lets more people in the door to express themselves for or against this merger, how it impacts, with less resources needed to get in front of an administrative agency than dealing with the Department of Justice.

Moreover, reducing the FTC's independence directly conflicts with Congress' intent in creating this antitrust enforcement agency and policymaking body as a distinct and independent shield from political and executive interference.

As enforcers of section 7 of the Clayton Act, both the FTC and DOJ have the authority and responsibility to prohibit mergers and acquisitions that substantially lessen competition. That saves money because competition helps save money. These agencies serve to complement each other. Why make them the same? They are not twins.

Based upon historical experience and coordinated development, the FTC serves to protect consumers and consumer spending, health care, pharmaceuticals, professional services, food, energy, food safety, among other things. The DOJ typically assumes a specialized focus on larger corporate industries, like telecommunications, banks, railroads, and airlines. Serving as joint enforcement agencies for over 100 years, they work together.

Don't take away the consumers' arm. That is the FTC. This bill takes it away and puts the little guy under and the big guy up.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2745, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews through Equal Rules Act—otherwise known as the SMARTER Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not about creating equal rules or implementing ''smarter'' legislation.

Rather, it is about attacking the administrative authority of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

H.R. 2745 is an unnecessary measure that would fundamentally undermine the FTC's independent enforcement authority and ability to prevent anti-competitive mergers.

As we all know, the FTC was created by Congress with the specific intent of creating an independent antitrust enforcement agency and supplemental authority to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Specifically, if enacted, the SMARTER Act would strip the FTC of its power by eliminating the agency's authority to enforce antitrust laws in larger merger cases, and by blocking its ability to use its administrative proceedings to stop a harmful merger transaction.

The bill seeks to do so by requiring that the FTC use the same enforcement process as the DOJ.

This proposed sweeping change undercuts the FTC's administrative litigation process for contested mergers or acquisitions and effectively removes the very core and functioning character of this agency.

Moreover, reducing the FTC's independence directly conflicts with Congress's intent in creating this antitrust enforcement agency and policymaking body as distinct and independent shield from political and executive interference.

As enforcers of Section 7 of the Clayton Act, both the FTC and the DOJ have the authority and responsibility to prohibit mergers and acquisitions that would ''substantially lessen competition'' or ''tend to create a monopoly''.

Under this enforcement authority, these agencies serve to complement each other, and have developed over the years to specialize in particular industries and markets.

Based upon historical experience and coordinated developments, the FTC serves to protect consumers and consumer spending—e.g., healthcare, pharmaceuticals, professional services, food, energy, and certain high-tech industries like computer technology and internet services.

Whereas, the DOJ typically assumes a specialized focus on larger corporate industries—e.g., telecommunications, banks, railroads, and airlines.

Thus, while the FTC and the DOJ have operated with a shared responsibility of enforcing federal antitrust laws, these two federal agencies are unique and each retain exclusive authority of certain conduct.

Serving as joint enforcement agencies for over 100 years, the FTC and DOJ rely upon each other to coordinate agency jurisdiction and harmonized standards and practices.

The SMARTER Act is simply unnecessary as it fails to put forth any meaningful effort to enhance or rectify any expressed concerns governing these longstanding agency operations.

In particular, in 2002 Congress sought to review and amend antitrust laws and policies in light of changing economy and rise in technological advances.

In 2007 a report issued by the Antitrust Modernization Commission (AMC) set forth specific recommendations for the FTC to eliminate real or perceived disparities in the review process for merger transactions.

According to the AMC, Congress should seek to ensure that the same or comparable standard is used when seeking a preliminary injunction against a potentially anticompetitive transaction.

However, the SMARTER Act goes beyond this recommendation and seeks to chip away and carve out the entire administrative adjudication authority of the FTC.

In order to identify potential violations of the Clayton Act, the FTC and the DOJ review proposed merger transactions pursuant to the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act (the HSR Act), which provides advance notice and sets forth guidelines on large merger and acquisition transactions.

The heart of this concern is the alternate means in which the FTC and the DOJ carry out their enforcement role during this HSR pre-merger process.

Namely, H.R. 2745 is curiously motivated by the preliminary injunction process utilized by the FTC and the DOJ to halt proposed transactions that would violate the Clayton Act if completed.

Additionally, the DOJ typically consolidates the preliminary and permanent injunction proceedings, while the FTC typically only pursues the preliminary injunction.

While some argue that proposed transactions reviewed through the FTC would be treated more leniently than those reviewed through the DOJ, this assertion was not fully substantiated by the AMC.

The pre-merger review process and the injunction standards utilized by the FTC and the DOJ are the very procedural steps that characterize and distinguish the respective enforcement roles of these agencies.

This supposed area of concern addresses only a small fraction of proposed transactions, as the vast majority of merger and acquisition proposals are found to not be in violation of the Clayton Act during the review process.

The FTC and the DOJ review over a thousand merger filings every year.

Yet 95% of those merger filings present no competitive issues or challenged transactions.

As reported by the American Antitrust Institute (AAI), the overall concerns purported by the bill's sponsors are simply without foundation.

In contrast, the overall work of the FTC has an incredible impact on American consumers, communities and corporations and will be severely impacted if disrupted.

As highlighted by the FTC Chairwoman Edith Ramirez in her testimony before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, the FTC prioritizes the protection of consumers and the prevention of anticompetitive market practices.

In fact, the FTC exists to ensure fair competition and to prevent enormous concentrations of economic power that hurts consumers and small businesses.

For example:

In the past year, the FTC has challenged over 28 mergers, (although in most it was able to negotiate a remedy to allow the merger to proceed).

At the consumer level in my home state of Texas, the FTC secured an $82,000 settlement against an auto-dealer found in violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act in September 2015.

Also last year, the FTC ordered the largest divestiture ever in a supermarket merger, requiring Albertsons and Safeway to sell 168 supermarkets in 130 local markets throughout several states, ensuring that communities continue to benefit from competition among their local supermarkets.

The FTC has also taken an aggressive stance on stopping anticompetitive mergers and conduct in the healthcare market by halting such practices through administrative litigation.

In September 2015, the FTC secured a $1.1 million settlement to consumers who lost money to a health insurance telemarketing scam.

And in the last two years, the FTC took action in 13 pharmaceutical mergers, ordering divestitures to preserve competition for drugs that treat diabetes, hypertension, and cancer, as well as widely used generic medications like oral contraceptives and antibiotics.

Just last week on March 18, 2016, after a thoroughly vetted investigation, the FTC approved a final order preserving competition among outpatient dialysis clinics in Laredo, Texas.

That is, the FTC cleared U.S. Renal Care, Inc.'s (the country's third largest outpatient dialysis provider) $640 million purchase of dialysis competitor DSI Renal, on the condition that three of DSI's outpatient clinics in Laredo, Texas, be handed over to a third party. Absent this agreed divestiture, the acquisition would have led to a significant increase in market concentration and anti-competitive effects. The likely result, according to the FTC, would have included the elimination of direct competition between U.S. Renal Care and DSI Renal, reduced incentives to improve services or quality for dialysis patients, and increased ability for the merged company to unilaterally increase prices.

Notably, the DOJ has also been successful in securing investigations and halting suspected harmful merger practices on a much larger scale (in the health care and airline industry as of recent).

In June 2015, the DOJ put pressure on several multibillion dollar health insurers seeking to engage in large merger transactions with near certain suppression of market competition in the healthcare industry.

In August 2015, the DOJ issued civil investigative demands on several major US airlines seeking to halt any potential unlawful mergers.

These cases demonstrate the need for continued protection of the FTC and its ability to effectively carry out injunctions on harmful merger and acquisition activities, as well as anticompetitive business conduct that harms consumers and restrains market activity.

The ability of the FTC to function independently is a necessary function to the success of both the FTC and the DOJ.

The far-reaching and elusive SMARTER Act fails keep the foundational integrity of these agencies and should be opposed.

I urge all Members to vote against this serious threat to our fundamental protections of consumers and fair economic competition.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

It is not often that I come to the floor to argue a bill and to debate and nobody on the other side shows up to participate in the debate. I have been feeling kind of lonely over here.

I guess that people are too embarrassed on the other side to come here and defend this legislation at this particular time, as we get ready to depart for what will be just about 3 weeks, while we are leaving dangling and hanging important issues, like a budget for this country that was promised to us back at the beginning of the year. It was supposed to be regular order. It

was supposed to be that we are going to do a budget.

After the budget is done and we have our top lines and bottom lines in place, then we will embark upon the appropriations process and we will pass all of the 12 appropriations bills for the first time in years and we will get back to regular order around here. They can't even produce enough votes to pass a budget.

So what do we do then? We revert to trying to protect and coddle and make things easy for big multinational corporations that want to get bigger. They want to get bigger so that they can get a lock on the market, they have no competition, and then they can set whatever price they want to set and the American people are left having to pay.

What can you do when you need your prescription medication and there is no competition, no other similar drug, and you only have one player in the room; therefore, you have to pay whatever they are holding you over the barrel for.

The American people are sick and tired and they are angry about having been held over a barrel year after year after year as this Congress continues to coddle and protect and make things good for big business.

Well, what about the working people of this country? When are we going to do something about making sure that they don't have to pay these increased bills that they would have to pay for things like hotel rooms, insurance, medical care, prescription drugs, nursing homes, and food?

I don't even want to talk about the price of gas that is going to go up this summer. Despite the fact that we have a glut in the oil market, you are going to be seeing your gas prices rise. Why? Because you are getting out on the road and trying to go on vacation. It is getting more and more difficult to do that because wages haven't gone up.

So this Congress continues to make it easy for big corporations to increase their profits while doing nothing to raise wages for the regular working people of this country.

Now we are getting ready to go on another 3-week district work period. I have a lot of work to do in the district trying to explain to the people of my district why we are not getting down to business and doing the things that they expect this Congress to do.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that my colleagues in this body oppose the SMARTER Act and do what is right for the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Let's look at the arguments, the straw men that have been set up by the other party claiming that this legislation does a manner of things that it simply does not do.

First, they say enacting the SMARTER Act only benefits large companies that wish to merge, but the SMARTER Act protects small and midsize companies which also come under the Federal Trade Commission's scrutiny.

This legislation is not designed to help big companies get bigger. Indeed, large companies have the resources to hire the lawyers, economists, lobbyists, and other regulatory professionals to wrestle with the FTC.

It is the small- and medium-size companies that would benefit from a fair process and an assurance that they would have their day in court.

The FTC does not always focus its attention on the large companies. In fact, a Wall Street Journal article from 2013 documents how the FTC pursued anticompetitive practices of the Music Teachers National Association, a nonprofit with about a dozen employees.

In short, this nonprofit was a collection of piano teachers. So if you think the FTC only engages with conglomerates, you are mistaken. They will even prosecute your after-school piano teacher.

The SMARTER Act ensures that, if the FTC does focus its efforts on piano teachers, on the small- and medium-size companies, they will have the benefit of a fair process.

Then they make the argument that the SMARTER Act will make it more difficult for antitrust enforcement agencies to stop a merger, but the SMARTER Act only changes the process. It does not have any substantive impact on merger reviews.

The SMARTER Act does not make any substantive changes to antitrust law. Rather, the legislation only standardizes the process between the two antitrust enforcement agencies.

The witnesses at the committee hearings on the SMARTER Act testified that the legislation only affects the process and not the substantive standard.

As Deborah Garza, former chairwoman of the Antitrust Modernization Commission stated:

> No one on the AMC believed at the time, and I do not believe today, that this legislation would make it difficult or impossible for the FTC Commission to do its job. The Justice Department has done very well in pursuing its merger enforcement agenda working with the standards that apply to it. And I firmly believe that the FTC can do so as well.

Indeed, even the current Department of Justice Assistant Attorney General for the antitrust division stated:

> I do not think there is a practical difference in how the courts assess the factual and legal basis for enjoining a merger challenged by the FTC on the one hand and the Department on the other.

Let me also quote from a letter written by 15 leading antitrust professors who wrote to Congress expressing their support for the SMARTER Act:

> The FTC is a very impressive agency that plays a valuable role in antitrust enforcement. The SMARTER Act does nothing to undermine the FTC's authority. It simply ensures that the merger review processes and standards are equally applied to merger parties, regardless of which agency reviews the transaction.

The gentleman from New Jersey complained about what was going on with the review of proposed mergers by health insurance companies. Guess what. Who is doing those reviews? Not the FTC. The Department of Justice. It doesn't make any sense.

What does make sense is that there are lots of companies going through lots of things caused, in part, by ObamaCare forcing healthcare providers, insurance companies, and others to look at mergers and acquisitions. When they do so, the public should have the right to know that justice is being done.

This is not about big business or small business. This is about making sure that the laws are fairly and equally applied. When that happens, we should have this legislation at hand so that we have the assurance that we are going to have justice done. The FTC should operate by the same merger review processes and standards that the Department of Justice does.

I believe in the vigorous prosecution of antitrust practices and transactions by the Department of Justice and the FTC. I would not support the SMARTER Act if I thought that it would disadvantage our antitrust enforcement agencies.

The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD demonstrates that the SMARTER Act only makes the process more fair and predictable while providing the antitrust enforcement agencies with the same powers to prosecute antitrust practices.

□ 1030

The SMARTER Act is a commonsense process reform that ensures fairness and parity in the narrow field of merger reviews. The bill was recommended to Congress by a bipartisan commission and is supported by former top Department of Justice antitrust enforcement officials and past and present FTC Commissioners of both political parties.

This legislation will help America continue to serve as a leader and innovator in competition law, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2745, the "Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015" or SMARTER Act, would require the Federal Trade Commission to use the same merger enforcement procedures as the Justice Department's Antitrust Division for proposed mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, and other similar transactions.

I oppose this flawed bill for several reasons.

Most importantly, H.R. 2745—by weakening the Commission's independence—undermines

Congress's original intent in creating the Federal Trade Commission in the first place.

For good reasons that are still relevant today, Congress established the Commission to be an independent administrative agency.

Although the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 empowered the Justice Department to enforce antitrust laws, Congress determined that more needed to be done to address the wave of mergers and anti-competitive corporate abuses that continued notwithstanding the enactment of that Act.

Accordingly, Congress created the Commission in 1914 as an independent body of experts charged with developing antitrust law and policy free from political influence, and particularly executive branch interference.

To this end, Congress specifically gave the Commission broad administrative powers to investigate and enforce laws to stop unfair methods of competition as well as the authority to use an administrative adjudication process to develop policy expertise, rather than requiring the Commission to try cases before a generalist federal judge.

Yet, rather than strengthening the Commission's independence and enforcement authority, the SMARTER Act does the opposite.

Of greatest concern is the bill's elimination of the administrative adjudication process for merger cases under section 5(b) of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

By doing so, the SMARTER Act would effectively transform the Commission from an independent administrative agency into just another competition enforcement agency indistinguishable from the Justice Department and, thereby, arguable redundant.

The Commission's administrative authority is key to its distinctive role as an independent administrative agency. But the SMARTER Act—by eliminating the Commission's administrative authority—opens the door for the ultimate elimination of the Commission.

And, you do not just have to take my word for it. Former Republican Commission Chairman William Kovacic, while expressing support for the bill's harmonization of preliminary injunction standards, says that the ''rest of the SMARTER Act is rubbish.''

He continued, ''Let me put it this way: behind the rest of [the SMARTER Act] is the fundamental question of whether you want the Federal Trade Commission involved in competition law.''

Similarly, current Commission Chairwoman Edith Ramirez observes that the bill would have ''far-reaching immediate effects'' and ''fundamentally alter the nature and function of the Commission, as well as the potential for significant unintended consequences.''

Consumers Union also opposes the SMARTER Act not only because it is completely unnecessary, but also because the bill could ''create unintended hurdles to effective and sound enforcement'' and ''set the stage for further tinkering—both of which risk undermining what is now a coherent, consistent, well-established, familiar enforcement procedure within the'' Commission.

Finally, the SMARTER Act is problematic because it may apply to conduct well-beyond large mergers, which could further hinder the Commission's effectiveness.

In particular, the SMARTER Act would eliminate the Commission's authority to use administrative adjudications not just for the largest mergers, but for non-merger activity, like a ''joint venture'' or ''similar transaction.''

I recognize that the bill's authors have tried in good faith to respond to some of the concerns expressed by me and by the Commission during the last Congress and I appreciate those efforts.

Moreover, I recognize that the Commission itself last year changed its procedural rules to make it easier to end the use of administrative litigation where it loses a preliminary injunction proceeding in court.

I continue to have concerns, however, about the bill's prohibition against the Commission's administrative litigation authority with respect to all merger cases.

Accordingly, I must oppose the SMARTER Act, even in its rewritten form, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposition to H.R. 2745.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to H.R. 2745 or the SMARTER Act.

This bill is another delay tactic that stops us from the meaningful work of passing a budget.

Too many bills that have come out of the Judiciary Committee this year are designed to erode consumer rights and roll back established judicial precedent.

We should be considering and debating meaningful bills to address criminal justice reform and common sense gun safety.

Instead, we are here voting to fix a problem that does not exist and does not need our attention.

A Politico article from two days ago was titled ''Congress setting a low bar for doing nothing.''

My Democratic colleagues and I have bills and agendas that we would like to bring to the floor to address real problems facing real Americans.

This bill is not smart. It is a timewaster and I hope after spring recess we can come back to a robust agenda and work on behalf of the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 653, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. DOGGETT. I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Doggett moves to recommit the bill (H.R. 2745) to the Committee on the Judiciary, with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 5. PROTECTING CONSUMERS AGAINST HIGH PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS.

(a) This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply to mergers that would unreasonably increase the costs of pharmaceutical drugs.

(b) The Clayton Act (15 U.S.C.12 et seq.) and Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45 et seq.) as in effect immediately before the date of the enactment of this Act shall apply to mergers that would unreasonably increase the costs of pharmaceutical drugs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, for many months now so many of us Democrats here in the House have been pleading with our Republican colleagues to recognize that there is a very serious cost to the American people of prescription price gouging; such a serious matter that, overwhelmingly, in the fall, when the Kaiser Family Foundation surveyed healthcare concerns of Americans, the number one issue was soaring, unaffordable prescription drugs.

We have not been very successful in getting their attention on this just to recognize the severity of the problem—not even getting to the point of agreeing on what legislative action this Congress, this administration might take in order to address this problem.

We got another indication of the severity of the problem and the way that people across America are being impacted by the Republican failure to address prescription price gouging in the latest survey done this year by AARP, their RxPrice Watch report, which found the average retail price among 622 prescription medicines that are widely used by seniors more than doubled from less than $6,000 in 2006 to over $11,000 in 2013. That is an incredible increase.

It is not just seniors who are impacted, but working families, people all over the United States, by the fact that prescription drug prices are rising much faster than the cost of living and other health care.

Now, we have been asking for months that Republicans recognize the severity of this problem. I have asked in the Committee on Ways and Means. We cannot even get a hearing on the subject.

Our colleagues have asked, in the Commerce Committee, how about a hearing to look at what is happening to the American people on these outrageous prescription price increases that just keep increasing and increasing? The Commerce Committee has refused to hold a hearing on it.

The Committee on Appropriations has been asked to review and consider this problem. They won't hold a hearing on it.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, under the leadership of ELIJAH CUMMINGS as the ranking Democrat, asked for a subpoena. Finally—and it is appropriate for this bill, they call it the SMARTER Act, and Republicans are always so much

better at naming their legislation than what is in it—we had a smart aleck who got subpoenaed, the guy who thought it was okay to raise the price of an over 60-year-old drug by over 5,000 percent in 1 day, having a big impact on people who needed it for reduced immunity from any number of kinds of treatments, a 5,000 percent increase, and they at least were willing to get him over video to make his various smart-aleck remarks about his ability to do that.

Competition by itself is not solving the problem with the soaring cost of prescription drugs. But trying to maintain competition, if Republicans won't recognize how endangered so many Americans are by prescription price gouging, we ought not to go backwards, and that is what I fear this bill would do.

Let me give you a precise example. On November 18, the Federal Trade Commission, which would be impacted by this bill, approved a final order that was concerned with the merger on generic drugs that treat certain types of ulcers and thyroid conditions. This is the merger, an $8 billion merger between Endo International and Par Pharmaceuticals.

The FTC was concerned about the effect on competition and raising prices and gouging consumers even more than is occurring already. I do not want to impair in any way their ability to initiate litigation, to be involved, to see that competition remains—to the limited extent it is now—and not see seniors or working families with a sick child or anyone who gets a sad diagnosis of a life-threatening disease and then finds themselves facing financial ruin even if they have insurance, to see one of the few tools we have to deal with these anticompetitive provisions eliminated by this bill.

This is the last amendment on the bill. It will not send the bill back to committee. It will at least preserve this one narrow area. If Republicans won't recognize the problem, at least don't go make it worse.

They could be bringing up bills to this floor like the one that had bipartisan support about 8 or 9 years ago. Former Representative John Dingell had a bill so that we would begin to have Medicare negotiate prices with these pharmaceutical companies. Twenty-four Republicans even joined us. That is the kind of bipartisan action we need.

At least approve this motion to recommit. Let the bill move forward, but without gouging consumers on prescription drug prices even more than they are today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that, because of ObamaCare and government regulation, the cost of prescription drugs is going up—and going up too fast. We definitely need to reform our healthcare system, starting with repealing ObamaCare and putting in place real patient-centered reforms to our healthcare system, but that is not what this legislation is about today.

The SMARTER Act is predicated on a very simple notion: the results of an antitrust merger review should not be dependent on which antitrust enforcement agency happens to review the deal. The outcome should not be determined by the flip of an agency coin. The SMARTER Act is a process reform that ensures that all parties have their day in court and are subject to the same standards, regardless of which antitrust enforcement agency reviews their merger.

The motion to recommit defeats this simple reform by carving out an exception for one area. Why, if we are seeking justice, why, if we are seeking a fair standard for all people before these antitrust review agencies, would we take this particular area and say, no, we are not going to have a consistent standard for reviewing something that the gentleman feels is so important.

We all feel that is very important, and that is why we all should oppose this motion to recommit and vote for the underlying bill. I urge my colleagues to vote against the motion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and the motion to suspend the rules and agree to House Resolution 658.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 174, nays 235, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 136]

YEAS—174

Adams	Brady (PA)	Carney
Aguilar	Brownley (CA)	Carson (IN)
Beatty	Bustos	Cartwright
Becerra	Butterfield	Castor (FL)
Beyer	Capps	Castro (TX)
Bishop (GA)	Capuano	Chu, Judy
Bonamici	Cárdenas	Cicilline
Clark (MA)	Honda	O'Rourke
Clarke (NY)	Hoyer	Pallone
Clay	Huffman	Pascrell
Cleaver	Israel	Payne
Clyburn	Jackson Lee	Pelosi
Cohen	Jeffries	Perlmutter
Connolly	Johnson (GA)	Pingree
Conyers	Johnson, E. B.	Pocan
Cooper	Jones	Polis
Costa	Kaptur	Price (NC)
Courtney	Keating	Quigley
Crowley	Kelly (IL)	Rice (NY)
Cuellar	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Cummings	Kildee	Ruiz
Davis (CA)	Kilmer	Ruppersberger
Davis, Danny	Kind	Rush
DeFazio	Kirkpatrick	Ryan (OH)
DeGette	Kuster	Sánchez, Linda T.
Delaney	Langevin	Sanchez, Loretta
DeLauro	Larsen (WA)	Sarbanes
DelBene	Larson (CT)	Schakowsky
DeSaulnier	Lawrence	Schiff
Deutch	Lee	Schrader
Dingell	Levin	Scott (VA)
Doggett	Lewis	Scott, David
Doyle, Michael F.	Lieu, Ted	Serrano
Duckworth	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)
Duncan (TN)	Loebsack	Sherman
Edwards	Lofgren	Sires
Ellison	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Engel	Lowey	Swalwell (CA)
Eshoo	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Takai
Esty	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Takano
Farr	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Fattah	Maloney, Carolyn	Thompson (MS)
Foster	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Frankel (FL)	Matsui	Tonko
Fudge	McCollum	Torres
Gabbard	McDermott	Tsongas
Gallego	McGovern	Van Hollen
Garamendi	McNerney	Vargas
Graham	Meeks	Veasey
Grayson	Meng	Vela
Green, Al	Moore	Velázquez
Green, Gene	Moulton	Visclosky
Gutiérrez	Murphy (FL)	Walz
Hahn	Napolitano	Wasserman Schultz
Hastings	Neal	Waters, Maxine
Heck (WA)	Nolan	Watson Coleman
Higgins	Norcross	Welch
Himes		Yarmuth
Hinojosa		

NAYS—235

Abraham	Costello (PA)	Guinta
Aderholt	Cramer	Guthrie
Allen	Crawford	Hanna
Amash	Crenshaw	Hardy
Amodei	Culberson	Harper
Ashford	Curbelo (FL)	Harris
Babin	Davis, Rodney	Hartzler
Barletta	Denham	Heck (NV)
Barr	Dent	Hensarling
Barton	DeSantis	Hice, Jody B.
Benishek	DesJarlais	Hill
Bera	Diaz-Balart	Holding
Bilirakis	Dold	Hudson
Bishop (MI)	Donovan	Huelskamp
Blackburn	Duffy	Huizenga (MI)
Blum	Duncan (SC)	Hultgren
Bost	Ellmers (NC)	Hunter
Boustany	Emmer (MN)	Hurd (TX)
Brady (TX)	Farenthold	Hurt (VA)
Brat	Fitzpatrick	Issa
Bridenstine	Fleischmann	Jenkins (KS)
Brooks (AL)	Fleming	Jenkins (WV)
Brooks (IN)	Flores	Johnson (OH)
Buchanan	Forbes	Johnson, Sam
Buck	Fortenberry	Jolly
Bucshon	Foxx	Jordan
Burgess	Franks (AZ)	Joyce
Byrne	Frelinghuysen	Katko
Calvert	Garrett	Kelly (MS)
Carter (GA)	Gibbs	Kelly (PA)
Carter (TX)	Gibson	King (IA)
Chabot	Goodlatte	King (NY)
Clawson (FL)	Gosar	Kinzinger (IL)
Coffman	Gowdy	Kline
Cole	Granger	Knight
Collins (GA)	Graves (GA)	LaHood
Collins (NY)	Graves (LA)	LaMalfa
Comstock	Graves (MO)	Lamborn
Conaway	Griffith	Lance
Cook	Grothman	Latta

LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—24

Bass
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Chaffetz
Fincher
Gohmert
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Labrador
Love
Nadler
Noem
Nugent
Rangel
Reichert
Richmond
Scalise
Smith (WA)
Speier
Wilson (FL)
Zinke

□ 1100

Messrs. LAMALFA, ASHFORD, LANCE, Mrs. HARTZLER, Messrs. SCHWEIKERT, FRANKS of Arizona, DUFFY, BERA, WESTMORELAND, MACARTHUR, and FITZPATRICK changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. NOLAN, DEUTCH, and DOGGETT changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 235, noes 171, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 137]

AYES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NOES—171

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—27

Bass
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Fincher
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Johnson (GA)
Labrador
Love
Moore
Nadler
Noem
Nugent
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Scalise
Smith (WA)
Speier
Wilson (FL)
Yoho
Zinke

□ 1106

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 137, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 137 for passage of H.R. 2745 which took place on Wednesday, March 23, 2016, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained at the Supreme Court. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on rollcall No. 137 for passage of H.R. 2745.

Stated against:

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 137, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no.''

CONDEMNING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN BRUSSELS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 658) condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered

more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 0, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

YEAS—409

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Blackburn
Blum
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—24

Bass
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Chaffetz
Fincher
Grijalva
Herrera Beutler
Labrador
Love
Noem
Nugent
Rangel
Reichert
Scalise
Smith (NE)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Tonko
Wilson (FL)
Zinke

□ 1118

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 21; Tuesday, March 22; and Wednesday, March 23, 2016, I was on medical leave while recovering from hip replacement surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 130 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4314, as amended).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 131 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 653).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 132 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 653).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 133 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4742).

"Yes" on rollcal1 vote No. 134 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4755).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 135 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4336, as amended).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 136 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 2745, with instructions).

"No" on rollcall vote No. 137 (on passage of H.R. 2745).

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 138 (on agreeing to the resolution on H. Res. 658).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, due to an illness I was unable to vote on the following:

Rollcall No. 130.
Rollcall No. 131.
Rollcall No. 132.
Rollcall No. 133.
Rollcall No. 134.
Rollcall No. 135.
Rollcall No. 137.
Rollcall No. 138.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

On rollcall No. 136, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2745, which would add protections for consumers by ensuring that the underlying bill would not apply to mergers that would unreasonably increase the costs of pharmaceutical drugs (rollcall No. 136), I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for the vote on the passage of H.R. 2745, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act (rollcall No. 137), I would have voted "nay." This bill would eliminate important administrative and procedural tools the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) uses to protect market competition and the American consumer. Additionally, this bill seems unnecessary, particularly after the Wall Street Journal dubbed 2015 the "biggest year ever for mergers and acquisitions."

Additionally, had I been present for the vote on H. Res. 658, a resolution condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, (rollcall No. 138), I would have voted "aye." These attacks signal a painful continuation in our struggle against terrorism.

REPORT ON H. CON. RES. 125, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, from the Committee on the Budget, submitted a

privileged report (Rept. No. 114–470) on the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 125) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONGRATULATING STUDENTS ON ACCEPTANCE AS DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate several students from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District on their appointments as delegates to the Congress of Future Medical Leaders. These students will be delegates to the Congress of Future Medical Leaders to be held later this year in Massachusetts.

The Congress is an honors-only program for high school students who want to become physicians or are going into a field devoted to medical research.

Each of these students was nominated by their teachers and has demonstrated tremendous academic success. Many who attend the Congress will receive full academic scholarships as they look toward completing university courses.

The six students selected to attend the Congress of Future Medical Leaders represent many communities in the Fifth Congressional District. Those chosen include: Courtney Craft from Bradford Area High School, Aubrey Feinour from Penns Valley High School, Kendra Gadley from West Forest Secondary School, Bella Huber from Central Mountain High School, Needhi Sharma from State College High School, and Laiken Turner from Mt. Union High School.

I wish these students the best of success at the Congress in June and as their academic careers progress and continue.

POVERTY AND THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the sixth anniversary of the adoption of the Affordable Care Act.

I am proud of the role I played as majority leader in 2010 to bring that legislation to the floor, legislation that has been extraordinarily successful in making affordable coverage accessible to millions of Americans.

The Affordable Care Act has become a critical tool in fighting poverty. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, 20 million previously uninsured individuals now have coverage.

Expanded Medicaid is now covering 8.6 million Americans in 28 States and the District of Columbia. Were the rest of the States to implement it, it would provide access to affordable, quality care to another 5.1 million Americans.

Young people under age 26 can be covered under a parent's plan, making it easier for them to find their footing in the workforce. And insurance companies, Mr. Speaker, can no longer deny coverage based on a preexisting condition.

As we mark this anniversary, the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Equality, and Opportunity will continue to lead efforts to defend the law against attempts to repeal or undermine it, and we will pursue additional policies that help more Americans stay healthy, put roofs over their heads, and find jobs that lift them out of poverty and into the middle class.

HONORING SHERIFF'S DEPUTY CARL KOONTZ

(Mr. ROKITA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Howard County Sheriff's Deputy Carl Koontz, who was killed in the line of duty last Sunday.

Deputy Koontz had strong ties to Howard County. He was a graduate of both Western High School in Russiaville and Indiana University Kokomo. As a member of the force, he served as a school resource officer, positively impacting the hundreds of students with whom he interacted on a daily basis.

Deputy Koontz was also a husband and a father to an 8-month-old son, Noah. Noah will be celebrating Easter this Sunday without his father and will never know him.

I offer my deepest and most heartfelt condolences for the family of Deputy Koontz during this time, and I thank him for all of his hard work and ultimate sacrifice.

I also pray for the continued recovery of Sergeant Jordan Buckley, who was also injured on Sunday.

HONORING CESAR CHAVEZ

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you to remind us of a great American, Cesar Chavez. Born in Yuma, Arizona, he dedicated his life to making sure that he fought for workers in America and around the world.

He only had an eighth grade education, but he served our country honorably in the military as well and risked his life and served the people of America honorably.

One of the key tenets of his life was nonviolence. That is something that is timely for us to remind ourselves of, as Americans, at this time when we choose who our leader is going to be, that we do it respectfully, honorably, and nonviolently.

So, with that, I would like to commemorate the opportunity to remind all of us to speak from our heart, to work from our heart, to be kind to our brothers, sisters, and our neighbors, and to do things and make change for the better nonviolently in honor of our fellow American, Cesar Chavez.

POLL: MEDIA HAS TOO MUCH POWER

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Americans know that liberal media bias is a major problem in our country.

A recent Rasmussen poll found that Americans believe media bias is a bigger problem in politics than large campaign contributions. It also found that a large majority of Americans, 66 percent, believe the news media has too much power and influence over government decisions.

A Media Research Center analysis of The New York Times provides an example. MRC found that, since last August, The New York Times has never characterized Hillary Clinton or BERNIE SANDERS as being hard-line or hard-left. In contrast, Republican candidates have been labeled as hard-line 45 times and hard-right 13 times. That is 58–0.

Americans will continue to view the media as a problem until it provides fair and balanced coverage. The media should give the American people the facts, not tell them what to think.

TOXIC CONTAMINATION IN SOUTHEAST LOS ANGELES

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to bring attention to an issue afflicting communities in southeast Los Angeles.

Today communities in Vernon and the surrounding areas are dealing with the aftermath of years of toxic contamination by a now-closed lead-acid battery recycling plant.

The recycling plant, which was owned by the company Exide Technologies, operated for years in the city of Vernon. Even though it had multiple violations documented by inspectors in the late 1990s of bad things going on,

there were few punitive measures used against them.

Ultimately, who paid the price? The contaminated areas can be cleaned up, but those communities that live there, mostly composed of working class Mexican Americans, now have to deal with long-term health effects of being exposed, like cancer.

Time and time again, when our infrastructure fails us, when corporations violate the rules, it is the most vulnerable communities that pay for it. I want to remind my colleagues we have to be vigilant.

AMERICA GRIEVES WITH THE BELGIAN PEOPLE

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share in the grief of the Belgian people after yesterday's horrific acts of terror that claimed the lives of over 30 innocent people and injured more than 200, some of whom were Americans, and to lend my voice to a call for action.

We, the Representatives of the American people, condemn the latest barbarity by the scum called ISIS. It should be clear to all that these terrorists are at war with the West. But are we at war with them? The actions by this administration at least thus far say no.

These terrorist thugs will continue to rape, pillage, and murder until they are destroyed. The United States and our allies are long overdue in doing just that.

□ 1130

REJECT DISCRIMINATION AND UPHOLD OUR VALUES

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I stood with my colleagues on the House floor in a moment of silence as we mourned for the victims in Brussels.

Today, as I watched leading politicians propose discriminatory policies targeting the Muslim community, I cannot be silent. Seventy years ago, my parents and grandparents were held prisoner during World War II without trial and without a reason, other than their Japanese heritage. In that moment, no one was willing to speak up for them. We cannot ignore the lessons of history.

The Muslim community is the most frequent victim of terrorism and our greatest ally in ridding the world of extremism. Responding to Brussels by advocating for patrols of Muslim neighborhoods, or suggesting that we torture our enemies, is not only counterproductive, it violates the moral code that separates us from our enemies.

It is my duty, and it is every American's duty to reject discrimination and uphold our values.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRI-CITY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(Mr. NEWHOUSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce on their 10-year anniversary celebration. This auspicious occasion marks the date that the Richland and the Tri-City area Chamber of Commerce merged to form the regional Chamber in 2006.

The Tri-Cities is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the State of Washington, situated at the confluence of the Columbia, Snake and Yakima Rivers. The beautiful Columbia Basin and 300 days of sunshine attract opportunities for agriculture, recreation, and business.

The Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce represents nearly 1,200 diverse businesses, providing access to customers and a network for job creators. The Chamber provides visibility for partner companies and works to improve the economic climate of our region. The Chamber represents local leaders, working to advance the local economy and the quality of life in the Tri-Cities.

With the motto of ''Bolder, Brighter, Better,'' this advocacy group has had a tremendously positive impact, attracting jobs to our community. It is my distinct pleasure to recognize and congratulate them on this milestone.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, as the only physicist remaining in the United States Congress, I feel a special responsibility to speak out on the importance of strengthening global nuclear security.

In just a few days, the United States will host the fourth and final Nuclear Security Summit. World leaders from more than 50 countries will convene in Washington, D.C., to participate in a global dialogue to reinforce our commitment at the highest levels to securing nuclear materials. To date, these summits have been instrumental in achieving critical nuclear security objectives, such as minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium in reactors around the world, and enhancing membership in international organizations like the IAEA. But more remains to be done.

It is no secret that rogue regimes and clandestine organizations continue to exhibit the ambition to acquire nuclear materials that can be used to create crude radiological dirty bombs or nuclear weapons.

I am, however, optimistic that with our allies and partners around the world, we will continue to develop new and innovative ideas to secure vulnerable nuclear material and make the world a safer place.

HONORING THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN IN BLUE

(Mr. YOHO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, we owe so much to the brave men and women who police our Nation's streets. Every day they selflessly put on their uniforms to stand in harm's way to keep us safe.

In my district, on March 9, an off-duty Jacksonville detective, who was taking his son to school, was shot while making an unexpected stop after witnessing a suspect driving erratically. He has been upgraded to a stable condition now, but it is a sobering reminder of how quickly evil can strike.

On March 13, Maryland Police Officer Jacai Colson was the 23rd police officer killed in the line of duty this year. May he rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, these tragedies have gone from infrequent to occasional to nearly everyday occurrences across the country. To me and law-abiding American citizens, this is simply unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, there isn't much room between order and chaos. Members of our police force are the first, and sometimes only, line of defense that we have from the evils that lurk in the shadows.

Our law enforcement officers deserve every ounce of support, respect, and gratitude that we can bestow upon them. Let us thank all of our first responders and our police officers. Let us pray for their safety, their families, and may God bless the brave men and women in blue.

ALLOW THE WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS TO BE INURNED AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, this is Women's History Month, and it is only appropriate that we finally give a group of remarkable women who served this country an honor that they have been denied far too long—the opportunity to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

I am referring to the Women Airforce Service Pilots, more commonly known as the WASPs. These women were remarkable, flying 78 different types of aircraft for the United States Army Air Force during World War II. They were stationed throughout the United States. They flew the very same missions as their male counterparts, over 60 million miles of operational flights. Despite their patriotism and selfless service, they did not receive veteran status until 1977, and yet, today, they cannot be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Thankfully, the House has already acted. They passed legislation—I was proud to cosponsor it—that would allow these WASPs to be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. I am hopeful that the Senate will soon follow suit and send the bill to the President.

KEEP THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A SAFE PLACE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to see that the House came together to have unanimous support for a resolution condemning the Brussels attacks, the terrorism, and the loss of life there as a result of terrorist activity.

We can't just stop there, though, with words from the House. We need to have action to ensure that our allies know that they are our allies. But also, our first primary goal is the safety of the United States citizens and the United States soil.

We need to vet whoever is going to be immigrating to this country, whoever the so-called immigrants are, and we need to be vetting the refugees here. It is our first obligation for the safety of the American people and the soil of the U.S. that we have the full information on who is coming here and who they are.

The methods we have now are endangering our country because we don't know who is coming here, and they certainly don't look like refugees in a lot of cases.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is an important first step to be in lockstep with the people of Belgium in their time of struggle and need. Let's also remember that we need to keep the United States of America a safe place.

BRUSSELS ATTACKS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I come with a heavy heart to acknowledge the deep tragedy that happened in Brussels, Belgium, yesterday.

Having participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Exchange, I traveled to Brussels on a number of occasions to join with the European Union. But more importantly, I had the sad duty of coming onto the then-Select Committee on Homeland Security and, ultimately, the Committee on Homeland Security in the very shadows of 9/11. I was in this Congress as it occurred, and I went to Ground Zero as they were still recovering individuals, as those firefighters and first responders would not stop.

Our hearts are heavy and we are desirous of being helpful. As Brussels recovers and responds, we need to stand with them. But as well, let me be very clear: let us not allow the terrorists to terrorize us; let us recognize the broadness of this Nation, the Muslims who put on the uniform of the United States military to fight on our behalf. Let us act with consciousness, providing more security and more human resources to make a difference.

As I close, let me acknowledge the historic trip of President Obama to Cuba and say that engagement is very important.

REMEMBERING WE ARE ALL PART OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

(Mr. RUIZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a very important day in my family's life. I have been the happiest man for 2 years, ever since I married my wife Monica and, also, the birth of Sky and Sage, my twin daughters. They are here with me today. We celebrated their first birthday yesterday with friends and family and good folks.

It has been one of those years of reflection that makes us all human—being a father, being a husband, and having a family. That is the essence that combines us all, as human beings.

I urge my colleagues to pause, celebrate their families, celebrate their children, their parents, hug them, love them, and let's remember we are all part of the human family.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND EARLY ACT ANNIVERSARY

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, good luck—mazel tov—to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the sixth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act. This was President Obama's and congressional Democrats' landmark law, which has helped 20 million Americans—1.7 million Floridians in my home State—get quality, affordable health care.

It is a law that outlawed discrimination against people like me—a woman and a cancer survivor—who could have been prevented from obtaining care before the ACA ended that injustice.

It is also the anniversary of the EARLY Act, a law that I was proud to author, which passed as part of the ACA. The EARLY Act empowers young women with the information and resources they need to understand their breast health and the risks that they face.

As a cancer survivor and a mother, these two anniversaries are near and dear to my heart. I will continue working with my sister survivors, with the healthcare and cancer communities, along with Vice President BIDEN's inspirational National Cancer Moonshot, to expand care; protect more of our daughters, sisters, and mothers; and, finally, beat cancer once and for all.

BRUSSELS ATTACKS

(Mr. MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution passed earlier today condemning the heinous acts that occurred in Brussels yesterday.

Whenever such cowardly attacks take place against innocent people, we all are victims. Of course, the attacks in Brussels are not isolated and, sadly, remind me of the recent attacks of terror in Paris, in Nigeria, in Kenya, in Turkey, against people of all faiths. I shall not recite all of the cities that come to mind in what has become a new normal.

As a global community, we must continue to unite against this threat abroad and at home until we have brought the extremists who perpetuate such crimes to justice.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by reminding us all here in this Chamber, as well as our European friends, that during these difficult times, we should remember what brings us together. The resolution passed earlier is not just about Belgium-U.S. relations, nor is it about the recent attacks in Brussels. The resolution also reminds us that the nature of the response is what brings us together. The solutions to terror are to be found only with an emphasis on the Democratic and individual rights that we humbly work to protect.

□ 1145

REEVALUATING OUR ANTI-ISIS POLICY

(Mr. SHERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, in light of the recent attack in Brussels, it is appropriate to reevaluate our anti-ISIS policy. The Obama administration's basic policy is sound in three parts—don't be suckered into declaring war against 1.4 billion Muslims around the world; don't be suckered by a small group of misguided psychopaths. Second, bomb ISIS appropriately. Third, arm the right rebels in Syria—but, in the details, the policy needs to be strengthened.

We have armed dozens, rather than thousands, in Syria because we insist that those whom we arm swear that they will not attack Assad. Assad has killed 200,000 civilians. Patriotic Syrians will wage war against that regime. Second, in our bombing, we have a zero civilian casualties policy. We will not hit a tanker truck that carries ISIS oil if it is moving, which means there is a driver in that truck, and that driver might be a civilian. We provide free electricity to ISIS-controlled areas.

It is time to get serious about our efforts against ISIS.

FACT-CHECKING GOP CLAIMS ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is one of the most important pieces of legislation in a generation.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, 20 million people have gained health insurance coverage. As this chart shows, the percentage of the population without health insurance is now under 10 percent. That is the first time this has happened in our Nation's history. Just look at it. The uninsurance rate was steady for many, many years. Then, after the Affordable Care Act was passed, it dropped like a stone.

Thanks to the ACA, young people are now able to stay on their parents' plans. Thanks to the ACA, families who could not get health insurance through their employers can now get it. Thanks to the ACA, people who couldn't afford health insurance can get subsidies to help them afford it. Thanks to the ACA, people who have what the insurance industry calls preexisting conditions are no longer left high and dry.

The ACA has been a lifesaver for people who were previously uninsured. It is a good thing for our economy and a promise kept to our constituents. I would like to wish the ACA, the Affordable Care Act, a very happy anniversary. Look at the chart.

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota) laid before the House the following privileged concurrent resolution:

S. CON. RES. 34

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Wednesday, March 23, 2016, through Friday, April 8, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 3:30 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2016, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the consideration of the concurrent resolution?

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reserving my right to object, and Mr. Speaker, I will not ultimately object; but on Thursday or Friday last, I had an extended conversation with the majority leader about adjourning. I pointed out to the majority leader at that point in time that there were a number of critical health issues pending that needed to be addressed by this House. Frankly, we should not be adjourning without doing so.

Zika is a threat to young women, to young men, and to our populations in Puerto Rico and in the Virgin Islands, and we should have responded to the President's supplemental request so that it could be effectively responded to.

In addition, we still have the ongoing Flint water crisis, caused by the negligence, frankly, of the Governor and the Department of Environmental Quality in Michigan. Thousands of young people have been put at risk.

We also, of course, have the opiate addiction crisis with which we ought to be dealing. It is an immediate threat to each and every one of our communities.

Lastly, I am pleased that the Speaker and the majority leader are working towards an early consideration, as soon as we get back, of legislation which will allow Puerto Rico to face the financial crisis that confronts it.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I will not object, but it is lamentable that we have not dealt with these four critically important issues before we adjourn.

I withdraw my reservation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

Without objection, the concurrent resolution is concurred in.

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WHEN THE LAW DOES NOT FOLLOW THE CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ISAAC LOWE

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for yielding to me so I may pay tribute to a great, stellar woman from northern California. This can't be done in a 1-minute speech, so a little extra time is very, very fitting in recognition of her work and her life.

In rising today, I join with many northstate residents in honoring the life and legacy of Isaac Lowe, an incredible woman and a prominent civil rights leader, who passed away just a few weeks ago in Redding, California.

She was born in 1921 in Wharton, Texas. Isaac was the second youngest of nine children, learning early the importance of hard work. She attended Tillotson Business College in Austin, Texas, and Prairie View A&M in Prairie View. It was during a visit to check up on a sick friend in California when she met her future husband, Vernon Lowe, whom she married soon after and started her family in Redding, California.

Being an African American woman in the 1940s, unfortunately, racism was no stranger to Isaac. Despite holding a business degree, she was denied jobs because employers chose to judge her skin color rather than her impressive credentials. Isaac did not give up. She started a catering business in Redding, and she eventually became the first Black woman to be hired by the County of Shasta, working in social services for 17 years and helping others. However, Isaac's most noble work was through her plight to advance racial equality in her own neighborhood.

Upon first moving to Redding, all but one of the Black families lived on the same street and were segregated from the community. This was a status quo that she didn't accept. Isaac joined her husband in founding the Redding chapter of the NAACP and began her 65-year journey of advocating for civil rights and worked very hard in order to hold onto that charter of the NAACP when times got a little leaner back in the seventies. She lobbied city and county lawmakers for safe and affordable housing for Black families. She worked with local school officials for the equal treatment of Black children in the community's mainly White schools. She fought for fairness and justice under the law for all citizens in the judicial system. She raised funds and successfully sought approval from city hall for the construction of the

only Martin Luther King, Jr., community center between Sacramento and Oregon at that time.

It was her compassionate advocacy and her resiliency that helped change Shasta County for the better. Some of her most notable accomplishments included being the first Black woman to serve on Shasta County's grand jury, where she served as a founding member of the Shasta County Citizens Against Racism and was awarded the Redding Citizen of the Year in 1992. Her proudest moment was in getting the Redding City Council members to recognize Martin Luther King Day as a holiday.

Her legacy speaks volumes of the person she was and of the impact she had on so many lives. One of the anecdotes I know about her informally is that she was fairly commonly referred to as the ''Rosa Parks of Redding, California.'' She was a deeply caring friend, a loving wife and mother, and a selfless advocate.

I had the chance to meet Isaac personally on different occasions—some positive and one, actually, a very negative occasion, but it was made positive by how the community responded to a very ugly racial incident that took place against a Black family in their home. Many of us in the community joined together in a march in solidarity, protesting, that we were not going to tolerate this in our community in northern California. Isaac was there, being strong but also being that smiling, positive voice. You could see her strength. You could also see the light shining from within her as she advocated for what was right for everybody, really, at the end of the day.

If we had more people like her and if we had more harmony instead of the divisiveness that we see so badly affecting this country today, we would be much better off. Northern California has lost a gem, but her legacy will live on, and we all recognize that. I am honored to be able to note that here today on the U.S. House floor and to properly show that. Her legacy even lives on in the papers she published and that are right over here in the Library of Congress, which note some of her work in the past for the NAACP. Indeed, it is a rich legacy that reaches all the way to Washington, D.C.

I appreciate my colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for allowing me to make this special tribute to Isaac Lowe today.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend from California (Mr. LAMALFA). I did not realize I should have been joining in that tribute with the gentleman. Her being born in Wharton, Texas, and going to college in Texas, we share her as a real gem that the Lord provided to both of us. I thank the gentleman for sharing that with us.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of being allowed to attend oral arguments at the Supreme Court, and I appreciate their staff and their accommodation. Not everybody over there recognizes that there are three independent, coequal branches of government the way the Founders intended, but I am extremely grateful for those who do, and we afford the mutual respect between us. That is a good thing.

So, to the clerk of the Court and to Perry and others, I thank you for your accommodation.

I am a member of the Supreme Court Bar, which allows attorneys, as far as seating, to come sit in front of the bar, on the side of the bar with the litigants, and to get a real ringside seat—actually, inside the ring.

The case today was, actually, a consolidation of a number of cases. Probably most well-known—probably that should be most well-known—was the Little Sisters of the Poor. We had representatives from East Texas Baptist University in my district in Marshall, Texas. It is just a super school. They are a religious school, and they are not ashamed, because they are East Texas Baptist University, to teach what religious convictions inform them are the right things to do. They follow the law. The problem is when the law does not follow the Constitution, and that is what has gotten us into the problem that was faced today and is being faced at the Supreme Court.

It is amazing. I was telling a group here just recently that, in east Texas, we call it ''common sense,'' but when I get to Washington, we usually just have to call it ''sense'' because it is not common at all. I found that to be the case at the Supreme Court during oral arguments. I do have great sympathy for all of the eight remaining Justices in this regard.

□ 1200

Once the Supreme Court issues a ruling that clearly violates the Constitution, for all who truly have eyes and truly have ears to hear not clouded by secular humanism, but informed by the Constitution's words itself, then they see that, when a court rules against the Constitution, violating the Constitution by its very ruling, it creates a terribly difficult situation for itself.

Because once the bold, visible lines that are spelled out in the Constitution are violated and erased, the Court is charged with an ongoing impossible task of trying to find a place to redraw those lines.

Now, it is unfortunate that some of the Justices—in fact, four of them—kept trying to draw a line in a manner that was not before the Court. They showed themselves to be not necessarily very able jurists who loved justice, but, in fact, very experienced politicians.

Because politicians know, if you are wrong on an issue and somebody brings up the issue about which you are wrong, the thing to do is change the subject and make it about something that you are not wrong about.

You point to something that is a very difficult question and say that that is a very difficult question and, as good magicians do, divert the attention away from the wrong that you have already done and that you are about to complicate.

Mr. Speaker, the wrong about which I speak was the violation by Congress coupled with the violation by the Supreme Court itself.

For the first time in our Nation's history, having the United States Federal Government with all its powers, its guns, its ability to take people's homes—well, that is the IRS. Most folks can't take homes.

But to just wreak havoc on the well-being of a family, of a business, the Federal Government says for the first time: You have to purchase a product. It is required.

There is nothing in the Constitution that either allows or encourages the United States Government to order all American citizens to buy a product.

As we went through discussion on ObamaCare back during 2009 until it passed in 2010, at first, the President and his minions were saying that, well, clearly this is not a tax. It was a mandate.

It says: You must buy a product and, if you don't comply with our Federal order to buy this product, this health insurance—and it has to be what we say health insurance is, not some idea you have—we will dictate what the health insurance is, and you have to provide it. If you don't, it is not a tax.

There is a penalty for violating the law, the mandatory obligation that we have imposed on every American. Well, nothing allows that and many things prohibit it.

Over the years, Members of Congress and even the Supreme Court and Presidents have used the Commerce Clause, that we have the right to control interstate commerce, as the basis for which to get involved in matters of commerce that lie within a State.

In this case, Chief Justice Roberts in this part of the opinion very correctly states that, if you allow the Federal Government to say we have jurisdiction to mandate people buy health insurance and not just any health insurance. It has to have the things in it that we dictate, then there is no place you could ever draw a line and say the Commerce Clause does not allow for this and ultimately decided that, under the Commerce Clause, ObamaCare was unconstitutional.

Simply citing the fact that everybody, at some point, seeks health care—and most people have some form of health insurance at some point—that does not give the Federal Government the right to come in and take over and even dictate the purchase of a product.

We had some in this room and at the other end of this building in the Senate who furthered the argument that this is old news, that the Government has been able to do this for many years. It is called car insurance or automobile insurance. Governments have been requiring insurance and penalizing if you didn't buy insurance for years. This is not a new concept.

The trouble is that was not an appropriate comparison at all. For one thing, that is activity within the State. It was not the Federal Government that required an insurance policy. And there was no mandate that everyone within a State had to have that car insurance.

Courts have long held that driving on a highway built by the State or Federal Government or county is a privilege. You do not have a constitutional right to drive a car on a government road. But if you choose to drive a car, a vehicle, on a government road, in that case, then you must have insurance.

The difference is driving on a road is a privilege. In the case of ObamaCare, the Federal Government said just breathing, walking around living or even lying prostrate in your bed, even if you are confined to your bed—it doesn't matter—just being a living person we will say under our Constitution is a privilege that the government giveth and the government taketh away.

Therefore, we are saying that, if you are going to exist, breathe, live, you must have health insurance, and not just any health insurance. It has to have the provisions we say and those will not necessarily include the things you need in your life.

We, as the omniscient, ubiquitous government—of course, it may be more ubiquitous than we know—we have a right to tell you what is good for you and what isn't. Once the government can tell you what you have to have or have not in the way of health care, they have the right to control your life.

So it was interesting, for one thing, that, in this case, the government had conceded that these were sincerely, deeply held religious beliefs of all the plaintiffs. So that was not an issue.

It was not an issue like some people who were trying to dodge the draft, except for religious purposes when sometimes it was and sometimes it was not. It was conceded in this case all of the deeply held religious beliefs were very sincere by the litigants.

I heard something I don't know that I have heard before in a Supreme Court argument when Justice Sotomayor made a statement of fact about the case.

One of the litigants who may not have been politically astute, but, apparently, accurate, said that, factually, Justice Sotomayor, that is just not the case. That is just not true here.

Where four of the Justices showed incredible aptitude for being politicians and not Justices, they diverted attention—as I said, good magicians do this. Good politicians do this.

They diverted attention away from the real problem and diverted away from the actual question before the Court and kept digging and pointing to a question that was not before the Court.

That point was that the four Justices kept wanting to talk about objections to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs.

They kept wanting to talk about the difficulty in drawing lines, that: ''Gee, what do we do if the plaintiffs or the defendants''—the litigants in the particular case—subjects would probably be more accurate under ObamaCare—the subjects of the United States—it used to be U.S. citizens—''are not objecting to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs?''

That has come up in cases before where someone would say: ''I believe my religious belief is so personal. You should not make me object on the basis of religious beliefs because then I would have to reveal what my religious beliefs are and that is none of your business. So we object to objecting.''

So the four most liberal Justices kept wanting to talk about: ''But where do we draw the line in this issue if there is an objection to objecting on the basis of religious grounds?''

The able attorneys for the American subjects to the fast-growing monarchy here in the United States kept trying to bring them back to what was before the Court: ''Justices, none of these clients, none of the litigants, object to objecting on religious grounds. They have no problem with objecting on religious grounds. They have objected on religious grounds. They filed objections both administratively and in court when they filed for injunction. They have had no problem objecting to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs. So that is not really an issue.''

Once again, when Justices are in the wrong, they don't want to talk about the issue before the Court. They want to talk about the issue that is not before the Court. Let's talk about how many angels you might could get on the head of a needle. Let's talk about anything but the elephant in the room.

The real elephant in the room and the reason for which I have sympathy for all eight Justices is that, once they violated the Constitution by saying ObamaCare was constitutional, they created so many scenarios that are going to be nightmares for the Court to try to figure out where we stop the flood as it overwhelms the rights of Americans.

It is just a massive—like that 1950s movie or maybe it was early '60s—''The Blob.'' You just couldn't stop it. It would go out one place and come out another.

And that is the problem when the Supreme Court violates the Constitution in the case of ObamaCare, saying: You can dictate to American citizens. You can make them American subjects to this all-powerful, dictatorial Federal Government. You can tell them what to buy. You can punish them for not buying it.

And, of course, we know that—although Chief Justice Roberts was exactly right and on point when he said: Gee, if you try to use the Commerce Clause, jurisdiction over interstate commerce, to justify the takeover of health care and a mandate to buy something the Federal Government says you have to buy, then there is no limit ever that can be drawn on the Commerce Clause.

□ 1215

So it is not constitutional under the Commerce Clause. It certainly appeared accurate when Chief Justice Roberts went through an explanation of the initial issue that they had to take up on ObamaCare, and that was the anti-injunction statute, which basically requires that, before a litigant in Federal court can have standing to be before the court and if it involves a tax, then the litigant must be someone against whom the tax has already been levied and the tax has already been paid. Only if the tax has been levied against the litigant and the tax has been paid do the courts recognize standing by that litigant to be before the court to make argument over any complaint.

So they had to deal with that issue because not only does a litigant not have standing to even stay in court if they are arguing about a tax and the tax has not been levied and the tax has not been paid, but the Federal court itself has no jurisdiction to even hear the controversy until the tax is levied and the tax is paid.

So Chief Justice Roberts had the difficult problem of investigating and ruling on whether or not the mandate and the penalty that comes if you don't purchase what is required by the Federal Government—is that a penalty or is that a tax?

Because if it is a tax, the law is very clear. We will have to rule that the plaintiffs do not have standing and their case be thrown out. And, similarly, we will rule that the Court does not have jurisdiction. The case, as it is said in court, is not ripe for litigation. So it will have to be thrown out.

If the court found that the penalty imposed by the Federal Government for not being a loyal American subject and buying a product that the monarchy or the growing dictatorship here says you have to buy—if it is a penalty, then you can come to court. We do have jurisdiction, and you do have standing.

So Chief Justice Roberts went through and ably explained how Congress called it a penalty. At that time,

of course, the Democrats were in the majority here in the House as well as the Senate. The Democratic leadership, the Democratic supporters in favor of ObamaCare, had made it clear this is a penalty.

Chief Justice Roberts cited that, that Congress should know better than anyone else whether this is a penalty or it is a tax. Because if it is a penalty, again, the litigant can be here and have standing. We have got jurisdiction. But if it is a tax, we have to throw it out. We can't hear the case, not now.

He said Congress should know better than anyone. They decided it was a penalty. Not only that, but it really does appear to be a penalty because ObamaCare says: You have to buy insurance and you have to buy a product we say is okay. You can't buy what you want. You have to buy what we say you must buy. And if you don't do that, we will impose a financial penalty on you.

I am hearing more and more young people who are really perplexed: Yes. The government is giving me a subsidy to help me pay for my insurance, but my insurance has 5-, 6-, 7-, $8,000 of a threshold that I have to meet before it ever helps me with a dime of insurance help. So am I better off getting the government subsidy, paying all this money that is really making my life miserable, or should I go ahead and pay the new income tax that I have added on to me for not having insurance as is dictated?

I think Chief Justice Roberts came to a proper conclusion. This truly is a penalty. It is not a tax because it is only paid if you violate the mandate that the Federal Government dictated. So, clearly, it is a penalty.

So there at page 1415 of the opinion, Chief Justice Roberts concludes: Okay. Congress says it is a penalty. It obviously is a penalty. If you don't want to pay the penalty, then buy the insurance. You won't have the penalty. It is clearly a penalty. Since it is a penalty, the Anti-Injunction Act does not apply. Therefore, the plaintiffs do have standing, and not only do they have standing, but this court has jurisdiction. Now, because it is a penalty and not a tax, we have jurisdiction. So now we will proceed to consider the primary cause before us, whether or not the Federal Government can mandate for the first time in history that all of the American people buy a product that it dictates.

Then he went through and determined, if you say the Commerce Clause justifies Federal jurisdiction here, then the Commerce Clause has no limits, has no meaning. And we choose to find that the Commerce Clause has meaning. Therefore, this is unconstitutional under the Commerce Clause.

But, then again, about 40 pages after he says it is not a tax, it is a penalty, Chief Justice Roberts plays the mental gymnastics of arriving at saying: You know what. It turns out this really is not a penalty. It is a tax. And since it is a tax, a majority of us will find that it is constitutional. And so the Federal Government can impose a mandate requiring that all American citizens be loyal subjects, subject to the dictatorship here in Washington, buy whatever product we tell them to buy. And all of that is because the Supreme Court rewrote the law and called it a tax.

That is why the Supreme Court is struggling the way it is today. Because when you create an abomination, you violate the Constitution to the extent, you violate your conscience the way it was before it got so clouded with politics. You violate the Constitution and then you create the kind of mess that is before the Supreme Court today.

It is incredible to sit and listen to the Supreme Court struggling over this issue of just how far we can go to violate someone's religious beliefs. I didn't hear any one of the Justices refer to the First Amendment, that the government will establish no religion and not violate—or not prohibit the free exercise thereof.

My friend, KEITH ROTHFUS, a fellow Member of Congress, was sitting beside me. He got sworn in as a member of the Supreme Court bar today. KEITH ROTHFUS was pointing out that, in one of the prior Supreme Court decisions back in the 1960s, they actually had a footnote where they listed a lot of the religions that they found currently in the United States. It was a fairly full list.

But one of the religions in the United States recognized by the Supreme Court in the early 1960s was secular humanism. As KEITH ROTHFUS and I agreed, we have now come to the point where we are violating the First Amendment of the Constitution.

And not only are we violating the restraint against the Federal Government prohibiting the free exercise of religion, as it is doing for East Texas Baptist University, Houston Baptist University, Little Sisters of the Poor, so many organizations that are religious in nature, but they have violated the part that said we will have no establishment of religion.

The Founders were thinking specifically about the Church of England and how the King didn't like the way the Vatican was ruling. And so he just created his own church, the Church of England. He said: Everybody has got to participate in my church now.

They didn't want that to ever happen where the government of the land could dictate the religion that people had to practice. Yet, that is what the Supreme Court has now done because it has now recognized secular humanism—not just recognized, but established secular humanism—as the State-sponsored religion in America.

With the ruling last summer, the Supreme Court, in effect, said: Since the 1960s, we have been limiting people's ability to use the word God, to pray to God, to read God's word, the Bible. We have been prohibiting that for 40 or so years, 50 years maybe, and we have been protecting what Moses said was the Word of God and what Jesus said was the Word of God for far too long.

They basically established secular humanism as the official religion of the United States. By their pronouncement, they were saying to forget what Moses said God said, forget what Jesus said.

When Jesus actually was asked about marriage and divorce, he quoted Moses verbatim: A man shall leave his father and mother, a woman leave her home. The two will become one flesh.

Then Jesus added, not just quoting Moses as to what Moses said God said about marriage: And what God has joined together, let nobody take apart.

The Supreme Court last summer said: The effect of the ruling is not only can you not talk about God publicly or pray or read the Bible, thank God we have speech and debate clause privileges here on this floor where I am actually free to even mention the word God. We pray every day to start our official day here in session. But the Supreme Court ruled, in effect: We are your God. The five of us in the majority of the Supreme Court are now your God. Forget what we said in our prior decisions about marriage. It was not mentioned in the Constitution. Therefore, under the 10th Amendment, it is reserved to the States and the people.

Forget the fact that we have talked before about the States will decide what marriage is. Forget our ruling on DOMA, the Defense of Marriage Act, passed by Congress, where we made very clear that the States only have the right to decide what marriage is.

Forget all that. Now we five majority Justices are your God. And forget the fact that we—at least two of us have violated the Federal law in order to reach this decision. Because the Federal law is very clear. If a judge—a Federal judge, magistrate, Justice might have their impartiality—his or her impartiality questioned, then they should disqualify—they shall disqualify themselves from sitting on the case.

So we had two Justices. Not only was their opinion and their impartiality in question, there was actually no question that they were not impartial because they had both participated in same-sex wedding ceremonies. And Justice Ginsburg, who is a very nice lady, actually said—as Maureen Dowd pointed out in her article, she emphasized as she pronounced them married by virtue of the laws of the—and she said she really hammered the words—by the Constitution of the United States.

□ 1230

So, clearly, we had Justice Kagan and Justice Ginsburg perform same-sex

marriages before they were not impartial. The law required them to disqualify themselves.

I have had some people say: Well, wouldn't it have disqualified any of the other judges if they had ever participated in a marriage between a man and a woman?

The answer is very easily and clearly no, because that was the law.

The question is: Can a government prohibit same-sex marriage?

It was same-sex marriage that was before the court, not can a government prohibit marriage between a man and a woman.

If the question had been: Can a government prohibit marriage between a man and a woman, then that might be a different story. But that was not the issue before the court. Two Justices were disqualified. They had made their opinion clearly known in advance.

There were other judges who had been asked, as I understand it, to do weddings, but they said: No, that might create a question of my impartiality and would require me to disqualify myself.

Well, their participation did certainly disqualify them. They refused to disqualify themselves. So two Justices, as a minimum, were disqualified as they participated in the majority of five.

So when you have an unconstitutional ruling by the United States Supreme Court, when the Chief Justice has to commit to the mental gymnastics, the loop-the-loops that he has to try to do to get around saying the mandate to purchase a policy that carries a penalty, is a penalty, and then over here we know he said it is a penalty over there, but now we are saying it is a tax, not a penalty, they created a nightmare for any legitimate judge with a conscience in trying to decide: Now that we have blown apart any constitutional lines, where do we draw the lines now?

It is rather tragic. Justice Kennedy was questioning one of the religious litigant's attorneys and made the statement, basically, that the court would find it very hard to write an opinion saying that if we give an exemption to a church, we then have to give it to all other religious institutions.

Well, that statement deeply troubled me as well because it means that Justice Kennedy does not understand the constitutional prohibition in the First Amendment. You are not on the Supreme Court or in Congress or in the Presidency to ever establish a religion. And it has been established. It is called secular humanism, which the Supreme Court has recognized as a religion. That is what is being established now.

You are also not to prohibit the free exercise of religion. When the Supreme Court gets to the point, as Justice Kennedy is, that we on this court—at least a majority—will find it very hard to say that if you are not a part of a church and acting as that church, then you have no right to practice any of your religious beliefs that five of us don't like, that is tragic.

I keep coming back to that prophetic statement by Benjamin Franklin when he was asked after the Constitutional Convention by a dear lady: What did you give us?

''A republic, madam, if you can keep it.''

Why would he say ''if you can keep it?''

The reason he said that is—as he knew—the nature of government is to take more and more power and authority over individual rights and individual liberties. And in order to keep a republic, as Ben Franklin called it, you have to teach generation after generation that there are responsibilities that come with citizenship. Because if you don't live up to those responsibilities, you will lose the republic, madam. You can't keep it.

We have done a miserable job of teaching the next generation about how you would keep a republic. Instead of being taught, as I was, in school the dangers of socialism, the dangers of communism, and that it always has to result in a dictatorship or a totalitarian government, that it requires people's rights be taken away, our Founders say that we have to recognize these rights are a gift from our Creator, from God, because if we say they are a gift of the government, then what the government giveth, the government can taketh away.

We have legislators and judges who have not been properly educated on the manner in which you keep a republic, madam.

It really has been heartbreaking when very smart young people ask sincerely: I understand socialism is supposed to be wrong, communism is supposed to be wrong, but it really sounds nice. Can you explain why it would be wrong? Because I don't get it. It sounds nice.

As the New Testament Church started out, as the Pilgrims' Compact started out, you bring into the common storehouse, and then you share and share alike. You share from those according to their ability to those according to their need.

Of course, more than one parent has explained socialism to their children by saying: Look, you got an A. I know how hard you were working every night doing your homework, but your friend over here got a C. I saw her out partying a lot of times when you were here studying. And she is not maybe quite as smart as you are, so she got a C, you got an A.

The socialist notion is that we have to give everybody a B. So we will make this A a B, we will make this C a B, and everybody will feel better for it.

Mr. Speaker, I have shared this before, but it was such a lesson to me as an exchange student to the Soviet Union being out at a collective farm. The farmers were sitting in the shade in midmorning, when anybody back home in east Texas knows that—especially in July, like it was—you start early and you try to finish early before the sun gets too hot. It is midmorning. This is prime time to be working before it gets too hot. And here are all the farmers sitting in the shade in the middle of their village.

Trying to use the best Russian I could—I had 2 years, which meant I could converse ably with a 4-year-old—I asked: When do you work out in the field?

I couldn't tell what they cultivated and didn't. It all looked brown. None of it looked very good. I would have expected in Texas that those fields would have been green, looking good, and the weeds out. You couldn't tell what was weeds and what wasn't.

I said: When do you work out in the field?

They laughed, and I thought I must not have translated that right. Then one of them said in Russian, basically: I make the same number of rubles if I am out there in the field in the sun or if I am here in the shade. So I am here in the shade.

I have carried that with me all these years. That is why socialism can't work. It is why socialism or communism—again, bringing all into the common storehouse, share and sharing alike—can never work on this Earth, in this world. Because the only way you will ever have share and share alike, as they found out in the New Testament Church, the only way you can make it work is if you have a totalitarian government that says: you will do what we say. And then there goes your freedoms.

So the only way to have the maximum amount of freedom is to have a self-governing republic so people can govern themselves by electing people that they have interviewed, they have read all about, done plenty of research on, and then they come forward on hiring day—otherwise known as election day—and they vote to hire the person that they want for their public servant. That is the way it is supposed to work.

People have not obliged themselves of the need that in order to keep a republic, you have to do the research on the candidates that have applied for your job. You have a requirement, a need, for you to actually come out and vote. Look, I get it. There are so many I have heard from that are disenfranchised voters. They say: We hear about all these people.

John Fund has a great book out on the fraud that has been in so many of our modern elections that is not being dealt with, despite what the government says. It is a great book.

People find out there is fraud. Since they didn't have to have a photo ID like you have to have to buy cigarettes or alcohol or get on a plane or anything else, you can manipulate the system, you can vote more than one time.

My friend from south Texas told me about some of the people who were illegally in the country being approached with voter registration forms, saying: Fill these out. If you don't want to use your own address here, just use one central address. You can all use the same address.

Some of them were worried about showing an ID. They will figure out we are illegally in this country and we are not supposed to vote. They were assured: No, no.

President Obama's lawyer—Eric Holder at that time—has gotten a judge to rule that they can't require an ID and, therefore, all you have to do is fill this out. But if you don't fill this out, then Republicans are going to take away your welfare, they are going to take away your health care, and they are going to try to make you leave the country.

So you have got to fill this out. And even though it is illegal, there is nothing wrong with doing it. You will get the voter registration card in the mail to the address you give them, and then you just go vote and that is all you have to show them.

Thankfully, we have voter ID now in Texas. But there are so many people who have been disenfranchised, because they say: There is so much voter fraud going on. Why should I even bother? My vote doesn't count like somebody that votes more than once.

We are in grave danger of losing this republic. We are not going to keep it much longer the way we are going. We haven't educated future generations to how you go about keeping a self-governing republic. Some have been miseducated to think socialism, which has failed every single time it has ever been tried—it will always fail. We haven't educated them about the truth of freedom and what is required to keep it.

Justice Scalia told a group from my hometown that was here that the reason we are the most free Nation in history is not because we had the best Bill of Rights, but because the Founders didn't trust government. They wanted gridlock. They wanted it as difficult as possible to pass laws, because with the passage of every law is the risk that some freedom will be taken away by the Big Government.

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The Founders knew that, and they made it hard to pass laws. That is not a bad thing. It is a good thing.

But when he mentioned that the Soviet Union had a better bill of rights than we had, I remembered, I did a paper back in college when I was at Texas A&M. After I had visited the Soviet Union as an exchange student, I wrote a paper on their system. But I had done a paper on their bill of rights, their Constitution. I was shocked at the extent of the rights that were guaranteed to the Soviet Union citizens.

I was also surprised to find that, in the early sixties, the Premier, Khrushchev, in the Soviet Union, had set up a commission, because those that had truly been educated on the different forms of government and governing know that, actually, true communism is only when there is no government, that it is like reaching for nirvana. You eventually reach the point where everybody is so sharing and so giving—taking from their ability, giving to the need—they are so giving that you don't even need a government anymore.

So Khrushchev set up a commission basically charged with coming up with a plan to reach that ultimate goal where someday there will be no government and we will have true communism in its purest form, no government, everyone giving, sharing, lovingly.

And I read that, after a couple of years of that commission trying to figure out, ''How are we ever going to come up with a plan that eventuates in having no government and everybody always sharing equally? How are we going to ever pull that off?'' they couldn't come up with a way to reach that in this world, in this life, and so Khrushchev disbanded the commission. There was no way to get there.

They were right. If you are going to have communism or socialism, you are going to have to have a totalitarian government, whether it is an individual dictator or a political group like they have or used to have at the Kremlin. You have got to have ruling autocrats, an oligarch, monarch, in order to force everybody to take from those who have worked hard, according to their ability, and giving to those who either can't work or choose not to work. The only way you can maximize freedoms is when people in the country understand what Franklin understood: you have got a republic if you can keep it.

We are not being vigilant to keep our Republic, and that is why so many are desperate now as they vote for a Presidential candidate.

And even Christian friends have said, you know, I understand there is a time and place for a David with a slingshot, complete faith in God, and a clear great ability with a slingshot. I know there is a time for that. But right now, our freedoms have been so badly eroded, we are losing the government. We are having people come in and start voting without understanding how you preserve a republic. We are losing the country. We are losing the melting pot that we once were, welcoming people from all over and coming together and being molded into one thing, not a hyphenated American, but an American. We are losing that.

You see many voters standing in lines now. They didn't used to ever do this, stand in line for hours. You found people do that in Africa when they are finally afforded an opportunity to vote for the first time in their lives. But now, in America, some people are waiting hours to vote because they see that we have not been vigilant in protecting our Republic, and just as Franklin worried, we are about to lose it.

We are already losing it when the government can dictate that individuals buy a product, when the government can say you can only practice your religious beliefs if you are within the confines of a church, but if you are an individual, like the Founders were, who held tightly to their religious beliefs—they talked about it as they passed legislation; they talked about it as they created our Constitution—the Supreme Court is now saying: Secular humanism is what we must have; it is what we demand. And since we are in charge and we are moving toward being socialistic, you have got to have an oligarchy, and we are it.

Obviously, they don't say it in those words, but that is what their actions say, and that is why, when a Justice says: Well, this Court would find it very hard to write an opinion saying that we were moving the line from beyond a church and extending that line out to other religious institutions—like the Little Sisters of the Poor, these wonderful, superb Christian women who have given their lives doing what Jesus said, ministering to others, feeding His sheep, ministering to their physical needs, their healthcare needs—and the Supreme Court says: We have a lot of trouble. See, they are not actually a church. They are a religious institution, and we are going to have a hard time writing an opinion that moves the line to protect religious opinions.

My word, shouldn't have any trouble drawing a line at individuals. Any individual in the United States of America who has a deeply held, sincerely held religious belief, it was meant to be protected, unless it is completely anathema to our Constitution.

Sharia law is anathema; and to the extent that some believe they should replace our Constitution with their sharia law, then that is treason if they are here in this country. But otherwise, their religious belief should be recognized, and God help us if the Court doesn't do it right.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 34, 114th Congress, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Monday, April 11, 2016, at 3:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4714. A letter from the Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's correcting amendments — Direct Farm Ownership Microloan; Correction (RIN: 0560-AI33) received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4715. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Admiral Mark E. Ferguson III, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4716. A letter from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Calendar Year 2015 reports to describe activities under the Secretary of Defense personnel management demonstration project authorities for the Department of Defense Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2358 note; Public Law 110-181, Sec. 1107(d); (122 Stat. 358); and Public Law 113-66, Sec. 1107(g); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4717. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's 2016 annual report to Congress on the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1692m(a); Public Law 90-321, Sec. 815(a) (as amended by Public Law 111-203, Sec. 1089(1)); (124 Stat. 2092); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4718. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Harford County, MD, et al.) [Docket ID: FEMA-2016-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8425] received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4719. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Lancaster County, PA, et al.) [Docket No.: FEMA-2016-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8423] received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4720. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Streamlining Administrative Regulations for Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Multifamily Housing, and Community Planning and Development Programs [Docket No.: FR 5743-F-03] (RIN: 2577-AC92) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4721. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Fiscal year 2015 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Report to Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 300ff-13(e); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XXVI, Sec. 2603 (as amended by Public Law 109-415, Sec. 104(e)); (120 Stat. 2776) and 42 U.S.C. 300ff-29a(d); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XXVI, Sec. 2620 (as amended by Public Law 109-415, Sec. 205(2)); (120 Stat. 2798); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4722. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements Limits for Unfinished and Untreated Wood [Docket No.: CPSC-2011-0081] received March 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4723. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's direct final rule — Amendment to Clarify When Component Part Testing Can be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits [Docket No.: CPSC-2011-0081] received March 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4724. A letter from the Acting Division Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Implementation of Section 224 of the Act [WC Docket No.: 07-245]; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future [GN Docket No.: 09-51] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4725. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report certifying that the export of the listed items to the People's Republic of China is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 note; Public Law 105-261, Sec. 1512 (as amended by Public Law 105-277, Sec. 146); (112 Stat. 2174); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4726. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(d) Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1; (86 Stat. 619); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4727. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Atrocities Prevention Report to Congress, pursuant to Public Law 114-113, Sec. 7033; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4728. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4729. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's FY 2014 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4730. A letter from the Co-Chief Privacy Officers, Federal Election Commission, transmitting the Commission's Fiscal Year 2015 Privacy Act Report to Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000ee-2(a)(6); Public Law 108-447, Sec. 522(a)(6); (118 Stat. 3268); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4731. A letter from the Deputy Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting the Administration's direct final rule — Nixon Administration Presidential Historical Materials [FDMS No.: NARA-16-0004; NARA-2016-019] (RIN: 3095-AB86) received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4732. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''The District's Management Contract with The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness was not Properly Managed in Fiscal Year 2014 to Ensure Performance Consistent with Contract Terms''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4733. A letter from the Secretary, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Board's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4734. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program, pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1344(c)(2); Aug. 7, 1953, ch. 345, Sec. 18(c) (as amended by Public Law 95-372, Sec. 208); (92 Stat. 649); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4735. A letter from the Vice President, Government Affairs and Corporate Communications, Amtrak, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, transmitting an addition to the Grant and Legislative Request for FY17, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 24315(a)(2); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e); (108 Stat. 918); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4736. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31062; Amdt. No.: 3683] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4737. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Air Traffic Service (ATS) Routes; Northeast United States [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3361; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-4] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4738. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; International Falls, MN [Docket

No.: FAA-2015-3084; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-13] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4739. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Enid Vance AFB, OK; Enid Woodring Municipal Airport, Enid, OK; and Enid, OK [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7489; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ASW-20] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4740. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Clinton, AR [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3967; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ASW-12] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4741. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Change of Controlling Agency for Selected Restricted Areas; North Carolina [Docket No.: FAA-2016-0151; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ASO-10] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4742. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Multiple Air Traffic Service (ATS) Routes; Western United States [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1345; Airspace Docket No.: 14-AWP-13] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4743. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for Lynchburg, VA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6231; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-12] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4744. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Minot, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7485; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-25] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4745. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Rapid City, SD [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7492; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-27] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4746. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Minnesota towns: Rochester, MN; and St. Cloud, MN [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7484; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-24] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4747. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4532; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-10] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4748. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Wilmington, OH [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7486; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-26] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4749. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0249; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-174-AD; Amendment 39-18393; AD 2016-03-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4750. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Michigan towns: Alpena, MI; and Muskegon, MI [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7483; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-23] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4751. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3699; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-109-AD; Amendment 39-18402; AD 2016-04-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4752. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2456; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-032-AD; Amendment 39-18401; AD 2016-04-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4753. A letter from the Associate Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's report on identifying the 9-1-1 capabilities of the multi-line telephone system in use by all Federal Agencies in all Federal buildings and properties, pursuant to 212-96, Sec. 6504(a); (126 Stat. 242); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4754. A letter from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Trust's Annual Management Report for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to Public Law 107-90, Sec. 105; (115 Stat. 886); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4755. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on action taken to extend and amend the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Italy Concerning the Imposition of Import Restrictions on Categories of Archaeological Material Representing the Pre-Classical, Classical and Imperial Roman Periods of Italy, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 2602(g)(1); Public Law 97-446, Sec. 303(g)(1); (96 Stat. 2354); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4756. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report on Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Report to Congress for November 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 711(g)(3); Public Law 111-148, Sec. 2951; (124 Stat. 341); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4757. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Annual Report to Congress on the Open Payments Program for April 2016, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1320a-7h(d); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XI, Sec. 1128G (as added by Public Law 111-148, Sec. 6002); (124 Stat. 693); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BRADY of Texas: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 4724. A bill to repeal the program of block grants to States for social services; with an amendment (Rept. 114–462). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 4618. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 121 Spring Street SE in Gainesville, Georgia, as the ''Sidney Oslin Smith, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse'' (Rept. 114–463). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 3937. A bill to designate the building utilized as a United States courthouse located at 150 Reade Circle in Greenville, North Carolina, as the ''Judge Randy D. Doub United States Courthouse''; with amendments (Rept. 114–464). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 223. A bill to authorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–465). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 3030. A bill to

direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to convey certain property from the United States to the City of Baudette, Minnesota; with an amendment (Rept. 114–466). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. House Concurrent Resolution 120. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony (Rept. 114–467). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. House Concurrent Resolution 119. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby (Rept. 114–468). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. House Concurrent Resolution 117. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition (Rept. 114–469). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia: Committee on the Budget. House Concurrent Resolution 125. Resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026 (Rept. 114–470). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1671. A bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects (Rept. 114–471). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 3023. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify probationary periods with respect to positions within the competitive service and the Senior Executive Service, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–472). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3340. A bill to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–473). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3791. A bill to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–474). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Texas: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 4723. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the recovery of improper overpayments resulting from certain Federally subsidized health insurance; with an amendment (Rept. 114–475). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Texas: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 4722. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require inclusion of the taxpayer's social security number to claim the refundable portion of the child tax credit; with an amendment (Rept. 114–476). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2947. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy; with an amendment (Rept. 114–477). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROTHFUS (for himself and Mr. KEATING):

H.R. 4841. A bill to establish programs for health care provider training in Federal health care and medical facilities, to establish Federal co-prescribing guidelines, to establish a grant program with respect to naloxone, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Veterans' Affairs, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (for herself, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4842. A bill to amend the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016, to enable the payment of certain officers and employees of the United States whose employment is authorized under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. KLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H.R. 4843. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to require certain monitoring and oversight, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. POLIS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 4844. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to revise the regulations relating to certain drivers of commercial motor vehicles involved in oilfield operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. BARLETTA):

H.R. 4845. A bill to amend the student loan forgiveness program in the Higher Education Act of 1965 to include a greater number of disabled veterans and to facilitate the automatic transfer to the Secretary of Education of information regarding veterans eligible for student loan forgiveness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK (for herself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4846. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the child tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD (for himself and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4847. A bill to repeal the Cuban Adjustment Act, Public Law 89-732, to provide that certain Cuban entrants are ineligible to receive refugee assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia (for himself and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4848. A bill to delay and suspend implementation of a comprehensive care for joint replacement (CJR) payment model for episode-based payment for lower extremity joint replacement (LEJR) under the Medicare program in a budget neutral manner; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4849. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to reform the work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota (for himself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BARR, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. WILLIAMS):

H.R. 4850. A bill to amend the Securities Act of 1933 to exempt certain micro-offerings from the registration requirements of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. WALORSKI (for herself and Mr. LARSEN of Washington):

H.R. 4851. A bill to enhance electronic warfare capabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 4852. A bill to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise Regulation D relating to exemptions from registration requirements for certain sales of securities; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4853. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise certain accreditation requirements applied under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 4854. A bill to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 4855. A bill to amend provisions in the securities laws relating to regulation crowdfunding to raise the dollar amount limit and to clarify certain requirements and exclusions for funding portals established by such Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BABIN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. JONES, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. OLSON, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. HUELSKAMP):

H.R. 4856. A bill to make aliens associated with a criminal gang inadmissible, deportable, and ineligible for various forms of relief; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LEE, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. FATTAH):

H.R. 4857. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a program to make grants to promote innovations at historically Black colleges and universities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4858. A bill to provide a declaration of nonnavigability for the central Delaware River, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4859. A bill to extend the declaration of nonnavigability in perpetuity for Rivercenter, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. KEATING, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ZELDIN, and Mr. LOWENTHAL):

H.R. 4860. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish the United States - Israel Cybersecurity Center of Excellence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Homeland Security, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4861. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to health centers to expand access to evidence-based substance abuse treatment services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DESAULNIER (for himself and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 4862. A bill to determine the feasibility of additional agreements for long-term use of existing or expanded non-Federal storage and conveyance facilities to augment Federal water supply, ecosystem, and operational flexibility benefits in certain areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4863. A bill to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds of the United States Army for acts of valor during World War II; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Mrs. WALORSKI, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. DINGELL, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mrs. NOEM):

H.R. 4864. A bill to revise the crime of sexual assault under Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice to include committing a sexual act upon another person by using position, rank, or authority to obtain compliance by the other person; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4865. A bill to ensure the development and responsible stewardship of nanotechnology; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOLLY (for himself and Mr. BILIRAKIS):

H.R. 4866. A bill to delay increases in flood insurance premium rates for certain properties for 12 months, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California):

H.R. 4867. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide further tax incentives for dependent care assistance; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 4868. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a business credit for investments in rural microbusinesses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois (for himself, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4869. A bill to require a comprehensive regional strategy to destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and its affiliates; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 4870. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the establishment of Promise Zones; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. BASS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. HAHN):

H.R. 4871. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of portions of the Los Angeles coastal area in the State of California to evaluate alternatives for protecting the resources of the coastal area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 4872. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the American opportunity tax credit to support college savings; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri):

H.R. 4873. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require each institution of higher education to describe how it spends tuition and fees; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. DOLD, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. GUINTA, and Mr. MULVANEY):

H.R. 4874. A bill to require that States receiving grants under the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program set aside sufficient amounts to facilitate electronic information sharing among States in compliance with the Prescription Monitoring Information Exchange National Architecture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4875. A bill to establish the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself and Mr. NEAL):

H.R. 4876. A bill to authorize the establishment of programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. FLORES, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. BARTON, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. VELA, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. VEASEY):

H.R. 4877. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3130 Grants Lake Boulevard in Sugar Land, Texas, as the ''LCpl Garrett W. Gamble, USMC Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PAULSEN (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4878. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare Better Care Program to provide integrated care for Medicare beneficiaries with chronic conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in

addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 4879. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to condition a State's receipt of funds for a drinking water treatment revolving loan fund on such State carrying out a program to test for lead in drinking water for schools; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE (for himself, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. OLSON, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. BARR, and Mr. MEADOWS):

H.R. 4880. A bill to prohibit any regulation, rule, guidance, recommendation, or policy issued after May 15, 2015, that limits the sale or donation of excess property of the Federal Government to State and local agencies for law enforcement activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4881. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance benefits be used to purchase supplemental foods that are eligible for purchase under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (commonly known as the WIC program) and certain additional foods; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. RUIZ (for himself and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4882. A bill to establish the César Chávez National Historical Park in the States of California and Arizona, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4883. A bill to prohibit the Department of State from obligating or expending any funds to hire a contractor to deliver interactive, professional training seminars for senior-level officials on effective congressional testimony and briefing skills, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 4884. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to place an annual cap on support provided through the Lifeline program of the Federal Communications Commission and to provide for certain other requirements relating to such program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri (for himself, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. REED, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, and Mr. MARCHANT):

H.R. 4885. A bill to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 4886. A bill to require purchasers of pre-paid mobile devices or SIM cards to provide identification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. VISCLOSKY:

H.R. 4887. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 23323 Shelby Road in Shelby, Indiana, as the ''Richard Allen Cable Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:

H.R. 4888. A bill to provide a path to end homelessness in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. YODER (for himself, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. POMPEO):

H.R. 4889. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide call location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical injury or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WALKER:

H. Con. Res. 126. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Cuba should issue a state of apology and agree to cease human rights violations in order for any embargo or economic restraints to be lifted; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H. Res. 660. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to support the territorial integrity of Georgia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. NADLER, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PIERLUISI, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. BASS, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. PETERS):

H. Res. 661. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Senate should fulfill its constitutional obligation to provide full and fair consideration of the President's nominee for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GALLEGO, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. HAHN, Mr. VELA, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. LEE, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SIRES, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. PETERS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MENG, Mr. BECERRA, and Mr. KILDEE):

H. Res. 662. A resolution recognizing March 31 as ''César Chávez Day'' in honor of the accomplishments and legacy of César Estrada Chávez; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. TAKANO):

H. Res. 663. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Middle Level Education Month''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H. Res. 664. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the largest national interdisciplinary research association devoted to the scientific study of education and learning, celebrating its achievements, and expressing support for the designation of April 8, 2016, as ''National Education Research Day''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mr. MASSIE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 665. A resolution commending the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, John Sopko, and his office for their efforts in providing accountability for taxpayer dollars spent in Afghanistan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself and Mr. COOK):

H. Res. 666. A resolution expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself and Mr. NEAL):

H. Res. 667. A resolution expressing support for designation of September as ''National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself and Mr. LEWIS):

H. Res. 668. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that philanthropy is an integral partner to government with a unique and proven ability to foster innovation, strengthen civil society, and build thriving communities; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

184. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 92, expressing support for the western states of the United States and the federal transfer of public lands to these western states, and urging the Congress to engage in good faith communication and cooperation concerning the coordination of the transfer of title to those western states; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

185. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, relative to a Senate Resolution requesting the Congress of the United States to adopt H.J. Res. 58; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. ROTHFUS:

H.R. 4841.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following.

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 4842.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1. Section 8 (18) To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 4843.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4844.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4845.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 4846.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 4847.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 4

By Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia:

H.R. 4848.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Consistent with the understanding and interpretation of the Commerce Clause, Congress has the authority to enact this legislation in accordance with Clause 3 of Section 8, Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4849.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:

H.R. 4850.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress is empowered to regulate interstate commerce under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 4851.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

To provide for the common defense, to raise and support Armies, to provide and maintain a Navy, and to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 4852.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 (''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States''), 3 (''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes''), and 18 (''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof'').

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4853.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(a) Article I, Section 1, to exercise the legislative powers vested in Congress as granted in the Constitution; and

(a) Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the authority ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof''.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 4854.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 4855.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4856.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4 (the Naturalization Clause), which gives Congress sovereign control over immigration and the vesting of citizenship in aliens. In March 1790, Congress passed the first uniform rule for naturalization under the new Constitution. In Chirac v Lessee of Chirac (1817), the Supreme Court affirmed this power rests exclusively with Congress.

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 4857.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4858.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the authority to regulate navigable waters under the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3).

USSCT found this in:

Gilman v. Philadelphia, 70 U.S. 3 Wall. 713 713 (1865)

''The power to regulate commerce comprehends the control for that purpose, and to the extent necessary, of all the navigable waters of the United States which are accessible from a state other than those on which they lie, and includes necessarily the power to keep them open and free from any obstruction to their navigation, interposed by the states or otherwise. And it is for Congress to determine when its full power shall be brought into activity, and as to the regulations and sanctions which shall be provided.''

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4859.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the authority to regulate navigable waters under the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3).

USSCT found this in:

Gilman v. Philadelphia, 70 U.S. 3 Wall. 713 713 (1865)

''The power to regulate commerce comprehends the control for that purpose, and to the extent necessary, of all the navigable waters of the United States which are accessible from a state other than those on which they lie, and includes necessarily the power to keep them open and free from any obstruction to their navigation, interposed by the states or otherwise. And it is for Congress to determine when its full power shall be brought into activity, and as to the regulations and sanctions which shall be provided.''

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4860.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4861.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 2 and 4 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 4862.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 4863.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 5.

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:

H.R. 4864.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, Clauses 12, 14 and 18, which

give Congress the power to ''To raise and support Armies,'' ''To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces,'' and ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4865.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4866.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4867.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution. The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 4868.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1

''All Bills for raising Revenue shall orginate in the House of Representatives''

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4869.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 4870.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.R. 4871.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 4872.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4873.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4874.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4875.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article 1, Section 5, Clause 2 and Article 1 Section 8 Clause 18.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4876.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 4877.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4878.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 4879.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 3—Congress has the ability to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE:

H.R. 4880.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4881.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 4882.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4883.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 4884.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 4885.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause [1] and Article I, Section 9, Clause [7]

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 4886.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: of the United States Constitution, seen below, this bill falls within the Constitutional Authority of the United States Congress.

Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. VISCLOSKY:

H.R. 4887.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 9 Clause 7 of the Constitution:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:

H.R. 4888.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. YODER:

H.R. 4889.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3, The Congress shal have power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common defence and the general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States; To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 174: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 329: Mr. RUSSELL.
H.R. 563: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 590: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 592: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H.R. 605: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 612: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 664: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 793: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 825: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 846: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 888: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 897: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 921: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 923: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 952: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 953: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. ZINKE, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 969: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 973: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 980: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 986: Mr. LANCE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 1019: Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 1111: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1206: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1271: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 1343: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 1347: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 1399: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 1482: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 1559: Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 1567: Mr. ZELDIN and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 1602: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 1608: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1643: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1655: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 1708: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1733: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 1769: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1774: Mr. HURT of Virginia.
H.R. 1779: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 1882: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 1934: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2254: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 2411: Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 2450: Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2649: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 2737: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 2799: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2817: Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 2896: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. FLORES, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. SANFORD.
H.R. 2902: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2903: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 2948: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 3029: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 3084: Mr. ROKITA and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3105: Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 3226: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 3235: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3355: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 3514: Mr. CLAY, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 3559: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 3666: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3684: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3713: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3808: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 3818: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 3917: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4006: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4073: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 4177: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 4229: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R..4235: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4301: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H.R. 4323: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4335: Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 4435: Ms. LEE.
H.R. 4442: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4475: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4480: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4481: Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 4485: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 4501: Mr. POMPEO and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 4532: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. BUCK.
H.R. 4534: Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. YODER, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. COOK, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. PETERSON, MR. VELA, and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 4538: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 4570: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4577: Mr. JONES and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4592: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. COSTA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 4611: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 4625: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4626: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4633: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 4651: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 4654: Mr. CARNEY and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 4662: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 4683: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 4694: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LEE, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4712: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 4715: Mrs. WALORSKI,
H.R. 4730: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. ISSA, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. PITTS.
H.R. 4764: Mr. GALLEGO and Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 4768: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. ROSS, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. HARDY, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. BRADY of Texas.
H.R. 4770: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 4785: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 4803: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4807: Mr. COOPER.
H.R. 4820: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4822: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H. Res. 393: Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H. Res. 451: Mr. MARCHANT.
H. Res. 540: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H. Res. 567: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H. Res. 591: Mr. HARRIS and Mrs. BUSTOS.
H. Res. 634: Mr. POMPEO, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H. Res. 647: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. MCSALLY, and Mr. LEVIN.
H. Res. 651: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H. Res. 658: Mr. CICILLINE and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H. Res. 659: Mr. RANGEL.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

54. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Council of the City of New York, New York, relative to Resolution No. 939–A, calling upon Congress to pass and the President to sign S. 1766 and H.R. 3068, the Restore Honor to Service Members Act; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DELMAS L. TAYLOR, LIVINGSTON PARISH REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

HON. GARRET GRAVES

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Delmas L. Taylor, who has served as Registrar of Voters for Livingston Parish in my home state of Louisiana since October 1, 1997. Delmas is retiring today from a dedicated career of public service to his parish and to all of Louisiana.

In 1976, Delmas took his first job with the Livingston Parish government where he worked for more than 20 years before being elected Registrar of Voters. For 20 more years after that, he faithfully executed his duties as Registrar of Voters, ensuring that citizens across the parish could access the information necessary to participate in our great democratic process.

Today on behalf of Livingston Parish and the state of Louisiana, I express gratitude to Delmas for his years of service and for a job well done.

HONORING CAROL BAUER ON 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor a distinguished public servant, Carol Bauer, for 50 years of service to the Village of Lombard. Carol has dedicated her life to Lombard and her service is a truly impressive feat. She serves as a role model for us all and as proof that one dedicated person can change the lives of many.

In 1966, Carol started full time for the village of Lombard as a fire and police dispatcher. Since that time she has had the role of Executive Secretary and coordinator for the Lombard Blood Drive, and has been an asset to numerous presidents, managers, and board members, who have been a part of Lombard Village Hall.

While working full time for her community, Carol took over the Village's blood drive in 1993. At the time, the village hosted two blood drives per year and usually collected 25 to 30 pints of blood. Carol believed they could do better and wanted to save people's lives so she dedicated herself to the cause. Now the Village hosts five blood drives per year and collects approximately 200 pints per drive. In 2013, Carol was named the most dedicated blood coordinator in Illinois by Heartland Blood Centers.

Since her days as a dispatcher, Carol has never stopped working to improve her community and has no plans of stopping on account of her 50th anniversary. When asked if she was retiring, she said, "Oh, no. I am not. It's such a big part of my life. If I can make some little dent in the community, some little mark that something is better, then I want to continue doing that."

Through hard work and no small amount of perseverance, Carol Bauer has helped countless people and tremendously improved her community. Distinguished Members, please join me in congratulating Carol on 50 years of service and many more to come.

IN HONOR OF DWIGHT WITCHER

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of an Arkansas legend, Mr. Dwight Witcher.

Dwight has been named the 2016 Faulkner County Veteran of the Year.

Dwight was a marine in Vietnam and continued serving in the Mediterranean and out of Subic Bay in the Philippines.

Dwight's dedication to this country did not end after he left the military. He has been a strong and steady voice for veterans in Arkansas for decades.

He served two years as the Marine Corps League Department of Arkansas Commandant and serves as president of the Arkansas Veterans Coalition. He also currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Arkansas Military Hall of Fame.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Dwight and his family for this very deserving award.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMMEMORATION CEREMONY FOR VIETNAM VETERANS AT THE JACKSONVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the veterans who served our country during the Vietnam War. On March 29, 2016, a Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War will be held at the Jacksonville National Cemetery as part of a 13-year program to honor and give thanks to the men and women who defended freedom in Vietnam.

The Vietnam War was one of the longest conflicts American forces have known and one of the most deadly. Before the war ended in 1975, over 58,000 Americans would die and another 304,000 would be wounded. We do not have to relate those statistics to our Vietnam Veterans. They know them by heart.

It has been said that no event in American history is more misunderstood than the Vietnam War. It was misreported then, and it is misremembered now. History has told us that unlike in other wars, our troops were not driving across a country to hold land and capture territory. Many of the missions were designed to find and harass a jungle-hidden enemy, inflict casualties, and fall back to a well-protected base. Our troops fought in canopied jungles, rugged mountains, on rivers, and through swampy lowlands. Many spent days—weeks—in wet rice paddies far from any base.

They fought for the noble cause of protecting the ideals we cherish as Americans. During our Commemoration, we will gather to thank them for their sacrifices and for the incredible dangers and hardships they endured for our country and for the ideals of freedom. This ceremony is a small gesture of grateful appreciation for the service these veterans gave our country.

Each year I hold a ceremony to recognize veterans. I have been honored to learn the stories of more than 500 Vietnam Veterans over the years. In citations that accompanied the many medals they received, these veterans were commended as members of our Nation's and the free world's most versatile and potent striking forces. It was in Vietnam that helicopter-based, air-mobile operations first demonstrated their combat potential. Some were shot down; some wounded; and many served multiple tours. Collectively, veterans in my District received hundreds of medals including Bronze and Silver Stars and, of course, Purple Hearts. Several were POWs for long, agonizing years.

Their service included jumping from aircraft despite enemy sniper fire to go to the rescue of downed soldiers trapped in battle. They worked tirelessly to direct tactical air strikes and artillery fire so their comrades could be airlifted to safety. They flew over the Red River into North Vietnam, and patrolled the brown waters of the Mekong River. They drove trucks through hostile territory to supply fellow soldiers and marines and ferried the injured to safety. Nurses and doctors administered aid and pastors heard too many final words. They provided maintenance to keep planes ready. Some walked through jungles and rice paddies and claimed they were just grunts. But, for those in the field there was often no hot chow, no showers, and no clean socks. For them, the fight was often against the weather, the red ants, the scorpions, and the leeches. The nights were long and punctuated with the distinct sounds of AK rounds, grenades, and M–16s. They sought out and

destroyed the enemy and defended key airfields and routes of communication while extending protection to millions of South Vietnamese. They did their duty and tried hard to leave no one behind.

The memory of lost comrades never subsides. Their names are beautifully remembered on The Wall in Washington, D.C. Each name engraved in the black granite has a story that speaks volumes about bravery, ingenuity, and drama. When people say, freedom isn't free—the names on The Wall seem to answer, ''It was paid for by me.''

The Commemoration ceremony in Jacksonville is a tribute to the service of all who served during that turbulent time. The unrelenting combat spirit and initiative of Vietnam Veterans bears testimony to individual acts of personal heroism and daring. Their loyalty, diligence, and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military services and reflect great credit upon them and our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in thanking our Vietnam Veterans for their valiant fighting spirit, perseverance, resolute courage, and selfless devotion to duty to each other and to our country.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF SCHAUMBURG, ILLINOIS

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I wish to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the incorporation of Schaumburg, Illinois.

From its incorporation, the city of Schaumburg, a town in my district, has been a model for other cities and towns to follow. Growing from its two square miles and population of 130 residents in 1956, Schaumburg is now home to almost 75,000 residents and a vibrant business community consisting of thousands of businesses, 25 hotels, 200 restaurants, and its own minor league baseball team, the Schaumburg Boomers. Since 1987, under the leadership of the President of Schaumburg, Al Larson, the city of Schaumburg has become the second largest economic development center in Illinois.

Through its continued dedication the city improves the quality of life by maintaining a balance between its people, nature, business and industry and provides the highest quality municipal service through planning, fiscal responsibility and accessible, responsive, and proactive leadership. This village continues to live out its mission of ''Progress Through Thoughtful Planning.''

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, please join me in recognizing the 60th anniversary of the incorporation of Schaumburg, Illinois, and wishing them many successful years in the future.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNITED SUPERMARKETS

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of United Supermarkets.

United Supermarkets has been a shining example of a community business since 1916, and in Lubbock, since 1956. With unrivaled customer service, United Supermarkets has always done business the right way. Through hard work and entrepreneurship, United Supermarkets has grown from one store, to a regional powerhouse with 66 stores now in existence. That's something of which to be very proud.

I am especially proud of United's volunteer work and financial donations. From charity golf tournaments, to employees logging tens of thousands of community service hours, and the Texas Tech Basketball Arena that bears the company's name—United is more than just a supermarket. It's an institution in our community.

I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our congratulations on 100 years of success and service. May God Bless the United Supermarkets family of stores and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF ALLAN E. NADER

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Allan E. Nader, who died peacefully at his home in Northbrook, Illinois, on February 16, 2016, at the age of 78.

Allan was the younger of two sons of Olga and Joshua Nader. He attended Lake View High School and was a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology. He received a Master's Degree in Science from Western Michigan University, and a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from Purdue.

After receiving his Doctorate, Allan began his career as a research scientist at DuPont, a post he held for 28 years. He then worked with his brother, Albert, at Questar and taught chemistry at Triton College and Northwestern University. He was part of INVO-Innovations and New Ventures at Northwestern, where he received the Office of Research Star Award in 2014 and the Outstanding Employee of the Year Award in 2015.

Allan Nader was a man of deep and abiding faith and was deeply devoted to his church and his family. He was an unwavering believer in education and mentored many young people. He was a dear friend to many, and I will always be grateful to count myself among them.

Allan Nader leaves his wife, Helen, the great love of his life for over 50 years, his daughter Cara, who was the joy of his life, and Cara's husband George, who became a true son to him.

The prophet Micah wrote:

''What is good has been explained to you; this is what Yahweh asks of you:
Only this, to act justly,
to love tenderly
and to walk humbly with your God.''

This is how Allan Nader lived his life.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of a great and good man, Allan E. Nader, and in extending our condolences to his wife, his entire family and his many friends. Our country is stronger and better because of his integrity, patriotism, brilliance, mentoring and faith. His was a life well lived and stands as a source of inspiration to countless individuals who were blessed to have known him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the Legislative Day of March 21, 2016, a series of votes was held. Had I been present for these roll call votes, I would have cast the following votes:

Roll Call 130—I vote 'YES'

On the Legislative Day of March 22, 2016, a series of votes was held. Had I been present for these roll call votes, I would have cast the following votes:

Roll Call 131—I vote 'NO'
Roll Call 132—I vote 'NO'
Roll Call 133—I vote 'YES'
Roll Call 134—I vote 'YES'
Roll Call 135—I vote 'YES'

HONORING CHIEF MARK HOGAN FOR HIS EXCEPTIONAL POLICE CAREER

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate the Deputy Chief Mark Hogan of the Rolling Meadows Police Department on his retirement and wish to honor his exceptional career.

Mark began his career of service and commitment to the City of Rolling Meadows in 1987. Throughout his career, Deputy Chief Hogan has exhibited the characteristics this line of duty necessitates: enormous sacrifice and courage. Chief of Police David Scanlon said about Deputy Chief Hogan, ''Mark is an incredibly loyal and trusted partner. He is always there for me and the department. He's a wonderful person and someone that will be missed greatly by the city.''

Deputy Chief Hogan's leadership provided stability to the Rolling Meadows Police Department as the men and women under his command risked their lives to protect Rolling

Meadows and the surrounding communities. His leadership is and will continue to be reflected in their bravery and courage.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in celebrating this special occasion and the long years of service and commitment that it represents.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE NEW UNITED STATES CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION AND UNITED STATES COAST GUARD BUILDING IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the new United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and United States Coast Guard (USCG) building that is being dedicated on March 30, 2016 in Florida's Fourth Congressional District. Thanks to several years of dedication and focus on the common goal of maritime safety and border protection, both offices can now operate in one building. This achievement means a safer and more secure First Coast, through an efficient and effective USCG/CBP operation.

The road to this achievement has been a long one. USCG and CBP personnel are tasked with keeping our waterways safe and our borders secure. However, since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003, these agencies were never provided adequate office space and were forced to consolidate.

Later in 2007, CBP/USCG Senior Guidance recommended the construction of a new joint CBP/USCG facility in Jacksonville. The idea of a one-stop shop for maritime security would streamline and improve joint field operations while also reducing facility costs.

Acquiring this building was no easy task because local CBP and USCG had to clear the hurdle of a heavy bureaucratic process. As Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, I kept a close eye on the process on Capitol Hill. Thanks to the continued leadership of the local CBP/USCG offices, the goal of this facility was never abandoned.

Now, with personnel, assets, and more importantly, strategic capabilities all headquartered in one building, the facility will serve as the cornerstone of maritime security for years to come. The center is immensely important to a community like Jacksonville, and I am honored to have played a role in acquiring it.

CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF PARKER JAY MILLER

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joel Miller and his wife, Megan Bel Miller, on the birth of their son, Parker Jay Miller.

Parker was born on Friday, March 11, 2016, at 7:04 p.m. Joel and Megan welcomed Parker, their pride and joy, into this world weighing in at 6 pounds, 11 ounces and 20 inches in height.

With Joel, my Legislative Counsel as his father, and Megan, also a former Capitol Hill staffer, as his mother, I trust Parker will have a bright and successful future ahead of him.

Joel has been an integral part of the legislative operation in my office with his understanding of complex policies yet humble and sincere character. I am thrilled to witness him in his new and most important role yet, a father. I have no doubt that Joel and Megan will be wonderful and inspiring parents, who are devoted to their son's well-being.

Congratulations and best wishes to the Miller and Bel families.

HONORING AZIZ MEMON

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Staten Island resident Aziz Memon's endless commitment to rid the world of polio.

Born in modern-day Mumbai, India to Pakistani parents, Aziz has always been a very self-motivated and socially-aware individual. This former Staten Islander is the very definition of altruism. From his first job teaching senior citizens at the age of thirteen, he has risen to become the Chairman of the Kings Group, a conglomerate of six companies in industries ranging from textiles to property development. In 1995, Aziz joined Rotary International, a global network of volunteer business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian services and works towards a better and more peaceful world. He served as President of the Rotary Club of Karachi in Pakistan from 2003 to 2004, as well as Governor of Rotary International District 3270, Pakistan and Afghanistan from 2007 to 2008.

Aziz has dedicated much of his time to eradicating polio in Pakistan, a country where the virus has been declared a national emergency and a global public health emergency by the Pakistani government and the World Health Organization, respectively. In the face of threats from the Taliban, which has banned polio vaccination and murdered those who have dared to defy them, Aziz has courageously continued his work to improve the lives of those less fortunate. He is currently the national chairman of Rotary International's Pakistan Polio Plus Committee. He has facilitated the opening of several health centers and has provided financial support to families of fieldworkers killed by the Taliban. He has received several awards in recognition of selfless dedication, including the Pride of Performance from the President of Pakistan and the Regional Service Award from Rotary International.

Mr. Speaker, Aziz Memon's dedication to serving humanity and improving the global community is the essence of a model humanitarian. I thank him for all of his great work and I am proud to honor this great man who has consistently put others before himself.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR RICHARD J. DONOVAN

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the esteemed public service career of Mayor Richard J. Donovan. Mayor Donovan has faithfully served his community for forty-four years and is a pillar in the Village of Minoa community.

Mayor Donovan attended Potsdam High School and graduated from Central City Business Institute, where he met his wife, Phyllis. Mayor Donovan and Phyllis moved to Minoa in 1971 and raised two children together.

Mayor Donovan began his public service career in 1972 as a volunteer with the Minoa Fire Department and as an EMT. In 1990 Mayor Donovan won his first term as Trustee on the Minoa Village Board, continuing to serve as Trustee for 14 years. Mayor Donovan served for 8 years as Deputy Mayor of Minoa before being elected Mayor in 2004.

Mayor Donovan has dedicated his career to public service serving on many local committees and organization boards. Mayor Donovan is the immediate past president of the New York Conference of Mayors and also serves as a member of its Task Force Mandate Relief Committee. Mayor Donovan also served as the past president of the Onondaga County Mayors Association. Mayor Donovan serves on multiple local committees and previously served on many local, county, and state-wide committees, including 20 years of service with ESM Youth Sports and 13 years on the Town of Manlius Zoning Board of Appeals. Mayor Donovan was instrumental in the construction of the St. Mary's Baseball Field where he initiated and chaired the construction of the field.

Without question, Mayor Donovan has been an influential member of the Village of Minoa and Town of Manlius community and I know the community is deeply grateful for his lifetime of service. I congratulate Mayor Donovan on his long and distinguished career, and wish him a happy retirement with his wife, children, and grandchildren.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF S/SGT GERALD V. ALDRICH II

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the accident which tragically claimed the lives of former Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and thirty-four others two decades ago. Among the casualties that night was S/SGT Gerald V. Aldrich II of the United States Air Force. S/SGT Aldrich perished

while in service to his country, and though we may never fully comprehend the grief felt by his mother, Hazel Aldrich Wattles, his wife, Petra, his two sons, Timothy and Joshua, and his sister, Sherry Roley, they may rest assured that they have my heartfelt condolences on their loss and the appreciation of a grateful nation.

S/SGT Aldrich, who grew up in Louisville, Illinois, graduated from North Clay High School with high honors, and turned down more lucrative job offers for a career in the Air Force, died on Good Friday, April 3, 1996. So it only seems appropriate to look to the Bible for strength. Psalm 46:1 tells us that ''God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.''

Let S/SGT Aldrich's loved ones know they are in my thoughts, and I pray that his sacrifice shall never be forgotten.

CONGRATULATING BLOOMINGDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT CHIEF DAN SCANLAN ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday March 23, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the long and distinguished service of Rolling Meadows Police Department Chief Dan Scanlan and congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement. On May 16th of this year, Chief Scanlan will conclude his loyal service to the community of Rolling Meadows and the surrounding area.

Chief Scanlan began his career with Rolling Meadows, as a patrolman, 34 years ago in 1982. He spent 10 years as a tactical officer and gang specialist before he eventually moved up the ranks and became chief of the Rolling Meadows police department in 2009.

Under Chief Scanlan's leadership, the Rolling Meadows Police Department implemented a number of programs to foster community outreach, crime prevention, and operational efficiencies. These programs include the Safe Schools Initiative—a partnership between law enforcement and local schools to identify and implement strategies to improve student safety and the community bike ride, which is an event where police officers and residents join together for a late summer ride around Rolling Meadows.

Throughout his career, his extraordinary leadership has earned him great respect among colleagues and members of the community. City Manager Barry Krumstok described Chief Scanlon by saying, ''Dave Scanlan has been a faithful, loyal, tireless professional who has always made sure the department maintains the highest levels of police services. His collaborative leadership style encourages creativity and innovation. His willingness to listen to residents' concerns reflects his unyielding commitment to community service.'' A true servant of Rolling Meadows, his ability to foster engagement and his dedication to the city will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in celebrating this special occasion and the long years of service and commitment that it represents.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATION

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of the Korea International Trade Association (KITA) Washington Center. Located at 1660 L Street, NW, in the heart of the commercial center of the city, the building has played an important role in KITA's effort to promote trade and bilateral investment by providing facilities and services on a reciprocal basis. The KITA Washington Center is one of nine overseas branches in major global cities that are augmented by twelve domestic offices to comprise and consolidate KITA's position as the preeminent business organization in Korea.

In Silicon Valley, the heart of my district, we've been at the cutting edge of innovation in nanotechnology, semiconductors, clean energy, telecommunications, cloud computing, digital media, and many other exciting frontiers. As Korea looks for more investment opportunities, and as we capitalize on synergies among institutions in the Bay Area and Korea, our economic relationship will get stronger and stronger.

Korea has invested significantly in Silicon Valley to leverage our cutting edge innovation. From major global companies like Samsung Electronics to the KOTRA Silicon Valley IT Center in Santa Clara that boasts over 40 Korean firms seeking to network and seek potential funders, the economic synergy between Korea and my district has never been greater. That is why I have committed to continuing to foster this important bilateral economic and investment relationship.

In December 2014, I had the privilege of visiting Korea to promote Silicon Valley ties to the country. I had the honor of a courtesy visit with President Park Geun-Hye and many Korean Government leaders to discuss a broad range of issues. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to participate in a business roundtable hosted by then Chairman of KITA and former Korean Ambassador to the United States, Duk-Soo Han. It was an important visit that helped to further the economic and trade ties between Korea and my district.

The Korea International Trade Association was established in 1946 with the objective of advancing the Korean economy through trade and investment, and is currently the largest business organization in Korea with over 71,000 member companies. On July 31 of this year, KITA will auspiciously mark its 70th anniversary. Taking the opportunity, I wish to extend my congratulations to KITA's Chairman, In-Ho Kim.

Since Korea's trade volume reached 1 billion dollars in 1967, the country has achieved remarkable economic growth over the past few decades, becoming the ninth country in the world in 2011 to attain a trillion-dollar trade volume. This has signified a new opportunity for Korea to engage in exports, imports and foreign investment.

For nearly seven decades, KITA has organized various functions and events to enhance mutual understanding on trade issues, seeking to resolve private-sector disputes through dialogue. It has also worked together with its overseas counterparts and international economic organizations to provide member firms with opportunities to interact fully with the international community.

Moreover, KITA places special emphasis on developing and maintaining cooperative relationships with overseas trade promotion. These cooperation activities include trade information exchange, organizing trade promotional events, joint research, business matchmaking, regional trade missions and the provision of facilities, such as the KITA Washington Office building on L Street.

It's in both the United States and Korea's interests that we forge a strong economic relationship that ensures sustained and balanced growth for both countries through greater bilateral investment. To this end, KITA's role will continue to be both meaningful and necessary for our economies are tightly intertwined. With Korea's rapid economic growth since the 1960's, the emergence of business centers in new markets, and the rise of their middle class, Korea's demand for American goods will continue to break historic records.

President Obama has made it a top priority of his administration to grow American jobs through increasing exports. About every $1 billion in exports creates about 5,000 jobs at home. If we double our exports, that would be 2 million new American jobs.

Since the President made boosting exports a top priority in his 2010 State of the Union speech our exports are up about 33 percent across all sectors. Manufactured goods are up 33 percent, agriculture is up 34 percent, and services are up almost 20 percent in just about every country in which we trade. Ninety-five percent of U.S. exporters are small businesses.

United States exports to South Korea supported more than 119,000 jobs across the U.S. in 2012. That's an increase of 28 percent over a decade. South Korea is our seventh largest bilateral trading partner, and the U.S. is South Korea's third largest. 29 U.S. States have more than doubled exports over the last decade. In fact, I am extremely proud that my congressional district leads the country in exports to Korea, with almost $900 million, as of 2012.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again extend my good wishes and recognize KITA Washington Office on its 10th anniversary and I encourage my colleagues in the House of Representatives to do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SETH MOULTON

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, due to my participation in the President's historic trip to

Cuba, I missed votes on Monday, March 21, 2016 and Tuesday, March 22, 2016.

On Monday, March 21, 2016 I missed the vote on H.R. 4314—Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, as amended. I would have voted Aye.

On Tuesday, March 22, 2016 I missed the following five votes.

I would have voted Nay on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2745.

I would have voted Nay on H. Res. 653—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2745—Standard Merger and Acquisitions Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015.

I would have voted Aye on H.R. 4742—Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

I would have voted Aye on H.R. 4755—Inspiring the Next Space Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act.

I would have voted Aye on H.R. 4336—Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act, as amended.

RECOGNITION OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority as it launches a new chapter in Northeast Wisconsin on April 2, 2016. Delta Sigma Theta was founded in 1913 at Howard University with a purpose to provide support to collegiate women through programs in local communities throughout the world.

In their first year, the sorority bravely marched in the Woman Suffrage Parade exemplifying their mission to promote women's rights. Founder Florence Letcher Torns reflected on that day saying ''we marched that day in order that women might come into their own, because we believed that women not only needed an education, but they needed a broader horizon in which they may use that education. And the right to vote would give them that privilege.''

Since that time, Delta Sigma Theta has grown to reach over 200,000 women and currently boasts a membership of 1,000 collegiate and alumnae chapters located around the globe.

I congratulate Delta Sigma Theta on their decision to embark on a new chapter in Northeast Wisconsin and look forward to watching the community flourish with their participation.

RECOGNITION OF SHELTON GIVENS

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Shelton Givens, who passed away on February 29, 2016. Mr. Givens was the owner of Shelton's Barber Shop, located on the ground floor of the historic Sinclair Building in downtown Fort Worth, Texas.

After working at local Fort Worth barbershop for nearly 10 years, Givens opened his namesake barber shop in 1991 at 512 Main Street in Room 112. Shelton's Barber Shop was well-known for its ''old-fashioned service'' and remained a fixture in the community for 25 years. Regular and walk-in customers often raved about the 1920's inspired services that included ''cigars, hot shaves, and casual conversation''. Givens and his staff became recognized for their exemplary customer service skills that kept loyal Fort Worth residents returning to their shop for years.

Shelton and his wife of 51 years, Eunice Givens, were longtime residents of the Highland Hills Community where they raised two children: a son, Daryl Givens, and a daughter, Shelby West. They were members of the East Saint Paul Baptist Church and active members in the community, helping to organize neighborhood events and playing a key role in the ''National Night Out'' initiative. Givens' wife, Eunice, is a homemaker and well-known throughout Fort Worth for her role as a neighborhood activist.

After more than two decades in the Sinclair Building, the Shelton Given's Barber Shop closed its doors in December 2015 due to Givens' failing health. At 80-years-old, Givens retired from his shop and stayed home in the care of his wife and children.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—BIANCA ELLEGON

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Bianca Ellegon from Richmond, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Bianca attends Terry High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Bianca was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Bianca and all of her hard work, and know she will make Richmond proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Bianca for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FARMINGTON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of the Farmington Regional Chamber of Commerce of Farmington, Missouri. The application to form the chamber was signed by Edward B. Effrein as President; Charles S. Fitz as Vice-President; and Mack F. Denman as Secretary-Treasurer. The Chamber became a legal and active organization on July 2, 1941. Its mission has broadened over the years: to promote good government, hold meetings for the discussion of current questions, and improve the quality of life for the residents of Farmington.

The Chamber was instrumental in bringing Trimfoot Shoe Company to the city as a major employer. In the 1950s the Chamber pushed for commercial development along the U.S. Highway 67 Bypass which today is known at Karsch Boulevard.

The Chamber was instrumental in the creation of an industrial park; advocated for a state prison in Farmington; worked for educational issues; and led efforts to continue economic growth. It campaigned for the Farmington City Civic Center, improvements for the Farmington Regional Airport, construction of the Farmington Water Park and most recently, the construction of the new Farmington Public Library. The Chamber also led a team effort to have St. Francois County become a Certified Work Ready Community.

From its year-long observance of Farmington's 200th anniversary in 1997 to its annual celebration of Country Days, the Farmington Regional Chamber of Commerce continues to focus on what's best about Farmington. Its outstanding efforts led the Missouri State Chamber of Commerce to honor it as the 2014 Chamber of the Year.

In the years ahead, the Farmington Regional Chamber of Commerce will continue to help Farmington be one of the best communities in Missouri to live and work. It gives me great pleasure to recognize the impressive 75-year history and the promising future of the Farmington Regional Chamber of Commerce before the United States House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE OPENING OF PACKARD HEALTH'S YPSILANTI HEALTH CENTER

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the ceremonial opening of Packard

Health's Ypsilanti Health Center on Tuesday March 29th, 2016.

Packard Health's two Ann Arbor locations have been serving all of Washtenaw County for the last 43 years. That means 43 years of serving our family, friends, and neighbors. From prenatal, pediatric, mental health, and chronic disease care, Packard Health works to provide the community with essential primary care needs. They have not only earned, but solidified their reputation as a vital community resource, providing health services to those who don't have access, or cannot afford health care. Beginning December 2015 this new Packard Health location in Ypsilanti has begun treating Washtenaw County's most underserved group of individuals in a more immediate way.

Ypsilanti has been one of the hardest hit communities with respect to the recent economic down turn, with a poverty rate nearing 30 percent. Nearly 3 out of 10 people are living without the basic necessities many of us take for granted. Though our national conversation about health care has taken center stage over the last several years there are still far too many people living without the adequate health care coverage, and even more who lack access to doctors, nurses and facilities. I believe that health care is a basic and fundamental right, regardless of income, age, or background. This new Packard Health location in Ypsilanti is positioned to do the most good for so many of the individuals with the greatest need in Washtenaw County. Currently, Packard Health has treated over 8,000 patients annually; we can ensure that this coverage will now extend its reach into and through the Ypsilanti community. This new location extends the promise to our people to unlock their ability to lead healthier, happier, and more satisfied lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the opening of the new Ypsilanti Packard Health Center. I wish them the best of luck with their important work and success in their future endeavors.

HONORING MRS. HILDA ZIMMERLY

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Mrs. Hilda Zimmerly, an outstanding individual from the state of Florida.

Originally from Ohio, Mrs. Zimmerly moved to LaBelle, Florida in 1977 after previously serving as a teacher and a bookkeeper in her home state. While in Ohio, Mrs. Zimmerly paused her college education in order to fill the need for teachers in the region, taking up part time teaching during her third year of college, all while balancing family and her other job as a secretary. Once she moved to LaBelle, she continued to work as a secretary to provide for her family and three young children. Mrs. Zimmerly eventually saved up enough to open up Hilda's Stitchery Shoppe. It was located in the same building as the business she served as a secretary, which enabled her to work both jobs concurrently. While working two jobs and raising a family, she was still able to stay active in the church, singing in the choir, and participating in youth leadership.

Although she had a small business, Mrs. Zimmerly had always wanted to go back to teaching. When a job became available in Glades County in the nearby town of Moore Haven, Mrs. Zimmerly moved on to become this school's librarian after earning her degree from the University of South Florida in media specialty. Her goal of teaching full time became a reality when she was hired in 1994 as a 4th grade teacher at LaBelle Elementary, teaching there one year until she transferred to County Oaks Elementary School also in LaBelle. Mrs. Zimmerly retired from County Oaks Elementary after a distinguished fourteen-year career. After her retirement, Hilda enjoyed her time sewing, scrapbooking and reading until she decided to try her hand at politics. She ran for City Commissioner with the help of her thirteen grandchildren, and won. She has served the city for ten years in this role. While serving as City Commissioner she has been involved in tourism development, the citizens traffic safety board and she is an active participant in City Government. She hopes to continue in this role for the foreseeable future.

I am privileged to know Mrs. Zimmerly, and admire her commitment to the community through a career of education and dedicated public service. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Mrs. Zimmerly for her continued service to Southwest Florida, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—SUNGMIN CHO

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sungmin Cho from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Sungmin is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Sungmin was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Sungmin and all of his hard work, and know he will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Sungmin for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

CELEBRATING 2016 AS THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PULSES

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate 2016 as the International Year of Pulses.

I am extremely proud to represent the Pulse farmers of Eastern Washington. Eastern Washington is one of the most fertile agricultural areas in the nation and is proud to add pulses, namely dry peas, beans, lentils and chickpeas to crops which feed the world.

Pulses are a low fat source of protein with a high fiber content and low glycemic index. They typically contain twice the amount of protein found in whole grain cereals, and in most developing countries comprise the main source of protein. Pulses are so nutrient-dense that nutritionists consider them both a protein and a vegetable.

Pulses are rich in vitamins and minerals, providing consumers iron, potassium, magnesium, zinc, and are abundant with B vitamins. They contribute to a balanced diet, and have been shown to lower the risk of heart disease and diabetes, lower blood pressure and cholesterol. Pulses can also play an important role in mitigating the harmful effects of human exposure to heavy metals, including lead, in communities across the United States.

In addition, according to conservative estimates, pulse crops provide thousands of production and manufacturing jobs in rural communities across the country. In the states of Washington and Idaho alone, 2015 saw over 226 million pounds of dry peas, nearly 70 million pounds of lentils, and over 165 million pounds of chickpeas produced. Top chefs and households around the country are discovering these healthy, affordable, sustainable and delicious super foods.

To help raise awareness of these crops, the United Nations declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses. Pulses will play a major role in meeting future food needs as the world's growing population, which is set to require a 70 percent increase in agricultural production by 2050, because they are sustainable, nutritious, versatile, and affordable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of our colleagues join me in celebrating 2016 as the International Year of the Pulses.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A HOUSE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THAT THE SENATE SHOULD PROVIDE FULL AND FAIR CONSIDERATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S NOMINATION OF JUDGE MERRICK GARLAND

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing, together with my Democratic colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, a resolution calling on the Senate to observe regular order and to give President Barack Obama's nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court full and fair consideration and an up-or-down vote.

Judge Garland is an eminently seasoned jurist who has the qualities to make him an upstanding nominee for the Supreme Court.

His unquestioned intellect, long judicial experience, and even temperament are widely admired and respected, even by Republicans like Senator ORRIN HATCH, who called him a ''consensus nominee'' for the Supreme Court who would be ''very well supported by all sides.''

Moreover, his deep respect for and fidelity to the Constitution and the law and his sensitivity to the impact of the law on ordinary people make him a good choice to fill the vacancy.

Unfortunately, with the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, we have seen partisan politics regarding Supreme Court nominations reach a new low.

For instance, within hours of Justice Scalia's passing, Senate Republican Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said that the Senate would refuse to consider any nomination made by President Obama to fill the vacancy.

In addition to being an astounding failure to carry out its constitutional duty, Senate Republicans' flat-out refusal to consider President Obama's nominee, regardless of the nominee's qualifications, is part of a longstanding pattern of disrespect shown to this President in particular.

The Senate must provide the same consideration and respect for this President and his Supreme Court nominee that every other President has been given.

The President, of course, has the Constitutional authority and obligation to appoint Justices to the Supreme Court pursuant to Article II, Section 2, and he has fulfilled his duty with his nomination of Judge Garland.

And the Senate has both the authority and the obligation to provide advice and consent on the President's nominee pursuant to that same provision. Yet, the Senate has flatly refused to do its job, which is simply unacceptable.

It is clear that the Constitution requires that both the President and the Senate fulfill their respective roles in the Supreme Court nomination process in order for the Supreme Court to be able to fully perform its constitutional role.

Otherwise, what is to stop the Senate from simply grinding the Court—a co-equal branch of government—to a halt by simply refusing to consider any nominees to fill any vacancies on the Court.

There is no merit to the argument that we have to wait until we elect a new President. After all, the American people twice elected President Obama to fulfill the duties of President, including the duty to appoint Supreme Court justices.

And there is ample precedent for Presidents nominating, and the Senate confirming, Supreme Court nominees in the last year of a presidency.

For example, in 1988, during the last full year of Republican Ronald Reagan's presidency, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed the nomination of Justice Anthony Kennedy by President Reagan by a 97–0 vote.

Today, there are 10 months left in President Obama's term. This is more than sufficient time for the President to nominate, and for the Senate to consider and vote on his nominee.

It is vital that the Supreme Court have a full complement of justices so that the critical constitutional and legal questions before the Court can be given the full attention that they need.

While the House of Representatives does not have a formal say in the nomination process, it is important that its voice be heard on this important constitutional matter, and I urge the House to pass my resolution.

The Senate should do its job, comply with regular order, hold fair hearings on Judge Garland's nomination, and then hold an up-or-down vote on the nomination.

IN RECOGNITION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL WILMA VAUGHT

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brigadier General Wilma L. Vaught of Pontiac, Michigan. A decorated veteran and pioneer for women, General Vaught served in the United States Air Force for 28 years and played an instrumental role in breaking down barriers for women in the military.

General Vaught began her career in 1957 with her commission as a second lieutenant at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. Throughout her distinguished career, General Vaught served throughout the United States and abroad in a variety of roles. From 1968 to 1969, she served as a management analyst for Deputy Chief of Staff, Comptroller, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, in Saigon. She continued to excel, and in 1980, was promoted to Brigadier General. She was one of only seven female generals in the entire United States armed forces when she retired in 1985.

During her time in the United States Air Force, General Vaught received a number of commendations for her service. Her military decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, and Legion of Merit. In addition to being the first woman promoted to Brigadier General in the comptroller field, General Vaught was the first woman to deploy with an Air Force bomber wing, further breaking down barriers for women serving our country.

After her military service, General Vaught fought for recognition of women's contributions to our nation's armed forces. As the leader of the Women in Military Service to America Memorial Foundation, she played a significant role in the creation of this wonderful tribute to women at Arlington National Cemetery. This is the only major memorial that honors America's servicewomen and serves as a testament to their courage and bravery.

General Vaught is a true patriot and trailblazer for women in the military. Her distinguished service and groundbreaking accomplishments are an inspiration to all of us. It is for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that I ask my colleagues today to join me in honoring Brigadier General Wilma L. Vaught for her contributions to our country. I thank her for her leadership and exemplary service to our country.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—ISABELLA FERRARA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Isabella Ferrara from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Isabella attends Cinco Ranch High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Isabella was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Isabella and all of her hard work, and know she will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Isabella for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,205,597,413,856.96. We've added $8,578,720,364,943.88 to our debt in 7 years. This is over $8.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING OFFICER LOURDES HERNANDEZ

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History Month, I rise today to honor Officer Lourdes Hernandez, an outstanding individual in the South Florida community.

Officer Hernandez first joined the Miami-Dade Police Department in 1997. After two years in the force, she decided to take a leave of absence and enlist in the United States Army Reserves. Officer Hernandez served honorably for seven months, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her service.

Officer Hernandez returned to the Miami-Dade Police Department as part of the Intracoastal District's Crime Suppression Team, but quickly moved to the Miami-Dade Narcotics Bureau, where she has been for the past thirteen years.

Officer Hernandez's most recent accomplishment is the completion of Miami-Dade's Special Response Team (SRT) boot camp training. This five week program is extremely mentally and physically grueling. Officer Hernandez is the only woman to have completed the updated course, which is a testament to her strength and tenacity. It is worth noting that Hernandez's determination to achieve this goal was formed nearly three years ago. Her focus and seriousness of purpose clearly go above and beyond the usual.

Officer Hernandez sets a high priority on physical and tactical training. She appreciates the dangers that officers see in the field and remains committed to keeping herself, her fellow officers, and every citizen as safe as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Officer Lourdes Hernandez for her continued service to South Florida, and the world at large, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD ''DICK'' MOORE ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Richard ''Dick'' Moore on the occasion of his retirement after 31 years of dedicated service with the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

Dick was born in Dearborn, Michigan and graduated from Michigan State University in 1977, which was the same year he married his high school sweetheart and future lawyer, Kathy.

After studying law at Stetson University College, he passed the bar in 1980 and began his career as a prosecutor in Naples, Florida. He successfully tried over 50 felony jury trials during his time working there as an Assistant State Attorney.

In 1985, Dick interviewed with future Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court Carol Corrigan and was appointed as a Deputy District Attorney for Alameda County.

Dick began with the Alameda County District Attorney's office, first rotating through the Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda, and Fremont branches before being assigned to the felony trial team at the Rene C. Davidson Courthouse in January 1988.

During the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, Dick began building his legacy by successfully prosecuting serious felony cases against some of Alameda County's most violent offenders in multiple high-profile cases.

Based on his accomplishments, in 2000 Alameda County District Attorney Thomas J. Orloff appointed Dick as the Felony Trial Team Leader. For the past 16 years Dick has overseen all felony prosecutions and supervised all felony trial deputies.

Under the direction of both then-District Attorney Orloff and current Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O'Malley, Dick mentored and trained countless Deputy District Attorneys on the importance of being an ethical prosecutor. In fact, Dick even trained both California Attorney General Kamala Harris and I during our time as prosecutors for the office.

Dick has earned the respect of judges, defense attorneys, law enforcement, and victims of crime for his sense of justice and fairness. I want to congratulate him on his long and distinguished career and to wish him health and happiness in retirement.

RECOGNIZING DR. JUAN LORENZO HINOJOSA AND SOLIDARITY BRIDGE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and congratulate Juan Lorenzo Hinojosa, PhD, for his founding of Solidarity Bridge, the Evanston-based non-profit, now in its 16th year. Through this organization, Dr. Hinojosa has dedicated himself to transforming lives by promoting solidarity and justice, harnessing the good will of generous people in the United States and in Bolivia to heal and empower in a spirit of mutuality and profound respect. I am proud that many who participate in the Solidarity Bridge mission as physicians, nurses, interpreters, chaplains, and helpers are residents of the 9th Congressional District of Illinois.

In 1999, Dr. Hinojosa launched the first Solidarity Bridge medical mission trip to Bolivia. Over the next 16 years, guided by his extraordinary vision and leadership, Solidarity Bridge grew far beyond its initial purpose of bringing medical volunteers on short-term mission trips. In close collaboration with medical communities in the U.S. and in South America, and with its sister organization, Puente de Solidaridad, Solidarity Bridge developed four year-round programs in Bolivia to provide high-complexity surgery, as well as a Center for the Development of Neurosurgery. Through those efforts, lifesaving and life-transforming care has been provided for over 60,000 people who otherwise would not have had access to the care they desperately need.

Dr. Hinojosa is Bolivian-American and a naturalized citizen of the United States. His memory of the poverty and suffering he witnessed as a child never ceased to pull on his heart. Over many years, his longing to serve the impoverished people of his native land was strengthened by his Catholic faith, with its focus on compassion and justice. Then, in 1999, Dr. Hinojosa met Dr. Enrique ViaReque, also a Bolivian-American living in the Chicago area, and, with his invaluable help, was finally able to fulfill his heart's longing by founding Solidarity Bridge.

Dr. Hinojosa and Dr. ViaReque are outstanding examples of the important contributions immigrants make to the social fabric of the United States of America. One of the greatest qualities of our citizens is the responsibility we feel to share our material abundance with those who have less. Dr. Hinojosa nurtured that sense of responsibility in others and created a highly effective means by which the abundant good will and generosity of volunteers, donors, hospitals, and medical supply companies are channeled to serve those who live in poverty. Through Solidarity Bridge, he has promoted and strengthened bonds of solidarity among thousands of people of good will in the United States and in Bolivia.

Dr. Hinojosa has created a bridge of solidarity between diverse individuals and communities, a bridge that enriches and heals every person who walks on it, whatever their role may be. I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking Dr. Juan Lorenzo Hinojosa and congratulating him on the fruitful work he has accomplished.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—ANDRE FERREIRA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Andre Ferreira from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Andre attends Cinco Ranch High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the

medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Andre was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Andre and all of his hard work, and know he will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Andre for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

RECOGNIZING WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE'S LEADERSHIP IN ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible achievements of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, the 2016 recipient of the National Academy of Engineering's prestigious Bernard M. Gordon Prize for Innovation in Engineering and Technology Education. WPI is being recognized this year by the National Academy of Engineering for ''The WPI Plan,'' the university's revolutionary project-based approach to education and for the leadership and contributions of four faculty leaders who continue the development and growth of opportunities offered by the WPI Plan.

The Gordon Prize, an annual award recognizing new modalities and experiments in education that develop effective engineering leaders, will be presented to WPI on April 15, 2016, for a ''project-based engineering curriculum developing leadership, innovative problem solving, interdisciplinary collaboration, and global competencies,'' and will be shared by Diran Apelian, Alcoa-Howmet Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Director of WPI's Metal Processing Institute; Arthur Heinricher, Dean of Undergraduate Studies; Richard Vaz, Dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies; and Kristin Wobbe, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

WPI's focus is for students to apply theory to practice to achieve impact upon the great problems of our day. The faculty members who have been singled out for this award are outstanding at driving innovation in the WPI curriculum and inspiring greatness from students at the university and from their colleagues across the campus.

Founded in 1865, WPI has been a pioneer in project-based education since 1970 when, building upon its core philosophy of balancing theory and practice in education, the university adopted a revolutionary new undergraduate program known as the WPI Plan. The new approach replaced the traditional, rigidly prescribed engineering curriculum with a flexible and academically challenging program aimed at helping students learn by synthesizing classroom experience in projects that involve real world problems.

In 1974, WPI launched a global component to its project-based curriculum and now sends approximately 70 percent of its students to more than 45 project centers around the world. At these centers, students work in teams to focus on issues such as energy, food, health, and urban sustainability. The Global Projects Program offers students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in tackling real problems, develop an understanding of other cultures, and see how their lives and work can make a meaningful impact.

During my time in Congress, I've had the opportunity to meet with WPI students, faculty, and staff, and continue to be impressed by the incredible research being done at this world-class university based in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts. Each year I have the privilege of learning from WPI students who attend the Washington, D.C. project center, and I am confident that they enter the workforce well-prepared to help solve some of our nation's biggest challenges and influence the development of policy to move our country forward.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating WPI and its outstanding faculty members. To be recognized by the National Academy of Engineering and Bernard Gordon is a tremendous honor, and the WPI community should be so proud of this incredible achievement.

IN HONOR OF NEW JERSEY STATE TROOPER SEAN CULLEN

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of fallen New Jersey State Trooper Sean Cullen of Cinnaminson, New Jersey, for his extraordinary sacrifice and exemplary service to the citizens of New Jersey and the United States.

Trooper Cullen was born in Dublin, Ireland, and immigrated to the United States with his family when he was a child. Trooper Cullen and his family resided in Cinnaminson, New Jersey, and he graduated from Cinnaminson High School in 2003.

Trooper Cullen subsequently became a police officer, serving in the Sea Isle City, Mount Holly, and Westampton Township Police Departments. In 2014, he became a trooper with the New Jersey State Police as a graduate of the 154th Class of the New Jersey State Police Academy and was assigned to the Bellmawr Station, Camden County Barracks.

On March 8, 2016, Trooper Cullen tragically passed away following a motor vehicle accident that occurred while he was on duty and responding to an incident. Trooper Cullen was a loving and devoted father, son, and brother, whose memory will live on in the hearts of his fiancée, family, friends, and colleagues. He made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the citizens of New Jersey and served with courage, professionalism, and a commitment to the finest ideals and traditions of the New Jersey State Police.

Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that we mourn the loss of Trooper Sean Cullen, whose life reminds us that the men and women who serve and protect our communities put their lives on the line every day to protect us. I join with my community and all of New Jersey in honoring the achievements and selfless service of this truly exceptional young man.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WASHTENAW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor Michigan.

Washtenaw Community College is a pillar of higher education in Michigan's 12th Congressional District and has helped make an affordable education possible for countless individuals and their families for half a century. Each year, more than 18,000 students register for classes to say nothing of the thousands who take advantage of their Economic and Community Development classes—non-credit courses designed to provide professional development and personal enrichment for citizens throughout Washtenaw County and beyond.

Since 1966, this institution has stood as a symbol of hope in our community. It has provided its students, many of whom are immigrants, with the opportunity to quite literally achieve the ''American Dream'' through the education and skills needed to not only enrich themselves, but also to become vital members of our workforce. Diversity is celebrated here with students from over 100 foreign countries comprising its student body.

As many of us already know, the effects of globalization have made our local workforce far more competitive. Since its formation, Washtenaw Community College has provided the instruction needed for students to enroll in programs that are important to Michigan's future. In the 1970's, Washtenaw Community College developed programs in manufacturing, automotive service, culinary arts, and business. Today, the school has adapted to the ever-changing demands of the job market by adding computer science, pharmacy tech, robotic and national trade programs.

Today, while our lives have become more and more complicated, higher education has become a basic necessity for success. Aside from its affordability and high-quality course offerings, Washtenaw Community College places great emphasis on convenience by offering more than 100 programs and approximately 1500 classes each year—seven days a week, at night and online. In addition to their academic programming, Washtenaw Community College was one of the first colleges to recognize the changing dynamics of our economy by offering daycare services, making education a possibility for many working moms and families.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Washtenaw Community College for its fifty years of leadership in helping shape and prepare the next generation of workers, business people and civic leaders in my district. We thank you for your willingness to think outside the box, for your flexibility and for your vision, and we look forward to another 50 years when we can celebrate your Centennial.

RECOGNIZING THE ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY LADY HORNETS FOR WINNING CONSECUTIVE SWAC BASKETBALL TITLES

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Alabama State University Lady Hornets for their outstanding basketball record over the past two seasons.

On March 12, the Alabama State University Lady Hornets won their second straight Southwestern Athletic Conference tournament with a 55 to 51 victory over the Southern University Jaguars.

This victory made Head Coach Freda Freeman-Jackson the first SWAC coach to lead a team to consecutive tournament titles.

The Alabama State University Lady Hornets advanced to the NCAA tournament where they competed against the Texas Lady Longhorns this past Saturday. This was their third all-time NCAA appearance.

During the 2015–2016 season, the Alabama State University Lady Hornets won 19 games and for a second straight year, the team was a 15 seed.

I would like to particularly congratulate the two Lady Hornets who are from the 7th Congressional District of Alabama, Miss Jasmine Peeples from Selma and Miss Tatyana Calhoun from Montgomery. Tatyana is a junior and was named second team All-State and an MVP in 2013. Jasmine is an all SWAC second-team performer and is a senior. She, along with her teammates, Britney Wright and Daniele Ewert, was voted to the all-SWAC Tournament team this year.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, it is important to recognize the female athletes who have made significant contributions to athletic programs across our country. Although it has been almost forty-five years since Title IX was passed here in Congress, female athletes are still not afforded the same respect, resources and attention afforded to male athletes.

The success achieved by the Alabama State University Lady Hornets over the past two seasons will be a tremendous recruiting tool for Alabama State University Coach Freeman-Jackson and have undeniably made Alabama State University a stronger institution.

I am incredibly proud of the successes the Alabama State University Lady Hornets and their coaches have made over the past two seasons. I look forward to watching this team grow and continue to win titles under the leadership of Coach Freeman-Jackson and Assistant coaches Clayton Harris, Yvette McDaniel, and Michael Floyd.

Go Hornets.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—ERIC MUTHONDU

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Eric Muthondu from Richmond, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Eric attends Randolph Foster High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Eric was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Eric and all of his hard work, and know he will make Richmond proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Eric for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DIANE BLACK

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 138 (H. Res. 658), which took place Wednesday March 23, 2016; I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained at the United States Supreme Court. Had I been present, I would have voted AYE. I firmly stand with my colleagues in the House in condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more.

I would like to reflect my deepest sympathies and condolences to those killed and injured in the attacks and their friends and families. I also reflect my pledge to support the Belgium government in its efforts to bring to justice those responsible for the attacks.

Finally, I declare my belief that the Islamic State poses a fundamental threat to the universal value of freedom in all countries, and that the flow of foreign fighters to and from the Middle East and West and North Africa remains a grave concern.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DR. ROBIN GARY CUMMINGS AS CHANCELLOR OF UNC PEMBROKE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Robin Cummings and congratulate him on his official installation as the sixth Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

As Representative of North Carolina's Eighth District, I'm proud to represent Robeson County and UNC Pembroke in Congress. There is no doubt in my mind that Chancellor Cummings is a perfect fit for this university. His leadership and service to North Carolina in numerous capacities—in health care, in state government and in volunteer service—has positioned him well for this role. With his knowledge and broad experience, Dr. Cummings will promote and grow the university while meeting the unique challenges facing our community.

As Chancellor, Dr. Cummings has already made an incredible impact and helped foster an institution that offers students a pathway to a career, that empowers faculty and staff to be successful, and that provides our community an institution to be proud of.

In addition, Dr. Cumming's love for our community and the university is unmatched. As a Pembroke native and member of the Lumbee tribe, he has the community's best interest at heart. Under his guidance, UNC Pembroke will continue to lead the way in strengthening our economy, supporting job creation and improving the quality of life for people all across Southeastern North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Chancellor Robin Cummings for his prestigious accomplishment. We wish him, his wife Rebecca and his four children, Amy, Mark, David, and Adam well as Chancellor Cummings undertakes this role and continues to serve Robeson County and UNC Pembroke.

HONORING THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION DIVISION

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Los Angeles Police Department Communication Division for its dedicated service to protecting our communities. Throughout the region, there are several public safety call centers staffed by civilians who dedicate their lives to helping others. These individuals are critical to Los Angeles' public safety and help

serve the wide-ranging needs of everyday residents.

Though they rarely get the credit they deserve, it is difficult to understate the importance of these professionals in serving our communities. While public-safety communicators are usually the first individuals that the public comes in contact with during an emergency, they also play a vital role in coordinating the first response to police, fire, and rescue incidents. They possess many admirable qualities, among which is the ability to maintain composure under extremely stressful circumstances. As a former 9-1-1 dispatcher within the department, I know the challenges they face on a daily basis, which is why I would like to honor their service to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to work for the Los Angeles Police Department Communication Division for over 17 years. Throughout that time, this division has helped coordinate responses to both routine occurrences and extraordinary situations, some of which have garnered national and international attention. They regularly dispatch first responders to thousands of incidents and have played a critical role in national emergencies. I applaud their continual efforts to serve our communities. On Sunday, April 10, they will be hosting an alumni gathering to mark the start of National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

Mr. Speaker, they are just one of many community organizations across the country that will recognize the second week of April as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. I would like to offer my support for this declaration and make note that I have introduced a Concurrent Resolution that would offer Congress' recognition of this designation. I believe that this will highlight the important contributions that public safety communication professionals provide our communities day in and day out and recognize the value of their work.

TRIBUTE TO CONNIE KUEHL

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the service of an esteemed and valued citizen of the Killeen, TX and Fort Hood area. Connie Kuehl has dedicated herself to Central Texas for nearly 30 years, diligently overseeing and directing countless organizations and community projects. Connie's immeasurable service and innovative vision for her community are qualities of an ideal citizen.

Graduating from the University of Texas in 1973, Connie earned her degree in Education and Science. Pursuing her passion for SCUBA diving, she obtained an instructor license in 1979 and taught lessons for ten years. This was only the beginning of Connie's lifetime of sharing her time and talents with others. In 1990, she became Temple's first Tourism Director and worked tirelessly to promote the community through her service on multiple boards and organizations. Connie's ability to showcase the very best that Central Texas has to offer attracted the Texas Early Day Tractor and Engine Association's State Headquarters as well as the Pioneer Village and festival to Temple in 1992, where it remains today. She has also served as President for Altrusa of Central Texas as well as the Texas Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, where she earned the Texas Destination Marketing Certification.

No matter where or how Connie serves, she exceeds the highest of expectations. Her desire to constantly improve and challenge her community has enabled the Fort Hood area to become involved in a wide range of activities and programs. Connie has helped promote creativity and the arts by developing the "Take 190 West" arts festival, a highlight of the Killeen cultural calendar. Connie's talents aren't limited to her extraordinary work ethic and commitment to service. She won 1st Place in District Nine for the Share Your Story, Share Your Dream writing contest and 2nd Place internationally.

Like all of us in Central Texas, Connie was deeply affected by the 2009 terror attack on Fort Hood. Knowing this tragedy was one we can never forget, Connie selflessly contributed her efforts and hard work into organizing the Fort Hood Memorial Dedication fundraising and ceremony. This poignant and moving memorial honors the lives of those lost that dark day and reminds all who visit of the sacrifices made in the name of freedom. Connie considers this project to be the highlight of her long career.

Connie's invaluable service and capacity to take on multiple leadership roles has left a positive and lasting impact on both her community and those she has come in contact with. Citizens like Connie Kuehl are greatly valued, and she will be missed upon her retirement. She looks forward to spending time with her two sons, Shawn and Chad Bowman, granddaughter Emily, and new grandbaby on the way. I know Connie's family is very proud of her career and achievements and I wish her much joy and happiness in the future.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—ARYAN SINGH

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Aryan Singh from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Aryan is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Aryan was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Aryan and all of his hard work, and know he will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Aryan for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

TRIBUTE TO TAMARA GRIGSBY

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great woman, Tamara Grigsby. She was a social worker, family counselor, instructor, state legislator, administrator and advocate for children, women and social justice. Ms. Tamara Grigsby passed away on March 14, 2016.

Tamara Grigsby was born in Pullman, Washington and graduated from Memorial High School in Madison. She received an undergraduate degree from Howard University and Master's Degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I am honored to pay tribute to Tamara Grigsby, she was a leader extraordinaire. She taught at Carroll and Cardinal Stritch Universities, as well as UW-Milwaukee. Tamara served as program manager at the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families prior to running and winning a seat as one of my successors to serve as representative for Wisconsin's 18th Assembly District. In fact, I encouraged Tamara to run for this seat. After her retirement from the state legislature, she worked for both the Milwaukee Public Schools and Madison Public Schools. At the time of her death, she was the Director of Dane County's Department of Equity and Inclusion.

As a legislator from 2005 to 2013, Tamara proved prolific. She both introduced and passed a large number of meaningful legislation to secure equality, fairness, and opportunity for Wisconsin's citizens. In fact in 2010, she was 18 for 18, passing 18 bills the same number as the legislative seat that she held. She also served admirably as a member of the prestigious Legislature's Joint Finance Committee.

When she endured a life-threatening health battle in 2011, she fought back with the same vigor as she had exhibited on behalf of her constituents. Tamara Grigsby received many awards including the Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin most prestigious recognition, the Rebecca C. Young Legislative Leadership Award and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Emerging Leader Award. Further she was named as one of the The 30 Most Influential Social Workers Alive Today in 2014 by the Social Work Degree Guide.

I am proud to have called Tamara Grigsby my friend; she made a positive impact on all of Wisconsin. She leaves behind many friends, former staffers, admirers and family members to mourn her passing including her dear parents: Dr. E. Howard Grigsby and Bettye Grigsby.

I was captivated by her passion and commitment to improving the lives of Wisconsinites. She was a fierce opponent of policies aimed at hurting public schools, health care and stronger communities. She fought to address racial and ethnic disparities in our criminal justice system, and advancing equality of rights for all.

Mr. Speaker for these reasons I rise to pay tribute to an amazing woman, Tamara Grigsby. While her time with us was a short 41 years, she leaves behind an enduring legacy for future leaders to follow.

TRIBUTE TO OFFICER FIRST CLASS JACAI DAVID COLSON

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my Maryland colleagues in paying tribute to the life and memory of Officer First Class Jacai David Colson, who fell in the line of duty on Sunday.

Officer Colson was twenty-eight years old and had served with the Prince George's County Police Department for four years. He lost his life responding courageously to an attack by a gunman on the District Three police station in Landover, Maryland. He did what he and his brothers and sisters in law enforcement have been trained to do: run toward gunfire in an attempt to save lives and protect bystanders and their fellow officers.

Officer Colson is a hero, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and his fellow officers. His father, James Colson, called his son 'courageous' and 'an excellent role model.' Officer Colson's high school football coach cited his extraordinary character and how he 'treated everyone with respect.'

Originally from Delaware County, Pennsylvania, Officer Colson followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, who served on the Upper Chichester Township police force in Delaware County for more than four decades. Prince George's County was fortunate to have Officer Colson on the force, and he left a lasting impression on so many people both here in Maryland and back home in Pennsylvania.

I join with my Maryland colleagues in mourning this tragic loss and honoring Officer Jacai Colson for his service to our Prince George's County communities, to the State of Maryland, and to our country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2745, (Roll Call Number 131) I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for the vote on H. Res. 653, the rules for consideration of H.R. 2745, the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act, (Roll Call Number 132), I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4742, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act (Roll Call Number 133), I would have voted "aye." I applaud Rep. ESTY's effort to expand the mission of the National Science Foundation to encourage its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women and to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world. While women make up about half the U.S. workforce, they only account for about 1 in 4 of those working in STEM fields. This bill is an important part of the larger effort to expand entrepreneurial opportunities for women in the STEM fields.

Had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4755, the Inspiring the Next Space Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act (Roll Call Number 134), I would have voted "aye." I am encouraged by Rep. COMSTOCK's work to expand STEM educational opportunities for women and girls. Specifically, the bill directs NASA to encourage women and girls to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), pursue careers in aerospace and support NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS, the Aspire to Inspire (A2I) program and the Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research (SISTER) program.

Had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4336, the Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act, as amended (Roll Call Number 135), I would have voted "aye." I support Rep. MCSALLY's work to make groups of women, civilians and foreigners who served the United States during World War II eligible to be inurned in Arlington National Cemetery. This is a great victory for the families of the brave women who served during World War II.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call vote numbers 130 through 135, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Roll Call No.	H.R./H. Res.	Vote
130	H.R. 4314	Yes
131	H. Res. 653	No
132	H. Res. 653	No
133	H.R. 4742	Yes
134	H.R. 4755	Yes
135	H.R. 4336	Yes

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—SKYLAR WILLIAMS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Skylar Williams from Houston, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Skylar attends J. Frank Dobie High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Skylar was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Skylar and all of her hard work, and know she will make Houston proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Skylar for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING CADET KAITLYN M. DOYLE

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cadet Kaitlyn Doyle, of the Third Congressional District, in her appointment to Chief Petty Officer of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps, and to commend her for her dedication to the Naval Sea Cadet youth program.

Kaitlyn, who is a resident of Mount Laurel, has worked diligently to complete the regulation U.S. Navy correspondence courses from Basic Military Requirements through Chief Petty Officer. In addition to this, Kaitlyn has exhibited superior qualities of leadership, patriotism, and expertise that have allowed her to achieve this significant accomplishment, which is awarded to less than half of one percent of approximately 9,000 Naval Sea Cadets across the nation. Kaitlyn stands out as an outstanding role model to her peers. This achievement exhibits the pride that Kaitlyn has for the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps youth program and demonstrates her determination to eventually attend the Naval Academy.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously honored to have newly appointed Chief Petty Officer Kaitlyn Doyle as a member of their community, who has shown a desire to serve her nation, and has worked continuously to do so to the best of her ability. I am honored to recognize her appointment and dedicated service, before the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING WVSSAC CLASS A MEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS ST. JOSEPH CENTRAL IRISH

HON. EVAN H. JENKINS

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the players and coaching staff of the St. Joseph Central Catholic High School men's basketball team in Huntington, West Virginia, for winning the West Virginia Class A men's basketball championship on March 19.

Lead by Head Coach Ross Scaggs, the Irish completed an amazing run in the state tournament with a thrilling 67–65 overtime win over Wheeling Central Catholic. This is a remarkable accomplishment for St. Joseph Central in its first state tournament appearance since 1989. I would also like to recognize the parents, teachers and others that volunteered their time to help achieve this remarkable honor.

Congratulations and Go Irish.

HONORING MS. BELINDA KEISER

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Belinda Keiser, a remarkable individual in the State of Florida.

Ms. Keiser has dedicated her life to working for others, specifically in the areas of education, public service, and philanthropy. She has served as Vice Chancellor of Community Relations and Student Advancement for Keiser University, where she is responsible for media and public relations, student services, employer relations, and charitable giving. Ms. Keiser manages an institution of higher education that is comprised of 17 locations throughout Florida, South America and Shanghai, China, with a student count of approximately 20,000 students and 3,500 employees. Through her role, she has broadened the school's reach, built on its strong reputation, and stayed true to its founders' vision.

The effects of Ms. Keiser's service have also been felt in public service, where she has served as an Ex-Officio member of the Florida Council of 100, as an appointee of Gov. Rick Scott to the Enterprise Florida Board of Directors, and on the Florida Government Efficiency Task Force. Currently, Belinda is serving as a reappointed member of the 17th Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission of Broward County, and is also working as a member of the Board of Florida's Chamber of Commerce. She still manages to contribute a large portion of her time and resources to numerous charitable organizations including the American Cancer Society, Operation Homefront, and the United States Marine Corps.

Belinda's ongoing efforts truly impacted Florida's economic and workforce welfare, global competitiveness, and the legal, education and healthcare communities. I look forward to working with her on our shared priorities in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to know Ms. Keiser and admire her service to the local community in South Florida, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SCIENTISTS—HAYLEY WISNIESKI

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hayley Wisnieski from Richmond, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders.

Hayley attends William B. Travis High School and is one of eight high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, a program for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school and supported to continually strive toward their aspirations of working in the medical field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 25th through the 27th. Hayley was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress because of her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing a medical science. We are proud of Hayley and all of her hard work, and know she will make Richmond proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Hayley for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists. Keep up the great work.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CESAR CHAVEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and the 36th Congressional District of California, I congratulate the students, families, and teachers—past and present—of Cesar Chavez Elementary School in my hometown of Coachella, California, on the occasion of the school's twenty-fifth anniversary.

For a quarter of a century, the Cesar Chavez Elementary School has provided young scholars from the Coachella Valley with a top-rate education. Named after an American hero, it continues to carry out a vital mission to our country and our region: to carry on his legacy by educating children to be socially responsible citizens of our community.

To the parents who entrust their children to Cesar Chavez Elementary School, it is your desire to better the lives of your children that continues to build our great country. Each family's individual pursuit of their American dream contributes to making our nation a more perfect union. Your hard work, calloused hands, and tired shoulders lift up our children and our community, and Cesar Chavez would be proud.

As the son of farmworkers from Coachella, it remains my humble honor to represent my hometown in the U.S. House of Representatives. Coachella's history is steeped in the American pursuit of liberty and justice for all because of the work of Cesar Chavez. Cesar Chavez Elementary School carries the legacy of being the only school named after Cesar Chavez and whose opening was presided by the great civil rights leader himself.

Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of this silver anniversary, I commend the faculty and staff for preserving and honoring his legacy and for inspiring today's youth to live lives dedicated to justice and a love for our country. I sincerely thank the school for its contribution to our Coachella Valley, and I look forward to its continued success in the years to come. Yes we can do it. (Si se puede).

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR SAVIOR PARISH

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of Our Savior Parish. It is my honor and privilege to recognize the devotion and hard work of the members of Our Savior Parish, who for so long now have striven to support the communities of Detroit and Dearborn Heights.

Following the separation of the Roman Catholic Church and Polish National Catholic Church in 1897, Polish Americans throughout the country struggled to find a medium to express their religious beliefs. Independent churches soon formed throughout the country to meet the needs of the Polish community. Our Savior Parish was founded in 1916 in the City of Detroit, the first independent Polish Catholic Church in Michigan. Initially, the group focused on helping Polish immigrants better acclimate to life in America. The parish established a bilingual accredited parochial

school, and enrollment reached over 350 students. By 1970, increasing membership resulted in the parish relocating to a new, beautiful church complex in Dearborn Heights.

The members of Our Savior Parish continue to give back to our community. The church performs an annual Thanksgiving canned-food drive, as well as an annual Christmas coat drive. Additionally, each Christmas the church hosts an ''Adopt-a-family'' program with the local school district. This program provides food, gifts, and most importantly, a warm Christmas spirit to those families in the community stricken by hard times. Their community work continues throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the 100th anniversary of Our Savior Parish. For a century now, the members of Our Savior Parish have displayed an immense passion and deep devotion for improving our community, and we wish them many more years of success.

HONORING PATSY CLINE OF HOBBS, NEW MEXICO

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Patsy Cline, an outstanding citizen of the great state of New Mexico and resident of my hometown, Hobbs.

Patsy has spent a lifetime embracing people of all origins and helping those most in need. She has given selflessly for many years to help more than 10,000 seniors in Lea County afford necessary medications through her nonprofit organization, Faith In Action.

I would like to thank Patsy for her contributions, her selfless deliverance of assistance to those in need, and for extending a helping hand to thousands of people when they needed it most. Patsy embodies the meaning of a true volunteer. Through her actions, she has helped foster a kinder society by living a life of service to others, seeking nothing in return. We can all learn from Patsy's selfless dedication and courage.

As a fellow New Mexican, it is my honor to rise and recognize Patsy Cline's commitment to community and country.

IN HONOR OF ROBERT A. LUCAS

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere condolences and to honor the extraordinary life of Robert A. Lucas, owner of the famous Donkey's Place in Camden, New Jersey.

Born in Camden, raised in Medford, and a graduate of Rancocas Valley Regional High School, Robert was truly a son of New Jersey. By the 1970s, he started running Donkey's Place, a bar opened in 1943 by his father, Leon, a former Olympic boxer. Donkey's still has a simple menu, consisting of cheesesteaks served on a poppy seed Kaiser roll from Del Buono's in Haddon Heights and a no-frills bar, just the way Robert liked it.

Donkey's is an institution in South Jersey, serving everyone from factory workers in its early days, to neighborhood residents, police officers, and city workers. Highlighted on the CNN television show Parts Unknown, chef and world traveler Anthony Bourdain said of Donkey's, ''the best cheesesteaks in the area might well come from New Jersey'' and it deserves to be a ''national landmark.''

A devoted family man, Robert even met his future wife of 39 years, Elsie, at Donkey's. It was love at first sight and Elsie remembers dreaming about her future husband that very night. Robert and Elsie had 4 children, Robert, Jr., Joseph, Lisa Bystryzycki, and Luis Mendoza, and 2 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Robert A. Lucas was an incredible man, dedicated to his family, the South Jersey community, and his business. He leaves behind an indomitable work ethic and one of the finest establishments in Camden. I join with his family, friends and all of New Jersey in celebrating the life of this extraordinary man.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on March 21 through 22, 2016, I accompanied President Obama and several of my colleagues in the U.S. Congress to Cuba as part of the ongoing effort to advance U.S.-Cuba relations. As a result, I was absent for roll call vote 135 on the Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act, H.R. 4336. This is an incredibly important piece of legislation that will reinstate the inurnment eligibility for the brave and honorable women who made up the Women Airforce Pilot Service. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on roll call vote 135.

Additionally, I was absent for roll call votes 130 through 134. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on roll call 130, no on roll call 131, no on roll call 132, yes on roll call 133, and yes on roll call 134.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LATIN EXPRESS BAND

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 40th Anniversary of The Latin Express Band. The Latin Express Band has serenaded Dallas-Fort Worth residents for four decades and counting and given back to the community in a variety of ways. Mr. Carlos Saenz, a graduate of Fort Worth's North Side High School, founded The Latin Express Band in 1976 after fundraising for a school trip. After receiving support and recognition from his classmates, Mr. Saenz added his younger brother, Leo Saenz, to join as drummer and vocalist.

Since their formation, the Latin Express Band has played at music venues throughout the DFW Metroplex and the United States, even playing in the nation's capital. In January 2001, they were invited to perform during the Presidential Inaugural Ball for President George W. Bush.

The Latin Express Band has received several accolades for their musical contributions throughout the years. Dating back to 1998, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram presented the band with its first award, the ''Best Tejano Band.'' They would go on to receive additional awards from Fort Worth Weekly, Hispanic Council of Tarrant County, and the Dallas Morning News. The Latin Express Band was inducted into the Tejano Roots Hall of Fame in 2008.

Additionally, the Latin Express Band supports various charitable groups and makes significant contributions to local organizations such as the Tarrant Area Food Bank. The Latin Express Band has inspired future generations of local musicians by supporting music education for children, youth and adults throughout the Metroplex.

On March 31, 2016, the band will perform for the first time at Fort Worth's historic Casa Mañana Theatre. Proceeds from the concert will support music education programs in the Fort Worth Independent School District. The concert takes place on the birthday of the legendary Latino civil rights leader, Cesar Chavez. The band will play in honor of Chavez, an activist who continuously fought to gain equal rights for all minorities.

The Saenz brothers are a staple in the Fort Worth community, both through sharing their musical talents and service to the Metroplex.

HONORING THE BIRTHDAY OF WILLIAM D. MOUNGER OF JACKSON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, on March 31, 1926, William ''Billy'' Mounger was born in Jackson, Mississippi. Mr. Mounger graduated from Central High School in Jackson and attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He intended on playing football at West Point, as one of the 27 players around the country recruited by the school, but failed to make the team. Instead of giving up and going back home, he graduated in 1948 with a degree in General Engineering and served five years in the U.S. Air Force. While in the Air Force, he attained the rank of First Lieutenant and served as an Aircraft Commander of the B–50 Medium Bomber as well as Atomic Bomb Commander.

Mr. Mounger continued his education at the University of Oklahoma, receiving a bachelor's degree and master's degree in Petroleum Engineering. He has had a long and successful career in oil production. In addition to his business success, many people know Mr.

Mounger for his work in establishing and developing the Republican Party in the South and especially Mississippi. His leadership roles are extensive, but to name a few: he has served on the Mississippi State Republican Executive Committee for decades, as the Mississippi Republican Finance Chairman, and on the Republican National Finance Committee. It is a direct result of Mr. Mounger's work and dedication to the party that Mississippi is now a Republican stronghold.

Most importantly, Mr. Mounger is a proud husband, father, and grandfather. He is also a man of faith, as a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Jackson. On his 90th birthday, I thank him for his contributions to Mississippi and the Republican Party.

McMEANS JUNIOR HIGH SYMPHONIC BAND

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the symphonic band of McMeans Junior High (MMJH) in Katy, Texas for their upcoming performance at the National Middle School Concert Band Festival for the Music for All National Festival, hosted at Butler University in Indianapolis.

The MMJH symphonic band, under the direction of George Liverman, will not only perform in front of professionally and nationally known experts at the Music for All National Festival, but will also engage in master classes, leadership sessions and other beneficial events to heighten and sharpen their instrumental skills. Through these workshops, students will have the ability to meet independently with professionals and get helpful advice regarding their personal instrument and position within the symphonic band. We are extremely proud of the McMeans Junior High Symphonic Band, and we can't wait to see their success at the National Middle School Concert Band Festival.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the McMeans Junior High Symphonic Band for earning the opportunity to perform at the Music for All National Festival. Keep up the great work.

HONORING MS. ARACELY GOMEZ

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Aracely Gomez, an outstanding individual in the South Florida community.

Ms. Gomez has been recognized as a respected member of the community for her work in social care, substance abuse prevention, and mental health. Ms. Gomez began her career in social work in 2004 as a substance abuse counselor for Collier County Counseling. In her next positions, she moved from purely clinical work to take on increasingly complex advocacy roles. She represented Youth Haven, which cares for neglected and abandoned youth, on the Spanish language program ''Esencias,'' and participated in the Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida's move to integrate behavioral health with traditional primary care. She also worked with the PACE Center for Girls, an organization that works to keep at-risk girls in a safe and productive environment that fosters their growth.

Ms. Gomez also founded Lolita's Hispanic Family Center, which is a family resource center that promotes, implements, and advocates for bilingual, culturally competent evidence-based programs to enhance the quality of life of Hispanic and other minorities in Southwest Florida. In addition, she is also a board member of the Immokalee Housing and Family Services, a facilitator of the Immokalee Interagency Council, and an organizer of Hispanic Women in Healthcare of Collier County.

In each of her positions, Aracely Gomez has demonstrated compassionate care. She is passionate about improving access to behavioral services, especially for minorities. She has worked for established institutions and created new ones where she sees a need. I am privileged to know Ms. Gomez, and admire her commitment to the community. Aracely's efforts have touched the lives of many people in Southwest Florida. She has surpassed many barriers and has brought forth valuable service urgently needed in combating the challenges in mental health, social work and Hispanic outreach in our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Aracely Gomez for her continued service to the State of Florida, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, on March 21 through 22, 2016, I was with the President in Cuba. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On roll call number 130, H.R. 4314, I would have voted YES.

On roll call number 131, Previous Question to H. Res. 653, I would have voted NO.

On roll call number 132, H. Res. 653, I would have voted NO.

On roll call number 133, H. Res. 4742, I would have voted YES.

On roll call number 134, H.R. 4755, I would have voted YES.

On roll call number 135, H.R. 4336, I would have voted YES.

SENATE—*Thursday, March 24, 2016*

The Senate met at 11:00 and 3 seconds a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 24, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2016, AT 11:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 11:30 a.m. on Monday, March 28, 2016.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:00 and 33 seconds a.m., adjourned until Monday, March 28, 2016, at 11:30 a.m.

SENATE—*Monday, March 28, 2016*

The Senate met at 11:30 and 1 second a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SUSAN M. COLLINS, a Senator from the State of Maine.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 28, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SUSAN M. COLLINS, a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Ms. COLLINS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2016, AT 6:30 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2016.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:30 and 39 seconds a.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 31, 2016, at 6:30 p.m.

SENATE—*Thursday, March 31, 2016*

The Senate met at 6:30 and 03 seconds p.m., and was called to order by the Honorable LAMAR ALEXANDER, a Senator from the State of Tennessee.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 31, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable LAMAR ALEXANDER, a Senator from the State of Tennessee, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ALEXANDER thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016 AT 3 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2016.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:30 and 35 seconds p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 4, 2016, at 3 p.m.

SENATE—*Monday, April 4, 2016*

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BILL CASSIDY, a Senator from the State of Louisiana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Worthy God, unto whom all hearts are opened, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, we praise Your Holy Name. You commanded light to shine out of darkness and gave us the gift of this day. Lord, we borrow our heartbeats from You; great is Your faithfulness.

Help our lawmakers to take the long view of their work and to not become weary in doing Your will. Teach them to trust Your wisdom, opening their minds to the counsels of Your sacred Word. Give them the graciousness to humbly serve one another, following Your example of lowliness. Lord, keep them always within the circle of Your will.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 4, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BILL CASSIDY, a Senator from the State of Louisiana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CASSIDY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate majority leader is recognized.

THANKING OUR CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS AND WELCOMING CHIEF MATTHEW VERDEROSA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I welcome our colleagues back from their State work periods. The Senate has gotten a lot done under the new majority, and we will continue our work today.

First, I want to remember the daily sacrifice of our Capitol Police in light of the incident last Monday. Incidents like these remind us of the sacrifices officers make on our behalf each and every day. These brave men and women protect all who work here. They protect the countless visitors from across our Nation and across the world. They defend this symbol of our democracy, and that means putting themselves in harm's way day in and day out. Again, we thank them for it.

We also welcome Capitol Police Chief Matthew Verderosa. Chief Verderosa comes to us with more than three decades of law enforcement experience, and that is a good thing given that this incident occurred just days into his new position. The Chief inherits an able, brave team who works hard every day to keep us safe. We look forward to continuing our close working relationship with the Capitol Police under his leadership.

DEFEND TRADE SECRETS BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the Defend Trade Secrets Act. This bipartisan legislation can help promote growth of the economy, help spur the increase and retention of American jobs, and help protect American innovation in the global economy. It aims to do so by providing tools for American companies both small and large to effectively protect some of their most valuable assets in today's international economy.

American companies spend billions every year on research and development and in the creation of products we use every day. But some thieves would rather not go through the trouble of developing products themselves; they would rather just steal the fruits of others' creativity and innovation. That is more than just wrong; it puts American jobs and the American economy at risk.

American businesses find themselves increasingly under attack from a sophisticated effort to steal the very things that give them a competitive edge in the 21st-century economy—things such as codes, formulas, and confidential manufacturing processes. While it has never been easier for these thieves to launch attacks on innovation, sometimes armed with little more than a jump drive, many American businesses now find themselves less able to protect their important assets under current law.

Senator HATCH knew we had to do something about this. He knew it was time to modernize our trade secret laws to keep pace with rapid advances in technology and in criminal techniques. He knew it was time to streamline and simplify the process for U.S. companies to effectively defend American jobs, American growth, and the American innovation that is increasingly at the heart of our modern economy. Senator HATCH worked across the aisle with Senator COONS to develop the Defend Trade Secrets Act. This bipartisan legislation eventually gained the cosponsorship of a majority of the Senate.

This bipartisan legislation also passed the Judiciary Committee unanimously. That is impressive, and it wouldn't have happened without the able leadership of the chairman of that committee, Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa. Since the new majority took office, Senator GRASSLEY has been a highly effective legislator as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. From comprehensive legislation to address America's opioid epidemic, to protecting the victims of modern slavery, to today's effort to support American innovation, he has received widespread praise from both sides of the aisle for leading a very productive committee. Senator GRASSLEY is a hard worker, and he is again winning kudos on this bill.

The organization that represents America's tech sector said that ''the committee's process has been very open and thoughtful.'' A broad cross section of American businesses wrote that ''the approach to the bill has been consensus-oriented.'' This, they said, ''led to broad and enthusiastic support from a wide range of American organizations and companies . . . representing the technology, medical device, agriculture, biotech, pharmaceutical, automobile, clean energy, consumer products and manufacturing sectors.''

Here is what I say: Today's trade secret theft is high-tech. It is fast moving, and it threatens America's economy, America's jobs, and America's innovation.

I ask that my colleagues join me this evening in voting to fight back on behalf of the American people. I ask them to join me in supporting the bipartisan Defend Trade Secrets Act.

TERRORIST THREATS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in recent weeks we have again been reminded of the pervasive threat posed by Islamic terrorists to the world. We have seen ghastly images in places as diverse as Brussels, Yemen, and Lahore. Attacks seem to be coming nearly weekly now, and it feels as if we hear of a new one almost every time we flip on the news.

Over the weekend, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee delivered an address focused on the threat facing us and what we can ultimately do to overcome it. Senator BURR noted that he could not remember a time when the United States and its allies faced a greater array of threats across the world, which is why, as he put it, ''we cannot simply focus our efforts on how to best respond to attacks once they've already happened.'' Senator BURR spoke on the significance of working with our allies to target threats at every level. He talked about the importance of ensuring that law enforcement has the tools and authorities needed to keep Americans safe. He also underlined the need for President Obama to do more in directly taking on ISIL and made clear that doing so would require leadership that reached beyond the administration's current containment strategy.

It is clear that defeating ISIL, Al Qaeda, and its affiliates will require concerted action by our military, the intelligence community, and international partners around the globe. That is why we have continued to press the administration for a serious plan to defeat these terrorist groups and not simply attempt to contain them. In addition to the ongoing air campaign, the President has lauded deploying special operations forces to target and pursue ISIL. It is a positive step, but a credible ground force will be needed to defeat ISIL.

As Senator BURR put it, ''We're beyond containment and must move decisively and with purpose to eliminate the Islamic State.''

''The President,'' he continued, has accurately stated ''that 'ISIL poses a threat to the entire civilized world.' Now is the time for our strategy to match that threat.''

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 636, the vehicle we will use for FAA reauthorization.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

DEFEND TRADE SECRETS BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand why my friend the Republican leader is doing everything he can to shine a bright light on the Judiciary Committee. It is kind of hard to do that considering everything that is going on today. The bill that we will vote on at 5:30 p.m. would have passed with unanimous consent, and everybody knows that. We don't need to take up the Senate's time on a bill that would pass just like that. We are doing it because it focuses less attention on the inadequacy of the Judiciary Committee. The Defend Trade Secrets Act was easily reported out of committee. There were no problems. It was a bill on which everybody agreed. There may be some reasons for it, but I don't see why the Judiciary Committee should be given a few pats on the back. The problem is that the committee does not deserve any pats on the back at this stage.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, as U.S. Senators we have a constitutional obligation to consider nominees to important positions. That is one of our constitutional responsibilities. Judges play an essential role in our society, and we should give qualified nominees the fair shot they deserve. Sadly, the Republican Senate has refused to do its job. They have a new standard: Unless the judge-to-be passes the test on the National Rifle Association, as stated by the Republican leader on national TV, they can't vote for him.

The Judiciary Committee has been hammered—and that is an understatement—day after day in the State of Iowa, the home State of the chairman of the committee. This is a headline from the largest newspaper in the State, the Des Moines Register: ''Grassley leads slowdown of judicial confirmations.'' Here is what this headline is all about:

The Republican-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee and its Chairman, Senator Grassley, have fallen far behind any comparable Senate in confirming judicial nominations.

Reading directly from the Des Moines Register article:

Even before the current controversy over consideration of a Supreme Court justice, action on federal court nominations has slowed markedly since U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley took control of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Since Republicans won a Senate majority in 2014, the number of President Obama's nominees winning confirmation to the bench has fallen compared with previous years and long-term averages, as have the number advancing out of Grassley's Judiciary Committee, according to data from the Congressional Research Service and the federal judiciary.

The article also quotes Professor Sheldon Goldman, an expert on judicial confirmations from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He said: ''With Republicans taking over the Senate, the strategy has been to obstruct, delay and slow-walk these nominees at every stage of the process.''

Statistics from the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service confirmed Professor Goldman's assertion. Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, the Judiciary Committee is grinding the nomination process to a halt. The number of judicial nominations confirmed in this Congress is the worst. To date, this Republican-controlled Senate has confirmed only 16 judicial nominations. That is one judge a month.

Contrast that with the last years of George W. Bush's Presidency. We had a Democratic Senate and we had a Republican President. Then-Democratic Chair LEAHY and his Senate colleagues confirmed 40 judges—40 confirmations compared to 16 under Chairman GRASSLEY. The numbers speak for themselves.

But to better understand the dysfunction of Senator GRASSLEY's committee, we have to consider the slow pace at which he and Republicans are reporting judicial nominations. We have to go back more than six decades to find a Senate Judiciary Committee that was less productive than Chairman GRASSLEY's committee is today.

Republicans will doubtless claim that their committee has stopped working because it is the last year of Obama's Presidency. That is simply nonsense. In 1988—President Reagan's last year—the Senate Judiciary Committee reported circuit and district court nominations as late as October. The Senate considered President Reagan's, President Clinton's, and President George W. Bush's judicial nominations in the eighth year of their terms, and many other Presidents were treated the same way.

The Republican leader is on the record advocating for the confirmation of judicial nominees in a President's last year in office. This is what the Republican leader said in July of 2008: ''Even with lameduck Presidents, there is a historical standard of fairness as to confirming judicial nominees, especially circuit court nominees.'' Those are the Republican leader's own words. Yet now he refuses to extend that ''historical standard of fairness'' to President Obama's nominees. Why are Republicans changing the rules for President Obama's nominees?

Given that the chairman of the Judiciary Committee refused to attend to the judiciary, how is the Republican Committee spending its time? We know Chairman GRASSLEY's committee is refusing to consider President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Chief Judge Merrick Garland. We know Chairman

GRASSLEY's committee is refusing to adequately report district and circuit court nominees.

This much is clear: The Republican Judiciary Committee is not doing its job. Instead, the senior Senator from Iowa is taking his marching orders from the Republican leader and has instituted a blockade of judicial nominations at every level. The once proud and powerful Judiciary Committee, established hundreds of years ago, has become a mere shadow of its former self. He has turned the once powerful and independent Judiciary Committee into an extension of the Republican leader's office.

This is the same gridlock the Republican leader has imposed upon the Senate for the last 8 years. Since his party assumed the majority in the Senate last January, the Republican leader's carefully orchestrated obstruction of judicial nominations has accelerated to historical levels and judicial emergencies have tripled.

My friend—we have served together in the Senate for decades—can come to the floor all the time to speak about the success of the Senate. No matter how many times you say a falsehood, it is still false.

Senator MCCONNELL once declared himself the ''proud guardian of gridlock.'' Senator GRASSLEY has become his most willing disciple. It is disappointing that the senior Senator from Iowa has surrendered his committee to the Republican leader.

The lack of progress on judges should alarm Members of the Senate—even Republican Senators. Take, for example, the nomination of a man by the name of Waverly Crenshaw, who was recommended by Senators ALEXANDER and CORKER to be a district judge in the Middle District of Tennessee. Mr. Crenshaw is a superb nominee who has broken barriers all of his life. He is currently a partner at a well-renowned law firm in Nashville where he became the first African-American partner in 1990. The senior Senator from Tennessee said that Mr. Crenshaw would be ''an excellent federal district judge.'' I agree. He was reported out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously in July of 2015—almost 10 months ago.

The vacancy in the Middle District of Tennessee is a judicial emergency, meaning there are more cases than the judges on the court can handle. The junior Senator from Tennessee said: ''I know there is a tremendous load of work in the Nashville office that needs to get done, and we've talked a great deal with the other judges there and know this position needs to be confirmed.''

Last month, the Senators from Maryland asked to bring the Crenshaw nomination to a vote, but the assistant Republican leader objected. Both Senators brought this forward. The objection was the same. The senior Senator from Texas said it will lead to ''chaos'' to schedule a vote on Mr. Crenshaw.

Chaos is exactly what the Republicans are bringing to the judiciary. From the Supreme Court, to the circuit courts, to the district courts, our entire judicial branch of government is under siege by this Republican Senate. After they have crippled the judiciary, the Republican leader and Chairman GRASSLEY want to hand it over to Donald Trump. That would be disastrous. That is not what the American people want. They want Republicans to do their constitutional duty and give these judges due consideration. That is not asking too much.

So I say to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee: Stop blocking these nominees. Do what other Judiciary chairs have done for 200 years and move the process forward. These nominations are important. Or, put simply, do your job. This—a historic slowdown of judicial confirmations—isn't your job, and it is not what the people of Iowa sent you here to do, as indicated by the Des Moines Register: ''Grassley leads slowdown of judicial confirmations.''

Mr. President, I see no one here wanting to speak. Would the Chair announce the business for the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING DR. JOSEPH MEDICINE CROW

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, yesterday Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow passed away after a long life at the age of 102. Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow leaves an unmatched legacy as the Crow Tribe's historian and storyteller, a decorated World War II veteran, and the first member of the Crow Tribe to ever obtain a master's degree.

Medicine Crow lived a life filled with numerous accomplishments. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and joined the 103rd Infantry Division. As a proud member of the Crow Tribe, he never went into battle without his war paint beneath his uniform and a sacred Eagle feather beneath his helmet. In fact, during World War II he achieved the war deeds to be declared chief. In 2006 his personal memoir, ''Counting Coup'' was published by National Geographic. When he earned the Medal of Freedom in 2009, our Nation's highest civilian honor, the White House identified him as both ''a warrior and a living legend.'' He is considered one of the most celebrated Native American soldiers due to his selfless service in World War II.

Medicine Crow's spirit, his humility, and his life achievements leave a lasting imprint on Montana's history. I personally will never forget the time I got to shake his hand and greet him and thank him for his service to our country.

I wish to express my deepest condolences to Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow's family and all of the Crow Nation.

REMEMBERING RUSS RITTER

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I wish to speak about Russ Ritter.

This past week longtime Helena mayor and dedicated public servant Russ Ritter passed away at the age of 83.

Russ was one of those guys who really made a notable difference in Montana, especially in our State capital of Helena. He was a true inspiration for Montanans seeking public office, and he was the first person to inspire others to run for mayor, including our current mayor, Jim Smith.

Russ was instrumental in the construction of a 10-mile water treatment plant. That was a big-ticket expenditure on the part of the city, and all bonds are now paid off and the plant is up and running. I might suggest that Washington, DC, could take a few lessons from Russ Ritter. During Russ's time, Helena transformed the solid waste system, and he also helped automate the system. He provided true management of the city and improved it for generations to come by helping prevent the spread of diseases and creating a healthier Helena.

Russ also had a soft spot in his heart for the USS *Helena*, the nuclear powered submarine. He went to the christening of the launch in 1986 and spent 9 days on the USS *Helena* underwater.

Another great story about Russ was reported recently in the Helena Independent Record:

Russ met President Ronald Reagan in Billings on August 11, 1982. But this meeting, one for which their father had planned and prepared his remarks, the children said, did not go as envisioned. Russ greeted the President by saying, ''Hello, mister mayor, I'm

the President of Helena,'' to which Reagan responded, ''No, I think you've got that wrong,'' Mike said. ''This left their father a bit flustered,'' Mike continued, adding that Russ made his living talking to people and always knew the right thing to say.

On behalf of Montanans and the people of Helena, we thank Russ for his selfless service and will never forget his legacy on the history of our State.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MADE-IN-MONTANA ENERGY

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, made-in-Montana energy means good Montana jobs that on average pay two to three times more than the State average. In fact, Montana's ability to create more good-paying energy jobs is immense. Our State leads the Nation in recoverable coal deposits. We are the Nation's fifth largest producer of hydropower, with 23 hydroelectric dams across the State, and we are fifth in wind energy potential.

In fact, Montana was center stage in the national energy debate and provides our Nation a template of a true ''all of the above'' energy portfolio. We have coal, natural gas, oil, as well as renewables such as hydro, wind, biomass, and solar opportunities.

What makes our State most valuable are the people who make our energy systems work—towns such as Colstrip, MT, that build communities around livelihoods that are reliant on good-paying energy jobs. That is the good news.

Here is the bad news: Montana energy jobs are under assault. Over the past 2 weeks, I heard from Montanans about the future and importance of made-in-Montana energy and made-in-Montana good-paying jobs. During my week-long tour across our State, I once again saw our vast natural resources and our true energy potential, whether it was touring a wind farm near Baker, MT, on the far eastern side of our State, or seeing the hydropower facility at Helena's Hauser Dam, or hosting a townhall at Colstrip. I was hearing directly from the community about the devastating impacts that President Obama's anti-coal regulations will have on hard-working Montanans.

My statewide energy tour culminated this past week at Montana Energy 2016, where over 600 people gathered in Billings, MT, for a Montana family conversation about our State's energy future. During that 2½-day summit, we heard a consistent and powerful message about the need to maximize our opportunity for growth and expand made-in-Montana energy and the good-paying jobs it supports.

Montanans are leading American energy innovation; for example, Montanans such as Chrystal Cuniff, a Montana tech engineer from Choteau, who helped drill the deepest well in the Gulf of Mexico, or Ryan Lance, a Montana native, a graduate of Montana Tech, who is leading one of the largest oil and gas companies in the world, or Ashley Dennehey from Colstrip, who highlighted how the boilermakers, operators, and other hard-working labor groups in her community are working hard to keep the lights on in the face of adversity.

We must continue investing in our 2-year colleges that provide training in trades such as welding and heavy machine operations so we can keep our kids in Montana with good, high-paying energy jobs. In fact, Business Insider released a map that shows how hard these times are for millenials, highlighting their median income across the United States. Montana ranked 50th, dead last, at a median income of $18,000 a year for millenials.

We cannot forget that Montana coal provides tax revenues of $145 million a year which supports our teachers and our schools. Montana should lead the world in developing clean coal technology. We must continue to develop renewable technologies that will store the power created by wind.

The bottom line is, we should not allow Washington, DC, and the Obama administration to dictate and regulate coal and gas out of existence. We need more made-in-Montana energy, not more made-in-the-Middle-East energy. Make no mistake, President Obama's Environmental Protection Agency and their regulations are killing Montana energy.

Our country's future is very bright if we could unleash the power of innovation and rein in the overregulation of Washington, DC. I couldn't agree more with what Darrin Old Coyote, chairman of the Crow Nation tribes, said in his keynote address at Montana Energy 2016 in Billings just last Thursday. He said this: ''All of Montana citizens need to work together for a better tomorrow: renewable energy, fossil energy, conventional energy, Indian or non-Indian, regardless of political affiliation, whether we are Democrats, Republicans or Independents.''

Montanans can find better solutions than Washington, DC, bureaucrats.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INSPECTOR GENERAL EMPOWERMENT ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this body was last in session during Sunshine Week, but the principle of government transparency is one that does not expire. So I would like to take a few moments now to reiterate my support for that timeless principle.

Open government is good government. And Americans have a right to a government that is accountable to its people. In 1978, following the lessons learned from the Watergate scandal, Congress created Inspectors General—or IGs—to be our eyes and ears within the executive branch. These independent watchdogs are designed to keep Congress and the public informed about waste, fraud, and abuse in government. But they also help agency leaders identify problems and inefficiencies that they may not be aware of. So IGs are critical to good governance and to the rule of law.

But in order for these watchdogs to do their jobs, IGs need access to agency records. That is why the law authorizes IGs to access ''all'' records of the agency that they're charged with overseeing. However, since 2010, more and more agencies have refused to comply with this legal obligation. This obstruction has slowed down far too many important investigations—ranging from sexual assaults in the Peace Corps to the FBI's exercise of anti-terrorism authorities under the PATRIOT Act.

Last July, the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel aided and abetted the obstruction by issuing a memo defending it. That memo has given cover to other agencies to follow the FBI's lead and withhold records from their IGs.

According to OLC's 66-page opinion, Congress didn't really mean to give IGs access to ''all records''—even though that is literally what we spelled out in the law. Think about that for a second. One unelected bureaucrat in the Justice Department thinks he can overturn the will of 535 elected officials in Congress and the President who signed the bill into law. That is unacceptable, and Americans are tired of stunts like this that undermine democracy and the rule of law, and make a mockery of government transparency.

The public deserves robust scrutiny of the federal government. So, since September, a bipartisan group of Senators and I have been working to overturn the OLC opinion through S. 579,

the Inspector General Empowerment Act. Among other things, this bill includes further clarification that Congress intended IGs to access all agency records, notwithstanding any other provision of law, unless other laws specifically state that IGs are not to receive such access.

We attempted to pass this bill by unanimous consent in September. Since then, the cosponsors and I have worked hard in good faith to accommodate the concerns of any and all Senators willing to work with us. As a result, this bill now has a total of 17 cosponsors, including 7 of my esteemed Democratic colleagues: Senators MCCASKILL, CARPER, MIKULSKI, WYDEN, BALDWIN, MANCHIN, and PETERS. I want to thank each and every one of them for standing up with me for Inspectors General and for the principles of good governance.

In December, we attempted to pass this bipartisan bill by unanimous consent. The bill cleared the Republican side with no objection, but the bill was objected to on the Democratic side.

So, let's do the math. None of the 54 Republican Senators objected. There are seven Democrat cosponsors. That is at least 61 votes—at least. If this bill came up for a vote, it would certainly pass easily. It was developed hand-in-hand over many months with both Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives, which is ready to move an identical bill as soon as we act here in the Senate.

So, on December 15, Senators MCCASKILL, JOHNSON, and I attempted to pass this bill by a process known as a live unanimous consent. Our goal was to pass the bill right then and there, and we could have, had a Senator not objected. However, the minority leader, Senator REID stood up and objected. The minority leader obstructed a bill sponsored by seven Senators of his own party. Senator REID refused to give any reason for obstructing this bipartisan bill, both at that time and later when questioned by reporters. All he would say publicly was that a Senator on his side of the aisle had concerns.

Apparently, Senator REID is now telling the press that his concerns relate to provisions of the bill that give IGs the power to subpoena testimony from former federal employees. In a moment, I will explain why this authority is absolutely vital to the ability of IGs to conduct effective investigations. But before I do that, I want to make one thing crystal clear. My bipartisan cosponsors and I have been working in good faith to address these concerns for 5 months—since November 2015. In those 5 months, we have offered at least half a dozen accommodations that would limit the subpoena authority in question. So we have offered reasonable compromises, but the one or two Senators who object to this provision appear to be demanding it be removed from the bill entirely.

Let me tell you why we cannot do that. When employees of the U.S. government are accused of wrongdoing or misconduct, IGs should be able to conduct a full and thorough investigation of those allegations. Getting to the bottom of these allegations is necessary to restore the public trust. Unfortunately, employees who may have violated that trust are often allowed to evade the IG's inquiry, by simply retiring from the government. So the bill empowers IGs to obtain testimony from employees like this.

Similarly, the bill helps IGs better expose waste, fraud, and abuse by those who receive Federal funds. It enables IGs to require testimony from government contractors and subcontractors and grantees and sub-grantees. Currently, most IGs can subpoena documents from entities from outside their agency. However, most cannot subpoena testimony, although a few can. For example, the Inspectors General for the Defense Department and the Department of Health and Human Services already have this authority.

The ability to require witnesses outside the agency to talk to the IG can be critical in carrying out an inspector general's statutory duties or recovering wasted federal funds. But I want to be clear: the bill also imposes limitations on the authority of IGs to require testimony.

There are several procedural protections in place to ensure that this authority is exercised wisely. For example, the subpoena must first be approved by a majority of a designated panel of three other IGs. It is then referred to the Attorney General. For those IGs that can already subpoena witness testimony, I am not aware of any instance in which it has been misused.

In fact, the Inspector General for the Department of Defense has established a policy that spells out additional procedures and safeguards to ensure that subjects of subpoenas are treated fairly. I am confident that the rest of the IG community will be just as scrupulous in providing appropriate protections for the use of this authority as well. You see, we all win when IGs can do their jobs. And most importantly, the public is better served when IGs are able to shine light into government operations and stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

This is a common sense, bipartisan bill that should have passed by unanimous consent. It overturns an OLC opinion that has been roundly criticized by nearly everyone who has read it. For example, the New York Times editorial board recently urged us to pass this bill so that we can allow IGs to do their jobs. But Senator REID is standing in the way of the Senate doing its job.

The Washington Post editorial board and the Project on Government Oversight have also called on us to fix this IG access problem. At a Judiciary Committee hearing in August, Senator LEAHY said that this access problem is ''blocking what was once a free flow of information.'' Senator LEAHY also called for a permanent legislative solution.

Even the Justice Department witness at that hearing disagreed with the results of the OLC opinion and supported legislative action to solve the problem. But, to all of that, Senator REID said ''no.''

Make no mistake: by blocking this bipartisan, good-government bill, Senator REID is muzzling watchdogs, and the public is being robbed of their right to an accountable government. What is it about independent Inspector General oversight that the minority leader is afraid of? Remember, the public is better served when IGs are able to shine light into government operations and stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

And the public is beginning to take notice of Senator REID'S obstruction. Just last week, the Las Vegas Review-Journal—which is the largest circulating daily newspaper in the minority leader's home State—published an article discussing his obstruction. Let me just take a moment to read a quote from this article:

> U.S. Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada received a government watchdog group's dubious honor . . . for blocking a bill to back inspectors general in their battles against waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement and refusing to provide a full explanation on why he did so.

Then, just over this weekend, the editorial board of this same newspaper wrote an opinion piece entitled, ''Let the sun shine in.'' Let me just read an excerpt from this article:

> Because Sen. Grassley's bill has attracted bipartisan support, and because Republicans and Democrats jointly have objected to efforts to thwart IGs from doing their jobs, we're confident that compromise is possible . . . . We urge Sens. Reid and Grassley to work together to pass this important legislation as quickly as possible.

As I mentioned earlier, the bipartisan group of cosponsors and I have already offered half a dozen accommodations to address the concerns related to the subpoena authority provision. All of those offers are still on the table, and we stand ready to work with Senator REID and the other Senator to get this bill done; in a way that improves IG access to both documents and witness testimony.

Remember, the Inspector General Act was passed in 1978, following one of the worst political scandals in American history. Today, at least 61 Senators, the Las Vegas Review-Journal, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and good governance groups like POGO and Citizens Against Government Waste, all support restoring the intent of that act—through S. 579. This

bill would redeem the free flow of information that Senator LEAHY advocated in August. And every day that goes by without overturning the OLC opinion is another day that watchdogs across the government can be stonewalled.

Let me be clear. Only one Senator is publicly standing in the way of fixing this problem. Who is the obstructionist here? Who is not doing their job? We need to find a way to get this bill done. Especially now, we need to focus on the things we can agree on. When there is something with this much bipartisan support, it should be a no-brainer. One or two Senators should not be allowed to stand in the way.

I urge my colleagues to work with me to get S. 579 passed so that IGs can resume doing the work that we asked them to do in 1978.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

DEFEND TRADE SECRETS BILL

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Defend Trade Secrets Act, which is before us today. I thank Senators HATCH and COONS for their important work on this bill and Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member LEAHY for their leadership as well.

Stolen trade secrets cost American companies—and thus their workers—billions of dollars each year and threaten their ability to innovate and compete globally. This bill will help protect vital intellectual property, and I am pleased to be a cosponsor.

Trade secrets are the lifeblood of so many businesses in American. Stealing those ideas can wipe out years of research by employees and development and cost millions of dollars in losses because competitors—those that steal the secrets—reap the benefits of innovation without putting in any of the work. Although measuring the total cost of trade secret theft is difficult, one study using multiple approaches estimates the yearly cost at 1 to 3 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product.

Today, as much as 80 percent of companies' assets are intangible, the majority of them in the form of trade secrets. This includes everything from financial, business, scientific, technical, economic, and engineering information to formulas, designs, prototypes, processes, procedures, and computer code. Trade secret theft poses a particular risk for my home State of Minnesota, which has a strong tradition of innovation and bringing technological advances to the marketplace. Our companies have brought the world everything from the pacemaker to the Post-it Notes. Protecting their intellectual property is critical to their economic success, critical to our businesses, and, most importantly, critical to the workers and employees who make their living in American businesses.

Here are some examples of what we are talking about and the costs when trade secret thefts occur.

In 2011 a former employee of the Minnesota agricultural company Cargill stole trade secrets of Cargill and Dow Chemical regarding a product and gave them to a Chinese university. The two companies suffered combined losses of over $7 million. Fortunately, the former employee was caught, convicted, and received 87 months in prison—the strongest sentence possible. But look at the loss that occurred—$7 million.

That same year, an employee of a Minnesota paint company, Valspar, tried to steal $20 million worth of chemical formulas to give to a Chinese company in exchange for a high-ranking job. That really happened. The authorities caught him before he completed his theft, and he received a sentence of 15 months in jail.

But too many thefts go unprosecuted, and the costs go beyond simply dollars and cents. Medical device makers Medtronic and Boston Scientific hope to bring advanced care to patients in China. These companies would like to do even more but fear they won't be able to protect sensitive proprietary technology, and that holds them back. Stronger protection of trade secrets will benefit consumers across the world as well as trade secret owners.

In 1996 Congress enacted the Economic Espionage Act, which made economic espionage and trade secret theft a Federal crime. Nearly 20 years later, the threat of trade secret theft has grown. Thumb drives and the cloud have replaced file cabinets for storage information, making stealing a trade secret as easy as clicking a button or touching a screen. Trade secret theft threatens not just businesses but jobs and, certainly, innovation.

Protecting the intellectual property of American businesses needs 21st century solutions. The Defend Trade Secrets Act demonstrates our commitment at the Federal level to protect all forms of a business's intellectual property. This balanced bill gives companies two more tools to effectively protect their trade secrets.

First, a party can seek an ex parte court order to seize stolen trade secrets to prevent their destruction or dissemination. To prevent abuse, the requirements to obtain an order are rigorous, access to the seized material is limited, and it is only available in what are considered ''extraordinary circumstances.''

Second, the bill creates a Federal private right of action for trade secret theft. Companies will be able to rely on a national standard to efficiently protect their intellectual property.

Securing the trade secrets of American businesses and their employees is a serious issue and needs to be addressed, and I urge my colleagues to support the Defend Trade Secrets Act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, later this evening, the Senate will vote on the Defend Trade Secrets Act, a bill that will enable U.S. businesses to protect their trade secrets in Federal court. Senator CHRIS COONS and I have been working on this legislation in a bipartisan way for nearly 2 years, so it is really satisfying to see the Senate poised to vote on this important bill.

To date, the legislation has 65 bipartisan cosponsors, including the distinguished Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, CHUCK GRASSLEY, and ranking member, the distinguished Senator PAT LEAHY. I appreciate their support for this bill.

I also commend our House colleagues, Representatives DOUG COLLINS and JERROLD NADLER, for their tireless efforts—and others over there as well. They have been invaluable partners in advancing this legislation in the House of Representatives. Working under the capable leadership of my dear friend, House Judiciary Committee Chairman BOB GOODLATTE, we have come together to right an inequity facing U.S. businesses by creating a civil remedy for trade secret misappropriation.

Trade secrets—such as customer lists, formulas, algorithms, software codes, unique designs, industrial techniques, and manufacturing processes—are an essential form of intellectual property. Other forms of intellectual property, such as patents, copyrights, and trademarks, are covered by Federal civil law. Trade secrets, by contrast, are the only form of U.S. intellectual property where the owner does not have access to a Federal civil remedy for misuse or misappropriation. As a result, billions of dollars each year are lost to trade secret theft, which stifles innovation by deterring companies from investing in research and development.

Currently, the only Federal vehicle for trade secret protection is the 1996 Economic Espionage Act, which makes trade secret theft by foreign nationals a criminal offense. But this remedy criminalizes only a small subset of trade secret theft and relies on the thinly stretched resources of the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute such offenses.

One experienced trade secret practitioner told me recently that the Justice Department typically only considers prosecuting cases with more

than $100,000 in damages. This is because trade secret investigations and prosecutions are more resource intensive and complex than most other Federal crimes, requiring a deep technological and scientific background. Given these constraints, the Justice Department and the FBI are reluctant to commit scarce resources to investigate and prosecute a single matter, especially when the same effort could result in the prosecution and conviction of other Federal crimes.

Therefore, it is not surprising that in the 20 years since the Economic Espionage Act became law, Federal prosecutors have charged only about 300 defendants for economic espionage or trade secret theft. And because these cases frequently involve multiple defendants, this equates to an average of about 10 prosecutions annually. Clearly, current Federal law is inadequate in resolving the many challenges our businesses face in today's innovation economy.

State laws have proven inadequate to protect victims of trade secret theft. Since most businesses today operate across one or more State lines, having a uniform set of standards that defines legal protections for trade secrets is crucial. That was the rationale behind creating the Uniform Trade Secrets Act, which sought to achieve nationwide uniformity in trade secret law. But over time, most States have adopted their own trade secret laws. In fact, State laws today are perhaps even more variable in their treatment of trade secrets than they were at the time the Uniform Trade Secrets Act was proposed in 1979. This next mixed bag of differing legal regimes forces victims of trade secret theft to wade through a quagmire of procedural hurdles in order to recover their losses.

For example, if an attorney needs testimony from a witness in another State, she must first apply to her local court, asking that it request the other State to issue its own subpoena for the document or deposition. This process can take weeks, which is an eternity in a trade secret case. Under a uniform Federal standard, the process would be far more efficient. That is because all Federal courts apply the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, allowing attorneys to obtain documents and testimony from a witness in another State without having to apply to that State's court system. Essentially, enabling businesses to protect their trade secrets in Federal court removes an unnecessary and time-consuming layer of bureaucracy.

Streamlining access to remedies is critical in trade secret cases where an expedited judicial process may be necessary to deal with thieves who pose a flight risk. Unfortunately, once a company's intellectual property is leaked and the information is made public, the trade secret loses its legal protection.

Put simply, State law is designed for intrastate litigation and offers limited practical recourse to victims of interstate trade secret theft—the contrast between intrastate and interstate. Maintaining the status quo is woefully insufficient to safeguard against misappropriation. U.S. companies must be able to protect their trade secrets in Federal court.

The Defend Trade Secrets Act will do precisely that by providing trade secret owners access to both a uniform national law and the ability to make their case in Federal courts. Likewise, the bill allows victims of trade secret theft to obtain a seizure order in extraordinary circumstances. This type of order would allow misappropriated property to be seized so that it isn't abused during the pendency of litigation. To ensure that companies do not use the seizure authority for anti-competitive purposes, this legislation requires those seeking redress to make a rigorous showing that they own the trade secret, that the trade secret was stolen, and that third parties would not be harmed if an ex parte order were granted. The bill also allows for employees to move from one job to another without fear of being wrongfully charged with trade secret theft.

In addition to the overwhelming bipartisan support among my Senate colleagues, more than 50 companies and associations have endorsed the Defend Trade Secrets Act. Leaders in the technology, life sciences, manufacturing, energy, automotive, agricultural, and telecommunications sectors support this bill, among others.

Many letters and opinion pieces have been written in support of the bill. Let me briefly share some of the comments from our Nation's business leaders.

In an op-ed published in The Hill, Aric Newhouse from the National Association of Manufacturers states, ''The [Defend Trade Secrets Act] encourages investment in cutting-edge research and development and will have an immediate, positive impact on our innovative sector, ultimately creating jobs and opportunity in manufacturing in the United States.''

In a piece published by the Washington Times, David Hirschmann from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce writes, ''The Defend Trade Secrets Act creates a federal civil cause of action that currently does not exist. Creating a new federal civil cause of action will help industry help itself.''

In an op-ed in the Washington Examiner, Mark Lauroesch from the Intellectual Property Owners Association writes, ''Every day without this law, our companies are losing millions of dollars to trade secret theft.''

Victoria Espinel from the BSA Software Alliance writes in the Huffington Post, ''The Defend Trade Secrets Act would provide that important, missing remedy, and help usher in the harmonized system that will benefit not only software innovation but our entire American economy.''

Guy Blalock from Utah's IM Flash writes in the Salt Lake Tribune, ''Enacting the bill will have an immediate, positive impact on innovative companies that create jobs in this country.''

In a joint op-ed published in the Salt Lake Tribune, Rich Nelson from the Utah Technology Council and Lane Beattie from the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce write that the Defend Trade Secrets Act ''equips business owners with the tools they need to combat trade secret theft.''

Finally, Eli Lilly's Michael Harrington and Microsoft's Erich Andersen in an op-ed published in Forbes write, ''This thoughtful and carefully considered legislation will adapt America's trade secret regime to reflect 21st Century realities and will strengthen this critical form of intellectual property.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the op-eds from which I have quoted following my remarks.

Throughout my 40 years of service, I have been a part of almost every significant intellectual property initiative that has come before the Senate—from the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which sought to streamline our copyright system for the digital era, to the America Invents Act, which overhauled our patent system to help ensure American innovators' property rights are adequately protected in the 21st century.

Legislating in the area of intellectual property requires patience and perseverance. The bill on which we are voting tonight has been 2 years in the making. Initially, providing a Federal standard and civil remedies for trade secrets had little support. It took much effort not only to identify the precise nature of the problem—a problem that amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars in economic loss for U.S. companies annually—but also to develop a solution that could garner the support of virtually all stakeholders. This required soliciting input from a broad range of interests and working closely with dozens of trade associations, affected businesses, and policymakers on both sides of the aisle. The final version of the legislation that the Senate will pass later this evening reflects input and additions from a broad coalition of interested parties.

It also reflects a number of instances where a careful balance had to be struck between competing interests. As has been true of several recent intellectual property efforts, the interests of the technology sector and the pharmaceutical industry are not always aligned. The same was true when it came to trade secrets. Yet we worked hard to develop a solution that could meet the needs of both. This balance is perhaps best exemplified by the joint

op-ed I mentioned a moment ago, coauthored by the general counsel of one of America's leading pharmaceutical companies and a senior executive from one of America's prominent tech companies.

As chairman of the Senate Republican High-Tech Task Force and coauthor of the Hatch-Waxman Act, I know how critical it is to strike the right balance such that both high-tech and life science industries can support a bill. We have struck that balance with the Defend Trade Secrets Act.

Not only will we succeed in defending the trade secrets of American businesses, I hope the passage of the bill will serve as a springboard to spur congressional action in other areas of intellectual property, including patent litigation reforms. I commend in particular House Judiciary Committee Chairman BOB GOODLATTE for his steadfast work in this regard, and I stand ready to do everything in my power to help him in this endeavor.

Tonight's passage of fundamental trade secret law reform would be a significant achievement at any time, let alone in the challenging partisan environment we face today. Indeed, today's Senate vote is not only a watershed moment for the intellectual property and business communities; it is also an example of what Congress can accomplish when we put our party politics aside and focus on areas of agreement. Throughout my Senate service, I have always sought, whenever possible, to seek common ground in order to advance public policy priorities that will benefit the American people and the American economy. With this bill, we have done just that.

I want to thank Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL for leading the Senate in such a way to make constructive bipartisan legislating possible. I appreciate his support for this legislation and his willingness to devote valuable floor time to help ensure its passage. Tonight we will add the Defend Trade Secrets Act to a long list of legislation the Senate has passed in the last 15 months since the senior Senator from Kentucky assumed leadership of the U.S. Senate. This is yet another example that the Senate is back to work for the American people.

I also want to take this moment to thank the staff members who have been instrumental in getting us to this point. Let me start by thanking my senior judiciary counsel, Matt Sandgren, whose relentless determination helped make tonight a reality. I also thank my chief of staff, Rob Porter, for his unmatchable leadership in shepherding this bill forward. Together, Matt and Rob have been an invincible team, working hand in glove throughout this process. I personally appreciate their excellent work.

I also recognize my superb press team for their efforts, J.P. Freire, Matt Whitlock, and Sam Lyman. I am also appreciative of my dedicated law clerks, Ryan Karr and Jaclyn D'Esposito.

I also acknowledge the important contributions of Senator COONS' current and former staff: Ted Schroeder, Andrew Crawford, Erica Songer, and Jonathan Stahler.

There are also several staff on the Senate Judiciary Committee who have been instrumental in helping with this key intellectual property bill: Rita Lari Jochum, Jonathan Nabavi, Alexandra Givens, Danielle Cutrona, Eric Haren, Lee Holmes, Lartease Tiffith, Gary Barnett, Daniel Swanson, Ray Starling, Ethan Arenson, Chad Rhoades, and Sam Simon.

I also acknowledge the following House staff for their hard work and commitment to this bill: Shelley Husband, Branden Ritchie, Jennifer Choudhry, Sally Larson, Jason Everett, and David Greengrass.

Finally, I thank the many staff members from majority leader MITCH MCCONNELL and minority leader HARRY REID who helped to make this bill's passage a reality. I wish to especially thank Laura Dove, Sharon Soderstrom, Hazen Marshall, John Abegg, Chris Tuck, and Ayesha Khanna.

Enacting meaningful public policy reform in the midst of a contentious Presidential election is something to celebrate. In very real ways, this bill will help strengthen our economy and allow businesses to grow and create additional jobs for hard-working Americans. I hope my colleagues will join me in safeguarding American ingenuity by voting for the Defend Trade Secrets Act. They will not be sorry by doing that.

I understand Senator COONS is here, and I want to recognize him and all the work he has done with me on this bill. He is a wonderful partner on the Judiciary Committee, and I personally appreciate him very much.

With that, I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From The Hill, Mar. 10, 2016]

US MANUFACTURERS TO CONGRESS: KEEP US COMPETITIVE, PASS TRADE SECRETS LEGISLATION

(By Aric Newhouse)

Trade secrets, an essential form of intellectual property, are among the most valued business assets for manufacturers. They can include everything from the special recipe for a food or beverage to the formula for a chemical or pharmaceutical. This proprietary information powers the innovation on a shop floor, which drives job creation at facilities in communities across our country.

Trade secrets can comprise as much as 80 percent of the value of a company's knowledge portfolio, and according to one estimate, theft costs businesses in this country some $250 billion a year. The current system desperately needs to be updated to provide the owners of trade secrets the ability to pursue intellectual property thieves aggressively and efficiently, in full cooperation with the federal government.

While patent, copyright and trademark owners can protect their rights in federal court, trade secret owners must instead rely on an array of state law remedies that were designed with small-scale, intrastate theft in mind. Although those laws may be sufficient and appropriate when, for example, an employee takes a former employer's customer list to a competitor down the street, they are ill-suited for the fast-moving, multijurisdictional cases in today's global economy.

Fortunately, there is important, bipartisan legislation that would fill this gap and assist manufacturers in pursuing trade secret thieves and protecting intellectual property. The Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 (DTSA)—a bipartisan, bicameral bill led by Sens. Orrin Hatch (R–Utah) and Chris Coons (D–Del.) and Reps. Doug Collins (R–Ga.) and Jerrold Nadler (D–N.Y.)—creates a federal civil cause of action for trade secret misappropriation to unify trade secrets law nationwide. The bill would also offer trade secrets owners the same legal options as owners of other forms of intellectual property.

The National Association of Manufacturers has long supported a federal civil remedy for trade secret theft and urges passage of DTSA. The consensus-oriented approach of the legislation has drawn strong support from all industry groups and manufacturing subsectors, including biotech, pharmaceutical, medical device, automotive, agriculture and beyond.

Trade secrets are vital to the competitiveness of companies throughout our economy, and the threat to these innovations is becoming more serious and more complex. By creating a strong, uniform body of trade secrets law nationwide, the DTSA ensures that our laws keep pace.

Congress should move quickly to pass this important legislation because strong trade secrets protection is critical to the American economy and to manufacturers' competitive advantage in the global economy. The DTSA encourages investment in cutting-edge research and development and will have an immediate, positive impact on our innovative sector, ultimately creating jobs and opportunity in manufacturing in the United States.

[From the Washington Times, Mar. 17, 2016]

PROTECTING AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

(By David Hirschmann)

American innovation has brought consumers across the globe many of the cutting edge products and technologies that have, quite literally, changed the world. From lifesaving medicines to computer software to incredibly efficient ways to generate energy, American companies are at the forefront of the ''innovation economy'' and the creators of millions of domestic jobs.

But our position as a global leader in innovation is under attack. Individuals, organizations and even some countries, want to take shortcuts and gain a competitive edge by stealing our ideas and manufacturing know-how—the ''secret-sauce'' that separates American industry from those who seek to duplicate our success. This theft of America's trade secrets is a growing—and increasingly alarming—threat to our economic security.

What separates a Coca-Cola from a store-brand counterpart is its secret formula, and Kentucky Fried Chicken relies on its unique blend of 11 herbs and spices to distinguish itself in the market. Both are examples of trade secrets.

But trade secrets are also used to designate propriety manufacturing processes or highly technical algorithms for biologic formulas that may one day be eligible for patent protections. This form of intellectual property (IP) encompasses a wide range of information and processes across virtually every industry sector and among companies large and small.

Trade secrets are often the crown-jewels of a small, innovative start-up that has neither the expertise nor budget to seek patent protection because their limited capital is spent developing the next big idea and putting people to work building the next must-have product.

The Defend Trade Secrets Act currently under consideration in Congress would give American companies another tool to fight trade secrets theft.

This is a rare piece of legislation with broad and diverse support. Introduced by Sens. Orrin Hatch, Utah Republican and Chris Coons, Delaware Democrat, and Reps. Chris Collins, New York Republican and Jerrold Nadler, New York Democrat this is a truly bipartisan and bicameral bill. Currently, the bill enjoys the support of 62 senators and 127 representatives, along with thousands of companies, industry associations, and think tanks.

As well stated by White House Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator Daniel Marti, ''Trade secret theft is a serious and pervasive problem that threatens the economic health and competitiveness of this country. The Administration is committed to protecting the innovation which drives the American economy and supports American jobs.''

Examples include foreign nationals digging new hybrid seeds out of cornfields in the heartland, embedded employees walking out the door with proprietary manufacturing processes, and hackers downloading secret research data. Once in possession of the trade secret, criminals want to get out of Dodge fast, and will typically flee the country to peddle these precious corporate assets to the highest bidder. To stop such theft, companies must be able to act quickly and effectively.

Unfortunately, current remedies alone are not enough to prevent the flight of these thieves. While law enforcement is a willing partner and often very helpful, too often they lack the bandwidth or resources to act quickly enough and stop these criminals before it's too late.

Currently, a patchwork of state laws and federal criminal penalties are available to companies or individuals confronted with trade secrets theft. The Defend Trade Secrets Act creates a federal civil cause of action that currently does not exist.

Creating a new federal civil cause of action will help industry help itself. The bill has many provisions to make sure that this new federal cause of action is not abused and employees are protected—including whistleblowers.

In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, it is critical that the right tools are in place to ensure that American ideas and jobs are not stolen and sold overseas. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce urges Congress to move this much needed legislation quickly so that it may become law and our industry and workers can remain at the forefront of the innovation economy.

[From Forbes, Apr. 4, 2016]

WE NEED TO SAFEGUARD THE SECRETS OF AMERICA'S INNOVATION ECONOMY

(By Michael Harrington and Erich Andersen)

America has long been recognized as a world leader in innovation. Not only does the unending flow of new inventions make life better for consumers, it also helps create new jobs and opportunities for millions of American families. The ''intellectual property'' associated with American innovation is protected by a network of laws, including patents, copyrights, trademarks and trade secrets. These legal protections are essential to reward innovation and encourage continued investment in American research and development. Unfortunately, trade secrets are the only form of intellectual property that do not receive robust federal protection. This needs to change.

Trade secrets include secret formulas, customer lists and methods of manufacturing developed at great expense and that have significant value to companies, which take steps to ensure their confidentiality. American businesses, regardless of size, must be able to continue to invest the enormous resources required to develop the products of the future, from the latest in cloud computing and artificial intelligence to the next generation of life-saving medicines. The Defend Trade Secrets Act, bipartisan legislation pending before the Senate and House, would provide 21st century protection for America's trade secrets. It has the strong support of our companies and scores of others representing a diverse cross section of industries.

In the digitally networked world, the need for robust trade secret protection has only increased. Businesses no longer compete against the company across the street—they sell products across the country and around the world. Gone are the days when a business kept its know-how on paper—its business plans, its manufacturing process, the secret sauce that gave the business a competitive edge—and locked it in a desk drawer or a safe. Today, companies store their data and business-critical information electronically, primarily in the cloud. Decentralization has allowed companies to rely on networks of manufacturers and service providers who must all be able to access, use and store this trade secret information. The ability to share secrets confidentially with such providers, with the knowledge they can be protected, is vital to the continuing growth of the American economy. While digitalization of information has facilitated the access to trade secrets essential to the conduct of business, it has also enabled anyone intent on doing harm to purloin vast amounts of information with no more than a computer key stroke to a thumb drive or the cloud.

Trade secrets are also unique among forms of intellectual property in how they are legally protected. They are governed under state law rather than by federal statute. That is, although it is a federal crime to steal a trade secret, a business that has its trade secrets stolen must rely on state law to pursue a civil remedy. Owners of copyrights, patents, and trademarks can go to federal court to protect their property and seek damages when their property has been infringed, but trade secret owners do not have access to such a federal remedy. This can prove unwieldy and ineffective when the trade secret thief crosses state lines—and all too often these thieves are ultimately heading overseas so that the unscrupulous can unfairly exploit and profit from the fruits of American know how in the global economy. This can result in significant loss of American prosperity and jobs.

Our state-by-state system for trade secret protection was simply not built with the digital world in mind where one device containing purloined information can literally destroy a hard-earned competitive edge. In today's global economy, however, trade secrets are increasingly stored and used across state line and even national borders. A uniform, national standard for protection will greatly benefit innovative enterprises of all sizes.

We commend Senators Orrin Hatch and Christopher Coons and Representatives Doug Collins and Jerrold Nadler for introducing the bipartisan Defend Trade Secrets Act. This thoughtful and carefully considered legislation will adapt America's trade secret regime to reflect 21st Century realities and will strengthen this critical form of intellectual property. We urge favorable and expeditious consideration by both the Senate and House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I begin my remarks by thanking my colleague, good friend, and the leader in this effort to pass the Defend Trade Secrets Act in the Senate today, the President pro tem of the Senate, Senator ORRIN HATCH. In his four decades of service in this body, Senator HATCH has become well known for his ability and willingness to work across the aisle, to be a genuine leader in intellectual property matters, and to fight tirelessly for America's inventors and inventions. I am grateful for the small role I have been able to play in partnering with Senator HATCH to bring this important piece of legislation through the Judiciary Committee and to the floor today.

Our country has long been the unquestioned world leader in the creation and production of innovative ideas. Simply put, for over two centuries we understood the critical connection between preserving intellectual property rights and creating sustained economic growth. As a result, we are second to none when it comes to innovation. Yet a critical form of IP, intellectual property, has somehow slipped through the cracks of Federal protection. Of course, I am talking about trade secrets, such as the secret formula for Coca-Cola, Kentucky Fried Chicken, customer lists, pricing strategies, and key stages in a vital manufacturing process. They are the lifeblood of great companies that can lead to the creation of products that make a company unique and uniquely profitable. It should come as no surprise that they are a major contributor to our economy. By some estimates, trade secrets are worth $5 trillion to publicly listed American companies alone.

Despite the importance of trade secrets to our economy and our innovation ecosystem, trade secrets remain the only form of intellectual property not protected from theft under Federal civil law. More specifically, a misuse of trade secrets doesn't provide the owner with a Federal private right of action

to seek redress. This means companies today have to rely on State courts or on Federal prosecutors to protect their rights. The multi-State procedural and jurisdictional issues and the hurdles you have to clear that arise in such cases are oftentimes intensive, costly, and complicated.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice, currently empowered to protect trade secrets on the Federal level, lacks the resources to prosecute many of the cases that arise. By the time the existing protections catch up with bad actors who have taken off with a customer list, formula, or recipe, it is often too late. Unlike physical goods, you simply can't take back trade secrets once they have been shared with the public. Once a trade secret is no longer secret, it loses its legal protection.

This glaring oversight in our Federal legal system has become increasingly problematic in recent years as technology has made it easier and easier to steal trade secrets. Today a foreign competitor can steal a vital trade secret from an American manufacturer with just a few key strokes through a cyber attack. This hasn't gone unnoticed. The rate of cyber trade secret theft is at an alltime high, and our foreign competitors are stealing American innovation with woefully inadequate repercussions. This uptick and steady rise in trade secret theft is affecting American businesses large and small across our country. Today the misappropriation of trade secrets is estimated to cost American companies between $160 and $480 billion annually. That money would be so much better spent by investing in new products, growing businesses, and creating jobs.

For example, my home State of Delaware has felt the impact of trade secret theft. Many are familiar with DuPont's signature product Kevlar, an extraordinarily strong and lightweight synthetic fiber that is best known for its use in lifesaving body armor. It is worn by dedicated police officers and the brave men and women in our Armed Forces. It has literally saved thousands of lives, including more than 3,000 law enforcement officers across this country.

About 10 years ago, DuPont developed a next generation of Kevlar, which was even lighter and better able to withstand penetrating trauma from a wide range of rifle rounds or IED-generated shrapnel. This technology represented a real breakthrough in safety, but it cost millions upon millions to develop. You see, chemically the spun polyaromatic fibers that make up Kevlar are not that complicated, but the fabrication and production method that give the fiber strength and flexibility is incredibly difficult to develop and then execute.

One day about 6 years ago—just 4 years after DuPont had developed this next-generation protective technology—a rogue employee took the trade secrets and the know-how behind manufacturing this new product and went and gave it to a rival manufacturing company in Korea by using DuPont's trade secrets. The potential loss to DuPont from this one instance of trade secret theft cost roughly $1 billion.

Not only does trade secret theft cost American businesses revenue, which puts American jobs at risk, but it also discourages businesses from investing in critical research and development, and of all the sectors in the American economy, trade secrets are most central for manufacturing and for manufacturing in advanced materials. If you know an employee can steal your company's trade secret, potentially resulting in a loss of up to $1 billion, that trade secret that was the product of years of research and development, as was the case for DuPont with their next-generation Kevlar, it becomes harder and harder to justify investing substantial sums in the R&D needed to continue to produce technological breakthroughs and cutting-edge manufacturing in the United States.

This trade secret theft can have a devastating, long-term impact on our country's ability to innovate and compete. It is also of particular concern in my home State of Delaware, where R&D is critical to our economy and sustaining our manufacturing sector. These protections in today's Defend Trade Secrets Act will only grow in importance as our country continues to cultivate advanced manufacturing.

Delaware has a proud legacy of encouraging cutting-edge science. We are home to hundreds of basement inventors who have tinkered, designed, and perfected inventions. Some have become well known internationally, such as Kevlar, and others are not as well known but are critical to our economy. That is why I introduced, along with my friend and senior colleague Senator HATCH, the Defend Trade Secrets Act. This bill creates a new Federal private right of action for the misappropriation of trade secrets. It uses an existing Federal criminal law, the Economic Espionage Act, to define trade secrets, and it draws heavily from the existing Uniform Trade Secrets Act which has been enacted by many States to define misappropriation.

Simply put, our bill will harmonize U.S. law. Each State has a slightly different trade secret law, and they vary in many different ways. Not all of these differences are major, but they affect the definition of what a trade secret is or what an owner must do to keep a secret or what constitutes misappropriation or what damages and remedies are available.

Our Defend Trade Secrets Act creates a single national baseline, or a minimal level of protection, and gives trade secret owners access to both a uniform national law and to the reach of Federal courts, which provide nationwide service of process and execution of judgments. However, it is important to know this bill does not preempt State law because States are, of course, free to continue to add further protections.

In my view, this bill is a commonsense solution to a very serious problem. Senator HATCH and I first introduced this bill in April of 2014, and we reintroduced it last July with just four original cosponsors. The bill before us today now has 65 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate. An identical version in the House, introduced by DOUG COLLINS of Georgia and JERRY NADLER of New York, now has 128 cosponsors. Congressmen COLLINS and NADLER have been great partners in this effort. Congressman JOHN CONYERS has also provided invaluable support.

In addition to the broad bipartisan support we have collected on this bill from our colleagues, we have gained endorsements from dozens and dozens of companies as diverse as Boeing, Corning, Microsoft, and DuPont. I believe it is also a testament to the hard work and esteem in which Senator HATCH is held by his colleagues. Senator HATCH has long been a leader in intellectual property and has been able to lead a successful, open, and collaborative process that has allowed us to move the bill to this point today.

Many of our colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, had suggestions for ways to improve the original draft. I am proud many of the Senators who originally raised concerns or questions have now become cosponsors of the bill as a result of Senator HATCH's leadership and our collaboration.

In today's political climate, it is easy to forget that to get things done, we don't have to agree on everything, we just have to agree on one thing. In this case, we have all agreed that losing hundreds of billions of dollars annually to trade secret theft and misappropriation has been hurting American businesses and our economy.

This bill is truly bipartisan. Frankly, it has united industry, practitioners, and Members of this body in a way we don't see often enough today. I rarely have an opportunity to work closely with the Heritage Foundation, the National Association of Manufacturers, and intellectual property owners on the same bill, but good policy can make for unique partnerships. With the bill before us today, the good policy is a commonsense proposal that creates a clear national standard and facilitates businesses' protection of their trade secrets in Federal court.

I thank all of my colleagues who have cosponsored and supported this bill. It has been a pleasure to work with them as we worked to ensure that this final bill is bipartisan and achieves our goal of protecting American trade secrets.

The formula for how we, together, got to this point is simple. Senator HATCH and I saw a problem, we found a coalition that wanted to fix it, and we came together to find a solution.

I thank former Senator Kohl, with whom I first discussed this issue when I came to the Senate. I thank him for his early interest and involvement in trade secret protections. Of course, I am particularly grateful to Senator HATCH for his championship of this bill and leadership in finding consensus. I wish to join him in thanking Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member LEAHY for their critical support and commend my colleagues for their focus on this issue. I wish to specifically thank Senators WHITEHOUSE, FEINSTEIN, GRAHAM, and FLAKE for their contributions to this bill that has strengthened it.

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize and thank the tremendous efforts our staff contributed together to get this bill to where it is today. Senator HATCH has thanked many of the floor staff, leadership staff, and staff in the House, and I would like to add to my thanks to Matt Sandgren in Senator HATCH's office and to my tireless, dedicated, and recently departed from my office chief counsel, Ted Schroeder, as well as Jonathan Stahler, Andrew Crawford, and Erica Songer on my staff.

This major achievement is the product of many contributions, and that is how the Senate is supposed to work. Given the wide support this bill enjoys today in the Senate and the fact that there is already an identical House version with bipartisan support, I am hopeful the House will act and pass this bill without delay.

I was pleased to learn earlier today that the administration has issued a Statement of Administration Policy urging the passage of this bill and its rapid enactment into law. The sooner this bill becomes law, the sooner American businesses and companies can get back to creating jobs and producing new, life-changing products and services. Our country's legacy of innovation depends on it.

With that, I yield the floor and thank my colleague Senator HATCH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

REMEMBERING JUSTIN AND STEPHANIE SHULTS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise to honor the lives of Tennessean Justin Shults and his wife Stephanie, who were killed in the attacks in Brussels, Belgium, on the morning of March 22.

I thank our senior Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER for joining me this afternoon.

We are heartbroken by this tragedy, which once again hit too close to home. Not long ago, Senator ALEXANDER and I came to this body to mourn the loss of five American heroes we lost in a terror attack in my hometown of Chattanooga. We are here again today, heartbroken that two more outstanding individuals were taken by evil, and we are reminded that terrorism knows no borders or boundaries.

Justin Shults was a native of Gatlinburg, TN. He attended Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, where he was valedictorian of his class. A bright young man, Justin received an undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University before attending Vanderbilt's Owen Graduate School of Management where he met Stephanie, a native of Lexington, KY.

Justin and Stephanie's journey is inspiring. Two young people from small towns, they set out on a journey to explore the world and to broaden their horizons.

They moved to Brussels in 2014. Justin worked for Clarcor, a Franklin, TN, manufacturing company, and Stephanie worked for Mars. They had a bright future ahead of them—a future that was stolen by terror.

To their family members and to all who loved them, we offer our prayers and deepest sympathies as we mourn their passing. We also extend condolences to all of the families who lost loved ones and to the people of Belgium.

I also thank the many individuals and organizations that were instrumental in helping Justin's and Stephanie's families in the aftermath of the attack. They include the State Department, the FBI, the consulate in Brussels, Delta Airlines, Justin's and Stephanie's companies, Clarcor and Mars, and members of my staff, especially Bess McWherter.

From Chattanooga to Paris, San Bernardino, Brussels, and beyond, we have seen unimaginable events unfold before our eyes. It is clear the fight against evil will be a long-term struggle. To protect our citizens, we must deepen our partnership with Europe and other allies to defeat ISIS and other terrorists so no more families will have to deal with the heartbreak Justin's and Stephanie's families face today.

We mourn their passing, we honor their lives, and we renew our commitment to fight against this evil.

With that, I yield the floor to our distinguished senior Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I join Senator CORKER in expressing to the families of Justin and Stephanie our deepest sympathy and our horror at what happened to them in Brussels.

I wish to thank Senator CORKER as well. Because of his position as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he was able to do some things all of us would have liked to have been able to do. He was able to help the family by being a liaison with the families and the State Department. These are things he wouldn't say about himself, but I would like to say. He and his staff worked to help the family get expedited passports, and they have stayed in touch with the families. I hope the families of Justin and Stephanie will know that when Senator CORKER and his staff are in touch with them, that they are in touch with them for all of us in the U.S. Senate and all of us as citizens of the State of Tennessee.

There is so much on television today that is horrible and violent and terroristic that we have become immune to it. It is almost an unreality. We don't want to believe any of it is true, until it hits home in Gatlinburg, TN, and happens to a bright young man whom everyone in the community seems to have known, one of those young men whom everybody looks at and says he is going to amount to something, we are going to watch him one day, and to a young woman from Lexington, KY, who met this young man at Vanderbilt's graduate school of management, not just in Sevier County, TN, and not just in Lexington, where so many people knew these two promising young Americans, but also in Nashville and the Vanderbilt community.

This is actually the third promising young life taken from the Vanderbilt school family. Taylor Force, a student there, was killed on a class visit to Israel a few weeks ago. At any time that is a horrifying, terrible thought, but this is a generation of young Americans who have grown up with the idea of living in the whole world, of making a contribution to the entire world. That is what Justin and Stephanie were doing when they went to Brussels with their companies, and now their lives are cut short by an evil act.

Our hearts go out to their families and to the communities from which they come in Gatlinburg, in Lexington, and in the Nashville Vanderbilt Owen school community. My personal thanks to Senator CORKER for doing what all of us want to do as well as we can, which is to be helpful to the families and express to them our appreciation for the lives of their children and our sorrow at what has happened to them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

DEFEND TRADE SECRETS ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1890, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1890) to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL JURISDICTION FOR THEFT OF TRADE SECRETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1836 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) PRIVATE CIVIL ACTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An owner of a trade secret that is misappropriated may bring a civil action under this subsection if the trade secret is related to a product or service used in, or intended for use in, interstate or foreign commerce.

''(2) CIVIL SEIZURE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—

''(i) APPLICATION.—Based on an affidavit or verified complaint satisfying the requirements of this paragraph, the court may, upon ex parte application but only in extraordinary circumstances, issue an order providing for the seizure of property necessary to prevent the propagation or dissemination of the trade secret that is the subject of the action.

''(ii) REQUIREMENTS FOR ISSUING ORDER.—The court may not grant an application under clause (i) unless the court finds that it clearly appears from specific facts that—

''(I) an order issued pursuant to Rule 65 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or another form of equitable relief would be inadequate to achieve the purpose of this paragraph because the party to which the order would be issued would evade, avoid, or otherwise not comply with such an order;

''(II) an immediate and irreparable injury will occur if such seizure is not ordered;

''(III) the harm to the applicant of denying the application outweighs the harm to the legitimate interests of the person against whom seizure would be ordered of granting the application and substantially outweighs the harm to any third parties who may be harmed by such seizure;

''(IV) the applicant is likely to succeed in showing that—

''(aa) the information is a trade secret; and

''(bb) the person against whom seizure would be ordered—

''(AA) misappropriated the trade secret of the applicant by improper means; or

''(BB) conspired to use improper means to misappropriate the trade secret of the applicant;

''(V) the person against whom seizure would be ordered has actual possession of—

''(aa) the trade secret; and

''(bb) any property to be seized;

''(VI) the application describes with reasonable particularity the matter to be seized and, to the extent reasonable under the circumstances, identifies the location where the matter is to be seized;

''(VII) the person against whom seizure would be ordered, or persons acting in concert with such person, would destroy, move, hide, or otherwise make such matter inaccessible to the court, if the applicant were to proceed on notice to such person; and

''(VIII) the applicant has not publicized the requested seizure.

''(B) ELEMENTS OF ORDER.—If an order is issued under subparagraph (A), it shall—

''(i) set forth findings of fact and conclusions of law required for the order;

''(ii) provide for the narrowest seizure of property necessary to achieve the purpose of this paragraph and direct that the seizure be conducted in a manner that minimizes any interruption of the business operations of third parties and, to the extent possible, does not interrupt the legitimate business operations of the person accused of misappropriating the trade secret;

''(iii)(I) be accompanied by an order protecting the seized property from disclosure by prohibiting access by the applicant or the person against whom the order is directed, and prohibiting any copies, in whole or in part, of the seized property, to prevent undue damage to the party against whom the order has issued or others, until such parties have an opportunity to be heard in court; and

''(II) provide that if access is granted by the court to the applicant or the person against whom the order is directed, the access shall be consistent with subparagraph (D);

''(iv) provide guidance to the law enforcement officials executing the seizure that clearly delineates the scope of the authority of the officials, including—

''(I) the hours during which the seizure may be executed; and

''(II) whether force may be used to access locked areas;

''(v) set a date for a hearing described in subparagraph (F) at the earliest possible time, and not later than 7 days after the order has issued, unless the party against whom the order is directed and others harmed by the order consent to another date for the hearing, except that a party against whom the order has issued or any person harmed by the order may move the court at any time to dissolve or modify the order after giving notice to the applicant who obtained the order; and

''(vi) require the person obtaining the order to provide the security determined adequate by the court for the payment of the damages that any person may be entitled to recover as a result of a wrongful or excessive seizure or wrongful or excessive attempted seizure under this paragraph.

''(C) PROTECTION FROM PUBLICITY.—The court shall take appropriate action to protect the person against whom an order under this paragraph is directed from publicity, by or at the behest of the person obtaining the order, about such order and any seizure under such order.

''(D) MATERIALS IN CUSTODY OF COURT.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Any materials seized under this paragraph shall be taken into the custody of the court. The court shall secure the seized material from physical and electronic access during the seizure and while in the custody of the court.

''(ii) STORAGE MEDIUM.—If the seized material includes a storage medium, or if the seized material is stored on a storage medium, the court shall prohibit the medium from being connected to a network or the Internet without the consent of both parties, until the hearing required under subparagraph (B)(v) and described in subparagraph (F).

''(iii) PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY.—The court shall take appropriate measures to protect the confidentiality of seized materials that are unrelated to the trade secret information ordered seized pursuant to this paragraph unless the person against whom the order is entered consents to disclosure of the material.

''(iv) APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL MASTER.—The court may appoint a special master to locate and isolate all misappropriated trade secret information and to facilitate the return of unrelated property and data to the person from whom the property was seized. The special master appointed by the court shall agree to be bound by a non-disclosure agreement approved by the court.

''(E) SERVICE OF ORDER.—The court shall order that service of a copy of the order under this paragraph, and the submissions of the applicant to obtain the order, shall be made by a Federal law enforcement officer who, upon making service, shall carry out the seizure under the order. The court may allow State or local law enforcement officials to participate, but may not permit the applicant or any agent of the applicant to participate in the seizure. At the request of law enforcement officials, the court may allow a technical expert who is unaffiliated with the applicant and who is bound by a court-approved non-disclosure agreement to participate in the seizure if the court determines that the participation of the expert will aid the efficient execution of and minimize the burden of the seizure.

''(F) SEIZURE HEARING.—

''(i) DATE.—A court that issues a seizure order shall hold a hearing on the date set by the court under subparagraph (B)(v).

''(ii) BURDEN OF PROOF.—At a hearing held under this subparagraph, the party who obtained the order under subparagraph (A) shall have the burden to prove the facts supporting the findings of fact and conclusions of law necessary to support the order. If the party fails to meet that burden, the seizure order shall be dissolved or modified appropriately.

''(iii) DISSOLUTION OR MODIFICATION OF ORDER.—A party against whom the order has been issued or any person harmed by the order may move the court at any time to dissolve or modify the order after giving notice to the party who obtained the order.

''(iv) DISCOVERY TIME LIMITS.—The court may make such orders modifying the time limits for discovery under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure as may be necessary to prevent the frustration of the purposes of a hearing under this subparagraph.

''(G) ACTION FOR DAMAGE CAUSED BY WRONGFUL SEIZURE.—A person who suffers damage by reason of a wrongful or excessive seizure under this paragraph has a cause of action against the applicant for the order under which such seizure was made, and shall be entitled to the same relief as is provided under section 34(d)(11) of the Trademark Act of 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1116(d)(11)). The security posted with the court under subparagraph (B)(vi) shall not limit the recovery of third parties for damages.

''(H) MOTION FOR ENCRYPTION.—A party or a person who claims to have an interest in the subject matter seized may make a motion at any time, which may be heard ex parte, to encrypt any material seized or to be seized under this paragraph that is stored on a storage medium. The motion shall include, when possible, the desired encryption method.

''(3) REMEDIES.—In a civil action brought under this subsection with respect to the misappropriation of a trade secret, a court may—

''(A) grant an injunction—

''(i) to prevent any actual or threatened misappropriation described in paragraph (1) on such terms as the court deems reasonable, provided the order does not—

''(I) prevent a person from entering into an employment relationship, and that conditions placed on such employment shall be based on evidence of threatened misappropriation and not merely on the information the person knows; or

''(II) otherwise conflict with an applicable State law prohibiting restraints on the practice of a lawful profession, trade, or business;

''(ii) if determined appropriate by the court, requiring affirmative actions to be taken to protect the trade secret; and

''(iii) in exceptional circumstances that render an injunction inequitable, that conditions future use of the trade secret upon payment of a

reasonable royalty for no longer than the period of time for which such use could have been prohibited;

''(B) award—

''(i)(I) damages for actual loss caused by the misappropriation of the trade secret; and

''(II) damages for any unjust enrichment caused by the misappropriation of the trade secret that is not addressed in computing damages for actual loss; or

''(ii) in lieu of damages measured by any other methods, the damages caused by the misappropriation measured by imposition of liability for a reasonable royalty for the misappropriator's unauthorized disclosure or use of the trade secret;

''(C) if the trade secret is willfully and maliciously misappropriated, award exemplary damages in an amount not more than 2 times the amount of the damages awarded under subparagraph (B); and

''(D) if a claim of the misappropriation is made in bad faith, which may be established by circumstantial evidence, a motion to terminate an injunction is made or opposed in bad faith, or the trade secret was willfully and maliciously misappropriated, award reasonable attorney's fees to the prevailing party.

''(c) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have original jurisdiction of civil actions brought under this section.

''(d) PERIOD OF LIMITATIONS.—A civil action under subsection (b) may not be commenced later than 3 years after the date on which the misappropriation with respect to which the action would relate is discovered or by the exercise of reasonable diligence should have been discovered. For purposes of this subsection, a continuing misappropriation constitutes a single claim of misappropriation.''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1839 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''the public'' and inserting ''another person who can obtain economic value from the disclosure or use of the information''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) the term 'misappropriation' means—

''(A) acquisition of a trade secret of another by a person who knows or has reason to know that the trade secret was acquired by improper means; or

''(B) disclosure or use of a trade secret of another without express or implied consent by a person who—

''(i) used improper means to acquire knowledge of the trade secret;

''(ii) at the time of disclosure or use, knew or had reason to know that the knowledge of the trade secret was—

''(I) derived from or through a person who had used improper means to acquire the trade secret;

''(II) acquired under circumstances giving rise to a duty to maintain the secrecy of the trade secret or limit the use of the trade secret; or

''(III) derived from or through a person who owed a duty to the person seeking relief to maintain the secrecy of the trade secret or limit the use of the trade secret; or

''(iii) before a material change of the position of the person, knew or had reason to know that—

''(I) the trade secret was a trade secret; and

''(II) knowledge of the trade secret had been acquired by accident or mistake;

''(6) the term 'improper means'—

''(A) includes theft, bribery, misrepresentation, breach or inducement of a breach of a duty to maintain secrecy, or espionage through electronic or other means; and

''(B) does not include reverse engineering, independent derivation, or any other lawful means of acquisition; and

''(7) the term 'Trademark Act of 1946' means the Act entitled 'An Act to provide for the registration and protection of trademarks used in commerce, to carry out the provisions of certain international conventions, and for other purposes, approved July 5, 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.) (commonly referred to as the ''Trademark Act of 1946'' or the ''Lanham Act'')'.''.

(c) EXCEPTIONS TO PROHIBITION.—Section 1833 of title 18, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''or create a private right of action for'' after ''prohibit''.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The section heading for section 1836 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 1836. Civil proceedings''.

(2) The table of sections for chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 1836 and inserting the following:

''1836. Civil proceedings.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any misappropriation of a trade secret (as defined in section 1839 of title 18, United States Code, as amended by this section) for which any act occurs on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendments made by this section shall be construed to modify the rule of construction under section 1838 of title 18, United States Code, or to preempt any other provision of law.

(g) APPLICABILITY TO OTHER LAWS.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall not be construed to be a law pertaining to intellectual property for purposes of any other Act of Congress.

SEC. 3. TRADE SECRET THEFT ENFORCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 1832(b), by striking ''$5,000,000'' and inserting ''the greater of $5,000,000 or 3 times the value of the stolen trade secret to the organization, including expenses for research and design and other costs of reproducing the trade secret that the organization has thereby avoided''; and

(2) in section 1835—

(A) by striking ''In any prosecution'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In any prosecution''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) RIGHTS OF TRADE SECRET OWNERS.—The court may not authorize or direct the disclosure of any information the owner asserts to be a trade secret unless the court allows the owner the opportunity to file a submission under seal that describes the interest of the owner in keeping the information confidential. No submission under seal made under this subsection may be used in a prosecution under this chapter for any purpose other than those set forth in this section, or otherwise required by law. The provision of information relating to a trade secret to the United States or the court in connection with a prosecution under this chapter shall not constitute a waiver of trade secret protection, and the disclosure of information relating to a trade secret in connection with a prosecution under this chapter shall not constitute a waiver of trade secret protection unless the trade secret owner expressly consents to such waiver.''.

(b) RICO PREDICATE OFFENSES.—Section 1961(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''sections 1831 and 1832 (relating to economic espionage and theft of trade secrets),'' before ''section 1951''.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON THEFT OF TRADE SECRETS OCCURRING ABROAD.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

(2) FOREIGN INSTRUMENTALITY, ETC.—The terms ''foreign instrumentality'', ''foreign agent'', and ''trade secret'' have the meanings given those terms in section 1839 of title 18, United States Code.

(3) STATE.—The term ''State'' includes the District of Columbia and any commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States.

(4) UNITED STATES COMPANY.—The term ''United States company'' means an organization organized under the laws of the United States or a State or political subdivision thereof.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and biannually thereafter, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, the Director, and the heads of other appropriate agencies, shall submit to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and make publicly available on the Web site of the Department of Justice and disseminate to the public through such other means as the Attorney General may identify, a report on the following:

(1) The scope and breadth of the theft of the trade secrets of United States companies occurring outside of the United States.

(2) The extent to which theft of trade secrets occurring outside of the United States is sponsored by foreign governments, foreign instrumentalities, or foreign agents.

(3) The threat posed by theft of trade secrets occurring outside of the United States.

(4) The ability and limitations of trade secret owners to prevent the misappropriation of trade secrets outside of the United States, to enforce any judgment against foreign entities for theft of trade secrets, and to prevent imports based on theft of trade secrets overseas.

(5) A breakdown of the trade secret protections afforded United States companies by each country that is a trading partner of the United States and enforcement efforts available and undertaken in each such country, including a list identifying specific countries where trade secret theft, laws, or enforcement is a significant problem for United States companies.

(6) Instances of the Federal Government working with foreign countries to investigate, arrest, and prosecute entities and individuals involved in the theft of trade secrets outside of the United States.

(7) Specific progress made under trade agreements and treaties, including any new remedies enacted by foreign countries, to protect against theft of trade secrets of United States companies outside of the United States.

(8) Recommendations of legislative and executive branch actions that may be undertaken to—

(A) reduce the threat of and economic impact caused by the theft of the trade secrets of United States companies occurring outside of the United States;

(B) educate United States companies regarding the threats to their trade secrets when taken outside of the United States;

(C) provide assistance to United States companies to reduce the risk of loss of their trade secrets when taken outside of the United States; and

(D) provide a mechanism for United States companies to confidentially or anonymously report the theft of trade secrets occurring outside of the United States.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) trade secret theft occurs in the United States and around the world;

(2) trade secret theft, wherever it occurs, harms the companies that own the trade secrets and the employees of the companies;

(3) chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Economic Espionage Act of 1996''), applies broadly to protect trade secrets from theft; and

(4) it is important when seizing information to balance the need to prevent or remedy misappropriation with the need to avoid interrupting the—

(A) business of third parties; and

(B) legitimate interests of the party accused of wrongdoing.

SEC. 6. BEST PRACTICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Judicial Center, using existing resources, shall develop recommended best practices for—

(1) the seizure of information and media storing the information; and

(2) the securing of the information and media once seized.

(b) UPDATES.—The Federal Judicial Center shall update the recommended best practices developed under subsection (a) from time to time.

(c) CONGRESSIONAL SUBMISSIONS.—The Federal Judicial Center shall provide a copy of the recommendations developed under subsection (a), and any updates made under subsection (b), to the—

(1) Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(2) Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 7. IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY FOR CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURE OF A TRADE SECRET TO THE GOVERNMENT OR IN A COURT FILING.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 1833 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''This chapter'' and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—This chapter'';

(2) in subsection (a)(2), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking ''the reporting of a suspected violation of law to any governmental entity of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, if such entity has lawful authority with respect to that violation'' and inserting ''the disclosure of a trade secret in accordance with subsection (b)''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY FOR CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURE OF A TRADE SECRET TO THE GOVERNMENT OR IN A COURT FILING.—

''(1) IMMUNITY.—An individual shall not be held criminally or civilly liable under any Federal or State trade secret law for the disclosure of a trade secret that—

''(A) is made—

''(i) in confidence to a Federal, State, or local government official, either directly or indirectly, or to an attorney; and

''(ii) solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law; or

''(B) is made in a complaint or other document filed in a lawsuit or other proceeding, if such filing is made under seal.

''(2) USE OF TRADE SECRET INFORMATION IN ANTI-RETALIATION LAWSUIT.—An individual who files a lawsuit for retaliation by an employer for reporting a suspected violation of law may disclose the trade secret to the attorney of the individual and use the trade secret information in the court proceeding, if the individual—

''(A) files any document containing the trade secret under seal; and

''(B) does not disclose the trade secret, except pursuant to court order.

''(3) NOTICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—An employer shall provide notice of the immunity set forth in this subsection in any contract or agreement with an employee that governs the use of a trade secret or other confidential information.

''(B) POLICY DOCUMENT.—An employer shall be considered to be in compliance with the notice requirement in subparagraph (A) if the employer provides a cross-reference to a policy document provided to the employee that sets forth the employer's reporting policy for a suspected violation of law.

''(C) NON-COMPLIANCE.—If an employer does not comply with the notice requirement in subparagraph (A), the employer may not be awarded exemplary damages or attorney fees under subparagraph (C) or (D) of section 1836(b)(3) in an action against an employee to whom notice was not provided.

''(D) APPLICABILITY.—This paragraph shall apply to contracts and agreements that are entered into or updated after the date of enactment of this subsection.

''(4) EMPLOYEE DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'employee' includes any individual performing work as a contractor or consultant for an employer.

''(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as expressly provided for under this subsection, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize, or limit liability for, an act that is otherwise prohibited by law, such as the unlawful access of material by unauthorized means.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1838 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''This chapter'' and inserting ''Except as provided in section 1833(b), this chapter''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I made long remarks earlier this afternoon, along with my colleague and friend Senator HATCH.

I want to briefly reiterate my thanks to the many staff who worked tirelessly to make it possible for the Defense Trade Secrets Act to move forward today. I greatly appreciate the leadership and hard work of the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senators GRASSLEY and LEAHY, for their hard work and their staffs' work.

I want to personally thank Ted Schroeder, who was my chief counsel for many years, for his terrific work on this bill and the dozens of staffs here in the Senate and the House and outside groups who have come together to make it possible for this strong bipartisan bill to move forward today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

EX PARTE SEIZURE PROVISION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as the Senate is prepared to vote on the Defend Trade Secrets Act, I rise today to enter into a colloquy with my longtime friend and colleague from Utah, Senator ORRIN HATCH.

Does the Senator agree that the ex parte seizure provision is a vital element of the bill?

Mr. HATCH. I thank my colleague and longtime friend from Iowa, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, for the question.

Indeed, the Defend Trade Secrets Act provides a trade secret owner with a right of action to go to court ex parte to have the trade secret seized and returned before the misappropriator can divulge it and cause it to lose its protection or before significant destruction of evidence.

The provision is tailored to prevent abuse—balancing the need to recover a stolen trade secret with the rights of defendants and third parties.

We drafted the bill to require the party seeking ex parte review to make a rigorous showing that they owned the secret, that it was stolen, and that third parties would not be harmed if an order were granted. We required a hearing at the earliest possible date. We also included damages for wrongful seizure, including attorney's fees.

Could the Senator discuss the intent behind that language?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank Senator HATCH. The Defend Trade Secrets Act is the product of bipartisan consensus, and as he will recall, before the bill was approved in the Senate Judiciary Committee, a modification added language that ex parte seizures would be granted under ''extraordinary circumstances.''

As I understand it, the ''extraordinary circumstances'' language was not added to impose an additional requirement for obtaining an ex parte seizure, but to acknowledge the Judiciary's general disfavor of ex parte procedures and to reinforce that particular circumstances are required to utilize the seizure provisions but still provide a much needed avenue for ex parte seizures when necessary.

The legislation specifically lists these requirements for issuing an ex parte seizure order. For example, this authority is not available if an injunction under existing rules of civil procedure would be sufficient. The ex parte seizure provision is expected to be used in instances in which a defendant is seeking to flee the country or planning to disclose the trade secret to a third party immediately or is otherwise not amenable to the enforcement of the court's orders.

Mr. HATCH. That is correct. We expect the provision will be used in instances such as when a trade secret misappropriator is seeking to flee the country or planning to disclose a trade secret immediately.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank Senator HATCH for his helpful insights.

Mr. President, today the Senate is poised to pass the Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016, a bill that offers practical

and necessary solutions to a growing problem.

I have recently had the opportunity to speak about a number of bipartisan bills that have passed out of the Judiciary Committee and that have been taken up here on the Senate floor. That is a testament to the fact that the Judiciary Committee is working hard through an open process to find thoughtful solutions to the problems facing our country. In fact, we have processed 24 bills out of the Judiciary Committee, all in a bipartisan fashion. Of these, 16 have passed the Senate and 6 have been signed into law by the President. While any Member of this body can tell you that it isn't always easy to find legislative agreement, the American people deserve hardworking representatives in Washington who strive to get things accomplished. And the record of the Judiciary Committee shows that we have chosen to overcome gridlock and dysfunction to pass legislation that addresses problems that American people face.

Here are a few examples of the Judiciary Committee's legislative accomplishments so far. Last month, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, by a vote of 94–1. In the face of a growing and deadly epidemic of heroin and opioid painkillers, this bill addresses this crisis comprehensively supporting prevention, education, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement.

In the past few weeks, the Senate also passed the FOIA Improvement Act, a bill authored by Senators CORNYN and LEAHY that I worked to move through the committee process. It codifies a presumption of openness for government agencies to follow when they respond to requests for government records via the Freedom of Information Act. In passing the FOIA Improvement Act—the Senate is helping change the culture in government toward openness and transparency.

In February, the Judiciary Committee reported out the bipartisan Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act by a vote of 19–0. The bill holds sponsors of terrorism accountable by preventing them from invoking ''sovereign immunity'' in cases involving attacks within the United States. It also allows civil suits to be filed against foreign entities that have aided or abetted terrorists.

The committee has worked to protect families and children by passing bills such as the Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act and the Adoptive Family Relief Act. The Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act reverses a Supreme Court decision that limited the restitution that victims of child pornography can seek from any single perpetrator, ensuring that victims can be fully compensated for these heinous crimes, and can focus their attention on healing. The Adoptive Family Relief Act was signed into law in October of 2015, after passing the Judiciary Committee, and aims to help families facing challenges with international adoptions.

And once again today, we are set to approve another Judiciary Committee bill that is supported by folks across the whole of the political spectrum. The support behind the Defend Trade Secrets Act makes clear that the Senate and Judiciary Committee is working to find thoughtful solutions to problems facing our country. This bipartisan legislation is authored by Senators HATCH and COONS. It brings needed uniformity to trade secret litigation so creators and owners of trade secrets can more effectively address the growing problem of trade secret theft.

It is estimated that the American economy loses 2.1 million jobs every year because of trade secret theft. Further, according to a recent report of the Commission on the Theft of American Intellectual Property, annual losses owing to trade secret theft are likely comparable to the current annual level of U.S. exports to Asia—over $300 billion.

Back in Iowa we have seen this firsthand as innovative companies like Monsanto and DuPont-Pioneer have become targets for trade secret theft. In a well-publicized case, a naturalized citizen was indicted and convicted for engaging in a scheme with foreign nationals to steal proprietary test seeds from Iowa fields to benefit foreign companies.

Contrasted with other areas of intellectual property, trade secrets are mainly protected as a matter of state law. Forty-seven states have enacted some variation of the Uniform Trade Secrets Act. Yet as we have learned through hearings in the Judiciary Committee and from companies who have experienced trade secret theft, the increasing use of technology by criminals and their ability to quickly travel across state lines, means at times these laws are inadequate. The existing patchwork of state laws has become a difficult procedural hurdle for victims who must seek immediate relief before their valuable intellectual property is lost forever.

As the pace of trade secret theft has soared, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reports that their caseload for economic espionage and trade secret theft cases has also increased more than 60% from 2009 to 2013. The Defend Trade Secrets Act will create a uniform federal civil cause of action, without preempting state law, to provide clear rules and predictability for trade secret cases. Victims of trade secret theft will now have another weapon in their arsenal to combat trade secret theft, aside from criminal enforcement. This bill will provide certainty of the rules, standards, and practices to stop trade secrets from being disseminated and losing their value, and will allow victims to move quickly to federal court to stop their trade secrets from being disseminated. By improving trade secret protection, this bill will also help to incentivize future innovation.

Importantly, the Defend Trade Secrets Act codifies protections for whistleblowers. An amendment that I authored with Ranking Member LEAHY, which was included in Committee, would create express protections for whistleblowers who disclose trade secrets confidentially to the government to report a violation of the law. There is a longstanding and compelling public interest in safeguarding the ability of whistleblowers to lawfully and appropriately disclose waste, fraud, and abuse that would otherwise never be brought to light. As chairman, and one of the founding members of the Senate Whistleblower Protection Caucus, I've seen how whistleblowers help hold wrongdoers accountable and allow the government to recoup taxpayer money that might otherwise be lost to fraud and other unlawful activities. The inclusion of this whistleblower protection in the Defend Trade Secrets Act allows us to help make sure that those who are best in a position to report illegal conduct can come forward.

Passing legislation to help Americans deal with a growing problem like trade secret theft in a bipartisan fashion is an important accomplishment. I am proud of the way the Judiciary Committee continues to get things done.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Under the previous order, the committee-reported substitute amendment is agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) would have voted ''yea'', the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) would have voted ''yea'', and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) would have voted ''yea''.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 39 Leg.]

YEAS—87

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Baldwin	Fischer	Nelson
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Bennet	Franken	Perdue
Blumenthal	Graham	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Reid
Boxer	Heitkamp	Risch
Brown	Heller	Roberts
Burr	Hirono	Rounds
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Casey	Johnson	Schumer
Cassidy	Kaine	Scott
Coats	King	Sessions
Cochran	Kirk	Shaheen
Collins	Klobuchar	Shelby
Coons	Lankford	Stabenow
Corker	Manchin	Tester
Cornyn	Markey	Thune
Cotton	McCain	Tillis
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—13

Ayotte	Leahy	Sullivan
Carper	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	Mikulski	Vitter
Gardner	Murkowski	
Gillibrand	Sanders	

The bill (S. 1890), as amended, was passed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed on H.R. 636.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Daniel Coats, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Thad Cochran, Johnny Isakson, Roy Blunt, Dean Heller, John Thune, John McCain, John Cornyn, Steve Daines.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

DEFEND TRADE SECRETS BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate voted today on the Defend Trade Secrets Act. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation, which would create a Federal civil cause of action to help deter and remedy trade secret theft that is costing American businesses hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

Trade secrets, such as manufacturing processes, industrial techniques, and customer lists, are critical assets for U.S. companies. However, American companies are increasingly being targeted by efforts to steal this proprietary information, often by overseas interests. Currently, there is no Federal civil remedy available to companies to fight this theft, and the Justice Department does not have the resources to investigate and prosecute criminally all of the thefts that are taking place. While most States have passed civil trade secret laws, these laws are not well suited for remedying interstate or foreign trade secret theft. The lack of a Federal civil remedy for trade secret misappropriation is a glaring gap in current law, especially since Federal civil remedies are available to protect other forms of intellectual property such as patents, trademarks, and copyrights.

The Defend Trade Secrets Act would close this gap by creating a civil right of action in Federal court for misappropriation of a trade secret that is related to a product or service used in interstate or foreign commerce. Available remedies would include injunctions, damages, and in certain cases enhanced damages. This broadly bipartisan bill has been carefully crafted to empower companies to protect their trade secrets through a process that will be both swift and fair. By helping American companies safeguard their essential trade secrets from theft, the bill will help keep innovation and jobs in America.

The Defend Trade Secrets Act has been cosponsored by 65 Senators and is supported by groups and companies representing a broad swath of the American economy, including numerous employers based in my home State of Illinois, such as Caterpillar and Illinois Tool Works. I am pleased that the Senate is moving forward with passage of this legislation, and I hope the bill will soon pass the House of Representatives and be signed into law.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. LEAHY. Today, the Senate voted on legislation that will provide a valuable tool to protect against trade secret theft. This legislation is supported by businesses from diverse sectors of our economy, including companies large and small.

In Vermont, trade secrets protect the specialized knowledge of woodworkers who have made heirloom products for generations, and cutting-edge start-ups that are shaping the future of plastics, software, and green technology. Trade secrets protect the recipes for Vermont craft brews and closely guarded customer lists for our top tourist services. Today's legislation provides an important tool to protect these innovative businesses in Vermont and across the country.

The Defend Trade Secrets Act contains a bipartisan provision I offered with Senator GRASSLEY to ensure that employers and other entities cannot bully whistleblowers or other litigants by threatening them with a lawsuit for trade secret theft. The provision protects disclosures made in confidence to law enforcement or an attorney for the purpose of reporting a suspected violation of law and disclosures made in the course of a lawsuit, provided that the disclosure is made under seal. It requires employers to provide clear notice of this protection in any nondisclosure agreements they ask individuals to sign. This commonsense public policy amendment is supported by the Project on Government Oversight and the Government Accountability Project and builds upon valuable scholarly work by Professor Peter Menell.

Good, thoughtful work was done in the Senate Judiciary Committee to craft the bill we are voting on today, which builds on earlier versions introduced in prior Congresses. It is a testament to how the Judiciary Committee can and should operate when it functions with regular order. We held a public hearing on the issue of trade secret theft in the Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism during the 113th Congress and another hearing in the full committee this past December. Senators suggested improvements to the bill, they debated them, and they voted on the legislation.

Unfortunately, the regular order and fair consideration that was given to this legislation is being denied for one of the Senate's most important and

solemn responsibilities: considering the Supreme Court nomination pending in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Americans by a 2-to-1 margin want the Senate to move forward with a full and fair process for Chief Judge Garland. The Senate today is coming together to pass trade secrets legislation, but that does nothing to absolve us from doing our jobs by considering the pending Supreme Court nominee.●

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to express my support for the Defend Trade Secrets Act and to explain some of the changes that were made in the Judiciary Committee to ensure the bill does not adversely impact California.

First, let me congratulate Senators HATCH and COONS on their work on this bill.

This bill will help protect vital trade secrets of American companies by providing a Federal cause of action for the theft of trade secrets. It will ensure there is access to Federal courts in these cases. During consideration of the bill in the Judiciary Committee, some members, including me, voiced concern that the injunctive relief authorized under the bill could override State law limitations that safeguard the ability of an employee to move from one job to another. This is known as employee mobility. Some States, including California, have strong public policies or laws in favor of employee mobility. These are reflected in some State court precedent or in laws that are on the books.

When this bill came before the Judiciary Committee, there was a serious concern that a Federal law without similar limits would override the law in those States and create impairments on employees' ability to move from job to job. If that were to happen, it could be a major limitation on employee mobility that does not exist today. To prevent this, the bill now includes language to preserve the law in California and elsewhere. Specifically, the bill bars an injunction ''to prevent a person from entering into an employment relationship,'' period. In other words, relief under this bill cannot include an injunction barring a person from starting a new job. As I understand it, this reflects the practice under current law in California.

Secondly, any injunction that is issued cannot be based ''merely on the information the person knows.'' This language makes clear that any injunctive relief must be based on real evidence of a threat to the trade secrets, not simply on the employee's knowledge.

Third, the bill also includes language to ensure that any injunction issued under the bill does not ''otherwise conflict with an applicable State law prohibiting restraints on the practice of a lawful profession, trade, or business.''

This language will ensure that States are able to protect against the use of this bill to create unlawful restraints on business practices within their States. In fact, California's strong public policy in favor of employee mobility stems from such a law, which is located at section 16600 in the State's business and professions code. This law states: ''Except as provided in this chapter, every contract by which anyone is restrained from engaging in a lawful profession, trade, or business of any kind is to that extent void.''

As I said in the markup of this bill in the Judiciary Committee and as is noted in the Judiciary Committee's report, if a State's trade secrets law authorizes additional remedies beyond what this bill authorizes, those State law remedies will still be available.

I felt it was important to protect California, which has a vibrant and dynamic economy of almost 40 million people in so many sectors.

I am very grateful that Senators HATCH and COONS were willing to accommodate my concerns, and I am pleased to support this bill and to cosponsor it.

Thank you very much.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–26, concerning the Department of the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the United Kingdom for defense articles and services estimated to cost $3.2 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER ZAKRISKI,
(for J. W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–26

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: United Kingdom.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* $1.8 billion.
Other $1.4 billion.
Total $3.2 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE).
Nine (9) P–8A Patrol Aircraft, which include: Tactical Open Mission Software (TOMS), Electro-Optical (EO) and Infrared (IR) MX–20HD, AN/AAQ–2(V)1 Acoustic System, AN/APY–10 Radar, ALQ–240 Electronic Support Measures (ESM).
Twelve (12) Multifunctional Informational Distribution System (MIDS) Joint Tactical Radio Systems (JTRS).
Twelve (12) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies (GLTA) for AN/AAQ–24(V)N.
Twelve (12) System Processors for AN/AAQ–24(V)N.
Twelve (12) Missile Warning Sensors for AN/AAR–54 (for AN/AAQ–24(V)N).
Nine (9) LN–251 with Embedded Global Positioning Systems/Inertial Navigation System (EGI).
Non-Major Defense Equipment (Non-MDE): Associated training, training devices, and support.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Navy (SAN, Basic Aircraft Procurement Case; LVK, Basic Training Devices Case; TGO, Basic Training Case).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: UK–P–FBF, total case value $5.6M, implemented January 27, 2015.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee. etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: March 24, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

United Kingdom—P–8A Aircraft and Associated Support

The Government of the United Kingdom (UK) has requested notification for the possible procurement of up to nine (9) P–8A Patrol Aircraft, associated major defense equipment, associated training, and support. The estimated cost is $3.2 billion.

The UK is a close ally and an important partner on critical foreign policy and defense issues. The proposed sale will enhance U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives by enhancing the UK's capabilities to provide national defense and contribute to NATO and coalition operations.

The proposed sale will allow the UK to reestablish its Maritime Surveillance Aircraft (MSA) capability that it divested when it cancelled the Nimrod MRA4 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) program. The United Kingdom has retained core skills in maritime patrol and reconnaissance following the retirement of the Nimrod aircraft through Personnel Exchange Programs (PEPs). The MSA has remained the United Kingdom's highest priority unfunded requirement. The P–8A aircraft would fulfill this requirement. The UK will have no difficulty absorbing these aircraft into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor involved in this sale is The Boeing Company, Seattle, WA. Implementation of the proposed sale will require approximately sixty-four (64) personnel hired by Boeing to support the program in the United Kingdom. Additional contractors include:

ViaSat, Carlsbad, CA.
GC Micro, Petaluma, CA.
Rockwell Collins, Cedar Rapids, IA.
Spirit Aero, Wichita, KS.
Raytheon, Waltham, MA.
Telephonics, Farmingdale, NY.
Pole Zero, Cincinnati, OH.
Northrop Grumman Corp, Falls Church, VA.
Exelis, McLean, VA.
Terma, Arlington, VA.
Symmetrics, Canada.
Arnprior Aerospace, Canada.
General Electric, UK.
Martin Baker, UK.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–26

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The P–8A aircraft is a militarized version of the Boeing 737–800 Next Generation (NG) commercial aircraft. The P–8A is replacing the P–3C as the Navy's long-range anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft capable of broad-area, maritime and littoral operations.

2. P–8A mission systems include:

(a) Tactical Open Mission Software (TOMS). TOMS functions include environment planning tactical aids, weapons planning aids, and data correlation. TOMS includes an algorithm for track fusion which automatically correlates tracks produced by on-board and off-board sensors.

(b) Electro-Optical (EO) and Infrared (IR) MX–20HD. The EO/IR system processes visible EO and IR spectrum to detect and image objects.

(c) AN/AAQ–2(V)1 Acoustic System. The Acoustic sensor system is integrated within the mission system as the primary sensor for the aircraft ASW missions. The system has multi-static active coherent (MAC) 64 sonobuoy processing capability and acoustic sensor prediction tools.

(d) AN/APY–10 Radar. The aircraft radar is a direct derivative of the legacy AN/APS–137(V) installed in the P–3C. The radar capabilities include Global Positioning System (GPS), selective availability anti-spoofing, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), and Inverse Synthetic Aperture Radar (ISAR) imagery resolutions, and periscope detection mode.

(e) ALQ–240 Electronic Support Measures (ESM). This system provides real time capability for the automatic detection, location, measurement, and analysis of Radio-Frequency (RF) signals and modes. Real time results are compared with a library of known emitters to perform emitter classification and specific emitter identification (SEI).

(f) Electronic Warfare Self Protection (EWSP). The aircraft EWSP consists of the ALQ–213 Electronic Warfare Management System (EWMS). ALE–47 Countermeasures Dispensing System (CMDS), and the AN/AAQ–24 Directional Infrared Countermeasures (DIRCM)/AAR–54 Missile Warning Sensors (MWS). The EWSP includes threat information.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary was to obtain access to the P–8A specific hardware and software elements, systems could be reverse engineered to discover U.S. Navy capabilities and tactics. The consequences of the loss of this technology, to a technologically advanced or competent adversary, could result in the development of countermeasures or equivalent systems, which could reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar advance capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the United Kingdom can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the technology being released as the U.S. Government. Support of the P–8A Patrol Aircraft to the Government of the United Kingdom is necessary in the furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the United Kingdom.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 22, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House has passed the following bill, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 192. An act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1180. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2393. An act to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 22, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1831. An act to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the enrolled bill was signed on March 24, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. COTTON).

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 24, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 34. Concurrent resolution providing for an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 24, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 4721. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the enrolled bill was signed on March 24, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. COTTON).

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 31, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER) had signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1180. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2393. An act to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the enrolled bills were signed on March 31, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. ALEXANDER).

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 482. An act to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1670. An act to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

H.R. 2745. An act to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority.

H.R. 2857. An act to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4119. An act to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4314. An act to require a plan to combat international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters, accelerate the transfer of certain border security systems to foreign partner governments, establish minimum international border security standards, authorize the suspension of foreign assistance to countries not making significant efforts to comply with such minimum standards, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4336. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial in Arlington National Cemetery of the cremated remains of certain persons whose service has been determined to be active service.

H.R. 4472. An act to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4742. An act to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

H.R. 4755. An act to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 482. An act to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2745. An act to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2857. An act to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4119. An act to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4314. An act to require a plan to combat international travel by terrorists and foreign fighters, accelerate the transfer of certain border security systems to foreign partner governments, establish minimum international border security standards, authorize the suspension of foreign assistance to countries not making significant efforts to comply with such minimum standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 4336. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial in Arlington National Cemetery of the cremated remains of certain persons whose service has been determined to be active service; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 4472. An act to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to adopt a centralized electronic system to help expedite the placement of children in foster care or guardianship, or for adoption, across State lines, and to provide grants to aid States in developing such a system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 4742. An act to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4755. An act to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on March 31, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 1180. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2393. An act to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of March 17, 2016, the following reports of committees were submitted on March 28, 2016:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 806. A bill to amend section 31306 of title 49, United States Code, to recognize hair as an alternative specimen for preemployment and random controlled substances testing of commercial motor vehicle drivers and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–232).

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1335. A bill to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Tokyo on February 24, 2012, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–233).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1873. A bill to strengthen accountability for deployment of border security technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–234).

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 800. A bill to improve, coordinate, and enhance rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health.

S. 849. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1101. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the regulation of patient records and certain decision support software.

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2014. A bill to demonstrate a commitment to our Nation's scientists by increasing opportunities for the development of our next generation of researchers.

S. 2687. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to improve plans of safe care for infants affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2740. A bill to prohibit the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to state sponsors of terrorism; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 2741. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to permit the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and the Secretary of Labor to elect not to recoup benefits overpayments; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KIRK, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2742. A bill to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act regarding the national research institutes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 410. A resolution honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. KIRK):

S. Res. 411. A resolution expressing support for the goals and ideals of the biennial USA Science & Engineering Festival in Washington, DC, and designating April 11 through April 17, 2016, as ''National Science and Technology Week''; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 412. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of the Honorable Martin Olav Sabo as an outstanding public servant dedicated to the State of Minnesota and the United States; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 192

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 192, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 578

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 579, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, and for other purposes.

S. 682

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 682, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 763

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 763, a bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes.

S. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1726

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1726, a bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to marijuana-related businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 1774

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1774, a bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code to treat Puerto Rico as a State for purposes of chapter 9 of such title relating to the adjustment of debts of municipalities.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2180

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2180, a bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

S. 2219

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2219, a bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct an assessment and analysis of the outdoor recreation economy of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2283

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2283, a bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2348

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2348, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 2358

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2358, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out a pilot program to work with municipalities that are seeking to develop and implement integrated plans to meet wastewater and stormwater obligations under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2438

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2438, a bill to amend titles XI and XIX of the Social Security Act to establish a comprehensive and nationwide system to evaluate the quality of care provided to beneficiaries of Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program and to provide incentives for voluntary quality improvement.

S. 2468

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2468, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a 5-year demonstration program to provide grants to eligible Indian tribes for the construction of tribal schools, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2541

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2541, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act to further the conservation of prohibited wildlife species.

S. 2572

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2572, a bill to make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 2592

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2592, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act by instituting a 180-day waiting period before medical debt will be reported on a consumer's credit report and removing paid-off and settled medical debts from credit reports that have been fully paid or settled, to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act by providing for a timetable for verification of medical debt and to increase the efficiency of credit markets with more perfect information, and for other purposes.

S. 2596

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2596, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces entitled to such travel.

S. 2631

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2631, a bill to amend the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 to define environmental intervention blood lead level, and for other purposes.

S. 2659

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2659, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency cannot regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 2662

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2662, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to include in income the unrepatriated earnings of groups that include an inverted corporation.

S. 2679

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2679, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits.

S. 2693

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2693, a bill to ensure the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission allocates its resources appropriately by prioritizing complaints of discrimination before implementing the proposed revision of the employer information report EEO–1, and for other purposes.

S. 2697

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 2697, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947 to prevent wage theft and assist in the recovery of stolen wages, to authorize the Secretary of Labor to administer grants to prevent wage and hour violations, and for other purposes.

S. 2705

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2705, a bill to authorize Federal agencies to establish prize competitions for innovation or adaptation management development relating to coral reef ecosystems and for other purposes.

S. 2707

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2707, a bill to require the Secretary of Labor to nullify the proposed rule regarding defining and delimiting the exemptions for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees, to require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a full and complete economic analysis with improved economic data on small businesses, nonprofit employers, Medicare or Medicaid dependent health care providers, and small governmental jurisdictions, and all other employers, and minimize the impact on such employers, before promulgating any substantially similar rule, and to provide a rule of construction regarding the salary threshold exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and for other purposes.

S. 2710

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2710, a bill to increase the participation of historically underrepresented demographic groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and industry.

S. 2716

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2716, a bill to update the oil and gas and mining industry guides of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

S. 2726

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2726, a bill to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes.

S. 2738

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2738, a bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require the disclosure of political intelligence activities, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for restrictions on former officers, employees, and elected officials of the executive and legislative branches regarding political intelligence contacts, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 394

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 394, a resolution recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 410—HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LEGACY OF CESAR ESTRADA CHAVEZ

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 410

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez was born on March 31, 1927, near Yuma, Arizona;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez spent his early years on a family farm;

Whereas at the age of 10, Cesar Estrada Chavez joined the thousands of migrant farm workers laboring in fields and vineyards throughout the Southwest after a bank foreclosure resulted in the loss of the family farm;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez, after attending more than 30 elementary and middle schools and achieving an eighth grade education, left school to work full time as a farm worker to help support his family;

Whereas at the age of 17, Cesar Estrada Chavez entered the United States Navy and served the United States with distinction for 2 years;

Whereas in 1948, Cesar Estrada Chavez returned from military service to marry Helen Fabela, whom he had met while working in the vineyards of central California;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez and Helen Fabela had 8 children;

Whereas, as early as 1949, Cesar Estrada Chavez was committed to organizing farm workers to campaign for safe and fair working conditions, reasonable wages, livable housing, and outlawing child labor;

Whereas, in 1952, Cesar Estrada Chavez joined the Community Service Organization, a prominent Latino civil rights group, and worked with the organization to coordinate voter registration drives and conduct campaigns against discrimination in East Los Angeles;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez served as the national director of the Community Service Organization;

Whereas, in 1962, Cesar Estrada Chavez left the Community Service Organization to establish the National Farm Workers Association, which eventually became the United Farm Workers of America;

Whereas under the leadership of Cesar Estrada Chavez, the United Farm Workers of America organized thousands of migrant farm workers to fight for fair wages, health care coverage, pension benefits, livable housing, and respect;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez was a strong believer in the principles of nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez effectively used peaceful tactics, including fasting for 25 days in 1968, 25 days in 1972, and 38 days in 1988, to call attention to the terrible working and living conditions of farm workers in the United States;

Whereas through his commitment to nonviolence, Cesar Estrada Chavez brought dignity and respect to organized farm workers and became an inspiration to and a resource for individuals engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world;

Whereas the influence of Cesar Estrada Chavez extends far beyond agriculture and provides inspiration for individuals working to better human rights, empower workers, and advance the American Dream, which is for all people of the United States;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez died on April 23, 1993, at the age of 66, in San Luis, Arizona, only miles from his birthplace;

Whereas more than 50,000 individuals attended the funeral services of Cesar Estrada Chavez in Delano, California;

Whereas Cesar Estrada Chavez was laid to rest at the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America, known as ''Nuestra Señora de La Paz'', located in the Tehachapi Mountains in Keene, California;

Whereas since the death of Cesar Estrada Chavez, schools, parks, streets, libraries, and other public facilities, as well as awards and scholarships, have been named in his honor;

Whereas more than 10 States and dozens of communities across the United States honor the life and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez each year on March 31;

Whereas March 31 is recognized as an official State holiday in California, Colorado, and Texas, and there is growing support to designate the birthday of Cesar Estrada Chavez as a national day of service to memorialize his heroism;

Whereas during his lifetime, Cesar Estrada Chavez was a recipient of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Peace Prize;

Whereas, on August 8, 1994, Cesar Estrada Chavez was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom;

Whereas, on October 8, 2012, the President authorized the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Cesar Estrada Chavez National Monument in Keene, California;

Whereas the President honored the life and service of Cesar Estrada Chavez by proclaiming March 31, 2015, to be ''Cesar Chavez Day'' and by asking all people of the United States to observe March 31 with service, community, and education programs to honor the enduring legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez; and

Whereas the United States should continue the efforts of Cesar Estrada Chavez to ensure equality, justice, and dignity for all people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the accomplishments and example of Cesar Estrada Chavez, a great hero of the United States;

(2) pledges to promote the legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to commemorate the legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez and to always remember his great rallying cry: ''¡Si, se puede!'', which is Spanish for ''Yes, we can!'', as a symbol of unity and hope for each individual who seeks justice.

SENATE RESOLUTION 411—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF THE BIENNIAL USA SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FESTIVAL IN WASHINGTON, DC, AND DESIGNATING APRIL 11 THROUGH APRIL 17, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WEEK''

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. KIRK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 411

Whereas science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (referred to in this preamble as ''STEM'') are essential to the future global competitiveness of the United States;

Whereas advances in technology have resulted in significant improvement in the daily life of each individual in the United States;

Whereas scientific discoveries are critical to curing diseases, solving global challenges, and an increased understanding of the world;

Whereas the future global economy requires a workforce that is educated in science and engineering specialties;

Whereas educating a new generation of individuals in the United States in STEM is crucial to ensure continued economic growth;

Whereas an increase in the interest of the next generation of students in the United States, particularly young women and underrepresented minorities, in STEM is necessary to maintain the global competitiveness of the United States;

Whereas science and engineering festivals have attracted millions of participants and inspired an effort throughout the United States to promote science and engineering;

Whereas thousands of institutions of higher education, museums, science centers, STEM professional societies, educational societies, government agencies and laboratories, community organizations, elementary and secondary schools, volunteers, corporate and private sponsors, and nonprofit organizations come together to organize the USA Science & Engineering Festival in Washington, DC, during April 2016;

Whereas the USA Science & Engineering Festival, through exhibits on topics including human spaceflight, medicine, engineering, biotechnology, physics, and astronomy—

(1) reinvigorates the interest of young individuals in the United States in STEM; and

(2) highlights the important contributions of science and engineering to the competitiveness of the United States; and

Whereas scientific research is essential to the competitiveness of the United States, and an event such as the USA Science & Engineering Festival promotes the importance of scientific research and development for the future of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the goals and ideals of the USA Science & Engineering Festival to promote, as the cornerstones of innovation and competition in the United States—

(A) scholarship in science; and

(B) an interest in scientific research and development;

(2) supports a festival, such as the USA Science & Engineering Festival, that focuses on the importance of science and engineering to the daily life of each individual in the United States through exhibits on topics including human spaceflight, medicine, engineering, biotechnology, physics, and astronomy;

(3) congratulates each individual or organization the efforts of which make the USA Science & Engineering Festival possible;

(4) recognizes that the USA Science & Engineering Festival highlights the accomplishments of the United States in science and engineering;

(5) encourages each family and child to participate in 1 or more of the activities or exhibits of the USA Science & Engineering Festival, which will occur—

(A) in Washington, DC; and

(B) across the United States as satellite events; and

(6) designates April 11 through April 17, 2016, as ''National Science and Technology Week''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 412—HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE MARTIN OLAV SABO AS AN OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVANT DEDICATED TO THE STATE OF MINNESOTA AND THE UNITED STATES

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 412

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo was born on February 28, 1938, in Crosby, North Dakota, and grew up in Alkabo, North Dakota;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo attended Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and graduated in 1959;

Whereas in 1960, at the age of 22 years, Martin Olav Sabo was first elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives and at that time, Martin Olav Sabo was the youngest person ever elected to the Minnesota Legislature;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo served in the Minnesota House of Representatives for 18 years, including—

(1) 4 years as minority leader; and

(2) 6 years as the first member of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party to serve as Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo fought for the historic 1971 ''Minnesota Miracle'' that changed the way schools and localities were funded;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1978 and he served 28 years as a Member of Congress representing the fifth congressional district of Minnesota;

Whereas in 1979, as a freshman legislator, Martin Olav Sabo was appointed to serve on the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and he later became Ranking Member of the Subcommittees on Transportation and Homeland Security of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo—

(1) championed investments in roads and bridges, transit systems, aviation infrastructure, railways, nonmotorized corridors, and other transportation projects, including the first light rail transit line in Minnesota (commonly known as the ''Blue Line''), the Hennepin Avenue bridge, and the Midtown Greenway; and

(2) provided critical funding—

(A) to foster economic development initiatives;

(B) to expand housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income families;

(C) to protect the environment;

(D) to support law enforcement;

(E) to promote agricultural production and research;

(F) to establish the Department of Homeland Security; and

(G) to strengthen the Department of Defense;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo served on the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives for 8 years, including—

(1) 2 years as Ranking Member; and

(2) 2 years as Chairman during the 103rd Congress, a period during which Martin Olav Sabo shepherded through enactment into law on August 10, 1993, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (Public Law 103–66), which many contend paved the way to a balanced budget in 1998, the first balanced budget of the United States since 1969;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo was concerned with the growing disparity between workers at the top of the income ladder and those at the bottom and on October 13, 1993, Martin Olav Sabo introduced H.R. 3278, 103rd Congress, entitled the ''Income Equity Act of 1993'', and Martin Olav Sabo reintroduced that legislation in each subsequent Congress in which he served;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo was a long-time fan of baseball and the Minnesota Twins and wore a Minnesota Twins team uniform each spring as a player on, and the manager of, the Democratic team in the annual congressional baseball game;

Whereas the Martin Olav Sabo Bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was named after Representative Sabo;

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo retired from the House of Representatives in 2006 and later served as—

(1) co-chair of the National Transportation Policy Project of the Bipartisan Policy Center; and

(2) a member of the Minnesota Ballpark Authority; and

Whereas Martin Olav Sabo will be remembered as a strong, civil legislator with an understated demeanor that earned him the reputation of being able to work on a bipartisan basis to get things done for the fifth congressional district of Minnesota, the State of Minnesota, and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the life and accomplishments of the Honorable Martin Olav Sabo;

(2) remembers the work that Martin Olav Sabo accomplished to balance the Federal budget, improve transportation and housing, and bring attention to the growing disparity between high- and low-wage earners; and

(3) recognizes the indelible legacy that Martin Olav Sabo has left on the State of Minnesota and the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 4, 2016, at 5:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Daniel Pedraza, a legal fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 411, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 411) expressing support for the goals and ideals of the biennial USA Science & Engineering Festival in Washington, DC, and designating April 11 through April 17, 2016, as ''National Science and Technology Week.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 411) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE MARTIN OLAV SABO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 412, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 412) honoring the life and legacy of the Honorable Martin Olav Sabo as an outstanding public servant dedicated to the State of Minnesota and the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 412) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, April 5; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 636; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:12 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 5, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. VINCENT K. BROOKS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 10502:

To be general

LT. GEN. JOSEPH L. LENGYEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE RESERVE AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 8038:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MARYANNE MILLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. BRADLEY A. HEITHOLD

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD, AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 10506:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. LEON S. RICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. KENNETH P. EKMAN

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. RONALD R. FRITZEMEIER

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 47:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. CHARLES D. MICHEL

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 4, 2016 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

NAVY NOMINATION OF REAR ADM. ELIZABETH L. TRAIN, TO BE VICE ADMIRAL, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, April 5, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 6

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.
SD–124
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine transportation security, focusing on protecting passengers and freight.
SR–253
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
SD–406
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider S. 2700, to update the authorizing provisions relating to the workforces of the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration, S. 185, to create a limited population pathway for approval of certain antibacterial drugs, S. 2713, to provide for the implementation of a Precision Medicine Initiative, an original bill entitled, ''NIH Strategic Plan and Inclusion in Clinical Research'', and an original bill entitled, ''Promoting Biomedical Research and Public Health for Patients Act''.
SH–216

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold closed hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the national intelligence and military intelligence programs.
SVC–217
Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine the unreliability of Federal financial data.
SD–608

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine Federal disaster response and Small Business Administration implementation of the RISE Act.
SR–428A

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the strategic implications of the United States debt.
SD–419
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine S. 2304, to provide for tribal demonstration projects for the integration of early childhood development, education, including Native language and culture, and related services, for evaluation of those demonstration projects, S. 2468, to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a 5-year demonstration program to provide grants to eligible Indian tribes for the construction of tribal schools, S. 2580, to establish the Indian Education Agency to streamline the administration of Indian education, and S. 2711, to expand opportunity for Native American children through additional options in education.
SD–628

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security
To hold hearings to examine research and development efforts at the Department of Homeland Security.
SD–138
Committee on Armed Services
To receive a closed briefing on the report of the Military Justice Review Group.
SR–232A
Special Committee on Aging
To hold hearings to examine finding a cure, focusing on assessing progress toward the goal of ending Alzheimer's by 2025.
SD–106

APRIL 7

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–G50

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the National Institutes of Health.
SD–138
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Matthew Rhett Jeppson, of Florida, to be Director of the Mint, both of the Department of the Treasury, and Lisa M. Fairfax, of Maryland, and Hester Maria Peirce, of Ohio, both to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.
SD–538
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the United States Geological Survey.
SD–366
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine the Federal role in keeping water and wastewater infrastructure affordable.
SD–406
Committee on Foreign Relations
Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy
To hold hearings to examine a progress report on the West Africa Ebola epidemic.
SD–419
Committee on the Judiciary
Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some

children with autism, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for Department of Defense military construction and family housing.

SD–124

2 p.m.
Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

APRIL 12

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the status of innovative technologies in advanced manufacturing.

SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine the strategy and implementation of the Department of Defense's technology offsets initiative in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

Committee on Environment and Public Works
Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight
To hold hearings to examine American small businesses perspectives on Environmental Protection Agency regulatory actions.

SD–406

APRIL 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine the role of environmental policies on access to energy and economic opportunity.

SD–406

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine S. 2205, to establish a grant program to assist tribal governments in establishing tribal healing to wellness courts, S. 2421, to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska, and to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation located in Dillingham, Alaska, S. 2564, to modernize prior legislation relating to Dine College, S. 2643, to improve the implementation of the settlement agreement reached between the Pueblo de Cochiti of New Mexico and the Corps of Engineers, and S. 2717, to improve the safety and address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams to prevent flooding on Indian reservations.

SD–628

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

APRIL 14

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.

SD–538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine options for addressing the continuing lack of reliable emergency medical transportation for the isolated community of King Cove, Alaska.

SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Land Management's proposed rule, entitled ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resources Conservation,'' published in the *Federal Register* on February 8, 2016.

SD–366

APRIL 19

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine challenges and opportunities for oil and gas development in different price environments.

SD–366

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''

SD–628

SENATE—*Tuesday, April 5, 2016*

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, though we cannot see You with our eyes or touch You with our hands, we daily experience the reality of Your presence and power.

Abide with our lawmakers throughout this day, providing them with wisdom, courage, and strength for the living of these days. Give them grace to understand the world we cannot see or touch, comprehending that eternal issues are at stake. As You care for their physical needs, provide also for their soul needs. Help us all to remember that You are the source of our strength.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we will soon begin consideration of bipartisan legislation that can support American jobs, improve airline safety, and help passengers—all without raising taxes or fees on travelers. The FAA Reauthorization Act before us is the result of a collaborative committee process. It shows what is possible with a Senate that is back to work and back to regular order. In this case, the Commerce Committee held a series of seven hearings to guide and inform its deliberations throughout this process. Republicans on the Commerce Committee had their say, Democrats on the Commerce Committee offered their input, and at the end of the day, Members of both parties were able to agree on bipartisan legislation that passed committee on a voice vote.

We know the bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act will promote American manufacturing, preserve rural access in States such as Kentucky, and advance new consumer protections for the flying public. We also know it will help improve safety and security both in the skies and in our airports. Here are a few ways this bipartisan bill can help: by allowing us to better prepare for the outbreak of communicable diseases like Ebola, by improving the quality of FAA's safety workforce, by encouraging the FAA to harmonize international safety standards, by bringing the government and stakeholders together in the development of safety standards for unmanned aerial vehicles, and by taking aim at human trafficking.

This legislation is the product of a lot of hard work and reaching across the aisle. At this time I wish to recognize Senator THUNE for leading the effort. He knows what is possible in a Senate that is back to work for the American people. He worked hard with the top Democrat on his committee, Senator NELSON, to get us to this point today. But these two Senators certainly didn't do it all by themselves. Senator AYOTTE was one of the key players in this bipartisan effort. As chair of the Subcommittee on Aviation, Senator AYOTTE held numerous briefings and hearings on the issue with her colleague Senator CANTWELL.

While many in this Chamber are focusing on the issue now, the bill before us is the product of many months of work by members of the Commerce Committee and their staff. Let's continue to work together in a similar spirit. While the Commerce Committee has produced a product that merits this Chamber's consideration, I am sure they would acknowledge that they don't have a monopoly on good ideas. I hope we can have an efficient amendment process where Members bring their best ideas to the floor. Let's pass another significant piece of legislation for the American people.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, a few years ago President Obama gave a speech in Miami where he said the following about immigration: ''I know [that] some . . . wish that I could just bypass Congress and change the law by myself. But that's not how democracy works.'' That was the President in Miami a couple of years ago. He is right—that isn't how it works. Apparently that wasn't enough to stop him from pursuing the kind of partisan overreach he once described as ''ignoring the law'' and ''unwise and unfair.'' It didn't keep him from doing that anyway. Maybe he didn't anticipate that a Federal district court would issue a preliminary injunction to prevent him from moving forward. Maybe he didn't expect that a Federal appeals court would uphold that ruling.

But now the Supreme Court will hear arguments in this case later this month on core constitutional principles like the separation of powers and the duty to take care that the laws are faithfully executed. That is why I led a group of 43 Republican Senators yesterday in filing an amicus brief in support of the challenge to this overreach—a challenge brought by a majority of America's Governors and attorneys general from across our country. As we highlighted in the brief, the administration's Executive action ''stands in stark contravention to Federal law and to the constitutional principle of the separation of powers.'' It is also an ''explicit effort to circumvent the legislative process.''

So, look, whether Republicans or Democrats, this kind of partisan overreach should worry all of us no matter who is in the White House because not only is the President's blatant refusal to follow the law an extraordinary power grab, it is a direct challenge to Congress's constitutional authority and a direct attack on our constitutional order.

WAR ON TERROR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this year I noted that the next Commander in Chief will assume office confronting a complex and varied array of threats. I observed that after 7 years of the Obama administration delaying action in the War on Terror, the next administration would need to return to the fight and restore our role in the world. Among many other things, that means we must return to capturing, interrogating, and targeting the enemy in a way that allows us to defeat terrorist networks because let's remember that during his first week in office, the President issued a series of Executive orders that collectively undermined the capability of our intelligence community and military to combat terrorism.

Yesterday the Defense Department confirmed that two of Al Qaeda's former explosives experts were transferred from the secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay to Senegal. Both detainees had long records of supporting Al Qaeda. According to records that have been made public, one of those detainees, a former associate of Osama bin Laden, is likely to reengage

in hostilities. The other detainee was previously assessed as likely to return to the fight. This comes at a time when Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has exploited the war in Yemen to secure a safe haven and the al-Nusra Front within Syria is exploiting the civil war there to carry on Al Qaeda's mission. This is precisely the wrong time to send experienced, hardened fighters back into the conflict.

We must use the remaining months of the Obama administration as a year of transition to better posture our military to meet the threats we face, not make it more challenging for the next President, regardless of political party. Actually, there have been encouraging changes within the administration recently, such as programs presented in the budget request by the Secretary of Defense to address Chinese and Russian aggression, a public recognition by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of the threat posed by ISIL in Libya, more focus on the need to rebuild a nuclear triad, General Campbell's statement that a larger force must be left in Afghanistan, and the deployment of the expeditionary targeting force to Iraq. This is the wrong time for the administration to release terrorists who are likely to return to the fight.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this side of the aisle also hopes that we can move through the FAA bill, which is important to get done. We just have to make sure we do it right. There are lots of things we need to do. I think that the bill coming from the committee, led by Senators THUNE and NELSON, is a good, basic outline for us to proceed on this matter.

IMMIGRATION AND INTERROGATION OF GITMO DETAINEES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to follow up on a couple of statements that were made by my friend the Republican leader. Senator MCCONNELL mentioned immigration. In the last Congress we worked very hard together in a bipartisan fashion to form a good, comprehensive immigration reform bill. We passed it, but due to the power of the tea partiers—or, as Speaker Boehner referred to them, ''the crazies''—they didn't have a vote in the House. If they had voted on that legislation, it would have passed. Democrats would have voted for it, and there were enough Republicans who would have voted for it. That would have been a big vote out of there, but it didn't happen, so the President had to do something on immigration, and he laid the groundwork. He spoke at the State of the Union Address and basically said: Since you are not passing any legislation, I will have to use my Executive power in order to get things done. He then proceeded to prioritize what he wanted to do. He issued the order that was so important to boys and girls, called a deferred action, which allowed DREAMers to stay in the country, and that was the right thing to do. He also prioritized deportations by going after criminals, not families, and enforcing the law. He has done a very good job.

I think it is also very important to note that the administrative actions the President has taken are nothing unique. We can go back to the days of Theodore Roosevelt, a good Republican President who did a lot of stuff administratively.

On his remarks about getting involved in the fight again—I am paraphrasing what he said—that we have to get back to the interrogation we did before, we know that torture was quickly eliminated. That effort was led by a lot of people, not the least of whom was someone who has been tortured, a Member of the U.S. Senate, JOHN MCCAIN. He has spoken out very admirably, and as only he can, about how bad torture is. And the facts indicate that torture doesn't get any new information anyway; there are other ways to get that information.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the senior Senator from Iowa, who is chairman of the Judiciary Committee, came to the floor yesterday afternoon in an attempt to divert attention away from that committee and his failure to do his job. He is not doing his job as chairman of that committee. He hoped to do that by focusing on me for objecting to a bill that would expand the subpoena powers of certain government appointees called inspectors general, but his efforts failed. People weren't looking at me; they were looking at the work not done by the Judiciary Committee.

I objected to that bill because that legislation was really a legislative overreach, just as my friend the senior Senator from Iowa continues his overreach by turning the Senate Judiciary Committee into, for example, a Benghazi committee—a narrowly partisan committee masquerading as an independent party. It is the same theory that had Secretary Clinton spending 11 or 12 hours before the committee during the course of 1 day. That hearing was a flop because of her assertiveness, her direct answering of questions, and her physical and emotional strength, standing and sitting during that time.

My friend's tenure as Judiciary Committee chair has been reduced to one stunt after another. One of his stunts included demanding maternity leave records of one of Secretary Clinton's staffers. Another political stunt was blocking the confirmation of State Department Legal Adviser Brian Egan, and yet another political stunt was blocking the promotions list of career Foreign Service officers. And his latest political stunt is preventing the Senate from doing its constitutional duty in considering President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland. So even though the senior Senator from Iowa hopes to divert attention away from this disappointment, that is his Republican Judiciary Committee, the people aren't easily fooled.

The people of Iowa and the rest of the country certainly aren't buying Senator GRASSLEY's political charades. This morning the Des Moines Register, the largest newspaper in Iowa, published another scathing editorial regarding Senator GRASSLEY's unprecedented obstruction of the Supreme Court nominee. The editorial highlights the fact that because of the Supreme Court vacancy, the highest Court in the land is now stuck in a rut of 4-to-4 decisions—a stalemate. This is what the Des Moines Register editorial said, and I quote:

> Americans might need to get used to deadlocks, thanks to Senator Chuck Grassley. The head of the Senate Judiciary Committee seems just fine with stalemate.

Now the senior Senator from Iowa may be content with gridlock in the Supreme Court, but the American people simply aren't. They are not content with the way the chairman continues to use one of the most prestigious, independent, and powerful committees to carry out political warfare. So maybe he should spend less time complaining about me and more time simply doing his job.

Every day, more and more Senators are meeting with President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Chief Judge Merrick Garland, as well they should. According to the senior Senator from Utah, ''fulfilling that role [of advice and consent] requires us to evaluate a nominee's qualifications for the particular position for which she has been nominated.'' We know that was when they were looking at Sotomayor and Kagan, who are on the Court. That is why every Senator, using the same logic as my friend from Utah—Republican, Democratic—should meet with Judge Garland.

This week he has a full slate of meetings scheduled with Senate Democrats. By the end of the week, every Democratic member of the Judiciary Committee will have met with President Obama's nominee. To date, 16 Republicans have either met with Judge Garland or indicated they are willing to do so in the future. Some even have meetings scheduled: Senators AYOTTE,

BOOZMAN, CASSIDY, COCHRAN, COLLINS, FLAKE, GRASSLEY, INHOFE, JOHNSON, KIRK, LANKFORD, MURKOWSKI, PORTMAN, RISCH, ROUNDS, and TOOMEY. These are all Republican Senators who have said publically that they are going to meet with him. I think that is a step in the right direction, and I think it really speaks volumes.

Take for example Senator INHOFE and Senator LANKFORD. I am sure they have in their mind the outstanding work that Garland did when he was U.S. assistant attorney. He led the charge. No one questions his terrific, outstanding prosecution of that man who killed who knows how many people in Oklahoma with that bomb, for which, of course, eventually, he was given the death penalty.

This is a good man. Judge Garland is a good man. In every court he goes to, Democrats and Republicans speak highly of him—Chief Justice Roberts, among others. So I was disappointed last week when some Republican Senators, such as MURKOWSKI and MORAN, abandoned their previous support for agreeing to consider Judge Garland's nomination. Senator MORAN's backtracking is especially alarming because it appears to be the result of a multimillion dollar campaign urging the Senator to reverse his support for a hearing for Judge Garland. As has been reported by the Topeka Capital-Journal, Senator MORAN's about-face came in response to a backlash from the Koch brothers. I quote directly from the article:

On March 21, Moran told a small crowd in Cimarron, ''I have my job to do,'' and ''I think the process ought to go forward.'' Though he made it clear that Garland likely wouldn't be worthy of his vote, the comments indicated hearings should be held for the judge.

But they went on to say more.

Within a few days, Moran's comments sparked backlash from conservative groups. The Judicial Crisis Network announced it was putting the finishing touches on an advertising campaign bashing Moran, and the Tea Party Patriots Citizens Fund said it was considering backing a primary challenger.

U.S. Representative Mike Pompeo, a fellow Kansas Republican, publicly called on Moran to reconsider, a rare criticism of Moran from a fellow member of the Kansas congressional delegation. The criticisms eventually reached bizarre heights when the Traditional Values Coalition compared Moran to Judas Iscariot.

[The] chief counsel of the Judicial Crisis Network said Friday she was pleased to see Moran changed his mind.

Well, I guess you could say he changed his mind. MORAN was meeting with Garland and holding confirmation hearings until the Judicial Crisis Network and the tea party and the Koch brothers threatened him. It will surprise no one to learn that the Koch brothers and their dark money helped fund these radical organizations more than anybody else in the world. The Kochs are notorious for bullying anyone who stands in their way.

There is, without any question, oligarchs in the land, the first ones I have known in America. They are the Koch brothers. If they are successful in the splurging of their vast wealth and accomplishing what they set out doing in this campaign, I feel very, very bad for our country. They will be talking about us the way they talk about Russia—the oligarchy that is there. We are going to have one and the same.

Now, we must not forget how the Koch brothers' minions tried to intimidate investigative journalist Jane Mayer because she dared to expose the Kochs' attempt to buy our democracy. Her book, called ''Dark Money,'' is on the New York Times bestseller list, and all over the country people are buying that book. Why? Because it is an insight into two brothers who are trying to buy America. Charles and David Koch used their fortune and their tremendous clout to force Senator MORAN to back down from his position. Publically, I can't imagine how one of us, a Senator, could be forced to do that in the manner that he was. All of this is because the junior Senator from Kansas dared to meet with the Supreme Court nominee. He dared to suggest that Garland deserved a hearing. He dared to do his job.

So is this now what the Republican Party has become—a party dictated by menace and intimidation? All you have to do is look at what is going on with the Republican Presidential nomination. That answers the question itself.

Some 30 years ago, though, Senator GRASSLEY said the Judiciary Committee ''has the obligation to build a record and to conduct the most in-depth inquiry that we can'' on Supreme Court nominees. Now the Republican leader, CHARLES GRASSLEY, have twisted the arms of the Republican Judiciary Committee members, compelling them to sign a loyalty pledge and forcing them to refuse to consider the President's Supreme Court nominee. Regrettably, Senator MORAN is just the latest Republican Senator who has allowed himself to be pushed around, to be intimidated by money.

Instead of caving to the Republican leader and the Koch brothers, it is time for the Republican Senators to take a stand and do their job. I hope the remaining Republican Senators who said they will meet with him will go ahead and do so and will stand firm. I hope they will meet with Judge Garland and take the next step in the process—to hold confirmation hearings. As it was reported by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the average wait for the Supreme Court nominees, from nomination to hearing, has been 42 days. According to that timeline, Chairman GRASSLEY and his committee should begin confirmation hearings for Judge Garland April 27.

Last week, Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to the Republican leader and Chairman GRASSLEY calling on them to abide by this traditional timeline and hold a hearing by the 27th. I am very proud of the Democrats on the Judiciary Committee for doing this. That is what the American people want. They want Republicans to stop counting on the most extreme forces within their party and just do their job. That is all we are asking—as simple as that.

Mr. President, will the Chair announce what the Senate is scheduled to do the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there is an old verse that reads, if I remember correctly, as follows: While I was going up the stair, I met a man who wasn't there. He wasn't there again today. I wish that man would go away.

That man in the U.S. Senate is Merrick Garland, a person whom I am sure the Republican leadership wishes would just go away. But he is not going to go away.

Merrick Garland is the nominee whom President Obama has sent forward to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court occasioned by the untimely death of Antonin Scalia. In sending that name forward, President Obama was meeting his constitutional responsibility. Article II, section 2 of the U.S. Constitution states clearly that the President shall—shall—nominate a person to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court. It goes on to say that the responsibility of the Senate is to provide advice and consent to Supreme Court nominations. It is very clear. The men who wrote the Constitution understood the importance of filling a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, and they understood it to be so important that they mandated that the President send the nominee forward to fill that vacancy.

You can read that Constitution from start to finish and never find the rationale being used by Senator MCCONNELL, the majority leader of the Senate, to stop that nomination from

being considered in the Senate. There is no argument made in the Constitution—nor has there ever been an argument made—that because the President is in the last year of his 4-year term, he no longer has a constitutional responsibility to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. In fact, never—underline never—has the Senate refused a hearing to a nominee who has been sent forward by a President of the United States to fill this important vacancy. It speaks volumes that Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, has decided—has taken it on himself—to stop the Senate from considering the President's nominee.

It is an embarrassing position to take for many of his colleagues. Look at what they are going through. Republican Senators who went home over this Easter break—many of them—went to town meetings where people asked this very basic question: Senator, why is it that you won't do your job? Why won't you even give a hearing to this man who was sent by the President for consideration by the Senate to fill this important vacancy?

It is a hard question to answer if you take the position of Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, because the answer is that, basically, he is arguing that this President has no authority—no authority to fill this vacancy. Senator MCCONNELL argues that we should hold this vacancy open for the rest of this calendar year into next year so that a new President—whoever that might be—would have the power to fill this vacancy. He argues that the American people will speak through this next election as to a new President and that person should have the authority.

Well, what we discovered over the course of the last several weeks is this isn't about giving the American people a voice in choosing to fill that vacancy; it is about giving two individuals, the Koch brothers, the decision to fill that vacancy. These brothers have decided it is in their best interests—their political interests, their economic interests, whatever it may be—to keep this spot vacant on the U.S. Supreme Court in the hopes that a Republican Presidential candidate will win the election and fill the Court vacancy with the blessing of the Koch brothers. So Republican Senators are going back to their home districts and States, basically facing the electorate in their home States, and finding it impossible to justify avoiding any consideration of this nominee.

It got more difficult this morning.

I ask unanimous consent that this article from the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD in its entirety. The Washington Post has reported that U.S. Appeals Court Judge Merrick Garland is getting a boost for his Supreme Court nomination from some of the lawyers who know him best—his former law clerks. It goes on to say that 68 former law clerks for this judge have written to Members of Congress recommending him based on their personal experience of working professionally with him.

Let me read this passage from their letter:

> There are not many bosses who so uniformly inspire the loyalty that we all feel toward Chief Judge Garland. Our enthusiasm is both a testament to his character and a reflection of his commitment to mentoring and encouraging us long after we left his chambers. He has stood by our side during the happiest moments of our lives—quite literally, having officiated the weddings of seven of his former clerks. He has welcomed us and our growing families into his home. He is a constant source of career advice and guidance. And he has offered love and support in the dark times, too, when we have suffered setbacks, losses, and uncertainty.

This article one might expect from his clerks saying what a good person he is, but they have gone out of their way to suggest to the Senate that a person of this quality and this integrity should be treated fairly—fairly.

I listened to some of the comments that are being made on the Republican side about this man, and it is a long way from fairness. What they are saying to him is we don't care about where you came from. We don't care about your education. We don't care about your professional qualifications. We don't care about your career on the bench. We care that you have been nominated by President Barack Obama, and as far as Senator MCCONNELL is concerned, enough said.

If Barack Obama nominates this man, Senator MCCONNELL has made it clear he will deny to him something that has never ever been denied to a Supreme Court nominee in the history of the United States of America: a fair hearing.

That is why it is painful for a lot of Republican Senators to go back and face audiences. The partisans in the audience come in, in a predictable state, with Republicans saying: Hold the line. Don't let Obama act like a President of the United States. We want him to go away. Democrats come in and ask: Can't you at least give this man a hearing? I would say to my Republican colleagues: Listen to the people who view themselves as Independents in this country, folks who don't carry a party label. They are saying overwhelmingly that Merrick Garland is entitled to a hearing before the U.S. Senate. He is an extraordinarily well-qualified man. There is no credible justification to refuse to give him a hearing.

Merrick Garland was born in Chicago. His father ran a small business. His mother volunteered in the Rogers Park neighborhood. He was the grandson of immigrants who fled anti-Semitism in the Pale of Settlement in Russia. They came to America in the early 1900s. Judge Garland grew up in Lincolnwood, IL. He graduated at the top of his class at Niles West High School in Skokie. He earned an undergraduate and law degree from Harvard. He was a law clerk to Judge Henry Friendly on the Second Circuit and to Supreme Court Justice William Brennan.

He had a distinguished career at the Justice Department. They sent Merrick Garland down after the Oklahoma City tragedy, when there was a terrible incident—a domestic terrorist bombing—that killed and maimed so many people. The prosecution of that accused terrorist was the highest priority for the Department of Justice. They had to get it right, not just for the cause of justice but for the victims and their families. They had to get it right on this prosecution. So they sent their very best prosecutor, Merrick Garland. He was given that responsibility and took it very seriously. He used to carry around with him the names of those who died in that Oklahoma City terrorist incident as a reminder of the solemn responsibility which he carried in this undertaking. That is the kind of person he is.

He successfully prosecuted those who were engaged in the terrorism that caused that terrible event. The Department of Justice thought that highly of him, and his performance in Oklahoma City was so stellar that he achieved his goal—a fair and effective prosecution.

The Senate considered Merrick Garland for the second highest court of the land, the D.C. Circuit Court in 1997. He received a majority vote on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats. The total final vote was 76 to 23. Thirty-two Senate Republicans voted to confirm Judge Garland. He has been on that court—the D.C. Circuit—for 19 years and he has been the chief judge for the last 3 years.

Throughout his lengthy judicial career, Chief Judge Garland has been praised for his intelligence, knowledge of the law, adherence to precedent, and his ability to forge a consensus. Listen to what Chief Justice John Roberts of the U.S. Supreme Court said during his own confirmation hearing: ''Any time Judge Garland disagrees, you know you're in a difficult area.''

I have my differences with Chief Justice Roberts of the U.S. Supreme Court, but I will be the first to say his presentation to the Senate Judiciary Committee was one I will never forget. He sat there for 2 days, without a note in front of him, and answered every question effectively and eloquently. I left there with the distinct impression he was one of the brightest individuals who had ever been nominated to the Supreme Court.

So this man, Chief Justice Roberts, whether we agree with his politics or his decisions, should be listened to when he says of Merrick Garland,

President Obama's nominee, that if you disagreed with Judge Garland, you know you are in a difficult area. That is high praise from Chief Justice John Roberts. It is high praise for a man who has been denied a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee for the first time in the history of the Senate.

I commend Judge Garland for his many decades of public service and congratulate him and his wife Lynn and their daughters for the great honor they have been given to be nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court. I offer as well a word of apology to them for the way they are being treated by the U.S. Senate. This is not right.

I hope that in the quiet and the solitude of their own Republican caucus lunch, they will close the door and turn to one another and say: This is not fair. It is not right. We owe this man a hearing. I am not saying he should be rubberstamped. I am not saying the Senate Republican majority should approve this man, although I think it is difficult not to. I am saying he should be given a hearing. He deserves that respect from the U.S. Senate.

It would be terrible and beneath the dignity of the Senate Republicans to close the doors of the Senate to such an accomplished American and deny him a fair hearing and a vote. The President has met his responsibility. The Senate should do no less.

I know Merrick Garland is in for a rough ride. The senior Senator from Texas said as much a few weeks ago. He said President Obama's Supreme Court nominee would ''bear some resemblance to a piñata.''

Do we know what that means? Remember, if you will, that Mexican custom of filling a paper maché animal with candy, then blindfolding a child and giving him a stick or a bat to try to swing wildly and beat on that piñata until it is broken open and the candy hits the floor. That was the analogy used by the senior Senator from Texas as to how Merrick Garland should expect to be treated if his nomination comes before the Senate. It is a sad commentary, but it may reflect the reality of the bitter political environment we live in. It is troubling to hear our nomination process in the Senate characterized this way.

There is a way to avoid piñata politics. Let's give Merrick Garland a fair hearing.

Right now, conservative groups and some Senate Republicans are taking their swings blindly at Merrick Garland. They are flailing around, hoping to find some argument to justify the mistreatment which they are offering. For example, there is a rightwing advocacy group calling itself the Judicial Crisis Network, whatever that is, that recently announced a multi-State ad campaign against Judge Garland. How about that. They will not give him a hearing. They will not even let him sit down in a chair under oath and face questions and give answers, but they have started a multi-State ad campaign against him. The campaign said that with Garland on the bench, the Second Amendment would be ''gutted'' because ''in two separate cases, Garland has demonstrated his strong hostility to gun owner rights.'' Several Senate Republicans have echoed this attack. They have heard this so-called Judicial Crisis Network ad and they have decided to amplify it.

However, there is no argument that can be made seriously or fairly for the proposition that Judge Garland opposes the Second Amendment in his rulings.

There are two cases mentioned by this rightwing organization on the subject. They date back many years to 2000 and 2007. The first was a case involving the auditing of background check records. When that case was appealed to the Supreme Court, the Justice Department of President George W. Bush, led by conservative Attorney General John Ashcroft, agreed with Judge Garland's position. There was no controversy as far as they were concerned. So a Republican President and a Republican Attorney General agreed with the ruling of Judge Garland.

In the other case in which Judge Garland is accused of having overstepped the bounds on the Second Amendment, he never even addressed any substantive Second Amendment issue.

If the Judicial Crisis Network was so outraged by these decisions in the year 2000 and the year 2007, why didn't they bring it up in 2010 when Merrick Garland was in the running to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court? In that year, Carrie Severino, the head of that organization—the Judicial Crisis Network—told the Washington Post:

> Of those the President could nominate, we can do a lot worse than Merrick Garland. He's the best scenario we could hope for to bring the tension and the politics in the city down a notch for the summer.

I just quoted the person who was in charge of the Judicial Crisis Network when Merrick Garland was under consideration for the Supreme Court six years ago. Now that same network has decided to spend millions of dollars to stop this nominee.

If Judge Garland's views on the Second Amendment were so objectionable, why has he been praised by Charles Cooper, the gun lobby's top outside attorney? On March 28 of this year, Cooper told the Washington Post about his ''high opinion'' of Garland as a judge.

So here is the reality. Rightwing advocacy groups like the Judicial Crisis Network are swinging wildly at Judge Garland. They mischaracterize his record and they attack his judgment in an effort to discredit him. If the Senate holds a public hearing for Garland, he would at least have his day to state his position clearly on the Second Amendment, but they are so afraid of what he is going to say, the Republican leadership in the Senate has denied Merrick Garland an opportunity for a hearing at this point in time.

At a hearing, the American people could judge for themselves. How about that for a novel idea; that we would put Merrick Garland under oath, sit him at a table, ask whatever questions we consider to be important for his nomination, and then let the American people decide. The Republicans will have nothing to do with that. Senator MCCONNELL has said from the start he is never going to allow that to occur.

The Senate is doing Judge Garland and our Nation a grave disservice if we don't move forward with a public hearing on this nomination, as we have with every other Supreme Court nominee that has been sent by a President.

Just for the record, go back to 1987, when a vacancy occurred on the Supreme Court, and in 1988, the last year of Ronald Reagan's Republican Presidency, he sent a nominee to the U.S. Senate to be considered. Anthony Kennedy was a Reagan nominee, and the Democratic-controlled U.S. Senate not only gave Anthony Kennedy a hearing, they gave him a unanimous vote, sending him to the Supreme Court. Despite the fact that Ronald Reagan was a ''lameduck''—the last year of his Presidency—the Senate at that time respected the Office of the Presidency and respected the Constitution enough to give Anthony Kennedy his day before the Senate Judiciary Committee, his day before the U.S. Senate. If it was fair enough for a Republican President in a Democratic Senate, why isn't the same standard to be used when it comes to President Obama's nominee being sent to the Senate on this day? It cannot be explained away.

What does this vacancy on the Supreme Court mean? There are only eight members of a nine-member Court. Already the Supreme Court has deadlocked twice on 4-to-4 tie votes since Justice Scalia's passing. Almost 50 cases still need to be decided in this term. Major legal questions may go unresolved because the Senate is not doing its job and not filling this vacancy.

Judge Garland does not deserve to be used as a piñata—a word used by a Senate Republican describing what he would face in the Senate. Let's give him an opportunity to rebut any attacks made against him. Let him explain himself on the record in full view of the American public. Let the American people decide if the ads and attacks against him are valid or baseless.

I urge my Republican colleagues: Do not follow the lead of rightwing advocacy groups and attack Judge Garland's character or record when you refuse to give the man a chance to respond at a public hearing. That is fundamentally unfair.

This is a real moment of truth for the Senate. No Supreme Court nominee has ever been denied a hearing before, and Merrick Garland should not be the first. The message of the American people to the Senate Republican majority is very simple, three words: Do your job. Do your job under the Constitution. Have a hearing. Be fair to this man. Don't dream up excuses. Don't argue with this President who won by 5 million votes over Mitt Romney. Don't disrespect the Office of the Presidency or the Constitution, which in its clarity establishes our responsibility to give a hearing to this nominee. My Republican colleagues need to do their job and to schedule a hearing for Merrick Garland without delay.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

GARLAND'S EX-CLERKS: CONFIRM OUR OLD BOSS

(By Mike DeBonis)

U.S. Appeals Court Judge Merrick Garland is getting a boost for his Supreme Court nomination from some of the lawyers who know him best: his former law clerks.

Sixty-eight former Garland clerks signed a letter delivered Monday to Senate leaders of both parties, urging them to confirm his nomination. The signers comprise all but three of the ex-clerks Garland has employed since he joined the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 1997. And the three holdouts have a good reason: They are clerks for Supreme Court justices.

The three-page tribute is both professional and personal.

''There are not many bosses who so uniformly inspire the loyalty that we all feel toward Chief Judge Garland,'' the ex-clerks write. ''Our enthusiasm is both a testament to his character and a reflection of his commitment to mentoring and encouraging us long after we left his chambers. He has stood by our side during the happiest moments of our lives—quite literally, having officiated the weddings of seven of his former clerks. He has welcomed us and our growing families into his home. He is a constant source of career advice and guidance. And he has offered love and support in the dark times, too, when we have suffered setbacks, losses, and uncertainty.''

Clerkships on the D.C. Circuit are among the nation's most prestigious, second only to the Supreme Court itself. The signers have gone on to high-level positions in federal and state government, private practices and academia. Several have spent time in the office of the White House counsel; one of those lawyers, Danielle Gray, served as Cabinet secretary to President Obama.

The letter paints a familiar portrait of Garland as a careful judge, a hard-working public servant and a devoted family man. But it also offers a couple of glimpses behind the curtain.

In one notable passage, the clerks write that Garland ''taught us the value of diversity, in all its forms.''

''We observed how Chief Judge Garland forged meaningful connections with others from a wide array of backgrounds and ideological perspectives—from the law clerks he hires to the personal and professional relationships he maintains. He finds camaraderie with his fellow judges without regard to who nominated them to the bench. Chief Judge Garland deeply believes that our system of justice works best when those who see things differently are able to work together, in a collegial manner, to arrive at a just result. And when he must disagree with his colleagues, he always does so respectfully.''

And they describe how his private response to the Sept 11, 2001, attacks had a profound impression on the four clerks who were working for him at the time: ''From his chambers, we watched with horror the news about the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In the days after, we remember the explicit importance Chief Judge Garland placed on coming to the office everyday and continuing to prepare for upcoming cases. In the aftermath of that terrible tragedy, he believed it was more important than ever for the American people to see that their system of government was functioning without interruption—that the rule of law endured!''

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to join in the remarks just made by the senior Senator from Illinois that we have an obligation to do our job and to provide a hearing and a vote for the President's nominee—not as a matter of discretion or convenience but as a mandatory obligation we have as Members of this body. It is an obligation that comes from the Constitution, which says that we shall exercise this duty of advising and consenting.

For all the reasons my colleague has expressed so eloquently, the American people feel that it is our job, and they are right. Nothing so epitomizes the feeling of the American people that Washington is failing to work, that this body is failing to do its job, that the Congress and the Federal Government are failing the American people, than the failure to deal with this nominee. The refusal to even meet with him mocks the American system of justice. For all who care about the quality of our judicial nominee, this intransigence is both an insult and an injury, and it will do lasting damage to the Court if it drags this third branch of government into the mire of partisan bickering.

The judicial branch depends, for the enforceability of its decisions, on the trust and credibility of the American people that it is above politics and that decisions made by the judicial branch are on the merits without regard to the special interests and the money that so infects this branch, and they are entitled to our support for the credibility and trust of the judicial branch, and nothing epitomizes the need for that credibility and trust more than the U.S. Supreme Court. It is the highest Court in the land, and it is the most powerful. It is an anomaly in a democratic government because it is unelected, appointed for life, at the top of the judicial pyramid, exercising vast powers, with only the trust and credibility of the American people as its means of enforcement. It has no army or police of its own. Its decisions and enforceability depend for their effect on it being above politics. The controversy and the intransigence and refusal to even consider this nominee is a great threat to that institution.

LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASE PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT

Mr. President, on the issue of getting the job done, I want to go to a separate topic very much on our minds at this time of year, very distinct and different, but I want to join it in these remarks because it is timely as we begin the next phase of our bipartisan efforts to combat Lyme and tick-borne diseases.

We will be building support this week for a bill that has been introduced by Senator AYOTTE and me, with the strong involvement and leadership of Senator GILLIBRAND, S. 1503, the Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Prevention, Education, and Research Act, with 13 cosponsors. It is a bipartisan bill that is critically important to public health.

Today we will be welcoming a number of my friends and constituents from Connecticut and around the country who are experts to provide briefings to our staffs in sessions that have been organized by Senator AYOTTE, Senator GILLIBRAND, and me. We are very pleased to welcome some of the leaders of this effort: John Aucott, who is an assistant professor of medicine at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine; Dr. Brian Fallon, a good friend and leading expert in this area and a professor at the Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons; Ally Hilfiger, who has been a survivor and strong supporter and advocate; Rebecca Tibball, a fourth grade teacher from my home State of Connecticut who has been battling Lyme disease since August of 2014; and David Roth, also a leader and a longstanding patient advocate from New York who in his day job is a managing director at the private sector group Blackstone. These individuals are here to call attention to and build support for curing a disease that is literally exploding exponentially in this country and now constitutes an epidemic that literally impinges and cripples the lives of millions of Americans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that more than 36,000 Americans suffered from Lyme disease in 2013. It says that the number who actually contracted this disease is probably 10 times higher because it is undetected and undiagnosed in so many people and it is underreported

even when it is discovered in individuals. Most of the cases of Lyme disease occur in a limited number of States. Ninety-eight percent of them occur in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. I name those States because the Senators in those States ought to be behind this bill, every single one of them. But those cases are only the ones reported. In many States there is no systematic reporting of Lyme disease, so the full extent, breadth, and depth of this epidemic is truly unknown.

We know in this body how to respond and recognize a public health threat. It was done for Ebola. It is done for influenza. It hopefully will be done for Zika. What is needed is the same kind of bipartisan awareness and support for legislation to help people who suffer from Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

Sometimes this Senator is asked: Why has the Congress failed to recognize and respond to this severe public health threat?

There is no good explanation except for the underreporting and the unawareness, and that is no excuse. In the meantime, the cases of Lyme disease are exploding in number, and the severity impacts our economy as well as the quality of life for Americans. It affects people's ability to perform their jobs, children's ability to go to school, and families' ability to function normally. The disease, if undetected and untreated, can cause the most severe kinds of pain and disability.

Lyme disease is named after a town in my State. I have always felt it was tremendously unfair for the beautiful and wonderful town of Lyme to have its name bear the burden of this disease, but regardless of the name, the burden is on the entire country—not simply on Connecticut and not simply on the Northeast or any part of the country or profession—to take action. That action must include provisions in this bill to strengthen Lyme disease surveillance and reporting, an education program, establishing epidemiological research objectives for tick-borne diseases, and the preparation of a regular report to Congress on the progress of efforts to combat these devastating tick-borne diseases. The effects are devastating, pernicious, and insidious, creeping into every aspect of a victim's life.

Our bill has earned the support of 13 Senators from both parties, including five members of the HELP Committee. When it comes to fighting Lyme disease, there is no partisanship. The ticks that carry this disease don't know a red State from a blue one. They don't make any discrimination between the boundaries of different States. The devastating diseases that can spring from these ticks are common to our entire country and therefore demand a national response and a Federal program that we have outlined in this bill.

I am proud to join with Senator AYOTTE and Senator GILLIBRAND in this effort. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, to send your staffs to the briefing we have today.

I thank others from Connecticut—such as Alexandra Cohen—who are going to be coming today, and I look forward to continuing this fight, which has to be one of a nationwide commitment.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from South Dakota.

ISIS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise to address last month's tragic terror attacks in Brussels and Istanbul by ISIS. It is critical for the Senate to consider these significant events as we get back to work on bills enhancing security and setting policies for air transportation.

In Brussels, 35 innocent people, including four Americans, lost their lives in barbaric attacks by ISIS at a subway station and airport terminal. In Istanbul, an ISIS suicide bombing killed four on Central Street and left dozens more injured. My thoughts and prayers are with those injured, the families of the victims, and the citizens of Belgium and Turkey.

In the past 2 years, ISIS has orchestrated 29 attacks on Western targets around the world, killing more than 650 innocent people. A decade ago, the group of violent jihadists behind ISIS fit a fairly conventional definition of a terrorist group. Operating in Iraq, they endeavored to kill Americans, Iraqis, and others working to build a free and democratic nation.

Today, however, calling ISIS a mere terrorist group may not fully convey the seriousness of the problem. ISIS, or the so-called Islamic State, has taken control of a significant amount of territory in Iraq and Syria. Within this territory, ISIS has established a self-proclaimed capital city and effective sovereignty over other populated urban centers. It collects taxes, operates and profits from oil well operations, controls banking, and rules over substantial agricultural acreage.

These operations help fund and sustain not only ISIS armed fighters but also the group's attempt to build actual institutions that spread its message of hate. Unfortunately, ISIS has enjoyed considerable success communicating and spreading its distorted vision of a grand Islamic caliphate claiming authority over all Muslims.

Branches of ISIS, trying to replicate what has happened in Syria and Iraq, have taken root elsewhere and carried out operations in destabilized areas, including Libya, the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt, and Yemen.

A recent report estimated that as many as 31,000 ISIS adherents have traveled from 86 countries to join the organization in Iraq and Syria. More than 5,000 of these recruits have come from Western Europe and 150 from the United States. In addition to those Americans who have actually traveled abroad, researchers at George Washington University estimated in December that there are 900 active investigations of ISIS sympathizers here in the United States. Let me repeat that—900 investigations of ISIS sympathizers here in the United States. This doesn't included those who have been radicalized without noticeable warning, such as a couple in San Bernardino who weren't known to authorities before they killed 14 in a shooting attack last December.

Over the past few years, ISIS's reach has expanded dramatically, and claims that our current policies have contained the organizations and its dangerous message are both false and reckless. We have had some successes in targeting senior ISIS officials, but as we saw in Brussels, in San Bernardino, and elsewhere, those efforts have not lessened the threat posed by a terrorist state that is successfully propagating its ideology all over the world.

So what can we do to protect against the threat posed by ISIS? Here are a few things:

First, we need a President who is committed to forming a robust coalition to destroy ISIS abroad. Real American leadership against ISIS must be manifested in sustained engagement against the enemy. We need an administration intent on eliminating the group's sources of income and its control of territory which facilitates an illusion of legitimacy for its followers. Incremental progress is not enough. Indeed, the Washington Post reported last week that some terrorism experts believe pressure on the group's finances could make ISIS more dangerous and unpredictable until it is defeated.

Second, we need to control our borders. We need to know who is coming in and out of our country and why. This includes screening travelers for ties to ISIS and to its sympathizers. One of the greatest threats facing Europe is citizens who leave their homes to fight for ISIS and then return to recruit or conduct operations in their communities. We also face this threat from European ISIS fighters, the return of American citizens who have fought for ISIS, and agents of ISIS posing as war refugees. Although we have passed bipartisan legislation to tighten some screening requirements, we need the administration to enforce the law rather than attempt to undermine and work around it.

Third, as a final line of defense, we need to better secure the homeland. We must make sure the intelligence community, law enforcement, and Homeland Security officials have the tools

they need to deter attacks and to stop plots before they are launched. This includes the need for constant reassessment of our vulnerabilities so we stay ahead of threats.

Tomorrow I will chair a hearing at the Commerce Committee with Transportation Security Administration Administrator Peter Neffenger, who happened to be in Brussels during the March 22 attacks. While we mainly see and know the Transportation Security Administration or TSA as the agency behind airport screening of passengers and baggage, the organization actually has a much broader charge. TSA is the designated Federal agency for all transportation security matters. As we know from independent covert testing that exposed TSA failures a year ago, TSA still has work to do to improve screening at airports, but TSA also needs to focus on securing transportation by train, bus, pipelines, and through our ports.

The diversity of the targets ISIS selected in its most recent attacks—a subway station, an unsecured airport terminal, and a busy street, underscores the challenge of protecting our citizens from an enemy seeking the path of least resistance to maximize its carnage. To stay ahead of this danger, security officials at TSA and other agencies need to be looking at potential threats before ISIS does.

Congress has a role in helping security officials stay ahead of ISIS. Aided by congressional oversight and congressional watchdogs, the Commerce Committee has already approved bipartisan legislation that Senator BILL NELSON and I have offered to address airport security vulnerabilities. Our bill is cosponsored by the Homeland Security Committee's chair and ranking member, Senator JOHNSON and Senator CARPER. Among other provisions, our legislation improves the vetting process for airport workers seeking or holding a security credential that grants access to restricted sections of an airport.

Over the past few weeks, a number of badged aviation industry workers have been caught in the act helping criminal organizations. On March 18, a flight attendant abandoned a suitcase with 68 pounds of cocaine after she was confronted by airport security officials in California. In Florida, on March 26, an airline gate agent was arrested with a backpack containing $282,400 in cash that he intended to hand off to an associate. According to press reports, the agent told authorities the money was connected to illegal activity, but he knew few other details. Some of the perpetrators in the deadly attacks in Brussels were previously known to authorities as criminals—but not terrorists.

As we work to address concerns about an insider threat scenario, where an aviation worker helps terrorists, criminals who have broken laws for their own financial gain and those with histories of violence are a good place to start. Ensuring that airport workers with security credentials are trustworthy is especially important, considering that ISIS in October killed 224 on a Russian flight leaving Egypt. Many experts believe this attack had help from an aviation employee.

In S. 2361, the Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act, Senator NELSON and I propose not only tightening vetting procedures for workers who need a security credential, but we also expand the list of criminal convictions that disqualifies an applicant from holding one. At present, even applicants convicted for embezzlement, racketeering, perjury, robbery, sabotage, immigration law violations, and assault with a deadly weapon can still obtain an airport security badge granting access to restricted areas. Our bill closes this loophole while updating airport security rules, expanding random inspections of airport workers, and requiring the review of airport perimeter security.

The Commerce Committee has also approved another TSA-related bill, H.R. 2843, the TSA PreCheck Expansion Act. This bill would expand participation in the TSA precheck application program by developing private sector partnerships and capabilities to vet and enroll more individuals. As a result, more passengers would be vetted before they even arrived at the airport and received expedited screening. This would get passengers through security checkpoints more quickly to ensure they don't pose the kind of easy target that ISIS suicide bombers found at the Brussels Airport.

Historically, this body has passed aviation security enhancements separate from a reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration. While I still prefer this separate approach and believe the Senate should pass our consensus security legislation without delay, I will pursue every option to enact these improvements and will vigorously oppose any effort to water down any security efforts that passed the Commerce Committee.

As we look at ISIS and consider necessary steps to stop attacks, let's remember our recent history of fighting terrorism. In the 1990s, our Nation not only fell behind on intelligence and airport security, but we did not act with force against Al Qaeda's enclaves in Afghanistan. This was true even after we recognized a significant threat following attacks on our embassies in East Africa and on the USS *Cole* in Yemen.

Only after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon did our Nation pursue a strong military response and adopt significant reforms to enhance our Homeland Security. Like Al Qaeda, ISIS is now a significant danger. While we are doing more to push our Homeland Security and intelligence agencies to meet current and future threats, we are unwise to allow this enemy time and multiple chances to inflict mass casualties.

As a legislative body, we have already passed legislation closing a border security vulnerability in our Visa Waiver Program and have an opportunity in the bill that Senator NELSON and I have offered to guard against an insider threat at airports. As lawmakers, we are going in the right direction. However, our responsibility to the people we represent does not end there. Until this administration or its successor changes the facts on the ground, we also have an obligation to speak about the continued threat of ISIS, especially when the administration downplays the need for a more aggressive response. We have an obligation to continue discussing the genocide of Christians and other religious groups in areas under ISIS control, and we have an obligation to scrutinize Executive actions and conduct rigorous oversight of administration initiatives that pose risks to our homeland. If we can't do this, we have learned very little.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING THE VILLANOVA WILDCATS ON WINNING THE 2016 NCAA MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak for a few minutes on the floor to send congratulations on my own behalf and also on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania to the Villanova Wildcats for a great win last night in the NCAA final.

It was a remarkable game for a lot of reasons. My wife and I watched every minute of it, as I know so many did. It was a remarkable game even before the last-second shot, but even more so after the shot made by Kris Jenkins.

We are grateful, on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania, to commend and salute Villanova University and, of course, the team itself.

In particular, I commend the players, not only Kris Jenkins but the entire team. At the same time, we commend the work done by Jay Wright. He is a great coach. He was awarded the Naismith Award as Coach of the Year this year, but we also commend him for leading Villanova this year and for the way he conducted himself, even in the aftermath of a win.

We learn a lot about people in victory and defeat, whether that is in the athletic contest or even in politics or life itself. I thought Jay Wright showed a lot of class in the way he conducted

himself after winning, which is sometimes not the case in sports today.

I want to commend them as well for their great teamwork that obviously has to play out not just on the court in one game but over the length of a season—the practice and the hard work and the working together and the way they built each other up. There are so many instances where this team really was a team in reality, not just in terms of people talking about them as a team.

I am not sure they could have shot better. I am told—and I hope I have this right—they had a 58-percent shooting field goal percentage throughout the tournament. That is a remarkable achievement. Again, that doesn't just happen; it happens because of hard work and because of a great coach.

I want to commend and salute the team and congratulate them on winning a very difficult tournament. This is a tournament that had a lot of upsets and a lot of twists and turns before the team came out No. 1. That is a great achievement.

Finally, I commend and salute the university and Father Peter Donahue, the president. We know him as Father Peter. I want to thank him. He sent me a Villanova hat, which I wore during the semifinal game or part of the game. I made sure I wore it at least for a few minutes during the final game. I was grateful he sent me that reminder of team spirit.

In addition to Father Peter in the larger Villanova community, we want to salute the students, who were so loyal, and the fans, who may not have been students but who were either graduates of Villanova or just supporters. And of course the alumni made it possible for the team to have the kind of support they have had over many years.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC AND CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO LEAD POISONING

Mr. President, in my recent travels across Pennsylvania, two issues arose that I know the Presiding Officer and others may have heard about in the time they were away from Washington, and I know there are many others, but I will just mention two that the people of our State are thinking a lot about and are worried about and expect us to take action concerning.

No. 1 is the opioid epidemic across the country, which has caused the kind of death and devastation that none of us can even begin to imagine. In Pennsylvania alone, more than 2,700 people died in 2014 as a result of some kind of drug overdose. So this is a major challenge.

We made tremendous progress when we passed our bipartisan bill here, the so-called CARA bill. That was a good move and an important step for the Senate. I hope we can follow up on that with the $600 million in funding that local law enforcement and treatment experts and others have asked us for. We need to finish the job in terms of making sure the Senate is taking the right steps on this challenge.

The second issue—which I will mention just briefly because we don't have time today to develop it further—is lead poisoning in children. We know what happened in Flint, the horror and the tragedy of Flint, but in a State such as mine, the biggest challenge we have is not necessarily lead from water or in the water systems that would adversely affect children. In our case, because we have a lot of old homes, it is lead paint and the exposure to lead paint and the high lead levels that put children in a precarious situation in the short run but even long term because some of these impacts, if the levels are very high, can be irreversible.

We have to make sure we are doing more to protect our children not only in Pennsylvania but across the country in terms of making sure that fewer and fewer children are exposed to high lead levels. I know we will talk more about that.

Those are two major challenges that I know confront Pennsylvania and also confront our country.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND WORKING TOGETHER IN THE SENATE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as you know, we have been back home in our States for the last couple of weeks or traveling, listening to our constituents. It was great to be back home and to spend some time talking to the people who I work for about the challenges facing our country and what we have been doing in the U.S. Senate to try to address those challenges. While it is always true that people wish there would be more consensus building and more solutions offered, I would say that, by and large, people feel we had a pretty productive 2015 and are hoping we can continue that sort of productivity here in the Senate in 2016, even though this is a Presidential election year.

Yesterday was a good example of that productivity. We passed a trademark enforcement piece of legislation basically without—it was unanimous, to the best of my knowledge. All the Senators here in the Chamber voted for it without going through the official procedural hoops that are required in order to process legislation here in the Senate.

Previously we passed legislation—recently the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—to deal with the crisis involving opioid or prescription drug painkillers that are being abused around the country, and people are unfortunately falling into that trap, and then the cheap heroin that sometimes is used as a substitute if people can't find the opioid prescription drugs.

So Congress actually has been doing the people's business here. Of course, we are in the type of profession where people will sometimes say: Well, we think you are doing a great job. And others will say: Well, we don't think you are doing quite so great a job. But that is the nature of the beast. Either way, it is always good to be back home.

As I was talking to my constituents back home, I was glad to hear one thing. No matter what part of the State I was traveling in, there was appreciation for the decision we made to give the voters a voice on who makes the next lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court. Texans want to have a say in who replaces Justice Scalia on our Nation's highest Court, and I believe their voice should be heard.

We are already engaged in the Presidential primaries process. Today is the Wisconsin primary. It will not be that long before we have a new President who will make that appointment. I simply believe it is important—particularly in something that could extend for the next 25 or 30 years and really affect the balance of power on the Supreme Court—that this be left to the voters.

We all know we did not end up in this position overnight. In fact, there is a lot of history. I remember that back when I came to the Senate, I was frustrated by the fact that there was so much politics at play in the judicial confirmation process. Having served as a State court judge for 13 years, I had some pretty strong views about that. But the problem is, there has been a lot that has transpired in the interim. Everything from the Biden rule to the Reid statement in 2005 was really a threat saying that if President George W. Bush were to appoint a judge to the Supreme Court, it was within the authority of the U.S. Senate not to hold a vote on that appointment. That was in 2005. That was the Democratic leader. And then in 2007 when George W. Bush was still President, 18 months before he left office, Senator SCHUMER, the next Democratic leader, said there should be a presumption against confirmation. This is something that is nearly unprecedented. Then we know that in the interim there has been this development of filibusters or the requirement of 60 votes in order to get judges confirmed brought to us by our Democratic friends, as well as something we didn't think would ever happen but, in fact, did happen under Democratic leadership: the so-called nuclear option—in other words, breaking the Senate rules in order to confirm judges mainly to the DC Circuit

Court of Appeals—what some call the second most powerful court in the Nation—in order to pack that court with judges who are more likely to affirm President Obama's constitutional overreach.

So, as I said, much to my chagrin and I bet to a lot of people's chagrin, we have seen the playbook torn up by our Democratic colleagues and rewritten. The question is, Are we going to be operating under a different set of rules than they would if the roles were reversed? Frankly, my constituents back home think the rules ought to be the same no matter who happens to be in the majority and who happens to be in the White House.

Even more significantly, the Supreme Court is the final authority for many of the most pressing issues that face our country. The Court often acts as a constitutional counterweight to the passions of both the legislative and executive branches. We have seen the Supreme Court operate time and time again as a check on the Obama administration's lawless actions. We saw this in the recess-appointment case. We have seen it in a number of different cases where the Court has said to the Obama administration: You have simply overextended your reach beyond legitimate boundaries.

I am thankful for that important counterbalance in our government and the give-and-take that the Founding Fathers intended for us to have with three coequal branches of government. But, as I said, the next Supreme Court Justice could well change the ideological direction of the Court for a generation.

Rightly or wrongly, the Supreme Court has the final word on issues as varied as the scope of the President's power, the ability of the States to make their own decisions about self-government, and questions of personal liberty and the like. The Court can and has made all the difference in the world, and one Justice can affect that for a long time.

We recall Justice Scalia as somebody who believed that the words of the Constitution mattered greatly, and he served on the Court for 30 years. Justice Scalia was what was sometimes called an originalist. In other words, he believed the Court had an obligation to apply the Constitution and the law as written, not based on some substituted value judgment for what perhaps the unelected, lifetime-tenured judges would have preferred in terms of policy. That is not their role. They don't stand for election. It is our role as the policymakers in the political branches who do stand for election—and thus give the American people a chance to voice their pleasure or displeasure, as the case may be, with the direction that we perhaps take the country when it comes to policy. But that is not a role the Supreme Court should play.

We need to approach filling this seat with great care. The administration and their liberal allies are now trying to basically throw everything but the kitchen sink at stopping the American people from getting a voice in this matter. In other words, they are trying to force Congress's hand or the Senate's hand to confirm the Presidential nominee at this time. They are spending millions of dollars on TV advertising. They have hired consultants, and they found some sympathetic allies in the media to criticize us.

I don't begrudge anybody who has a different point of view than I do about this, but I simply cannot in good conscience vote to confirm another Obama nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court in the waning days of this President's term in office. I happen to believe we should not process this nomination. We should exercise the power we have under the Constitution to grant or withhold consent, and in this case to withhold consent.

But here we are, several weeks after the President announced his nominee, and nothing has really changed. All the money and the consultants in the world are not going to change the fact that the American people are going to have their say. We don't know exactly how that will turn out, but that is because this is based not on the personality of the nominee but on the principle that the American people should have their voice heard.

As I said, the President has the authority to nominate anybody he chooses, but that doesn't change our responsibility or our authority under that same Constitution. We remain committed to the idea that this vacancy should be filled by the next President.

I want to be clear that the American people do deserve a voice here, and we will make sure they are heard. In the meantime, as I started out saying, there are a lot of things we can do working together. Just because we disagree about this one item doesn't mean we have to disagree about everything or that Congress needs to lapse into dysfunction.

We currently have a bill pending before us involving the Federal Aviation Administration and the very important topic of safe and secure air travel. We can disagree about how to proceed with the President's nominee to the Supreme Court and still work together to pass other good consensus legislation. So I hope all of us, our colleagues across the aisle and on this side of the aisle, will continue to work together to do things I think would help the country a lot, things such as criminal justice reform—a bill that has been voted out of the Judiciary Committee, that enjoys broad bipartisan support, and that the President of the United States has said he supports.

There is also other important legislation that I am very concerned about and interested in involving the intersection of mental illness with our criminal justice system and the fact that our jails have become the de facto warehouses for people with mental illness who are going untreated and obviously the homeless who are living on our streets, many of whom are suffering from mental illness.

I hope we can continue to work together on these other consensus matters even though we disagree about this one very important matter. I am confident that we can and we will.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, during the recess last week, I had the opportunity to meet with Judge Merrick Garland of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, President Obama's nominee to fill the existing vacancy of an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. During our meeting, we discussed the role of the Supreme Court and protecting the civil rights of Americans. We discussed a number of national security challenges, including those relating to the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. We discussed the Citizens United case and campaign finance law. We talked about the respect for each branch of government and our constitutional system of checks and balances. We spoke about the important role of precedent in our judicial decisions and the need to build consensus on decisions. We discussed the value of promoting pro bono work in the legal profession and the need to address the growing access-to-justice gap. I was pleased to hear that as an attorney at the Justice Department, Chief Justice Garland worked to clarify ethics rules to allow government lawyers to engage in additional pro bono work.

What I was doing is what I hope every Member in the Senate will do, and that is finding out more about Judge Garland, his judicial philosophy, the way he has conducted his life, his respect for the Constitution and the precedents of the judicial branch of government, looking at current issues and seeing how Judge Garland views those current issues. That is all part of a confirmation process.

The President, under the Constitution, has done his job; that is, he has

made the nomination of who he believes should fill Justice Scalia's vacancy. It is now up to the Senate to do our job, and our job starts with Members of the Senate meeting with Judge Garland to be able to see one-on-one, without cameras glaring, how Judge Garland responds to our individual issues. We obviously have his record, his background, his public service, what he has done as a lawyer, what he has done as a prosecutor, and what he has done as a judge on the circuit court. We also should have a confirmation hearing in the Judiciary Committee, which will give us more information.

Under the Constitution, the responsibility of the President is to make the nomination. It is now up to the Senate to do our job, and our job is to consider that nominee, for each Senator to learn as much as they possibly can—this is a critically important position, obviously, the Supreme Court of the United States—and for the institution to hold hearings and to vote. Each Senator will have to make his or her own judgment on whether we should vote for or against confirmation, but we have a responsibility to consider that nomination and a responsibility to vote.

I must say that I was very impressed by the nominee during the course of our meeting. He has impeccable qualifications as a prosecutor, judge, and now chief judge of what many call the second highest court in the land. The Senate confirmed Judge Garland on a bipartisan basis for his current judgeship, which he has held for nearly two decades. Chief Judge Garland strikes me as a thoughtful and deliberate person who has dedicated his life to public service. And I am proud to say that the nominee is a Marylander and lives in Bethesda in Montgomery County, MD.

Chief Judge Garland is the nominee for the Supreme Court and should be dealt with in this term of Congress. It is not a matter for the next President and the next Congress; it is a matter for this President and this Congress. There are 9 months left in this year, and to suggest that we don't have the time and the President doesn't have the authority to appoint a nominee is outrageous, and it is an affront to the Constitution.

This nomination is not about popularity or politics; it is about finding the next Justice who will advance the rule of law in this country, who will recognize the responsibility of the Supreme Court to be the final arbiter on constitutional issues, and having a person who can bring about greater consensus among his colleagues. As more of my colleagues meet Judge Garland, they will see that this is one of his many strengths. We need to go through the process and give Chief Judge Garland a chance.

I think it is hard to understand how you are excused from doing your job for 9 months by not having a confirmation hearing or vote. I don't think the American people understand that. Quite frankly, I don't understand that. I don't understand why we are not going through the regular order. Regular order would be for us individually to meet with Judge Garland and for the Judiciary Committee to hold a hearing and to schedule a timely vote on the floor of the Senate. I think more and more Senators will come to that conclusion. The President did his job, and it is now time for the Senate to do its job.

The American people want to see nine Justices on the Supreme Court when it convenes its new term in October. We have a new term beginning in October of this year. We expect to see nine Justices on the Court to make decisions. You don't resolve issues on a 4-to-4 vote. We hopefully will have greater consensus. We shouldn't have a divided Court. We should be able to get more collegiality on the Supreme Court, but we also should be able to make a decision. The Supreme Court needs to be able to make a decision. With eight Justices, in too many cases they are not going to be able to make a decision.

Article II, section 2, of the Constitution states that the President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.'' The President has no alternative under the Constitution but to make a nomination when there is a vacancy. There is a vacancy on the Supreme Court due to Justice Scalia's untimely death. The President did his job. The Constitution says very clearly that we—the Senate—have to advise and consent. That is our requirement. That is not optional; we have that as a requirement. Never have we denied an opportunity to consider a Supreme Court nominee. It is now up to us to consider that nominee, and we should consider that nominee by doing our job—interviewing Judge Garland, scheduling a committee hearing, and voting on that nominee.

The American people twice elected President Obama to a 4-year term in office. Their voice has been heard very clearly. Elections have consequences, and President Obama has carried out the constitutional responsibilities and duties of his office by nominating Judge Garland as the successor to Justice Scalia. The President is simply doing the job the American people elected him to do. The President doesn't stop working simply because it is an election year. He has more than 9 months left in office, as do Senators who will face the voters in November. Congress should not stop working, either, in this election year.

Of course, every Senator has the right to make his or her own judgment on whether they will vote for or against confirmation. Senators were elected for 6-year terms by the citizens of their States and have the right and obligation to vote as they see fit. President Obama was elected by the people of the United States for two 4-year terms and has the right and obligation to nominate judges.

History has shown that when the roles were reversed and Democrats held the majority in the Senate, Supreme Court and judicial nominees for Republican Presidents were given hearings and up-or-down votes regardless of when the vacancies occurred. While I might have picked different judges, as a Senator, I voted to confirm the vast majority of President Bush's judicial nominations in his final year in office. I will continue to carry out my constitutional responsibilities that I undertook when I became a Senator and swore to support the Constitution.

Let me remind my colleagues that a democratically controlled Senate confirmed Justice Kennedy to the Supreme Court during the last year of President Ronald Reagan's final term in 1988. Senators also confirmed Justice Murphy in 1940, Justice Cardozo in 1932, and Justice Brandeis in 1916. The precedent of the Senate indicates that we need to take up this nominee.

What the Republicans are effectively trying to do is temporarily shrink the Supreme Court from nine to eight Justices and shorten the term of the President from 4 years to 3 years. Why? Because the President is of a different party than the Senate. This is disgraceful and indefensible.

Let me quote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981 as the first female Justice of the Supreme Court. When asked about the vacancy on the Court created by the death of Justice Scalia, Justice O'Connor said, ''We need somebody there now to do the job, and let's get on with it.'' I agree with Justice O'Connor. Let's do our job and fulfill the Senate's constitutional responsibilities and vote up or down on Judge Garland's nomination.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:25 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order

by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here for my 132nd ''Time to Wake Up'' speech. We are now back from recess, and while we were away, one little thing and three really big things happened. The little thing has to do with the so-called war on coal which we have heard so much nonsense about in this Chamber. There was this article, which I am showing on this chart, saying: ''Natural gas has been waging a war on coal for more than a decade, and this is the year it plants the flag.''

Natural gas has been waging a war on coal. Not Obama. Not liberals. Natural gas.

The article predicts a resulting ''wave'' of coal plant retirements. Who wrote this? Some green, lefty publication? Actually, it was the Wall Street Journal news department.

So as coal companies go bankrupt left and right, there is the coal story. Natural gas has been waging war on coal for more than a decade. Spinning this against the President has been easy politics, but false, and that false political strategy has left coal country with what? Nothing. A carbon fee could produce revenues that could power wealth into coal country, but, no, what they got instead was someone to blame—someone to blame wrongly. Great job.

Now to the three big things that happened during our recess. First, a group of very distinguished scientists, led by legendary climate scientist Dr. James Hansen, warned us that this climate change thing is likely to be a lot worse than we thought. Their sweeping synthesis, which underwent an involved and public peer-review process, suggests the possibility of greater sea level rise in this century than forecast. It suggests, worse, even epic storms, and it posits ''losing functionality of all coastal cities.'' How about that for a phrase? They go on to conclude, obviously, that ''the economic and social cost of losing functionality of all coastal cities is practically incalculable.''

That was one.

Second is the Great Barrier Reef, a wonder of the world, hit by the worst coral bleaching ever measured. For those of my colleagues who don't know, uplanders who may not understand what coral bleaching is, it is like cardiac arrest for coral. You are not necessarily dead yet, but there is a very good chance you will be, and for sure you are in serious trouble and you will need time to recover. That is what is happening in the Great Barrier Reef.

The third thing is a new study out of UMass and Penn State which found that the expected loss of Antarctic ice ''nearly doubles'' prior estimates of sea level rise.

I am from an ocean State. I am from Rhode Island, the Ocean State. This is consequential. How consequential? Here is what one of the authors of the study said: ''You're remapping the way the planet looks from space with those numbers, not just subtle changes about which neighborhoods are going to be susceptible to storm surge,'' but remapping the way the planet looks from space. Of course, CO_2 levels continue to exceed 400 parts per million against a human history where they were always between 170 and 300 until the industrial era drove it up.

So that is not great news, but here is what is sickening about it. We don't seem to care here. It has all been in the news. Senators read the news. It is not like we are being deprived of information. We just as an institution do not care. That is a defect. That makes us a defective institution, not to be able to receive and process information like this. This is institutional failure, and we don't even care about that because one might say: You know, I don't really care myself about all of this damage, but as a Member of this body, I get that the U.S. Senate ought to care institutionally. It is like secondary caring. I will do my duty. Even if I personally don't care about oceans or reefs or coasts or storms, I am in. I am in, even though it is not my thing, because I know it is important. But we don't even do that. So we really don't care.

Why? Why would we be so blind? We are not all terrible people. Some of us actually spend time outdoors and profess to care about nature. So why does the Senate, as a body collectively, not give a hoot? It is a deadly combination of politics and money. That is what investigation and history will show, and the investigations are underway. The history will not be pretty.

We are surrounded by money. Senators exist in a world of money the way fish exist in a world of water. We are so accustomed to it, we barely even notice it. Hundreds of millions of dollars every year in lobbying money surround us. Hundreds of millions of dollars in campaign money every election have to be raised. Hundreds of millions in PAC money pours in and exerts its influence, and we don't even know how much dark money there is flowing around through loopholes the size of the Holland Tunnel. Just one—one—dark money group is spending $750 million in the 2016 elections. It is a disgrace, but it has an effect.

The interests that spend hundreds of millions of dollars lobbying us want things. The interests who give hundreds of millions of dollars in campaign money want things. The PACs and the super PACs pointing $750 million in political artillery at us, they want things. Some want ideological things, but most want money. More exactly, they want things we can do that can be turned into money: licenses, tax breaks, trade advantages, regulations, relief from regulations. You name it, they want it because they can turn it into money.

All of that has a desensitizing effect on our values here. If something can't be monetized, we get trained not to care about it. Values that aren't monetized in the marketplace start to seem weird. Who cares about a reef? What is that weird Senator doing talking about a reef? What a silly thing to talk about in our serious world.

Now, someone's favorable fat cat tax rate, that is important. Jerking around a perfectly qualified Supreme Court nominee, that is definitely important, but the greatest crisis facing the natural world as we know it, no. And we go along. We go along with that warped value system. It is a lie. It is a moral lie so big it envelopes us, and we acclimate to it. All that money around us slowly anesthetizes our moral and natural senses, and that is how this place becomes Mammon Hall.

It is actually even worse than that. It is not just that if you can't cash it in, it doesn't matter around here. It is that big, greedy special interests come here to plunder, and we let them. We let them, and we even help them because we become dependent on their money.

Well, I have a proposition. Years ago, one of the Koch brothers, America's biggest polluters, ran for Vice President as a Libertarian Party candidate. When he ran, he learned something. He learned the perverse math of third parties in a two-party system. The perverse math of third parties in a two-party system is that you only hurt the ones you love. You hurt the party you are closest to by your third party taking votes away from the party closest to your politics. Well, the Kochs may be a lot of things, but they aren't stupid, and I think they learned. They learned that a creepy far-right third party that could be put in tow to big polluters was not the right method to achieve their purposes.

There was a smarter method. Invade the Republican Party, that Grand Old Party of Theodore Roosevelt, capture it, turn it into the far-right party of their dreams. That was the smart play. Money and secrecy could make it happen, and they are pretty close to having done it. The Republican Party in Congress is as dependent on fossil fuel and polluter money now as a deep sea diver is on his air hose. Cut the airhose

or pinch the flow, and we have a diver in real distress. When you control a deep sea diver's airhose, he becomes a pretty obedient diver. It is a form of the Golden Rule: He who wields the gold makes the rules.

The political press, by the way, does little to help. It is a game to them. Who will say something appalling we can chatter about on the talk shows? Who is up? Who is down? Who said what about whom? It is akin to a soccer team of 7-year-olds. Most everybody runs to the ball or whatever the shiny object of the moment is, and in the midst of them are outfits that masquerade as the political press, but they are really polluter PR fronts in disguise. They, too, are in tow to the fossil fuel industry. Money and secrecy have their way.

So here we are in the Senate, in the face of this news that came to us over the recess, ineffective, defective, idly paying no attention to what is really important as we chase political trifles around, making a mockery of our great American democratic experiment.

Well, folks, people are going to notice. This climate mess we have created is only going in one direction. When everybody has noticed, when it is way past denying, elected officials who refused to even look at the problem are going to look pretty foolish, and they are going to have to explain.

Well, you see, I thought there was this big hoax.

Really.

Yes, I thought NASA's scientists and NOAA's scientists were all in on it, along with the U.S. Navy and every National Lab we fund.

Hum. That is a big hoax.

Oh, did I forget to mention my home State university must have been in on the hoax too? They were all studying climate change effects actually happening in my home State, but I knew better.

Great.

And every major legitimate American scientific society and most of my home State corporate leaders—I figured they were all wrong.

Oh, OK, and where did you get that idea?

Oh, from a bunch of guys with financial ties to the polluters.

Come on—seriously? Didn't you think that was a pretty obvious conflict of interest?

Wow, is that something I should have thought of? But listen. Now I want you to reelect me because I am such a good, prudent, and responsible decisionmaker.

Folks, good luck with that. If you think the Republican Party is in trouble now, wait until the day of reckoning comes on climate change. Explain the money. Explain the money. You don't think people are going to figure out how it works? Explain the talk show science you believe instead of the peer-reviewed stuff. Explain the quality of your due diligence into the science. Good luck with that.

Explain why you thought NASA, which is driving a rover around on the surface of Mars that they flew there and safely landed—that is probably the greatest scientific and mechanical achievement of our time. They did that, but you say they were part of a hoax on climate change. Really?

By the way, I think people here actually owe NASA an apology for saying such nonsense about them, but that is for another day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, a couple of weeks ago was the sixth anniversary of President Obama's unpopular health care law. Every year at this time, that birthday is not one people actually want to celebrate. When we take a look at the reasons Americans aren't celebrating ObamaCare's sixth birthday, it is pretty obvious. Let's read them: unsecured data through the Web site, fewer provider choices, over $1 trillion in new taxes on American families, 2 million jobs' worth of hours lost, and skyrocketing premiums and deductibles. It is no surprise that the health care law continues to be very unpopular.

Americans know that under the health care law they have less freedom to keep their doctor, to keep the insurance that was right for them and their families, because the President says he gets to decide what somebody needs for themselves and their families—not the families getting to decide for themselves.

We know that—again, it came out during the break—people's personal data is not secure at healthcare.gov, as they thought it was. We know insurance companies are continuing to give patients fewer choices by limiting the networks of doctors that people can see. The health care law has added over $1 trillion in new taxes onto hardworking American families. Premiums and deductibles are up, and according to the Congressional Budget Office, ObamaCare is cutting the hours Americans can work by about 2 million jobs over the next decade. So it seems that every day there is more news coming out on how the health care law is unaffordable, unpopular, and unworkable.

Last week there was a new study that explains one of the reasons why the President's health care law is collapsing. There was a study that came out from Blue Cross Blue Shield. It compared people buying new health insurance coverage in the ObamaCare exchanges to people who already had health insurance through their jobs. The study found that the new ObamaCare customers went to the doctor 26 percent more often than other people did, that they were admitted to the hospital almost twice as often, that ObamaCare customers have higher costs, and that the average medical spending is about $1,200 a year higher for people on ObamaCare than people who get their insurance through work. So why is it that hospital admissions are up so much for people who are on ObamaCare, and why is it that doctors' visits are up 26 percent? Because the new ObamaCare enrollees are sicker and costlier. So insurance companies of course have to raise their premiums. People are sicker who are signing up. They go to the doctor more. The insurance company turns around, and it raises premiums on everyone else. That is why so many people are opposed to the health care law—because the impact it has had on them personally.

When insurance companies have to raise their rates on ObamaCare plans, a lot of money is paid by taxpayers because it is the taxpayers who are paying for the subsidies for all the folks who have signed up for ObamaCare. What we know is that taxpayers are subsidizing the premiums of 83 percent of the people who buy ObamaCare insurance. When the premiums go up, taxes have to be made up to pay for it.

Well, when companies can't get enough extra money, they just stop offering policies. Under ObamaCare that may happen. Then more people will lose their insurance coverage. Maybe some companies will just go out of business. We are familiar with that process because we have seen it. We have seen that under the ObamaCare health care law, a majority of the ObamaCare health insurance co-ops have actually gone bankrupt. The health care law created 23 co-ops, and 12 have already gone out of business.

Premiums were already out of control, and it is getting worse. The average premium for what is called the benchmark silver plan in the ObamaCare exchange is more than 7 percent higher this year than last year. For people who can only afford the cheaper bronze plan, premiums are up 13 percent compared to last year. Over the next couple of months, insurance companies are going to start setting their rates for 2017. They are going to take into account what has happened in the previous year. So this new study by Blue Cross Blue Shield is just laying the groundwork for even more price increases to come next year. I think this is one of the things that explains why so many people dislike ObamaCare.

A new poll came out that found that 47 percent of Americans have an unfavorable view of the health care law. The Kaiser Family Foundation report shows Americans' opinion of ObamaCare is tilting negative—47 percent marked it unpopular in March of 2016. A year ago this poll said that 42 percent of the people had an unfavorable view. There we were a year ago.

Here we are now. The number keeps climbing. Now only 41 percent of the people have a favorable view of the health care law. It wasn't supposed to be this way.

Mr. President, 6 years ago Democrats in Washington were very confident that the law would be extremely popular today. As a matter of fact, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER of New York went on ''Meet the Press'' back in 2010 and said: ''It is going to become more popular.'' He said: ''I predict that by November those who voted for the health care law will find it an asset.''

Well, we all remember what happened in the 2010 elections. We know that Democrats who voted for the health care law did not find it an asset. Democrats lost six seats in the Senate that year, and they lost control of the House of Representatives. NANCY PELOSI was out as Speaker of the House, and the Republicans took the majority.

Then in 2013, Senator HARRY REID was making this same prediction about how popular the health care law was going to be. He told the newspaper The Hill in Washington that ObamaCare would be ''a net positive'' for Democrats in 2014. Senator REID forced the health care law through Congress when he was the majority leader, and I think that is a big part of why he is now the minority leader. He lost the majority in the Senate. Why? I think in big part because of the health care law and the fact that it ignored the needs of the American people.

The longer people have to live with this offensive and expensive law, the less popular it gets.

It was never popular to begin with, but today, even more than before, the opinion is, as this poster says, ''tilting negative.''

The same poll also found something I found amazing. I have practiced medicine for 25 years, and I have been involved here in the Senate for a number of years. I have never seen anything like this. This new poll found that 28 percent of Americans say that this health care law has directly hurt them and their families.

The President says: Defend and be proud of this law.

How can you defend and be proud of something that 28 percent of the American public tells you has hurt them and their family personally? Only 18 percent in the poll said the law had directly helped them. It is incredible and it is disturbing. ObamaCare is hurting far more people than it is helping.

Costs are going up much faster than Democrats promised, as are copays and deductibles. It is no wonder the law is unpopular. We know the health care law makes it more expensive for taxpayers—but how much more expensive?

The Congressional Budget Office came out with a report last week. It said that over the next 10 years the health care law is going to cost $136 billion more than they thought it would cost just a year ago. When they compared what they thought it was going to cost a year ago and what they think it is going to cost now, it is $136 billion more. That is despite there being fewer people in the insurance exchanges than they expected. They predicted there would be 21 million people buying ObamaCare health insurance this year. In fact, they say it is going to be no more than 12 million.

People are doing everything they can to avoid these insurance policies—especially young, healthy people. So why is it going to cost an extra $136 billion? One of the reasons is higher premiums, sicker patients, and because the law has dumped so many more people into Medicaid. About 23 percent of the people in the country under the age of 65 are now on Medicaid. That is what the Congressional Budget Office says—one out of every four.

Is that a success—putting all these additional people on Medicaid? The President says it is.

As a doctor who has practiced medicine and taken care of patients for over 25 years, putting additional people on Medicaid is not a success. It is not what people wanted, and it is not what President Obama promised. Americans deserve better. They deserve better than to be shoved into this second-tier health care system. Plus, in terms of government health care programs and wasting money, a recent study found that for every dollar spent on Medicaid, people only get about 20 to 40 cents on every dollar spent. How is that for an inefficient government system? Almost every day we get more information on the damage the health care law is doing to Americans across the country.

Republicans have offered solutions that would actually keep the promises the Democrats made for ObamaCare, such as letting people keep their doctors and keep their insurance, giving more people options for how they can reduce their costs of medical care. Americans have now been forced to try this ObamaCare experiment—what the Democrats wanted—and forced to do it for the last 6 years. ObamaCare isn't getting any better. It is just getting older, and it is still making things worse for American families. That is why it is so unpopular.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, today marks my 38th edition of ''Waste of the Week.'' With our Nation $19 trillion in debt, I am going to continue coming to the Senate floor every week the Senate is in session to highlight verified and documented examples of waste, fraud, and abuse.

I turn to reports from nonpartisan organizations such as the Government Accountability Office which indicate that, thankfully, somebody is looking into how we run this government, coming up with examples of how we can run it better. They let the American people know that we are not wisely and carefully spending their taxpayer dollars, and, hopefully, we can take remedial action.

Last year, I detailed an investigation by the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office, the GAO, which discovered that fraudulent applications are being accepted by healthcare.gov. That is the government's health care Web site for choosing ObamaCare plans on the Federal exchange.

Just last month, I discussed a new report from the GAO that outlined how healthcare.gov allowed people to sign up for and receive ObamaCare benefits without proper verification. They did a test. They made up some names, they filled out the application, they sent it in to healthcare.gov, and 11 out of the 12 test applications came back approved, with no verification whatsoever. Subsidies started going out to these people. Even after they were notified at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, it took months to correct. Some people collected these subsidies; these fraudulent subsidies went somewhere. These were just made-up names. When we look at 11 out of 12, we have to say something is wrong with the system. And if we extrapolated that out, there could be a stunning number of fraudulent applications certified and subsidies sent to people that don't exist.

Today I want to discuss even more ObamaCare problems. This one totals up to $1.16 billion worth of problems.

We all know that the Affordable Care Act—which I call the Unaffordable Care Act, based on its operations so far—directed States to either develop their own State-based exchange to operate ObamaCare or to use the Federal exchange accessible at healthcare.gov. States had a choice about the action to take. But in order to try to get States to set up their own exchanges, the Obama Administration awarded billions of dollars in Federal grants to States if they agreed to plan and develop a State exchange.

In 6 of the 14 States that chose to develop their own exchanges and receive these Federal grants—Maryland, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Oregon, New Mexico, and Nevada—the end results were disastrous. In fact, the GAO found that these State exchanges were given the green light without the systems ever being fully tested. For example, Maryland's exchange Web site had more

than 600 unresolved defects, and Massachusetts had over 1100 unresolved defects.

And yet the exchanges were given the go-ahead by the Obama Administration even though these unresolved defects were not realized and not addressed.

In Oregon, a State exchange was set up by political operatives. Months after the enrollment period began, the online Oregon exchange couldn't enroll a single person, and applicants had to fax in their handwritten materials. Talk about a dysfunctional rollout. On this Senate floor we have talked about how, in the rush to prove that ObamaCare was what this country needed and that the government could efficiently and effectively run a health care system and in a rush to prove and get the thing up and going according to what the promises were, all kinds of mistakes were made.

Oregon's abysmal failure cost taxpayers $305 million plus an additional $41 million that had to be spent to bring Oregon onto the Federal exchange. In other words, they failed to set up their State exchange and cost taxpayers $305 million. Then they had to spend another $41 million to transfer the system over to the Federal exchange. All totaled, the Federal government gave these six States $1.16 billion, and today none of these six States are independently operating their own individual exchanges.

This was a long time in the making. The nonpartisan GAO and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services raised concerns about these State exchanges more than a year before they were scheduled to launch. In other words, the warning went out, saying: You are not getting your act together. This was a year before the process started. We went through that whole year and they still didn't have their act together, and it ended up costing taxpayers $1.16 billion.

It is no secret that the Obama Administration was in a rush to get this system up and going, and in the process, who knows how much money has been wasted? Who knows the trauma that people have gone through trying to sign up for these exchanges?

I think we all remember the classic debacle that occurred in the whole software system and in the whole exchange system. People were calling in, they couldn't get anybody to answer the phone, and they couldn't get their applications fulfilled. All those promises, you know: Your premiums will not go up a penny. Count on that, the President said, period. Done deal. Take it to the bank. If you want your doctor, you can keep your doctor. Take it to the bank. I guarantee you that is what is going to happen. Costs will not go up.

We have all seen deductibles shoot up. We have all seen premiums increase. People weren't able to keep the doctor they wanted. On and on it goes, and on and on it continues, and it is at the expense of the American taxpayer. Well, maybe it is not surprising. I am here every week, and I probably could come up here every day and maybe every hour and detail some waste of the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

So today we are going to add more money to our growing list of waste, fraud, and abuse, taking us to $158,777,908,417. It just keeps adding up, and our colleagues have not taken the necessary action to try to tie the deal to these problems.

Maybe government has become so overwhelmingly bureaucratic and dysfunctional that we are not able to run this country anymore in an efficient and effective manner. The problem is that we are asking people to go to work every day to put in a hard-earned number of hours earning pay and sending money to Washington, DC, only to find that it is wasted over and over and over. It is a relentless plunge into ever more debt because we don't have the money to pay for what we spend. Then we have to issue bonds in order to collect money, in order to pay for that. All of this falls to the taxpayer, and most of it is going to fall to future generations. They are going to have a limit on their ability to have the opportunity to make a viable living for themselves and for their children, and we wonder why the American people have lost faith in Washington's ability to carefully spend their hard-earned dollars.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO J. THOMAS MCGRADY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, my wife Diana and I wish we could have been with Tom McGrady to mark the retirement of a good friend and a great legal warrior, Pinellas-Pasco Chief Judge J. Thomas McGrady. I am proud of Tom and his commitment to the law. Over the years he has compiled a tremendous record of success. Simply put, he has made a difference.

It is probably unusual for a Senator from Wyoming to speak so highly of a retiring judge from Florida. Over the years, I have had a chance to come to know Tom. I feel honored to call him my friend, and, as often has been said, his departure from the bench will leave some large shoes to fill.

Looking back, the script for Tom's life would have made a great movie. For starters, he was born on Christmas Eve. He turned out to be his parents' favorite Christmas gift. As he grew up and began to explore the world around him and develop his talents and abilities, his educational pursuits led him to another highlight of his life—high school—where he met and went on to marry his high school sweetheart, Mary Choquette.

His interest in the law must have started around then because after graduating from the University of Florida with his bachelor's degree, he then got his juris doctorate degree there, and then joined a law firm and started practicing civil litigation. Before long he opened his own law firm.

He practiced law for 25 years. He was so good that Governor Bush appointed him county judge. He was then appointed a circuit judge, again by Governor Bush. Whenever Tom ran for reelection, he won—without opposition. People admired him and greatly appreciated his efforts on the bench so much that no one ran against him.

Perhaps the best indication of his ability as a judge and the affection of those with whom he served was his unanimous election by 68 of his judge colleagues to chief judge 3 times.

During Tom's service as chief judge, he discovered that with his election came a number of problems—Tom probably called them challenges—that came packaged together with his new duties. He had to deal with cuts to the court budget. He had to deal with a mortgage foreclosure crisis. He had to deal with a number of other issues. He was also working with a system that relied on old and outdated technologies, to name just a few of the matters that required his attention as chief judge.

Probably the biggest problem was the shortage of funds to run the courts. Things were so bad that it looked as if drastic measures would have to be taken to keep the courts up and running. He came up with an option to obtain a loan from the Governor and the legislature. Without it, there would have been severe cuts, furloughs, and much more. He received a great reception when he shared the details of the problem with those who would be most affected—the judges and their staff. They appreciated his blunt assessment of how bad things were, as Tom put it, ''not because of what I had to say, but because I would even come and tell them.''

Tom is a straight shooter, and he knew that the best antidote for the impact of bad news was not to sugar coat it but to tell ''the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'' It also helped that Tom had established a reputation over the years for being a gentle man and a gentleman, and his honesty, sincerity, good humor, and concern for his colleagues and staffers earned him a lot of good will.

Now that Tom has decided to retire and sit back, he will have more time to share with his family and friends. I

know they will enjoy being with him and having more time to share with him, especially his grandchildren, who will love having ''Papa'' around a little more often.

In the end, that is what it is all about—time. Time for faith, family, and friends. Time is the most valuable and precious asset we have, and how we choose to spend it and the quality of those activities that consume most of our time say a lot about the quality of our lives.

I once heard about a guy who traveled around the world doing research on what people were thinking as they grew older. There were a lot of interesting thoughts they shared, but one of the most frequent comments was about spending more time with family. No one said: I wish I had spent more time at work.

So, as the old film title says so well, Tom has already had a wonderful life, with so much more to come. He has made the most of every moment and every day. Mary, his sweetheart from his high school days, is still by his side, retired from her days as a schoolteacher. Now they will spend time enjoying all that life has to offer. Tom and Mary both truly earned it.

Congratulations, Tom McGrady. You have been a great judge, and you made a difference in more lives than you will ever know. We can all learn a lot from you and the way you have lived your life. God bless you and Mary.

REMEMBERING JOSEPH MEDICINE CROW

Mr. President, I rise to share the news with the Senate that Joseph Medicine Crow, a Crow war chief and American hero, has passed away. If you look in today's Washington Post you will see something unusual—somebody from the West passing away and getting a major mention in the paper. Joe Medicine Crow did that, and he earned it in his 102 years. I know it meant a lot to the students of Western and American history to see the attention he has received, as numerous publications have written about him and his life and his countless contributions to the Crow people and to our Nation.

If you have a chance to read the tributes to Joe Medicine Crow—and I hope you do—you will fully understand what an amazing individual he was. A historian for his people and an important part of American life, he accomplished more in his life than I could ever describe in these remarks.

As I read the articles that were so well researched, they reminded me of meeting and getting to know him when he was on the board of All American Indian Days. That was a gathering that would draw tribal members from all over the United States to Sheridan, WY. They would come to share their history, their culture, their traditions, their sports, their dances, and their arts and crafts. I know that gathering meant a lot to him because one of his top priorities in his life was to ensure that the legacy of the Crow and all tribes would never be forgotten and that their way of life would be passed down from generation to generation.

In an effort to bring us all together as one and overcome the racial divides that separate us, a man named F.H. Sinclair—a columnist for the Sheridan Press who was known by his nickname of ''Neckyoke Jones''—came up with the idea of gathering all the tribes together in Sheridan, WY, to demonstrate these talents and abilities. I grew up there, and I was fascinated by the event. As you can imagine, it took a substantial amount of money to organize and plan the event each year, but it paid big dividends for those who were able to attend and all those who heard about it. It was a source of great pride for us all to have this time when we would come together and celebrate the culture of the tribes and the individuals who were so near to us. It provided the kind of exposure and interaction that is so necessary to bring people together and overcome prejudice and bias. I could see the difference the gathering made and the impact it had on those who attended.

Events like that and the opportunity they provide help us to get to know people who come from different cultures and backgrounds and help us to understand and appreciate each other. They remove the boundaries that are created by fear and a lack of understanding. They foster and increase the feeling of community that makes our cities and towns better places to live.

I remember how Joe served on that board and helped with the Miss Indian American Pageant that was part of All American Indian Days. It was a competition of young women who were chosen by their tribes based on their knowledge of their tribal culture, their history, and their traditional dress. My mother, Dorothy Enzi, worked with Joe Medicine Crow and Suzie Yellowtail on the particulars that needed to be worked out to put on the pageant. My mother would then chaperone the winner to events during the year.

Joe Medicine Crow had a great affection for Wyoming and a love of our land that was never surpassed. In addition to the Crow, Joe Medicine Crow was well known to the Wyoming Arapahos and Shoshones. In so many ways, Joe Medicine Crow was an ambassador for his tribe and his way of life. He was an inspiration to us all.

Joe Medicine Crow referred to his life as living in two worlds. In one, he worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs for 32 years. Then he returned and fit right back into the other and the culture that surrounded him. It didn't bother him that his life was divided into two worlds. In fact, he said he enjoyed them both.

The tributes to him and the way he lived his life have already started coming in from those who knew him, his family, and his friends. He was a military hero, having served in the Army in World War II. He was not only a student of history, he was a historian who helped to preserve the stories and the culture of the Crow. He also had a great respect for all the traditions of his people.

I will always find a sense of pride and inspiration in the words he used to describe Wyoming. He said that although sage can be found in so many places in the West, the most sacred sage had to be collected on the tribal lands in Wyoming.

Joe Medicine Crow was given 102 years of life, and he made the most of every day. He has a record of which we can be very proud. That is why I hope you will seek out the stories about him that made him such an important part of our history.

In 2009 President Barack Obama presented him with the highest honor awarded to a civilian, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. I know it must have meant a great deal to him to be so recognized—not for himself but for what he knew it would mean to current and future generations.

Now he has passed on from this life and left behind more accomplishments and achievements than we could possibly imagine. His life was like that—102 years of making a difference every day, a difference that will always be remembered and never be forgotten.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

CONGRATULATING THE VILLANOVA WILDCATS ON WINNING THE 2016 NCAA MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I intend to address an amendment to the FAA authorization bill that Senator CASEY and I are offering. But before I do that, I wish to take a quick moment to celebrate an amazing basketball game last night and an amazing victory for an amazing team, the Villanova Wildcats. It just made everyone in Pennsylvania so proud. They have had a fantastic season, a fantastic tournament, and last night I think we witnessed one of the greatest college basketball games ever.

I know that is saying an awful lot. There have been a lot of college basketball games, but the game was unbelievable. We had two fantastic teams, extremely well matched, extremely talented, very well coached on both teams, and they just played phenomenally. I don't know how many times the lead changed. I don't think it ever got more than 10 points away from either team. It was just so much fun to watch, all the way through.

I think Jay Wright has proven once again what a magnificent coach he is. The kids who played demonstrated just amazing teamwork and talent, and all of the attributes we want to see in college athletics we saw on display last night.

I can't say enough about the University of North Carolina. What a great team they are. They played with so much heart and they played so well. I think we are going to watch the end of that game—the final 5 seconds of that game—for a long time to come.

I will say when Marcus Paige took that shot, it looked to me like he was 20 feet behind the three-point line. He had almost been knocked over. He was airborne in a very odd and awkward position because he had just dodged another player. He got the shot off, and somehow it dropped. They tied the game, and there were 4.7 seconds left. At that point, I thought: Well, I am in for a late night because this is going to be the first of overtimes since it is tied with only 4.7 seconds left, but that was not the way it ended, as we know. The Wildcats had a plan and they executed it brilliantly with a great play to move the ball up the court quickly, to get it to Kris Jenkins, who put up a long three-point shot, and released it just before the buzzer went off. The buzzer went off while the ball was sailing through the air, sunk the basket, and won the game with no time left. It was the most dramatic and exciting finish to a basketball game that I can recall.

I want to take this moment to congratulate the Villanova Wildcats on an outstanding season, tournament, and game last night. Congratulations to our new national champions.

Mr. President, now let me turn my attention to the amendment I alluded to; that is, an amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill. Senator CASEY and I are going to offer as an amendment the legislation we have introduced as a freestanding bill, and that is the Saracini Aviation Safety Act of 2016. I thank Senator CASEY for the very good work he has done on this issue for some time.

Let me give a little bit of background on the amendment, which is based on the legislation that is named after Victor Saracini. Victor Saracini was a Bucks County, PA, native. He was a Navy pilot. After he left the Navy, he became a commercial airline pilot. He was a captain. He was the captain of United Flight 175 which, as my colleagues will recall, was one of the planes that was captured by terrorists on 9/11. The fact is, Captain Saracini was murdered by the terrorists when they stormed the cockpit, took control of the plane, killed Victor Saracini, and then flew the plane into the World Trade Center.

Victor Saracini left behind his wife Ellen, who is with us today in the Senate. She has been a very forceful and effective advocate for greater safety on board our commercial planes. Victor also left behind two daughters, Kirsten and Brielle.

The amendment does something very simple. It requires a secondary barrier to the cockpit on commercial aircraft. That is all. That will prevent unauthorized individuals from getting into the cockpit. It is as simple as that. It is a simple, lightweight, inexpensive technology, readily available. It is actually made from a wire mesh, and it provides a barrier between the passenger cabin and the cockpit door. It would only be engaged when the cockpit door is open.

So why is this necessary? It is necessary because it is still entirely possible for terrorists to hijack commercial aircraft.

Back in 2001, after 9/11, Congress took a step to make commercial aircraft cockpits more secure. They mandated the installation of reinforced doors, and these reinforced doors are much stronger than the doors that used to exist. It is very difficult—almost impossible—to breach those doors when they are closed, but the threat remains because on every long flight and on many short flights the doors are open. At some point during the course of the flight, pilots often get up and they get out of the cockpit. They have to go to the restroom or they go to get some food or a flight attendant goes in to check on the pilots or to bring them something they want. That moment when that door is opened, that door is no longer a barrier. Therein lies the danger. There is the moment of opportunity for terrorists.

The FAA fully acknowledges the serious nature of this risk. In April of 2015, an FAA advisory said the following:

> On long flights, as a matter of necessity, crewmembers must open the flight deck door to access lavatory facilities, to transfer meals to flightcrew members, or to switch crew positions for crew rest purposes. The opening and closing of the flight deck door (referred to as ''door transition''), reduces the protective anti-intrusion/anti-penetration benefits of the reinforced door. . . . During this door transition, the flight deck is vulnerable.

Of course, it is not only the FAA that was able to figure this out. The terrorists understand this as well.

The 9/11 Commission report said this:

> Ali Sheikh Mohammed told them—

And the ''them'' in this case refers to the terrorists he was instructing.

> Ali Sheikh Mohammed told them to watch the cabin doors at takeoff and landing to observe whether the captain went to the lavatory during the flight and to note whether the flight attendants brought food into the cockpit.

I continue to quote:

> The best time to storm the cockpit would be about 10 to 15 minutes after takeoff when the cockpit doors typically were opened for the first time.
>
> Furthermore—

States the 9/11 Commission report—

> they had no firm contingency plans—

''They'' being the terrorists—

> in case the cockpit door was locked. They were confident the cockpit doors would be opened and did not consider breaking them down a viable idea.

Since then, we have made the doors even more durable. It would be even more difficult to actually break down the door or otherwise open a closed door. The problem is when the door is open.

This is not just a theoretical risk. Since 9/11, there have been at least 51 attempts at cockpit breaches worldwide. Five attempts have been successful. One successful attempt occurred in 2006 on Turkish Airlines Flight 1476. Terrorists were successful in entering the cockpit after a flight attendant opened the door to ask the pilots if they needed anything.

So it seems to me unacceptable, when we have a readily available solution, to continue to take this risk. It is just common sense to install secondary barriers on commercial planes. These are inexpensive, several thousand dollars to install. They are lightweight and easy to use and very compact when they are not engaged. The only people who would be inconvenienced by these secondary barriers would be terrorists. Had the secondary barriers, these kinds of barriers, been installed on 9/11, it would have made the job very difficult for the terrorists to ever get into the cockpit.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. I think this is a sensible amendment. The substance of this has been approved in the House. We ought to pass it on the Senate floor and pass this FAA reauthorization underlying bill. If we do that, in time, our skies will be that much safer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa

PROPER ROLE OF A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, a significant number of Americans believe the Supreme Court is highly politicized. Its approval rating has fallen over the years, not surprisingly. Its approval rating has dropped most drastically in recent years following the President's appointment of Justices Sotomayor and Kagan.

There are four Justices who vote in a liberal way in effectively every case the public follows. There are two Justices who stick to the constitutional text and who vote in a consistently conservative way. One Justice votes mostly, but not always, in a conservative way, and one Justice votes sometimes with the conservatives and sometimes with the liberals.

All of the liberals were appointed by Democrats, the conservatives and swing Justices were appointed by a Republican President, but in a speech shortly before Justice Scalia's death, Chief Justice Roberts maintained that the public wrongly thinks Justices view themselves as Republicans or as Democrats. Of course, it is irrelevant to the public how the Justices view themselves. What is troubling is that a large segment of the population views the Justices as political.

It is appropriate and instructive, then, to ask why the public takes this view and whether that view is warranted. I believe the public's perception is at least sometimes very warranted.

The Chief Justice ruled out that this perception has anything to do with what the Justices themselves have done. Instead, he attributes it to the Senate confirmation process. As he sees it, Senators ''frequently ask us questions they know it would be inappropriate for us to answer. Thankfully, we don't answer the questions.''

The Chief Justice also stated:

When you have a sharply divided political divisive hearing process, it increases the danger that whoever comes out of it will be viewed in those terms. You know, if the Democrats and Republicans have been fighting so fiercely about whether you're going to be confirmed, it's natural for some members of the public to think, well, you must be identified in a particular way as a result of that process.

On the one hand, the Chief Justice identified precisely why it would be bad for the Court and the nominee to move forward in the middle of a hotly contested Presidential election campaign.

As you have heard this Senator say, it would be all politics and no Constitution. Of course, that was the thrust of another Senator a few years back—Chairman BIDEN's argument in 1992. But in another respect, the Chief Justice has it exactly backwards. The confirmation process doesn't make the Justices appear political. The confirmation process has gotten political precisely because the Court itself has drifted from the constitutional text and rendered decisions based instead on policy preferences. In short, the Justices themselves have gotten political, and because the Justices' decisions are often political and transgress their constitutional role, the process becomes more political.

In fact, many of my constituents believe, with all due respect, that the Chief Justice is part of this problem. They believe that a number of his votes have reflected political considerations, not legal ones. Certainly, there are academics who agree.

In a recent New York Times article, academics appealed to the Chief Justice's political side. These academics asked him to intervene in the current Supreme Court vacancy, suggesting that it could be a so-called John Marshall moment for Chief Justice Roberts. That is a political temptation that the Chief Justice should resist.

I can't think of anything any current Justice could do to further damage respect for the Court at this moment than to interject themselves into what Chairman BIDEN called the political ''cauldron'' of an election year Supreme Court vacancy.

In a recent speech, the Chief Justice said: ''We're interpreting the law, not imposing our views.''

He further stated: ''If people don't like the explanation, or don't think it holds together, you know, then they're justified, I think, in viewing us as having transgressed the limits of our role.''

Again, with all due respect to the Chief Justice, tens of millions of Americans believe, correctly, that the Supreme Court has transgressed the limits of its role. Tens of millions of Americans believe, correctly, that too many of the Justices are imposing their views and not interpreting the law.

That is the major reason why we should have a debate about the proper role of a Supreme Court Justice. We need to debate whether our current Justices are adhering to their constitutional role.

As the Chief Justice remarked, although many of the Supreme Court's decisions are unanimous or nearly so, the Justices tend to disagree on what the Chief Justice called, in his words, the ''hot button issues.'' We all know what kinds of cases he has in mind when he talks about ''hot button issues''—freedom of religion, abortion, affirmative action, gun control, free speech, and the death penalty. One can probably name a lot of others. The Chief Justice was very revealing when he acknowledged that the lesser known cases are often unanimous, and the hot button cases are frequently 5 to 4.

But why is that?

The law is no more or less likely to be clear in a hot button case than another case. For those Justices committed to the rule of law, it shouldn't be any harder to keep personal preferences out of a politically charged case than any other case.

In some cases, the Justices are all willing to follow the law, but in others where they are deeply invested in the policy implications of the ruling, those cases tend to turn out 5 to 4. The explanation of these 5-to-4 rulings must be that in hot button cases some of the Justices are deciding based on their political preferences and not—as they should be—on the law. But if hot button cases are being decided by politicians in robes, then the Supreme Court has no more of a right than the voters to be the final word.

The Chief Justice regrets that the American people believe the Court is no different from the political branches of government. But again, and with respect, I think he is concerned with the wrong problem. He would be well-served to address the reality—not the perception—that too often there is little difference between the actions of the Court and the actions of the political branches. So, Physician, heal thyself. In case after 5-to-4 case, the Justices who the Democrats appointed vote for liberal policy results.

This can't be a coincidence. Democratic Presidents know what they want when they nominate Justices—Justices who will reach politically liberal results regardless of what the law requires. This, of course, is what our current President means when he says that he wants Justices to look to their ''heart'' to decide the really hard cases. That is an unambiguous invitation for Justices to decide the hot button cases based on personal policy preferences. That, of course, isn't the law, and it is not the appropriate role for the Court. It is no wonder, then, that the public believes the Court is political.

What Democratic Presidents want in this regard is what they get—even before Justice Scalia's death. Leading scholars found this Supreme Court to be the most liberal since the 1960s. Justices appointed by Republicans are generally committed to following the law. There are Justices who frequently vote in a conservative way. But some of the Justices appointed even by Republicans often don't vote in a way that advances conservative policy.

Contrary to what the Chief Justice suggested, a major reason the confirmation process has become more divisive is that some of the Justices are voting too often based on politics and not on law. If they are going to be political actors after they are confirmed, then the confirmation process necessarily is going to reflect that dynamic.

For instance, just last week, after one of my Democratic colleagues met with Judge Garland, the Senator said after discussing issues like reproductive rights: ''I actually feel quite confident that he is deserving of my support.''

Obviously, I don't know what they discussed during that meeting or what Judge Garland said about reproductive rights, and, to be clear, I am not suggesting anything inappropriate was discussed. My point is this: If Justices stuck to the constitutional text and didn't base decisions on their own policy preferences or what the President asked, based on what is in their heart or on empathy for a particular litigant, then Senators wouldn't deem it necessary to understand whether the nominee supports reproductive rights or not. With this in mind, is it any wonder that the public believes the Court is political?

If we want the confirmation process to be less divisive, if we want the public to have more confidence that the Justices haven't exceeded their constitutional role, then the Justices themselves need to demonstrate that in politically sensitive cases their decisions are based on the Constitution and the law and not on political preferences or what comes from the heart or because of some empathy.

So here is where we are about the public perception of the Court being political. When the Justices return to their appropriate role of deciding cases

based on the facts and the law, public perception of the Court will take care of itself.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–23, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $386 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER ZAKRISKI,
(for J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–23

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Australia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $172 million.

Other $214 million.

Total $386 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to 2,950 GBU–39/B Small Diameter Bomb I (SDB I).

Up to 50 Guided Test Vehicles (GTV) with GBU–39 (T–1)/B (Inert Fuze).

Non-MDE: This request also includes the following Non-MDE: containers, weapons system support equipment, support and test equipment, site survey, transportation, repair and return warranties, spare and repair parts, publications and technical data, maintenance, personnel training, and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor representative engineering, logistics, and technical support services, and other related elements of logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (YAF).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 4, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Australia—GBU–39 (Small Diameter Bomb Increment I)

The Government of Australia has requested a possible sale of:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to 2,950 GBU–39/B Small Diameter Bomb I (SDB I).

Up to 50 Guided Test Vehicles (GTV) with GBU–39 (T–1)/B (Inert Fuze).

This request also includes the following Non-MDE: containers, weapons system support equipment, support and test equipment, site survey, transportation, repair and return warranties, spare and repair parts, publications and technical data, maintenance, personnel training, and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor representative engineering, logistics, and technical support services, and other related elements of logistics support.

The total estimated value of MDE is $172 million. The total overall estimated value is $386 million.

Australia is one of our most important allies in the Western Pacific. The strategic location of this political and economic power contributes significantly to ensuring peace and economic stability in the region. This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a major contributor to political stability, security, and economic development in the Pacific region and globally.

The sale of SDB I supports and complements the on-going sale of the F–35 to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). This capability will strengthen combined operations and increase interoperability between the U.S. Air Force and the RAAF. Australia will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor for production is Boeing in St. Louis, Missouri. The principal contractor for integration is unknown and will be determined during contract negotiations. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. or contractor representatives to Australia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–23

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. Sensitive and/or classified (up to SECRET) elements of the proposed acquisition include hardware, accessories, components, and associated software: GBU–39/B Small Diameter Bomb Increment I (SDB I). Additional sensitive areas include operating manuals and maintenance technical orders containing performance information, operating and test procedures, and other information related to the support operations and repair. The hardware, software, and data identified are classified to protect vulnerabilities, design and performance parameters, and other similar critical information.

2. The GBU–39/B Small Diameter Bomb Increment T (SDB I) is a 250-pound class weapon designed as a small, all-weather, autonomous, conventional, air-to-ground, precision glide weapon able to strike fixed and stationary re-locatable targets from standoff range. The SDB I weapon system consists of the weapons, the BRU–61/A (4-place pneumatic carriage system), shipping and handling containers for a single weapon and the BRU–61/A either empty or loaded, and a weapon planning module. It has integrated diamond-back type wings that deploy after releases, which increases the glide time and therefore maximum range. The SDB I Anti-Jam Global Positioning System aided Inertial Navigation System (AJGPS/INS) provides guidance to the coordinates of a stationary target. The payload/warhead is a very effective multipurpose penetrating and blast fragmentation warhead coupled with a cockpit selectable electronic fuze. Its size and accuracy allow for an effective munition with less collateral damage. A proximity sensor provides height of burst capability.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology associated with this system as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Australia.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of

the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0J–16. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 15–62 of 19 November 2015.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER ZAKRISKI,
(for J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 0J–16

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(A), AECA)

i. Purchaser: Government of Japan.

ii. Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 15–62; Date: 19 November 2015; Military Department: Air Force.

iii. Description: On 19 November 2015, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 15–62, of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act of three (3) RQ–4 Block 30 (I) Global Hawk Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), each with Enhanced Integrated Sensor Suite (EISS), eight (8) Kearfott Inertial Navigation System/Global Positioning System (INS/GPS) units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares), and eight (8) LN–251 INS/GPS units (2 per aircraft with 2 spares). Also included with this request are operational-level sensor and aircraft test equipment, ground support equipment, operational flight test support, communications equipment, spare and repair parts, personnel training, publications and technical data, U.S. Government and contractor technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support. The total value of this sale is $1.2 billion. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constitutes $689 million of this sale.

This transmittal reports the inclusion of two Ground Control Elements (GCE). The GCEs were not enumerated as MDE in the original notification of the Global Hawk RPA system. Inclusion of this equipment as MDE will increase the MDE cost by $31 million, resulting in a revised MDE cost of $720 million. The total case value will remain $1.2 billion.

iv. Significance: This notification is being provided as the GCEs were not enumerated as MDE in the original notification. Their inclusion does not necessarily represent an increase in capability over what was notified, but properly identifies the equipment required for Global Hawk operations. This equipment provides the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) a ground control station from which to fly and execute Global Hawk surveillance missions. Overall, these systems meet the requirements of providing the JASDF with the ability to conduct high-altitude surveillance and reconnaissance without exposing JASDF personnel to the dangers inherent to high-altitude ISR operations.

v. Justification: This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by meeting the security and defense needs of an ally and partner nation. Japan continues to be an important force for peace, political stability, and economic progress in East Asia and the Western Pacific. The proposed sale of the RQ–4 will significantly enhance Japan's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities and help ensure that Japan is able to continue to monitor and deter regional threats. The JASDF will have no difficulty absorbing these systems into its armed forces.

vi. Date Report Delivered to Congress: April 4, 2016.

JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, JROTC. On June 3, 1916, Congress passed the National Defense Act, establishing the JROTC. This program teaches students the values of our Armed Forces through training and classroom instruction with military personnel.

This influential program encourages leadership, fortitude, and personal responsibility. The JROTC has experienced a long history of success, and millions of high school students have completed the program since its inception. Not only do these students learn military history and customs, but participants gain a deeper understanding of civic engagement, community service, and the importance of character building.

Out of the many high school students who participate in JROTC each year, 30 to 50 percent go on to serve in the U.S. military later in life. The program also connects high school students with universities that offer the Reserve Officer Training Corps program and helps many students who may have not otherwise earned a college degree.

I would also like to recognize the 35 schools in Colorado that offer the JROTC program. In Colorado, there are 2 Marine Corps JROTC units, 8 Air Force JROTC units, 4 Navy units, and 21 Army units. I am proud of the accomplishments of the JROTC students, and I know they have a bright future ahead of them.

Please join me in honoring Adams City High School, Northridge High School, Aurora Central High School, Westminster High School, Harrison High School, William Mitchell High School, Air Academy High School, Skyview Academy, Glenwood Springs High School, Doherty High School, Montrose High School, Mesa Ridge High School, Widefield High School, Pueblo County High School, Pueblo East High School, North High School, Abraham Lincoln High School, Denver South High School, Manual High School, Loveland High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, Pueblo West High School, Centennial High School, Central High School, Pueblo South High School, Delta High School, Central High School—Pueblo, Montebello Senior High School, West High School, George Washington High School, John F. Kennedy High School, Fountain Fort Carson High School, East High School, and Canon City High School.

REMEMBERING GARY M. ORLANDO, SR.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, today I wish to honor the life of Mr. Gary M. Orlando, Sr. Mr. Gary Orlando passed away on Sunday, October 25, at the Erie VA Medical Center. A tireless and longtime advocate for veterans, Gary sat on the board of directors for the Paralyzed Veterans of America, PVA. He was also a member of the Disabled American Veterans, DAV.

Gary was an Erie, PA, native, born on November 8, 1951. He served with the U.S. Army during the Vietnam war as a door gunner on a helicopter. While serving in Vietnam, he survived being shot down and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, two Good Conduct Medals, and the National Defense Service Medal.

Following his service with the Army, Gary worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Erie. In his free time, he enjoyed hunting, volunteering, and participating in the Wheelchair Games. He was also an avid fan of the Erie Otters Hockey Club. Gary was a relentless advocate for our veterans, a friendly face, and a supporter for countless veterans in the Erie area.

Gary is survived by two sons, two grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, one brother, one brother-in-law, and several nieces and nephews. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, an honor he richly deserved.

On behalf of the U.S. Senate, I wish to express my thanks for Mr. Orlando's steadfast service to our Nation and his commitment to our veterans.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO WALTER EVANS

● Mr. DAINES. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Walter Evans, a 14-year-old native Montanan and member of the Boy Scouts of America, troop 214, for his service to his community. Walter's Court of Honor is scheduled for April 12, 2016, where he will earn the Eagle Scout Award. His Eagle Scout project was a trail building project for the Prickly Pear Land Trust in the South Hills of Helena. Walter's project alone involved 230 volunteer hours and provided for the creation of a beautiful new trail used by mountain bikers, hikers, and dog walkers.

Walter is an excellent leader and always keeps a great attitude. Doug Wheeler, scoutmaster to Troop 214 stated, ''Walter is a great example of a Boy Scout in his character attributes. Of particular note are his compassion, enthusiasm to serve others, and polite manner. These attributes, as well as his other traits, will help him do great things in his life.''

Walter, thank you for your service to Montana at such an early age. We look forward to seeing your future successes.●

REMEMBERING GILBERT HORN, SR.

● Mr. DAINES. Madam President, today I wish to honor Gilbert Horn, Sr., an Assiniboine Tribal member and Montanan who exemplified leadership throughout his life. He passed away on March 27, at the age of 92.

Gilbert Horn was born May 23, 1923, on the Fort Belknap Indian reservation in Montana. He was an Assiniboine chief, decorated war hero, WWII combat veteran, and code talker. In 1940 he entered the U.S. Army at the young age of 17. He was a member of the 163rd Infantry Battalion. Chief Horn received training in communication and encryption. He then volunteered to be a code talker using his native Assiniboine Tribe language to disguise U.S. military communications against the Japanese.

He volunteered for the Merrill's Marauders, a deep penetration unit commanded by MG Frank Merrill. They spent 5 months of field operations in Burma and western China and completed an 800-mile journey across the Himalaya Mountains in order to cut Japanese communications and supply lines. Chief Horn survived the journey with chest, back, and jaw wounds. He was honorably discharged, having received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

After returning to the Fort Belknap Indian reservation he served as chairman and council member of the Fort Belknap Community Council. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in humanitarian services from MSU Northern in 2013. Then in 2014 he had the honor of being named the honorary chief of the Fort Belknap Assiniboine Tribe, a title that had not been awarded since the 1890s.

I extend my condolences to his family and to the entire Fort Belknap Indian community. We have lost a true American and a great Montanan.●

RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS POST NATIONAL MEMORIAL AND PARK

● Mr. COTTON. Madam President, in honor of the National Parks Service's 100th birthday year, I want to recognize Arkansas Post National Memorial and Park. Arkansas Post was established as a trading post by Henri De Tonti in 1686 and was the first permanent European settlement in the lower Mississippi River valley. While the exact location moved several times, the area remained a vital trade center for much of the 17th and 18th centuries. The land was eventually ceded to Spain, who controlled the post for over 40 years. While under Spanish control, Arkansas Post was home to the Battle of Arkansas Post, a Revolutionary War battle between Spanish and British forces fought on April 17, 1783. Also known as the Colbert Raid, this battle was the only Revolutionary War battle to take place in what is today the State of Arkansas. Arkansas Post was briefly ceded back to the French before it was sold to the U.S. Government during the Louisiana Purchase.

Today Arkansas Post National Memorial and Park is located in Arkansas County, AR. It was designated a National Memorial and National Historic Landmark in 1960 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. The National Park Service manages over 650 acres of park land at the site, and there is a State-managed visitors center and museum featuring display of Arkansas Post's rich history. Arkansas Post is a must-visit for any Arkansan looking to get out and enjoy the rich history of our State—especially those interested in the Revolutionary War. I would like to thank the National Park Service for its commitment to maintaining this important part of Arkansas history.●

REMEMBERING HILLIARD FLETCHER

● Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, today I wish to honor the life of my friend Hilliard Fletcher of Tuscaloosa, AL, who passed away on March 13, 2016. He will be remembered as a skilled businessman, a devoted public servant, and a man who deeply cared about the city of Tuscaloosa.

A native of Mobile, Hilliard graduated from the University of Alabama in 1957. He went on to serve our country as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and served for 14 years in the Reserves, retiring with the rank of major.

Hilliard was the president of Duckworth-Morris Insurance Company and also served with distinction four terms as finance and waterworks commissioner on the Tuscaloosa City Commission. During those 16 years, he played an instrumental role in the creation of the mayor-council model of municipal government that we know today. He was also influential in the efforts that led to Congress passing the Lake Tuscaloosa Protection Act, which prevented the Federal Government from installing a hydroelectric powerplant on Lake Tuscaloosa's dam in 1970.

In addition to his many years of service to the city of Tuscaloosa, Hilliard was a true leader in his community—serving on numerous boards and working with various charitable and business organizations. He served on the board of directors of First Alabama Bank, was the president of the United Way of West Alabama, and was president and director of the Exchange Club of Tuscaloosa. He also served as a board member and officer of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, was a member of the board of directors and membership chairman of the YMCA of Tuscaloosa, and was the Chairman of the Heart Fund Drive. Hilliard was on the DCH Foundation Board, was director of the Alabama League of Municipalities, and was a deacon of First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa.

Hilliard's many accomplishments, as well as his contributions to the city of Tuscaloosa and West Alabama, will not be soon forgotten. Tuscaloosa named the city's wastewater treatment plant after him in 1998. The Community Foundation of West Alabama named him a ''Pillar of West Alabama'' in 2010 for his dedicated efforts and service to the area.

The city of Tuscaloosa and the State of Alabama were fortunate to have a leader and a great man like Hilliard Fletcher, and he will be sorely missed. I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Betty; his daughter, Beth Lubin; and his sons, Douglas and Curtis, as they celebrate his many life accomplishments and mourn this great loss.●

TRIBUTE TO MANSOUR KARIM

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Mansour Karim of Pierre, SD. Mr. Karim's life story is inspiring, and his contributions to his community and the State of South Dakota are worthy of commendation.

Born and raised in Tehran, Iran, to a poor family, Mr. Karim dreamed of moving to the United States to pursue his higher education. That dream became a reality in November of 1950, when Mr. Karim arrived at the Port of New York and New Jersey with a limited English vocabulary and only $27 in his pocket. He had originally planned to attend the University of Michigan, but was worried that the growing Iranian immigrant population there would keep him from being immersed in the culture of the United States. He decided to study at Huron College in Huron, SD.

Mr. Karim's journey to South Dakota was challenged by the barriers of an unfamiliar nation, but he had his faith and was often helped by strangers along the way. He studied at Huron College for a year before transferring to South Dakota State College, now known as South Dakota State University, from which he graduated in 1955 with a degree in civil engineering. He would later receive his master's degree in engineering from the same school. Mr. Karim served 35 years with the South Dakota Department of Transportation in South Dakota's capital city of Pierre. Though a dedicated civil servant, he found his passion doing something he never could have done in his home country of Iran.

He invested in rental properties, starting modestly. Eventually, through hard work, wise investment, and trusted relationships, he achieved great success in providing affordable, quality rentals for residents in the Pierre area. Mr. Karim did not do this alone. His

wife, Ruth, provided support to the enterprise as the two of them raised their seven children.

Ruth Karim cofounded South Dakota Right to Life and served as its executive director for 19 years. Prior to Ruth passing away in 2013, Mr. Karim worked with the Saint Mary's Foundation in Pierre to set up the Ruth Karim Endowment that would help nursing students who value protecting the sanctity of life and fund their education at Ruth's alma mater, the University of South Dakota.

When looking back on his life, Mr. Karim is quick to recognize those who helped him move to South Dakota. He also remembers how, as a young child, he gave a beggar a penny, though he wished he had been able to give more. That giving nature has continued throughout his life, with Mr. Karim having given more than $2 million to charities throughout South Dakota, with a focus on education and children's needs. He created the Mansour and Ruth Karim Scholarship Endowment in 2004 at South Dakota State University. Due to these charitable contributions Mr. Karim has been the recipient of many awards, including being named Pierre's Outstanding Philanthropist of the Year in 2011.

I, like the residents of Pierre and others across South Dakota, have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Karim. His passion for the United States and the freedoms it affords and his genuine care for his community is contagious. In conversations, Mr. Karim will often say that his experience could only be possible in the United States. His story is another real-life example of the American dream as reality and what makes our Nation great, to succeed and to give back, so that others may succeed.

It is for these reasons that I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Karim for his generous philanthropic work and thank him for making South Dakota his home.●

TRIBUTE TO SHUKRI JAMA

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Shukri Jama, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Shukri is a graduate of South Sioux City High School in South Sioux City, NE. Currently, Shukri is attending the University of South Dakota, where she is majoring in political science and history. Shukri is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Shukri Jama for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ADAM KOST

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Adam Kost, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Adam is a graduate of Roosevelt High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, Adam is attending Augustana University, where he is majoring in government and international affairs. Adam is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Adam Kost for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL SNYDER

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Michael Snyder, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Michael is a graduate of Sturgis Brown High School in Sturgis, SD. Currently, Michael is attending South Dakota State University, where he is majoring in political science and history. Michael is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Michael Snyder for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SARAH WEDEL

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Sarah Wedel, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Sarah is a graduate of James Valley Christian School in Huron, SD. Currently, Sarah is attending Northwestern College, where she is majoring in journalism and history. Sarah is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Sarah Wedel for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING BART'S OFFICE MOVING, INC.

● Mr. VITTER. Madam President, with the recent celebration of International Women's Day, it is fitting that we recognize hard-working women all around our country and in our local communities. There are inspiring women running small businesses all over our great State, from right out of the swamps of south Louisiana to the big cities. This week I would like to recognize Bart's Office Moving Company, Inc., of New Orleans, LA, as small business of the week for their commitment to supporting the local economy and serving as a shining example for women entrepreneurs across the State.

In 1978, with the dream of owning and running their own successful business, Bart and Kathleen Thibodeaux opened Bart's Office Furniture Repairs in New Orleans, LA. Quickly establishing a reputation for reliability and dependability with a can-do attitude, the Thibodeaux's business flourished, just as the couple began having children and building their family. When Bart suddenly developed a chronic illness, hindering him from working, Kathleen took the reins of the day-to-day operations of running the business, keeping up the principles and quality for which the company has become so well known.

Today, Kathleen's and Bart's daughters—Ashley, Courtney, Kasie, and Alexie—have joined the family business and expanded the furniture repair shop to include a full-service office moving and office furniture installation company.

Congratulations again to the Thibodeaux family and Bart's Office Moving for being selected small business of the week. We look forward to your continued growth and success under the leadership of the Thibodeaux women entrepreneurs.●

RECOGNIZING DELTA INTERIORS AND GIFTS

● Mr. VITTER. Madam President, in recent weeks our State has faced disastrous storms and flooding, but with true Louisiana strength, families and communities are already banding together for the recovery. In that spirit, I would like to recognize Delta Interiors and Gifts as small business of the week whose community has rallied together to respond to and recover from the recent storms.

In 1976, John and Martha Peters founded Delta Interiors and Gifts in their hometown of Homer in northwest Louisiana with the goal of providing quality interior design services and unique gifts to clients in their community. Offering additional services in custom drapery and design in their factory in Homer, they produce draperies, hospital curtains, blinds, and other items for hotels and hospitals nationwide, from Massachusetts to Washington to California to Florida. One of their most well-known projects was providing the interior designs for the historic Waldorf Astoria hotel in New Orleans.

Today, the company boasts a statewide and nationwide clientele, largely due to their commitment to personally measuring, producing, and installing each order that many large corporations sometimes cannot provide. The

company has earned a reputation among large hotel brands, enabling Delta Interiors to grow and employ more and more local workers in their manufacturing factory.

In the aftermath of a strong upper level storm system that brought dangerous thunderstorms and flooding across Louisiana this month, the Peters found themselves in a seemingly impossible situation: their life's business was literally underwater. The Homer community came together to help the Peters recover all undamaged products and remove what had been destroyed by the rising water. With friends, family, and neighbors coming to their aid, the Peters have been inspired to pick up the pieces and rebuild their small business.

In the next several months, countless businesses like Delta Interiors will put the pieces of their businesses back together again with the help of family, friends, and neighbors. As the Peters family and their team at Delta Interiors rebuild after these disastrous storms, I am honored to name Delta Interiors as small business of the week, and I wish them a quick recovery and many more years of growth and success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4752. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Mandipropamid; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9943–00) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4753. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Salicylaldehyde; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9944–12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4754. A communication from the Administrator, Rural Housing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Single Family Housing Guarantee Loan Program'' ((7 CFR part 3555) (RIN0575–AD00)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 28, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4755. A communication from the Administrator of the National Organic Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Organic Program (NOP); Sunset 2016 Amendments to the National List'' ((RIN0581–AD39) (Docket No. AMS–NOP–15–0052)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4756. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Trade Options'' (RIN3038–AE26) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4757. A communication from the Acting Associate Administrator of the Country of Origin Labeling Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Removal of Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling Requirements for Beef and Pork Muscle Cuts, Ground Beef, and Ground Pork'' ((RIN0581–AD29) (Docket No. AMS–LPS–16–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 15, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4758. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines, and Tangelos Grown in Florida; Order Amending Marketing Order No. 905'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–12–0069) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 15, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4759. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Commodity Credit Corporation, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Direct Farm Ownership Microloan; Correction'' (RIN0560–AI33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4760. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department of Defense 2016 Major Automated Information System (MAIS) Annual Reports (MARs) and an index of the 34 MARs; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4761. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2015 Annual Nuclear Weapons Stockpile Assessments from the Secretaries of Defense and Energy, the three national security laboratory directors, and the Commander, United States Strategic Command (OSS–2016–0396); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4762. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4763. A communication from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report describing activities under the Secretary of Defense personnel management demonstration project authorities for Department of Defense Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories (STRLs) for calendar year 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4764. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Admiral Mark E. Ferguson III, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4765. A communication from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the National Security Education Program for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4766. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Clauses with Alternates-Small Business Programs'' ((RIN0750–AI68) (DFARS Case 2015–D017)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4767. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Buy American and Balance of Payments Program-Clause Prescription'' ((RIN0750–AI77) (DFARS Case 2015–D037)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4768. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Extension and Modification of Contract Authority for Advanced Component Development and Prototype Units'' ((RIN0750–AI62) (DFARS Case 2015–D008)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4769. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Prohibition on Requiring the Use of Fire-resistant Rayon Fiber'' ((RIN0750–AI85) (DFARS Case 2016–D012)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4770. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition

Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Warranty Tracking of Serialized Items'' ((RIN0750–AI39) (DFARS Case 2014–D026)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4771. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Logistics and Materiel Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to core depot-level maintenance and repair capability requirements and sustaining workloads; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4772. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Gregory A. Biscone, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4773. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4774. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of Certain Persons and Modification to Entries on the Entity List; and Removal of Certain Persons from the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AG87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4775. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities that was declared in Executive Order 13694 on April 1, 2015, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4776. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4777. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Streamlining Administrative Regulations for Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Multifamily Housing, and Community Planning and Development Programs'' (RIN2577–AC92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4778. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fair Debt Collection Practices Act''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4779. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to the HUD Acquisition Regulation (HUDAR)'' (RIN2501–AD73) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4780. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cuban Assets Control Regulations'' (31 CFR Part 515) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4781. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cuba: Revisions to License Exceptions and Licensing Policy'' (RIN0694–AG86) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4782. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4783. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4784. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4785. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2014 Methane Hydrate Program''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4786. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program 2017–2022''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4787. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Exemption of Certain Chemical Substances from Reporting Additional Chemical Data'' (FRL No. 9941–19–OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4788. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District and South Coast Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9943–40–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4789. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Washington; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference'' (FRL No. 9943–19–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4790. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Ambient Monitoring Quality Assurance and Other Requirements'' (FRL No. 9942–91–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4791. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: The 2016 Critical Use Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide; Correction'' (FRL No. 9943–91–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4792. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Findings of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for Attainment of the 2010 1-Hour Primary Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS)'' (FRL No. 9942–91–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4793. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Iowa Air Quality Implementation Plans; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule; Polk County Board of Health Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Revisions'' (FRL No. 9943–89–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4794. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Nevada: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions'' (FRL No. 9943–99–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4795. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants from Coal- and Oil-

Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units and Standards of Performance for Fossil-Fuel-Fired Electric Utility, Industrial-Commercial-Institutional, and Small Industrial-Commercial-Institutional Steam Generating Units; Technical Correction'' ((RIN2060–AS41) (FRL No. 9942–28–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4796. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans (SIP); State of Iowa; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS); Correction'' (FRL No. 9944–19–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4797. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Evaluation for 'BWRVIP–18, Revision 2: Boiling Water Reactor Vessel and Internals Project, Boiling Water Reactor Vessel Core Spray Internals Inspection and Flaw Evaluation Guidelines' '' (BWRVIP–18, Revision 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 15, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4798. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Interagency Cooperation—Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat'' (RIN0648–BB80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4799. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Criteria and Design Features for Inspection of Water Control Structures Associated With Nuclear Power Plants'' (RG 1.127, Revision 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4800. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Announcement of the Delegation of Partial Administrative Authority for Implementation of Federal Implementation Plan for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation'' (FRL No. 9943–54–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4801. A joint communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a five-year report relative to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan for 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4802. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Mill Creek Flood Risk Management project in Davidson County and the City of Nashville, Tennessee, for the purpose of flood risk management; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4803. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs; Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008; the Application of Mental Health Parity Requirements to Coverage Offered by Medicaid Managed Care Organizations, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and alternative Benefit Plans'' ((RIN0938–AS24) (CMS–2333-F)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4804. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary (Financial Markets), Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4805. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4806. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4807. A communication from the Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to the Congress: Medicare Payment Policy''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4808. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological and Ethnological Materials from the Republic of Colombia'' (RIN1515–AE08) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4809. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report to Congress on the Open Payments Program''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4810. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the extending and amending the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Italian Republic Concerning the Imposition of Import Restrictions on Categories of Archaeological Material Representing the Pre-Classical, Classical and Imperial Roman Periods of Italy; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4811. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2016–0026 - 2016–0031); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4812. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a semiannual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4813. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary (Financial Markets), Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 23, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4814. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Patient Engagement Advisory Committee'' (Docket No. FDA–2016–N–0001) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4815. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Use of Materials Derived From Cattle in Human Food and Cosmetics'' ((RIN0910–AF47) (Docket No. FDA–2004–N–0188)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4816. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Investigational New Drug Applications for Biological Products; Bioequivalence Regulations; Technical Amendment'' (Docket No. FDA–2016–N–0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4817. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022 and 29 CFR Part 4044) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4818. A communication from the Director, Office of Labor-Management Standards, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Interpretation of the 'Advice' Exemption in Section 203(c) of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act'' (RIN1215–AB79 and RIN1245–AA03) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4819. A communication from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement

Investment Trust, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual management report relative to its operations and financial condition for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4820. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4821. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4822. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report on FDA Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4823. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2014 Report to Congress: Older Americans Act''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4824. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2013 Report to Congress on Community Services Block Grant Discretionary Activities - Community Economic Development and Rural Community Development Programs''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4825. A communication from the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4826. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4827. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4828. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bureau's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4829. A communication from the Director, Government Publishing Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Annual Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4830. A communication from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4831. A communication from the Chief of the Border Security Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Flights to and From Cuba'' ((RIN1651–AB10) (CBP Dec. 16–06)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4832. A communication from the Associate Administrator, Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report to Congress identifying the 9–1–1 capabilities of the multi-line telephone system in use by all federal agencies in all federal buildings and properties; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4833. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2016 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4834. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services Can Strengthen the Management of DC YouthLink, Community-Based Residential Facilities, and Performance Reporting''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4835. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Real Property Tax Appeals Commission Has Improved the Appeal Assessment Process''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4836. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4837. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4838. A communication from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4839. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The District's Management Contract with The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness was not Properly Managed in Fiscal Year 2014 to Ensure Performance Consistent with Contract Terms''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4840. A communication from the Deputy Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Nixon Administration Presidential Historical Materials'' (RIN3095–AB86) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4841. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Payment for Physician and Other Health Care Professional Services Purchased by Indian Health Programs and Medical Charges Associated with Non-Hospital-Based Care'' (RIN0917–AA12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–4842. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled ''Executive Summary of the 2015 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts'' and ''Judicial Business of the United States Courts'' and the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) for the two reports; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4843. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Department of Justice 2015 Freedom of Information Act Litigation and Compliance Report'' and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4844. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 OVC Report to the Nation: Building Capacity Through Research, Innovation, Technology, and Training'' and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4845. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on the Department's activities during calendar year 2014 relative to prison rape abatement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4846. A communication from the Director of Equal Employment Opportunity, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4847. A communication from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Federal Voting Assistance Program's 2015 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–4848. A communication from the Co-Chief Privacy Officers, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law,

the Commission's Privacy Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–4849. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0529)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4850. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0243)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4851. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3149)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4852. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1417)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4853. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–0467)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4854. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0681)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4855. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3146)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4856. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–3981)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4857. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–4222)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4858. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0248)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4859. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1270)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4860. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0755)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4861. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–3699)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4862. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0249)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4863. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1423)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4864. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2460)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4865. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1983)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4866. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3630)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4867. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2456)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4868. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; ATR–GIE Avions de Transport Regional Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1280)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4869. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; B–N Group Ltd. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7777)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4870. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of

Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; B–N Group Ltd. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4803)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4871. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–3704)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4872. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2006–25970)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4873. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3753)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4874. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4070)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4875. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3805)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4876. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Engine Alliance Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3713)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4877. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; M7 Aerospace LLC Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3607)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4878. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–4280)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4879. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7205)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4880. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0561)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4881. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2012–1331)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4882. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3778)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4883. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3144)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4884. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3633)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4885. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters, Inc.'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3658)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4886. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2568)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4887. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4381)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4888. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–2843)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4889. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2984)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4890. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4532)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4891. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following

Minnesota Towns; Rochester, MN; and St. Cloud, MN'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7484)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4892. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Wilmington, OH'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7486)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4893. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace, South Naknek, AK'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3108)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4894. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following North Dakota Towns; Harvey, ND, and Rolla, ND'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–3695)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4895. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace, Southbend, WA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3771)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4896. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Rapid City, SD'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7492)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4897. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Minot, ND'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7485)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4898. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Lynchburg, VA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4532)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4899. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; International Falls, MN'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3084)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4900. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Clinton, AR'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3967)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4901. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Michigan Towns; Alpena, MI; and Muskegon, MI'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7483)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4902. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Salem, OR'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3751)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4903. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Minot, ND'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7485)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4904. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Enid Vance AFB, OK; Enid Woodring Municipal Airport, Enid OK; and Enid, OK'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7489)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4905. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Enid Vance AFB, OK; Enid Woodring Municipal Airport, Enid OK; and Enid, OK'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7489)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4906. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Change of Controlling Agency for Selected Restricted Areas; North Carolina'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–0151)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4907. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q–35; Western United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–6001)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4908. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Multiple Air Traffic Services (ATS) Routes; Western United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1345)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4909. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Air Traffic Service (ATS) Routes; Northeast United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3361)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1077. A bill to provide for expedited development of and priority review for breakthrough devices.

S. 1597. A bill to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, and for other purposes.

S. 1767. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to combination products, and for other purposes.

S. 1878. A bill to extend the pediatric priority review voucher program.

S. 2030. A bill to allow the sponsor of an application for the approval of a targeted drug to rely upon data and information with respect to such sponsor's previously approved targeted drugs.

S. 2503. A bill to establish requirements for reusable medical devices relating to cleaning instructions and validation data, and for other purposes.

S. 2511. A bill to improve Federal requirements relating to the development and use of electronic health records technology.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2743. A bill to amend the Agricultural Act of 2014 to repeal a loophole for payment limitations; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 2744. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to protect the privacy of individuals who are research subjects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KIRK, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2745. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to promote the inclusion of minorities in clinical research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. BURR, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 2746. A bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2747. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to authorize Federal assistance to State adult protective services programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2748. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KING, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2749. A bill to provide an exception from the reduced flat rate per diem for long-term temporary duty under Joint Travel Regulations for civilian employees of naval shipyards traveling for direct labor in support of off-yard work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. HELLER):

S. Res. 413. A resolution designating April 5, 2016, as ''Gold Star Wives Day''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 134

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 134, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes.

S. 198

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rules relating to inverted corporations.

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 405

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 405, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

S. 510

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 510, a bill to require Senate confirmation of Inspector General of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, supra.

S. 804

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, supra.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1252, a bill to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1503

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to provide for enhanced Federal efforts concerning the prevention, education, treatment, and research activities related to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, including the establishment of a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1776

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1776, a bill to enhance tribal road safety, and for other purposes.

S. 2311

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2377, a bill to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and protect and secure the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2457

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2457, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 2473

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2473, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide veterans the option of using an alternative appeals process to more quickly determine claims for disability compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 2548

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2548, a bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 2592

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2592, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act by instituting a 180-day waiting period before medical debt will be reported on a consumer's credit report and removing paid-off and settled medical debts from credit reports that have been fully paid or settled, to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act by providing for a timetable for verification of medical debt and to increase the efficiency of credit markets with more perfect information, and for other purposes.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2614

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2614, a bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2676

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2676, a bill to provide for the adjustment of the debts of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes.

S. 2693

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2693, a bill to ensure the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission allocates its resources appropriately by prioritizing complaints of discrimination before implementing the proposed revision of the employer information report EEO–1, and for other purposes.

S. 2722

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2722, a bill to amend the Home Owners' Loan Act to allow Federal savings associations to elect to operate as national banks, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 394

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 394, a resolution recognizing the 195th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

S. RES. 406

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 406, a resolution recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in the Girl Scouts, which has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere since 1916.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 413—DESIGNATING APRIL 5, 2016, AS ''GOLD STAR WIVES DAY''

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. HELLER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 413

Whereas the Senate honors the sacrifices made by the spouses and families of the fallen members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. represents the spouses and families of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have died on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability;

Whereas the primary mission of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. is to provide services, support, and friendship to the spouses of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas in 1945, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was organized with the help of Eleanor Roosevelt to assist the families left behind by the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. was held on April 5, 1945;

Whereas April 5, 2016, marks the 71st anniversary of the first meeting of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.;

Whereas the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States bear the burden of protecting the freedom of the people of the United States; and

Whereas the sacrifices of the families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States should never be forgotten: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 5, 2016, as ''Gold Star Wives Day'';

(2) honors and recognizes—

(A) the contributions of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; and

(B) the dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Gold Star Wives Day to promote awareness of—

(A) the contributions and dedication of the members of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(B) the important role that Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. plays in the lives of the spouses and families of the fallen members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3458. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3459. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3458. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5010 and insert the following:

SEC. 5010. SECONDARY COCKPIT BARRIERS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Saracini Aviation Safety Act of 2016''.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue an order requiring installation of a secondary cockpit barrier on each aircraft that is manufactured for delivery to a passenger air carrier in the United States operating under the provisions of part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SA 3459. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5010 and insert the following:

SEC. 5010. SECONDARY COCKPIT BARRIERS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Saracini Aviation Safety Act of 2016''.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue an order that requires—

(1) on each covered aircraft the installation of a barrier, other than the cockpit door, that prevents access to the flight deck of the aircraft; and

(2) for a covered aircraft—

(A) that is equipped with a cockpit door, that the barrier required under paragraph (1) remain locked while—

(i) the aircraft is in flight; and

(ii) the cockpit door separating the flight deck and the passenger area is open; and

(B) that is not equipped with a cockpit door, that the barrier required under paragraph (1) remain locked as determined appropriate by the pilot in command.

(c) COVERED AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered aircraft'' means a commercial aircraft—

(1) operating under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) equipped with more than 75 passenger seats; and

(3) with a maximum gross takeoff weight that exceeds 75,000 pounds.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Assessing the Effects of Consumer Finance Regulations.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Recent Iranian Actions and Implementation of the Nuclear Deal.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Terror in Europe: Safeguarding U.S. Citizens at Home and Abroad.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy, and Consumer Rights be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Section 5 and 'Unfair Methods of Competition': Protecting Competition or Increasing Uncertainty?''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 5, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 434 only, with no other executive business in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John E. Sparks, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sparks nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 406 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 406) recognizing the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in the Girl Scouts, which has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere since 1916.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 406) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 17, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

GOLD STAR WIVES DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 413, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 413) designating April 5, 2016, as ''Gold Star Wives Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 413) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, April 6; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:08 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 6, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

DAVID C. NYE, OF IDAHO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF IDAHO, VICE EDWARD J. LODGE, RETIRED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

TODD E. SCHROEDER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

DEVON D. NUDELMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

CALVIN C. THOMAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

STEPHEN G. CRUYS
GREGORY J. LONG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

EDWARD S. BARNETT
LYNN J. WILSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

TIMOTHY G. BONNER
MICHAEL L. LOZANO
BRIAN D. RAY
OLIVER G. WASHINGTON, JR.
JAMES S. WELCH, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

KRYSTAL D. BEAN
MARLA K. BRUNELL
TROY D. CREASON
CRAIG A. KOELLER
LUIS A. LUGOROMAN
MICHAEL E. MCCOWN
JUSTIN R. SCHLANSER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

GEORGE A. BARBEE
MARNI B. BARNES
DAVID W. BROUSSARD
JAMES P. BURNS
RYAN A. CURTIS
ANGELA R. DIEBAL
JOSEPH A. DOMINGUEZ III
MATTHEW S. DOUGLAS
AMELIA M. DURANSTANTON
MICHAEL P. GARRISON
RANDOLPH S. HARRISON
MICHAEL S. KIM
LISA N. KONITZER
SCOTT J. KUSHNER
CHRISTOPHER C. PASE
MONTALVO I. ROSELLO
MICHAEL P. WAY
D011324
D013078

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

GABRIELLE M. ANDREANIFABRONI
CHRISTOPHER P. BAGLIO
LISA M. BREECE
CAROLINE C. BRODEN
SAVANNAH L. BROOKHART
LAMBERT B. CABALES
JON L. CAMP
RHONDA L. CENTUOLO
JOVITTA CHANDLER
SCOTT J. CHRISTIE
JEAN COXTURNER
KENNETH E. DAVIS, JR.
NANCY L. DAVIS

DAVID C. DEE
PAMELA A. DIPATRIZIO
GEOFFREY W. DUNCKLEE
MICHAEL S. FISHER
YVONNE J. FLEISCHMAN
ROBBY R. FRONDOZO
TAMI R. GAZERRO
KATHLEEN M. M. GERRIE
JAYNE A. GIBSON
KEVIN A. GOKE
LATONA M. HARRIS
LORI A. JOHNSON
PAUL D. JONES
ORIN J. KENDALL
JOHN S. KERNS
JAMES C. KESLER
ROBIN L. KLINGENSMITH
LORI A. LAWHORN
CHERI A. LAY
ARLENE B. LEDOUX
YETTA F. C. LEWIS
CATHARINA R. LINDSEY
JAMES W. LING III
LESTER E. MACK
CLINT R. MAGANA
MARY M. MARAN
PATRICK R. MARLOW
PAUL B. MASTERS
KIMBERLI J. MATTHEWS
NATACHA L. MILLER
JULIET N. MORAH
XAVIER MUNOZ, JR.
HEATHER M. OWENS
BRIANNA M. PERATA
SCOTT A. PHILLIPS
JANELL L. PULIDO
RUTH A. RACINE
VICTORIA P. RAGAN
STEPHANIE M. RIGBYTOMASKO
KATIE A. RIVERA
MARIO A. RIVERABARBOSA
JERRY RIVERASANTIAGO
VILMA ROJAS
SOSA O. RUIZ
DEBORAH G. SAVAGE
JENNIFER M. SCHENCK
WILLIAM T. SELLERS
GERRY P. SHARP
WYLIE K. SIMMONS
JONATHAN A. SINNOTT
PAUL J. SINQUEFIELD
RICHARD A. SONNIER
JACK A. STRONG
CATHERINE C. TO
CHRISTOPHER A. VANFOSSON
SANDRA K. VARGAS
MELODY A. VOSKUIL
LATONYA R. WALKER
MICHAEL T. WARNOCK, JR.
JESSICA J. WHALEY
LORI L. WHITNEY
SAUNDETH A. WILLIAMS
JAMES H. WILSON
NATALIE M. WILSON
MARK H. WIMMER
DENISE A. YARDE
YOUNG J. YAUGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

TERRYL L. AITKEN
JOSEPH C. ALEXANDER
BRUCE ARGUETA
BRYAN R. BAILEY
DONALD B. BENTLEY, JR.
RYAN S. BIBLE
FRANK C. BLAKE
AARON J. BRAXTON II
JEFFREY K. BROWN
ROBERT E. BRUTCHER
JACOB A. BUSTOZ
PAUL B. CARBY
ALEKSEY V. CASCOFIGUEROA
JASON M. CATES
YOUYKHAM CHANTHAVILAY
KATHLEEN M. CHUNG
JEFFREY CLARK
JILLYEN E. CURRYMATHIS
DENNIS J. CURTIS
ROBERT J. CYBULSKI, JR.
VICTOR M. DE ARMAS
JOHNNY R. DENNIS
CHARLES L. DOUGLAS
CHRISTOPHER N. DUNCAN
CHRISTOPHER W. ELLISON
NORJIM C. ESTRELLADO
SCOTT M. FARLEY
JASON B. FAULKENBERRY
ERIC R. FLEMING
RICHARD K. FLOYD
SAMUEL L. FRICKS
TYRA D. FRUGE
MATTHEW C. GEIMAN
ELIZABETH R. GUM
TERESA S. HINNERICHS
JOSEPH J. HOUT
MICHELE E. HUDAK
PETER K. HUGGINS
ALISHA F. HUTSON
DOUGLAS R. JACKSON
SHONNEL A. JACKSON
KURT H. JERKE
TANYA M. JUAREZ
JOHNPAUL KELLY
JAMES K. KENISKY
INDIA B. KINES
ALBERT E. KINKEAD
MARA KREISHMANDEITRICK
PAUL D. LANG
SHARRON D. LANKFORD
ATHENA C. LOCK
KAREN P. LUISI
KENNETH C. LUTZ
GLEN MANGLAPUS
ANTHONY J. MARINOS
JASON R. MATHRE
DEON D. MAXWELL
DAVID L. MCCASKILL, JR.
JAY A. MCFARLAND
JAMES R. MCKNIGHT
DARRYL M. METCALF
JOHN T. NUCKOLS
CHRISTOPHER G. PETERSON
NAOMI S. PHAYNE
JOHN M. PITUS, JR.
CORY J. A. PLOWDEN
STEPHAN C. PORTER
JONATHAN R. RAMSEY
WILLIAM R. RITTER
MARY I. RIVERACOLON
AMANDA P. ROBBINS
CHRISTOPHER M. RUTZ
ALAN G. SCHILANSKY II
KARA E. SCHMID
DONALD W. SEXTON
ANNE M. STERLING
MICHAEL C. STORY
GARRETT G. STOTZ
STEVEN A. STOVALL
JAMA D. VANHORNESEALY
MICHAEL L. VANZILE
APRIL R. VERLO
JASON C. WILLIAMS
D010908

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

DANIELLE M. BARNES
JONATHAN W. BRUGGER
PATRICK L. DALY
JAMES I. DUPREE
RACHEL M. ELLIS
RICHARD P. GOODRICH, JR.
DANIEL S. IKEDA
MATTHEW W. KOHAN
CHRISTOPHER D. MAROULES
PETER P. STUHLDREHER
MARK R. THOMAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

WILLIAM A, HLAVIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

MARC D. BORAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

SCOTT P. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

PHILLIP G. CYR

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 5, 2016:

THE JUDICIARY

JOHN E. SPARKS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE ARMED FORCES FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS TO EXPIRE ON THE DATE PRESCRIBED BY LAW.

SENATE—*Wednesday, April 6, 2016*

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, each blessing we receive is a gift from You. Thank You for the blessings of life, liberty, and love. Thank You also for the blessing of salvation that we receive by grace through faith.

Today, empower our Senators to live a life rooted in Your grace. Liberate them from guilt, fear, and division. Give them the wisdom to rely on Your love as they seek to live faithfully for Your glory. May the good they accomplish because of You lead them away from pride or boasting. May they always point to You as the source of all that is good.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act is the product of a collaborative committee process in the Senate that is back to work. It was guided and informed by a series of substantive committee hearings. It contains ideas from committee members on both sides of the aisle, and because both Republicans and Democrats were given a stake in the outcome, it passed the Commerce Committee on a voice vote.

Senator THUNE is the chair of that committee and Senator AYOTTE is the chair of the committee's aviation panel. We recognize key players like these for their many months of hard work, hearings, and collaboration. We recognize the ranking members, Senators NELSON and CANTWELL, and committee members from both sides for their contributions as well.

The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act will support American jobs and help American manufacturing. It will improve safety in the skies and security in our airports. It contains commonsense reforms for passengers too. In fact, a consumer columnist for the Washington Post dubbed it ''one of the most passenger-friendly FAA reauthorization bills in a generation.'' For instance, to the extent an airline charges fees for things such as baggage or cancellations or changes, this bill will help ensure they provide it in a clear, standard format that people can actually understand. It will allow passengers to get refunds for services they purchased but didn't receive, like when they have been charged a bag fee and the bag doesn't make it. It will give passengers more peace of mind when they travel, directing the FAA to update the contents of the onboard emergency medical kits, and it will maintain rural access in States like Kentucky.

The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act achieves all of this without imposing the kind of overregulation that takes away choices from consumers and threatens service. It does everything I mentioned without raising taxes or fees on travelers. It is a balanced bill, but that doesn't mean some colleagues won't have ideas or amendments they would like to have considered. For instance, in the wake of incidents like we saw in Brussels, I know some have expressed interest in security-related amendments. But in order to even have an opportunity to work through additional ideas or amendments, we must first get on the bill. After talking to the Democratic leader, I am optimistic we will do that in a few hours.

If colleagues are serious about having the opportunity for amendments of any kind, here is what it means today: Let's continue doing our job. We will vote today to get on the bill, and we will move ahead.

REGULATION ON RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the administration will unveil a set of regulations many believe will make it harder for lower to middle-class families to save for retirement. The regulation has been a long time coming, and there will be changes made from what was initially proposed. However, the fundamentals are likely to remain the same.

If that is the case, here is what we can safely say. Some have estimated that investment fees could more than double under this regulation. Here is what that could mean: access to critical retirement advice for those who can afford it and restricted access to affordable advice, and fewer retirement savings as a result, for too many lower and middle-class Americans.

It sounds a lot like ObamaCare. Here is why. Like ObamaCare, it threatens to upend an entire industry, threatens to increase costs and decrease access, and it threatens to hurt the very people it is aimed at helping. This regulation could have the effect of discouraging investment advisers from taking on clients with smaller accounts. What that means is that smaller savers, everyday Americans trying to plan for their future, could have less access to sound investment advice. One report projects the rule could cost middle-class families $80 billion in lost savings over the next decade.

I have already heard from Kentuckians who fear the negative repercussions this rule could have. For example, one financial adviser in my State shared with me his concerns about how the rule, as proposed, could impact his clients. There is the single mom with a daughter in college who fears she could see significant investment fee increases under the rule—increases she simply cannot afford. There is also the small business which could have a harder time accessing investment advice, potentially leading it to stop offering retirement plans to employees all together, and retirees living off their lifesavings could see reductions in their fixed income because of potential increases in investment costs.

From its initial proposal at a campaign-style event to its rollout today, this regulation seems to have always been more about politics than good policy. According to a report released by the Senate Homeland and Governmental Affairs Committee chairman, the administration seems to have ''disregarded . . . concerns and declined to implement recommendations'' from career, nonpartisan staff and government officials. Chairman JOHNSON's report goes on to say that the administration ''frequently prioritized the expeditious completion of the rulemaking process at the expense of thoughtful deliberation.''

America's middle class deserves responsible solutions, not far-reaching regulations that could jeopardize the retirement security of the very people it purports to help.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in the last 12 hours or so, the Republican leader and I have had some very productive discussions on the FAA bill and the associated tax title. Those discussions have been productive, as the Republican leader said, and so I say to all my Members, we are going to go ahead and support invoking cloture on this part of the bill. We are going to proceed to this legislation. We should know in a few hours how much of the postcloture time will have to be used. I hope not very much. I hope we can get right to offering amendments.

As the Republican leader said, Senators NELSON and THUNE will manage this bill and the committee did a good job. There are airport security measures in the bill. I think we need to do more, but what they did is certainly a step in the right direction, so there will be amendments dealing with airport security coming from our side. There could be some other amendments, but we will see. I do hope we can yield back whatever time is left on the motion to proceed to the bill. I hope we can do that no later than this afternoon.

RULE ON INVESTMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I commend the administration for the rule issued with fiduciary duties on investments. These advisers on investments will do a better job for consumers because of this rule. This issue is so important that it is estimated that it will save consumers at least $17 billion a year—not over 10 years, but a year. So that is something that is very important. I hope people understand that.

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday the assistant Republican leader made an interesting statement as he spoke to reporters just off the Senate floor. This is what he said and I quote: ''Even though this is an election year, it is no excuse for not getting the people's work done.'' We all agree. On this side of the aisle, we all agree.

Even though this is an election year, it is no excuse for not getting the people's work done. I didn't write that for the Republican whip, but I couldn't have done any better had I tried to write it. That is why Senate Republicans should put aside election year politics and do their job regarding President Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Garland, hopefully to be Justice Garland soon. And what is that job? As the Republican leader said a decade ago, and I quote:

> Our job is to react to the nomination in a respectful and dignified way, and at the end of the process to give that person an up-or-down vote as all nominees who have majority support have gotten through the history of the country. It's not our job to determine who ought to be picked.

So says the senior Senator from Kentucky. By the Republican leader's own admission, our job is to carry out a respectful nomination process. That means hearings, and at the end of the process we must give the nominee an up-or-down vote. That is our job, and we should do it.

Will the Chair announce what the Senate is going to be doing for the remainder of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for weeks now we have seen Democratic Senators come to the floor and attack the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The tone of these attacks against Senator GRASSLEY have been vicious and they have been very personal. I believe Democrats have embarrassed themselves, and they have done a disservice to their constituents and to the U.S. Senate.

Senator GRASSLEY is an outstanding public servant. He has been relentless in representing the interests and the views of the people of his home State of Iowa. He has not missed a vote in 27 years. He holds townhall meetings in every one of Iowa's 99 counties every single year. That is how seriously CHUCK GRASSLEY takes his responsibility to serve and to represent the people of his home State. Every other Member of this body should be trying to copy his example, not coming to the floor to criticize him or take cheap shots, as the Democrats have been doing in an attempt for political gain.

What Senator GRASSLEY wants should be the same thing all of us want when it comes to momentous decisions—decisions like who will have a lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States. He wants to give the people a voice. That is what Senator GRASSLEY wants for the people of Iowa, and that is what I want for the people of Wyoming.

Senator ENZI and I had a telephone townhall meeting last month, talking to people around the State of Wyoming. The great majority of the folks in Wyoming agree with Senator GRASSLEY, agree with Senator ENZI, and agree with me about the next Supreme Court Justice and giving the people a voice. This isn't just something that Republicans are making up because we don't like this nominee, although there is plenty not to like; it is what past chairmen of the Senate Judiciary Committee have done, Democrats as well as Republicans.

In 1992 Senator JOE BIDEN—now Vice President JOE BIDEN, but then Senator JOE BIDEN—came to the Senate floor to explain his rule, called the Biden rule, and it had to do with Supreme Court nominations. On this Senate floor, JOE BIDEN said that once the Presidential election is underway, ''action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.'' That is what Vice President JOE BIDEN said when he was a Senator. Those are JOE BIDEN's words—former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is the same position Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY currently holds. Senator BIDEN at the time said the temporary vacancy on the Court was ''quite minor''—''quite minor,'' he said—''compared to the cost that a nominee, the president, the Senate, and our nation would have to pay for what would assuredly be a bitter fight.''

Senator BIDEN was one of the Democrats who voted to filibuster Samuel Alito's nomination to the Supreme Court. So was Senator PAT LEAHY, who once also chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee. Senator Obama and Senator HARRY REID—that is right, Barack Obama, currently President of the United States, then-Senator Obama, and Senator HARRY REID, once majority leader, now minority leader—voted for that filibuster.

Back in 2005, when Senator REID was the Democratic leader, he said: ''Nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote.'' Senator REID even went so far as to unilaterally change the rules of the Senate on nominations a few years ago. He was in the majority then; now he is in the minority.

That is what Democrats have done and what they have said about things like nominations to the Supreme Court and other important jobs for the country.

We have elections in this country for a reason—it is so we can hear directly from the people what they think and how they want us to act on their behalf.

In 2014, the American people rejected the path the Democrats in Washington were taking. They put Republicans in charge of the House and the Senate because they wanted us to act as a check and a balance on what President Obama was doing. Democrats want to ignore the will of the people on this Supreme Court nomination.

The President wants to say it is his decision and his alone. Well, it is not just his decision. Now that the election season is upon us, it should be the people's decision. Republicans understand that, Senator GRASSLEY clearly understands that, and Democrats actually used to understand it. We need to give the people a voice.

ENERGY INDUSTRY JOBS

Mr. President, I would also like to speak briefly about something going on in my home State of Wyoming. Late last week, two of our State's largest coal mines announced they would let go 15 percent of their workers—465 families now living with the terrible pain of loss of a job. Wyoming has seen thousands of hard-working men and women lose their jobs in the energy industry over the past few years, people working in oil, gas, and coal.

Democrats in Washington should never forget that the regulations they and this administration impose have real impact on real people. When Members of the Congress focus obsessively—and it is a misguided obsession—on ideas like climate change, they do grave damage to the hard-working families all across this country who are trying to provide energy for America and provide for their families.

When Democratic Presidential candidates say they want to keep our resources in the ground, they send shock waves through communities that depend on energy jobs. When the Obama administration promotes green energy at any cost, it does great harm to Americans who are working to produce red, white, and blue energy. Seven years of overregulation has taken its toll on coal country. The Obama administration has taken away these people's jobs, and now it is trying to take away their dignity because a person's job is related to their identity and dignity in so many ways.

My goal is to make American energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, without raising costs and causing pain to American families. That means investing in new ways to develop Wyoming's incredible energy resources and finding new markets for those resources. Energy is known as the master resource. It is the master resource for a reason, and America provides and produces the energy we need for a strong economy as well as a healthy environment. There are bipartisan ideas and bills here in the Senate to help us do both. We should never give up on that goal.

American energy production has powered our economic recovery and has been the workhorse for the American economy for the last 7 years through the economic recovery. It is time for us here in the Senate, here in the country, certainly here in Washington, to return that favor and to help get these Americans back to work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Daniel Coats, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Thad Cochran, Johnny Isakson, Roy Blunt, Dean Heller, John Thune, John McCain, John Cornyn, Steve Daines.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 636, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 40 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Flake	Murray
Ayotte	Franken	Nelson
Baldwin	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Perdue
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Reid
Boozman	Heitkamp	Risch
Boxer	Heller	Roberts
Brown	Hirono	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Scott
Casey	King	Sessions
Cassidy	Kirk	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Daines	McConnell	Vitter
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Enzi	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden
Fischer	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—2

Cruz	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 98, the nays are 0.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Iowa.

WHISTLEBLOWER INVESTIGATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to tell a story about how a distinguished naval career was ruined by abuse of suspected whistleblowers. The end result is a mixed bag of good and bad.

In doing oversight of the Defense Department whistleblower cases, I have learned a difficult lesson. As hard as we may try, whistleblower cases rarely have good outcomes. Now, true, a wrong may be made right, a measure of justice may have been meted out, but the victims—the whistleblowers—have been left out in the cold. They may never get the remedy they seek and deserve.

At the center of this case is an honored naval officer, RADM Brian L. Losey. He can only blame himself for what happened. No matter how you cut it, though, the destruction of a distinguished military career—especially one devoted to hazardous duty in Special Operations—is very unfortunate and very sad as well. Yet that is accountability's harsh reality. This admiral allegedly broke the law and must now pay the price.

In the end, under pressure from several quarters, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus was forced to deny Admiral Losey his second star. This promotion was hanging fire for 5 long years, mostly because of ongoing investigations. Admiral Losey had allegedly retaliated against several whistleblowers.

If the Secretary of the Navy and the Navy's top brass had their way, Admiral Losey would be wearing that second star today, but late last year it got tossed into a boiling cauldron. Mounting opposition was coming from four different directions.

First, on November 13 of last year, after learning about the controversy, a bipartisan group of Senators weighed in with a request for all the reports on the Losey matter. The requests came from Senators WYDEN, KIRK, BOXER, JOHNSON, MARKEY, MCCASKILL, and BALDWIN, along with this Senator from Iowa. We happen to be members of the Whistleblower Protection Caucus. Other Senators also made similar requests for those reports.

The second operation. On December 2, 2015, we received four of the five Department of Defense Office of Inspector General reports on that investigation. One is still being reviewed, and I will tell you about that particular report in a minute.

In reviewing these documents, we quickly realized that Admiral Losey appeared to be a serial retaliator of whistleblowers. The evidence was overwhelming. He allegedly broke the law.

It all began in July 2011 at the Norfolk naval base Travel Office. There was a minor dispute over who should pay for his daughter's airline ticket to Germany. As a Coast Guard Academy cadet, that daughter was not entitled to travel as a dependent at taxpayers' expense. Although Admiral Losey, his wife, and staff allegedly ''pestered'' the Travel Office to pay for the ticket, Admiral Losey eventually purchased it with his own money. Nonetheless, this incident triggered a hotline complaint on July 13, 2011. Admiral Losey was informed of the complaint 2 months later, and then from that point it was all downhill.

After learning of the anonymous hotline tip, Admiral Losey was reportedly ''livid.'' He saw it as an act of disloyalty and ''a conspiracy to undermine his command.'' He reportedly developed a list of suspects and began a punitive hunt for more. Reports indicate he was determined to find out who blew the whistle, and when he did, he allegedly said he ''would cut the head off this snake and end this.''

So in his drive to root out moles, he created a toxic environment in his command. His seemingly reckless behavior and blatant disregard for the law and well-being of his subordinates led to his downfall. The end result of the admiral's misguided search for moles was a series of reprisals against suspected—just suspected—whistleblowers.

His choice of suspects was gravely mistaken. No one, in fact, had blown the whistle. Yet each was allegedly subjected to adverse personnel action at his direction and with his concurrence. His targets were mostly senior members of his command staff at Stuttgart, Germany. The person who actually blew the whistle worked at the Travel Office in Norfolk, VA. Clearly, this was a case of misdirected retaliation, which makes his alleged abuses even more egregious.

As soon as Senators finished reviewing these reports and started asking pointed questions, the Navy knew the watchdogs were on the case. The Navy brass went to general quarters. According to reports in the Washington Post, the top brass turned up the pressure. They arbitrarily dismissed the inspector general's findings and put the promotion on a fast track.

Now for the third part of this story. My good friend from Oregon, Senator RON WYDEN, on December 18 of last year, upset the apple cart. He placed a hold on the pending nomination for a new Under Secretary of the Navy, Dr. Davidson. His hold was not directed at Dr. Davidson; instead, it was directed at Admiral Losey's pending promotion. He had grave concerns about revelations in the inspector general's reports. His hold restored much needed leverage lost when the Senate confirmed the admiral's promotion in December 2011. He wanted the Secretary of the Navy to reconsider the promotion. So I commend my friend from Oregon for taking this action because it was an immediate game-changer.

Fourth, on January 14, 2016, there came a bolt out of the blue. The Senate Committee on Armed Services fired a shot across the bow that stopped the Navy dead in the water. The committee's letter to the Secretary of the Navy began with this damaging assessment. After reviewing the investigative reports, we—meaning the committee—''maintain deep reservations'' about Admiral Losey's ability to successfully perform as a two-star admiral. This was the death knell, but the committee's condemnation didn't end there. If it had known in 2011 what it knew in January of this year, the committee said it would never have confirmed Admiral Losey's nomination in the first place. The inspector general's damaging investigative reports had turned its earlier assessment upside down. The committee then very much slammed the door shut.

The committee urged the Secretary of the Navy to use his authority to deny the promotion. There was no gentle nudge. This letter effectively ended Admiral Losey's career. The Secretary of the Navy had run out of options. The Secretary had to do what he had to do. The committee of jurisdiction had laid down the law. The admiral should not be promoted. End of story. Admiral Losey will now step down as leader of the Naval Special War Command and retire.

The committee's groundbreaking letter was signed by Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED, and what is important about this letter is that it is a very sharp departure from actions taken by past Armed Services Committees in questioning a lot of these things that go on in the Defense Department. During the course of my oversight work, I have had several beefs with this committee over issues exactly like this. All were about the need to hold senior officers accountable for alleged misconduct based on evidence in inspector general reports. The response back then was very different from what I see of the work of the committee today.

I see this letter as a breakthrough. I see it as a masterpiece. I am proud of the Committee on Armed Services. This about-face came under new leadership, and I hope it signals the dawning of a bright new day. So it shouldn't surprise anyone that I would thank Chairman MCCAIN and thank Ranking Member REED from the bottom of my heart for this outstanding leadership. Their actions send a message to whistleblowers: Reprisals will not be tolerated. That is a real morale booster for all whistleblowers suffering under the weight of reprisals.

From what I know about whistleblowers, most of them are very patriotic people. They just want the government to follow the law and spend the money appropriately. They just want the government to do what the government is supposed to do. When they see it isn't being done, and they work up the chain of command but do not see any changes, then they come to Members of the Senate and the Congress. So I thank them again for having the courage to do the right thing. Holding such a distinguished naval officer accountable was no easy task. To the contrary, it was as difficult as they get.

Mr. President, now that the question of the admiral's promotion has been laid to rest, I would like to turn to that unfinished business I earlier referred to. The true scope of the admiral's retaliation actions is still being examined because there is a fifth report out there. The focus of the fifth and final report of the Losey investigation is more like a phantom than a real report.

Over 1,150 days have passed since this investigation began, and it is still not finished. It should be a piece of cake. The cast of characters, the facts, the evidence, and the findings should be essentially the same as in other Losey reports published long ago.

So I ask: What is really going on here? I have received several anonymous tips. What I hear is very disturbing. This report is allegedly being doctored, causing bitter internal dispute over across the river. On one side are the investigators just doing their job. They appear—as we would expect—to be guided by the evidence. On the other side is top management at the Defense Department. They appear very eager to line up with the Navy's decision to arbitrarily dismiss evidence.

From the get-go, the findings in the draft report substantiated reprisal allegations against Admiral Losey—consistent with the other reports. Top management initially concurred with those findings. So then, what is wrong? Why not issue the report?

However, in response to alleged pressure from the Secretary of the Navy's office, they caved and agreed to take Losey out of the report. How could they get such a bad case of weak knees? The evidence staring them in the face seems irrefutable—rock solid. Plus, it was just reaffirmed by an unlikely source—the U.S. Air Force.

Because two Air Force officers were allegedly involved, the Air Force had to conduct its own review. The Air Force also found the evidence very compelling. As a result, the Air Force officer—who was Admiral Losey's command attorney—reportedly faces potential legal trouble. He allegedly facilitated the admiral's retaliatory actions against the whistleblowers. The other officer will retire.

Despite the red flags and the need for caution, caution has been tossed to the wind. On March 31, 2015, Deputy Inspector General Marguerite Garrison gave the Navy a green light to proceed. She notified Admiral Losey by letter that he ''was no longer a subject of the investigation.'' How could she do such a thing with all the evidence that is already out there in the other four reports and what we think we know in this report that is not public?

At that point in time, Admiral Losey's alleged retaliation was the centerpiece of the report. True, it was a draft report in the midst of review. True, there were questions about Admiral Losey's role. Yet, after the passage of 1 year, the dispute remains unresolved. The report is still in draft and, obviously, mired in controversy.

I think this all shows that there is something rotten at the Pentagon. To send such a letter, which was inconsistent with the evidence in an unfinished report, seems inappropriate. The Garrison letter set the stage for what has followed, and I will tell you what followed.

To conform to the Garrison letter, the findings in the draft report had to be allegedly changed from ''substantiated'' to ''not substantiated.'' The investigators, thank God, dug in their heels and stood their ground. The evidence was apparently on their side.

In early December of last year, as the Losey promotion issue reached a critical juncture, top management allegedly ''directed'' the investigators to change the report's findings from ''substantiated'' to ''not substantiated.'' The investigators were also allegedly directed to change facts and evidence to fit the desired findings. In other words, key pieces of evidence had to be allegedly ''removed'' to ensure that the evidence presented in the report was aligned with the specified conclusions.

These are very serious allegations. Deliberately falsifying information in an official report constitutes a potential violation of law. If the directed rewrite of this report really happened, and if it is allowed to stand, it could undermine the integrity of the whole investigative process.

The new acting Defense Department inspector general, Mr. Glenn Fine, whom I know from a similar position in the Justice Department to be a pretty good inspector general, needs to grab the bull by the horns in this case, and he has the authority to do it.

He needs to call the top officials involved on the carpet. This would include Mrs. Garrison, her deputy, Director Nilgun Tolek, and Deputy Director Michael Shanker. The IG needs to ask them to explain and justify their actions. Next, he needs to ask the investigators to present their side of the story. Then, he needs to weigh independently and objectively the evidence and figure out what needs to be done to get this solved and get this report out. I think Mr. Fine has the capability to be independent and objective, and I ask him to do that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am here to defend Chief Justice John Roberts. I am here because he has been attacked, without cause, by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Yesterday afternoon the senior Senator from Iowa hit a new low in trying to justify his unprecedented obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nomination of Judge Merrick Garland. The chairman of the Judiciary Committee accused Chief Justice John Roberts of being ''part of the problem'' when it comes to the politicization of the Supreme Court. That is without any foundation.

I don't agree with the Chief Justice on every opinion he has rendered, nor, frankly, do I agree with any of the other seven on opinions they have rendered. We have had some disagreements on a number of opinions they have authored and participated in. Again, I don't agree with the Chief Justice on many of the opinions he has written, but his observations about the Supreme Court confirmation process have obviously struck a nerve in the Republican caucus.

Here is what happened. Days before the unfortunate death of Justice Scalia, before anyone could have anticipated the Supreme Court vacancy, Chief Justice Roberts made the commonsense assertion in a speech he gave that partisan politics hurt our Nation's highest Court. This is what he said:

> When you have a sharply political, divisive hearing process, it increases the danger that whoever comes out of it will be viewed in these terms. . . . It's natural for some member of the public to think you must be identified in a particular way as a result of that process. And that's just not how—we don't work as Democrats or Republicans. I think it's a very unfortunate perception the public might get from the confirmation process.

I was a Member of the Senate when we had the hearings regarding Justice Roberts. He came from the same court on which Merrick Garland served. They served together, and they are friends. In the past, Justice Roberts has said many glowing things about Merrick Garland. But yesterday afternoon on this floor, the senior Senator from Iowa had the audacity to accuse Roberts of being part of the problem, even going so far as to tell the Chief Justice—listen to this one—''Physician, heal thyself.''

I say to the senior Senator from Iowa, Justice Roberts isn't the one who needs healing. What needs mending is the Judiciary Committee under his chairmanship, which he has annexed as a political arm of the Republican leader's office. Senator GRASSLEY has sacrificed the historical independence of the Judiciary Committee to do the bidding of the tea party and obviously the Koch brothers.

I have news for Senator GRASSLEY: The American people don't think the process of nominating a Supreme Court Justice is political because the Supreme Court's rulings don't match expectations of the political right or the political left. I have confidence that these men and women who serve on the Court do the very best they can to rule on the law as they see it. The American people don't think it is political because the senior Senator from Iowa is refusing to give a fair hearing to a highly qualified nominee purely because he was nominated by a Democratic President. The American people think it is political when the Judiciary Committee and the Republicans on his committee meet behind closed doors and make pacts to blockade our Nation's judiciary, from the Supreme Court, to the circuit courts, to the district courts.

I know that my friend, with whom I have served for decades in this body, is

grasping for something, anything to get himself off the hook. President Harry Truman said, ''The buck stops here.'' Senator GRASSLEY wants the buck to stop with anyone but himself. He has done more to politicize the process than any chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the history of this country.

If the senior Senator from Iowa really wants to understand why Americans think the process of nominating Supreme Court Justices is so partisan, he should consider his own actions. He has only himself to blame for not doing his job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, just a little earlier today, the Senate moved to proceed to the FAA reauthorization bill. My hope is that we—the distinguished Senator from Florida, who is the ranking member on the Commerce Committee, and I—will move to have a substitute considered, and, hopefully, that will happen very soon.

At this time, I wish to speak about the subject that is before us, and that is the FAA reauthorization bill.

This week the Senate is taking up something that is a very important piece of legislation when it comes to aviation reforms that will support U.S. jobs, increase safety, improve drone operations, and make travel easier for airline passengers. The bill before us today, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, will help update aviation law to reflect the rapid advances in technology we have seen over the last few years.

For example, since the last reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration in 2012, the use of drones has increased dramatically. The FAA has sought to keep up by using the authority it already has to safely advance this burgeoning industry, but there are limits to what the FAA can do with only outdated authority to manage this rapidly advancing technology. Passing this reform bill will help the FAA remove barriers to innovation and address unacceptable safety risks when it comes to unmanned aircraft.

Just last month the Los Angeles Times reported on an incident where a Lufthansa A380 jumbo jet approaching the Los Angeles International Airport experienced a near miss with a drone that flew just 200 feet over the airliner. While fortunately in this case, the two did not collide, the prospect of a jumbo jet carrying hundreds of passengers striking a drone while flying over a heavily populated area is chilling.

Our colleague from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, noted in a statement on this incident that our FAA bill includes key reforms that will keep drones out of the path of airliners. She added: ''We must pass this bill and strengthen the law wherever we can.'' Well, I could not agree more. To keep drones out of the paths of commercial airliners, the Senate bill would implement standards so that existing safety technologies could be built into unmanned aircraft. This legislation also takes steps to require drone users to learn basic rules of the sky so they understand the limits of where and when unmanned aircraft may operate. This is critical as we move into an era where drones share airspace with commercial aircraft, emergency medical flights, low-altitude agricultural planes, and general aviation pilots.

Our focus on safety in this legislation doesn't stop at promoting safe use of unmanned systems. Our legislation addresses safety issues across the aviation spectrum. Lithium batteries, the batteries that power laptops and mobile phones, have helped to grow our digital economy, but the bulk transport of these items poses serious shipping challenges. Our bill ensures swift implementation of new international safety standards for the bulk transport of these batteries.

Although the sequence of events preceding the tragic Germanwings murder-suicide almost certainly would not have happened in the United States due to existing rules, our bill recognizes the importance of mental health and strengthens evaluations for commercial pilots.

Our legislation also improves a voluntary safety reporting program for pilots and sets a deadline for creating a commercial pilot record database to ensure air carriers have all available information about pilots' training, testing, and employment histories when hiring.

In response to an independent recommendation completed after our experience with the 2015 Ebola virus outbreak, our bill directs Federal agencies to establish aviation preparedness plans for any future outbreaks of communicable diseases.

Our legislation also directs the FAA to update guidance regarding flight deck automation, such as the use of autopilot, a key factor in recent fatal accidents. This legislation also makes existing funds available for a $400 million increase in the Airport Improvement Program to strengthen infrastructure and safety measures at our airports.

While our top priority is safety, the Senate's aviation bill also makes consumer friendly reforms to improve air travel for passengers. I commute weekly from my home in South Dakota to Washington, DC. So I understand the many frustrations that passengers face, and my colleagues and I are immensely proud of the pro-consumer provisions in this bill. Our legislation has been hailed by a consumer columnist for the Washington Post as ''one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation.''

Under our bill, airlines must return fees consumers have paid for baggage if items are lost or delayed. We also require airlines to automatically return fees for services purchased but not delivered so that travelers don't have to go through the hassle of trying to reclaim their money from an airline. And for customers frustrated by lengthy legal jargon that can make it difficult to understand fees, our bill creates a new and easy-to-read uniform standard for disclosing baggage, ticket change, seat selection, and other fees. Our proposal also helps families with children find flights where they can sit together without additional costs by requiring airlines to tell purchasers about available seat locations at the time of booking.

As a resident of a rural State, the needs of the general aviation community were a priority of mine when we wrote this bill. I am pleased we were able to build a consensus for including reforms from the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2 offered by many of my colleagues and led by Senators INHOFE and MANCHIN. These provisions include reforms to the third class medical certificate required for noncommercial pilots and new protections for pilots in their interactions with the FAA.

To reduce the risk of aircraft accidents for low-altitude fliers, such as agricultural applicators, our bill includes requirements for highly visible physical markings on small towers posing hazards.

This bill would also strengthen the aviation industry by improving the FAA's process for certifying aircraft designs and modifications and ensuring that these certifications benefit manufacturers competing in global markets. This would help manufacturers move U.S. aerospace products to market faster without compromising safety standards.

While I expect and encourage robust debate on this bill, I hope the debate will go forward with the same bipartisan and constructive spirit that Senator NELSON and I witnessed during consideration of this bill in the Commerce Committee. At the committee markup, we voted to include dozens of amendments reflecting ideas from both sides of the aisle. On final passage, we approved this bill by a voice vote, without a single committee member recording an objection. Part of reaching this consensus was an agreement Senator NELSON and I had reached not to include certain proposals that would divide our colleagues. We worked hard to find middle ground on a number of

issues to enable us to move this bill forward. Air traffic control reform and a passenger facility charge increase were excluded from the package because, at present, these proposals lack sufficient support and their inclusion could have jeopardized the legislation. Senator NELSON and I also agreed to limit the length of this bill to 18 months. This allows us to enact important reforms now while providing an opportunity to revisit other issues reasonably soon.

As we debate this bill, we should remember the urgent need for safety improvements and good government reforms to improve our aviation industry. There are numerous reforms in this bill that are simply too important to delay, and I look forward to a productive debate.

Finally, I took to the floor earlier this week to discuss the recent horrific attacks perpetrated by ISIS and the implications for security and our aviation policy. In addition to this FAA bill, the Commerce Committee has approved two bipartisan aviation security bills. The first is S. 2361, the Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act, which Senator NELSON and I introduced along with the bipartisan leadership of the Homeland Security Committee as cosponsors, and the second is H.R. 2843, which is the TSA PreCheck Expansion Act offered by Representative JOHN KATKO in the House.

Historically, the Senate has passed aviation security enhancements separate from a reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration. While I still prefer this separate approach, I will pursue every option to enact these improvements and will vigorously oppose any efforts to water down the security enhancements in these bills.

I know we all share the goal of keeping aviation secure, and I will listen to the views of my colleagues on whether we pursue enactment of these bipartisan aviation security proposals through this reauthorization or through separate legislation.

I thank my partner on the Commerce Committee, Ranking Member BILL NELSON, as well as Senators KELLY AYOTTE and MARIA CANTWELL, who lead our Aviation Subcommittee, for their work on the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act.

I look forward to the ensuing debate on the bill, and I urge—at the end of that debate—my colleagues to move forward and pass this legislation because it is important for America's economy and the safety of our traveling public.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I think the chairman, Senator THUNE, has pointed out that what we have tried to exhibit is the way the Senate is supposed to work. We are supposed to work in a bipartisan way to forge consensus in order to be able to govern. The subject matter of the FAA reauthorization bill is one that we shouldn't dilly-dally around. Indeed, we take some of the very serious consequences we are facing with our national aviation system head-on.

I also want the chairman to know how much I appreciate the spirit with which we have worked, not only on this issue but on the many issues we have discussed in the Commerce Committee. I think the proof is in the pudding, and I think we will see an amendment process that will run fairly smoothly as a result of the example and the spirit we have tried to set with regard to this legislation.

This is a comprehensive bill. It has been months in the making, and in working together in the fashion that I indicated, the bill reflects our broad agreement on aviation. At the same time, we have refrained from the controversial proposals, such as the plan in the House bill that has come out of the House committee and has not gone to the floor. They had a plan to privatize air traffic control and that has stopped the House FAA bill dead in its tracks.

We have a good bill in front of us here in the Senate, and in this robust process we will consider many amendments and improvements as we continue the legislative process. There is no basis for the chatter coming from some in the House that hearts and minds will change here in the Senate on air traffic control privatization. Air traffic control privatization is just not going to happen. I have made myself very clear on that issue. Such a privatization scheme would seriously impact the overall success of our aviation system. It would dismantle the longstanding partnership between the FAA and the Department of Defense and needlessly disrupt the progress the FAA is making in its modernization efforts. Let me underscore that. The Defense Department operates in about 20 percent of our airspace. They cannot afford to have a private company handling that airspace. Of course, this privatization could also lead to increased costs for the traveling public and users of the National Airspace System.

We think the measured approach we are taking in this bill is the better path, and we are not alone in this view. This bipartisan bill enjoys the support of a huge number of organizations. Now, nothing is perfect, and so it was my hope that we could find a way to help our busiest airports by increasing the resources they need to improve and maintain vital facilities. We couldn't reach that agreement. That is one reason the term of this bill is somewhat limited through fiscal year 2017, so we have an additional opportunity to revisit this and other issues in the not-too-distant future. It is a consensus bill, and it contains, as the chairman has just mentioned, many new consumer protections for airline passengers, critical improvements in drone safety, and reforms that boost U.S. aircraft manufacturing and exports, and it will do all of this without disrupting the safest and most efficient air transportation system in the world.

Let me highlight some of these consumer protections. How irritating is it to passengers that they don't know about this-and-that fee, this-and-that charge? At the end of the day, consumers feel nickeled and dimed. They deserve to know, and they need some relief. Well, this bill makes progress on that. Last summer, this Senator released a report that found that airlines failed to adequately disclose the extra fees and the add-on costs charged to the flying public. In many cases, passengers didn't know they could get a seat without having to request a special seat with a fee. In many cases, passengers didn't know about the fees they had to pay for airline baggage. That report had a number of comprehensive recommendations, and this legislation builds on that report to protect the flying public—many things in the bill. For example, it requires fee refunds for lost or delayed baggage. It requires new standardized disclosure of fees for consumers. It requires increased protections for disabled passengers.

As the chairman mentioned, drone safety is a very important area of this bill. Remember Captain Sully Sullenberger, who became a national hero when, upon takeoff and ascending out of LaGuardia, he encountered a flock of seagulls which were sucked into his jet engines? Now, that is flesh and blood and feathers and webbed feet. You can imagine what would happen if a plane, on ascent or on descent of a passenger airline, sucks in the plastic and metal of a drone. There are lives at risk, and there might not be a Hudson River that Captain Sullenberger could belly it in, in the Hudson River, and save all the lives of his passengers.

Last year alone, the FAA recorded over 1,000 drone sightings near airports and aircraft. That is unacceptable, and we must do everything we can to protect the flying public from these dangers posed by drones. So this bill creates a pilot program to test various technologies to keep drones away from airports, and it requires the FAA to work with NASA to test and develop a drone traffic management system. We have seen the technology already available that can suddenly capture a drone, if it goes into a prohibited area, and land that drone or take over that drone and take it someplace else. The identification of drones that go in and out of prohibited areas is also important. We are going to have to face this because, sooner or later, it will not be what happened at the Miami International Airport with a drone within

hundreds of feet of an inbound American Airlines airliner into Miami International. So we want to avoid that catastrophic outcome. This legislation also provides reforms in the FAA certification process that will boost U.S. manufacturing and exports and most importantly create really good jobs for hard-working Americans.

Those are just some of the key features in the bill when it comes to reauthorizing the FAA, and that is what brings us here today with the bill on the floor. We know we are in a new context of world terrorism, having just been reminded in Brussels. The dual attacks on a Brussels metro station and the airport are a grim reminder that both aviation and surface transportation networks remain attractive targets for terrorists. It is now almost 15 years after September 11. The terrorists are still out there seeking these vulnerabilities. In November of last year, we saw the ability to penetrate airport perimeter security in Egypt enabled an employee to get an explosive device on a Russian passenger jet, and that killed 224 civilians. So we have amendments to address these issues. We think these amendments are noncontroversial, we think they are bipartisan, and they certainly are timely.

As our debate unfolds over the next few days, aviation security will be an important factor in the discussion. The chairman and I have talked at length, and we have some of the ideas that we are going to present for consideration on security. One such proposal, as the chairman has mentioned in his opening remarks, we already passed in the commerce committee. It is right there, the Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act. That bipartisan legislation, sponsored by a number of us on the committee, would improve background checks for airport workers and increase employee screenings—obviously, a reminder of the Russian jetliner—this is important—and a reminder of the gun-running scheme in the Atlanta airport: over 100 guns over a 3-month period put on airliners, transporting them from the Atlanta Airport to New York. It is an area that requires attention.

So I look forward to collaborating with our colleagues as we move these important issues.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an issue that affects a part of our Constitution. The Constitution begins with these three words: ''We the people.'' You can talk in any townhall across America and ask ''What are the first three words of the Constitution?'' and they will respond ''We the people.'' They know that the Constitution starts with those words written in a super-sized font, because that is really the heart of what our system of government is all about—not ''we the powerful commercial interests,'' not ''we the titans of industry,'' not ''we the richest in America.'' No. ''We the people,'' the citizens, ordinary citizens. Our Constitution, our system of government is set up to honor and respect and address the concerns of ordinary citizens. That is very different from so many other countries where our early residents came from, from across the sea. So those three words capture the spirit of what our new Nation was all about, or, as President Lincoln later summarized, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

I have come to the floor periodically to address various issues related to ''we the people,'' related certainly to honoring the spirit of the Constitution. In that regard, this week I am coming to the floor to address the responsibility of our Senate and its advice and consent role under our Constitution.

The President's duty is to nominate a Supreme Court Justice when there is a vacancy. That responsibility is clearly written into our Constitution. The Senate's duty is to consider whether that nominee merits being appointed. In the early ages of our country, as we went from the Revolution of 1776 to the drafting of the Constitution, our Founders were of mixed minds as to how this appointment process should work. Some said the appointments should all be done by what they referred to as the assembly—that is, by all of us in Congress. So the executive branch would have a check on it, but the position would be filled by Congress. Others said: No, no, no, no, that is too difficult. Too much horse trading is going to be going on. The responsibility needs to be vested in the President. That is accountability.

But what happens if the President engages in appointments of dubious merit, people of dubious character, of dubious qualifications? So they came out with this compromise that the President nominates and our responsibility here in the Senate is to determine whether the nominee is of fit character.

One can get a little flavor of this from the writings of Hamilton in the Federalist Papers, Paper No. 76. He writes:

To what purpose then require the cooperation of the Senate? I answer, that the necessity of their concurrence would have a powerful, though, in general, a silent operation. It would be an excellent check upon a spirit of favoritism in the president, and would tend greatly to prevent the appointment of unfit characters.

That is our responsibility—to vet the nominee and to vote upon determining whether the individual is of fit character, and that certainly can be broadly interpreted to include personal characteristics and qualifications for a job that requires specific qualifications. That is our responsibility.

Every Senator here took an oath to the Constitution, pledged to honor their responsibilities here as they are laid out in the Constitution. That is why I am so disturbed that at this moment we have Senators in this body who have said: I am not going to do my responsibility under the Constitution. I am going on a job strike. I don't want to work and do my responsibility under advice and consent. I don't want to do the work of vetting candidates and voting on candidates. I am just going to sit on my hands and sing ''la la la'' instead of doing the work the Constitution requires.

That is unacceptable. To my colleagues who are sitting on their hands and failing to do their constitutional responsibility, I simply say: Do your job.

On March 16 President Obama nominated Merrick Garland to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Certainly the President has now fulfilled his responsibility under the Constitution. He put forward a nominee to fill this critical vacancy on the Supreme Court. I certainly look forward to meeting with Merrick Garland, reviewing his credentials, and learning more about his vision for the Supreme Court. That is part of the vetting process. That is something all of us should be doing. Then it will be time for the Senate as a body to act. That means the Judiciary Committee proceeds to collect information on Mr. Garland's background and on his decisions, and then they hold a hearing and members of the committee ask penetrating questions: Why did you say this in a particular opinion? He has a whole record to be examined, and that is what we should be doing right now.

Not since the Civil War have we left a vacancy on the Supreme Court for over a year, but the job strike my colleagues are engaged in today says: We are going to leave this vacancy on the Court. We are going on a job strike for an entire year and not do our responsibility under the Constitution because we just don't want to.

That is a dereliction of duty, and I encourage my colleagues to rethink their positions.

Since 1975 it has taken on average only 67 days to vet and vote on a Supreme Court nominee—just 67 days or a little over 2 months.

There are some folks here in the Chamber who say: Well, this is a

unique circumstance because we are in the last year of a Presidency, and therefore we should just wait and leave the Court spot empty for a year. Wait until the election next November and wait for the new President to come in in January and then get a new nominee and hold hearings then.

That argument fails on several accounts. First of all, there is nothing in the Constitution that says one will only do their job in a year, if you will, that is in the first 3 years of the Presidency instead of the fourth year. That is not written in the Constitution. For any of my colleagues who make this argument, I would be happy to read the Constitution to them. Better yet, read it yourselves. Look at the Constitution and our responsibilities under the Constitution. The President is required to nominate in all 4 years, and we here in the Senate are required to proceed to determine whether that nominee is of unfit character or of fit character, and that means vetting and that means voting. The President doesn't get a break in his fourth year and get told to do nothing, and we don't get a break in our sixth year. We are not told that in the sixth year we should wait to make decisions because we have to run for reelection and therefore we should wait until our citizens vote. No. We have a term that runs a full 6 years, and we have a responsibility for the entire 6 years. The President has a term of 4 years, and he or she has the responsibility for the entire 4 years. There is nothing in the advice and consent clause that says that at a certain point in time, we are just not going to do our advice and consent responsibility.

It is conceivable that the Founders could have written into the Constitution that in the fourth year of a Presidency, the Senate will not fill any positions, but they didn't write that into the Constitution, and it would not have made sense for them to have done so because the work of the Court is ongoing and the work of the executive branch is ongoing.

Indeed, if we want any form of precedent, we can look to the recent past. Justice Kennedy, who sits on the Court today, was confirmed in the last year of President Reagan's final term, and he was confirmed under a Democratically controlled Senate. I have not heard a single Member come to this floor and say that if they had been here in that year, they would have advised that we leave President Reagan's nominee hanging, unvetted, not voted on for an entire year, waiting for the next President. No one here made that argument back then, and nobody is making it now. What we are seeing is a purely political effort to pack the Court to politicize an institution that shouldn't be politicized.

From the moment of nomination through the end of this administration, we still have 310 days. The average, after a nomination, to confirm a nomination, is 66 days. In other words, we have five times as many days as needed for the average to confirm. There is no argument that there is not enough time.

A job strike based purely on partisan politics designed to polarize and pack the Court is going to do a tremendous amount of damage to this important institution.

Our Founders laid out in the Constitution a vision of three coequal branches, but, colleagues, if you take the advice and consent power to undermine the ability of the executive branch to operate or the ability of the Court to operate, you will damage in a serious way the quality of the three branches. You will be saying that one branch has the power to derail the ability of the other two to function. That is absolutely, clearly, completely, 100 percent not the vision that was laid out in the Constitution and not the vision that was laid out for advice and consent.

Let me remind you that advice and consent is the responsibility to determine if the nominee is of unfit character. How can we determine if someone is of unfit character if we won't meet with them? How can we determine if someone is of unfit character if we are not willing to review their writings? How can we determine if they are of unfit character if the Judiciary Committee doesn't hold a hearing to actually raise questions and ask the nominee to respond to them? How can we as a body determine and make the decision that someone is of unfit character if we don't hold a vote?

Consider the precedent that is being established and the damage it will do. Let's say for example that by refusing to do their job, my Republican colleagues delay until the next administration comes in. It is a Republican administration, and they get a nominee who they feel has far-right views that they like better than the nominee before us.

By the way, Merrick Garland's views are about as straight down the center as anyone can ask for. He has been praised voluminously by Republicans in the past. Justice Roberts said that if one disagreed with Justice Garland, one would really have to look carefully as to why. A key Member of this body who has been here a very long time said: If someone like Justice Garland was nominated, well, that would be a very reasonable nomination. So we have a very reasonable, down-the-middle nomination.

But what if this tactic of going on strike and failing to do your job worked, so that in the next administration you could secure a Supreme Court Justice who is way to the right?

First, it has been a clear and complete effort to pack the Court. You have destroyed the integrity of the Court as one that rises above partisan politics.

Then along comes another vacancy, and you have a different President and/or maybe the same President. Now the minority says: Well, we are going to go on strike, or maybe the majority is going to go on strike because they don't like this particular President or they don't like this particular nominee. And they say: We are not going to vet, we are not going to vote, we are going to wait. It is only 3 years until the next President. Let's let the people decide or wait till the next President.

Perhaps if the Republican side succeeds in packing the Court and then the question becomes another vacancy, Democrats say: Well, look, we have to restore the balance of the Court, so we are going to absolutely refuse to act on the next nominee of this Republican President.

This you can see. This precedent is not only a dereliction of duty; it is deeply damaging to the integrity of the Court. It is deeply destructive of the integrity of the Court. This is a path we do not want to go down as a body, exercising our advice and consent responsibilities, politicizing our judicial system, polarizing our judicial system, destroying the integrity of our judicial system.

I appeal to my colleagues, rethink the oath of office that you took to do your job, decide to end this job strike, and do your job. Rethink how important the responsibility that we have as a Senate is to maintain the integrity of our institutions. For short-term gain, destroying the Supreme Court, polarizing, diminishing the Supreme Court is not in the interest of our Nation.

I will go back to where I began, with our system of ''we the people''—our ''we the people'' Constitution—designed to create laws of, by, and for the people. There are three coequal branches of government; one creating laws, one executing those laws, and one determining whether or not those laws are within the balance of our Constitution.

This action of trying to pack the Court through a job strike is equivalent to shredding key parts of this beautiful document. It is wrong in terms of the short-term action, and it is certainly wrong in terms of our long-term responsibilities.

Let's end this show. Let's end this highly politicized moment. Let's actually hold the hearing to vet the candidate. Let's meet with the candidate so we can develop our individual understandings. Let's review the candidate's writings, and let's gather on the floor to vote whether we believe this candidate is a fit character or unfit character. That is our responsibility. Let's do our responsibility.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last Saturday marked the 1-year anniversary of the Obama administration's deal with Iran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. This is the nuclear deal with Iran that officially went into effect last October.

Briefly summarized, in exchange for billions of dollars in near-term and long-term sanctions relief, Iran made some very modest nuclear concessions—and that is if you believe the inspection regime is not fundamentally flawed, which I do not believe. So instead of trust and verify, we can't even verify Iran is complying with the terms of the agreement. Indeed, I think we can pretty much be guaranteed that Iran will do its dead-level best to cheat.

To make matters worse, the administration all but admitted the deal wasn't going to stop Iran from exporting terrorism—which is the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism in the world—or violating the human rights of its own citizens or advancing its ballistic missile program. We have seen a lot of evidence of that recently.

All of these major bipartisan concerns were highlighted by Congress but totally ignored by the administration. President Obama himself warned that ''this deal is not''—is not—''contingent on Iran changing its behavior. That is the President of the United States, the leader of the free world, the Commander in Chief. The President of the United States said: ''This deal is not contingent on Iran changing its behavior.'' Unbelievable and outrageous.

My concerns with this agreement have done nothing but grow ever since the deal was done, and Iran continues to prove it was not negotiating in good faith—to the contrary, that it was negotiating in bad faith and would take every advantage it could to advance its nuclear ambitions and to continue its state sponsorship of global terrorism.

Iran is still working to undercut the United States and its priorities in the Middle East by fueling proxy wars in the region in places such as Iraq, Yemen, and Syria. The administration has even made clear that it knew the money that was released as a result of the sanctions relief—that it knew—that the tens of billions of dollars of intermediate sanctions relief going to Iran would be funneled to terrorist groups across the Middle East. So we have an unverifiable deal, and we have money going to finance terrorism. What is not to love about that? That is the administration's attitude.

In fact, earlier this week it was reported that the U.S. Navy—the U.S. Navy—for the third time in just 2 months intercepted an Iranian shipment of weapons in the Arabian Sea believed to be headed from Iran to rebel groups in Yemen.

One has to wonder how Iran paid for those weapons. Well, one logical explanation would be perhaps with the sanctions relief authorized by the President's misbegotten deal with Iran. That was a huge cash infusion. It is only logical to believe that Iran used that money to pay for the weapons they were then trying to ship to the rebels in Yemen. And, of course, as we have seen recently, the deal certainly didn't keep Iran's Revolutionary Guard from test-firing ballistic missiles. The fact is, the Iranian nuclear deal is not worth the paper it is written on. I hope the next President will rip it to shreds day one in office and give it the sort of respect that it has really earned.

Unfortunately, Iran serves as just one of the many examples of how the administration's rudderless strategy is advancing America's interests in the complex world we are living in. On President Obama's watch, the United States has methodically ceded our irreplaceable leadership role throughout the world. This is most evident in the Middle East—a caldron of violence and instability.

In Syria, we don't see the JV team that President Obama referred to in ISIS. We see an emboldened terrorist group that exports death and destruction to our allies in cities such as Paris and Brussels, with the intention to do the same thing right here in the United States, anywhere and everywhere they can, including places such as Garland, TX, where thankfully an alert security guard was able to thwart two ISIS-inspired terrorists from killing innocent civilians.

In Iraq, where Americans spent their treasure and spilled their blood to bring relative peace and stability just a few short years ago, we now find complete chaos. President Obama's precipitous withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq helped turn the region back into a powder keg.

Much like the Obama administration's promised redline on chemical weapons in Syria, the border between Syria and Iraq has literally been erased. It doesn't exist anymore. As the Obama administration has stood by, today the black flag of ISIS flies high over places such as Mosul and Fallujah.

We all know that ISIS has carved out a safe haven in the heart of the Middle East, while Syria has plunged deeper and deeper into civil war and chaos. Millions of people have become displaced as refugees, both internally in Syria and in surrounding countries, causing further instability in the region. And now, of course, we are seeing them not only in refugee camps in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, but escaping to Europe and creating huge challenges for the governments in Europe. That is not even to mention the hundreds of thousands of Syrians who have lost their lives in this civil war while the world has stood back and by and large watched with negligible strategy or effort to try to change the outcome.

What is the result? Well, beyond this hard reality, this sends a message to our allies and our adversaries. Our allies are questioning our commitment and our reliability. Our adversaries are interpreting our lack of strategy and action as weakness and opportunity. Israel, along with several of our gulf partners, has found a White House that repeatedly seems to care more about the interests of our common enemy than Israel's security interests. In Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries—NATO countries—question our dedication and commitment to transatlantic peace and prosperity as Russia prowls at their back door. Our adversaries have noticed. They have been emboldened by the lack of American leadership and strategy, and they have taken full advantage.

This administration's abdication of leadership has allowed China to grow more belligerent in the Asia-Pacific; North Korea to test what they claim is a hydrogen bomb and to threaten our allies, such as South Korea and Japan; and Russia to quickly fill the leadership vacuum left by the United States in Europe and the Middle East.

If we had any doubt about it, once again we have learned a hard lesson, and that is, weakness is itself a provocation. Weakness is a provocation. What this world needs, what America needs, is leadership and a strategic vision that doesn't just respond to every crisis on an ad hoc basis.

Fortunately, the Founding Fathers gave the Congress some tools to be able to help when the Chief Executive of the country seems to be without any particular direction or without a particular strategy. The Senate can play an active role in holding the administration accountable and putting forth a strategy to help keep us safe.

For example, yesterday the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to discuss Iran's recent transgressions. I am glad the chairman of that committee, Senator CORKER, and the ranking member, Senator CARDIN, are working together on a bipartisan basis on legislation to levy more comprehensive sanctions on the Iranian regime to make up for what should have been done in the Iran nuclear deal but was essentially ignored. The administration had consciously decided to ignore Iran's role as a state sponsor of terrorism and decided we are just going to try to deal with the Iranian nuclear aspirations and not the terrorism aspirations. In doing so, I think they literally failed on both counts. They not only created a testing regime that

can't actually verify when Iran is cheating, but at the same time they have unleashed tens of billions of dollars to help finance terrorist activity.

The administration has made clear that it simply doesn't have much interest in holding Iran accountable. They seem now absolutely nervous about doing anything that Iran might use as an excuse to walk away from the nuclear deal, which they could do on a moment's notice, meanwhile keeping the benefits they have already gotten from this deal; namely, the billions of dollars in sanctions relief.

I hope the Senate will move forward on this legislation soon. Our allies and our friends need to know that if the President will not stand by them and challenge our adversaries, Congress will.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise once again to address the Supreme Court vacancy created by the untimely death of Justice Antonin Scalia. The Constitution gives the nomination power to the President and gives the advice and consent power to the Senate but does not tell either how to exercise their power. Our job of advice and consent begins with deciding how best to exercise this power in each situation, and the Senate has done so in different ways at different times under different circumstances. I don't think there is any question about that.

For two reasons, I am convinced that the best way to exercise our power of advice and consent regarding the Scalia vacancy is to defer the confirmation process until the current Presidential season is over. The first reason is that the circumstances we face today make this the wrong time for the confirmation process. This vacancy occurred in a Presidential election year with the campaigns and voting already underway. Different parties control the nomination and confirmation phases of the judicial appointment process. The confirmation process, especially for Supreme Court nominees, has been racked by discord in the past, and this is one of the bitterest and dirtiest Presidential campaigns we have seen in modern times. Combining a Supreme Court confirmation fight and a nasty Presidential campaign would create the perfect storm that would do more harm than good for the Court, the Senate, and of course, our Nation.

The circumstances I mentioned are identical to those that led Vice President BIDEN in 1992 to recommend exactly what we are doing today. In June of 1992, when he chaired the Judiciary Committee, he identified these very circumstances and concluded: ''[O]nce the political season is under way, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.'' To be fair, something significant has changed since 1992. The confirmation process has become even more partisan, contentious, and divisive.

In 2001 Democrats plotted a procedural revolution by launching new tactics to prevent Republican judicial nominees from being confirmed. Over the next several years, they led 20 filibusters of appeals court nominees and prevented several from ever getting appointed.

Then in 2013, Democrats used a parliamentary maneuver to abolish the very filibusters they had used so aggressively. The minority leader knows this because he was in the middle of it all. If the condition of the confirmation process was bad enough in 1992 for Chairman BIDEN to recommend deferring it to a less politically charged time, Democrats' actions since then have only made this conclusion more compelling today.

The second reason for deferring the confirmation process for the Scalia vacancy is that elections have consequences. In 2012 the election obviously had consequences for the President and his power to nominate, but the 2014 election had its own consequences for the Senate and its power of advice and consent. The reason the American people gave Senate control to Republicans was to be a more effective check on how the President is exceeding his constitutional authority.

The 2016 election also has consequences for the judiciary. The timing of the Scalia vacancy creates a unique opportunity for the American people to voice their opinion about the direction of the courts.

On Monday the minority leader reminded us of an important axiom. Let me refer to the chart again. ''No matter how many times you say a falsehood, it is still false.'' I agree.

The minority leader claims that the Senate has a constitutional duty, a constitutional obligation to hold a prompt hearing and timely floor vote for the President's nominee to the Scalia vacancy. Yesterday The Hill quoted him saying this: ''The obligation is for them to hold hearings and to have a vote. That's in the Constitution.'' By my count, then, the minority leader has made this claim here on the Senate floor more than 40 times. He said it as recently as this morning. No matter how many times he says this falsehood, it is still false. The minority leader's claim is false because the Constitution says no such thing. This is what the Constitution actually says about appointing judges: The President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint.'' Nothing about hearings or votes, nothing about a timetable or schedule.

I say this to my Democratic colleagues: Do you really want to stand behind a completely fictional, patently false claim like that? Do you really want to base your position on what the Washington Post Fact Checker called a ''politically convenient fairytale''? I understand that you want the Senate to conduct the confirmation process now for the President's nominee. We can and should debate that. But will none of you be honest enough to at least say what everyone in this Chamber knows—that the Constitution does not require us to do things that way?

The minority leader not only contradicts the Constitution; he contradicts himself. The minority leader was serving here in the Senate in 1992. Senator REID took no issue with Chairman BIDEN's conclusion that the circumstances at the time—the same circumstances that exist today—counseled deferring the confirmation process. Senator REID did not tell Chairman BIDEN that the Senate must do its job. Senator REID did not assert then what he repeats so often today—that the Senate has a constitutional duty to give nominees prompt hearings and timely floor votes.

On May 19, 2005, during the debate on the nomination of Priscilla Owen to the U.S. court of appeals, the minority leader said of the Constitution—and I will refer to this chart again—''Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.''

In that 2005 speech, the minority leader was particularly adamant about this point. Claiming that the Senate has a duty to promptly consider each nominee and give them an up-or-down vote, he said, would ''rewrite the Constitution and reinvent reality.'' That is what the minority leader said then. The circumstances have changed, of course. Today the political shoe is on the minority leader's other foot, and he is the one claiming that nominees must have prompt consideration and up-or-down votes. By his own standard, the minority leader is rewriting the Constitution and reinventing reality. Now that it serves his own political interests and that of his party, the minority leader has reversed course and claimed in a recent Washington Post opinion column that the Senate has a constitutional duty to give nominees ''a fair and timely hearing.''

Let me once again mention 1992, when Chairman BIDEN denied a hearing to more than 50 Republican judicial nominees. He allowed no hearing at all, whether fair or unfair, timely or otherwise. In September 1992 the New York Times reported on page 1 that this was

part of an obstruction strategy to keep judicial vacancies open in the hopes that Bill Clinton would be elected. Senator REID served here at that time, but I can find no record of him demanding that every nominee get a timely hearing. Instead, he wholeheartedly supported his party's strategy of obstruction.

In his recent Washington Post column, the minority leader also wrote that the Senate has a constitutional duty to give nominees a floor vote. Between 2003 and 2007, however, he voted 25 times to deny any floor vote at all to Republican judicial nominees. As far as I can tell, we have the same Constitution today as we did in 1992, 2003, 2005, and 2007. We have the same Constitution today with a Democrat in the White House as we did in the past with a Republican President in the White House. The minority leader cannot have it both ways. He cannot today insist that the Constitution requires the very hearings and floor votes he and his fellow Democrats blocked in the past. I suppose they will say those were lesser court judges. Well, they were still judicial nominees.

On Monday, the minority leader again attacked the Judiciary Committee and its distinguished chairman, Senator GRASSLEY. You have to go a long way to find anybody who is nicer, more competent, and more dedicated than Senator GRASSLEY; yet he is being attacked again. I guess they think that somehow makes a difference.

The minority leader held up a quote from an editorial in an Iowa paper about how the chairman is conducting the confirmation process. I don't know when the minority leader started caring about what hometown newspaper editorials said about the confirmation process, but this appears to be yet another epiphany.

On February 19, 2003, the Reno Gazette-Journal criticized Democrats for their filibuster of Miguel Estrada to the U.S. Court of Appeals. A few weeks later, the Las Vegas Review-Journal called the filibuster campaign promoted by Senator REID ''nothing more than ideological posturing and partisan blustering.''

As I mentioned earlier, the minority leader went on to vote 25 times for filibusters of Republican judicial nominees.

Also on Monday, the minority leader claimed that the Judiciary Committee is not doing its job and that the chairman is ''taking his marching orders from the Republican leader.'' Later in the day, the Senate unanimously passed the Defend Trade Secrets Act. The minority leader dismissed this legislative accomplishment because it was reported out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously. He said: ''I don't see today why the Judiciary Committee should be given a few pats on the back.'' Well, that is OK with me; we don't need pats on the back. The minority leader knows better though. He knows that the strong bipartisan outcome for this legislation was the result of nearly two years of work behind the scenes, primarily at the staff level.

It is painfully obvious that the minority leader desperately wants to score political points and to spin everything he can to his advantage, but to disparage and belittle the arduous work of both Democrats and Republicans, by both staff and Senators, is disgraceful and insulting. Before he denigrated this significant bipartisan achievement, he should have read the Obama administration's statement of policy on the bill. The Defend Trade Secrets Act will, the administration says, promote innovation and help minimize threats to American businesses, the economy, and national security interests. The Obama administration calls this an ''important piece of legislation'' that would ''provide important protection to the Nation's businesses and industries.''

This morning, the minority leader once again said that the Senate must do its job regarding the Scalia vacancy, and he asked, ''What is that job?'' The Senate's job is to determine how best to exercise its advice and consent power under the particular circumstances we face today. We have made that determination. We have done our job. We are making the same determination that the minority leader apparently supported in 1992. The Constitution no more dictates our decision than it did in 2009 when the minority leader correctly said that the Senate is not required to vote on nominations.

No matter how many times you say a falsehood, it is still false. No matter how many times the minority leader falsely claims that the Constitution dictates how and when the Senate must conduct the confirmation process, it is still false. No matter how many times he claims that the Senate is not doing its job, it is still false. No matter how many times the minority leader questions the integrity and character of the Judiciary Committee chairman, those questions are still false. No matter how many times the minority leader contradicts himself and tries to avoid his own judicial confirmation record, his claims today are still false.

The Senate today has the same power of advice and consent as when Democrats were the majority. We have the same responsibility to determine the best way to exercise that power in each situation. In 1992 Chairman BIDEN recommended deferring the confirmation process so that ''partisan bickering and political posturing'' did not overwhelm everything else. The false claims and disreputable tactics being used today, including by the minority leader, only confirm Chairman BIDEN's judgment and its application today.

All of this is disappointing to me, to be honest with you. We have an honest disagreement as to when this nomination should be brought up. We have an honest disagreement as to how it should be brought up. We have an honest disagreement about the times we are in. We think this Presidential race is horrific on both sides. And I, for one, as former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, am deeply concerned that we bring up this nominee in the middle of this awful mess called the Presidential election, with all of the politics and screaming and shouting and arguing from both sides. Considering a nominee now would demean the Court. It would demean what we are trying to do around here. Waiting to consider a nominee only makes sense given that voting in this election is already underway. For reasons I have explained before—and no doubt will do so again—the confirmation process for the Scalia vacancy should be deferred until the election season is over.

I am also troubled by the minority leader's attacks on Chairman GRASSLEY. I am concerned because I think that to have any leader attack somebody as decent and as honorable as CHUCK GRASSLEY is below the dignity of this body. Whether someone has disagreements with CHUCK or not, they can explain those disagreements without being slanderous or libelous.

There are very few people in this body who are as honest and as decent as CHUCK GRASSLEY. I think all of my colleagues are honest and decent, but very few of them would rise to the level CHUCK GRASSLEY does. He is an old farmer who believes in doing right and who, to the best of his ability, always does right. I have been around Chairman GRASSLEY for a long time, and I have the utmost respect for him. He is not even an attorney. Yet he is running the Judiciary Committee very well. He is a good man. He deserves to be treated like a good man and a good leader and a good chairman.

We are going to have our differences in this body, but we should treat each other with the utmost respect and not accuse people of being things they are not. I can say one thing. I have served here for 40 years and CHUCK GRASSLEY has been one of the best people I have served with on either side.

I think my friends on the other side understand that I care a great deal for them and that I like working with them. Sometimes we have to modify things so they are pleased, but that is part of this process. Sometimes we very vehemently disagree. That is one of the great things about the Senate—we can disagree without being disagreeable. We can find fault in the issues, but I think it is time to quit finding unnecessary fault in each other.

This is the greatest deliberative body in the world. I feel good to have been

able to serve as long as I have here, and I respect my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Even so, we have a disagreement on when this body should consider a nominee, and that disagreement is a sincere one. The fact is, it would be terrible to bring up the nominee in the middle of this particular Presidential election.

Let me just conclude by saying I love this body and I love my colleagues. I just hope we can open the door to understanding each side a little bit better than we do.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the recent bad behavior of Iran and some important steps that have been taken by the administration to push back on their support for terrorism, for illegal actions, and for their support for disorder in the Middle East but to also sound the alarm that this series of steady actions continues to raise the specter that Iran has an expanding reach in the region and poses a greater and greater threat to our allies and, in particular, our vital ally, Israel.

Just over a year ago, leading world powers came together in support of a framework for blocking Iran's path to developing a nuclear weapon. That framework ultimately became the JCPOA, or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. In the months since that agreement took effect, Iran has taken steps to significantly restrain its nuclear program. That is true. They filled with concrete the core of their reactor at Arak. They shipped out of the country 98 percent of their accumulated stockpile of enriched uranium, and they have allowed searching inspections by the IAEA. Those are all good steps. Yet the Iran regime continues to engage in dangerous actions outside the nuclear agreement, including ongoing human rights abuses, support for terrorism in the Middle East, and its repeated illegal ballistic missile tests. All of those are ongoing reminders to us that America's security and the security of our allies demand constant vigilance and close scrutiny of Iran's actions.

Since last September, I have regularly called upon my congressional colleagues, the Obama administration, and our European allies to be wary of Iran's intentions and to continue to seek ways to effectively push back on its bad behavior.

The international community and the United States possess three major nonmilitary tools to lawfully counter Iran's continued bad behavior: financial sanctions, criminal charges, and weapons seizures. So let me first offer a number of examples of how each of these tools have recently been put to work.

First, financial sanctions. On March 24, the Treasury Department imposed new sanction designations on a number of entities and individuals who have supported Iran's ballistic missile program and on an Iranian airline, Mahan Air, which provides support services—transportation—to the Quds Force, an elite Iranian military corps designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. Treasury Department.

On this floor in early March, I called for the United States and our European allies to further punish Mahan Air by eliminating the airline's access to international markets and airports. Since then, the Treasury Department has taken action against two companies, one based in the United Kingdom, another in the United Arab Emirates, that have provided financial and materiel support to Mahan Air.

I commend the Obama administration for effectively deploying another tool in our diplomatic toolkit—criminal charges. On March 21, the Justice Department unsealed charges against three individuals who allegedly acted on behalf of the Iranian Government and associated entities to engage in hundreds of millions of dollars of transactions barred by U.S. sanctions. These three Iranian individuals stand accused of illegally laundering the proceeds of these transactions and defrauding the banks to which the transactions were processed.

Two days later, on March 23, a consultant to Iran's mission to the United Nations was also charged with violating U.S. law. The seven charges levied against this individual include conspiracy to evade U.S. sanctions against Iran, money laundering, and arranging false tax returns.

Then the following day, March 24, the Justice Department unsealed an indictment of seven Iranian ''experienced computer hackers'' who led a coordinated campaign of cyber attacks from 2011 to 2013 that targeted 46 U.S. banks and a dam in Upstate New York in Rye. Unsurprisingly, the seven individuals charged have been linked to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, the IRGC, the hardline conservative military force committed to the preservation of the radical revolutionary Iranian regime.

Just yesterday, the Justice Department announced that the United States negotiated the extradition from Indonesia of a Singaporean man conspiring to send U.S. equipment to Iran—equipment later found in unexploded roadside bombs in Iraq.

These various criminal charges demonstrate to Iran and the world that responsible members of the international community seek to resolve disputes through international norms and institutions or accepted ways of conduct, not provocative missile tests and ongoing violations of sanctions.

In addition, the fact that each of these indictments occurred after the implementation of the nuclear deal—while Iran did fulfill the letter of its commitments under the agreement—these ongoing violations demonstrate that the United States can continue to counter Iran's bad behavior and regional aggression without undermining the ongoing implementation and enforcement of the JCPOA.

That brings us to the third tool in our arsenal: weapons seizures. On Monday, the U.S. Navy announced that the previous week, the USS *Sirocco* and USS *Gravely* intercepted a vessel in the Arabian Sea that contained an illicit Iranian arms shipment to the Houthi rebels in Yemen. After boarding the ship, American sailors confiscated 1,500 AK–47s, 200 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and 21 .50-caliber machine guns, including the various weapons pictured in this photograph I have in the Chamber. This marks the third successful interdiction of illicit arms in the Arabian Sea since late February. On March 20, a French Naval destroyer seized nearly 2,000 AK–47s, 64 sniper rifles, nine anti-tank missiles, and much more. That followed an interdiction a month earlier, on February 27, in which an Australian naval crew intercepted another shipment off the coast of Oman that contained 1,900 AK–47s, 100 grenade launchers, 49 machine guns, and other illicit arms, headed to Yemen by way of Somalia. All of these interdictions were done with coordination and support of the United States.

These interdictions are not just military exercises. They prevent weapons from falling into the hands of dangerous terrorists or Houthi rebels. Just as importantly, these actions send a strong signal to Iran that the international community continues to refuse to tolerate Iran's destabilizing actions and its support for terrorism.

The picture to my right shows an Australian vessel, the crew from the HMAS *Darwin*, part of a U.S.-led, multinational coalition intercepting and boarding a dhow that held a shipment of illicit arms, likely intended for the Houthi rebels of Yemen. The conflict in Yemen pits the Yemeni government stacked by a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia against the Houthis, a group allied with a former President and the radical Iranian regime.

Iran's support for the Houthis has devastated Yemen and the Yemeni people. Over a year of fighting has led to more than 6,000 deaths, including thousands of civilians, and more than 30,000 injuries. The human suffering has been dramatic. According to the World Health Organization, more than 21 million people—more than 80 percent of

Yemen's population—today require humanitarian aid. Instead of aid, Iran sends weapons. These are not the actions of a responsible member of the international community. These are not the actions of a government the U.S. can trust. As the United Arab Emirates' Ambassador to the United States, Yousef Al Otabia, recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal, ''The international community must intensify its actions to check Iran's strategic ambitions.''

While I am pleased at recent actions by the U.S. Navy and our key allies from Europe and around the world in the region off the Arabian Sea, I think there is more that we can and should do. That is why in the months to come, instead of talking about giving Iranians access to U.S. dollar transactions, I think the U.S. should lead coordinated international efforts to enforce existing sanctions and seize the illicit arms shipments through which Iran continues to fan violence, terror, and instability—not just in Yemen, but in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and the broader Middle East.

The imposition of further sanctions, the levying of criminal charges, and the successful interdiction of weapons all show that the international community has an array of tools to push back against Iran. But just having the tools is not enough. We must continue to take action, and when multilateral mechanisms fail, Congress should work on a bipartisan basis to see what new tools or authorities we can give the administration to further crack down on Iran unilaterally.

Lest we need another reminder that Iran remains unwilling to meet the obligations required of a responsible member of the international community, on March 30, their Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei claimed that ballistic missiles are central to Iran's future—despite Iran's commitments under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231.

The Obama administration should continue to designate bad actors for sanctions, pursue criminal charges where appropriate, and seek accountability for Iran's ballistic missile tests in the U.N. Security Council.

We must continue to work hand-in-hand with our international partners to interdict arms shipments to Hezbollah, to the Houthis in Yemen, and to the murderous Assad regime in Syria. We must not accommodate Iran in any way, given its continued ballistic missile launches, its repeated human rights abuses, and its continued support for terrorism.

I remain concerned about the message sent by rumors of allowing offshore financial institutions to access U.S. dollars for foreign currency trades in support of so-called legitimate business with Iran. We must keep in mind that both our words and our deeds send a strong signal to Iran, to our European allies, and our vital ally, Israel.

In the months and years to come, we must make clear to Iran not just that we will not waiver in enforcing the terms of the JCPOA, but also that our commitment to a successful nuclear agreement will not prevent us from taking action when Iran's bad behavior warrants it.

With that, I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk a little about the Court and the vacancy on the Court.

First of all, I want to express my shared concern with my good friend from Delaware about what is happening in Iran and how we are reacting to what is happening in Iran and how much we need to be focused on that country, still understood to be the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism in the world and designated by the current administration and current security agencies that it is bad. I am pleased to see that topic is one of the things we are talking about today.

FILLING OF THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, the Supreme Court has gotten a lot of attention since the unfortunate loss of Justice Scalia. When I was home a few days ago, in at least one meeting when this question came up, somebody said: Well, the Constitution says that the President is supposed to nominate somebody and the Senate is supposed to have hearings.

Well, I am not a lawyer. I have been a history teacher, and some days that is better than being a lawyer. In fact, I have argued that most days it might be better than being a lawyer. But when that came up, I said that is not what the Constitution says at all. It is easy to talk about what the Constitution says, but that is not what the Constitution says. The Constitution says the President will nominate someone to serve on the Court, and the Senate will give its advice and consent. This is a 50–50 obligation, a two-part puzzle that has to come together before this happens.

Understand that the people at the Constitutional Convention thought about doing it differently than that. They thought about doing it so that the President would nominate, and if no one in the Senate objected or the majority of the Senate didn't object, then the nominee would just serve. They decided not to do that. What they decided to do was to have both things happen in order for someone to serve.

Early on, it was clear that there were no hearings about who would be on the Court. There was no Judiciary Committee, and there were no hearings to be held. As a rule, either someone was confirmed or often, when they weren't confirmed, the Senate just didn't deal with the nomination because their part of the necessary things that had to come together wasn't ready to come together.

What the Senate has to decide when there is a nomination to the Supreme Court is this: Is this the right time for this vacancy to be filled, and then is this the right person?

In election years, the Senate for most of the history of the country has decided it wasn't the right time. The last time a vacancy was filled in an election year was March of 1988, but that was a vacancy that occurred in the middle of 1987. Then the Senate, with President Reagan, went through hearings for Judge Bork, and they looked at Judge Ginsburg—not the Justice Ginsburg that is currently on the Court, but another Judge Ginsburg—and, eventually, 9 months or so later, Justice Kennedy was put on the Court. That wasn't a vacancy that occurred in an election year. It took 9 months to fill a vacancy that occurred in the year before the election year.

The job of the Senate has always been to decide if this was the right time to do it. The last time a vacancy that was created in an election year was filled was 1932. The last time a vacancy was filled in a previous election year when the House, Senate, and Presidency were of different parties was 1888. In 1968, President Johnson tried to move Abe Fortas from Justice on the Supreme Court to the Chief Justice, and Democrats in control of the Senate would not let the President fill that vacancy in an election year.

The idea that there is anything extraordinary going on here—the case has been made over and over again by our friends on the other side and even by the Vice President himself that filling a vacancy in an election year is just something the Senate should be very thoughtful about. If you follow what Vice President BIDEN said or what Senator SCHUMER said or what Senator REID said, what they were saying is: Don't fill a vacancy in a Presidential election year. They were right.

They were right because we are now 7 months from the Presidential election. One of the things people ought to be thinking about is what happens when whoever is elected President puts someone on the Supreme Court for life. This is an appointment that if the person determines that they are going to serve for the entire rest of their life, they can.

Justice Scalia, whose death created this vacancy, was put on the Court by Ronald Reagan and served more than a quarter of a century after Ronald Reagan left the Presidency. He was put on the court by Ronald Reagan and served more than 12 years after Ronald Reagan died. This is a long shadow or a long ray of sunlight, however you want to look at it, that goes out way beyond the life of this President.

You can make the argument that, well, we had a Presidential election already, and why couldn't that election that was held in 2012—why wouldn't that determine—why wouldn't that be good enough? Well, No. 1, it was held in 2012, and following the election that was held in 2014, the American people sent a Republican Senate. The most recent election of those two parts it takes to fill this vacancy produced a Republican Senate that is at least 50 percent of this determination of who goes on the Court. We can wait.

It is not unusual in the history of the country for the Court to have an even number. In fact, the first Court had six people. Is there anything in the Constitution about the size of the Court? No. The Constitution creates a Supreme Court and other courts as the Congress determines necessary.

Originally, there were six Justices on the Court, mostly because that is how many circuits the original Congress thought were needed. Those Supreme Court Justices each served as a circuit judge in the six circuits in the country. So you actually had something we don't see now, where a Supreme Court Justice would sit on an appeals case of a case where that same person had been the original circuit judge, the lower appeal before the Court.

There was no thought that the Court was going to be a legislative body, no idea that you would have to worry about a tie-breaker because these six people were supposed to figure out what the Constitution and the law said and reach the conclusion that six good lawyers would reach. Very often, in the next 100 years, the Court had an even number. It had a changing number that changed with some frequency, but it wasn't seen that the Court couldn't function if somehow there were fewer than nine Justices. In fact, there have been at least 15 times since World War II when there were eight Justices. The longest Court that had 8 Justices was 13 months. When Justice Fortas resigned in May of 1969, the Democrats in the Senate didn't fill that vacancy until June of 1970—13 months, 8 Justices. No one has come forward talking about what great devastation was done to the country while we were waiting to get the right person for the country—at least what the Senate at the time thought was the right person for the country to serve for the rest of their working lifetime, which has generally been the standard.

When Justices are split, they always have the opportunity to just defer to the lower court and say: Well, there is an appeals court decision here. We can't decide it better than the appeals court did, so that becomes the decision.

They also can say: This is complicated enough. You might have differing views of two different courts of appeals. We need to rehear this at a later date.

That also would not be unusual.

While only one time in the 20th century have we had a vacancy of over 300 days, there have been 10 times when the Court had vacancies above 200 days, 300 days in the life of the Court. Of the 36 people who have been nominated to the Court who didn't get on the Court under the Congress they were nominated, 25 of them didn't have a vote.

We are not plowing any new ground. We are not coming up with any new legal philosophy. In fact, we are looking at what the Senate is supposed to do.

I think the President of the United States has done exactly what he should do. There is a vacancy, and the President's job is to nominate somebody to fill that vacancy, but often that nominee has not been put on the Court or not been put on the Court by that Congress at that time.

I can speculate that the only good reason for that—certainly in recent years—has been the argument that people need to have a voice in this decision. This is a decision that in all likelihood will outlast the next Presidency. Even if the next Presidency is a two-term Presidency, the person who goes on the Court—more likely than not—will serve beyond the time that this President is elected.

When John Tyler was President, he nominated nine people. He made nine nominations of people who didn't get on the Court. By the time he left the Presidency, I think there were multiple vacancies on the Court because the Senate was not prepared to confirm the people he nominated. Probably their excuse at the time was he was the first Vice President to become President, so maybe they wondered, well, maybe this is not someone who gets the deference of a President, and Presidents in their last year have never received much deference.

This is a lifetime appointment. These are important cases. As an example, just look at the cases that are before the Court now. There is a case on appeal from a Texas Circuit Court where the President—as many of us said at the time, the Court says the President's amnesty Executive decision was way beyond the power of the President. If the President wants to change immigration laws, he has to come to the Congress and change the law.

As much as—maybe more—than this President would like to do it, Presidents don't have the authority to change the law by themselves. They can do a lot of things with the law, but the one thing they cannot do is change the law. The Texas Court of Appeals said you can't change the law. The Texas Circuit Court said you can't change the law, and we will see what the Supreme Court says about that. If they are tied, unless they decide to rehear it, the result will be they cannot change the law. Executive amnesty doesn't work, and you are not going to be allowed to make it work.

The administration is suing a number of religious entities. One is the Little Sisters of the Poor. The lawsuit is that they are trying to force those entities—Little Sisters of the Poor is an example—to have health insurance coverage that violates their faith principles. As I understand it, the purpose of the Little Sisters of the Poor, the order of the Little Sisters of the Poor, is something such as this: We are here to serve elderly people without means, no matter what their faith is, as if they were Jesus Christ. It doesn't sound like a bad thing for somebody to be willing to do, a Christian organization to serve elderly people without means no matter what their faith is—as if they came to the door and they were Jesus Christ. That is what their order says.

Would the United States of America be irreparably harmed if the government allowed the Little Sisters of the Poor to have health insurance that met with their faith principles? I don't think so.

Would the country be harmed in a significant way if we decide it is the overwhelming purpose of the government to make you do things for no particular reason at all that violates your faith principles? The first freedom in the First Amendment is freedom of religion. I don't think that is by accident. Those are the kinds of cases the Court decides.

In a regulatory case that they just heard a few days ago, the argument appeared to be with a company in Minnesota that grows peat moss. The EPA is saying we have the authority to regulate navigable waters, and so we are going to get involved in your peat moss farm, because even though it is 120 miles from any navigable waters, the water from your peat moss farm could run into other water that could run into other water that 120 miles away would run into navigable waters. Look right here in the Clean Air Act. It says we have the ability to regulate navigable waters.

No reasonable person would believe that is what ''navigable waters'' means, but that is the kind of thing we ask the Supreme Court to do. It is not just what the Court will do in the next 7 months. Even if somehow a nominee began the process right now, I think the average has been about 54 days. That is the 9 months it took to get to Judge Kennedy and less than that it took to get to somebody else. By the time you are through the 54 days, you are through most of the arguing period for this Court anyway, and you are not supposed to participate in the decision if you didn't hear the argument.

This is a lifetime appointment to the Court. This is an appointment that has to be nominated by the President and approved by the Senate. They both have to agree, before it is over, that

this is the right person at the right time.

I think the history of these nominations and the common sense of Americans would lead them to believe that the American people deserve to be heard on a decision that has this much impact and lasts this long.

While I am not on the Judiciary Committee, I certainly am supportive of the determination that the chairman and others on this committee have made. There will be time to deal with this lifetime appointment when the American people have had a chance to weigh in one more time 7 months or so from today.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to address the question of the ongoing vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court. I listened with great interest to the remarks of my friend and colleague from the State of Missouri, and I think we have reached a different conclusion about how and when the American people should have their say in the question of the filling of this vacancy.

In my view, vacancies on the Supreme Court of the United States have consequences, and vacancies that go on for a great length of time have even bigger consequences. I don't believe there has been a vacancy that has lasted a year since roughly the time of the Civil War. Although we don't know this today, we don't know how long this vacancy may last.

My concern is that in the absence of a willingness to meet with the President's nominee—to hold hearings and to proceed to a vote—should that position remain firm on the part of my colleagues on the other side, we are likely looking at a year-long vacancy.

I certainly agree with my colleague, my friend from Missouri, that the Supreme Court plays an absolutely central role in our constitutional order. As he recited at length, the cases decided are of great significance. I bring to my colleague's attention that in recent weeks, on March 22 and March 29, the Court handed down tied decisions in two central cases. These four decisions are not just a waste of judicial resources, they fail to provide clarity to the litigants, the American people, and leave lower courts without a controlling precedent.

In the 3 weeks since President Obama did his job under the Constitution and nominated Chief Judge Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy created by the untimely passing of Justice Scalia, we have already seen these consequences of the Senate's refusal to engage proactively in advice and consent and consider this nomination.

Much has been made of what was said on this floor by my predecessor in this seat, the now-Vice President, then-chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, former Senator JOE BIDEN. I just wish to draw my colleague's attention to the entire remarks made by Senator BIDEN. His entire remarks include a section near the end where he said that if the President—there was not then a vacancy on the Supreme Court—would consult with the Senate and moderate in his choice and advance a consensus candidate, that candidate might well be deserving of it, might well win then-Senator BIDEN's support, as had been the case in several other nominations.

I will simply put to my friend and my colleague that President Obama has advanced for our consideration a nomination in Chief Judge Garland who is genuinely qualified and who has a long record in his 19 years on the DC Circuit of rendering decisions that put him right in the center of the American judiciary.

I very much look forward to having the opportunity to meet with him in person tomorrow. I think it is important that all of us give the deference and respect to the President's constitutional role implicit in our being willing to meet with his nominee. Frankly, I have profound questions about whether advice and consent by this body can be given by refusing to hold hearings and refusing to take a vote.

My Republican colleagues, friends, have asserted that the American people should have a voice in the selection of the next Supreme Court Justice, and I agree. I think the best way for the American people to exercise that voice is for this body to do its job, for the Senate Judiciary Committee to conduct full, fair, and open hearings, and to allow Judge Garland to answer searching questions of the sort that many of us are asking him privately, but then we should ask publicly and then have a vote—a vote by the people's representatives in this body.

That is the purpose of this Senate. There has been an election for President, the President has done his job under the Constitution, and we have a nominee. This is a fully constituted Senate—some of us in our last year of service, some in our sixth, and some in our first or second. We can be the appropriate channel of the people's voice following an open hearing, and we should cast a vote. We should not leave this Supreme Court with a vacancy that lasts months and months, maybe as long as a year.

Every term the Supreme Court receives over 7,000 petitions for certiorari. The Supreme Court hears a carefully chosen fraction of those cases, weighing constitutional principles and legal issues that are dividing the circuit courts. It is a sacred duty, a central duty in our constitutional order for the Supreme Court to be rendering important and meaningful decisions. Why would we delay the filling of this vacancy on the Supreme Court a full year? I can't see the value in that position. I understand many of my colleagues have cited precedent, have cited history, and have reached different conclusions than me.

I simply hope the 16 of my Republican colleagues who have expressed a willingness to meet with Judge Garland will continue to grow and that more of my colleagues will meet with him and then consider carefully what the consequences are for our role in advice and consent, not just for this vacancy but for the many more that may follow in the decades to come.

Thank you.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, as my colleagues know, I come to the floor every week or so to share the stories of those victims who have been lost to the epidemic of gun violence that is plaguing this Nation. The news covers the episodes of mass shootings, such as those that happened in my State in Sandy Hook, but, of course, on average there are 80 people who are killed in episodes of gun violence every day. Approximately 50 or so of those are suicides, the remaining 30 are in ones and twos and threes and fours and fives all across the country.

I think the data alone is overwhelming, and I am not sure why the numbers alone have not caused us to act. There are a variety of ways that we could step up and act. We could do something about illegal guns on the street, we could fix our broken mental health care system, and we could give law enforcement more power so they could track illegal guns and criminals. But we don't do any of that. We remain silent and complicit even with this rash of murder.

The data hasn't moved this Congress, and so my hope is that the stories of those who have been lost and the families they have left behind might move this place to action. So today I will focus on those victims of gun homicides who were at the hands of their domestic partner. Of those 30 or so people who are killed by guns that are not suicides, an alarming percentage of them every single day are killed by someone they know—a husband or a spouse or a boyfriend. It is usually someone who is very close to them. They often leave notes. Oftentimes they have notified the police that they were in danger, but somehow that

loved one still managed to find a way to get their hands on a firearm and to commit the heinous act of murder.

On February 27 of this year in Woodbridge, VA, which is only a short drive away from where we sit today, Crystal Hamilton was killed. Crystal's friends described her as kind, humble, and energetic—a wonderful person. She actually spent her time working with wounded soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq.

One of her friends said:

She was so beautiful. She dressed to the nines and loved her high heels. She didn't need any makeup.

She had an 11-year-old son who is now left without a mother. She was supposed to be going out one Saturday night for a girls' night with a group of her friends, but after arguing all day with her husband, she finally called 9-1-1. She was really upset and feeling gravely in danger, and it is believed that at some point between when she called 9-1-1 and when the police arrived, her husband fatally shot her.

A neighbor said that she saw the 11-year-old running away and looking back at the house as he ran down the street. She said:

He ran so fast I can't even imagine how scared he must have been. It broke my heart.

About a month later, on March 29—just about 2 weeks ago—Ruby Stiglmeier was shot and killed in what was believed to have been a murder-suicide by her boyfriend. Ruby was a dental hygienist in a small firm in Orchard Park, NY. She worked there for 20 years. Her coworkers said that her patients absolutely loved Ruby. Ruby was friendly, outgoing, athletic, and loved life. Her coworkers said that Ruby had been a rock for her family after the recent deaths of both of her parents. Her boyfriend shot her three times before turning the gun on himself. They had been dating on and off for about 2 years.

Just last week, Christina Fisher, 34 years old, was killed in Leesburg, VA. She was the proud mother of three young children, a teenage daughter and two young boys. She was shot multiple times and killed inside her home on Saturday evening, April 2, by her ex-boyfriend during a domestic dispute. Her 15-year-old daughter was home at the time of the altercation and promptly called 9-1-1, but by the time she got to the hospital, it was too late.

Her friends remembered Christina much in the same way as the previous victims. They said:

[Christina] was so sweet, so caring . . . she was a great mom. She did everything she could for her kids.

Christina leaves behind her teenage daughter and two young boys.

This is just a sample of three people in the last 3 months who have been killed in episodes of gun homicides by their boyfriend, domestic partner, or husband. We should just know that there is something happening in the United States that isn't happening anywhere else in the world. As a woman, you are about 10 times more likely to die in an episode of domestic violence by your husband or boyfriend than you are in any other OECD country. It is hard not to read the difference as anything other than a difference in gun laws—a difference in the number of guns that are available to people who would decide to murder their spouse. Why? Because there is no evidence that men are less violent in any of these other countries. There is no evidence that these countries spend any more money on mental health. In fact, the United States, on average, likely spends more. But there is nothing different about the United States other than the number of guns that we have and the relatively loose gun laws that create this tragic outlier status.

The data on a State-by-State basis backs up the idea that there is something about our gun laws that tells us the story of women being in danger and being killed by their spouse. What we know is that in States that do require a background check for every handgun that is sold, there are 38 percent fewer women who are shot to death by an intimate partner. We can't get around that fact. In States that are universal in their application of background checks, there are 38 percent fewer women shot by their intimate partner. You can't argue about that. There are States that are universal in their applicability of background checks and there are States that are not. The data on women murdered by their husbands with guns is publicly available. It is not a 5, 10, 20, or 25 percent difference. It is a 38-percent difference.

Women's lives could be saved if we required people to go through background checks. Why is that? Well, because there have been 250,000 gun sales that have been blocked to domestic abusers since the National Instant Criminal Background Check System was started. These are people who were convicted of domestic abuse crimes and known to be domestic abusers, walked into a gun store, tried to buy a gun, and were stopped from doing so because of the Federal law.

Now, that is just the number of people who walked into the store and had the audacity to try to buy a gun even though they knew they had been convicted of domestic abuse. Again, that number is 250,000. Obviously there are 10 times that number who never walked into the gun dealership because they knew they weren't going to be able to buy the weapon. So guess where they went. They went online or to gun shows. In 2012 alone it is estimated that 6.6 million guns were exchanged in private transfers without a criminal background check. In just 1 year alone, over 6 million guns were transferred without the purchaser having to prove that they weren't a domestic abuser or that they hadn't committed murder in the past with a weapon. It is easy to buy guns at gun shows or online, and so that is why 90 percent of Americans believe that we should have universal background checks—because it works and because increasingly people who want to buy guns and use them for malevolent purposes are able to do so outside of the criminal background check system.

The numbers are not small, and 38 percent fewer women die in States that do universal background checks. The States that have decided to fill the loophole that we, as a Congress, have created have 38 percent fewer women die from gunshot wounds. We have blood on our hands because if we just got together and closed that loophole, the data tells us there would be fewer deaths.

Let me close by suggesting a couple of other ways that we could try to address this epidemic of domestic abuse and gun homicide perpetuated by intimate partners. Let me first do so by telling the story of Lori Jackson, who was 32 years old when she died in 2014 in Oxford, CT.

Lori and her husband Scott had a long and difficult history together. All of her friends knew about the difficulty that the two of them were having. It finally caused Lori to go and submit an application for a temporary restraining order. Scott had become that violent. In the application she wrote:

Scott yelled in my face . . . and got very angry. I felt threatened and told him I didn't feel safe and was going to leave with the twins.

She had 18-month-old twins.

She said:

He then told me I wasn't going anywhere and grabbed my right thumb and twisted my wrist.

That happened while the two children were in her arms.

She said:

He acts out violently and I am afraid for my kids and myself.

Judge Robert Malone ordered Scott to stay away from his wife and the two 18-month-old twins. But because there is a loophole in the law that allows you to buy and own guns while you have a temporary restraining order—not when you have a permanent restraining order—one day before that temporary restraining order was going to become permanent, Scott shot Lori Jackson Gellatly four times in the head and torso with a .38-caliber handgun. So today her two little twins have no mother, their father is in jail, and the twins will grow up only hearing stories about her. Why? Because we can't pass a bill that says when you have a temporary restraining order against you, you shouldn't be able to buy a gun. During that moment of terror for the domestic spouse, the police should be

able to go in and see if you have weapons that you might use in that immediate moment of anger. We could come together on that. We could come together on simply saying that while you have a temporary restraining order, you can't buy guns. You are on the list of prohibited purchasers during a restraining order period of time. If we had done that prior to 2014, Lori Jackson might be alive today.

Let's take the case of Jennifer Magnano. She was killed in Terryville, CT, in 2007. She was in the process of trying to end her marriage to her husband Scott, who was a controlling and abusive husband. Scott and Jennifer had two children, and Jennifer had an older daughter who had been sexually abused by Scott for about 3 years.

On April 14, 2007, while he was taking a shower, she finally escaped. After the end of their time together, Scott became so angry that he came back to their house and murdered her. She was always posting inspirational sayings on to Web sites. She was a really positive person, but that couldn't stop her husband from murdering her.

Now, Scott had a protective order that was permanent. So he was actually prohibited from purchasing a weapon, but he walked into a gun store and asked to see two handguns. He was handed weapons and the ammunition for each of them, and despite being the only customer in the store, he was left alone. He saw an opportunity, and so he walked out of the store with the handguns and the ammunition and went straight to kill his wife. Now, the store didn't report the stolen weapons for 3 days. By that time, it was too late. Had they monitored the weapons so they couldn't have been taken out of the store or reported the stolen weapons, it is possible Jennifer might be still alive today.

Well, the administrator of Jennifer's estate filed a lawsuit against the retailer bringing claims regarding their inability to secure the weapons and their complete inability to notify local law enforcement that somebody, who they themselves said looked like a suspicious customer, stole weapons from the store. The judge dismissed that lawsuit, saying a statute Congress passed giving gunmakers and dealers virtual immunity for their actions ''goes directly to the heart of the jurisdiction here.'' Congress was clear these cases must be dismissed. Congress has granted gunmakers and gun dealers almost complete immunity from lawsuits that would hold them liable for irresponsibly selling weapons or irresponsibly making unsafe weapons.

The fact is, the gun industry is held to a standard that no other product maker is held to. They are granted an immunity that is carved out from the broader products liability law. In fact, the maker of a toy gun is held to a higher standard of liability than a maker of a real gun. This Congress passed that statute simply because the gun industry asked for it and because they knew they were liable for making guns that were intentionally unsafe because they knew there were dealers that were conducting their activities in an irresponsible manner.

So for the Magnano family, they don't even get to bring their case to court. They don't even get to litigate this claim simply because Congress has given a level of immunity to the gun industry that they give to no other industry. If we were to repeal that law, it would be another way to address this epidemic of gun violence that plagues this country and specifically women who have the great misfortune of being the subject of domestic abuse.

I am going to continue to come down to the floor and tell these stories. I hope there are ways we can come together. I understand we might not be able to pass a background checks amendment between now and the end of the year, but we could close that domestic violence loophole. We could put more resources into the mental health system. We could give more resources to law enforcement. There has to be an answer to the thousands of women who are being killed all across this country by domestic abusers and 80 individuals a day who are being killed by guns all across the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to be on the Senate floor as we begin the debate and discussion of legislation that I think is critical to certainly my home State of Kansas and important and valuable to the rest of the Nation as well. Kansas is known as an aviation State. Wichita, KS, is known as the air capital of the world, and one would expect a Senator from Kansas to be especially supportive of things that improve the opportunity for aviation, and that is certainly true.

We care about the jobs that are in our State as a result of general aviation manufacturing, as a result of aviation manufacturing for large commercial airlines, and it matters. The FAA is an important component of the environment in our State as a driver of our State's economy, but I also point out that I am a strong supporter of general aviation and reauthorization of the FAA as a result of representing a very rural State. Kansas is made up of a number of larger communities, but small cities and towns dot our State. Those local airports and the ability to connect with those communities as a result of general aviation—the ability to fly to visit somebody but perhaps more importantly the ability for a business to be in a community, a small rural community—exist in part because of those general aviation airports and those planes and pilots. So in communities across our State, we are able to have manufacturing and service industries that probably otherwise, in the absence of an airport and aviation, would have to be located in larger cities in Kansas or elsewhere.

GA and FAA reauthorization is important to every Kansan, regardless of whether they are a factory line worker or engineer in Wichita and South Central Kansas or whether they are a hospital, a manufacturing business, or a service located in a small community in our State.

I am pleased the Senate is beginning to do its work on the FAA reauthorization. I serve on the Committee on Commerce responsible for this product, and I am pleased the chairman and ranking member have worked closely together to get us to this point today in a bill that I hope—I assume subject to some amendments—I hope this bill then passes with strong support across both sides of the aisle.

This FAA Reauthorization Act of 2016 will strengthen the industry by improving the FAA's process for certifying aircraft. Again, in that manufacturing sector in our State, one of the things that would be of great value is to have a process by which an improvement, a development, the manufacturing process, the product we manufacture is more readily and more quickly, more efficiently certified by the Federal Aviation Administration, making certain that those certifications allow those airplane manufacturers to compete in the global marketplace.

This bill also addresses the Pilot's Bill of Rights. I see I have been joined on the Senate floor by the Senator from Oklahoma, the champion of this issue. We are pleased it is in this bill, and it reforms, among other things, the third-class medical certificate process for general aviation pilots—something that has been long overdue and something the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE, has championed and continues to champion. Just this week, he called me asking for assistance as we make certain that this bill advances and the House approves language that is included in this bill.

Another essential piece of this bill text, S. 2549, is the TSA Fairness Act. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation that was originally introduced by Senator MERKLEY and Senator BARRASSO. The language provides protection for some of our small airports that have commercial air service. Generally, it is

possible that air service is there, that small commercial airline flight is there because of the Essential Air Service Program, but in order for Essential Air Service to work and to meet the needs of a community and the traveling public, we need to make certain the TSA, the Transportation Security Administration, provides the necessary screeners and screening equipment that you would find in a larger airport.

We want to make certain our rural communities that have commercial service—often flying to Denver International Airport—are screened before they enter the plane to fly to DIA, and this legislation includes language that would enhance that circumstance.

I am also encouraged by the efforts in this bill to address the rapidly evolving circumstance we face with unmanned aerial vehicles. That industry is moving forward, again another Kansas industry that matters greatly. This legislation moves the ball forward for an environment where businesses, universities, and countless others can tap into the potential and the vast economic benefits of UASs, while maintaining high safety standards we would expect in the aviation world.

I know my colleagues remember—I remember well—the 23 short-term FAA reauthorizations that have occurred leading up to the 2012 FAA reauthorization bill. It is hugely detrimental to our aviation system to have to tolerate, to have to figure out how to abide by these short-term extensions that eliminate the opportunity for long-term planning and create great uncertainty. I am pleased we are headed down the path of a longer term, more permanent FAA Reauthorization Act represented by this legislation, this act of 2016.

I would ask my colleagues to work, all of us together, to make sure the end product is something we can be proud of. We certainly start in a position in which that is the case.

Again, I commend Mr. THUNE, the Senator from South Dakota, for his leadership and working with the Senator from Florida, Mr. NELSON, getting us to this point today. This is an important piece of legislation for our country, its economy, and our citizens, and matters greatly to the folks back in Kansas.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to the Senator from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first of all, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized as in morning business to use as much time as I shall consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I want to comment that I have dramatically shortened my presentation, as I was crossing off things from my list that have already been more eloquently expressed by my friend from Kansas, and I think it shows. He brought out a point I think is significant; that the first of the year we were able to pass the highway bill, which is a major piece of legislation. It is the first time since 1998 we were able to get that reauthorization bill, and it was because of the interim period of time we had the short-term fixes that the Senator from Kansas was talking about. Those are expensive, and you can't do major overhauls, improvements, and modernization unless you have an authorization bill, and this covers a lot of areas.

I want to repeat one thing the Senator from Kansas stated, and that is in reference to Senators THUNE and NELSON. Any time you—and I would say this to all of the members of the Commerce Committee—any time you get a major piece of legislation that covers a lot of stuff, there is always a lot of confusion and some opposition, although not as much opposition to this as we had anticipated would be taking place.

So there are areas I want to visit that I have a special interest in. One is the certification process for general aviation pilots. I know this was mentioned by Senator MORAN, but this is something that is very significant. I want to cover it in perhaps a little bit more detail, along with the other areas and an amendment we have. I am getting a lot of Democratic support on my amendment, amending the use of drones, the allowable use of drones.

First of all, on the Pilot's Bill of Rights, I refresh everyone's memory that the first Pilot's Bill of Rights was something we passed in 2012. It was one that for the first time took care of a problem that had been out there. The only group of people in America who did not have the opportunity of the protections, the legal protections in our jurisprudence system, was general aviation pilots and other pilots because it allowed the FAA to come in and make all kinds of accusations without giving people the benefit of the evidence that was being used against them. We passed a good bill called the Pilot's Bill of Rights.

Last year, in Oshkosh—Oshkosh is the largest general aviation event of the year. It is one that involves hundreds of thousands of people and actually thousands of aircraft on the field. I say to the Presiding Officer, I can remember this was the 37th annual convention that I have attended and flown in, in the last 37 years, so I am very familiar with this. Of course, when I got there, they were interested in the successes that were in the Pilot's Bill of Rights, but there are some things that weren't in there that should have been in there. So we had a session with people—I mean, there are people from all 50 States and countries around the world, and so one of the areas of concern has been about the medical certification process. It is called a third-class medical. A third-class medical is something that goes into a lot of things that are not necessary and sometimes deter the safety factor that is built into medical certification. So we reformed that system.

By the way, I have to say that we have already passed this bill in the Senate. The last thing we did before breaking for Christmas, 10 minutes before we recessed, was to pass a free-standing bill that is worded exactly the same way that is in this bill. This is a backup. Since that got bogged down in the House for a period of time, we thought we would put this in here just to make sure that one way or another this does become a reality. It is singularly the greatest concern for large organizations, including the Experimental Aircraft Association and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the AOPA.

We put a system in there that provides—first of all, the pilots will still have to do some of the elements of what was considered to be a third-class medical. A third-class medical—10 years ago we repealed that, or reformed it, for pilots of very small aircraft, the light aircraft. In fact, there hasn't been one injury or death in the last 10 years that could be related to anything, any change that was made in that system. So this just allows the other pilots to have the same benefits the pilots did in the small aircraft.

Pilots still have to complete an online medical education course. Pilots are going to have to maintain verification that they have seen a doctor concerning anything that might impair their ability to safely fly an airplane. Pilots have to complete a comprehensive medical review initially by the FAA. So those safeguards are built in.

The Pilot's Bill of Rights 2 increases its due process protections established for pilots in the original Pilot's Bill of Rights. The original Pilot's Bill of Rights—since I have been active in aviation for over 60 years, it was only natural that when problems came up, people would contact me as opposed to their own Senators, in many cases. I was concerned and always tried to help people. But until those abuses occurred to me, and I realized all of a sudden that I was at risk of losing a pilot certificate and didn't have the means to defend myself—that is when this whole effort started.

Well, this was carried out in the reforms that we intended to put in the first bill that were not really strong enough to get the FAA to comply with, which we have in this bill. One of those is called NOTAMs, Notices to Airmen.

By the way, when I talk about this, this doesn't mean a lot to a lot of other people, but there are 590,000 single-issue general aviation pilots in America to whom it means a lot. So these guys are all very much concerned

about it, and they are all anxious for this to become a reality.

A Notice to Airmen is something that is required and has been required for a long period of time so that people will know—if you are going to make a flight from airport A to airport B, if there is any problem at that airport where you are going to land in terms of work on the runway or in terms of lights being out or new towers being erected or something like that, they have NOTAMs, which are Notices to Airmen. So this is going to carry into reality the reform that we intended to do in 2012.

It also ensures that pilots are going to have access to the flight data, such as air traffic communication tapes and that type of thing. So it is good. I know it doesn't mean a lot to a lot of other people, but it sure does to 509,000 people.

The contract towers—this is a major program. It is kind of interesting. We established a program of contract towers intended to reach areas that didn't really have the unique, normal necessity of information and assistance that we would have in normal towers, and the towers do a great job. And I am now talking about the regular towers, but the contract towers have also done a good job.

In 2013 the Obama administration targeted our Nation's air traffic control towers as an unnecessary mechanism to make the public feel the pain of nondefense budget cuts. Well, that was back during sequestration time, and at that time they were going to close all of the contract towers. They were saying that these towers don't—one of the arguments they used is that they don't have the traffic that many other towers have. Well, I suggest to my colleagues that in my State of Oklahoma, we have a number of great universities and colleges, and the two largest are Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma University. They are located in Stillwater, OK, and Norman, OK. I can tell my colleagues right now that if they had been successful in closing down those two contract towers, on football days, when we have literally hundreds of airplanes coming in, all converging at about the same time, it would have been a life-threatening event. We now have been able to maintain those contract towers in a cost-sharing program that has been very successful in the past, and that is in this bill also.

Aircraft certification is an issue some of us are very concerned about. The Oklahoma aerospace industry is a vital and growing component of the State's economy. It is responsible for billions of dollars of economic output and employs thousands of people. The aerospace industry in Oklahoma includes commercial, military, and general aviation manufacturing, testing and maintenance activities, as well as a vibrant and cutting-edge culture of research and development that is located in my State of Oklahoma. Both of our major universities are an important part of this.

With this in mind, I applaud the bill's inclusion of reforms to the FAA's process for certifying general aviation aircraft and aviation products such as engines and avionics, removing government redtape that is so prevalent that we are all so sensitive to and aware of.

The bill also ensures that the FAA maintains strong engagement with industry stakeholders, so the FAA's safety oversight and certification process includes performance-based objectives and tracks performance-based metrics. This is key to eliminating bureaucratic delays and having increased accountability between the FAA and the aviation community for type certificate resolution or the installation of safety-enhancing technology on small general aviation aircraft.

Now, I have an amendment. The Senator from Kansas was talking about some of the uses and restrictions and the expansion of the use of the UAVs. We are talking about drones now. Drones sometimes have a bad reputation, and normally it is not well-founded. But there are some areas where there were restrictions in the use of drones, which we are—I have an amendment that will allow drones to be used in areas where it does make sense. I already have several Democratic supporters and cosponsors of this amendment, including Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator HEITKAMP and Senator BOOKER, who are all very enthused about this.

It would direct the FAA to establish rules to allow critical infrastructure owners and operators to use unmanned aircraft systems to carry out federally mandated patrols of an area, and that could be a pipeline or anything else that is currently being patrolled, some by foot and some by aircraft, and this would allow unmanned aircraft to do that same thing. It is a safety thing because some of these patrols have to take place in bad weather and sometimes risk is involved. But if you don't have a person in the airplane—an unmanned plane—then this is an ideal use for it. It does establish a pathway for critical infrastructure operators to use the airspace under the FAA guidelines. It is still under FAA guidelines, but nonetheless it is an opportunity to use it.

Today, critical infrastructure owners and operators are required to comply with significant requirements to monitor facilities and assets, which can stretch thousands of miles. This is something to which I think there should not be any opposition. We haven't had anyone whom I have asked to be a cosponsor deny us so far, and I don't anticipate that we will have a problem.

The amendment is supported by a wide array of stakeholders, including the National Rural Electric Cooperative, the American Public Power Association, Edison Electric Institute, CTIA—The Wireless Association, the American Gas Association, the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, the American Petroleum Institute, and I could go on and on. So far, there is neither organized nor just normal opposition, as one would normally find, so it is very popular. No one that I know of is against it. This is an amendment I will be offering as soon as we start working on amendments. This amendment will make this bill an even better bill.

Again, I applaud all the work that has been done by the members of the Commerce Committee and particularly by the chairman and the ranking member, Senators THUNE and NELSON, in getting this done. We are getting into an area where we are really being productive in this body, and I am very proud to be a part of it.

We need to keep our eyes open on this. I would encourage any Members who have amendments they want to be included in this to come to the floor with their amendments and do what I am doing right now so that we can get in the queue, we can get started and get this done. I don't know when we are anticipating finishing this bill, but I don't see any reason why we can't do it, if everyone gets amendments done, by the end of next week.

With that, I will yield the floor. I think we have several speakers lined up who are going to be here.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an amendment which Senator TOOMEY and I are working on, amendment No. 3458. I will have some remarks about this amendment, as will my colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY.

We know that since 9/11, we have made a good deal of progress on airline security, but we know there are still a number of commonsense steps we can take to bolster security at our airports and on our airplanes. We also know that since 9/11, there have been 15 hijacking attempts around the world, and we know that terrorists still aim to repeat those actions and improve on their deadly tactics. It is also a concern that Federal programs designed to increase aviation security, such as the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program—the acronym being FFDO—to train and arm pilots, continue to experience drastic cuts and reduced budgets.

After 9/11, Congress mandated the installation of reinforced cockpit doors, and the FAA regulations stated that the reinforced cockpit doors should remain locked while closed. However, pilots and flight attendants must open the door frequently for a variety of reasons, all of them reasons we understand, whether it is to use the restroom, get a meal, or rest times for pilots on international flights when they are not in the cockpit. So we know they have to open that door on a regular basis. Simulations have shown that when the door of the cockpit is open, the cockpit can, in fact, be breached and the plane can be hijacked—by one estimate, in less than 4 seconds.

A voluntary airline industry movement toward adopting secondary barriers—meaning a barrier other than the actual cockpit door—began in 2003, but a commitment to deploying these devices has waned significantly since the year 2010.

Senator TOOMEY and I have submitted an amendment that would close a gaping hole in our airline aviation security systems, thus achieving what Congress intended when it mandated installation of the fortress door after 9/11. The amendment we are working on together is named after a Bucks County, PA, resident, Captain Victor Saracini, who piloted United Flight 175 when it was hijacked by terrorists and flown into the World Trade Center. The amendment would require that each new commercial aircraft install a barrier other than the cockpit door to prevent access to the flight deck of an aircraft.

A secondary cockpit barrier is a lightweight wire mesh gate installed between the passenger cabin and the cockpit door that is locked into place and blocks access to the flight deck. While the cockpit doors are currently reinforced, secondary barriers provide significantly more security to airline companies, their employees, the pilots, and, of course, more security for passengers as well.

A 2007 study concluded that the secondary barrier dramatically improves the effectiveness of the other onboard security measures currently in place and also works as a stand-alone security layer and is the most cost-effective, efficient, and safest way to protect the cockpit.

There is no way to fully and completely pay tribute to the extraordinary courage of Captain Saracini and the others who were lost on that tragic day. He gave the full measure of his life—as Lincoln said in another context, the last full measure of devotion to his country. He also, of course, gave the full measure not only for his Nation but for his wife Ellen and his family. Ellen, whom I have come to know, and others have worked tirelessly in the years since to increase airline safety for other pilots, passengers, and the airlines themselves.

I am urging our colleagues in the Senate to adopt this amendment to continue to strengthen and secure our Nation's airspace and to further improve airline safety.

I look forward to hearing Senator TOOMEY's remarks, and I am grateful to be working with him on this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I want to thank Senator CASEY for his great work on this. We have been partnering on getting this accomplished for some time now. This is the opportunity to do it. This is the right legislative vehicle. This is the right bill. This is the FAA reauthorization bill. This is exactly where we ought to be taking a commonsense step toward making commercial aircraft safer. It is as simple as that.

I am hoping that very soon we will adopt the motion to proceed so that we are on the bill. We have already filed this amendment. As soon as we can, we will bring it up so that it is pending, so that we can adopt this amendment.

This passed the House Transportation Committee unanimously. I don't know why it wouldn't have the same outcome here. I want us to get on this bill, I want to offer this amendment, and I want to get on with this because Senator CASEY is exactly right. In the immediate aftermath of that appalling attack on September 11, Congress passed legislation to require that the cabin door be reinforced, become a stronger barrier, and that is exactly what happened. It is a terrific barrier. It is very hard to see how anyone could break down the cabin door and access the cockpit when that door is closed. The problem is that the door is not always closed. As Senator CASEY pointed out, it is necessarily opened from time to time during a flight. This creates the threat. It creates the opportunity for a terrorist who is so inclined to rush that open door. A very well reinforced door is useless when open, but that is the risk.

That isn't just our assessment; the FAA has acknowledged the very serious nature of this threat. Let me quote from their April 2015 advisory. The FAA said:

> On long fights, as a matter of necessity, crewmembers must open the flight deck door to access lavatory facilities, to transfer meals to flightcrew members, or to switch crew positions for crew rest purposes. The opening and closing of the flight deck door (referred to as ''door transition'') reduces the protective anti-intrusion/anti-penetration benefits of the reinforced door. . . . During this door transition, the flight deck is vulnerable.

This is not some theory; this is an objective fact. It is observed by the FAA advisory. The 9/11 Commission also observed that terrorists were very keyed in to the notion that the best time to strike would be when the door was open. That was at a time when the primary door was not as reinforced as it is now. The opening of the door clearly creates the opportunity for terrorists. This threat is real. It persists. There have been attempts to breach cockpits since 9/11. There have been successful attempts, including the successful hijacking of a Turkish Airlines flight in 2006.

We know that the secondary barrier Senator CASEY and I are proposing would be extremely effective. It is low cost, it is lightweight, and it is not intrusive. It is not deployed at all except immediately prior to opening the primary door. This is just a commonsense solution. It will provide a significant upgrade in the safety of these aircraft.

We have an amendment. It has been filed, and as soon as we can, we would like to make this pending. I would urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment. Let's get this adopted. Let's pass the FAA reauthorization bill and get it to the President.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman and ranking member of the Commerce Committee for all their hard work on this FAA reauthorization bill. The Commerce Committee has done very hard work on it. I am especially pleased the committee included a provision that directly affects my home State and the city in which I live, Phoenix, AZ.

Since September of 2014, residents in Arizona around the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport have had their daily lives impacted by changes to flight paths. These changes were made without formal notification to the airport or community engagement before the changes were implemented.

These flight changes in Phoenix were made as part of the Federal Aviation Administration's ongoing implementation of NextGen. I support the aims of NextGen to improve the safety and efficiency of air travel and modernize our Nation's air space. We will all benefit from the improvements that come from NextGen, and this provision is not intended to undermine those efforts or diminish the efficiencies that have already been achieved through NextGen.

However, the experience my constituents have gone through in Arizona demonstrates that improvements need to be made to the process surrounding the implementation of NextGen. The airport and affected community must be part of the process before these changes are made.

It is important that those on the ground—the individuals who have their daily lives impacted the most by this

process—have an opportunity to be heard. Input from local stakeholders is necessary to ensure that community planning and noise mitigation efforts that have been underway for decades are now taken into full account.

The language in this bill would require the FAA to review certain past decisions and take steps to mitigate impacts when flight path changes have a significant impact on affected communities, and that is certainly the case in my home city of Phoenix, AZ.

Importantly, this provision would also require the FAA to notify and consult with those communities before making significant changes to flight paths moving forward, as has happened, which has caused so much difficulty and so many ill effects on the citizens of Phoenix, AZ—indeed, the entire valley.

The FAA has acknowledged the need to improve community outreach and is undertaking efforts to update their community outreach manual, but more needs to be done to guarantee this outreach takes place.

The Senate had previously agreed unanimously to this language as an amendment to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. However, that bill did not advance in the Senate. Also, the FAA reauthorization bill that passed the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee earlier this year also included similar language at the request of myself and my colleague Senator FLAKE.

This legislation is necessary to create a long-awaited, much needed opportunity for residents around Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport negatively impacted by flight noise to have their voices heard by the FAA. It is important that the process surrounding changes to flight paths include the local officials, airport representatives, and residents—most of all, residents—who know the issues best, both around Sky Harbor and in communities across the country.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I also thank my colleague Senator FLAKE for working hard on this reauthorization and this provision that is in this bill. He and I both have been contacted by literally thousands of our fellow citizens and the people we represent in Phoenix, AZ, concerning the noise problems around Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. It didn't have to happen this way. I hope the FAA will go back and meet with the people and hear the complaints, hear their problems, and fix them.

I thank my colleague Senator FLAKE for his hard work on this issue. Again, I appreciate the Commerce Committee and its chairman and ranking member for including this language in this legislation that is so important to our community.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words on this subject, and I thank the senior Senator from Arizona for all the work he has put into this. As he has mentioned, we have heard from thousands of residents in the Phoenix area who have been impacted.

This language is important because in September of 2014, the FAA instituted new flight path changes for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport without adequately engaging the community and the stakeholders. These flight paths, as Senator MCCAIN said, have greatly impacted residents in the surrounding areas. We have heard from them with concerns about both the noise and the frequency of these flights.

Section 5002 of the FAA reauthorization bill would simply approve the FAA's process for instituting new flight paths. The fact that this language is retroactive is especially important because of what we have mentioned. Communities in Phoenix have already been negatively impacted by these recent flight path changes.

This language would create a process to review those changes and to require the FAA to consult with airports and to determine steps to mitigate the negative effects, including the consideration of new or alternative flight paths. Going forward, this language would ensure that communities and airports have the opportunity to fully engage with the FAA before these flight paths changes are made.

Again, I commend Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON for including this critical language. I hope that it is supported. We have support for this amendment.

With that, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

JOHN WAGNER

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to call attention to the significant contributions public servants make to our Nation every day.

Since 2010, I have tried to come to the Senate floor on a fairly regular basis to recognize exemplary Federal employees. This is a tradition started by my friend Senator Ted Kaufman from Delaware when he was here for a few years—somebody who, as much as anybody in this body, having served as a staff member for so long, recognized the enormous value that people who work for our Federal Government provide to our national purpose and to making sure we get things done.

Earlier this week, I met with some of these outstanding public servants. Convened under the umbrella of the Performance Improvement Council, I had a discussion with individuals participating in the Leaders Delivery Network and the White House Leadership Development Program fellowships. These senior administration officials, who are working—oftentimes in obscurity—to improve government performance, come together on a regular basis to collaborate and share best practices.

Oftentimes on this floor, we talk about costs and budget issues. One challenge I think we don't spend enough time on is oversight. The fact is, there are many folks within the Federal Government who are focusing on improving government performance and making sure that we at the end of that also save resources.

In the spirit of the work of the PIC, with which I met earlier this week, I am pleased to honor one exceptional Federal employee today who happens to be a Virginian—John Wagner.

As Deputy Assistant Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Mr. Wagner conceived, developed, and implemented two groundbreaking programs that overhauled the way American citizens and a growing number of foreign travelers enter the United States.

At the time, CBP was facing the need for heightened security—obviously, something that continues—while contending with an increase in the number of international travelers, which resulted in long wait times for arriving passengers, a surge in missed flight connections, and strained personnel capacity.

Mr. Wagner's innovative solutions to making our century-old process work more effectively and efficiently are now familiar to millions of travelers worldwide: the Global Entry Trusted Traveler Program and the kiosk-based Automated Passport Control Program.

As somebody who participates in the Global Entry Trusted Traveler Program, it has obviously sped my transit through many international airports. Global Entry saves travelers time and ensures a high level of security by employing a screening process that includes background checks, personal interviews, and fingerprinting. Approved travelers then bypass the regular immigration control lanes and proceed to the automated, biometrics-based, self-service kiosks that validate passports, verify fingerprints, and perform database queries. This back-end security allows approved travelers to quickly clear through Customs without the need for an interview with a Customs officer. Global Entry is now offered at 48 U.S. airports, including Dulles International Airport in my State of Virginia.

In addition to streamlining the international arrivals process, the program has resulted in saving over 287,000 working hours and reducing the average wait time for members 84 percent when compared to travelers not enrolled in the program.

Mr. Wagner's other brainchild has shown similar results. The kiosk-based Automated Passport Control Program automates the entry processes for those with U.S. passports and travelers from a number of foreign countries. This automation allows CBP officers to focus solely on questioning the individual and observing his or her behavioral responses, rather than getting bogged down with administrative procedures. The automated kiosks have resulted in decreases in average wait times for travelers and efficiencies in allocating human resources.

Mr. Wagner described his work best, saying that ''it has contributed to the national security of the country, helped promote travel and tourism that benefits the economy, and delivered a public service that has been well received.''

I hope my colleagues will join me in thanking Mr. Wagner and government employees at all levels for their willingness to shake up the status quo and their commitment to providing exceptional service to Americans across the country.

Today the Presiding Officer and I were at a budget hearing where, as former business members, we sometimes feel like our heads will explode in terms of our ability to get an appropriate audit of Federal spending and Federal programs. We talked about different processes, like the DATA Act, where we try to get more transparency. We have to do all this, but we also have to recognize and celebrate Federal employees who, at the work level, are coming up with great innovative programs, such as Mr. Wagner has done.

So while we may disagree on many items in terms of how we get to ultimate policy issues—the Presiding Officer has had a very successful career in business—we know, as former businesspersons, that oftentimes some of the best ideas come from the workforce, and we need to do more to celebrate individuals like Mr. Wagner who come forth with good ideas that have been implemented on a cost-effective basis and that save time, save money, and increase national security.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in 1988—almost 30 years ago—when Justice Kennedy was elected to the Supreme Court, President Reagan said: ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.'' President Reagan realized in 1988, during the last year of his Presidency, what President Obama realizes in 2016, the last year of his Presidency: that an eight-person Supreme Court runs counter to our national interest and runs counter, frankly, to the intent of our Founders, especially as we modernized the Supreme Court.

There is a reason the Supreme Court—I believe for 150 years or something like that—has had an odd number of Justices, and that is so they can make decisions. Since Justice Scalia's death, we have seen the Supreme Court deadlock a couple of times, and when the Supreme Court deadlocks, it is as if the cases weren't even heard. It also means that if there are two different appellate cases that contradict one another, the Supreme Court would rule, as a referee would, to decide on the law of the land. When there is a vote of 4 to 4, it is as if there were no Supreme Court decision at all, and as a result, we have conflicting laws in different parts of the country. So you can live under one set of rules in Ohio and live a few miles away in Pittsburgh under another set of rules. As a result, this prolonged vacancy is damaging to our country's highest Court.

Fifty cases remain on the docket for this term, and the Supreme Court is going to likely set a record for most tied votes. The 50 cases are for this term right now. When the Court meets again—according to Senator MCCONNELL, it will be before Judge Garland is considered and brought up for a vote, if he is ever brought up for a vote—there will be another whole set of issues Judge Garland will not be able to rule on.

We are really sentencing ourselves as a nation to a potential 4-to-4 vote on case after case after case, week after week after week, month after month after month, through two Supreme Court calendar years, for want of a better term. No term since 1990 has included more than two tied votes—a benchmark the Court has now hit in a single week. It means we have no national standard on important issues, and it diminishes the important role the Supreme Court plays in our country. It is part of a pattern that is damaging the judiciary. Last year the Senate confirmed just 11 Federal judges—the fewest in any year since 1960. It is the fewest in almost six decades.

Chief Judge Garland's qualifications are without question. The President really did reach across party lines—reaching into the center aisle, perhaps—in choosing Judge Garland. He picked somebody who is significantly older as a nominee, which is something most Presidents don't want to do. They want to pick somebody in his or her forties or early fifties so they have—at least mathematically—the opportunity to serve more years. He picked somebody who had Republican support in the past and has had glowing things said about him by people like the former judiciary Republican chairman, Senator HATCH. His qualifications are without question, but in the end, the Senate has said they don't want to do their job.

The last time there was a vacancy on the Supreme Court for more than a year was during the Civil War, and it was because we were in a civil war. The last time a Republican Senate ratified or confirmed a Democratic Presidential nominee on the Supreme Court was 1895.

This is a Senate that needs to do its job. When I hear Senator MCCONNELL say he doesn't care and will not do anything until the next election, well, we had an election. President Obama was elected to a 4-year term—not a 3-year term and not three-fifths of a term but a 4-year term. He is doing his job. The Constitution says that the President shall nominate and the Senate shall advise and consent.

The Senate needs to meet with this nominee—and I will meet with Judge Garland tomorrow—the Senate needs to have hearings on Judge Garland, and the Senate then needs to bring him to a vote.

Of the eight Supreme Court Justices sitting on the Court today, the average time was 66 days to confirm that Justice. This President still has close to 300 days left in his term. There is plenty of time to do that. Pure and simple, the Senate needs to do its job. It is incredible to the country, and it is incredible to all of us who really love this institution and think our government should work—and does work most of the time—that Senators are so dug in that most of my Republican colleagues will not even meet with Judge Garland. None of them, except for a couple of courageous exceptions, called for hearings. I believe only one or two said we should vote on his confirmation. The country doesn't understand why Republicans are failing to do their jobs. It is important, election year or not, that the Congress do its job.

THE STEEL INDUSTRY

Mr. President, for generations our steelworkers and manufacturers have made the steel that built this country. Manufacturers are the cornerstone of our economy. We know that every dollar invested in manufacturing adds an additional $1.48 to the economy, but our steel industry is being left behind. Years of outsourcing and years of illegal dumping—dumping means foreign

competitors will sell steel into the United States below the cost of production so it is just impossible to compete on price or quality with them—have taken their toll on our companies and our workers.

I want to read a letter I got this year from a group of Ohio steelworkers. I want to read one that I chose to read from this. Thomas Kelling wrote:

As of January 11, 2016, there are 12,000 steelworkers laid off. I am one of them. When you include other manufacturers that deal with steel—aluminum, refractory, etc.—there are 35,000 men and women out of work.

Thousands of immigrants came to this country looking for work years ago, and the steel industry supplied them with work. Without the steel industry, the country would not be what it is today. Every building, car, motorcycle, bridge, and so on is made of steel.

The steel industry has taken a big hit because of illegal dumping by China, Korea, India, and Italy, among others. These countries subsidize their companies—

I would add—he didn't say this in the letter—sometimes these companies are State owned and subsidized by the State.

These countries subsidize their companies so they are able to sell steel at a much lower cost, which in turn causes the U.S. steel industry to decline—hurting thousands of families, and the economy in general.

Mr. Kelling is right. It is time for us to stand up for American steel manufacturers and workers who play by the rules but drown under a sea of illegal, subsidized imports. Far too many politicians seem content to throw up their hands and write off the industry and say: Well, that is an old industry. We can buy our steel from somewhere else. They seem to assume that because it is a tough problem, because it is complicated, it is not even worth trying to fix. Imagine if we had said that about the auto industry. I know what this body did. I know there was a lot of Republican opposition. Some Republicans like Senator Voinovich, my colleague from Ohio back then, were supportive. Most of my Republican colleagues tried to block the Bush administration—a fellow Republican. Then with the Obama administration, they really dug in in opposition to the auto rescue.

We know what happened. Chrysler posted 7 percent gains in sales last year. GM and Ford were not far behind with 5 percent. More vehicles were sold in 2015 than at any time in American history. When that number had dropped close to 10 million, it was back up to 16 million vehicles. That is a lot of autoworker jobs in Ohio at Chrysler, Ford, GM, and Honda. It is also a lot of autoworkers' supply chain jobs—some union, some not, some autoworker union, some other unions, some nonunion, but thousands of jobs in the supply chain making glass and tires and all kinds of hubcaps and metal tops—hard tops for the Chrysler, whatever they are—in gear shifts and transmissions and engines in plants all over Ohio.

So don't tell me we can't save the steel industry. Don't tell workers like Thomas Kelling it isn't worth saving. There are concrete steps to enforce a level playing field. We enacted a law last year to make it easier to petition our government when foreign producers are cheating on the rules. We know this happens all too often, especially in this industry, because so many countries around the world have their own steel industry. Some don't even use much of the steel they make but know they have a country—us—where they can dump the steel. This law is only as strong as its enforcement.

The Commerce Department needs to apply so-called adverse facts available, or AFA, in trade cases where a foreign company is not cooperating. If we don't apply adverse facts when it is warranted, we allow countries and companies that are cheating to get away with violating the law at the expense of our companies, at the expense of workers in Lorain, Niles, Youngstown, and Middletown—all over our State and all over our country.

Second, we need to fully fund the Office of Enforcement and Compliance. This office investigates charges of illegal subsidies and dumping by foreign producers. There are so many violations, this office is overwhelmed. Trade investigations are lengthy. They are difficult. They are labor intensive. We are a Nation of laws. We enforce laws. We enforce rules. We follow laws. We follow the rules so that we can play fair on trade cases, but that takes time and expertise, and that is why we need to fund the Office of Enforcement and Compliance.

Third, the administration needs to do everything in its power to address global overcapacity, particularly from China. It is the single biggest challenge facing our domestic steel industry. China has excess steelmaking capacity of 300 million metric tons. What does that mean? They can make 300 million metric tons more than they use in their country. What does that mean? That means they are looking for a market, and they are willing to subsidize their steel production to dump their steel into Ohio, into Detroit, in auto plants, and dump their steel where we build roads, bridges, and appliances.

Last year, China exported more steel than the total tonnage of steel produced by U.S. manufacturers. Think of that. Chinese capacity in steelmaking is about the same as the rest of the world combined. As I said, China exported more steel last year than the total tonnage of steel produced by U.S. manufacturers. No wonder our companies face such serious challenges. China is the single biggest contributor in excess capacity, but the problem is spreading elsewhere. The Chinese have committed to reducing steel production, but have failed to follow through.

Our steel industry has done the right thing. Our industry restructured to a sustainable model a decade ago—competitive, smart, productive—but it is now under threat again from Chinese imports. We have to file complaints and petitions against this unfair competition. These cases take too long.

To stop the flood of cheap illegal imports once and for all, we need a permanent shutdown of production in countries where the steel industry is not driven by the market. Let me give you an example. South Korea was making something called oil country tubular goods, OCTG. These are pipes made for drilling, for fracking, for drilling for oil and gas. It makes sense, right? Except South Korea didn't have a domestic industry. They used not one of these steel pipes that they manufacture. What were they doing? They were selling them under cost to the United States. They basically created an industry to make steel, to dump that steel in the United States and keep their workers going at the expense of our companies and our workers. We won trade cases against them, but it often took long, and by the time we won these cases, a lot of damage was done to those companies and those workers.

Finally, renegotiate the auto rules of origin, the Trans-Pacific Partnership. These provisions determine how much of a car is made in these 12 countries of the Trans-Pacific Partnership regions. Unfortunately, the TPP rules of origin are even weaker than they were in the North American Free Trade Agreement. What does that mean? That means only 40 percent of an auto sold in a TPP country needs to be made in TPP countries. So what that means is that more than 50 percent of the components for a newly made car can come from China sold into the United States or Mexico or Canada or any of the 12 countries with no tariffs. The whole point of the Trans-Pacific Partnership is to strengthen the auto supply chain and strengthen these countries' economies, but the way our negotiators did it was to drop the percentage components—the so-called rules of origin—from 60-some percent to 40-some percent so China could backdoor.

Think about this: 35,000 women and men out of work—35,000 families have been forced to have terrible conversations around the kitchen table. They have to sell their house. Maybe they are going to get foreclosed on because they are not working. They have to cut back on sports at the local school because, frankly, of a State government in our State that underfunds schools. If kids want to play sports—no matter if they are low-income kids—they have to pay for it. There was nothing like that when I was growing up, but it is a different world. We have a State government that doesn't respond in so many ways to the concerns of young parents

that they have to come up with money. They can't do that now. They have lost their jobs. All of this impacts families.

The bad news doesn't stop with family layoffs. These conversations don't stop with mom and dad getting laid off. They lead to mom having to take a second job at night and to selling a car to save the house from being foreclosed.

Mr. Kelling writes: ''The livelihood of thousands are counting on you.'' I ask my colleagues to think about what that means. That doesn't just mean their income and job; it is so much more important than that. It is the ability to put food on the table, send their kids to college, and save something for retirement. It is the difference between a thriving community and a dying community.

We can't stand by and watch communities turn to ghost towns because foreign competitors don't play by the rules. It means we have to take action that levels the playing field and holds our trading partners accountable. If the administration doesn't take bold, decisive action soon, we will get thousands more letters, as do more and more of my colleagues who also get these letters. Thousands more workers like Thomas are going to lose their livelihoods, and our country will be worse off because of that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3464

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up substitute amendment No. 3464.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] proposes an amendment numbered 3464.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next amendments in order be the following and that it be in order to call them up and considered offered in the order listed: Gardner No. 3460; Thune No. 3512; Heinrich No. 3482, as modified; Thune No. 3462; Schumer No. 3483; Thune No. 3463; and Cantwell No. 3490.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3460 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up Gardner amendment No. 3460.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for Mr. GARDNER, proposes an amendment numbered 3460 to amendment No. 3464.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the FAA Administrator to consider the operational history of a person before authorizing the person to operate certain unmanned aircraft systems.)

On page 89, line 3, insert ''and any operational history of the person, as appropriate'' before the period at the end.

AMENDMENT NO. 3512 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

(Purpose: To enhance airport security, and for other purposes)

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3512.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] proposes an amendment numbered 3512 to amendment No. 3464.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for April 2016. The report compares current law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts provided in the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 11, the budget resolution for fiscal year 2016. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. It has been prepared by the Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

This is the third scorekeeping report for this calendar year but the seventh report I have made since adoption of the fiscal year 2016 budget resolution on May 5, 2015. My last filing can be found in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on February 24, 2016. The information contained in this report is current through April 4, 2016.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee is below or exceeds its allocation under the budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. Over the fiscal year 2016–2025 period, which is the entire period covered by S. Con. Res. 11, Senate authorizing committees have spent $147.9 billion more than the budget resolution calls for.

Table 2 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds the statutory spending limits. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in section 312 and section 314 of the CBA. On December 18, 2015, the President signed H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, P.L. 114–113, into law. This bill provided regular appropriations equal to the levels set in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, P.L. 114–74, specifically $548.1 billion in budget authority for defense accounts, revised security category, and $518.5 billion in budget authority for nondefense accounts, revised nonsecurity category.

Table 3 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds its allocation for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, OCO/GWOT, spending. This separate allocation for OCO/GWOT was established in section 3102 of S. Con. Res. 11 and is enforced using section 302 of the CBA. The consolidated appropriations bill included $73.7 billion in budget authority and $32.1 billion in outlays for OCO/GWOT in fiscal year 2016. This level is equal to the revised OCO/GWOT levels that I filed in the RECORD on December 18, 2015.

The budget resolution established two new points of order limiting the use of changes in mandatory programs in appropriations bills, CHIMPS. Tables 4 and 5 show compliance with fiscal year 2016 limits for overall CHIMPS

and the Crime Victims Fund CHIMP, respectively. This information is used for determining points of order under section 3103 and section 3104, respectively. Enacted CHIMPS are under both the broader CHIMPS limit, $1.3 billion less, and the Crime Victims Fund limit, $1.8 billion less.

In addition to the tables provided by the Senate Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting additional tables from CBO that I will use for enforcement of budget levels agreed to by the Congress.

For fiscal year 2016, CBO estimates that current law levels are $138.9 billion and $103.6 billion above the budget resolution levels for budget authority and outlays, respectively. Revenues are $155.2 billion below the level assumed in the budget resolution. Finally, Social Security outlays are at the levels assumed in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2016, while Social Security revenues are $23 million below assumed levels for the budget year.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate's pay-as-you-go rule. The Senate's pay-as-you-go scorecard currently shows deficit reduction of $20.4 billion over the fiscal year 2015–2020 period and $95.7 billion over the fiscal year 2015–2025 period. Over the initial 6-year period, Congress has enacted legislation that would increase revenues by $17 billion and decrease outlays by $3.3 billion. Over the 11-year period, Congress has enacted legislation that would increase revenues by $36.8 billion and decrease outlays by $59 billion. The Senate's pay-as-you-go rule is enforced by section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

(In millions of dollars)

	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	−66	−518	−1,117
Outlays	−50	−476	−1,099
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	130	650	1,300
Outlays	0	0	0
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	2,880	19,432	9,459
Outlays	252	1,147	−8,801
Finance			
Budget Authority	365	41,116	152,815
Outlays	365	41,116	152,815
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	−1	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	−3,358	5,962	4,833
Outlays	1,713	5,862	4,082
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	208	278
Outlays	0	208	278
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	−2	−1	−1
Outlays	388	644	644
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	1	2	2
Total			
Budget Authority	−51	66,849	167,567
Outlays	2,669	48,502	147,921

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS [1]

(Budget authority, in millions of dollars)

	2016	
	Security [2]	Nonsecurity [2]
Statutory Discretionary Limits	548,091	518,491
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	21,750
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	5,101	50,621
Defense	514,000	136
Energy and Water Development	18,860	18,325
Financial Services and General Government	44	23,191
Homeland Security	1,705	39,250
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	32,159
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	162,127
Legislative Branch	0	4,363
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	8,171	71,698
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	37,780
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	210	57,091
Current Level Total	548,091	518,491
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (−) Statutory Limits	0	0

[1] This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

[2] Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS

(In millions of dollars)

	2016	
	BA	OT
OCO/GWOT Allocation[1]	73,693	32,079
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0	0
Defense	58,638	27,354
Energy and Water Development	0	0
Financial Services and General Government	0	0
Homeland Security	160	128
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	0
Legislative Branch	0	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	14,895	4,597
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	0
Current Level Total	73,693	32,079
Total OCO/GWOT Spending vs. Budget Resolution	0	0

BA = Budget Authority; OT = Outlays

[1] This allocation may be adjusted by the Chairman of the Budget Committee to account for new information, pursuant to section 3102 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

TABLE 4.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

(Budget authority, millions of dollars)

	2016
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2016	19,100
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	600
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	9,458
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	725
Homeland Security	176
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	28
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	6,799
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	17,786
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (−) Budget Resolution	−1,314

TABLE 5.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAM (CHIMP) TO THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND

(Budget authority, millions of dollars)

	2016
Crime Victims Fund (CVF) CHIMP Limit for Fiscal Year 2016	10,800
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	9,000
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	9,000
Total CVF CHIMP Above (+) or Below (−) Budget Resolution	−1,800

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 6, 2016.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2016 budget and is current

through April 4, 2016. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

Since our last letter dated February 24, 2016, the Congress has not cleared any legislation for the President's signature that affects budget authority, outlays, or revenues.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, AS OF APRIL 4, 2016

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution	Current Level [a]	Current Level Over/Under (−) Resolution
On-Budget			
Budget Authority	3,069.8	3,208.7	138.9
Outlays	3,091.2	3,194.9	103.6
Revenues	2,676.0	2,520.7	−155.2
Off-Budget			
Social Security Outlays [b]	777.1	777.1	0.0
Social Security Revenues	794.0	794.0	0.0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

[a] Excludes emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

[b] Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016, AS OF APRIL 4, 2016

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted [a]			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,676,733
Permanents and other spending legislation	1,968,496	1,902,345	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	0	500,825	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	−784,820	−784,879	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,183,676	1,618,291	2,676,733
Enacted Legislation:			
An act to extend the authorization to carry out the replacement of the existing medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Denver, Colorado, to authorize transfers of amounts to carry out the replacement of such medical center, and for other purposes (P.L. 114–25)	0	20	0
Defending Public Safety Employees' Retirement Act & Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–26)	0	0	5
Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–27)	445	175	−766
Steve Gleason Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–40)	5	5	0
Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41) [b]	0	0	99
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–53)	700	775	0
Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–55)	130	0	0
Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–58)	−2	368	0
Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees Act (P.L. 114–60)	0	0	40
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–74)	3,424	4,870	269
Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–88)	0	1	0
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114–92)	−66	−50	0
Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (P.L. 114–94)	2,880	252	471
Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–105)	269	269	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113) [b]	2,008,016	1,563,177	−156,107
Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act (P.L. 114–115)	32	32	0
Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–125)	20	20	−7
Total, Enacted Legislation	2,015,853	1,569,914	−155,996
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	9,170	6,674	0
Total Current Level [c]	3,208,699	3,194,879	2,520,737
Total Senate Resolution [d]	3,069,829	3,091,246	2,675,967
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	138,870	103,633	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	155,230
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2016–2025:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	31,755,050
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	32,233,099
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	478,049

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

[a] Includes the following acts that affect budget authority, outlays, or revenues, and were cleared by the Congress during this session, but before the adoption of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016: the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2014 (P.L. 114–1; the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015 (P.L. 114–4), and the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–10).

[b] Emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall not count for certain budgetary enforcement purposes. These amounts, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41)	0	917	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113)	−2	0	0
Total	−2	917	0

[c] For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.

[d] Periodically, the Senate Committee on the Budget revises the budgetary levels in S. Con Res. 11, pursuant to various provisions of the resolution. The Initial Senate Resolution total below excludes $6,872 million in budget authority and $344 million in outlays assumed in S. Con Res. 11 for disaster-related spending. The Revised Senate Resolution total below includes amounts for disaster-related spending:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Initial Senate Resolution:	3,032,343	3,091,098	2,676,733
Revisions:			
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 4311 S. Con. Res. 11	445	175	−766
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11	700	700	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11	0	1	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 4313 of S. Con. Res. 11	269	269	0
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 3404 of S. Con. Res. 11	36,072	−997	0
Revised Senate Resolution	3,069,829	3,091,246	2,675,967

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS, AS OF APRIL 4, 2016

[In millions of dollars]

	2015–2020	2015–2025
Beginning Balance [a]	0	0
Enacted Legislation: [b c d]		
Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–17) [e]	n.e.	n.e.
Construction Authorization and Choice Improvement Act (P.L. 114–19)	20	20
Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–22)	1	2
Uniting and Strengthening America by Fulfilling Rights and Ensuring Effective Discipline Over Monitoring Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–23)	*	*
An act to extend the authorization to carry out the replacement of the existing medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Denver, Colorado (P.L. 114–25)	150	150
Defending Public Safety Employees' Retirement Act & Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–26)	−1	5
Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–27)	−640	−52
Boys Town Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (P.L. 114–30) [f]	0	0
Steve Gleason Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–40)	13	28
Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41)	−1,552	−6,924
Agriculture Reauthorizations Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–54)	*	*
Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–58)	624	624
Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees Act (P.L. 114–60)	−32	−2
Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–62)	*	*
Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–63)	*	*
Adoptive Family Relief Act (P.L. 114–70)	*	*
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–73)	*	*
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–74)	−15,050	−71,315
Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–81)	*	*
A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs for all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs) (P.L. 114–85)	*	*
Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–88)	2	2
Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act (P.L. 114–89)	*	*
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114–92)	−194	−10
Equity in Government Compensation Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–93)	*	*
Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (P.L. 114–94) [g]	−3,845	−18,144
Improving Access to Emergency Psychiatric Care Act (P.L. 114–97)	*	*
Breast Cancer Research Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–99)	−1	0
Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–102)	*	*
Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–104)	*	*
Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–105)	−14	−13
Securing Fairness in Regulatory Timing Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–106)	*	*
National Guard and Reservist Debt Relief Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–107)	*	*
Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–109)	*	*
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114–113) [h]	2	4
Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act (P.L. 114–115)	36	−1
District of Columbia Courts, Public Defender Service, and Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–118)	*	*
International Megan's Law to Prevent Child Exploitation and Other Sexual Crimes Through Advanced Notification of Traveling Sex Offenders (P.L. 114–119)	*	*
Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–120)	*	*
North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (P.L. 114–122)	*	*
Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–125)	104	−116
Judicial Redress Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–126)	*	*
To revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida. (P.L. 114–128)	*	*
To amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans. (P.L. 114–135)	*	*
Competitive Service Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–137)	*	*
Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–142)	*	*
Current Balance	−20,377	−95,742
Memorandum:		
	2015–2020	2015–2025
Changes to Revenues	17,037	36,750
Changes to Outlays	−3,340	−58,992

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.e. = not able to estimate; P.L. = Public Law. * = between −$500,000 and $500,000.

[a] Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 11, the Senate Pay-As-You-Go Scorecard was reset to zero.

[b] The amounts shown represent the estimated impact of the public laws on the deficit. Negative numbers indicate an increase in the deficit; positive numbers indicate a decrease in the deficit.

[c] Excludes off-budget amounts.

[d] Excludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.

[e] P.L. 114–17 could affect direct spending and revenues, but such impacts would depend on future actions of the President that CBO cannot predict. (***http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/s615.pdf***).

[f] P.L. 114–30 will cause a decrease in spending of $5 million in 2017 and an increase in spending of $5 million in 2019 for a net impact of zero over the six-year and eleven-year periods.

[g] The budgetary effects associated with the Federal Reserve Surplus Funds are excluded from the PAYGO Scorecard in P.L. 114–94 pursuant to section 232(b) of H.C. Res. 290, the Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001 (106th Congress).

[h] The budgetary effects of divisions M through Q are not reflected in the PAYGO Scorecard pursuant to section 1001(b) of Title X of Division O of P.L. 114–113.

AMERICAN CITY QUALITY MONTH

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the many years of productive community partnership fostered by the cooperation of four organizations—the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the American City Planning Directors' Council, and the American City Quality Foundation—in their administration of the American City Quality Month every April since its establishment in 1988.

Thanks to the collaboration of both public and private partners connected through this program, communities across the Nation are bolstered each April by a combination of public meetings, educational opportunities for students, and public announcements, all dedicated to the betterment of urban areas. By advocating for improved city planning, decisionmaking, design, development, management, and action, the program brings attention to the need for revitalization and upkeep of metropolitan spaces.

With the U.S. population expected to hit nearly 350 million by 2026 and almost 400 million by 2050, the sustainability of American cities, which contain 80.7 percent of the U.S. total population according to the 2010 census, is paramount to accommodating an ever-expanding citizenry.

The focus of the program lies not only with large cities like Boston and New York, but also with smaller ones like Portland and Augusta, ME. These small cities are growing and developing into economic powerhouses attractive to both skilled workers and middle-class families. Ensuring the preservation of productive relationships, infrastructure, and environmental well-being in Maine's growing urban spaces is a crucial piece of the success not only for these cities, but for the entire State. American City Quality Month inspires the dialogue and partnerships necessary for sustainable growth and revitalization.

I thank the organizers of American City Quality Month for ensuring that American cities of all sizes continue to promote the welfare of this generation and those to come.

101ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE WYOMING STATE SOCIETY, NSDAR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to pay special tribute and recognize the good work that the Wyoming State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution is doing in my home State. This is their 101st annual conference, and the fact that the organization has

not only continued to exist, but has grown stronger over the years, is proof of their determination to keep the spirit of the American Revolution alive. Thanks to them, our respect and our admiration for the heroes of those days has remained strong and continues to grow stronger.

On October 11, 1890, a group of concerned citizens banded together to create the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Their intent was to protect and preserve the principles and values upon which our Nation was founded. They knew that their ancestors were part of a very special time in our history and sharing their stories would raise our awareness of the blessings we had received from our citizenship.

Over the years the organization has grown in strength and numbers as the national society now includes 177,000 members all over the world who continue to embrace and promote the American dream and our American way of life.

In Wyoming the State society has 11 chapters with hundreds of members statewide.

The Daughters of the American Revolution is such a special organization in part because of its qualification for membership. Any woman 18 years or older can join if it can be shown that she is a direct descendent of one of our Nation's patriots from the days of the American Revolution.

Each member of the DAR knows that the best way to honor their family's contribution to the beginnings of our Nation is to promote a greater awareness and appreciation of what it means to be an American citizen. That means getting more and more involved every day in helping to make their community stronger and more committed to making the world a better place to live.

The Daughters of the American Revolution continues to make a difference, and we can be proud of the results they continue to achieve. The members of the DAR have taken their inspiration from our past, and it has encouraged and guided them to work together to build a better future for our Nation and all our people.

I thank them for the good work they do.

Thank you.

REMEMBERING DR. JOE MEDICINE CROW

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following remarks that will be read on my behalf at the funeral of Dr. Joe Medicine Crow today be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Today I wish to honor Dr. Joe Medicine Crow, a Presidential Medal of Freedom winner for his contributions to the culture, history, and security of the United States, who passed away on April 3, 2016.

On behalf of all Montanans and all Americans, I would like to thank Dr. Medicine Crow for his service and contributions to the nation.

It is my privilege to share Dr. Medicine Crow's story for the official Senate RECORD.

Thank you for inviting me to share a few words today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Joe Medicine Crow. I'm sorry I cannot be with you in person.

I remember when I first met Dr. Joe Medicine Crow, I was immediately inspired. His words resonated deep into the souls of those he touched.

In 2008, I had the great honor of nominating Dr. Joe Medicine Crow for one of the highest awards given by the United States—the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Honorees are selected for their exemplary contributions to their country's culture, history, and security. I nominated Joe Medicine Crow because he embodied all of these things.

During World War II, he accomplished the four remarkable war deeds that make a traditional Crow War Chief. His bravery is the kind you read about only in stories. He fought in hand-to-hand combat, and led troops into enemy territory to capture 50 enemy horses.

And he accomplished these feats for the country that he loved, as so many Native Americans did during World War II, even though their treatment on the home front left much to be desired.

But Joe Medicine Crow's achievements for his people went far beyond bravery on the field of battle.

His commitment to education was unmatched and paved the way for generations of Native Americans to achieve their dream.

We are fortunate, in Montana, to have many reminders of the land and the people who came before us. Joe wasn't just a reminder, he was a shining example. Montanans will be telling the story of Medicine Crow for generations. And Americans across the country will have his work to thank for preserving the rich history, language, and vibrant culture of the Crow Nation.

Joe received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama on August 12, 2009, and joined a short and prestigious list of Montanans to receive this honor. His actions and accomplishments ensure that his legacy will reflect the life he lived.

Joe was a remarkable Montanan. He was a soldier, scholar, and historian, but above all he was a fierce advocate for Native American families. He embodied the warrior spirit of the Crow people, and was a fierce example of America's highest ideals. I'm honored to lend my praise and remembrance of Dr. Joe Medicine Crow.

TRIBUTE TO SHERRY DAVICH

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak about a topic that is bittersweet for me. I am here to share my gratitude for a person who I not only consider an adviser and an exemplary public servant, but a friend and confidant for over 40 years—our director of constituent services, Sherry Davich, who retired from the Senate.

I met Sherry back when we were both admittedly younger, after she worked on Jimmy Carter's Presidential campaign and I was running for the Florida House of Representatives. Sherry was finishing her bachelor's degree at Florida State University and had an undeniable curiosity and a nose for politics. After Carter became President and I was in the Florida House, I convinced her to intern in our office, and the rest is history. Forty years—wow, that is real public service.

Sherry has been unwavering in her service to the people of our country and of Florida as I have served in the House and Senate, as well as State treasurer and insurance commissioner. During her 15 years in the Senate, she has overseen over 350,000 constituent cases ranging from veterans not receiving their benefits, working with folks impacted by the BP oil spill, reuniting families as they navigate the immigration process, and of course, the lost passports and visa assistance.

She has touched the lives of so many of our constituents as their chief advocate. She has also been a part of my family. Actually Sherry and her husband, David, started to see each other as a ''Nelson Congressional Couple,'' both working in the DC office years ago. Grace and I think of Sherry, David, and their son Will, who was an intern in our office, as family. We are so thankful for her commitment, her loyalty, and her friendship.

Sherry has left a lasting mark on our family, our office family, and the folks she has served. She will be missed, and I am grateful to her beyond words.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DEERFIELD'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Deerfield, NH—a town in Rockingham County that is celebrating the 250th anniversary of its founding. I am proud to join citizens across the Granite State in recognizing this special milestone.

Deerfield was originally part of the town of Nottingham until residents petitioned to become a separate town by requesting the Colonial Governor ''set us off a distinct parish.'' Permission was granted, and Deerfield was incorporated in 1766 by Colonial Governor Benning Wentworth. Major John Simpson, a native of Deerfield, is notoriously known for firing the first shot at the Battle of Bunker Hill without permission from his commanding officers.

Founded with a strong background in agriculture, the town was once cleared of most of its forest in order to farm the land and is home to the oldest family fair in New England—the annual Deerfield Fair. Deerfield was also shaped by a steadfast commitment to education, and by the mid-19th century, the town had 13 school buildings,

one within walking distance of almost every child in town. The town became a prosperous center as it lay on the road between larger hubs such as Portsmouth, Exeter, and Concord. In the 20th century, as the agricultural economy began to fade, Deerfield's forests slowly returned, and the population began to decrease.

Today Deerfield has a population of over 4,000 residents and is proud of its 250-year history. The residents have created a vibrant civic and social community, which serves our State and Nation well. The town exemplifies the motto, ''Deerfield, a place to call home since 1766.'' Deerfield has greatly contributed to the life and spirit of New Hampshire. I am pleased to extend my warm wishes to the people of Deerfield as they celebrate this very special occasion.●

TRIBUTE TO UTAH'S VIETNAM VETERANS AND THEIR SPOUSES

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, on this special occasion, I would like to thank each and every one of Utah's more than 47,000 Vietnam veterans, as well as their spouses, for their service to our great State and this exceptional Nation. You answered the call of duty at a time of national need, and your courage is an inspiration to us all.

Over the next several weeks, friends, neighbors, and families will gather in communities across our great State to hold special commemorative ceremonies in honor of the men and women who served in the Vietnam war. But the people of Utah understand that our veterans deserve our gratitude and support, not just on special occasions, but every day.

Utah's communities, businesses, and public institutions are committed to ensuring that Utah is a place where veterans have the resources and support they need to lead fulfilling lives and achieve a high standard of living, whether they have just returned to civilian life or have been out of the service for 50 years.

In Salt Lake City, Provo, and St. George, the Beehive State has three of the best veterans centers in the Nation that provide critical mental health and counseling services to veterans and their families. And the people at the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs, the host of today's commemorative ceremony, are faithful, tireless advocates of Utah's veterans. The work of Utah's VMA and the brave veterans they represent is one of the reasons why I am so proud to call Utah home.

May God bless the veterans of Utah, and may God bless these United States of America.●

RECOGNIZING SIMMONS-PINCKNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

● Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I congratulate Simmons-Pinckney Middle School in Charleston on a successful first year and thank everyone who has helped make the school a part of our community.

Simmons-Pinckney's significance lies in its name. It was designed to honor State senator and civil rights leader, Reverend Clementa Pinckney, and a legendary blacksmith from Daniel Island, Mr. Philip Simmons. Reverend Pinckney was a servant of the people in the truest sense of the word and pastor at Mother Emanuel AME Church—where he lost his life while serving his ministry last June.

Mr. Philip Simmons's beautiful ironwork is not only displayed throughout Charleston, but in the South Carolina State Museum, Smithsonian Museum, and all around the world. These two men symbolize what I believe schools should promote, dedication and a commitment to leading our State and country to a brighter future.

Last year, Simmons-Pinckney Middle School opened to serve two purposes, and that is to remember the lives and legacies of these two amazing men and to ensure that each student receives the education they deserve. I am proud to welcome Simmons-Pinckney to the community as the newest middle school of the Charleston County School District.

Congratulations again to Simmons-Pinckney Middle School on a successful first year, and I wish the students and teachers more productive years to come.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4910. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Employment and Training Program Monitoring, Oversight and Reporting Measures'' (RIN0584–AE33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4911. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4912. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2015 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4913. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Consumer Response Annual Report''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4914. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4915. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Armourdale and Central Industrial District Levee Units at Kansas Citys, Missouri and Kansas, for the purpose of flood risk management; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4916. A communication from the Attorney, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modification of Regulations Regarding Price Adjustments in Antidumping Duty Proceedings'' (RIN0625–AB02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4917. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–128); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4918. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4919. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–334, ''Military Installation Public Charter School Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4920. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–335, ''Child Support Guideline Revision Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4921. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–336, ''Carcinogenic Flame Retardant Prohibition Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4922. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–337, ''Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4923. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–338, ''Health Care Benefits Lien Reduction Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4924. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report

on D.C. Act 21–339, ''Workers' Compensation Benefits Lien Reduction Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4925. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–340, ''Marion S. Barry Youth Employment Expansion Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4926. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–341, ''Higher Education Tax Exemption Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4927. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–342, ''Maverick Room Way Designation Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4928. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–343, ''Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 5197, S.O. 11–4822, Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4929. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–344, ''Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 2882, S.O. 14–21729, Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4930. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–345, ''Dedication of Land for Street Purposes in Squares 3185 and 3186, S.O. 13–11003 Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4931. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Flight Simulation Training Device Qualification Standards for Extended Envelope and Adverse Weather Event Training Tasks'' ((RIN2120–AK08) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0391)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4932. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2455)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4933. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2961)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4934. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2459)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4935. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0774)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4936. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0495)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4937. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–4227)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4938. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–2701)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4939. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (134); Amdt. No. 3684'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4940. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (90); Amdt. No. 3683'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4941. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (44); Amdt. No. 3679'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4942. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (10); Amdt. No. 3682'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4943. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (32); Amdt. No. 3680'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4944. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (83); Amdt. No. 3681'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4945. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (196); Amdt. No. 3688'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4946. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (36); Amdt. No. 3687'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4947. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (93); Amdt. No. 3685'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office

of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4948. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (64); Amdt. No. 3686'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4949. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D Airspace and Class E Airspace; Lynchburg, VA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–6231)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4950. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D Airspace and Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4532)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4951. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace for the following Minnesota Towns: Rochester, MN; and St. Cloud, MN'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7484)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4952. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Redesignation and Expansion of Restricted Area R–4403; Gainesville, MS'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0370)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4953. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Butte, MT'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3772)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4954. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Deer Lodge MT'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3773)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4955. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Tennessee Towns: Jackson, TN; Tri-Cities, TN'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–0735)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4956. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Minot, ND'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7485)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4957. A communication from the Senior Attorney Advisor, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Highway Safety Improvement Program'' (RIN2125–AF56) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4958. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Passenger Screening Using Advanced Imaging Technology'' (RIN1652–AA67) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4959. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments'' (RIN2120–AA66) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4960. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''State Safety Oversight'' (RIN2132–AB19) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4961. A communication from the Senior Attorney Advisor, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Performance Management Measures: Highway Safety Improvement Program'' (RIN2125–AF49) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4962. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 15'' (RIN0648–BE93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4963. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery and Golden Crab Fishery of the South Atlantic, and Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery of the Atlantic'' (RIN0648–BE38) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4964. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Off the Atlantic States and Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region; Amendments 7/33'' (RIN0648–BD76) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4965. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Increase'' (RIN0648–XE480) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4966. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Run-Around Gillnet Closure'' (RIN0648–XE406) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4967. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish Longline Component'' (RIN0648–BE93) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4968. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction'' (RIN0648–BE455) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4969. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; 2016 Recreational Accountability Measure and Closure for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia'' (RIN0648–XE445) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4970. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE482) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4971. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Other Hook-and-Line Fishery by Catcher Vessels in the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE493) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4972. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE410) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4973. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XE494) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4974. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands'' (RIN0648–XE482) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4975. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Western Aleutian Islands District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XE471) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4976. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program'' (RIN0648–BE98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4977. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XE368) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4978. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Trawl Catcher Vessels in the Western Regulatory Are of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE505) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4979. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XE494) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4980. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer'' (RIN0648–XE449) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4981. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Adjustments to 2016 Annual Catch Limits'' (RIN0648–XE379) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4982. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Annual Specifications'' (RIN0648–XE043) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4983. A communication from the Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Report to Congress on the Disclosure of Financial Interest and Recusal Requirements for Regional Fishery Management Councils and Scientific and Statistical Committees and on Apportionment of Membership of the Regional Fishery Management Councils''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4984. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements Limits for Unfinished and Untreated Wood'' (RIN3041–AD46) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4985. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment To Clarify When Component Part Testing Can Be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits'' (RIN3041–AD46) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4986. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2015''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4987. A communication from the Executive Director, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's 2014 Annual Report to the President and Congress; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4988. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''NASA FAR Supplement: NASA Suspending and Debarring Official'' (RIN2700–AE26) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4989. A communication from the Under Secretary for Policy, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the National Transportation Safety Board's 2016 Most Wanted List; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4990. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review'' (RIN2140–AB25) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–138. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to explore and support policies that will lead to the establishment of facilities within the United States for the reprocessing and recycling of spent nuclear fuel; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 220

Whereas, The federal Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 called for the United States Department of Energy to begin collecting spent nuclear waste and develop a long-term plan for storage of the material. In 2002, Congress approved Yucca Mountain in Nevada as the location to allow the Department of Energy to establish a safe repository for high-level spent nuclear waste; and

Whereas, In 2010, the Department of Energy halted the project at Yucca Mountain when the construction authorization process was in progress, despite the Nuclear Waste Fund receiving more than $30 billion in revenue from electric customers throughout the United Slates in order to construct the facility and store the spent fuel; and

Whereas, The Argonne National Laboratory has developed a high-temperature method of recycling spent nuclear waste into fuel, known as pyrochemical processing. This process allows 100 times more of the energy in uranium ore to be used to produce electricity compared to current commercial reactors; and

Whereas, Extending the productive life of uranium ore through pyrochemical processing ensures almost inexhaustible supplies of low-cost uranium resources for the generation of electricity, minimizes the risk that used fuel could be stolen and used to produce weapons, and reduces the amount of nuclear waste and the time it must be isolated by almost 1,000 times; and

Whereas, Advanced non-light water reactors currently under development in the United States and internationally have the potential to utilize used fuel from existing reactors as fuel, but according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, there are no reprocessing facilities currently operating within the United States; and

Whereas, The federal government's inability to adequately store or reprocess almost 100,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel has adversely affected the residents of the state of Michigan. Michigan has paid more than $800 million into the Nuclear Waste Fund since 1983, but the federal government has failed to use it to permanently store nuclear waste in a way that serves the public: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the President and Congress of the United States to explore and support policies that will lead to the establishment of facilities within the United States for the reprocessing and recycling of spent nuclear fuel; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM–139. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of New Mexico supporting the passage of the Diné College Act of 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 15

Whereas, the State of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation maintain a government-to-government relationship, and the Navajo people residing in the State are citizens of both New Mexico and the Navajo Nation; and

Whereas, in 1968, the Navajo Nation established Navajo Community College, which later became Diné College, to provide access to higher education to the Navajo people; and

Whereas, Diné College's New Mexico Flagship Campus is located in Shiprock, and there is a Community Campus Center in Crownpoint; and

Whereas, Diné College has dual credit agreements with school districts and schools in New Mexico, including the Central Consolidated School District, Gallup-McKinley County School District, Magdalena Municipal School District, Navajo Preparatory School, Shiprock Alternative School, Inc., Wingate High School and the Alamo Navajo Community School; and

Whereas, the State of New Mexico provides support to Diné College through its Higher Education Department by way of higher education capital outlay projects, the tribal college dual credit funding program and high school equivalency credential program grants; and

Whereas, the United States Congress passed the Navajo Community College Act of 1971, the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978 and the Navajo Nation Higher Education Act of 2008, which collectively provide for maintenance, operation and construction funding for Diné College; and

Whereas, Representative Ann Kirkpatrick from Arizona introduced the Diné College Act of 2015 ''to fulfill the United States Government's Trust responsibility to serve the higher education needs of the Navajo people and to clarify, unify, and modernize prior Diné College Legislation'', and Diné College has asked Senator Jeff Flake from Arizona to introduce a Senate Companion Bill: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Legislature of the State of New Mexico, That the State of New Mexico stand in support of the passage of the Diné College Act of 2015 and urge the New Mexico Congressional Delegation to work to ensure its passage into Federal Law; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this memorial be transmitted to the Secretary of Higher Education, the Governor, the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate and the President of the United States.

POM–140. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to enact legislation that would require that an autopsy be conducted, and the results thereof be made public, whenever a still-serving President, Vice President, Member of Congress, Chief Justice or Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, or any Judge of any Federal Court dies; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1336. A bill to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Auckland on November 14, 2009, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–235).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2750. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2751. A bill to create a pilot program permitting businesses receiving Phase II awards under the SBIR program to use not more than 5 percent of the amount of the award for commercialization-related services; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2752. A bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2753. A bill to amend title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2754. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 300 Fannin Street in Shreveport, Louisiana, as the ''Tom Stagg Federal Building and United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. UDALL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BURR, Mr. HELLER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. KING):

S. 2755. A bill to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 2756. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iranian persons responsible for knowingly engaging in significant activities undermining cybersecurity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 2757. A bill to prohibit certain transactions with Iran and to impose sanctions with respect to foreign financial institutions that facilitate such transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. Res. 414. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the actions, including the reapplication of waived nuclear-related sanctions, that the United States should undertake in the event of an Iranian violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 415. A resolution congratulating the 2016 national champions, the Villanova Wildcats, for their win in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2150

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2150, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make technical improvements to the Net Price Calculator system so that prospective students may have a more accurate understanding of the true cost of college.

S. 2175

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2175, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2377, a bill to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and protect and secure the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2386

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2386, a bill to authorize the establishment of the Stonewall National Historic Site in the State of New York as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 2427

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2548

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2548, a bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 2551

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2551, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2596

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2596, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces entitled to such travel.

S. 2604

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2604, a bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges.

S. 2612

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2612, a bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.

S. 2666

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2666, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent earnings stripping of domestic corporations which are members of a worldwide group of corporations which includes an inverted corporation and to require agreements with respect to certain related party transactions with those members.

S. 2674

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2674, a bill to authorize the President to provide major disaster assistance for lead contamination of drinking water from public water systems.

S. 2690

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2690, a bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to modernize the funding of wildlife conservation, and for other purposes.

S. 2725

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2725, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2726

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2726, a bill to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes.

S. 2736

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2736, a bill to improve access to durable medical equipment for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2736, supra.

S. 2746

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2746, a bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes.

S. 2748

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2748, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 2749

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2749, a bill to provide an exception from the reduced flat rate per diem for long term temporary duty under Joint Travel Regulations for civilian employees of naval shipyards traveling for direct labor in support of off-yard work, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 5, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 392

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 392, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

AMENDMENT NO. 3458

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3458 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 414—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE ACTIONS, INCLUDING THE REAPPLICATION OF WAIVED NUCLEAR-RELATED SANCTIONS, THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD UNDERTAKE IN THE EVENT OF AN IRANIAN VIOLATION OF THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

Mr. LANKFORD submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 414

Whereas national security is a fundamental and primary responsibility of both Congress and the President;

Whereas, on July 14, 2015, President Barack Obama reached an agreement with Iran known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, a political agreement among the United States, France, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and Germany (commonly referred to as the ''P5+1 countries'') and Iran that does not carry the force or effect of United States law;

Whereas President Obama lifted nuclear-related sanctions imposed by the United States with respect to Iran on January 16, 2016;

Whereas, on July 14, 2015, President Obama stated, ''If Iran violates the deal, all of these sanctions will snap back into place.'';

Whereas Congress intends to work with the President to ensure that the President's commitment to snapping back sanctions in response to any violation by Iran of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is fully enforced;

Whereas Iran has been the beneficiary of financial assets and international engagement while its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has yet to be proven; and

Whereas, given the historic and dramatic shift in longstanding United States foreign policy represented by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the obligations and commitments Iran agreed to as part the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action must be clarified by the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON IRANIAN VIOLATIONS OF THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of the Senate—

(1) that the United States should take the actions specified in subsection (b) if—

(A) Iran ever seeks, develops, manufactures, or acquires nuclear weapons;

(B) Iran ever engages in plutonium reprocessing or plutonium-related research and development;

(C) Iran violates—

(i) the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Washington, London, and Moscow July 1, 1968 (21 UST 483) (commonly referred to as the ''Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty'' or the ''NPT'');

(ii) the Agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Vienna June 19, 1973 (commonly referred to as the ''Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement'');

(iii) its commitment to ratify by October 18, 2023, the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement; or

(iv) the Iranian-ratified Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement;

(D) Iran installs a new natural uranium core or the original core in the Arak reactor;

(E) the power of Iran's redesigned heavy water reactor exceeds 20 MWth;

(F) Iran produces any amount of weapons grade uranium or plutonium;

(G) Iran pursues construction at the existing unfinished Arak heavy water reactor based on its original design;

(H) Iran produces or tests natural uranium pellets, fuel pins, or fuel assemblies that are specifically designed for the support of the originally designed Arak heavy water reactor, designated by the International Atomic Energy Agency as IR–40;

(I) Iran does not store all existing natural uranium pellets and IR–40 fuel assemblies under the continuous monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency until the modernized Arak reactor becomes operable;

(J) once the Arak reactor becomes operable, Iran does not take the IR–40 fuel assemblies and natural uranium pellets and convert them to uranyl nitrate or exchange them with an equivalent quantity of natural uranium;

(K) Iran does not make the necessary technical modifications to the natural uranium fuel production process line that was intended to supply fuel for the IR–40 reactor design, such that it can be used for the fabrication of the fuel reloads for the modernized Arak reactor;

(L) all spent fuel from the redesigned Arak reactor, regardless of its origin, for the lifetime of the reactor, is not shipped out of Iran;

(M) Iran operates the Fuel Manufacturing Plant to produce anything other than fuel assemblies for light water reactors or reloads for the modernized Arak reactor;

(N) Iran does not inform the International Atomic Energy Agency about the inventory and production of the Heavy Water Production Plant or does not allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to monitor the quantities of the heavy water stocks and the amount of heavy water produced, including through visits by the International Atomic Energy Agency, as requested, to the Heavy Water Production Plant;

(O) Iran does not ship out all spent fuel for all future and present nuclear power and research reactors;

(P) Iran does not remove and keep stored at Natanz in Hall B of the fuel enrichment plant under continuous monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency—

(i) all excess centrifuge machines, including IR–2m centrifuges (during the 10-year prohibition period under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action); and

(ii) UF6 pipework including sub headers, valves and pressure transducers at cascade level, and frequency inverters, and UF6 withdrawal equipment from one of the withdrawal stations, which is currently not in service, including its vacuum pumps and chemical traps (during the 10-year prohibition period under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action);

(Q) the 164–machine IR–2m cascade does not remain stored at Natanz in Hall B of the fuel enrichment plan under the continuous monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

(R) the 164–machine IR–4 cascade does not remain stored at Natanz in Hall B of the fuel enrichment plan under the continuous monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

(S) Iran enriches, obtains, or otherwise stockpiles any uranium, including in oxide form, enriched to greater than 3.67 percent;

(T) all future uranium oxide, scrap oxide, or other material not in fuel plates enriched to between 5 and 20 percent is not transferred out of Iran or diluted to a level of 3.67 percent or less within 6 months of production;

(U) Iran does not abide by its voluntary commitments as expressed in its own long-term enrichment and enrichment research and development plan submitted as part of the initial declaration described in Article 2 of the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement;

(V) Iran engages in production of centrifuges, including centrifuge rotors suitable for isotope separation or any other centrifuge components, which exceeds the enrichment and enrichment research and development requirements outlined in Annex I of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(W) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency the use of online enrichment measurement and electronic seals, as well as other International Atomic Energy Agency-approved and certified modern technologies in line with internationally accepted practices of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

(X) Iran does not facilitate automated collection of International Atomic Energy Agency measurement recordings registered by installed measurement devices and sent to the International Atomic Energy Agency working space at individual nuclear sites;

(Y) Iran does not make the necessary arrangements to allow for a long-term presence of the International Atomic Energy Agency, including issuing long-term visas, as well as providing proper working space at nuclear sites and, with to the best of its effort, at locations near nuclear sites in Iran for the designated International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors for working and keeping necessary equipment;

(Z) Iran does not increase the number of designated International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors to at least 130 by October 16, 2016, which is the date that is 9 months after implementation day, or does not allow the designation of inspectors from countries that have diplomatic relations with Iran;

(AA) Iran does not apply nuclear export policies and practices in line with the internationally established standards for the export of nuclear material, equipment, and technology;

(BB) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency access to verify that uranium isotope separation production and research and development activities are consistent with Annex I of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(CC) Iran engages in—

(i) designing, developing, acquiring, or using computer models to simulate nuclear explosive devices;

(ii) designing, developing, fabricating, acquiring, or using multi-point explosive detonation systems suitable for a nuclear explosive device, unless approved by the Joint Commission for non-nuclear purposes and subject to monitoring;

(iii) designing, developing, fabricating, acquiring, or using explosive diagnostic systems (streak cameras, framing cameras and flash x-ray cameras) suitable for the development of a nuclear explosive device, unless approved by the Joint Commission for non-nuclear purposes and subject to monitoring; or

(iv) designing, developing, fabricating, acquiring, or using explosively driven neutron sources or specialized materials for explosively driven neutron sources;

(DD) during the 10-year period beginning on implementation day and ending on January 16, 2026—

(i) Iran operates, for the purpose of enriching uranium, more than 5,060 IR–1 centrifuges;

(ii) Iran's enrichment capacity exceeds 5,060 IR–1 centrifuge machines in 30 cascades in their current configurations in currently operating units at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant;

(iii) consistent with Iran's enrichment research and development plan, Iran's enrichment research and development with uranium includes any centrifuges other than IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, and IR–8 centrifuges;

(iv) Iran conducts testing of more than a single IR–4 centrifuge machine and IR–4 centrifuge cascade of up to 10 centrifuge machines;

(v) Iran tests more than a single IR–5 centrifuge machine;

(vi) Iran does not recombine the enriched and depleted streams from the IR–6 and IR–8 cascades through the use of welded pipework on withdrawal main headers in a manner that precludes the withdrawal of enriched and depleted uranium materials and verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency;

(vii) research and development with uranium is not strictly limited to IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, and IR–8 centrifuges;

(viii) Iran's uranium isotope separation-related research and development or production activities are not exclusively based on gaseous centrifuge technology;

(ix) Iran engages in nuclear direct-use or nuclear dual-use procurements of commodities without using the procurement channel mandated by the United Nations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015);

(x) research and development is carried out in the IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, or IR–8 centrifuges in a manner that accumulates enriched uranium, or Iran installs or tests those centrifuges beyond the enrichment and enrichment research and development requirements outlined in Annex I of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(xi) except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (LL), mechanical testing on up to 2 single centrifuges for each type is carried out on any centrifuge other than the IR–2m, IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, IR–6s, IR–7, or IR–8; or

(xii) Iran builds or tests any new centrifuge without approval of the Joint Commission;

(EE) during the 15-year period beginning on implementation day and ending on January 16, 2031—

(i) Iran conducts uranium enrichment-related activities at Fordow;

(ii) Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium hexafluoride, or the equivalent in other chemical forms, exceeds 300kg enriched to 3.67 percent;

(iii) Iran reprocesses spent fuel except for irradiated enriched uranium targets for production of radio-isotopes for medical and peaceful industrial purposes;

(iv) Iran develops, acquires, or builds facilities capable of separation of plutonium, uranium, or neptunium from spent fuel or from fertile targets, other than for production of radio-isotopes for medical and peaceful industrial purposes;

(v) Iran develops, acquires, builds, or operates hot cells (containing a cell or interconnected cells), shielded cells, or shielded glove boxes with dimensions not less than 6 cubic meters in volume compatible with the specifications set out in Annex I of the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, unless approved by the Joint Commission established by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(vi) Iran undertakes destructive post irradiation examination of fuel pins, fuel assembly prototypes, and structural materials, unless the P5+1 countries make available their facilities to conduct destructive testing with Iranian specialists, as agreed pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(vii) Iran engages in producing or acquiring plutonium or uranium metals or their alloys, or conducts research and development on plutonium or uranium (or their alloys) metallurgy, or casting, forming, or machining plutonium or uranium metal;

(viii) Iran produces, seeks, or acquires separated plutonium, highly enriched uranium, uranium–233, or neptunium–237 (except for use for laboratory standards or in instruments using neptunium–237);

(ix) Iran installs gas centrifuge machines, or enrichment-related infrastructure, whether suitable for uranium enrichment, research and development, or stable isotope enrichment, at any location other than a location exclusively specified under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(x) Iran conducts all testing of centrifuges with uranium anywhere other than at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant or Iran conducts mechanical testing of centrifuges anywhere other than at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant and the Tehran Research Centre;

(xi) Iran maintains more than 1044 IR–1 centrifuge machines at one wing of the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant;

(xii) Iran does not limit its stable isotope production activities with gas centrifuges to the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant or uses more than 348 IR–1 centrifuges for such activities;

(xiii) Iran exceeds the limitations on its activities at the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant as described in Annex I of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

(xiv) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency regular access, including daily as requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency, access to the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant;

(xv) Iran builds or has a heavy water reactor;

(xvi) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency to implement continuous monitoring, including through containment and surveillance measures, as necessary, to verify that stored centrifuges and infrastructure remain in storage;

(xvii) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency regular access, including daily access as requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency, to relevant buildings at Natanz, including parts of the fuel enrichment plan and the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant;

(xviii) any uranium enrichment activity in Iran, including safeguarded research and development, occurs anywhere but the Natanz enrichment site;

(xix) Iran engages, including through export of any enrichment or enrichment related equipment and technology, with any other country, or with any foreign entity in enrichment or enrichment related activities, including related research and development activities, without approval by the Joint Commission;

(xx) the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant does not remain strictly a research facility, Iran conducts enrichment or research and development-related activities, or Iran holds nuclear material at that Plant;

(xxi) excess heavy water that is beyond Iran's needs for the modernized Arak research reactor or the zero power heavy water reactor, quantities needed for medical research and production of the deuterated solutions, and chemical compounds including, where appropriate, contingency stocks, is not made available for export to the international market based on international prices and delivered to an international buyer;

(xxii) all enriched uranium hexafluoride in excess of 300 kg of up to 3.57 percent enriched UF6 (or the equivalent in different chemical forms) is not immediately down-blended to natural uranium level or sold on the international market and delivered to an international buyer;

(xxiii) Iran does not rely on only light water for its future nuclear power and research reactors;

(xxiv) Iran conducts enrichment research and development in a manner that accumulates enriched uranium; or

(xxv) Iran enriches uranium to a level exceeding 3.67 percent;

(FF) during the 25-year period beginning on implementation day and ending on January 16, 2041—

(i) Iran does not permit the International Atomic Energy Agency to monitor that all uranium ore concentrate produced in Iran or obtained from any other source is transferred to the uranium conversion facility in Esfahan or to any other future uranium conversion facility that Iran might decide to build in Iran within this period; or

(ii) Iran does not provide the International Atomic Energy Agency with all necessary information so that the International Atomic Energy Agency will be able to verify the production of the uranium ore concentrate and the inventory of uranium ore concentrate produced in Iran or obtained from any other source;

(GG) on or after January 16, 2024, which is the date that is 8 years after implementation day, Iran commences manufacturing IR–6 and IR–8 centrifuges with rotors, or commences manufacturing IR–6 and IR–8 centrifuges without rotors at a rate of more than 200 centrifuges per year for each type;

(HH) on or after January 16, 2026, which is the date that is 10 years after implementation day, Iran commences manufacturing on more than 200 complete centrifuges per year for each type;

(II) Iran does not present its plan to, and seek approval by, the Joint Commission if Iran seeks to initiate research and development on a uranium metal based fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor in small agreed quantities after January 16, 2026, and before January 15, 2031, which are 10 and 15 years after implementation day, respectively; or

(JJ) during the 8½ year period beginning on implementation day and ending on July 16, 2024—

(i) Iran conducts testing on more than a single IR–6 centrifuge machine and intermediate cascades for such machines and commences testing on more than 30 centrifuge machines; or

(ii) Iran conducts testing on more than a single IR–8 centrifuge machine and intermediate cascades for such machines or commences testing on more than 30 centrifuge machines; and

(2) that—

(A) Iran's uranium enrichment and research and development plans should be made public;

(B) the reports of the Joint Commission and procurement requests made to the United Nations Security Council and to the Joint Commission, and whether or not such requests were approved, should be made available to the public; and

(C) countries should verify the end-use of items, materials, equipment, goods, and technologies that require import authorization by the Joint Commission but are not verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

(b) ACTIONS SPECIFIED.—The actions specified in this subsection are the following:

(1) Seeking immediate reinstitution and application of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), 1929 (2010), and 2224 (2015).

(2) Seeking the immediate adoption of a United Nations Security Council resolution that directs all United Nations member states to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer to Iran of all items listed in subsection (a)(i) of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718 (2006) in order to prevent Iran from arming itself while its commitment to international law is still in question.

(3) Working with international partners of the United States to seek the immediate reapplication of the regulations of the Council of the European Union concerning restrictive measures against Iran, as in effect on October 17, 2015.

(4) The immediate reapplication of the nuclear-related sanctions waived by the United States.

(5) Seeking the imposition of additional punitive sanctions with respect to Iran.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM.—The term ''highly enriched uranium'' means uranium with a 20 percent or higher concentration of the isotope uranium-235.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION DAY.—The term ''implementation day'' means January 16, 2016.

(3) JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION.—The term ''Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action'' means the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, agreed to at Vienna on July 14, 2015, by Iran and by the People's Republic of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and all implementing materials and agreements related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

(4) P5+1 COUNTRIES.—The term ''P5+1 countries'' means the United States, France, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

(5) SPENT FUEL.—The term ''spent fuel'' includes all types of irradiated fuel.

SENATE RESOLUTION 415—CONGRATULATING THE 2016 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS, THE VILLANOVA WILDCATS, FOR THEIR WIN IN THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 415

Whereas, on April 4, 2016, the Villanova Wildcats defeated the University of North Carolina Tar Heels by a score of 77 to 74 in the final game of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') Division I Men's Basketball Tournament in Houston, Texas;

Whereas the Villanova Wildcats hold 2 national men's basketball titles for winning NCAA championships in 1985 and 2016;

Whereas junior forward Kris Jenkins scored the last-second, game-winning 3-point shot;

Whereas the Villanova Wildcats shot 58.2 percent from the field during the tournament, the highest percentage since the 64-team bracket was introduced in 1985;

Whereas the Villanova Wildcats had the largest margin of victory in any Final Four game, beating the Oklahoma Sooners by 44 points;

Whereas senior guard Ryan Arcidiacono was named the Most Outstanding Player of the 2016 Final Four, averaging 15.5 points on 73-percent shooting in the 2 final games in Houston and providing the game-winning assist in the championship game;

Whereas Jay Wright was named the Naismith Coach of the Year for the second time;

Whereas during the 2015–2016 season, the Villanova Wildcats finished with a record of 35-5; and

Whereas Villanova University is committed to the ideal of the student athlete and the education of the athletes of Villanova University, as evidenced by the presence of 5 seniors and 3 juniors on the roster of the Villanova Wildcats: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and honors the Villanova University men's basketball team and its loyal fans on the performance of the team in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament; and

(2) recognizes and commends the hard work, dedication, determination, and commitment to excellence of the players, parents, families, coaches, and managers of the team.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3460. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

SA 3461. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3462. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3463. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3464. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3465. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3466. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3467. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3468. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3469. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3470. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3471. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3472. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3473. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3474. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3475. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3476. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3477. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3478. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3479. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3480. Mr. ISAKSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3481. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3482. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3483. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3484. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3485. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3486. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3487. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3488. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3489. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3490. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3491. Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3492. Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3493. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3494. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3495. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3496. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3497. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3498. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3499. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3500. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HELLER, Mr. REID, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3501. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3502. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3503. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3504. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3505. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3506. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3507. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3508. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3509. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3510. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3511. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3512. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. AYOTTE, and Ms. CANTWELL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3513. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3514. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3515. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3516. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3517. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3460. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 89, line 3, insert ''and any operational history of the person, as appropriate'' before the period at the end.

SA 3461. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 302, strike line 17 and all that follows through page 304, line 21 and insert the following:

(a) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall assess—

(1) Administration and industry readiness to meet the ADS–B mandate by 2020;

(2) changes to ADS–B program since May 2010; and

(3) additional options to comply with the mandate and consequences, both for individual system users and for the overall safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, for noncompliance.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward meeting the ADS–B mandate by 2020, including any recommendations of the Inspector General to carry out such mandate.

SA 3462. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 265, lines 19 and 20, strike ''(and any other victim of the accident, including any victim on the ground)'' and insert ''and the families of any other victim of the aircraft accident, including any victim on the ground,''.

On page 266, strike line 19 and all that follows through ''(D)'' on line 21, and insert the following:

(C) in paragraph (9), by inserting ''and the families of any other victim of the aircraft accident, including any victim on the ground,'' after ''nonrevenue passengers'';

(D) in paragraph (16), by striking ''major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(E)

SA 3463. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 130, between lines 18 and 19, insert the following:

(iv) facilities that store or utilize nuclear material; and

SA 3464. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.

In this Act, unless expressly provided otherwise, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

TITLE I—AUTHORIZATIONS

Subtitle A—Funding of FAA Programs

SEC. 1001. AIRPORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND NOISE COMPATIBILITY PLANNING AND PROGRAMS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Section 48103(a) is amended by striking ''section 47505(a)(2), and carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c) $3,350,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 and $2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''section 47505(a)(2), carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c), for an airport cooperative research program under section 44511, for Airports Technology-Safety research, and Airports Technology-Efficiency research, $3,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2016 and $3,750,000,000 for fiscal year 2017''.

(b) OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

SEC. 1002. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) through (5) and inserting the following:

''(1) $2,855,241,025 for fiscal year 2016.

''(2) $2,862,020,524 for fiscal year 2017.''.

SEC. 1003. FAA OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106(k)(1) is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (E) and inserting the following:

''(A) $9,910,009,314 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(B) $10,025,361,111 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(b) AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES.—Section 106(k)(2) is amended by striking ''for fiscal years 2012 through 2015'' each place it appears and inserting ''for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

(c) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER FUNDS.—Section 106(k)(3) is amended by striking ''2012 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 1004. FAA RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''44511-44513'' and inserting ''44512-44513''; and

(ii) by striking ''and, for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015, under subsection (g)'';

(B) in paragraph (8), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following:

''(9) $166,000,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(10) $169,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (3).

SEC. 1005. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

(a) AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND GUARANTEE.—Section 48114(a)(1)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The total budget resources made available from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund each fiscal year under sections 48101, 48102, 48103, and 106(k)—

''(i) shall in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017, be equal to the sum of—

''(I) 90 percent of the estimated level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for that fiscal year; and

''(II) the actual level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year minus the total amount made available for obligation from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year; and

''(ii) may be used only for the aviation investment programs listed in subsection (b)(1).''.

(b) ENFORCEMENT OF GUARANTEES.—Section 48114(c)(2) is amended by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2017''.

SEC. 1006. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) MARSHALL ISLANDS, MICRONESIA, AND PALAU.—Section 47115(j) is amended by striking ''2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' and inserting ''2017''.

(b) EXTENSION OF COMPATIBLE LAND USE PLANNING AND PROJECTS BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 47141(f) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT ON PARTICIPATION IN FAA PROGRAMS BY DISADVANTAGED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to Congress a report on the number of new small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including those owned by veterans, that participated in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act.

(2) NEW SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a new small business concern is a small business concern that did not participate in the programs and activities described in paragraph (1) in a previous fiscal year.

(3) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(A) a list of the top 25 and bottom 25 large and medium hub airports in terms of providing opportunities for small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals to participate in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act;

(B) the results of an assessment, to be conducted by the Inspector General, on the reasons why the top airports have been successful in providing such opportunities; and

(C) recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Congress on methods for other airports to achieve results similar to those of the top airports.

(d) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORT PROPERTIES.—Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

Subtitle B—Airport Improvement Program Modifications

SEC. 1201. SMALL AIRPORT REGULATION RELIEF.

Section 47114(c)(1)(F) is amended to read as follows:

''(F) SPECIAL RULE FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016 THROUGH 2017.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall apportion to a sponsor of an airport under that subparagraph for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017 an amount based on the number of passenger boardings at the airport during calendar year 2012 if the airport—

''(i) had 10,000 or more passenger boardings during calendar year 2012;

''(ii) had fewer than 10,000 passenger boardings during the calendar year used to calculate the apportionment for fiscal year 2016 or 2017 under subparagraph (A); and

''(iii) had scheduled air service in the calendar year used to calculate the apportionment.''.

SEC. 1202. PRIORITY REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN COLD WEATHER STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, to the extent practicable, shall schedule the Administrator's review of construction projects so that projects to be carried out in the States in which the weather during a typical calendar year prevents major construction projects from being carried out before May 1 are reviewed as early as possible.

(b) REPORT.—The Administrator shall update the appropriate committees of Congress annually on the effectiveness of the review and prioritization.

SEC. 1203. STATE BLOCK GRANTS UPDATES.

Section 47128(a) is amended by striking ''9 qualified States for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 and 10 qualified States for each fiscal year thereafter'' and inserting ''15 qualified States for fiscal year 2016 and each fiscal year thereafter''.

SEC. 1204. CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM UPDATES.

(a) SPECIAL RULE.—Section 47124(b)(1)(B) is amended by striking ''after such determination is made'' and inserting ''after the end of the period described in subsection (d)(6)(C)''.

(b) CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER COST-SHARE PROGRAM; FUNDING.—Section 47124(b)(3)(E) is amended to read as follows:

''(E) FUNDING.—Of the amounts appropriated under section 106(k)(1), such sums as may be necessary may be used to carry out this paragraph.''.

(c) CAP ON FEDERAL SHARE OF COST OF CONSTRUCTION.—Section 47124(b)(4)(C) is amended by striking ''$2,000,000'' and inserting ''$4,000,000''.

(d) COST BENEFIT RATIO REVISION.—Section 47124 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) COST BENEFIT RATIOS.—

''(1) CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER PROGRAM AT COST-SHARE AIRPORTS.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, if an air traffic control tower is operating under the Cost-share Program, the Secretary shall annually calculate a new benefit-to-cost ratio for the tower.

''(2) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM AT NON-COST-SHARE AIRPORTS.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, if a tower is operating under the Contract Tower Program and continued under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall not calculate a new benefit-to-cost ratio for the tower unless the annual aircraft traffic at the airport where the tower is located decreases by more than 25 percent from the previous year or by more than 60 percent over a 3-year period.

''(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing a benefit-to-cost ratio under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2), the Secretary may consider only the following costs:

''(A) The Federal Aviation Administration's actual cost of wages and benefits of personnel working at the tower.

''(B) The Federal Aviation Administration's actual telecommunications costs of the tower.

''(C) Relocation and replacement costs of equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration associated with the tower, if paid for by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(D) Logistics, such as direct costs associated with establishing or updating the tower's interface with other systems and equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration, if paid for by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(4) EXCLUSIONS.—In establishing a benefit-to-cost ratio under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2), the Secretary may not consider the following costs:

''(A) Airway facilities costs, including labor and other costs associated with maintaining and repairing the systems and equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(B) Costs for depreciating the building and equipment owned by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(C) Indirect overhead costs of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(D) Costs for utilities, janitorial, and other services paid for or provided by the airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is located.

''(E) The cost of new or replacement equipment, or construction of a new or replacement tower, if the costs incurred were incurred by the airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is or will be located.

''(F) Other expenses of the Federal Aviation Administration not directly associated with the actual operation of the tower.

''(5) MARGIN OF ERROR.—The Secretary shall add a 5 percent margin of error to a benefit-to-cost ratio determination to acknowledge and account for any direct or indirect factors that are not included in the criteria the Secretary used in calculating the benefit-to-cost ratio.

''(6) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish procedures—

''(A) to allow an airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is located not less than 90 days following the receipt of an initial benefit-to-cost ratio determination from the Secretary—

''(i) to request the Secretary reconsider that determination; and

''(ii) to submit updated or additional data to the Secretary in support of the reconsideration;

''(B) to allow the Secretary not more than 90 days to review the data submitted under subparagraph (A)(ii) and respond to the request under subparagraph (A)(i);

''(C) to allow the airport, State, or political subdivision of a State, as applicable, 30 days following the date of the response under subparagraph (B) to review the response before any action is taken based on a benefit-to-cost determination; and

''(D) to provide, after the end of the period described in subparagraph (C), an 18-month grace period before cost-share payments are due from the airport, State, or political subdivision of a State if as a result of the benefit-to-cost ratio determination the airport, State, or political subdivision, as applicable, is required to transition to the Cost-share Program.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—The term 'Contract Tower Program' means the level I air traffic control tower contract program established under subsection (a) and continued under subsection (b)(1).

''(2) COST-SHARE PROGRAM.—The term 'Cost-share Program' means the cost-share program established under subsection (b)(3).''.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 47124(b) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking ''the program established under paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''the Cost-share Program'';

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER PROGRAM'' and inserting ''COST-SHARE PROGRAM'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''contract tower program established under subsection (a) and continued under paragraph (1) (in this paragraph referred to as the 'Contract Tower Program')'' and inserting ''Contract Tower Program'';

(C) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''In carrying out the program'' and inserting ''In carrying out the Cost-share Program'';

(D) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''participate in the program'' and inserting ''participate in the Cost-share Program'';

(E) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''under the program'' and inserting ''under the Cost-share Program''; and

(F) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''the program continued under paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''the Contract Tower Program''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)(B)(i)(I), by striking ''contract tower program established under subsection (a) and continued under paragraph (1) or the pilot program established under paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''Contract Tower Program or the Cost-share Program''.

(f) EXEMPTION.—Section 47124(b)(3)(D) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''Airports with both Part 121 air service and more than 25,000 passenger enplanements in calendar year 2014 shall be exempt from any cost share requirement under the Cost-share Program.''.

(g) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Notwithstanding the amendments made by this section, the towers for which assistance is being provided under section 41724 of title 49, United States Code, on the day before the date of enactment of this Act may continue to be provided such assistance under the terms of that section as in effect on that day.

SEC. 1205. APPROVAL OF CERTAIN APPLICATIONS FOR THE CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration has not implemented a revised cost-benefit methodology for purposes of determining eligibility for the Contract Tower Program before the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, any air traffic control tower with an application for participation in the Contract Tower Program pending as of January 1, 2016, shall be approved for participation in the Contract Tower Program if the Administrator determines the tower is eligible under the criteria set forth in the Federal Aviation Administration report, Establishment and Discontinuance Criteria for Airport Traffic Control Towers, dated August 1990 (FAA–APO–90–7).

(b) REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The Administrator shall respond not later than 30 days after the date the Administrator receives a formal request from an airport and air traffic control contractor for additional authority to expand contract tower operational hours and staff to accommodate flight traffic outside of current tower operational hours.

(c) DEFINITION OF CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—In this section, the term ''Contract Tower Program'' has the meaning given the term in section 47124(e) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 1206. REMOTE TOWERS.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish—

(A) in consultation with airport operators and general aviation users, a pilot program at public-use airports to construct and operate remote towers; and

(B) a selection process for participation in the pilot program.

(2) SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the pilot program, the Administrator shall consult with operators of remote towers in foreign countries to design the pilot program in a manner that leverages as many safety and airspace efficiency benefits as possible.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In selecting the airports for participation in the pilot program, the Administrator shall—

(A) to the extent practicable, ensure that at least 2 different vendors of remote tower systems participate;

(B) include at least 1 airport currently in the Contract Tower Program and at least 1 airport that does not have an air traffic control tower; and

(C) clearly identify the research questions that will be addressed at each airport.

(4) RESEARCH.—In selecting an airport for participation in the pilot program, the Administrator shall consider—

(A) how inclusion of that airport will add research value to assist the Administrator in evaluating the feasibility, safety, and cost-benefits of remote towers;

(B) the amount and variety of air traffic at an airport; and

(C) the costs and benefits of including that airport.

(5) DATA.—The Administrator shall clearly identify and collect air traffic control information and data from participating airports that will assist the Administrator in evaluating the feasibility, safety, and cost-benefits of remote towers.

(6) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date the first remote tower is operational, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report—

(A) detailing any benefits, costs, or safety improvements associated with the use of the remote towers; and

(B) evaluating the feasibility of using remote towers, particularly in the Contract Tower Program and for airports without any air traffic control tower, or to improve safety at airports with towers.

(7) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall select airports for participation in the pilot program.

(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—The term ''Contract Tower Program'' has the meaning given the term in section 47124(e) of title 49, United States Code.

(B) REMOTE TOWER.—The term ''remote tower'' means a system whereby air traffic services are provided to operators at an airport from a location that may not be on or near the airport.

(b) AIP FUNDING ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of the pilot program under subsection (a), and after certificated systems are available, constructing a remote tower or acquiring and installing air traffic control, communications, or related equipment for a remote tower shall be considered airport development (as defined in section 47102 of title 49, United States Code) for purposes of subchapter I of chapter 471 of that title if components are installed and used at the airport, except for off-airport sensors installed on leased towers, as needed.

SEC. 1207. MIDWAY ISLAND AIRPORT.

Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' and inserting ''and for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 1208. AIRPORT ROAD FUNDING.

(a) AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT GRANT ASSURANCES.—Section 47107(b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) This subsection does not prevent the use of airport revenue for the maintenance and improvement of the on-airport portion of a surface transportation facility providing access to an airport and non-airport locations if the surface transportation facility is owned or operated by the airport owner or operator and the use of airport revenue is prorated to airport use and limited to portions of the facility located on the airport. The Secretary shall determine the maximum percentage contribution of airport revenue toward surface transportation facility maintenance or improvement, taking into consideration the current and projected use of the surface transportation facility located on the airport for airport and non-airport purposes. The de minimus use, as determined by the Secretary, of a surface transportation facility for non-airport purposes shall not require prorating.''.

(b) RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF AIRPORT REVENUE.—Section 47133(c) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''Nothing'' and indenting appropriately; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) Nothing in this section may be construed to prevent the use of airport revenue for the prorated maintenance and improvement costs of the on-airport portion of the surface transportation facility, subject to the provisions of section 47107(b)(4).''.

SEC. 1209. REPEAL OF INHERENTLY LOW-EMISSION AIRPORT VEHICLE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 47136 is repealed.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by striking the item relating to section 47136 and inserting the following:

''47136. [Reserved].''.

SEC. 1210. MODIFICATION OF ZERO-EMISSION AIRPORT VEHICLES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 47136a is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking '', including'' and inserting ''used exclusively for transporting passengers on-airport or for employee shuttle buses within the airport, including''; and

(2) in subsection (f), by inserting '', as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016,'' after ''section 47136''.

SEC. 1211. REPEAL OF AIRPORT GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT EMISSIONS RETROFIT PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 47140 is repealed.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by striking the item relating to section 47140 and inserting the following:

''47140. [Reserved].''.

SEC. 1212. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY FOR AIRPORT ENERGY EFFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS.

(a) COST REIMBURSEMENTS.—Section 47140a(a) is amended by striking ''airport.'' and inserting ''airport, and to reimburse the airport sponsor for the costs incurred in conducting the assessment.''.

(b) SAFETY PRIORITY.—Section 47140a(b)(2) is amended by inserting '', including a certification that no safety projects would be deferred by prioritizing a grant under this section,'' after ''an application''.

SEC. 1213. RECYCLING PLANS; SAFETY PROJECTS AT UNCLASSIFIED AIRPORTS.

Section 47106(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (6)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''for an airport that has an airport master plan, the master plan addresses'' and inserting ''a master plan project, it will address''; and

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) if the project is at an unclassified airport, the project will be funded with an amount apportioned under subsection 47114(d)(3)(B) and is—

''(A) for maintenance of the pavement of the primary runway;

''(B) for obstruction removal for the primary runway;

''(C) for the rehabilitation of the primary runway; or

''(D) a project that the Secretary considers necessary for the safe operation of the airport.''.

SEC. 1214. TRANSFERS OF INSTRUMENT LANDING SYSTEMS.

Section 44502(e) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting ''An airport may

transfer, without consideration, to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration an instrument landing system consisting of a glide slope and localizer that conforms to performance specifications of the Administrator if an airport improvement project grant was used to assist in purchasing the system, and if the Federal Aviation Administration has determined that a satellite navigation system cannot provide a suitable approach.''.

SEC. 1215. NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47143. Non-movement area surveillance surface display systems pilot program

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may carry out a pilot program to support non-Federal acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors if—

''(1) the Administrator determines that acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors improve safety or capacity in the National Airspace System; and

''(2) the non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors are supplemental to existing movement area systems and sensors at the selected airports established under other programs administered by the Administrator.

''(b) PROJECT GRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out the pilot program, the Administrator may make a project grant out of funds apportioned under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2) of section 47114(c) to not more than 5 eligible sponsors to acquire and install qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors. The Administrator may distribute not more than $2,000,000 per sponsor from the discretionary fund. The airports selected to participate in the pilot program shall have existing Federal Aviation Administration movement area systems and airlines that are participants in Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Collaborative Decision Making process.

''(2) PROCEDURES.—In accordance with the authority under section 106, the Administrator may establish procurement procedures applicable to grants issued under this subsection. The procedures may permit the sponsor to carry out the project with vendors that have been accepted in the procurement procedure or using Federal Aviation Administration contracts. The procedures may provide for the direct reimbursement (including administrative costs) of the Administrator by the sponsor using grant funds under this subsection, for the ordering of system-related equipment and its installation, or for the direct ordering of system-related equipment and its installation by the sponsor, using such grant funds, from the suppliers with which the Administrator has contracted.

''(3) DATA EXCHANGE PROCESSES.—The Administrator may establish data exchange processes to allow airport participation in the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Collaborative Decision Making process and fusion of the non-movement surveillance data with the Administration's movement area systems.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) NON-MOVEMENT AREA.—The term 'non-movement area' is the portion of the airfield surface that is not under the control of air traffic control.

''(2) NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term 'non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors' is a non-Federal surveillance system that uses on-airport sensors that track vehicles or aircraft that are equipped with transponders in the non-movement area.

''(3) QUALIFYING NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term 'qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors' is a non-movement area surveillance surface display system that—

''(A) provides the required transmit and receive data formats consistent with the National Airspace System architecture at the appropriate service delivery point;

''(B) is on-airport; and

''(C) is airport operated.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of chapter 471 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47142 the following:

''47143. Non-movement area surveillance surface display systems pilot program.''.

SEC. 1216. AMENDMENTS TO DEFINITIONS.

Section 47102 is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (28) as paragraphs (12) through (30), respectively;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by redesignating clauses (iii) through (x) as clauses (iv) through (xi), respectively; and

(ii) by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

''(II) security equipment owned and operated by the airport, including explosive detection devices, universal access control systems, perimeter fencing, and emergency call boxes, which the Secretary may require by regulation for, or approve as contributing significantly to, the security of individuals and property at the airport;

''(III) safety apparatus owned and operated by the airport, which the Secretary may require by regulation for, or approve as contributing significantly to, the safety of individuals and property at the airport, and integrated in-pavement lighting systems for runways and taxiways and other runway and taxiway incursion prevention devices;'';

(B) in subparagraph (K), by striking ''such project will result in an airport receiving appropriate'' and inserting ''the airport would be able to receive''; and

(C) in subparagraph (L)—

(i) by striking ''or conversion of vehicles and'' and inserting ''of vehicles used exclusively for transporting passengers on-airport, employee shuttle buses within the airport, or'';

(ii) by striking ''airport, to'' and inserting ''airport and equipped with''; and

(iii) by striking ''7505a) and if such project will result in an airport receiving appropriate'' and inserting ''7505a)) and if the airport would be able to receive'';

(4) in paragraph (5), by striking ''regulations'' and inserting ''requirements'';

(5) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following:

''(7) 'categorized airport' means a nonprimary airport that has an identified role in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.'';

(6) in paragraph (9), as redesignated, by striking ''public'' and inserting ''public-use'';

(7) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated, the following:

''(11) 'joint use airport' means an airport owned by the Department of Defense, at which both military and civilian aircraft make shared use of the airfield.'';

(8) in paragraph (24), as redesignated, by amending subparagraph (B)(i) to read as follows:

''(i) determined by the Secretary to have at least—

''(I) 100 based aircraft that are currently registered with the Federal Aviation Administration under chapter 445 of this title; and

''(II) 1 based jet aircraft that is currently registered with the Federal Aviation Administration where, for the purposes of this clause, 'based' means the aircraft or jet aircraft overnights at the airport for the greater part of the year; or''; and

(9) by adding at the end the following:

''(31) 'unclassified airport' means a nonprimary airport that is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems that is not categorized by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration in the most current report entitled General Aviation Airports: A National Asset.''.

SEC. 1217. CLARIFICATION OF NOISE EXPOSURE MAP UPDATES.

Section 47503(b) is amended—

(1) by striking ''a change in the operation of the airport would establish'' and inserting ''there is a change in the operation of the airport that would establish''; and

(2) by inserting after ''reduction'' the following: ''if the change has occurred during the longer of—

''(1) the noise exposure map period forecast by the airport operator under subsection (a); or

''(2) the implementation timeframe of the operator's noise compatibility program''.

SEC. 1218. PROVISION OF FACILITIES.

Section 44502 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) AIRPORT SPACE.—

''(1) RESTRICTION.—The Administrator may not require an airport owner or sponsor (as defined in section 47102) to provide to the Federal Aviation Administration without cost any of the following:

''(A) Building construction, maintenance, utilities, or expenses for services relating to air traffic control, air navigation, or weather reporting.

''(B) Space in a facility owned by the airport owner or sponsor for services relating to air traffic control, air navigation, or weather reporting.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect—

''(A) any agreement the Secretary may have or make with an airport owner or sponsor for the airport owner or sponsor to provide any of the items described in subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) at below-market rates; or

''(B) any grant assurance that requires an airport owner or sponsor to provide land to the Administration without cost for an air traffic control facility.''.

SEC. 1219. CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report—

(1) which includes public and stakeholder input, and examines all safety risks, hazard effects, efficiency and operational effects on airports, airlines, and other stakeholders that could result from loss of contract weather observer service at the 57 airports targeted for the loss of this service;

(2) detailing how the Federal Aviation Administration will accurately report rapidly changing severe weather conditions at these airports, including thunderstorms, lightning, fog, visibility, smoke, dust, haze, cloud layers and ceilings, ice pellets, and freezing rain or drizzle without contract weather observers; and

(3) indicating how airports can comply with applicable Federal Aviation Administration orders governing weather observations given the current documented limitations of automated surface observing systems.

(b) MORATORIUM.—The Administrator may not finalize any determination regarding the continued use of the contract weather observer service at any airport until after the date the report is submitted under subsection (a).

(c) REPORT ON GOLDEN TRIANGLE INITIATIVE OF NOAA.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall jointly submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Golden Triangle Initiative of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the impacts of enhanced aviation forecast services provided as part of the Golden Triangle Initiative on weather-related air traffic delays.

(B) A description of the costs of providing such enhanced aviation forecast services.

(C) A description of potential alternative mechanisms to provide enhanced aviation forecast services comparable to such enhanced aviation forecast services for airports in rural or low population density areas.

SEC. 1220. FEDERAL SHARE ADJUSTMENT.

Section 47109(a)(5) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) 95 percent for a project at an airport for which the United States Government's share would otherwise be capped at 90 percent under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3) if the Administrator determines that the project is a successive phase of a multiphased construction project for which the sponsor received a grant in fiscal year 2011 or earlier.''.

SEC. 1221. MISCELLANEOUS TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) AIRPORT SECURITY PROGRAM.—Section 47137 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Transportation'' and inserting ''Homeland Security'';

(2) in subsection (e), by striking ''Homeland Security'' and inserting ''Transportation''; and

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting ''of Transportation'' after ''Secretary'' the first place it appears.

(b) SECTION 516 PROPERTY CONVEYANCE RELEASES.—Section 817(a) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47125 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''or section 23'' and inserting '', section 23''; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', or section 47125 of title 49, United States Code''.

SEC. 1222. MOTHERS' ROOMS AT AIRPORTS.

(a) LACTATION AREA DEFINED.—Section 47102, as amended by section 1216 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (12) through (31) as paragraphs (13) through (32), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

''(12) 'lactation area' means a room or other location in a commercial service airport that—

''(A) provides a location for members of the public to express breast milk that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from the public;

''(B) has a door that can be locked;

''(C) includes a place to sit, a table or other flat surface, and an electrical outlet;

''(D) is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs; and

''(E) is not located in a restroom.''.

(b) PROJECT GRANTS WRITTEN ASSURANCES FOR LARGE AND MEDIUM HUB AIRPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 47107(a) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (20), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (21), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(22) with respect to a medium or large hub airport, the airport owner or operator will maintain a lactation area in each passenger terminal building of the airport in the sterile area (as defined in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations) of the building.''.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to a project grant application submitted for a fiscal year beginning on or after the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) SPECIAL RULE.—The requirement in the amendments made by paragraph (1) that a lactation area be located in the sterile area of a passenger terminal building shall not apply with respect to a project grant application for a period of time, determined by the Secretary of Transportation, if the Secretary determines that construction or maintenance activities make it impracticable or unsafe for the lactation area to be located in the sterile area of the building.

(c) TERMINAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS.—Section 47119(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) LACTATION AREAS.—In addition to the projects described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may approve a project for terminal development for the construction or installation of a lactation area at a commercial service airport.''.

(d) PRE-EXISTING FACILITIES.—On application by an airport sponsor, the Secretary of Transportation may determine that a lactation area in existence on the date of enactment of this Act complies with the requirement of paragraph (22) of section 47107(a) of title 49, United States Code, as added by subsection (b), notwithstanding the absence of one of the facilities or characteristics referred to in the definition of the term ''lactation area'' in paragraph (12) of section 47102 of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 1223. ELIGIBILITY FOR AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AT AIRPORTS THAT ENTER INTO CERTAIN LEASES WITH COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 47107, as amended by section 1208 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(t) AIRPORTS THAT ENTER INTO CERTAIN LEASES WITH THE ARMED FORCES.—The Secretary of Transportation may not disapprove a project grant application under this subchapter for an airport development project at an airport solely because the airport renews a lease for the use, at a nominal rate, of airport property by a regular or reserve component of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard.''.

SEC. 1224. CLARIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF AVIATION-RELATED ACTIVITY FOR HANGAR USE.

Section 47107, as amended by section 1223 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(u) CONSTRUCTION OF RECREATIONAL AIRCRAFT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The construction of a covered aircraft shall be treated as an aeronautical activity for purposes of—

''(A) determining an airport's compliance with a grant assurance made under this section or any other provision of law; and

''(B) the receipt of Federal financial assistance for airport development.

''(2) COVERED AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'covered aircraft' means an aircraft—

''(A) used or intended to be used exclusively for recreational purposes; and

''(B) constructed or under construction, repair, or restoration by a private individual at a general aviation airport.''.

SEC. 1225. USE OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS FOR RUNWAY SAFETY REPAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47144. Use of funds for repairs for runway safety repairs

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may make project grants under this subchapter to an airport described in subsection (b) from funds under section 47114 apportioned to that airport or funds available for discretionary grants to that airport under section 47115 to conduct airport development to repair the runway safety area of the airport damaged as a result of a natural disaster in order to maintain compliance with the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration relating to runway safety areas, without regard to whether construction of the runway safety area damaged was carried out using amounts the airport received under this subchapter.

''(b) AIRPORTS DESCRIBED.—An airport is described in this subsection if—

''(1) the airport is a public-use airport;

''(2) the airport is listed in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems of the Federal Aviation Administration;

''(3) the runway safety area of the airport was damaged as a result of a natural disaster;

''(4) the airport was denied funding under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 4121 et seq.) with respect to the disaster;

''(5) the operator of the airport has exhausted all legal remedies, including legal action against any parties (or insurers thereof) whose action or inaction may have contributed to the need for the repair of the runway safety area;

''(6) there is still a demonstrated need for the runway safety area to accommodate current or imminent aeronautical demand; and

''(7) the cost of repairing or replacing the runway safety area is reasonable in relation to the anticipated operational benefit of repairing the runway safety area, as determined by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 471, as amended by this

subtitle, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47143 the following:

''47144. Use of funds for repairs for runway safety repairs.''.

Subtitle C—Passenger Facility Charges

SEC. 1301. PFC STREAMLINING.

(a) PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGES; GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Section 40117(b)(4) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking '', if the Secretary finds—'' and inserting a period; and

(2) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B).

(b) PILOT PROGRAM FOR PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGE AUTHORIZATIONS AT NONHUB AIRPORTS.—Section 40117(l) is amended—

(1) in the heading by striking ''NONHUB'' and inserting ''CERTAIN''; and

(2) in paragraph (1), by striking ''nonhub'' and inserting ''nonhub, small hub, medium hub, and large hub''.

SEC. 1302. INTERMODAL ACCESS PROJECTS.

Section 40117 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) PFC ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMODAL GROUND ACCESS PROJECTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may authorize a passenger facility charge imposed under subsection (b)(1) to be used to finance the eligible capital costs of an intermodal ground access project.

''(2) DEFINITION OF INTERMODAL GROUND ACCESS PROJECT.—In this subsection, the term 'intermodal ground access project' means a project for constructing a local facility owned or operated by an eligible agency that—

''(A) is located on airport property; and

''(B) is directly and substantially related to the movement of passengers or property traveling in air transportation.

''(3) ELIGIBLE CAPITAL COSTS.—The eligible capital costs of an intermodal ground access project shall be the lesser of—

''(A) the total capital cost of the project multiplied by the ratio that the number of individuals projected to use the project to gain access to or depart from the airport bears to the total number of individuals projected to use the local facility; or

''(B) the total cost of the capital improvements that are located on airport property.

''(4) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall determine the projected use and cost of a project for purposes of paragraph (3) at the time the project is approved under this subsection, except that, in the case of a project to be financed in part using funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration, the Secretary shall use the travel forecasting model for the project at the time the project is approved by the Federal Transit Administration to enter preliminary engineering to determine the projected use and cost of the project for purposes of paragraph (3).

''(5) NONATTAINMENT AREAS.—For airport property, any area of which is located in a nonattainment area (as defined under section 171 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501)) for 1 or more criteria pollutant, the airport emissions reductions from less airport surface transportation and parking as a direct result of the development of an intermodal project on the airport property would be eligible for air quality emissions credits.''.

SEC. 1303. USE OF REVENUE AT A PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED AIRPORT.

Section 40117, as amended by section 1302 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(o) USE OF REVENUES AT A PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED AIRPORT.—Notwithstanding the requirements relating to airport control under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may authorize use of a passenger facility charge under subsection (b) to finance an eligible airport-related project if—

''(1) the eligible agency seeking to impose the new charge controls an airport where a $2.00 passenger facility charge became effective on January 1, 2013; and

''(2) the location of the project to be financed by the new charge is at an airport that was under the control of the same eligible agency that had controlled the airport described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 1304. FUTURE AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCING STUDY.

(a) FUTURE AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCING STUDY.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall enter into an agreement with the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies to conduct a study and make recommendations on the actions needed to upgrade and restore the national aviation infrastructure system to its role as a premier system that meets the growing and shifting demands of the 21st century, including airport infrastructure needs and existing financial resources for commercial service airports.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the study, the Transportation Research Board shall convene and consult with a panel of national experts, including—

(1) nonhub airports;

(2) small hub airports;

(3) medium hub airports;

(4) large hub airports;

(5) airports with international service;

(6) non-primary airports;

(7) local elected officials;

(8) relevant labor organizations;

(9) passengers;

(10) air carriers; and

(11) representatives of the tourism industry.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the study, the Transportation Research Board shall consider—

(1) the ability of airport infrastructure to meet current and projected passenger volumes;

(2) the available financial tools and resources for airports of different sizes;

(3) the current debt held by airports, and its impact on future construction and capacity needs;

(4) the impact of capacity constraints on passengers and ticket prices;

(5) the purchasing power of the passenger facility charge from the last increase in 2000 to the year of enactment of this Act;

(6) the impact to passengers and airports of indexing the passenger facility charge for inflation;

(7) how long airports are constrained with current passenger facility charge collections;

(8) the impact of passenger facility charges to promote competition;

(9) the additional resources or options to fund terminal construction projects;

(10) the resources eligible for use toward noise reduction and emission reduction projects;

(11) the gap between AIP-eligible projects and the annual Federal funding provided;

(12) the impact of regulatory requirements on airport infrastructure financing needs;

(13) airline competition;

(14) airline ancillary fees and their impact on ticket pricing and taxable revenue; and

(15) the ability of airports to finance necessary safety, security, capacity, and environmental projects identified in capital improvement plans.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Transportation Research Board shall submit to the Secretary and the appropriate committees of Congress a report on its findings and recommendations.

(e) FUNDING.—The Secretary is authorized to use such sums as are necessary to carry out the requirements of this section.

TITLE II—SAFETY

Subtitle A—Unmanned Aircraft Systems Reform

SEC. 2001. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Unless expressly provided otherwise, the terms used in this subtitle have the meanings given the terms in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

(b) DEFINITION OF CIVIL AIRCRAFT.—The term ''civil aircraft'' has the meaning given the term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

PART I—PRIVACY AND TRANSPARENCY

SEC. 2101. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS PRIVACY POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that the operation of any unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system shall be carried out in a manner that respects and protects personal privacy consistent with the United States Constitution and Federal, State, and local law.

SEC. 2102. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) each person that uses an unmanned aircraft system for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise, except for news gathering, should have a written privacy policy consistent with section 2101 that is appropriate to the nature and scope of the activities regarding the collection, use, retention, dissemination, and deletion of any data collected during the operation of an unmanned aircraft system;

(2) each privacy policy described in paragraph (1) should be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary; and

(3) each privacy policy described in paragraph (1) should be publicly available.

SEC. 2103. FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION AUTHORITY.

A violation of a privacy policy by a person that uses an unmanned aircraft system for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise, in the national airspace system shall be an unfair and deceptive practice in violation of section 5(a) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)).

SEC. 2104. NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESS.

Not later than July 31, 2016, the Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the industry privacy best practices developed through the multi-stakeholder engagement process (established under Presidential Memorandum of February 15, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 9355)) on unmanned aircraft systems transparency and accountability. In addition to the agreed upon best practices, this report shall include relevant stakeholder recommendations for legislative or regulatory action regarding privacy, accountability, and transparency, including ways to encourage the adoption of privacy policies by companies that use unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise. The report shall take into account existing rights protected under the

First Amendment to the United States Constitution in public spaces and the First Amendment rights of journalists to control their archives.

SEC. 2105. IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, and in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the President of RTCA, Inc., and the Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, shall convene industry stakeholders to facilitate the development of consensus standards for remotely identifying operators and owners of unmanned aircraft systems and associated unmanned aircraft.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—As part of the standards developed under subsection (a), the Director shall consider—

(1) requirements for remote identification of unmanned aircraft systems;

(2) appropriate requirements for different classifications of unmanned aircraft systems operations, including public and civil;

(3) the role of manufacturers, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the owners of the systems described in paragraphs (1) and (2) in reporting and verifying identification data; and

(4) the feasibility of the development and operation of a publicly searchable online database to further enable the immediate remote identification of any unmanned aircraft and its operator by the general public and potential exceptions to inclusion in the online database.

(c) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the consensus identification standards.

(d) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after the date that the Director submits the report on the consensus identification standards under subsection (c), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulatory guidance based on the consensus identification standards.

SEC. 2106. COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except for model aircraft under section 44808 of title 49, United States Code, in authorizing the operation of any public unmanned aircraft system or the operation of any unmanned aircraft system by a person conducting civil aircraft operations, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, to the extent practicable and consistent with applicable law and without compromising national security, homeland defense, or law enforcement, shall make the identifying information in subsection (b) available to the public via an easily searchable online database. The Administrator shall place a clear and conspicuous link to the database on the home page of the Federal Aviation Administration's website.

(b) CONTENTS.—The database described in subsection (a) shall contain the following:

(1) The name of each individual, or agency, as applicable, authorized to conduct civil or public unmanned aircraft systems operations described in subsection (a).

(2) The name of each owner of an unmanned aircraft system described in paragraph (1).

(3) The expiration date of any authorization related to a person identified in paragraph (1) or paragraph (2).

(4) The contact information for each person identified in paragraphs (1) and (2), including a telephone number and an electronic mail address, in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

(5) The tail number or specific identification number of all unmanned aircraft authorized for use that links each unmanned aircraft to the owner of that aircraft.

(6) For any unmanned aircraft system that will collect personally identifiable information about individuals, including the use of facial recognition—

(A) the circumstance under which the system will be used;

(B) the specific kinds of personally identifiable information that the system will collect about individuals; and

(C) how the information referred to in subparagraph (B), and the conclusions drawn from such information, will be used, disclosed, and otherwise handled, including—

(i) how the collection or retention of such information that is unrelated to the specific use will be minimized;

(ii) under what circumstances such information might be sold, leased, or otherwise provided to third parties;

(iii) the period during which such information will be retained;

(iv) when and how such information, including information no longer relevant to the specified use, will be destroyed; and

(v) steps that will be used to protect against the unauthorized disclosure of any information or data, such as the use of encryption methods and other security features.

(7) With respect to public unmanned aircraft systems—

(A) the locations where the unmanned aircraft system will operate;

(B) the time during which the unmanned aircraft system will operate;

(C) the general purpose of the flight; and

(D) the technical capabilities that the unmanned aircraft system possesses.

(c) RECORDS.—Each person described in subsection (b)(1), to the extent practicable without compromising national security, homeland defense, or law enforcement shall maintain and make available to the Administrator for not less than 1 year a record of the name and contact information of each person on whose behalf the unmanned aircraft system has been operated.

(d) DEADLINE.—The Administrator shall make the database available not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) TERMINATION.—The Administrator may cease the operation of such database on September 30, 2017.

SEC. 2107. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT REMEDIES UNDER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL JURISDICTIONS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a review of the privacy issues and concerns associated with the operation of unmanned aircraft systems in the national airspace system that—

(1) examines and identifies the existing Federal, State, or local laws, including constitutional law, that address an individual's personal privacy;

(2) identifies specific issues and concerns that may limit the availability of existing civil or criminal legal remedies regarding inappropriate operation of unmanned aircraft systems in the national airspace system;

(3) identifies any deficiencies in current Federal, State, or local privacy protections; and

(4) recommends legislative or other actions to address the limitations and deficiencies identified in paragraphs (2) and (3).

PART II—UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

SEC. 2121. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part A of subtitle VII is amended by inserting after chapter 447 the following:

"CHAPTER 448—UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

''Sec.
''44801. Definitions.

"§ 44801. Definitions

''In this chapter—

''(1) 'appropriate committees of Congress' means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

''(2) 'Arctic' means the United States zone of the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and Bering Sea north of the Aleutian chain.

''(3) 'certificate of waiver' and 'certificate of authorization' mean a Federal Aviation Administration grant of approval for a specific flight operation.

''(4) 'permanent areas' means areas on land or water that provide for launch, recovery, and operation of small unmanned aircraft.

''(5) 'public unmanned aircraft system' means an unmanned aircraft system that meets the qualifications and conditions required for operation of a public aircraft (as defined in section 40102(a)).

''(6) 'sense and avoid capability' means the capability of an unmanned aircraft to remain a safe distance from and to avoid collisions with other airborne aircraft.

''(7) 'small unmanned aircraft' means an unmanned aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached to or carried by the aircraft.

''(8) 'test range' means a defined geographic area where research and development are conducted as authorized by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(9) 'test site' means any of the 6 test ranges established by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, and any public entity authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration as an unmanned aircraft system flight test center before January 1, 2009.

''(10) 'unmanned aircraft' means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

''(11) 'unmanned aircraft system' means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft) that are required for the operator to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.''.

(b) TABLE OF CHAPTERS.—The table of chapters for subtitle VII is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 447 the following:

''448. Unmanned Aircraft Systems .... 44801''.

SEC. 2122. UTILIZATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM TEST SITES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as designated by section 2121 of this Act, is amended by inserting after section 44801 the following:

"§ 44802. Unmanned aircraft system test sites

''(a)(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish and update, as appropriate, a program for the use of the 6 test sites established under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C.

40101 note), and any public entity authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration as an unmanned aircraft system flight test center before January 1, 2009, to facilitate the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

''(2) TERMINATION.—The program shall terminate on September 30, 2017.

''(b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In establishing the program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

''(1) designate airspace for safely testing the integration of unmanned flight operations in the national airspace system;

''(2) develop operational standards and air traffic requirements for unmanned flight operations at test sites, including test ranges;

''(3) coordinate with and leverage the resources of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Defense;

''(4) address both civil and public unmanned aircraft systems;

''(5) ensure that the program is coordinated with relevant aspects of the Next Generation Air Transportation System;

''(6) provide for verification of the safety of unmanned aircraft systems and related navigation procedures as it relates to continued development of standards for integration into the national airspace system;

''(7) engage each test site operator in projects for research, development, testing, and evaluation of unmanned aircraft systems to facilitate the Federal Aviation Administration's development of standards for the safe integration of unmanned aircraft into the national airspace system, which may include solutions for—

''(A) developing and enforcing geographic and altitude limitations;

''(B) classifications of airspace where manufacturers must prevent flight of an unmanned aircraft system;

''(C) classifications of airspace where manufacturers of unmanned aircraft systems must alert the operator to hazards or limitations on flight;

''(D) sense and avoid capabilities;

''(E) beyond-line-of-sight, nighttime operations and unmanned traffic management, or other critical research priorities; and

''(F) improving privacy protections through the use of advances in unmanned aircraft systems technology;

''(8) coordinate periodically with all test site operators to ensure test site operators know which data should be collected, what procedures should be followed, and what research would advance efforts to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system;

''(9) allow a test site to develop multiple test ranges within the test site;

''(10) streamline the approval process for test sites when processing unmanned aircraft certificates of waiver or authorization for operations at the test sites;

''(11) require each test site operator to protect proprietary technology, sensitive data, or sensitive research of any civil or private entity when using that test site without the need to obtain an experimental or special airworthiness certificate;

''(12) evaluate options for the operation of 1 or more small unmanned aircraft systems beyond the visual line of sight of the operator for testing under controlled conditions that ensure the safety of persons and property, including on the ground; and

''(13) allow test site operators to receive Federal funding, other than from the Federal Aviation Administration, including in-kind contributions, from test site participants in the furtherance of research, development, and testing objectives.

''(c) TEST SITE LOCATIONS.—In determining the location of a test site under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

''(1) take into consideration geographic and climatic diversity;

''(2) take into consideration the location of ground infrastructure and research needs; and

''(3) consult with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Secretary of Defense.

''(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the establishment and implementation of the program under subsection (a).

''(2) BRIEFINGS.—Beginning 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, and every 180 days thereafter until September 30, 2017, the Administrator shall provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing that includes—

''(A) a current summary of unmanned aircraft systems operations at the test sites since the last briefing to Congress;

''(B) a description of all of the data generated from the operations described in subparagraph (A), and shared with the Federal Aviation Administration through a cooperative research and development agreement authorized in section 2123 of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, that relate to unmanned aircraft systems research priorities, including beyond-line-of-sight, unmanned traffic management, nighttime operations, and sense and avoid technology;

''(C) a description of how the data described in subparagraph (B) will be or is used—

''(i) to advance Federal Aviation Administration priorities;

''(ii) to validate the safety of unmanned aircraft systems and related technology; and

''(iii) to inform future rulemaking related to the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace;

''(D) an evaluation of the activities and specific outcomes from activities at the test sites that support the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems under this chapter; and

''(E) recommendations for future Federal Aviation Administration test site operations that would generate data necessary to inform future rulemaking related to unmanned aircraft systems.

''(e) REVIEW OF OPERATIONS BY TEST SITE OPERATORS.—The operator of each test site under subsection (a) shall—

''(1) review the operations of unmanned aircraft systems conducted at the test site, including—

''(A) ongoing or completed research; and

''(B) data regarding operations by private and public operators; and

''(2) submit to the Administrator, in such form and manner as specified by the Administrator, the results of the review, including recommendations to further enable private research and development operations at the test sites that contribute to the Federal Aviation Administration's safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system, on a quarterly basis until the program terminates.

''(f) TESTING.—The Secretary may authorize an operator of a test site described in subsection (a) to administer testing requirements established by the Administrator for unmanned aircraft systems operations.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as added by section 2121 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44801 the following:

''44802. Unmanned aircraft system test sites.''.

(2) PILOT PROJECTS.—Section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking subsection (c).

SEC. 2123. ADDITIONAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND TESTING.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the United States Unmanned Aircraft System Executive Committee, jointly, and in coordination with industry, users, the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and test site operators, shall develop a research plan to identify ongoing research into the broad range of technical, procedural, and policy concerns arising from the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system, and research needs regarding those concerns. In developing the plan, the Administrator shall determine and engage the appropriate entities to meet the research needs identified in the plan.

(b) COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator may use the other transaction authority under section 106(l)(6) of title 49, United States Code, and enter into collaborative research and development agreements, to direct research related to unmanned aircraft systems, including at any test site under section 44802(a) of that title.

SEC. 2124. SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44802 the following:

''SEC. 44803. AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.

''(a) CONSENSUS AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with government and industry stakeholders and appropriate standards-setting organizations, shall initiate a collaborative process to develop risk-based, consensus industry airworthiness standards related to the safe integration of small unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

''(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the consensus aircraft safety standards, the Director and Administrator shall consider the following:

''(1) Technologies or standards related to geographic limitations, altitude limitations, and sense and avoid capabilities.

''(2) Using performance-based standards.

''(3) Predetermined action to maintain safety in the event that a communications link between a small unmanned aircraft and its operator is lost or compromised.

''(4) Detectability and identifiability to pilots, the Federal Aviation Administration, and air traffic controllers, as appropriate.

''(5) Means to prevent tampering with or modification of any system, limitation, or

other safety mechanism or standard under this section or any other provision of law, including a means to identify any tampering or modification that has been made.

''(6) Consensus identification standards under section 2105.

''(7) How to update or modify a small unmanned aircraft system that was commercially distributed prior to the development of the consensus aircraft safety standards so that, to the greatest extent practicable, such systems meet the consensus aircraft safety standards.

''(8) Any technology or standard related to small unmanned aircraft systems that promotes aviation safety.

''(c) CONSULTATION.—In developing the consensus aircraft safety standards under subsection (a), the Director and Administrator shall consult with—

''(1) the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

''(2) the President of RTCA, Inc.;

''(3) the Secretary of Defense;

''(4) each operator of a test site under section 44802;

''(5) the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems;

''(6) unmanned aircraft systems stakeholders; and

''(7) community-based aviation organizations.

''(d) FAA APPROVAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a process for the approval of small unmanned aircraft systems make and models based upon the consensus aircraft safety standards developed under subsection (a). The consensus aircraft safety standards developed under subsection (a) shall allow the Administrator to approve small unmanned aircraft systems for operation within the national airspace system without requiring the type certification process in parts 21 and 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

''(e) ELIGIBILITY.—The consensus aircraft safety standards for approval of small unmanned aircraft systems developed under this section shall set eligibility requirements for an airworthiness approval of a small unmanned aircraft system which shall include the following:

''(1) An applicant must provide the Federal Aviation Administration with—

''(A) the aircraft's operating instructions; and

''(B) the manufacturer's statement of compliance as described in subsection (f) of this section.

''(2) A sample aircraft must be inspected by the Federal Aviation Administration and found to be in a condition for safe operation and in compliance with the consensus aircraft safety standards required by the Administrator in subsection (d).

''(f) MANUFACTURER'S STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR SMALL UAS.—The manufacturer's statement of compliance shall—

''(1) identify the aircraft make and model, and consensus aircraft safety standard used;

''(2) state that the aircraft make and model meets the provisions of the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(3) state that the aircraft make and model conforms to the manufacturer's design data, using the manufacturer's quality assurance system that meets the identified consensus standard adopted by the Administrator in subsection (d), and is manufactured in way that ensures consistency in the production process so that every unit produced meets the applicable consensus aircraft safety standards;

''(4) state that the manufacturer will make available to any interested person—

''(A) the aircraft's operating instructions, that meet the standard identified in paragraph (1); and

''(B) the aircraft's maintenance and inspection procedures, that meet the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(5) state that the manufacturer will monitor and correct safety-of-flight issues through a continued airworthiness system that meets the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(6) state that at the request of the Administration, the manufacturer will provide access by the Administration to its facilities; and

''(7) state that the manufacturer, in accordance with a production acceptance test procedure that meets an applicable consensus aircraft safety standard has—

''(A) ground and flight tested random samples of the aircraft;

''(B) found the sample aircraft performance acceptable; and

''(C) determined that the make and model of aircraft is suitable for safe operation.

''(g) PROHIBITION.—It shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured after the date that the Administrator adopts consensus aircraft safety standards under this section, unless the manufacturer has received approval under subsection (d) for each make and model.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44802 the following:

''44803. Aircraft safety standards.''.

SEC. 2125. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN THE ARCTIC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44803 the following:

''§ 44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall develop a plan and initiate a process to work with relevant Federal agencies and national and international communities to designate permanent areas in the Arctic where small unmanned aircraft may operate 24 hours per day for research and commercial purposes.

''(b) PLAN CONTENTS.—The plan under subsection (a) shall include the development of processes to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft beyond line of sight.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each permanent area designated under subsection (a) shall enable over-water flights from the surface to at least 2,000 feet in altitude, with ingress and egress routes from selected coastal launch sites.

''(d) AGREEMENTS.—To implement the plan under subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into an agreement with relevant national and international communities.

''(e) AIRCRAFT APPROVAL.—Not later than 1 year after the entry into force of an agreement necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section, the Secretary shall work with relevant national and international communities to establish and implement a process, or may apply an applicable process already established, for approving the use of unmanned aircraft in the designated permanent areas in the Arctic without regard to whether an unmanned aircraft is used as a public aircraft, a civil aircraft, or a model aircraft.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44803 the following:

''44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic.''.

(2) EXPANDING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN ARCTIC.—Section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 2126. SPECIAL AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44804 the following:

''§ 44805. Special authority for certain unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other requirement of this chapter, the Secretary of Transportation shall use a risk-based approach to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system notwithstanding completion of the comprehensive plan and rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807.

''(b) ASSESSMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—In making the determination under subsection (a), the Secretary shall determine, at a minimum—

''(1) which types of unmanned aircraft systems, if any, as a result of their size, weight, speed, operational capability, proximity to airports and populated areas, and operation within or beyond visual line of sight, or operation during the day or night, do not create a hazard to users of the national airspace system or the public; and

''(2) whether a certificate under section 44703 or section 44704 of this title, or a certificate of waiver or certificate of authorization, is required for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems identified under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE OPERATION.—If the Secretary determines under this section that certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system, the Secretary shall establish requirements for the safe operation of such aircraft systems in the national airspace system, including operation related to research, development, and testing of proprietary systems.

''(d) PILOT CERTIFICATION EXEMPTION.—If the Secretary proposes, under this section, to require an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to hold an airman certificate, a medical certificate, or to have a minimum number of hours operating a manned aircraft, the Secretary shall set forth the reasoning for such proposal and seek public notice and comment before imposing any such requirements.

''(e) SUNSET.—The authority under this section for the Secretary to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system terminates effective September 30, 2017.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section

2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44804 the following:

''44805. Special rules for certain unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2127. ADDITIONAL RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations of unmanned aircraft systems have tremendous potential—

(A) to enhance research and development both commercially and in academics;

(B) to spur economic growth and development through innovative applications of this emerging technology; and

(C) to improve emergency response efforts as it relates to assessing damage to critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and utilities, including water and power, ultimately speeding response time;

(2) advancements in miniaturization of safety technologies, including for aircraft weighing under 4.4 pounds, have increased economic opportunities for using unmanned aircraft systems while reducing kinetic energy and risk compared to unmanned aircraft that may weigh as much as 55 pounds;

(3) advancements in unmanned technology will have the capacity to ultimately improve manned aircraft safety; and

(4) integrating unmanned aircraft systems safely into the national airspace, including beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations on a routine basis should remain a top priority for the Federal Aviation Administration as it pursues additional rulemakings under the amendments made by this section.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44805 the following:

''§ 44806. Additional rulemaking authority

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807 of this title and subject to subsection (b)(2) of this section and section 44808, the Administrator may issue regulations under which a person may operate certain unmanned aircraft systems (as determined by the Administrator) in the United States—

''(1) without an airman certificate;

''(2) without an airworthiness certificate for the associated unmanned aircraft; or

''(3) that are not registered with the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(b) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPERATIONAL RULES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), the Administrator shall issue regulations not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 under which any person may operate a micro unmanned aircraft system classification of unmanned aircraft systems, the aircraft component of which weighs 4.4 pounds or less, including payload, without the person operating the system being required to pass any airman certification requirement, including any requirements under section 44703 of this title, part 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other rule or regulation relating to airman certification.

''(2) OPERATIONAL RULES.—The rulemaking required by paragraph (1) relating to micro unmanned aircraft systems shall consider the following rules, or any appropriate modifications thereof concerning altitude, airspeed, geographic location, and time of day as the Administrator considers appropriate, for operation of such systems:

''(A) Operation an altitude of less than 400 feet above ground level.

''(B) Operation with an airspeed of not greater than 40 knots.

''(C) Operation within the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(D) Operation during the hours between sunrise and sunset.

''(E) Operation not less than 5 statute miles from the geographic center of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower or an airport denoted on a current aeronautical chart published by the Federal Aviation Administration, except that a micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated within 5 statute miles of such an airport if the operator of the system—

''(i) provides notice to the airport operator; and

''(ii) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

''(c) SCOPE OF REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether a person may operate an unmanned aircraft system under 1 or more of the circumstances described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a), the Administrator shall use a risk-based approach and consider, at a minimum, the physical and functional characteristics of the unmanned aircraft system.

''(2) LIMITATION.—The Administrator may only issue regulations under this section for unmanned aircraft systems that the Administrator determines may be operated safely in the national airspace system.

''(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

''(1) to prohibit a person from operating an unmanned aircraft system under a circumstance described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a) if—

''(A) the circumstance is allowed by regulations issued under this section; and

''(B) the person operates the unmanned aircraft system in a manner prescribed by the regulations; and

''(2) to limit or affect in any way the Administrator's authority to conduct a rulemaking, make a determination, or carry out any activity related to unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft systems under any other provision of law.''.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44805 the following:

''44806. Additional rulemaking authority.''.

SEC. 2128. GOVERNMENTAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44806 the following:

''§ 44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary of Transportation shall issue guidance regarding the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system—

''(1) to streamline the process for the issuance of a certificate of authorization or a certificate of waiver;

''(2) to provide for a collaborative process with public agencies to allow for an incremental expansion of access to the national airspace system as technology matures and the necessary safety analyses and data become available, and until standards are completed and technology issues are resolved;

''(3) to facilitate the capability of public agencies to develop and use test ranges, subject to operating restrictions required by the Federal Aviation Administration, to test and operate public unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(4) to provide guidance on a public agency's responsibilities when operating an unmanned aircraft without a civil airworthiness certificate issued by the Administration.

''(b) STANDARDS FOR OPERATION AND CERTIFICATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop and implement operational and certification requirements for the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(c) AGREEMENTS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each appropriate public agency to simplify the process for issuing a certificate of waiver or a certificate of authorization with respect to an application for authorization to operate a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(2) CONTENTS.—An agreement under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) with respect to an application described in paragraph (1)—

''(i) provide for an expedited review of the application;

''(ii) require a decision by the Administrator on approval or disapproval not later than 60 business days after the date of submission of the application;

''(iii) allow for an expedited appeal if the application is disapproved; and

''(iv) if applicable, include verification of the data minimization policy required under subsection (d);

''(B) allow for a one-time approval of similar operations carried out during a fixed period of time; and

''(C) allow a government public safety agency to operate an unmanned aircraft weighing 25 pounds or less if that unmanned aircraft is operated—

''(i) within or beyond the line of sight of the operator;

''(ii) less than 400 feet above the ground;

''(iii) during daylight conditions;

''(iv) within Class G airspace; and

''(v) outside of 5 statute miles from any airport, heliport, seaplane base, spaceport, or other location with aviation activities.

''(d) DATA MINIMIZATION FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM OPERATORS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 each Federal agency authorized by the Secretary to operate an unmanned aircraft system shall develop and update a data minimization policy that requires, at a minimum, that—

''(1) prior to the deployment of any new unmanned aircraft system technology, and at least every 3 years, existing policies and procedures relating to the collection, use, retention, and dissemination of information obtained by an unmanned aircraft system

must be examined to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected;

''(2) if the unmanned aircraft system is the platform for information collection, information must be collected, used, retained, and disseminated consistent with the Constitution, Federal law, and other applicable regulations and policies, such as the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a);

''(3) the Federal agency or person operating on its behalf, only collect information using the unmanned aircraft system, or use unmanned aircraft system-collected information, to the extent that the collection or use is consistent with and relevant to an authorized purpose as determined by the head of a Federal agency and consistent with the law;

''(4) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or an unmanned aircraft system, that may contain personal information will not be retained by any Federal agency for more than 180 days after the date of collection unless—

''(A) the head of the Federal agency determines that retention of the information is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specific purpose for which the Federal agency used the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) that Federal agency maintains the information in a system of records under section 552a of title 5; or

''(C) the information is required to be retained for a longer period under other applicable law, including regulations;

''(5) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system, that is not maintained in a system of records under section 552a of title 5, will not be disseminated outside of that Federal agency unless—

''(A) dissemination is required by law; or

''(B) dissemination satisfies an authorized purpose and complies with that Federal agency's disclosure requirements;

''(6) to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security a Federal agency shall—

''(A) provide notice to the public regarding where in the national airspace system the Federal agency is authorized to operate the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) keep the public informed about the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system program, including any changes to that program that would significantly affect privacy, civil rights, or civil liberties;

''(C) make available to the public, on an annual basis, a general summary of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system operations during the previous fiscal year, including—

''(i) a brief description of types or categories of missions flown; and

''(ii) the number of times the Federal agency provided assistance to other agencies or to State, local, tribal, or territorial governments; and

''(D) make available on a public and searchable Internet website the data minimization policy of the Federal agency;

''(7) ensures oversight of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system use, including—

''(A) the use of audits or assessments that comply with existing Federal agency policies and regulations;

''(B) the verification of the existence of rules of conduct and training for Federal Government personnel and contractors who work on programs, and procedures for reporting suspected cases of misuse or abuse of unmanned aircraft system technologies;

''(C) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, that provide meaningful oversight of individuals who have access to sensitive information, including personal information, collected using an unmanned aircraft system;

''(D) ensuring that any data-sharing agreements or policies, data use policies, and record management policies applicable to an unmanned aircraft system conform to applicable laws, regulations, and policies;

''(E) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, to authorize the use of an unmanned aircraft system in response to a request for unmanned aircraft system assistance in support of Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial government operations; and

''(F) a requirement that State, local, tribal, and territorial government recipients of Federal grant funding for the purchase or use of unmanned aircraft systems for their own operations have in place policies and procedures to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties prior to expending such funds; and

''(8) ensures the protection of civil rights and civil liberties, including—

''(A) ensuring that policies are in place to prohibit the collection, use, retention, or dissemination of data in any manner that would violate the First Amendment or in any manner that would discriminate against persons based upon their ethnicity, race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity, in violation of law;

''(B) ensuring that unmanned aircraft system activities are performed in a manner consistent with the Constitution and applicable laws, Executive Orders, and other Presidential directives; and

''(C) ensuring that adequate procedures are in place to receive, investigate, and address, as appropriate, privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties complaints.

''(e) LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY.—Each Federal agency shall effectuate a requirement under subsection (d) only to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security.

''(f) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL AGENCY.—In subsections (d) and (e), the term 'Federal agency' has the meaning given the term 'agency' in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44806 the following:

''44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 334 of the FAA Modernization and reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2129. SPECIAL RULES FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44807 the following:

''§ 44808. Special rules for model aircraft

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law relating to the incorporation of unmanned aircraft systems into Federal Aviation Administration plans and policies, including this chapter, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not promulgate any new rule or regulation specific only to an unmanned aircraft operating as a model aircraft if—

''(1) the aircraft is flown strictly for hobby or recreational use;

''(2) the aircraft is operated in accordance with a community-based set of safety guidelines and within the programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(3) not flown beyond visual line of sight of persons co-located with the operator or in direct communication with the operator;

''(4) the aircraft is operated in a manner that does not interfere with and gives way to any manned aircraft;

''(5) when flown within 5 miles of an airport, the operator of the aircraft provides the airport operator, where applicable, and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport) with prior notice and receives approval from the tower, to the extent practicable, for the operation from each (model aircraft operators flying from a permanent location within 5 miles of an airport should establish a mutually agreed upon operating procedure with the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport));

''(6) the aircraft is flown from the surface to not more than 400 feet in altitude, except under special conditions and programs established by a community-based organization; and

''(7) the operator has passed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test administered by the Federal Aviation Administration online for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems subject to the requirements of section 44809 and maintains proof of test passage to be made available to the Administrator or law enforcement upon request.

''(b) UPDATES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in collaboration with government and industry stakeholders, including nationwide community-based organizations, shall initiate a process to update the operational parameters under subsection (a), as appropriate.

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In updating an operational parameter under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

''(A) appropriate operational limitations to mitigate aviation safety risk and risk to the uninvolved public;

''(B) operations outside the membership, guidelines, and programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(C) physical characteristics, technical standards, and classes of aircraft operating under this section;

''(D) trends in use, enforcement, or incidents involving unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(E) ensuring, to the greatest extent practicable, that updates to the operational parameters correspond to, and leverage, advances in technology.

''(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as expanding the authority of the Administrator to require operators of model aircraft under the exemption of this subsection to be required to seek permissive authority of the Administrator prior to operation in the national airspace system.

''(c) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue enforcement action against persons operating model aircraft.

''(d) MODEL AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'model aircraft' means an unmanned aircraft that—

''(1) is capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere; and

''(2) is limited to weighing not more than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached to or carried by the aircraft, unless otherwise approved through a design, construction, inspection, flight test, and operational safety program administered by a community-based organization.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44807 the following:

''44808. Special rules for model aircraft.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.—Section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2130. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44808 the following:

''§ 44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual may not operate an unmanned aircraft system unless—

''(1) the individual has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test under subsection (c);

''(2) the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft under other Federal law; or

''(3) the individual is a holder of an airmen certificate issued under section 44703.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system that has been authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration under section 44802, 44805, 44806, or 44807. The Administrator may waive the requirements of this section for operators of aircraft weighing less than 0.55 pounds or for operators under the age of 13 operating the unmanned aircraft system under the supervision of an adult as determined by the Administrator.

''(c) AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY TEST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with manufacturers of unmanned aircraft systems, other industry stakeholders, and community-based aviation organizations, shall develop an aeronautical knowledge and safety test that can be administered electronically.

''(d) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator shall ensure that the aeronautical knowledge and safety test is designed to adequately demonstrate an operator's—

''(1) understanding of aeronautical safety knowledge, as applicable; and

''(2) knowledge of Federal Aviation Administration regulations and requirements pertaining to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(e) RECORD OF COMPLIANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each operator of an unmanned aircraft system described under subsection (a) shall maintain and make available for inspection, upon request by the Administrator or a Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer, a record of compliance with this section through—

''(A) an identification number, issued by the Federal Aviation Administration certifying passage of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test;

''(B) if the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft system under other Federal law, the requisite proof of authority under that law; or

''(C) an airmen certificate issued under section 44703.

''(2) COORDINATION.—The Administrator may coordinate the identification number under paragraph (1)(A) with an operator's registration number to the extent practicable.

''(3) LIMITATION.—No fine or penalty may be imposed for the initial failure of an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to comply with paragraph (1) unless the Administrator finds that the conduct of the operator actually posed a risk to the national airspace system.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44808 the following:

''44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test.''.

SEC. 2131. SAFETY STATEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44809 the following:

''§ 44810. Safety statements

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date of publication of the guidance under subsection (b)(1), it shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured unless a safety statement is attached to the unmanned aircraft or accompanying the unmanned aircraft in its packaging.

''(b) SAFETY STATEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance for implementing this section.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A safety statement described in subsection (a) shall include—

''(A) information about laws and regulations applicable to unmanned aircraft systems;

''(B) recommendations for using unmanned aircraft in a manner that promotes the safety of persons and property;

''(C) the date that the safety statement was created or last modified; and

''(D) language approved by the Administrator regarding the following:

''(i) A person may operate the unmanned aircraft as a model aircraft (as defined in section 44808) or otherwise in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration authorization or regulation, including requirements for the completion of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test under section 44809.

''(ii) The definition of a model aircraft under section 44808.

''(iii) The requirements regarding a model aircraft under paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 44808(a).

''(iv) The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may pursue enforcement action against a person operating model aircraft who endangers the safety of the national airspace system.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person who violates subsection (a) shall be liable for each violation to the United States Government for a civil penalty described in section 46301(a).''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44809 the following:

''44810. Safety statements.''.

SEC. 2132. TREATMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OPERATING UNDERGROUND.

An unmanned aircraft system that is operated underground for mining purposes shall not be subject to regulation or enforcement by the Federal Aviation Administration under chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2133. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) UAS SAFETY ENFORCEMENT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a program to utilize available remote detection and identification technologies for safety oversight, including enforcement actions against operators of unmanned aircraft systems that are not in compliance with applicable Federal aviation laws, including regulations.

(b) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 46301 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(A), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),'';

(B) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717–44723),'';

(C) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),''; and

(D) in subsection (f), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except 44717 and 44719–44723),''.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue an enforcement action for a violation of this Act, a regulation prescribed or order or authority issued under this Act, or any other applicable provision of aviation safety law or regulation.

(c) REPORTING.—As part of the program, the Administrator shall establish and publicize a mechanism for the public and Federal, State, and local law enforcement to report a suspected abuse or a violation of chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code, for enforcement action.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2017.

SEC. 2134. AVIATION EMERGENCY SAFETY PUBLIC SERVICES DISRUPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 is amended—

(1) in section 46301(d)(2), by inserting ''section 46320,'' after ''section 46319,''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities

''(a) PROHIBITION.—No person may operate an aircraft so as to interfere with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.

''(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, an aircraft interferes with the activities specified in subsection (a) when its operation prevents the initiation of, interrupts, or endangers a person or property engaged in those activities.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person violating subsection (a) shall be liable for a civil penalty of not more than $20,000.

''(d) COMPROMISE AND SETOFF.—The United States Government may deduct the amount

of a civil penalty imposed or compromised under this section from the amounts the Government owes the person liable for the penalty.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 463 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.''.

SEC. 2135. PILOT PROJECT FOR AIRPORT SAFETY AND AIRSPACE HAZARD MITIGATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall carry out a pilot program for airspace hazard mitigation at airports and other critical infrastructure.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall work with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the heads of relevant Federal agencies for the purpose of ensuring technologies that are developed, tested, or deployed by those departments and agencies to mitigate threats posed by errant or hostile unmanned aircraft system operations do not adversely impact or interfere with safe airport operations, navigation, and air traffic services.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund to carry out this section $6,000,000, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 2136. CONTRIBUTION TO FINANCING OF REGULATORY FUNCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44810 the following:

''§ 44811. Regulatory and administrative fees

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Administrator may assess and collect regulatory and administrative fees to recover the costs of regulatory and administrative activities under this chapter related to authorization to operate unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise.

''(b) LIMITATIONS.—Fees authorized under subsection (a) shall be reasonable, cost-based relative to the regulatory or administrative activity, and may not be discriminatory or a deterrent to compliance.

''(c) RECEIPTS CREDITED TO ACCOUNT.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, all fees and amounts collected under this section shall be credited to the separate account established under section 45303(c). Section 41742 shall not apply to fees and amounts collected under this section.

''(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall issue regulations to carry out this section.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44810 the following:

''44811. Regulatory and administrative fees.''.

SEC. 2137. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SMALL UAS RULEMAKING.

It is the sense of the Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Secretary of Transportation should take every necessary action to expedite final action on the notice of proposed rulemaking dated February 23, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 9544), entitled ''Operation and Certification of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems''.

SEC. 2138. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN FOR UTM DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop a research plan for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management (referred to in this section as ''UTM'') development.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the research plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify research goals related to:

(i) operational parameters related to altitude, geographic coverage, classes of airspace, and critical infrastructure;

(ii) avionics capability requirements or standards;

(iii) operator identification and authentication requirements and capabilities;

(iv) communication protocols with air traffic control facilities that will not interfere with existing responsibility to deconflict manned aircraft in the national airspace system;

(v) collision avoidance requirements;

(vi) separation standards for manned and unmanned aircraft; and

(vii) spectrum needs;

(B) evaluate options for the administration and management structure for the traffic management of low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(C) ensure the plan is consistent with the broader Federal Aviation Administration regulatory and operational framework encompassing all unmanned aircraft systems operations expected to be authorized in the national airspace system.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—The research plan under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of—

(A) the ability to allow near-term small unmanned aircraft system operations without need of an automated UTM system;

(B) the full range of operational capability any automated UTM system should possess;

(C) the operational characteristics and metrics that would drive incremental adoption of automated capability and procedures consistent with a rising aggregate community demand for service for low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(D) the integration points for small unmanned aircraft system traffic management with the existing national airspace system planning and traffic management systems.

(4) DEADLINES.—The Administrator shall—

(A) initiate development of the research plan not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) complete the research plan;

(ii) submit the research plan to the appropriate committees of Congress; and

(iii) publish the research plan on the Federal Aviation Administration's Web site.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the research plan under subsection (a) is submitted under paragraph (4)(B) of that subsection, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the small unmanned aircraft systems industry to develop operational concepts and top-level system requirements for a UTM system pilot program, consistent with subsection (a).

(2) SOLICITATION.—The Administrator shall issue a solicitation for operational prototype systems that meet the necessary objectives for use in a pilot program to demonstrate, validate, or modify, as appropriate, the requirements developed under paragraph (1).

(c) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date the pilot program under subsection (b) is complete, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and in consultation with the head of each relevant Federal agency, shall develop a comprehensive plan for the deployment of UTM systems in the national airspace.

(2) SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive plan under paragraph (1) shall include requirements or standards consistent with established or planned rulemaking for, at a minimum—

(A) the flight of small unmanned aircraft systems in controlled and uncontrolled airspace;

(B) communications, as applicable—

(i) among small unmanned aircraft systems;

(ii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft operating in the same airspace; and

(iii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and air traffic control as considered necessary; and

(C) air traffic management for small unmanned aircraft systems operations.

(d) SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.—Based on the comprehensive plan under subsection (c), including the requirements under paragraph (2) of that subsection, and the pilot program under subsection (b), the Administrator shall determine the operational need and implementation schedule for evolutionary use of automation support systems to separate and deconflict manned and unmanned aircraft systems.

SEC. 2139. EMERGENCY EXEMPTION PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall publish guidance for applications for, and procedures for the processing of, on an emergency basis, exemptions or certificates of authorization or waiver for the use of unmanned aircraft systems by civil or public operators in response to a catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency to facilitate emergency response operations, such as firefighting, search and rescue, and utility and infrastructure restoration efforts. This guidance shall outline procedures for operations under both sections 44805 and 44807, of title 49, United States Code, with priority given to applications for public unmanned aircraft systems engaged in emergency response activities.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In providing guidance under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) make explicit any safety requirements that must be met for the consideration of applications that include requests for beyond visual line of sight, nighttime operations, or the suspension of otherwise applicable operating restrictions, consistent with public interest and safety; and

(2) explicitly state the procedures for coordinating with an incident commander, if any, to ensure operations granted under procedures developed under subsection (a) do

not interfere with manned catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency response operations or otherwise impact response efforts.

(c) REVIEW.—In processing applications on an emergency basis for exemptions or certificates of authorization or waiver for unmanned aircraft systems operations in response to a catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall act on such applications as expeditiously as practicable and without requiring public notice and comment.

SEC. 2140. PUBLIC UAS OPERATIONS BY TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.

(a) PUBLIC UAS OPERATIONS BY TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 40102(a)(41) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) An unmanned aircraft that is owned and operated by or exclusively leased for at least 90 consecutive days by an Indian tribal government (as defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)), except as provided in section 40125(b).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 40125(b) is amended by striking ''or (D)'' and inserting ''(D), or (F)''.

SEC. 2141. CARRIAGE OF PROPERTY BY SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS FOR COMPENSATION OR HIRE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2136 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 44811 the following:

''§ 44812. Carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a final rule authorizing the carriage of property by operators of small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire within the United States.

''(b) CONTENTS.—The final rule required under subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

''(1) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CERTIFICATE.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, at the direction of the Secretary, shall establish a certificate (to be known as a 'small UAS air carrier certificate') for persons that undertake directly, by lease, or other arrangement the operation of small unmanned aircraft systems to carry property in air transportation, including commercial fleet operations with highly automated unmanned aircraft systems. The requirements to operate under a small UAS air carrier certificate shall—

''(A) consider the unique characteristics of highly automated, small unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(B) include requirements for the safe operation of small unmanned aircraft systems that, at a minimum, address—

''(i) airworthiness of small unmanned aircraft systems;

''(ii) qualifications for operators and the type and nature of the operations; and

''(iii) operating specifications governing the type and nature of the unmanned aircraft system air carrier operations.

''(2) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Administrator, at the direction of the Secretary, shall establish a process for the issuance of small UAS air carrier certificates established pursuant to paragraph (1) that is performance-based and ensures required safety levels are met. Such certification process shall consider—

''(A) safety risks and the mitigation of those risks associated with the operation of highly automated, small unmanned aircraft around other manned and unmanned aircraft, and over persons and property on the ground;

''(B) the competencies and compliance programs of manufacturers, operators, and companies that manufacture, operate, or both small unmanned aircraft systems and components; and

''(C) compliance with the requirements established pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(3) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CLASSIFICATION.—The Secretary shall develop a classification system for persons issued small UAS air carrier certificates pursuant to this subsection to establish economic authority for the carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire. Such classification shall only require—

''(A) registration with the Department of Transportation; and

''(B) a valid small UAS air carrier certificate issued pursuant to this subsection.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2136 of this Act, is further amended by adding after the item relating to section 44811 the following:

''44812. Carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire.''.

SEC. 2142. COLLEGIATE TRAINING INITIATIVE PROGRAM FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a Collegiate Training Initiative program relating to unmanned aircraft systems by making new agreements or continuing existing agreements with institutions of higher education (as defined by the Administrator) under which the institutions prepare students for careers involving unmanned aircraft systems. The Administrator may establish standards for the entry of such institutions into the program and for their continued participation in the program.

(b) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given that term by section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

PART III—TRANSITION AND SAVINGS PROVISIONS

SEC. 2151. SENIOR ADVISOR FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS INTEGRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Federal Aviation Administration a Senior Advisor for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Senior Advisor for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration shall have a demonstrated ability in management and knowledge of or experience in aviation.

(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Unless otherwise determined by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) the Senior Advisor shall report directly to the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(2) the responsibilities of the Senior Advisor shall include the following:

(A) Providing advice to the Administrator and Deputy Administrator related to the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

(B) Reviewing and evaluating Federal Aviation Administration policies, activities, and operations related to unmanned aircraft systems.

(C) Facilitating coordination and collaboration among components of the Federal Aviation Administration with respect to activities related to unmanned aircraft systems integration.

(D) Interacting with Congress, and Federal, State, or local agencies, and stakeholder organizations whose operations and interests are affected by the activities of the Federal Aviation Administration on matters related to unmanned aircraft systems integration.

SEC. 2152. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

(a) FEDERAL PREEMPTION.—No State or political subdivision of a State may enact or enforce any law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law relating to the design, manufacture, testing, licensing, registration, certification, operation, or maintenance of an unmanned aircraft system, including airspace, altitude, flight paths, equipment or technology requirements, purpose of operations, and pilot, operator, and observer qualifications, training, and certification.

(b) PRESERVATION OF STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to limit a State or local government's authority to enforce Federal, State, or local laws relating to nuisance, voyeurism, privacy, data security, harassment, reckless endangerment, wrongful death, personal injury, property damage, or other illegal acts arising from the use of unmanned aircraft systems if such laws are not specifically related to the use of an unmanned aircraft system.

(c) NO PREEMPTION OF COMMON LAW OR STATUTORY CAUSES OF ACTION.—Nothing in this subtitle, nor any standard, rule, requirement, standard of performance, safety determination, or certification implemented pursuant to this subtitle, shall be construed to preempt, displace, or supplant any State or Federal common law rights or any State or Federal statute creating a remedy for civil relief, including those for civil damage, or a penalty for a criminal conduct. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, nothing in this subtitle, nor any amendments made by this subtitle, shall preempt or preclude any cause of action for personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, or other injury based on negligence, strict liability, products liability, failure to warn, or any other legal theory of liability under any State law, maritime law, or Federal common law or statutory theory.

SEC. 2153. SPECTRUM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Small unmanned aircraft systems may operate wireless control link, tracking, diagnostics, payload communication, and collaborative-collision avoidance, such as vehicle-to-vehicle communication, and other uses, if permitted by and consistent with the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), Federal Communications Commission rules, and the safety-of-life determination made by the Federal Aviation Administration, and with carrier consent, whether they are operating within the UTM system under section 2138 of this Act or outside such a system.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Federal Communications Commission, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report—

(1) on whether small unmanned aircraft systems operations should be permitted to operate on spectrum designated for aviation use, on an unlicensed, shared, or exclusive basis, for operations within the UTM system or outside of such a system;

(2) that addresses any technological, statutory, regulatory, and operational barriers to the use of such spectrum; and

(3) that, if it is determined that spectrum designated for aviation use is not suitable for operations by small unmanned aircraft systems, includes recommendations of other spectrum frequencies that may be appropriate for such operations.

SEC. 2154. APPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNATION.

(a) APPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall establish a process to allow applicants to petition the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit or otherwise limit the operation of an aircraft, including an unmanned aircraft, over, under, or within a specified distance from a fixed site facility.

(b) REVIEW PROCESS.—

(1) APPLICATION PROCEDURES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish the procedures for the application for designation under subsection (a).

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The procedures shall—

(i) allow individual fixed site facility applications; and

(ii) allow for a group of similar facilities to apply for a collective designation.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the procedures, the Administrator shall consider how the process will apply to—

(i) critical infrastructure, such as energy production, transmission, and distribution facilities and equipment;

(ii) oil refineries and chemical facilities;

(iii) amusement parks; and

(iv) other locations that may benefit from such restrictions.

(2) DETERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for a determination under the review process established under subsection (a) not later than 90 days from the date of application, unless the applicant is provided with written notice describing the reason for the delay.

(B) AFFIRMATIVE DESIGNATIONS.—An affirmative designation shall outline—

(i) the boundaries for unmanned aircraft operation near the fixed site facility; and

(ii) such other limitations that the Administrator determines may be appropriate.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination whether to grant or deny an application for a designation, the Administrator may consider—

(i) aviation safety;

(ii) personal safety of the uninvolved public;

(iii) national security; or

(iv) homeland security.

(D) OPPORTUNITY FOR RESUBMISSION.—If an application is denied and the applicant can reasonably address the reason for the denial, the Administrator may allow the applicant to reapply for designation.

(c) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—Designations under subsection (a) shall be published by the Federal Aviation Administration on a publicly accessible website.

SEC. 2155. USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish procedures and standards, as applicable, to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft systems by institutions of higher education, including faculty, students, and staff.

(b) STANDARDS.—The procedures and standards required under subsection (a) shall outline risk-based operational parameters to ensure the safety of the national airspace system and the uninvolved public that facilitates the use of unmanned aircraft systems for educational or research purposes.

(c) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM APPROVAL.—The procedures required under subsection (a) shall allow unmanned aircraft systems operated under this section to be modified for research purposes without iterative approval from the Administrator.

(d) ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES.—The Administrator shall establish a procedure to provide for streamlined, risk-based operational approval for unmanned aircraft systems operated by institutions of higher education, including faculty, students, and staff, outside of the parameters or purposes set forth in subsection (b).

(e) DEADLINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If, by the date that is 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator has not set forth standards and procedures required under subsections (a), (b), and (c), an institution of higher education may—

(A) without specific approval from the Federal Aviation Administration, operate small unmanned aircraft at model aircraft fields approved by the Academy of Model Aeronautics and with the permission of the local club of the Academy of Model Aeronautics; and

(B) submit to the Federal Aviation Administration applications for approval of the institution's designation of 1 or more outdoor flight fields.

(2) CONSEQUENCE OF FAILURE TO APPROVE.—If the Administrator does not take action with respect to an application submitted under paragraph (1)(B) within 30 days of the submission of the application, the failure to do so shall be treated as approval of the application.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given that term by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

(3) EDUCATIONAL OR RESEARCH PURPOSES.—The term ''educational or research purposes'', with respect to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system by an institution of higher education, includes—

(A) instruction of students at the institution;

(B) academic or research related use of unmanned aircraft systems by student organizations recognized by the institution, if such use has been approved by the institution;

(C) activities undertaken by the institution as part of research projects, including research projects sponsored by the Federal Government; and

(D) other academic activities at the institution, including general research, engineering, and robotics.

SEC. 2156. TRANSITION LANGUAGE.

(a) REGULATIONS.—Notwithstanding the repeals under sections 2122(b)(2), 2125(b)(2), 2126(b)(2), 2128(b)(2), and 2129(b)(2) of this Act, all orders, determinations, rules, regulations, permits, grants, and contracts, which have been issued under any law described under subsection (b) of this section on or before the effective date of this Act shall continue in effect until modified or revoked by the Secretary of Transportation, acting through the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, as applicable, by a court of competent jurisdiction, or by operation of law other than this Act.

(b) LAWS DESCRIBED.—The laws described under this subsection are as follows:

(1) Section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(2) Section 332(d) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(3) Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(4) Section 334 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(5) Section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(c) EFFECT ON PENDING PROCEEDINGS.—This Act shall not affect administrative or judicial proceedings pending on the effective date of this Act.

Subtitle B—FAA Safety Certification Reform

PART I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 2211. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The term ''Advisory Committee'' means the Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee established under section 2212.

(3) FAA.—The term ''FAA'' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Transportation.

(5) SYSTEMS SAFETY APPROACH.—The term ''systems safety approach'' means the application of specialized technical and managerial skills to the systematic, forward-looking identification and control of hazards throughout the lifecycle of a project, program, or activity.

SEC. 2212. SAFETY OVERSIGHT AND CERTIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee in accordance with this section.

(b) DUTIES.—The Advisory Committee shall provide advice to the Secretary on policy-level issues facing the aviation community that are related to FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities, including the following:

(1) Aircraft and flight standards certification processes, including efforts to streamline those processes.

(2) Implementation and oversight of safety management systems.

(3) Risk-based oversight efforts.

(4) Utilization of delegation and designation authorities, including organization designation authorization.

(5) Regulatory interpretation standardization efforts.

(6) Training programs.

(7) Expediting the rulemaking process and prioritizing safety-related rules.

(8) Enhancing global competitiveness of U.S. manufactured and FAA type-certificate aircraft products and services throughout the world.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—In carrying out its duties under subsection (b) related to FAA safety

oversight and certification programs and activities, the Advisory Committee shall—

(1) foster aviation stakeholder collaboration in an open and transparent manner;

(2) consult with, and ensure participation by—

(A) the private sector, including representatives of—

(i) general aviation;

(ii) commercial aviation;

(iii) aviation labor;

(iv) aviation, aerospace, and avionics manufacturing; and

(v) unmanned aircraft systems industry; and

(B) the public;

(3) recommend consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities for the most efficient, streamlined, and cost-effective safety oversight and certification processes in order to maintain the safety of the aviation system while allowing the FAA to meet future needs and ensure that aviation stakeholders remain competitive in the global marketplace;

(4) provide policy recommendations for the FAA's safety oversight and certification efforts;

(5) periodically review and provide recommendations regarding the FAA's safety oversight and certification efforts;

(6) periodically review and evaluate registration, certification, and related fees;

(7) provide appropriate legislative, regulatory, and guidance recommendations for the air transportation system and the aviation safety regulatory environment;

(8) recommend performance objectives for the FAA and aviation industry;

(9) recommend performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry to be tracked and reviewed as streamlining certification reform, flight standards reform, and regulation standardization efforts progress;

(10) provide a venue for tracking progress toward national goals and sustaining joint commitments;

(11) recommend recruiting, hiring, staffing levels, training, and continuing education objectives for FAA aviation safety engineers and aviation safety inspectors;

(12) provide advice and recommendations to the FAA on how to prioritize safety rulemaking projects;

(13) improve the development of FAA regulations by providing information, advice, and recommendations related to aviation issues;

(14) encourage the validation of U.S. manufactured and FAA type-certificate aircraft products and services throughout the world; and

(15) any other functions as determined appropriate by the chairperson of the Advisory Committee and the Administrator.

(d) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following voting members:

(A) The Administrator, or the Administrator's designee.

(B) At least 1 representative, appointed by the Secretary, of each of the following:

(i) Aircraft and engine manufacturers.

(ii) Avionics and equipment manufacturers.

(iii) Aviation labor organizations, including collective bargaining representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers.

(iv) General aviation operators.

(v) Air carriers.

(vi) Business aviation operators.

(vii) Unmanned aircraft systems manufacturers and operators.

(viii) Aviation safety management experts.

(2) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the members appointed under paragraph (1), the Advisory Committee shall be composed of nonvoting members appointed by the Secretary from among individuals representing FAA safety oversight program offices.

(B) DUTIES.—A nonvoting member may—

(i) take part in deliberations of the Advisory Committee; and

(ii) provide input with respect to any report or recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

(C) LIMITATION.—A nonvoting member may not represent any stakeholder interest other than that of an FAA safety oversight program office.

(3) TERMS.—Each voting member and nonvoting member of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Public Law 104–65 (2 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) may not be construed to prohibit or otherwise limit the appointment of any individual as a member of the Advisory Committee.

(e) COMMITTEE CHARACTERISTICS.—The Advisory Committee shall have the following characteristics:

(1) Each voting member under subsection (d)(1)(B) shall be an executive that has decision authority within the member's organization and can represent and enter into commitments on behalf of that organization in a way that serves the entire group of organizations that member represents under that subsection.

(2) The ability to obtain necessary information from experts in the aviation and aerospace communities.

(3) A membership size that enables the Advisory Committee to have substantive discussions and reach consensus on issues in an expeditious manner.

(4) Appropriate expertise, including expertise in certification and risk-based safety oversight processes, operations, policy, technology, labor relations, training, and finance.

(f) CHAIRPERSON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Secretary from among the voting members under subsection (d)(1)(B).

(2) TERM.—Each member appointed under paragraph (1) shall serve a term of 2 years as chairperson.

(g) MEETINGS.—

(1) FREQUENCY.—The Advisory Committee shall convene at least 2 meetings a year at the call of the chairperson.

(2) PUBLIC ATTENDANCE.—Each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be open and accessible to the public.

(h) SPECIAL COMMITTEES.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Advisory Committee may establish 1 or more special committees composed of private sector representatives, members of the public, labor representatives, and other relevant parties in complying with consultation and participation requirements under subsection (c)(2).

(2) RULEMAKING ADVICE.—A special committee established by the Advisory Committee may—

(A) provide rulemaking advice and recommendations to the Advisory Committee;

(B) provide the FAA additional opportunities to obtain firsthand information and insight from those persons that are most affected by existing and proposed regulations; and

(C) assist in expediting the development, revision, or elimination of rules in accordance with, and without circumventing, established public rulemaking processes and procedures.

(3) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to a special committee under this subsection.

(i) SUNSET.—The Advisory Committee shall cease to exist on September 30, 2017.

PART II—AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION REFORM

SEC. 2221. AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the Advisory Committee is established under section 2212, the Administrator shall establish performance objectives and apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry relating to aircraft certification in accordance with this section.

(b) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator shall carry out this section in collaboration with the Advisory Committee and update agency performance objectives and metrics after considering the proposals recommended by the Advisory Committee under paragraphs (8) and (9) of section 2212(c).

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—In establishing performance objectives under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure progress is made toward, at a minimum—

(1) eliminating certification delays and improving cycle times;

(2) increasing accountability for both FAA and the aviation industry;

(3) achieving full utilization of FAA delegation and designation authorities, including organizational designation authorization;

(4) fully implementing risk management principles and a systems safety approach;

(5) reducing duplication of effort;

(6) increasing transparency;

(7) developing and providing training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to certification oversight;

(8) improving the process for approving or accepting the certification actions between the FAA and bilateral partners;

(9) maintaining and improving safety;

(10) streamlining the hiring process for—

(A) qualified systems safety engineers at staffing levels to support the FAA's efforts to implement a systems safety approach; and

(B) qualified systems safety engineers to guide the engineering of complex systems within the FAA; and

(11) maintaining the leadership of the United States in international aviation and aerospace.

(d) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry; and

(2) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report on tracking the progress toward full implementation of the recommendations under section 2212.

(e) DATA.—

(1) BASELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date the Advisory Committee recommends initial performance metrics under section 2212(c)(9), the Administrator shall generate initial data with respect to each of the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section.

(2) BENCHMARKS.—The Administrator shall use the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section to generate data on an ongoing basis and to measure progress toward the consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities recommended under section 2212(c)(3).

(f) PUBLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Administrator shall make data generated using the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section available in a searchable, sortable, and downloadable format through the Internet Web site of the FAA or other appropriate methods.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator shall make the data under paragraph (1) available in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

SEC. 2222. ORGANIZATION DESIGNATION AUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 447 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 44736. Organization designation authorizations

''(a) DELEGATIONS OF FUNCTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), in the oversight of an ODA holder, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration standards, shall—

''(A) require, based on an application submitted by the ODA holder and approved by the Administrator (or the Administrator's designee), a procedures manual that addresses all procedures and limitations regarding the specified functions to be performed by the ODA holder subject to regulations prescribed by the Administrator;

''(B) delegate fully to the ODA holder each of the functions specified in the procedures manual, unless the Administrator determines, after the date of the delegation and as a result of an inspection or other investigation, that the public interest and safety of air commerce requires a limitation with respect to 1 or more of the functions; and

''(C) conduct oversight activities, including by inspecting the ODA holder's delegated functions and taking action based on validated inspection findings.

''(2) DUTIES OF ODA HOLDERS.—An ODA holder shall—

''(A) perform each specified function delegated to the ODA holder in accordance with the approved procedures manual for the delegation;

''(B) make the procedures manual available to each member of the appropriate ODA unit; and

''(C) cooperate fully with oversight activities conducted by the Administrator in connection with the delegation.

''(3) EXISTING ODA HOLDERS.—With regard to an ODA holder operating under a procedures manual approved by the Administrator before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall—

''(A) at the request of the ODA holder, and in an expeditious manner, consider revisions to the ODA holder's procedures manual;

''(B) delegate fully to the ODA holder each of the functions specified in the procedures manual, unless the Administrator determines, after the date of the delegation and as a result of an inspection or other investigation, that the public interest and safety of air commerce requires a limitation with respect to 1 or more of the functions; and

''(C) conduct oversight activities, including by inspecting the ODA holder's delegated functions and taking action based on validated inspection findings.

''(b) ODA OFFICE.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall identify, within the Office of Aviation Safety, a centralized policy office to be responsible for the organization designation authorization (referred to in this subsection as the ODA Office). The Director of the ODA Office shall report to the Director of the Aircraft Certification Service.

''(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the ODA Office shall be to provide oversight and ensure consistency of the Federal Aviation Administration audit functions under the ODA program across the agency.

''(3) FUNCTIONS.—The ODA Office shall—

''(A)(i) at the request of an ODA holder, eliminate all limitations specified in a procedures manual in place on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 that are low and medium risk as determined by a risk analysis using criteria established by the ODA Office and disclosed to the ODA holder, except where an ODA holder's performance warrants the retention of a specific limitation due to documented concerns about inadequate current performance in carrying out that authorized function;

''(ii) require an ODA holder to establish a corrective action plan to regain authority for any retained limitations;

''(iii) require an ODA holder to notify the ODA Office when all corrective actions have been accomplished;

''(iv) make a reassessment to determine if subsequent performance in carrying out any retained limitation warrants continued retention and, if such reassessment determines performance meets objectives, lift such limitation immediately;

''(B) improve the Administration and the ODA holder performance and ensure full use of the authorities delegated under the ODA program;

''(C) develop a more consistent approach to audit priorities, procedures, and training under the ODA program;

''(D) expeditiously review a random sample of limitations on delegated authorities under the ODA program to determine if the limitations are appropriate;

''(E) review and approve new limitations to ODA functions; and

''(F) ensure national consistency in the interpretation and application of the requirements of the ODA program, including any limitations, and in the performance of the ODA program.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ODA OR ORGANIZATION DESIGNATION AUTHORIZATION.—The term 'ODA' or 'organization designation authorization' means an authorization under section 44702(d) to perform approved functions on behalf of the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration under subpart D of part 183 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

''(2) ODA HOLDER.—The term 'ODA holder' means an entity authorized under section 44702(d)—

''(A) to which the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration issues an ODA letter of designation under subpart D of part 183 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling); and

''(B) that is responsible for administering 1 or more ODA units.

''(3) ODA PROGRAM.—The term 'ODA program' means the program to standardize Federal Aviation Administration management and oversight of the organizations that are approved to perform certain functions on behalf of the Administration under section 44702(d).

''(4) ODA UNIT.—The term 'ODA unit' means a group of 2 or more individuals under the supervision of an ODA holder who perform the specified functions under an ODA.

''(5) ORGANIZATION.—The term 'organization' means a firm, a partnership, a corporation, a company, an association, a joint-stock association, or a governmental entity.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of chapter 447 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 44735 the following:

''44736. Organization designation authorizations.''.

SEC. 2223. ODA REVIEW.

(a) EXPERT REVIEW PANEL.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall convene a multidisciplinary expert review panel (referred to in this section as the ''Panel'').

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Panel shall be composed of not more than 20 members appointed by the Administrator.

(B) QUALIFICATIONS.—The members appointed to the Panel shall—

(i) each have a minimum of 5 years of experience in processes and procedures under the ODA program; and

(ii) include representatives of ODA holders, aviation manufacturers, safety experts, and FAA labor organizations, including labor representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers.

(b) SURVEY.—The Panel shall survey ODA holders and ODA program applicants to document FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities, including the FAA's use of the ODA program and the speed and efficiency of the certification process. In carrying out this subsection, the Administrator shall consult with the appropriate survey experts and the Panel to best design and conduct the survey.

(c) ASSESSMENT.—The Panel shall—

(1) conduct an assessment of—

(A) the FAA's processes and procedures under the ODA program and whether the processes and procedures function as intended;

(B) the best practices of and lessons learned by ODA holders and the FAA personnel who provide oversight of ODA holders;

(C) the performance incentive policies, related to the ODA program for FAA personnel, that do not conflict with the public interest;

(D) the training activities related to the ODA program for FAA personnel and ODA holders; and

(E) the impact, if any, that oversight of the ODA program has on FAA resources and the FAA's ability to process applications for certifications outside of the ODA program; and

(2) make recommendations for improving FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities based on the results of the survey under subsection (b) and each element of the assessment under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date the Panel is convened under subsection (a), the Panel shall submit to the Administrator, the Advisory Committee established under section 2212, and the appropriate committees of Congress a report on results of the survey under subsection (b)

and the assessment and recommendations under subsection (c).

(e) DEFINITIONS.—The terms used in this section have the meanings given the terms in section 44736 of title 49, United States Code.

(f) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Panel.

(g) SUNSET.—The Panel shall terminate on the date the report is submitted under subsection (d).

SEC. 2224. TYPE CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44704(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(6) TYPE CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION PROCESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall establish an effective, expeditious, and milestone-based issue resolution process for type certification activities under this subsection.

''(B) PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.—The resolution process shall provide for—

''(i) the resolution of technical issues at preestablished stages of the certification process, as agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant;

''(ii) the automatic escalation to appropriate management personnel of the Federal Aviation Administration and the type certificate applicant of any major certification process milestone that is not completed or resolved within a specific period of time agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant; and

''(iii) the resolution of a major certification process milestone escalated under clause (ii) within a specific period of time agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant.

''(C) DEFINITION OF MAJOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS MILESTONE.—In this paragraph, the term 'major certification process milestone' means a milestone related to a type certification basis, type certification plan, type inspection authorization, issue paper, or other major type certification activity agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 44704 is amended in the heading by striking ''**airworthiness certificates,,**'' and inserting ''**airworthiness certificates,**''.

SEC. 2225. SAFETY ENHANCING TECHNOLOGIES FOR SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANES.

(a) POLICY.—In a manner consistent with the Small Airplane Revitalization Act of 2013 (49 U.S.C. 44704 note), not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish and begin implementing a risk-based policy that streamlines the installation of safety enhancing technologies for small general aviation airplanes in a manner that reduces regulatory delays and significantly improves safety.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The safety enhancing technologies for small general aviation airplanes described in subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the replacement or retrofit of primary flight displays, auto pilots, engine monitors, and navigation equipment.

(c) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall collaborate with general aviation operators, general aviation manufacturers, and appropriate FAA labor organizations, including representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers, certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code.

(d) DEFINITION OF SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANE.—In this section, the term ''small general aviation airplane'' means an airplane that—

(1) is certified to the standards of part 23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) has a seating capacity of not more than 9 passengers; and

(3) is not used in scheduled passenger-carrying operations under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 2226. STREAMLINING CERTIFICATION OF SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANES.

(a) FINAL RULEMAKING.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Administrator shall issue a final rulemaking to comply with section 3 of the Small Airplane Revitalization Act of 2013 (49 U.S.C. 44704 note).

(b) GOVERNMENT REVIEW.—The Federal Government's review process shall be streamlined to meet the deadline in subsection (a).

PART III—FLIGHT STANDARDS REFORM

SEC. 2231. FLIGHT STANDARDS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the Advisory Committee is established under section 2212, the Administrator shall establish performance objectives and apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry relating to flight standards activities in accordance with this section.

(b) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator shall carry out this section in collaboration with the Advisory Committee and update agency performance objectives and metrics after considering the recommendations of the Advisory Committee under paragraphs (8) and (9) of section 2212(c).

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that progress is made toward, at a minimum—

(1) eliminating delays with respect to such activities;

(2) increasing accountability for both FAA and the aviation industry;

(3) fully implementing risk management principles and a systems safety approach;

(4) reducing duplication of effort;

(5) promoting appropriate compliance activities and eliminating inconsistent regulatory interpretations and inconsistent enforcement activities;

(6) improving and providing greater opportunities for training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to oversight;

(7) developing and allowing the use of a single master source for guidance;

(8) providing and using a streamlined appeal process for the resolution of regulatory interpretation questions;

(9) maintaining and improving safety; and

(10) increasing transparency.

(d) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry; and

(2) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report tracking the progress toward full implementation of the performance metrics under section 2212.

(e) DATA.—

(1) BASELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date the Advisory Committee recommends initial performance metrics under section 2212(c)(9), the Administrator shall generate initial data with respect to each of the performance metrics applied and tracked that are approved based on the recommendations required under this section.

(2) BENCHMARKS.—The Administrator shall use the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section to generate data on an ongoing basis and to measure progress toward the consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities recommended under section 2212(c)(3).

(f) PUBLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Administrator shall make data generated using the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section available in a searchable, sortable, and downloadable format through the Internet Web site of the FAA or other appropriate methods.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator shall make the data under paragraph (1) available in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

SEC. 2232. FAA TASK FORCE ON FLIGHT STANDARDS REFORM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish the FAA Task Force on Flight Standards Reform (referred to in this section as the ''Task Force'').

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The membership of the Task Force shall be appointed by the Administrator.

(2) NUMBER.—The Task Force shall be composed of not more than 20 members.

(3) REPRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS.—The membership of the Task Force shall include representatives, with knowledge of flight standards regulatory processes and requirements, of—

(A) air carriers;

(B) general aviation;

(C) business aviation;

(D) repair stations;

(E) unmanned aircraft systems operators;

(F) flight schools;

(G) labor unions, including those representing FAA aviation safety inspectors and those representing FAA aviation safety engineers; and

(H) aviation safety experts.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the Task Force shall include, at a minimum, identifying cost-effective best practices and providing recommendations with respect to—

(1) simplifying and streamlining flight standards regulatory processes;

(2) reorganizing the Flight Standards Service to establish an entity organized by function rather than geographic region, if appropriate;

(3) FAA aviation safety inspector training opportunities;

(4) FAA aviation safety inspector standards and performance; and

(5) achieving, across the FAA, consistent—

(A) regulatory interpretations; and

(B) application of oversight activities.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force shall submit to the Administrator, Advisory Committee established under section 2212, and appropriate committees of Congress a report detailing—

(1) the best practices identified and recommendations provided by the Task Force under subsection (c); and

(2) any recommendations of the Task Force for additional regulatory action or cost-effective legislative action.

(e) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Task Force.

(f) SUNSET.—The Task Force shall cease to exist on the date that the Task Force submits the report required under subsection (d).

SEC. 2233. CENTRALIZED SAFETY GUIDANCE DATABASE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall establish a centralized safety guidance database for all of the regulatory guidance issued by the FAA Office of Aviation Safety regarding compliance with 1 or more aviation safety-related provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The database under subsection (a) shall—

(1) for each guidance, include a link to the specific provision of the Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) subject to paragraph (3), be accessible to the public; and

(3) be provided in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

(c) DATA ENTRY TIMING.—

(1) EXISTING DOCUMENTS.—Not later than 14 months after the date the database is established, the Administrator shall have completed entering into the database any applicable regulatory guidance that are in effect and were issued before that date.

(2) NEW REGULATORY GUIDANCE AND UPDATES.—Beginning on the date the database is established, the Administrator shall ensure that any applicable regulatory guidance that are issued on or after that date are entered into the database as they are issued.

(d) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In establishing the database under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consult and collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, including labor organizations (including those representing aviation workers, FAA aviation safety engineers, and FAA aviation safety inspectors) and aviation industry stakeholders.

(e) DEFINITION OF REGULATORY GUIDANCE.—In this section, the term ''regulatory guidance'' means all forms of written information issued by the FAA that an individual or entity may use to interpret or apply FAA regulations and requirements, including information an individual or entity may use to determine acceptable means of compliance with such regulations and requirements, such as an order, manual, circular, policy statement, legal interpretation memorandum, and rulemaking documents.

SEC. 2234. REGULATORY CONSISTENCY COMMUNICATIONS BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall establish a Regulatory Consistency Communications Board (referred to in this section as the ''Board'').

(b) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In establishing the Board, the Administrator shall consult and collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, including FAA labor organizations (including labor organizations representing FAA aviation safety inspectors and labor organizations representing FAA aviation safety engineers) and aviation industry stakeholders.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Board shall be composed of FAA representatives, appointed by the Administrator, from—

(1) the Flight Standards Service;

(2) the Aircraft Certification Service; and

(3) the Office of the Chief Counsel.

(d) FUNCTIONS.—The Board shall carry out the following functions:

(1) Recommend, at a minimum, processes by which—

(A) FAA personnel and persons regulated by the FAA may submit regulatory interpretation questions without fear of retaliation;

(B) FAA personnel may submit written questions as to whether a previous approval or regulatory interpretation issued by FAA personnel in another office or region is correct or incorrect; and

(C) any other person may submit anonymous regulatory interpretation questions.

(2) Meet on a regular basis to discuss and resolve questions submitted under paragraph (1) and the appropriate application of regulations and policy with respect to each question.

(3) Provide to a person that submitted a question under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) an expeditious written response to the question.

(4) Recommend a process to make the resolution of common regulatory interpretation questions publicly available to FAA personnel and the public in a manner that—

(A) does not reveal any identifying data of the person that submitted a question; and

(B) protects any proprietary information.

(5) Ensure that responses to questions under this subsection are incorporated into regulatory guidance (as defined in section 2233(e)).

(e) PERFORMANCE METRICS, TIMELINES, AND GOALS.—Not later than 180 days after the date that the Advisory Committee recommends performance objectives and performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry under paragraphs (8) and (9) of section 2212(c), the Administrator, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee, shall—

(1) establish performance metrics, timelines, and goals to measure the progress of the Board in resolving regulatory interpretation questions submitted under subsection (d)(1); and

(2) implement a process for tracking the progress of the Board in meeting the performance metrics, timelines, and goals under paragraph (1).

SEC. 2235. FLIGHT STANDARDS SERVICE REALIGNMENT FEASIBILITY REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with relevant industry stakeholders, shall—

(1) determine the feasibility of realigning flight standards service regional field offices to specialized areas of aviation safety oversight and technical expertise; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the findings under paragraph (1).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider a flight standards service regional field office providing support in the area of its technical expertise to flight standards district offices and certificate management offices.

SEC. 2236. ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION RESOURCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and subject to the requirements of subsection (b), the Administrator may enter into a reimbursable agreement with an applicant or certificate holder for the reasonable travel and per diem expenses of the FAA associated with official travel to expedite the acceptance or validation by a foreign authority of an FAA certificate or design approval.

(b) CONDITIONS.—The Administrator may enter into an agreement under subsection (a) only if—

(1) the travel covered under the agreement is determined to be necessary, by both the Administrator and the applicant or certificate holder, to expedite the acceptance or validation of the relevant certificate or approval;

(2) the travel is conducted at the request of the applicant or certificate holder;

(3) the travel plans and expenses are approved by the applicant or certificate holder prior to travel; and

(4) the agreement requires payment in advance of FAA services and is consistent with the processes under section 106(l)(6) of title 49, United States Code.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the number of occasions on which the Administrator entered into reimbursable agreements under this section;

(2) the number of occasions on which the Administrator declined a request by an applicant or certificate holder to enter into a reimbursable agreement under this section;

(3) the amount of reimbursements collected in accordance with agreements under this section; and

(4) the extent to which reimbursable agreements under this section assisted in reducing the amount of time necessary for foreign authorities' validations of FAA certificates and design approvals.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICANT.—The term ''applicant'' means a person that has applied to a foreign authority for the acceptance or validation of an FAA certificate or design approval.

(2) CERTIFICATE HOLDER.—The term ''certificate holder'' means a person that holds a certificate issued by the Administrator under part 21 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

PART IV—SAFETY WORKFORCE

SEC. 2241. SAFETY WORKFORCE TRAINING STRATEGY.

(a) SAFETY WORKFORCE TRAINING STRATEGY.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall review and revise its safety workforce training strategy to ensure that it—

(1) aligns with an effective risk-based approach to safety oversight;

(2) best utilizes available resources;

(3) allows FAA employees participating in organization management teams or conducting ODA program audits to complete, expeditiously, appropriate training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to oversight;

(4) seeks knowledge-sharing opportunities between the FAA and the aviation industry in new technologies, best practices, and other areas of interest related to safety oversight;

(5) fosters an inspector and engineer workforce that has the skills and training necessary to improve risk-based approaches that focus on requirements management and auditing skills; and

(6) includes, as appropriate, milestones and metrics for meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (5).

(b) REPORT.—Not later that 270 days after the date the strategy is established under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation of the strategy and progress in meeting any milestones or metrics included in the strategy.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ODA HOLDER.—The term ''ODA holder'' has the meaning given the term in section 44736 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) ODA PROGRAM.—The term ''ODA program'' has the meaning given the term in section 44736(c)(3) of title 49, United States Code, as added by this Act.

(3) ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT TEAM.—The term ''organization management team'' means a group of FAA employees consisting of FAA aviation safety engineers, flight test pilots, and aviation safety inspectors overseeing an ODA holder and its specified function delegated under section 44702 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2242. WORKFORCE STUDY.

(a) WORKFORCE STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to assess the workforce and training needs of the Office of Aviation Safety of the Federal Aviation Administration and take into consideration how those needs could be met.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a review of the current staffing levels and requirements for hiring and training, including recurrent training, of aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers;

(2) an analysis of the skills and qualifications required of aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers for successful performance in the current and future projected aviation safety regulatory environment, including an analysis of the need for a systems engineering discipline within the Federal Aviation Administration to guide the engineering of complex systems, with an emphasis on auditing an ODA holder (as defined in section 44736(c) of title 49, United States Code);

(3) a review of current performance incentive policies of the Federal Aviation Administration, as applied to the Office of Aviation Safety, including awards for performance;

(4) an analysis of ways the Federal Aviation Administration can work with the aviation industry and FAA labor force to establish knowledge-sharing opportunities between the Federal Aviation Administration and the aviation industry in new technologies, best practices, and other areas that could improve the aviation safety regulatory system; and

(5) recommendations on the best and most cost-effective approaches to address the needs of the current and future projected aviation safety regulatory system, including qualifications, training programs, and performance incentives for relevant agency personnel.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the study required under subsection (a).

PART V—INTERNATIONAL AVIATION

SEC. 2251. PROMOTION OF UNITED STATES AEROSPACE STANDARDS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES ABROAD.

Section 40104 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PROMOTION OF UNITED STATES AEROSPACE STANDARDS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES ABROAD.—The Secretary shall take appropriate actions—

''(1) to promote United States aerospace-related safety standards abroad;

''(2) to facilitate and vigorously defend approvals of United States aerospace products and services abroad;

''(3) with respect to bilateral partners, to use bilateral safety agreements and other mechanisms to improve validation of United States type certificated aeronautical products and services and enhance mutual acceptance in order to eliminate redundancies and unnecessary costs; and

''(4) with respect to the aeronautical safety authorities of a foreign country, to streamline that country's validation of United States aerospace standards, products, and services.''.

SEC. 2252. BILATERAL EXCHANGES OF SAFETY OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 44701(e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) FOREIGN AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES.—

''(A) ACCEPTANCE.—The Administrator shall accept an airworthiness directive (as defined in section 39.3 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations) issued by an aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country, and leverage that aeronautical safety authority's regulatory process, if—

''(i) the country is the state of design for the product that is the subject of the airworthiness directive;

''(ii) the United States has a bilateral safety agreement relating to aircraft certification with the country;

''(iii) as part of the bilateral safety agreement with the country, the Administrator has determined that the aeronautical safety authority has an aircraft certification system relating to safety that produces a level of safety equivalent to the level produced by the system of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

''(iv) the aeronautical safety authority utilizes an open and transparent public notice and comment process in the issuance of airworthiness directives.

''(B) ALTERNATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Administrator may issue a Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive instead of accepting the airworthiness directive issued by the aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country if the Administrator determines that such issuance is necessary for safety or operational reasons due to the complexity or unique features of the Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive or the United States aviation system.

''(C) ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF COMPLIANCE.—The Administrator may—

''(i) accept an alternative means of compliance, with respect to an airworthiness directive under subparagraph (A), that was approved by the aeronautical safety authority of the foreign country that issued the airworthiness directive; or

''(ii) notwithstanding subparagraph (A), and at the request of any person affected by an airworthiness directive under that subparagraph, the Administrator may approve an alternative means of compliance with respect to the airworthiness directive.''.

SEC. 2253. FAA LEADERSHIP ABROAD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To promote United States aerospace safety standards, reduce redundant regulatory activity, and facilitate acceptance of FAA design and production approvals abroad, the Administrator shall—

(1) attain greater expertise in issues related to dispute resolution, intellectual property, and export control laws to better support FAA certification and other aerospace regulatory activities abroad;

(2) work with United States companies to more accurately track the amount of time it takes foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to validate United States type certificated aeronautical products;

(3) provide assistance to United States companies who have experienced significantly long foreign validation wait times;

(4) work with foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to collect and analyze data to determine the timeliness of the acceptance and validation of FAA design and production approvals by foreign authorities and the acceptance and validation of foreign-certified products by the FAA;

(5) establish appropriate benchmarks and metrics to measure the success of bilateral aviation safety agreements and to reduce the validation time for United States type certificated aeronautical products abroad; and

(6) work with foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to improve the timeliness of the acceptance and validation of FAA design and production approvals by foreign authorities and the acceptance and validation of foreign-certified products by the FAA.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) describes the Administrator's strategic plan for international engagement;

(2) describes the structure and responsibilities of all FAA offices that have international responsibilities, including the Aircraft Certification Office, and all the activities conducted by those offices related to certification and production;

(3) describes current and forecasted staffing and travel needs for the FAA's international engagement activities, including the needs of the Aircraft Certification Office in the current and forecasted budgetary environment;

(4) provides recommendations, if appropriate, to improve the existing structure and personnel and travel policies supporting the FAA's international engagement activities, including the activities of the Aviation Certification Office, to better support the growth of United States aerospace exports; and

(5) identifies policy initiatives, regulatory initiatives, or cost-effective legislative initiatives needed to improve and enhance the timely acceptance of United States aerospace products abroad.

(c) INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.—The Administrator of the FAA, or the Administrator's designee, may authorize international travel for any FAA employee, without the approval of any other person or entity, if the Administrator determines that the travel is necessary—

(1) to promote United States aerospace safety standards; or

(2) to support expedited acceptance of FAA design and production approvals.

SEC. 2254. REGISTRATION, CERTIFICATION, AND RELATED FEES.

Section 45305 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking ''Subject to subsection (b)'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (c)'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) CERTIFICATION SERVICES.—Subject to subsection (c), and notwithstanding section

45301(a), the Administrator may establish and collect a fee from a foreign government or entity for services related to certification, regardless of where the services are provided, if the fee—

''(1) is established and collected in a manner consistent with aviation safety agreements; and

''(2) does not exceed the estimated costs of the services.''.

Subtitle C—Airline Passenger Safety and Protections

SEC. 2301. PILOT RECORDS DATABASE DEADLINE.

Section 44703(i)(2) is amended by striking ''The Administrator shall establish'' and inserting ''Not later than April 30, 2017, the Administrator shall establish and make available for use''.

SEC. 2302. ACCESS TO AIR CARRIER FLIGHT DECKS.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall collaborate with other aviation authorities to advance a global standard for access to air carrier flight decks and redundancy requirements consistent with the flight deck access and redundancy requirements in the United States.

SEC. 2303. AIRCRAFT TRACKING AND FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall assess current performance standards, and as appropriate, conduct a rulemaking to revise the standards to improve near-term and long-term aircraft tracking and flight data recovery, including retrieval, access, and protection of such data after an incident or accident.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In revising the performance standards under subsection (a), the Administrator may consider—

(1) various methods for improving detection and retrieval of flight data, including—

(A) low frequency underwater locating devices; and

(B) extended battery life for underwater locating devices;

(2) automatic deployable flight recorders;

(3) triggered transmission of flight data, and other satellite-based solutions;

(4) distress-mode tracking; and

(5) protections against disabling flight recorder systems.

(c) COORDINATION.—If the performance standards under subsection (a) are revised, the Administrator shall coordinate with international regulatory authorities and the International Civil Aviation Organization to ensure that any new international standard for aircraft tracking and flight data recovery is consistent with a performance-based approach and is implemented in a globally harmonized manner.

SEC. 2304. AUTOMATION RELIANCE IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) MODERNIZATION OF TRAINING.—Not later than October 1, 2017, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall review, and update as necessary, recent guidance regarding pilot flight deck monitoring that an air carrier can use to train and evaluate its pilots to ensure that air carrier pilots are trained to use and monitor automation systems while also maintaining proficiency in manual flight operations consistent with the final rule entitled, ''Qualification, Service, and Use of Crewmembers and Aircraft Dispatchers'', published on November 12, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 67799).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing and updating the guidance, the Administrator shall—

(1) consider casualty driven scenarios during initial and recurrent simulator instruction that focus on automation complacency during system failure, including flight segments when automation is typically engaged and should result in hand flying the aircraft into a safe position while employing crew resource management principles;

(2) consider the development of metrics or measurable tasks an air carrier may use to evaluate the ability of pilots to appropriately monitor flight deck systems;

(3) consider the development of metrics an air carrier may use to evaluate manual flying skills and improve related training;

(4) convene an expert panel, including members with expertise in human factors, training, and flight operations—

(A) to evaluate and develop methods for training flight crews to understand the functionality of automated systems for flight path management;

(B) to identify and recommend to the Administrator the most effective training methods that ensure that pilots can apply manual flying skills in the event of flight deck automation failure or an unexpected event; and

(C) to identify and recommend to the Administrator revision in the training guidance for flight crews to address the needs identified in subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

(5) develop any additional standards to be used for guidance the Administrator considers necessary to determine whether air carrier pilots receive sufficient training opportunities to develop, maintain, and demonstrate manual flying skills.

(c) DOT IG REVIEW.—Not later than 2 years after the date the Administrator reviews the guidance under subsection (a), the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall review the air carriers implementation of the guidance and the ongoing work of the expert panel.

SEC. 2305. ENHANCED MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING FOR PILOTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider the recommendations of the Pilot Fitness Aviation Rulemaking Committee in determining whether to implement, as part of a comprehensive medical certification process for pilots with a first- or second-class airman medical certificate, additional screening for mental health conditions, including depression and suicidal thoughts or tendencies, and assess treatments that would address any risk associated with such conditions.

SEC. 2306. FLIGHT ATTENDANT DUTY PERIOD LIMITATIONS AND REST REQUIREMENTS.

(a) MODIFICATION OF FINAL RULE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise the flight attendant duty period limitations and rest requirements under section 121.467 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) CONTENTS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), in revising the rule under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that a flight attendant scheduled to a duty period of 14 hours or less is given a scheduled rest period of at least 10 consecutive hours.

(c) EXCEPTION.—The rest period required under subsection (b) may be scheduled or reduced to 9 consecutive hours if the flight attendant is provided a subsequent rest period of at least 11 consecutive hours.

(d) FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) SUBMISSION OF PLAN BY PART 121 AIR CARRIERS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, each air carrier operating under part 121 of title 13, Code of Federal Regulations (referred to in this subsection as a ''part 121 air carrier''), shall submit a fatigue risk management plan for the carrier's flight attendants to the Administrator for review and acceptance.

(2) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—Each fatigue risk management plan submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) current flight time and duty period limitations;

(B) a rest scheme that is consistent with such limitations and enables the management of flight attendant fatigue, including annual training to increase awareness of—

(i) fatigue;

(ii) the effects of fatigue on flight attendants; and

(iii) fatigue countermeasures; and

(C) the development and use of methodology that continually assesses the effectiveness of implementation of the plan, including the ability of the plan—

(i) to improve alertness; and

(ii) to mitigate performance errors.

(3) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) review each fatigue risk management plan submitted under this subsection; and

(B)(i) accept the plan; or

(ii) reject the plan and provide the part 121 air carrier with suggested modifications to be included when the plan is resubmitted.

(4) PLAN UPDATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 2 years, each part 121 air carrier shall—

(i) update the fatigue risk management plan submitted under paragraph (1); and

(ii) submit the updated plan to the Administrator for review and acceptance.

(B) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which an updated plan is submitted under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Administrator shall—

(i) review the updated plan; and

(ii)(I) accept the updated plan; or

(II) reject the updated plan and provide the part 121 air carrier with suggested modifications to be included when the updated plan is resubmitted.

(5) COMPLIANCE.—Each part 121 air carrier shall comply with its fatigue risk management plan after the plan is accepted by the Administrator under this subsection.

(6) CIVIL PENALTIES.—A violation of this subsection by a part 121 air carrier shall be treated as a violation of chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code, for the purpose of applying civil penalties under chapter 463 of such title.

SEC. 2307. TRAINING TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR CERTAIN AIR CARRIER EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 417 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 41725. Training to combat human trafficking

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each air carrier providing passenger air transportation shall provide flight attendants who are employees or contractors of the air carrier with training to combat human trafficking in the course of carrying out their duties as employees or contractors of the air carrier.

''(b) ELEMENTS OF TRAINING.—The training an air carrier is required to provide under subsection (a) to flight attendants shall include training with respect to—

''(1) common indicators of human trafficking; and

''(2) best practices for reporting suspected human trafficking to law enforcement officers.

''(c) MATERIALS.—An air carrier may provide the training required by subsection (a) using modules and materials developed by the Department of Transportation and the Department of Homeland Security, including the training module and associated materials of the Blue Lightning Initiative and modules and materials subsequently developed and recommended by such Departments with respect to combating human trafficking.

''(d) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that appropriate training modules and materials are available for air carriers to conduct the training required by subsection (a).

''(e) HUMAN TRAFFICKING DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'human trafficking' means 1 or more severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 417 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 41724 the following:

''41725. Training to combat human trafficking.''.

(c) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes—

(1) an assessment of the status of compliance of air carriers with section 41725 of title 49, United States Code, as added by subsection (a); and

(2) in collaboration with the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, recommendations for improving the identification and reporting of human trafficking by air carrier personnel while protecting the civil liberties of passengers.

(d) IMMUNITY FOR REPORTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING.—Section 44941(a) is amended by striking ''or terrorism, as defined by section 3077 of title 18, United States Code,'' and inserting ''human trafficking (as defined by section 41725), or terrorism (as defined by section 3077 of title 18)''.

SEC. 2308. REPORT ON OBSOLETE TEST EQUIPMENT.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the National Test Equipment Program (referred to in this section as the ''Program'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(1) a list of all known outstanding requests for test equipment, cataloged by type and location, under the Program;

(2) a description of the current method under the Program of ensuring calibrated equipment is in place for utilization;

(3) a plan by the Administrator for appropriate inventory of such equipment; and

(4) the Administrator's recommendations for increasing multifunctionality in future test equipment to be developed and all known and foreseeable manufacturer technological advances.

SEC. 2309. PLAN FOR SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE DIRECT WARNINGS OF POTENTIAL RUNWAY INCURSIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 30, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) assess available technologies to determine whether it is feasible, cost-effective, and appropriate to install and deploy, at any airport, systems to provide a direct warning capability to flight crews and air traffic controllers of potential runway incursions; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the assessment under subsection (a), the Administration shall consider National Transportation Safety Board findings and relevant aviation stakeholder views relating to runway incursions.

SEC. 2310. LASER POINTER INCIDENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall provide quarterly updates to the appropriate committees of Congress regarding—

(1) the number of incidents involving the beam from a laser pointer (as defined in section 39A of title 18, United States Code) being aimed at, or in the flight path of, an aircraft in the airspace jurisdiction of the United States;

(2) the number of civil or criminal enforcement actions taken by the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, or Department of Justice with regard to the incidents described in paragraph (1), including the amount of the civil or criminal penalties imposed on violators;

(3) the resolution of any incidents that did not result in a civil or criminal enforcement action; and

(4) any actions the Department of Transportation or Department of Justice has taken on its own, or in conjunction with other Federal agencies or local law enforcement agencies, to deter the type of activity described in paragraph (1).

(b) CIVIL PENALTIES.—The Administrator shall revise the maximum civil penalty that may be imposed on an individual who aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the airspace jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, to be $25,000.

SEC. 2311. HELICOPTER AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS DATA AND REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in collaboration with helicopter air ambulance industry stakeholders, shall assess the availability of information to the general public related to the location of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services, including helipads and helipads outside of those listed as part of any existing databases of Airport Master Record (5010) forms.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Based on the assessment under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) update, as necessary, any existing guidance on what information is included in the current databases of Airport Master Record (5010) forms to include information related to heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services; or

(2) develop, as appropriate and in collaboration with helicopter air ambulance industry stakeholders, a new database of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment, including any recommendations on how to make information related to the location of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services available to the general public.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 30 days after completing action under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2) of subsection (b), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation of that action.

(d) INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT DATA.—Section 44731 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter'' and inserting ''annually'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''flights and hours flown, by registration number, during which helicopters operated by the certificate holder were providing helicopter air ambulance services'' and inserting ''hours flown by the helicopters operated by the certificate holder'';

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''of flight'' and inserting ''of patients transported and the number of patient transport'';

(ii) by inserting ''or'' after ''interfacility transport,''; and

(iii) by striking '', or ferry or repositioning flight'';

(D) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by striking ''flights and''; and

(ii) by striking ''while providing air ambulance services''; and

(E) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:

''(6) The number of hours flown at night by helicopters operated by the certificate holder.'';

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking ''Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit'' and inserting ''The Administrator shall submit annually''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''The report shall include the number of accidents experienced by helicopter air ambulance operations, the number of fatal accidents experienced by helicopter air ambulance operations, and the rate, per 100,000 flight hours, of accidents and fatal accidents experienced by operators providing helicopter air ambulance services.'';

(3) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(4) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator, in collaboration with part 135 certificate holders providing helicopter air ambulance services, shall—

''(1) propose and develop a method to collect and store the data submitted under subsection (a), including a method to protect the confidentiality of any trade secret or proprietary information submitted; and

''(2) ensure that the database under subsection (c) and the report under subsection (d) include data and analysis that will best inform efforts to improve the safety of helicopter air ambulance operations.''.

SEC. 2312. PART 135 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT DATA.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) determine, in collaboration with the National Transportation Safety Board and

Part 135 industry stakeholders, what, if any, additional data should be reported as part of an accident or incident notice to more accurately measure the safety of on-demand Part 135 aircraft activity, to pinpoint safety problems, and to form the basis for critical research and analysis of general aviation issues; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the findings under paragraph (1), including a description of the additional data to be collected, a timeframe for implementing the additional data collection, and any potential obstacles to implementation.

SEC. 2313. DEFINITION OF HUMAN FACTORS.

Section 40102(a), as amended by section 2140 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (24) through (47) as paragraphs (25) through (48), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (23) the following:

''(24) 'human factors' means a multidisciplinary field that generates and compiles information about human capabilities and limitations and applies it to design, development, and evaluation of equipment, systems, facilities, procedures, jobs, environments, staffing, organizations, and personnel management for safe, efficient, and effective human performance, including people's use of technology.''.

SEC. 2314. SENSE OF CONGRESS; PILOT IN COMMAND AUTHORITY.

It is the sense of Congress that the pilot in command of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to, the operation of that aircraft, as set forth in section 91.3(a) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation thereto).

SEC. 2315. ENHANCING ASIAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with relevant aviation industry stakeholders, shall assess what, if any, improvements are needed to develop the predictive capability of the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing program (referred to in this section as ''ASIAS'') with regard to identifying precursors to accidents.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the assessment under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) determine what actions are necessary—

(A) to improve data quality and standardization; and

(B) to increase the data received from additional segments of the aviation industry, such as small airplane, helicopter, and business jet operations;

(2) consider how to prioritize the actions described in paragraph (1); and

(3) review available methods for disseminating safety trend data from ASIAS to the aviation safety community, including the inspector workforce, to inform in their risk-based decision making efforts.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment, including recommendations regarding paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (b).

SEC. 2316. IMPROVING RUNWAY SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall expedite the development of metrics—

(1) to allow the Federal Aviation Administration to determine whether runway incursions are increasing; and

(2) to assess the effectiveness of implemented runway safety initiatives.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress in developing the metrics described in subsection (a).

SEC. 2317. SAFE AIR TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM CELLS AND BATTERIES.

(a) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES ON PASSENGER AIRCRAFT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note)—

(A) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall update applicable regulations to implement the revised standards adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on February 22, 2016, regarding—

(i) prohibiting the bulk air transportation of lithium ion batteries on passenger aircraft; and

(ii) prohibiting bulk air transport cargo shipment of lithium batteries with an internal charge above 30 percent; and

(B) the Secretary of Transportation may initiate a review of existing regulations under parts 171–181 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, and any applicable regulations under title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, regarding the air transportation, including passenger-carrying and cargo aircraft, of lithium batteries and cells.

(2) MEDICAL DEVICE BATTERIES.—The Secretary of Transportation is encouraged to work with ICAO, pilots, and industry stakeholders to facilitate continued shipment of medical device batteries consistent with high standards of safety.

(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or constricting any other authority the Secretary of Transportation has under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note) to promulgate additional emergency or permanent regulations as permitted by subsection (b) of that section.

(b) LITHIUM BATTERY SAFETY WORKING GROUP.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall establish a lithium battery safety working group to promote and coordinate efforts related to the promotion of the safe manufacture, use, and transportation of lithium batteries and cells.

(1) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be composed of at least 1 representative from each of the following:

(i) Consumer Product Safety Commission.

(ii) Department of Transportation.

(iii) National Institute on Standards and Technology.

(iv) Food and Drug Administration.

(B) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The working group may include not more than 4 additional members with expertise in the safe manufacture, use, or transportation of lithium batteries and cells.

(C) SUBCOMMITTEES.—The President, or members of the working group, may—

(i) establish working group subcommittees to focus on specific issues related to the safe manufacture, use, or transportation of lithium batteries and cells; and

(ii) include in a subcommittee the participation of nonmember stakeholders with expertise in areas that the President or members consider necessary.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date it is established under subsection (b), the working group shall—

(A) research—

(i) additional ways to decrease the risk of fires and explosions from lithium batteries and cells;

(ii) additional ways to ensure uniform transportation requirements for both bulk and individual batteries; and

(iii) new or existing technologies that could reduce the fire and explosion risk of lithium batteries and cells; and

(B) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the research under subparagraph (A), including any legislative recommendations to effectuate the safety improvements described in clauses (i) through (iii) of that subparagraph.

(3) EXEMPTION FROM FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group.

(4) TERMINATION.—The working group, and any working group subcommittees, shall terminate 90 days after the date the report is transmitted under paragraph (2).

SEC. 2318. PROHIBITION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY CHANGE TO PERMIT SMALL, NON-LOCKING KNIVES ON AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, on and after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security may not implement any change to the prohibited items list of the Transportation Security Administration that would permit passengers to carry small, non-locking knives through passenger screening checkpoints at airports, into sterile areas at airports, or on board passenger aircraft.

(b) PROHIBITED ITEMS LIST DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''prohibited items list'' means the list of items passengers are prohibited from carrying as accessible property or on their persons through passenger screening checkpoints at airports, into sterile areas at airports, and on board passenger aircraft pursuant to section 1540.111 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 2319. AIRCRAFT CABIN EVACUATION PROCEDURES.

(a) REVIEW.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall review—

(1) evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft used in air transportation, with regard to—

(A) emergency conditions, including impacts into water;

(B) crew procedures used for evacuations under actual emergency conditions;

(C) any relevant changes to passenger demographics and legal requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), that affect emergency evacuations; and

(D) any relevant changes to passenger seating configurations, including changes to seat width, padding, reclining, size, pitch, leg room, and aisle width; and

(2) recent accidents and incidents in which passengers evacuated such aircraft.

(b) CONSULTATION; REVIEW OF DATA.—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) consult with the National Transportation Safety Board, transport-category aircraft manufacturers, air carriers, and other relevant experts and Federal agencies, including groups representing passengers, airline crew members, maintenance employees, and emergency responders; and

(2) review relevant data with respect to evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the review under subsection (a) and related recommendations, if any, including recommendations for revisions to the assumptions and methods used for assessing evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft.

Subtitle D—General Aviation Safety

SEC. 2401. AUTOMATED WEATHER OBSERVING SYSTEMS POLICY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) update automated weather observing systems standards to maximize the use of new technologies that promote the reduction of equipment or maintenance cost for non-Federal automated weather observing systems, including the use of remote monitoring and maintenance, unless demonstrated to be ineffective;

(2) review, and if necessary update, existing policies in accordance with the standards developed under paragraph (1); and

(3) establish a process under which appropriate on site airport personnel or an aviation official may, with appropriate manufacturer training or alternative training as determined by the Administrator, be permitted to conduct the minimum tri-annual preventative maintenance checks under the advisory circular for non-Federal automated weather observing systems (AC 150/5220-16D).

(b) PERMISSION.—Permission to conduct the minimum tri-annual preventative maintenance checks described under subsection (a)(3) shall not be withheld but for specific cause.

(c) STANDARDS.—In updating the standards under subsection (a)(1), the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure the standards are performance-based;

(2) use risk analysis to determine the accuracy of the automated weather observing systems outputs required for pilots to perform safe aircraft operations; and

(3) provide a cost benefit analysis to determine whether the benefits outweigh the cost for any requirement not directly related to safety.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2017, the Administrator shall provide a report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the implementation of requirements under this section.

SEC. 2402. TOWER MARKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulations to require the marking of covered towers.

(b) MARKING REQUIRED.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that a covered tower be clearly marked in a manner that is consistent with applicable guidance under the Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular issued December 4, 2015 (AC 70/7460–1L) or other relevant safety guidance, as determined by the Administrator.

(c) APPLICATION.—The regulations issued under subsection (a) shall ensure that—

(1) all covered towers constructed on or after the date on which such regulations take effect are marked in accordance with subsection (b); and

(2) a covered tower constructed before the date on which such regulations take effect is marked in accordance with subsection (b) not later than 1 year after such effective date.

(d) DEFINITION OF COVERED TOWER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term ''covered tower'' means a structure that—

(A) is self-standing or supported by guy wires and ground anchors;

(B) is 10 feet or less in diameter at the above-ground base, excluding concrete footing;

(C) at the highest point of the structure is at least 50 feet above ground level;

(D) at the highest point of the structure is not more than 200 feet above ground level;

(E) has accessory facilities on which an antenna, sensor, camera, meteorological instrument, or other equipment is mounted; and

(F) is located—

(i) outside the boundaries of an incorporated city or town; or

(ii) on land that is—

(I) undeveloped; or

(II) used for agricultural purposes.

(2) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''covered tower'' does not include any structure that—

(A) is adjacent to a house, barn, electric utility station, or other building;

(B) is within the curtilage of a farmstead;

(C) supports electric utility transmission or distribution lines;

(D) is a wind powered electrical generator with a rotor blade radius that exceeds 6 feet; or

(E) is a street light erected or maintained by a Federal, State, local, or tribal entity.

(e) DATABASE.—The Administrator shall—

(1) develop a database that contains the location and height of each covered tower;

(2) keep the database current to the extent practicable;

(3) ensure that any proprietary information in the database is protected from disclosure in accordance with law; and

(4) ensure access to the database is limited to individuals, such as airmen, who require the information for aviation safety purposes only.

SEC. 2403. CRASH-RESISTANT FUEL SYSTEMS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall evaluate and update, as necessary, standards for crash-resistant fuel systems for civilian rotorcraft.

SEC. 2404. REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN DEFINING SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FUTURE FLIGHT SERVICE PROGRAM.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consult with general aviation stakeholders in defining the scope and requirements for any new Future Flight Service Program of the Administration to be used in a competitive source selection for the next flight service contract with the Administration.

Subtitle E—General Provisions

SEC. 2501. DESIGNATED AGENCY SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(u) DESIGNATED AGENCY SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICER.—

''(1) APPOINTMENT.—There shall be a Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer appointed by the Administrator who shall exclusively fulfill the duties prescribed in this subsection.

''(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall have responsibility and accountability for—

''(A) auditing occupational safety and health issues across the Administration;

''(B) overseeing Administration-wide compliance with relevant Federal occupational safety and health statutes and regulations, national industry and consensus standards, and Administration policies; and

''(C) encouraging a culture of occupational safety and health to complement the Administration's existing safety culture.

''(3) REPORTING STRUCTURE.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall occupy a full-time, senior executive position and shall report directly to the Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management.

''(4) QUALIFICATIONS AND REMOVAL.—

''(A) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall have demonstrated ability and experience in the establishment and administration of comprehensive occupational safety and health programs and knowledge of relevant Federal occupational safety and health statutes and regulations, national industry and consensus standards, and Administration policies.

''(B) REMOVAL.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall serve at the pleasure of the Administrator.''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall appoint an individual to serve as the Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer under section 106(u) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2502. REPAIR STATIONS LOCATED OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.

(a) RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT.—Section 44733 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g);

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall take measures to ensure that the safety assessment system established under subsection (a)—

''(A) places particular consideration on inspections of part 145 repair stations located outside the United States that conduct scheduled heavy maintenance work on part 121 air carrier aircraft; and

''(B) accounts for the frequency and seriousness of any corrective actions that part 121 air carriers must implement to aircraft following such work at such repair stations.

''(2) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator shall take the measures required under paragraph (1)—

''(A) in accordance with the United States obligations under applicable international agreements; and

''(B) in a manner consistent with the applicable laws of the country in which a repair station is located.

''(3) ACCESS TO DATA.—The Administrator may access and review such information or data in the possession of a part 121 air carrier as the Administrator may require in carrying out paragraph (1)(B).''; and

(3) in subsection (g), as redesignated—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), as redesignated, the following:

''(1) HEAVY MAINTENANCE WORK.—The term 'heavy maintenance work' means a C-check, a D-check, or equivalent maintenance operation with respect to the airframe of a transport-category aircraft.''.

(b) ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TESTING.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure that—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, a notice of proposed rulemaking required pursuant to section 44733(d)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is published in the Federal Register; and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date on which the notice of proposed rulemaking is published in the Federal Register, the rulemaking is finalized.

(c) BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure that each employee of a repair station certificated under part 145 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, who performs a safety-sensitive function on an air carrier aircraft has undergone a preemployment background investigation sufficient to determine whether the individual presents a threat to aviation safety, in a manner that is—

(1) determined acceptable by the Administrator;

(2) consistent with the applicable laws of the country in which the repair station is located; and

(3) consistent with the United States obligations under international agreements.

SEC. 2503. FAA TECHNICAL TRAINING.

(a) E-LEARNING TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in collaboration with the exclusive bargaining representatives of covered FAA personnel, shall establish an e-learning training pilot program in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) CURRICULUM.—The pilot program shall—

(1) include a recurrent training curriculum for covered FAA personnel to ensure that the covered FAA personnel receive instruction on the latest aviation technologies, processes, and procedures;

(2) focus on providing specialized technical training for covered FAA personnel, as determined necessary by the Administrator;

(3) include training courses on applicable regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(4) consider the efficacy of instructor-led online training.

(c) PILOT PROGRAM TERMINATION.—The pilot program shall terminate 1 year after the date of establishment of the pilot program.

(d) E-LEARNING TRAINING PROGRAM.—Upon termination of the pilot program, the Administrator shall assess and establish or update an e-learning training program that incorporates lessons learned for covered FAA personnel as a result of the pilot program.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FAA PERSONNEL.—The term ''covered FAA personnel'' means airway transportation systems specialists and aviation safety inspectors of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) E-LEARNING TRAINING.—The term ''e-learning training'' means learning utilizing electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom.

SEC. 2504. SAFETY CRITICAL STAFFING.

(a) AUDIT BY DOT INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall conduct and complete an audit of the staffing model used by the Federal Aviation Administration to determine the number of aviation safety inspectors that are needed to fulfill the mission of the Federal Aviation Administration and adequately ensure aviation safety.

(b) CONTENTS.—The audit shall include, at a minimum—

(1) a review of the staffing model and an analysis of how consistently the staffing model is applied throughout the Federal Aviation Administration's aviation safety lines of business;

(2) a review of the assumptions and methods used in devising and implementing the staffing model to assess the adequacy of the staffing model to predict the number of aviation safety inspectors needed to properly fulfill the mission of the Federal Aviation Administration and meet the future growth of the aviation industry; and

(3) a determination on whether the current staffing model takes into account the Federal Aviation Administration's authority to fully utilize designees.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of completion of the audit, the Inspector General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the audit.

SEC. 2505. APPROACH CONTROL RADAR IN ALL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWERS.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) identify airports that are currently served by Federal Aviation Administration towers with non-radar approach and departure control (Type 4 tower); and

(2) develop an implementation plan, including budgetary considerations, to provide the facilities identified under paragraph (1) with approach control radar.

Subtitle F—Third Class Medical Reform and General Aviation Pilot Protections

SEC. 2601. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Pilot's Bill of Rights 2''.

SEC. 2602. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION OF CERTAIN SMALL AIRCRAFT PILOTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue or revise regulations to ensure that an individual may operate as pilot in command of a covered aircraft if—

(1) the individual possesses a valid driver's license issued by a State, territory, or possession of the United States and complies with all medical requirements or restrictions associated with that license;

(2) the individual holds a medical certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act, held such a certificate at any point during the 10-year period preceding such date of enactment, or obtains such a certificate after such date of enactment;

(3) the most recent medical certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration to the individual—

(A) indicates whether the certificate is first, second, or third class;

(B) may include authorization for special issuance;

(C) may be expired;

(D) cannot have been revoked or suspended; and

(E) cannot have been withdrawn;

(4) the most recent application for airman medical certification submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration by the individual cannot have been completed and denied;

(5) the individual has completed a medical education course described in subsection (c) during the 24 calendar months before acting as pilot in command of a covered aircraft and demonstrates proof of completion of the course;

(6) the individual, when serving as a pilot in command, is under the care and treatment of a physician if the individual has been diagnosed with any medical condition that may impact the ability of the individual to fly;

(7) the individual has received a comprehensive medical examination from a State-licensed physician during the previous 48 months and—

(A) prior to the examination, the individual—

(i) completed the individual's section of the checklist described in subsection (b); and

(ii) provided the completed checklist to the physician performing the examination; and

(B) the physician conducted the comprehensive medical examination in accordance with the checklist described in subsection (b), checking each item specified during the examination and addressing, as medically appropriate, every medical condition listed, and any medications the individual is taking; and

(8) the individual is operating in accordance with the following conditions:

(A) The covered aircraft is carrying not more than 5 passengers.

(B) The individual is operating the covered aircraft under visual flight rules or instrument flight rules.

(C) The flight, including each portion of that flight, is not carried out—

(i) for compensation or hire, including that no passenger or property on the flight is being carried for compensation or hire;

(ii) at an altitude that is more than 18,000 feet above mean sea level;

(iii) outside the United States, unless authorized by the country in which the flight is conducted; or

(iv) at an indicated air speed exceeding 250 knots.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL EXAMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop a checklist for an individual to complete and provide to the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The checklist shall contain—

(A) a section, for the individual to complete that contains—

(i) boxes 3 through 13 and boxes 16 through 19 of the Federal Aviation Administration Form 8500–8 (3–99);

(ii) a signature line for the individual to affirm that—

(I) the answers provided by the individual on that checklist, including the individual's answers regarding medical history, are true and complete;

(II) the individual understands that he or she is prohibited under Federal Aviation Administration regulations from acting as pilot in command, or any other capacity as a required flight crew member, if he or she knows or has reason to know of any medical deficiency or medically disqualifying condition that would make the individual unable to operate the aircraft in a safe manner; and

(III) the individual is aware of the regulations pertaining to the prohibition on operations during medical deficiency and has no medically disqualifying conditions in accordance with applicable law;

(B) a section with instructions for the individual to provide the completed checklist to

the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(C) a section, for the physician to complete, that instructs the physician—

(i) to perform a clinical examination of—

(I) head, face, neck, and scalp;

(II) nose, sinuses, mouth, and throat;

(III) ears, general (internal and external canals), and eardrums (perforation);

(IV) eyes (general), ophthalmoscopic, pupils (equality and reaction), and ocular motility (associated parallel movement, nystagmus);

(V) lungs and chest (not including breast examination);

(VI) heart (precordial activity, rhythm, sounds, and murmurs);

(VII) vascular system (pulse, amplitude, and character, and arms, legs, and others);

(VIII) abdomen and viscera (including hernia);

(IX) anus (not including digital examination);

(X) skin;

(XI) G–U system (not including pelvic examination);

(XII) upper and lower extremities (strength and range of motion);

(XIII) spine and other musculoskeletal;

(XIV) identifying body marks, scars, and tattoos (size and location);

(XV) lymphatics;

(XVI) neurologic (tendon reflexes, equilibrium, senses, cranial nerves, and coordination, etc.);

(XVII) psychiatric (appearance, behavior, mood, communication, and memory);

(XVIII) general systemic;

(XIX) hearing;

(XX) vision (distant, near, and intermediate vision, field of vision, color vision, and ocular alignment);

(XXI) blood pressure and pulse; and

(XXII) anything else the physician, in his or her medical judgment, considers necessary;

(ii) to exercise medical discretion to address, as medically appropriate, any medical conditions identified, and to exercise medical discretion in determining whether any medical tests are warranted as part of the comprehensive medical examination;

(iii) to discuss all drugs the individual reports taking (prescription and nonprescription) and their potential to interfere with the safe operation of an aircraft or motor vehicle;

(iv) to sign the checklist, stating: ''I certify that I discussed all items on this checklist with the individual during my examination, discussed any medications the individual is taking that could interfere with their ability to safely operate an aircraft or motor vehicle, and performed an examination that included all of the items on this checklist. I certify that I am not aware of any medical condition that, as presently treated, could interfere with the individual's ability to safely operate an aircraft.''; and

(v) to provide the date the comprehensive medical examination was completed, and the physician's full name, address, telephone number, and State medical license number.

(3) LOGBOOK.—The completed checklist shall be retained in the individual's logbook and made available on request.

(c) MEDICAL EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS.—The medical education course described in this subsection shall—

(1) be available on the Internet free of charge;

(2) be developed and periodically updated in coordination with representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for-profit general aviation stakeholder groups;

(3) educate pilots on conducting medical self-assessments;

(4) advise pilots on identifying warning signs of potential serious medical conditions;

(5) identify risk mitigation strategies for medical conditions;

(6) increase awareness of the impacts of potentially impairing over-the-counter and prescription drug medications;

(7) encourage regular medical examinations and consultations with primary care physicians;

(8) inform pilots of the regulations pertaining to the prohibition on operations during medical deficiency and medically disqualifying conditions;

(9) provide the checklist developed by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with subsection (b); and

(10) upon successful completion of the course, electronically provide to the individual and transmit to the Federal Aviation Administration—

(A) a certification of completion of the medical education course, which shall be printed and retained in the individual's logbook and made available upon request, and shall contain the individual's name, address, and airman certificate number;

(B) subject to subsection (d), a release authorizing the National Driver Register through a designated State Department of Motor Vehicles to furnish to the Federal Aviation Administration information pertaining to the individual's driving record;

(C) a certification by the individual that the individual is under the care and treatment of a physician if the individual has been diagnosed with any medical condition that may impact the ability of the individual to fly, as required under (a)(6);

(D) a form that includes—

(i) the name, address, telephone number, and airman certificate number of the individual;

(ii) the name, address, telephone number, and State medical license number of the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7);

(iii) the date of the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(iv) a certification by the individual that the checklist described in subsection (b) was followed and signed by the physician in the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(E) a statement, which shall be printed, and signed by the individual certifying that the individual understands the existing prohibition on operations during medical deficiency by stating: ''I understand that I cannot act as pilot in command, or any other capacity as a required flight crew member, if I know or have reason to know of any medical condition that would make me unable to operate the aircraft in a safe manner.''.

(d) NATIONAL DRIVER REGISTER.—The authorization under subsection (c)(10)(B) shall be an authorization for a single access to the information contained in the National Driver Register.

(e) SPECIAL ISSUANCE PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual who has qualified for the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) and is seeking to serve as a pilot in command of a covered aircraft shall be required to have completed the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate for each of the following:

(A) A mental health disorder, limited to an established medical history or clinical diagnosis of—

(i) personality disorder that is severe enough to have repeatedly manifested itself by overt acts;

(ii) psychosis, defined as a case in which an individual—

(I) has manifested delusions, hallucinations, grossly bizarre or disorganized behavior, or other commonly accepted symptoms of psychosis; or

(II) may reasonably be expected to manifest delusions, hallucinations, grossly bizarre or disorganized behavior, or other commonly accepted symptoms of psychosis;

(iii) bipolar disorder; or

(iv) substance dependence within the previous 2 years, as defined in section 67.307(a)(4) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(B) A neurological disorder, limited to an established medical history or clinical diagnosis of any of the following:

(i) Epilepsy.

(ii) Disturbance of consciousness without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause.

(iii) A transient loss of control of nervous system functions without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause.

(C) A cardiovascular condition, limited to a one-time special issuance for each diagnosis of the following:

(i) Myocardial infraction.

(ii) Coronary heart disease that has required treatment.

(iii) Cardiac valve replacement.

(iv) Heart replacement.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONS.—In the case of an individual with a cardiovascular condition, the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate shall be satisfied with the successful completion of an appropriate clinical evaluation without a mandatory wait period.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.—

(A) In the case of an individual with a clinically diagnosed mental health condition, the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) shall not apply if—

(i) in the judgment of the individual's State-licensed medical specialist, the condition—

(I) renders the individual unable to safely perform the duties or exercise the airman privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(II) may reasonably be expected to make the individual unable to perform the duties or exercise the privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(ii) the individual's driver's license is revoked by the issuing agency as a result of a clinically diagnosed mental health condition.

(B) Subject to subparagraph (A), an individual clinically diagnosed with a mental health condition shall certify every 2 years, in conjunction with the certification under subsection (c)(10)(C), that the individual is under the care of a State-licensed medical specialist for that mental health condition.

(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—

(A) In the case of an individual with a clinically diagnosed neurological condition, the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) shall not apply if—

(i) in the judgment of the individual's State-licensed medical specialist, the condition—

(I) renders the individual unable to safely perform the duties or exercise the airman privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(II) may reasonably be expected to make the individual unable to perform the duties or exercise the privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(ii) the individual's driver's license is revoked by the issuing agency as a result of a clinically diagnosed neurological condition.

(B) Subject to subparagraph (A), an individual clinically diagnosed with a neurological condition shall certify every 2 years, in conjunction with the certification under subsection (c)(10)(C), that the individual is under the care of a State-licensed medical specialist for that neurological condition.

(f) IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS FOR THE CACI PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall review and identify additional medical conditions that could be added to the program known as the Conditions AMEs Can Issue (CACI) program.

(2) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consult with aviation, medical, and union stakeholders.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report listing the medical conditions that have been added to the CACI program under paragraph (1).

(g) EXPEDITED AUTHORIZATION FOR SPECIAL ISSUANCE OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall implement procedures to expedite the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate under section 67.401 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consult with aviation, medical, and union stakeholders.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report describing how the procedures implemented under paragraph (1) will streamline the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate and reduce the amount of time needed to review and decide special issuance cases.

(h) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the National Transportation Safety Board, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that describes the effect of the regulations issued or revised under subsection (a) and includes statistics with respect to changes in small aircraft activity and safety incidents.

(i) PROHIBITION ON ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not take an enforcement action for not holding a valid third-class medical certificate against a pilot of a covered aircraft for a flight, through a good faith effort, if the pilot and the flight meet the applicable requirements under subsection (a), except paragraph (5) of that subsection, unless the Administrator has published final regulations in the Federal Register under that subsection.

(j) COVERED AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered aircraft'' means an aircraft that—

(1) is authorized under Federal law to carry not more than 6 occupants; and

(2) has a maximum certificated takeoff weight of not more than 6,000 pounds.

(k) OPERATIONS COVERED.—The provisions and requirements covered in this section do not apply to pilots who elect to operate under the medical requirements under subsection (b) or subsection (c) of section 61.23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(l) AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator receives credible or urgent information, including from the National Driver Register or the Administrator's Safety Hotline, that reflects on an individual's ability to safely operate a covered aircraft under the third-class medical certificate exemption in subsection (a), the Administrator may require the individual to provide additional information or history so that the Administrator may determine whether the individual is safe to continue operating a covered aircraft.

(2) USE OF INFORMATION.—The Administrator may use credible or urgent information received under paragraph (1) to request an individual to provide additional information or to take actions under section 44709(b) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2603. EXPANSION OF PILOT'S BILL OF RIGHTS.

(a) APPEALS OF SUSPENDED AND REVOKED AIRMAN CERTIFICATES.—Section 2(d)(1) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended by striking ''or imposing a punitive civil action or an emergency order of revocation under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709 of such title'' and inserting ''suspending or revoking an airman certificate under section 44709(d) of such title, or imposing an emergency order of revocation under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709 of such title''.

(b) DE NOVO REVIEW BY DISTRICT COURT; BURDEN OF PROOF.—Section 2(e) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In an appeal filed under subsection (d) in a United States district court with respect to a denial, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate by the Administrator—

''(A) the district court shall review the denial, suspension, or revocation de novo, including by—

''(i) conducting a full independent review of the complete administrative record of the denial, suspension, or revocation;

''(ii) permitting additional discovery and the taking of additional evidence; and

''(iii) making the findings of fact and conclusions of law required by Rule 52 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure without being bound to any findings of fact of the Administrator or the National Transportation Safety Board.'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) BURDEN OF PROOF.—In an appeal filed under subsection (d) in a United States district court after an exhaustion of administrative remedies, the burden of proof shall be as follows:

''(A) In an appeal of the denial of an application for the issuance or renewal of an airman certificate under section 44703 of title 49, United States Code, the burden of proof shall be upon the applicant denied an airman certificate by the Administrator.

''(B) In an appeal of an order issued by the Administrator under section 44709 of title 49, United States Code, the burden of proof shall be upon the Administrator.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) APPLICABILITY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection or subsection (a)(1) of section 554 of title 5, United States Code, section 554 of such title shall apply to adjudications of the Administrator and the National Transportation Safety Board to the same extent as that section applied to such adjudications before the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2.''.

(c) NOTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATION.—Subsection (b) of section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting ''and the specific activity on which the investigation is based'' after ''nature of the investigation'';

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''timely''; and

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking ''section 44709(c)(2)'' and inserting ''section 44709(e)(2)''.

(d) RELEASE OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS.—Section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is further amended by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) RELEASE OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) EMERGENCY ORDERS.—In any proceeding conducted under part 821 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, relating to the amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate, in which the Administrator issues an emergency order under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709, section 44710, or section 46105(c) of title 49, United States Code, or another order that takes effect immediately, the Administrator shall provide to the individual holding the airman certificate the releasable portion of the investigative report at the time the Administrator issues the order. If the complete Report of Investigation is not available at the time the Emergency Order is issued, the Administrator shall issue all portions of the report that are available at the time and shall provide the full report within 5 days of its completion.

''(B) OTHER ORDERS.—In any non-emergency proceeding conducted under part 821 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, relating to the amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate, in which the Administrator notifies the certificate holder of a proposed certificate action under subsections (b) and (c) of section 44709 or section 44710 of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator shall, upon the written request of the covered certificate holder and at any time after that notification, provide to the covered certificate holder the releasable portion of the investigative report.

''(2) MOTION FOR DISMISSAL.—If the Administrator does not provide the releasable portions of the investigative report to the individual holding the airman certificate subject to the proceeding referred to in paragraph (1) by the time required by that paragraph, the

individual may move to dismiss the complaint of the Administrator or for other relief and, unless the Administrator establishes good cause for the failure to provide the investigative report or for a lack of timeliness, the administrative law judge shall order such relief as the judge considers appropriate.

''(3) RELEASABLE PORTION OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the releasable portion of an investigative report is all information in the report, except for the following:

''(A) Information that is privileged.

''(B) Information that constitutes work product or reflects internal deliberative process.

''(C) Information that would disclose the identity of a confidential source.

''(D) Information the disclosure of which is prohibited by any other provision of law.

''(E) Information that is not relevant to the subject matter of the proceeding.

''(F) Information the Administrator can demonstrate is withheld for good cause.

''(G) Sensitive security information, as defined in section 15.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar ruling or regulation).

''(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the Administrator from releasing to an individual subject to an investigation described in subsection (b)(1)—

''(A) information in addition to the information included in the releasable portion of the investigative report; or

''(B) a copy of the investigative report before the Administrator issues a complaint.''.

SEC. 2604. LIMITATIONS ON REEXAMINATION OF CERTIFICATE HOLDERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44709(a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Administrator'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator'';

(2) by striking ''reexamine'' and inserting '', except as provided in paragraph (2), reexamine''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) LIMITATION ON THE REEXAMINATION OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not reexamine an airman holding a student, sport, recreational, or private pilot certificate issued under section 44703 of this title if the reexamination is ordered as a result of an event involving the fault of the Federal Aviation Administration or its designee, unless the Administrator has reasonable grounds—

''(i) to establish that the airman may not be qualified to exercise the privileges of a particular certificate or rating, based upon an act or omission committed by the airman while exercising those privileges, after the certificate or rating was issued by the Federal Aviation Administration or its designee; or

''(ii) to demonstrate that the airman obtained the certificate or the rating through fraudulent means or through an examination that was substantially and demonstrably inadequate to establish the airman's qualifications.

''(B) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Before taking any action to reexamine an airman under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall provide to the airman—

''(i) a reasonable basis, described in detail, for requesting the reexamination; and

''(ii) any information gathered by the Federal Aviation Administration, that the Administrator determines is appropriate to provide, such as the scope and nature of the requested reexamination, that formed the basis for that justification.''.

(b) AMENDMENT, MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION, OR REVOCATION OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES AFTER REEXAMINATION.—Section 44709(b) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(3) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), as redesignated, by striking ''The Administrator'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Administrator''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) AMENDMENTS, MODIFICATIONS, SUSPENSIONS, AND REVOCATIONS OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES AFTER REEXAMINATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not issue an order to amend, modify, suspend, or revoke an airman certificate held by a student, sport, recreational, or private pilot and issued under section 44703 of this title after a reexamination of the airman holding the certificate unless the Administrator determines that the airman—

''(i) lacks the technical skills and competency, or care, judgment, and responsibility, necessary to hold and safely exercise the privileges of the certificate; or

''(ii) materially contributed to the issuance of the certificate by fraudulent means.

''(B) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—Any order of the Administrator under this paragraph shall be subject to the standard of review provided for under section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44703 note).''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 44709(d)(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''subsection (b)(1)(A)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(1)(A)(i)''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''subsection (b)(1)(B)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(1)(A)(ii)''.

SEC. 2605. EXPEDITING UPDATES TO NOTAM PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) Beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not take any enforcement action against any individual for a violation of a NOTAM (as defined in section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44701 note)) until the Administrator certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Administrator has complied with the requirements of section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights, as amended by this section.

(2) In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1162; 49 U.S.C. 44701 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking ''this Act'' and inserting ''the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2''; and

(ii) by striking ''begin'' and inserting ''complete the implementation of'';

(B) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) to continue developing and modernizing the NOTAM repository, in a public central location, to maintain and archive all NOTAMs, including the original content and form of the notices, the original date of publication, and any amendments to such notices with the date of each amendment, in a manner that is Internet-accessible, machine-readable, and searchable;'';

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) to specify the times during which temporary flight restrictions are in effect and the duration of a designation of special use airspace in a specific area.''; and

(2) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) DESIGNATION OF REPOSITORY AS SOLE SOURCE FOR NOTAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator—

''(A) shall consider the repository for NOTAMs under subsection (a)(2)(B) to be the sole location for airmen to check for NOTAMs; and

''(B) may not consider a NOTAM to be announced or published until the NOTAM is included in the repository for NOTAMs under subsection (a)(2)(B).

''(2) PROHIBITION ON TAKING ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF NOTAMS NOT IN REPOSITORY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), beginning on the date that the repository under subsection (a)(2)(B) is final and published, the Administrator may not take any enforcement action against an airman for a violation of a NOTAM during a flight if—

''(i) that NOTAM is not available through the repository before the commencement of the flight; and

''(ii) that NOTAM is not reasonably accessible and identifiable to the airman.

''(B) EXCEPTION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply in the case of an enforcement action for a violation of a NOTAM that directly relates to national security.''.

SEC. 2606. ACCESSIBILITY OF CERTAIN FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471 is amended by inserting after section 47124 the following:

''§ 47124a. Accessibility of certain flight data

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term 'Administration' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(3) APPLICABLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'applicable individual' means an individual who is the subject of an investigation initiated by the Administrator related to a covered flight record.

''(4) CONTRACT TOWER.—The term 'contract tower' means an air traffic control tower providing air traffic control services pursuant to a contract with the Administration under the contract air traffic control tower program under section 47124(b)(3).

''(5) COVERED FLIGHT RECORD.—The term 'covered flight record' means any air traffic data (as defined in section 2(b)(4)(B) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44703 note)), created, maintained, or controlled by any program of the Administration, including any program of the Administration carried out by employees or contractors of the Administration, such as contract towers, flight service stations, and controller training programs.

''(b) PROVISION OF COVERED FLIGHT RECORD TO ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) REQUESTS.—Whenever the Administration receives a written request for a covered flight record from an applicable individual and the covered flight record is not in the possession of the Administration, the Administrator shall request the covered flight record from the contract tower or other contractor of the Administration in possession of the covered flight record.

''(2) PROVISION OF RECORDS.—Any covered flight record created, maintained, or controlled by a contract tower or another contractor of the Administration that maintains covered flight records shall be provided to the Administration if the Administration requests the record pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(3) NOTICE OF PROPOSED CERTIFICATE ACTION.—If the Administrator has issued, or subsequently issues, a Notice of Proposed Certificate Action relying on evidence contained in the covered flight record and the individual who is the subject of an investigation has requested the record, the Administrator shall promptly produce the record and extend the time the individual has to respond to the Notice of Proposed Certificate Action until the covered flight record is provided.

''(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2, the Administrator shall promulgate regulations or guidance to ensure compliance with this section.

''(2) COMPLIANCE BY CONTRACTORS.—

''(A) Compliance with this section by a contract tower or other contractor of the Administration that maintains covered flight records shall be included as a material term in any contract between the Administration and the contract tower or contractor entered into or renewed on or after the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2.

''(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any contract or agreement in effect on the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2 unless the contract or agreement is renegotiated, renewed, or modified after that date.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47124 the following:

''47124a. Accessibility of certain flight data.''.

SEC. 2607. AUTHORITY FOR LEGAL COUNSEL TO ISSUE CERTAIN NOTICES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise section 13.11 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to authorize legal counsel of the Federal Aviation Administration to close enforcement actions covered by that section with a warning notice, letter of correction, or other administrative action.

TITLE III—AIR SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 3001. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COVERED AIR CARRIER.—The term ''covered air carrier'' means an air carrier or a foreign air carrier as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) ONLINE SERVICE.—The term ''online service'' means any service available over the Internet, or that connects to the Internet or a wide-area network.

(3) TICKET AGENT.—The term ''ticket agent'' has the meaning given the term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

Subtitle A—Passenger Air Service Improvements

SEC. 3101. CAUSES OF AIRLINE DELAYS OR CANCELLATIONS.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review the categorization of delays and cancellations with respect to air carriers that are required to report such data.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the review under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider, at a minimum—

(A) whether delays and cancellations attributed by an air carrier to weather were unavoidable due to an operational or air traffic control issue, or due to the air carrier's preference in determining which flights to delay or cancel during a weather event;

(B) whether and to what extent delays and cancellations attributed by an air carrier to weather disproportionately impact service to smaller airports and communities; and

(C) whether it is an unfair or deceptive practice in violation of section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, for an air carrier to inform a passenger that a flight is delayed or cancelled due to weather, without any other context or explanation for the delay or cancellation, when the air carrier has discretion as to which flights to delay or cancel.

(3) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Secretary may use the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection, established under section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note), to assist in conducting the review and providing recommendations.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date the review under subsection (a) is complete, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review under subsection (a), including any recommendations.

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting the decision of an air carrier to maximize its system capacity during weather-related events to accommodate the greatest number of passengers.

SEC. 3102. INVOLUNTARY CHANGES TO ITINERARIES.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review whether it is an unfair or deceptive practice in violation of section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, for an air carrier to change the itinerary of a passenger, more than 24 hours before departure, if the new itinerary involves additional stops or departs 3 hours earlier or later and compensation or other more suitable air transportation is not offered.

(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Secretary may use the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection, established under section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note), to assist in conducting the review and providing recommendations.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date the review under subsection (a) is complete, the Secretary shall submit to appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review under subsection (a), including any recommendations.

SEC. 3103. ADDITIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date that the reviews under sections 3101 and 3102 of this Act are complete, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking to its notice of proposed rulemaking published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2014 (DOT–OST–2014–0056) (relating to the transparency of airline ancillary fees and other consumer protection issues) to consider the following:

(1) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by delays or cancellations when an air carrier has a choice as to which flights to cancel or delay during a weather-related event.

(2) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by involuntary changes to the consumer's itinerary.

SEC. 3104. ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES OF PASSENGERS INVOLVED IN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS.

(a) AIR CARRIERS HOLDING CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY.—Section 41113 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''a major'' and inserting ''any'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (9), by striking ''(and any other victim of the accident)'' and inserting ''(and any other victim of the accident, including any victim on the ground)'';

(B) in paragraph (16), by striking ''major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(C) in paragraph (17)(A), by striking ''significant'' and inserting ''any''; and

(3) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) 'Aircraft accident' means any aviation disaster, regardless of its cause or suspected cause, for which the National Transportation Safety Board is the lead investigative agency.

''(2) 'Passenger' has the meaning given the term in section 1136.''.

(b) FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS PROVIDING FOREIGN AIR TRANSPORTATION.—Section 41313 is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''a major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''a significant'' and inserting ''any'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''a significant'' and inserting ''any'';

(C) in paragraph (16), by striking ''major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(D) in paragraph (17)(A), by striking ''significant'' and inserting ''any''.

(c) NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD.—Section 1136(a) is amended by striking ''aircraft accident within the United States involving an air carrier or foreign air carrier and resulting in a major loss of life'' and inserting ''aircraft accident involving an air carrier or foreign air carrier, resulting in any loss of life, and for which the National Transportation Safety Board will serve as the lead investigative agency''.

SEC. 3105. EMERGENCY MEDICAL KITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall evaluate and revise, as appropriate, the regulations under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, regarding the emergency medical equipment requirements, including the contents of the first-aid kit, applicable to all certificate holders operating passenger-carrying airplanes under that part.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider whether the minimum contents of approved emergency medical kits, including approved first-aid kits, include appropriate medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children, including consideration of an epinephrine auto-injector, as appropriate.

SEC. 3106. TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study of airport accessibility best practices for individuals with disabilities; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include accessibility best practices beyond those recommended under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4151 et seq.), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 1080; Public Law 99–435), or Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), that improve infrastructure and communications, such as with regard to wayfinding, amenities, and passenger care.

SEC. 3107. EXTENSION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.

(a) TERMINATION.—Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(b) FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE.—Section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i); and

(2) by inserting before subsection (i), the following:

''(h) CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, each member of the advisory committee who is not a government employee shall disclose, on an annual basis, any potential conflicts of interest, including financial conflicts of interest, to the Secretary in such form and manner as prescribed by the Secretary.''.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Section 411(g) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''of the first 2 calendar years beginning after the date of enactment of this Act'' and inserting ''calendar year''; and

(2) by inserting ''and post on the Department of Transportation Web site'' after ''Congress''.

SEC. 3108. EXTENSION OF COMPETITIVE ACCESS REPORTS.

Section 47107(r)(3) is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund to a passenger in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid if the covered air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage but the covered air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

(b) EXCEPTION.—If as part of the rulemaking the Secretary makes a determination on the record that a requirement under subsection (a) is unfeasible and will negatively affect consumers in certain cases, the Secretary may modify 1 or both of the deadlines in that subsection for such cases, except that—

(1) the deadline relating to a domestic flight may not exceed 12 hours after the arrival of the domestic flight; and

(2) the deadline relating to an international flight may not exceed 24 hours after the arrival of the international flight.

SEC. 3110. REFUNDS FOR OTHER FEES THAT ARE NOT HONORED BY A COVERED AIR CARRIER.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations that require each covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund to a passenger of any ancillary fees paid for services that the passenger does not receive, including on the passenger's scheduled flight, on a subsequent replacement itinerary if there has been a rescheduling, or for a flight not taken by the passenger.

SEC. 3111. DISCLOSURE OF FEES TO CONSUMERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations requiring—

(1) each covered air carrier to disclose to a consumer the baggage fee, cancellation fee, change fee, ticketing fee, and seat selection fee of that covered air carrier in a standardized format; and

(2) notwithstanding the manner in which information regarding the fees described in paragraph (1) is collected, each ticket agent to disclose to a consumer such fees of a covered air carrier in the standardized format described in paragraph (1).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that each disclosure—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service—

(A) be prominently displayed to the consumer prior to the point of purchase; and

(B) set forth the fees described in subsection (a)(1) in clear and plain language and a font of easily readable size; and

(2) if ticketing is done on the telephone, be expressly stated to the consumer during the telephone call and prior to the point of purchase.

SEC. 3112. SEAT ASSIGNMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall complete such actions as may be necessary to require each covered air carrier and ticket agent to disclose to a consumer that seat selection for which a fee is charged is an optional service, and that if a consumer does not pay for a seat assignment, a seat will be assigned to the consumer from available inventory at the time the consumer checks in for the flight or prior to departure.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The disclosure under subsection (a) shall—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service, be prominently displayed to the consumer on that Internet Web site or online service during the selection of seating or prior to the point of purchase; and

(2) if ticketing is done on the telephone, be expressly stated to the consumer during the telephone call and prior to the point of purchase.

SEC. 3113. CHILD SEATING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall complete such actions as may be necessary to require each covered air carrier and ticket agent to disclose to a consumer that if a reservation includes a child under the age of 13 traveling with an accompanying passenger who is age 13 or older—

(1) whether adjoining seats are available at no additional cost at the time of purchase; and

(2) if not, what the covered air carrier's policy is for accommodating adjoining seat requests at the time the consumer checks in for the flight or prior to departure.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The disclosure under subsection (a) shall—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service, be prominently displayed to the consumer on that Internet Web site or online service during the selection of seating or prior to the point of purchase; and

(2) if ticketing is done on the telephone, be expressly stated to the consumer during the telephone call and prior to the point of purchase.

SEC. 3114. CONSUMER COMPLAINT PROCESS IMPROVEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 42302 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (a), the following:

''(b) POINT OF SALE.—Each air carrier, foreign air carrier, and ticket agent shall inform each consumer of a carrier service, at the point of sale, that the consumer can file a complaint about that service with the carrier and with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation.'';

(3) by amending subsection (c), as redesignated, to read as follows:

''(c) INTERNET WEB SITE OR OTHER ONLINE SERVICE NOTICE.—Each air carrier and foreign air carrier shall include on its Internet Web site, any related mobile device application, and online service—

''(1) the hotline telephone number established under subsection (a) or for the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

''(2) an active link and the email address, telephone number, and mailing address of the air carrier or foreign air carrier, as applicable, for a consumer to submit a complaint to the carrier about the quality of service;

''(3) notice that the consumer can file a complaint with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

''(4) an active link to the Internet Web site of the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation for a consumer to file a complaint; and

''(5) the active link described in paragraph (2) on the same Internet Web site page as the active link described in paragraph (4).''; and

(4) in subsection (d), as redesignated—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''An air carrier or foreign air carrier providing scheduled air transportation using any aircraft that as originally designed has a passenger capacity of 30 or more passenger seats'' and inserting ''Each air carrier and foreign air carrier'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking ''air carrier'' and inserting ''carrier''; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking ''air carrier'' and inserting ''carrier''.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations to implement the requirements of section 42302 of title 49, United States Code, as amended.

SEC. 3115. ONLINE ACCESS TO AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION INFORMATION.

(a) INTERNET WEB SITE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall—

(1) complete an evaluation of the aviation consumer protection portion of the Department of Transportation's public Internet Web site to identify any changes to the user interface that will improve usability, accessibility, consumer satisfaction, and Web site performance;

(2) in completing the evaluation under paragraph (1)—

(A) consider the best practices of other Federal agencies with effective Web sites; and

(B) consult with the Federal Web Managers Council;

(3) develop a plan, including an implementation timeline, for—

(A) making the changes identified under paragraph (1); and

(B) making any necessary changes to that portion of the Web site that will enable a consumer—

(i) to access information regarding each complaint filed with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

(ii) to search the complaints described in clause (i) by the name of the air carrier, the dates of departure and arrival, the airports of origin and departure, and the type of complaint; and

(iii) to determine the date a complaint was filed and the date a complaint was resolved; and

(4) submit the evaluation and plan to appropriate committees of Congress.

(b) MOBILE APPLICATION SOFTWARE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall—

(1) implement a program to develop application software for wireless devices that will enable a user to access information and perform activities related to aviation consumer protection, such as—

(A) information regarding airline passenger protections, including protections related to lost baggage and baggage fees, disclosure of additional fees, bumping, cancelled or delayed flights, damaged or lost baggage, and tarmac delays; and

(B) file an aviation consumer complaint, including a safety and security, airline service, disability and discrimination, or privacy complaint, with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation; and

(2) make the application software available to the public at no cost.

SEC. 3116. STUDY ON IN CABIN WHEELCHAIR RESTRAINT SYSTEMS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, shall conduct a study to determine the ways in which particular individuals with significant disabilities who use wheelchairs, including power wheelchairs, can be accommodated through in cabin wheelchair restraint systems.

SEC. 3117. TRAINING POLICIES REGARDING ASSISTANCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) each air carrier's training policy for its personnel and contractors regarding assistance for persons with disabilities, as required by Department of Transportation regulations;

(2) any variations among the air carriers in the policies described in paragraph (1);

(3) how the training policies are implemented to meet the Department of Transportation regulations;

(4) how frequently an air carrier must train new employees and contractors due to turnover in positions that require such training;

(5) how frequently, in the prior 10 years, the Department of Transportation has requested, after reviewing a training policy, that an air carrier take corrective action; and

(6) the action taken by an air carrier under paragraph (5).

(b) BEST PRACTICES.—After the date the report is submitted under subsection (a), the Secretary of Transportation, based on the findings of the report, shall develop and disseminate to air carriers such best practices as the Secretary considers necessary to improve the training policies.

SEC. 3118. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE AIR TRAVEL NEEDS OF PASSENGERS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish an advisory committee for the air travel needs of passengers with disabilities (referred to in this section as the ''Advisory Committee'').

(b) DUTIES.—The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretary with regard to the implementation of the Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–435; 100 Stat. 1080), including—

(1) assessing the disability-related access barriers encountered by passengers with disabilities;

(2) determining the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department of Transportation are addressing the barriers described in paragraph (1);

(3) recommending improvements to the air travel experience of passengers with disabilities; and

(4) such activities as the Secretary considers necessary to carry out this section.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall be comprised of at least 1 representative of each of the following groups:

(A) Passengers with disabilities.

(B) National disability organizations.

(C) Air carriers.

(D) Airport operators.

(E) Contractor service providers.

(2) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall appoint each member of the Advisory Committee.

(3) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(d) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of Transportation shall designate, from among the members appointed under subsection (c), an individual to serve as chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

(e) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members of the advisory committee shall serve without pay, but shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 1 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Transportation a report on the needs of passengers with disabilities in air travel, including—

(A) an assessment of disability-related access barriers, both those that were evident in the preceding year and those that will likely be an issue in the next 5 years;

(B) an evaluation of the extent to which the Department of Transportation's programs and activities are eliminating disability-related access barriers;

(C) a description of the Advisory Committee's actions during the prior calendar year;

(D) a description of activities that the Advisory Committee proposed to undertake in the succeeding calendar year; and

(E) any recommendations for legislation, administrative action, or other action that the Advisory Committee considers appropriate.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date the Secretary receives the report under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a copy of the report, including any additional findings or recommendations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(g) TERMINATION.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3119. REPORT ON COVERED AIR CARRIER CHANGE, CANCELLATION, AND BAGGAGE FEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of existing airline industry change, cancellation, and bag fees and the current industry practice for handling changes to or cancellation of ticketed travel on covered air carriers.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall consider, at a minimum—

(1) whether and how each covered air carrier calculates its change fees, cancellation fees, and bag fees; and

(2) the relationship between the cost of the ticket and the date of change or cancellation as compared to the date of travel.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

SEC. 3120. ENFORCEMENT OF AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION RULES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to consider and evaluate Department of Transportation enforcement of aviation consumer protection rules.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include an evaluation of—

(1) available enforcement mechanisms;

(2) any obstacles to enforcement; and

(3) trends in Department of Transportation enforcement actions.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

SEC. 3121. DIMENSIONS FOR PASSENGER SEATS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the

Secretary of Transportation shall initiate a proceeding to study the minimum seat pitch for passenger seats on aircraft operated by air carriers (as defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing any minimum seat pitch under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider the safety of passengers, including passengers with disabilities.

SEC. 3122. CELL PHONE VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 417, as amended by section 2307 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 41726. Cell phone voice communications

''(a) PROHIBITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Transportation may issue regulations—

''(1) to prohibit an individual on an aircraft from engaging in voice communications using a mobile communications device during a flight of that aircraft in scheduled passenger interstate or intrastate air transportation; and

''(2) that exempt from the prohibition described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) any member of the flight crew on duty on an aircraft;

''(B) any flight attendant on duty on an aircraft; and

''(C) any Federal law enforcement officer acting in an official capacity.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) FLIGHT.—The term 'flight' means, with respect to an aircraft, the period beginning when the aircraft takes off and ending when the aircraft lands.

''(2) MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'mobile communications device' means any portable wireless telecommunications equipment utilized for the transmission or reception of voice data.

''(B) LIMITATION.—The term 'mobile communications device' does not include a phone installed on an aircraft.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents at the beginning of chapter 417, as amended by section 2307 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 41725 the following:

''41726. Cell phone voice communications.''.

SEC. 3123. AVAILABILITY OF SLOTS FOR NEW ENTRANT AIR CARRIERS AT NEWARK LIBERTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—The terms ''new entrant air carrier'' and ''slot'' have the meanings given those terms in section 41714(h) of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SLOTS FOR NEW ENTRANT AIR CARRIERS.—The Secretary shall, annually, by granting exemptions from the requirements under part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or by other means, make not less than 8 slots at Newark Liberty International Airport available to enable new entrant air carriers to provide air transportation.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply in any year—

(1) new entrant air carriers operate 5 percent or more of the total number of slots at Newark Liberty International Airport; or

(2) the Secretary makes a determination that making slots available to enable new entrant air carriers to provide air transportation at that airport is not in the public interest and doing so would significantly increase operational delays.

(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives not later than 14 calendar days after the date a determination is made under subsection (c)(2), including the reasons for that determination.

Subtitle B—Essential Air Service

SEC. 3201. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION EXTENSION.—Section 41742(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''$150,000,000'' and all that follows though ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''$155,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 41731(a)(1)(A) is amended by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

''(ii) was determined, on or after October 1, 1988, and before December 1, 2012, under this subchapter by the Secretary of Transportation to be eligible to receive subsidized small community air service under section 41736(a);''.

(c) SEASONAL SERVICE.—The Secretary of Transportation may consider the flexibility of current operational dates and airport accessibility to meet local community needs when issuing requests for proposal of essential air service at seasonal airports.

SEC. 3202. SMALL COMMUNITY AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION.—Section 41743(e)(2) is amended to read as follows:

''(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017 to carry out this section. Such sums shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 41743(c)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) SIZE.—On the date of the most recent notice of order soliciting community proposals issued by the Secretary under this section, the airport serving the community or consortium—

''(A) was not larger than a small hub airport, as determined using the Department of Transportation's most recent published classification; and

''(B)(i) had insufficient air carrier service; or

''(ii) had unreasonably high air fares.''.

SEC. 3203. SMALL COMMUNITY PROGRAM AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 41743(c)(4) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(B) SAME PROJECTS.—'' before the second sentence and indenting appropriately;

(2) by inserting ''(A) IN GENERAL.—'' before the first sentence and indenting appropriately;

(3) in subparagraph (B), as designated by this subsection, by striking ''No community'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subparagraph (C)''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may waive the limitation under subparagraph (B) related to projects that are the same if the Secretary determines that the community or consortium spent little or no money on its previous project or encountered industry or environmental challenges, due to circumstances that were reasonably beyond the control of the community or consortium.''.

(b) AUTHORITY TO MAKE AGREEMENTS.—Section 41743(e)(1) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''The Secretary may amend the scope of a grant agreement at the request of the community or consortium and any participating air carrier, and may limit the scope of a grant agreement to only the elements using grant assistance or to only the elements achieved, if the Secretary determines that the amendment is reasonably consistent with the original purpose of the project.''.

SEC. 3204. WAIVERS.

Section 41732 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) WAIVERS.—Notwithstanding section 41733(e), upon request by an eligible place, the Secretary may waive, in whole or in part, subsections (a) and (b) of this section or subsections (a) through (c) of section 41734. A waiver issued under this subsection shall remain in effect for a limited period of time, as determined by the Secretary.''.

SEC. 3205. WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING AIR SERVICE TO SMALL COMMUNITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a working group—

(1) to identify obstacles to attracting and maintaining air transportation service to and from small communities; and

(2) to develop recommendations for maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

(b) OUTREACH.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall consult with—

(1) interested Governors;

(2) representatives of State and local agencies, and other officials and groups, representing rural States and other rural areas;

(3) other representatives of relevant State and local agencies; and

(4) members of the public with experience in aviation safety, pilot training, economic development, and related issues.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall—

(1) consider whether funding for, and terms of, current or potential new programs is sufficient to help ensure continuation of or improvement to air transportation service to small communities, including the Essential Air Service Program and the Small Community Air Service Development Program;

(2) identify initiatives to help support pilot training to provide air transportation service to small communities;

(3) consider whether Federal funding for airports serving small communities, including airports that have lost air transportation services or had decreased enplanements in recent years, is adequate to ensure that small communities have access to quality, affordable air transportation service;

(4) consider potential improvements in pilot training and any constraints affecting pilot career pathways that, if addressed, would increase both aviation safety and pilot supply;

(5) identify innovative State or local efforts that have established public-private partnerships that are successful in attracting and retaining air transportation service in small communities; and

(6) consider such other issues as the Secretary and Administrator consider appropriate.

(d) COMPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be facilitated through the Administrator or the Administrator's designee.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the working group shall be appointed by the Administrator and shall include representatives of—

(A) State and local government, including State and local aviation officials;

(B) State Governors;
(C) aviation safety experts;
(D) economic development officials; and
(E) the traveling public from small communities.

(e) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report, including—

(1) a summary of the views expressed by the participants in the outreach under subsection (b);

(2) a description of the working group's findings, including the identification of any areas of general consensus among the non-Federal participants in the outreach under subsection (b); and

(3) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would assist in maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

TITLE IV—NEXTGEN AND FAA ORGANIZATION

SEC. 4001. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(3) ADS–B.—The term ''ADS–B'' means automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast.

(4) ADS–B OUT.—The term ''ADS–B Out'' means automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast with the ability to transmit information from the aircraft to ground stations and to other equipped aircraft.

(5) NEXTGEN.—The term ''NextGen'' means the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

Subtitle A—Next Generation Air Transportation System

SEC. 4101. RETURN ON INVESTMENT ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Administrator's assessment of each NextGen program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an estimate of the date that each NextGen program will have a positive return on investment;

(2) an assessment of the impacts of each such program for—

(A) the Federal Government; and

(B) the users of the national airspace system;

(3) a description of how each such program directly contributes to a more safe and efficient air traffic control system; and

(4) the status of NextGen programs and of the projected return on investment for each such program.

(c) NEXTGEN PRIORITY LIST.—Based on the assessment under subsection (a) the Administrator shall—

(1) develop, in coordination with the NextGen Advisory Committee and considering the need for a balance between long-term and near-term user benefits, a prioritization of each NextGen program;

(2) include the priority list in the report under subsection (b); and

(3) prepare budget submissions to reflect the current status of NextGen programs and projected returns on investment for each program.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) KEY MILESTONES.—The term ''key milestones'' includes cost and deployment schedule, and benefits anticipated in the most recent baseline.

(2) RETURN ON INVESTMENT.—The term ''return on investment'' means the cost associated with technologies that are required by law or policy as compared to the benefits derived from such technologies by a government or a user of airspace.

(e) REPEAL OF NEXTGEN PRIORITIES.—Section 202 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act are repealed.

SEC. 4102. ENSURING FAA READINESS TO USE NEW TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure the capability of the Administration to receive space-based ADS-B data; and

(2) use the data described under paragraph (1) to provide positive air traffic control, including separation of aircraft over the oceans and other specific regions not covered by radar.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and biannually thereafter until the date that the Administrator certifies that the Administration has the capability to receive space-based ADS–B data, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) details the actions the Administrator has taken to ensure 2018 readiness and usage;

(2) details the actions that remain to be taken to implement such capability;

(3) includes a schedule for expected completion of each outstanding action described in paragraph (2); and

(4) includes a detailed description of the investment decisions and requests for funding made by the Administrator that are consistent with the terrestrial ADS–B implementation to ensure a sustained program beyond 2018.

SEC. 4103. NEXTGEN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.

(a) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.—Section 214 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.—The Administrator shall establish annual NextGen performance goals for each of the performance metrics set forth in subsection (a) to meet the performance metric baselines identified under subsection (b). Such goals shall be consistent with the annual performance objectives established by the senior policy committee (commonly known as the 'NextGen Advisory Committee') established under section 710 of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

(b) NEXTGEN METRICS REPORT.—Section 710(e)(2) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) a description of the progress made in meeting the annual NextGen performance goals relative to the performance metrics established under section 214 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

(c) CHIEF NEXTGEN OFFICER.—Section 106(s)(3) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(B), by adding at the end the following: ''In evaluating the performance of the Chief NextGen Officer for the purpose of awarding a bonus under this subparagraph, the Administrator shall consider the progress toward meeting the NextGen performance goals established pursuant to section 214(d) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following: ''The annual performance goals set forth in the agreement shall include quantifiable NextGen airspace performance objectives regarding efficiency, productivity, capacity, and safety, which shall be established by the senior policy committee (commonly known as the 'NextGen Advisory Committee') established under section 710 of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

SEC. 4104. FACILITY OUTAGE CONTINGENCY PLANS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On September 26, 2014, an Administration contract employee deliberately started a fire that destroyed critical equipment at the Administration's Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center (referred to in this section as the ''Chicago Center'') in Aurora, Illinois.

(2) As a result of the damage, Chicago Center was unable to control air traffic for more than 2 weeks, thousands of flights were delayed or cancelled into and out of O'Hare International Airport and Midway Airport in Chicago, and aviation stakeholders and airlines reportedly lost over $350,000,000.

(3) According to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, the fire at Chicago Center demonstrated that the Administration's contingency plans for the Chicago Center and the airspace it controls do not ensure redundancy and resiliency for sustained operations.

(4) Further, the Inspector General found that Chicago Center incident highlighted the limited flexibility and lack of resiliency in critical elements of the Administration's current air traffic control infrastructure, including limited communication capacity and the inability to easily transfer control of airspace and flight plans.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE CONTINGENCY PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall update the Administration's comprehensive contingency plan to address potential air traffic facility outages that could have a major impact on operation of the national airspace system.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the plan is updated under subsection (b), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the update, including any recommendations for ensuring air traffic facility outages do not have a major impact on operation of the national airspace system.

SEC. 4105. ADS–B MANDATE ASSESSMENT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Administration's ADS–B program is expected to be the centerpiece of the NextGen effort at the Administration, but the satellite-based system faces uncertainty and controversy.

(2) In May 2010, the Administration published a final rule that mandated airspace users be equipped with ADS–B Out avionics by January 1, 2020.

(3) Subsequently, in April 2015, the Administration announced completion of the ADS–B ground-based radio infrastructure. However, the ADS–B program faces considerable uncertainty and unanswered questions about whether or not the 2020 mandate is still meaningful.

(4) In 2014, the Office of the Inspector General found that while ADS–B is providing benefits where radar is limited or nonexistent in places such as the Gulf of Mexico, the system is providing only limited initial services to pilots and air traffic controllers in domestic airspace.

(5) The Office of the Inspector General also found, in 2014, that all elements of the system, such as avionics, the ground infrastructure, and controller automation systems, had not yet been tested in combination to determine if the overall system can be used in congested airspace and perform as well as existing radar, much less allow aircraft to fly closer together. This is referred to as ''end-to-end testing.''

(6) When this report was issued, commercial and general aviation stakeholders voiced serious concerns that equipping with new avionics for the 2020 mandate will be difficult due to the cost and limited availability of avionics, and capacity of certified repair stations to install avionics.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall assess—

(1) Administration and industry readiness to meet the ADS–B mandate by 2020;

(2) changes to ADS–B program since May 2010; and

(3) additional options to comply with the mandate and consequences, both for individual system users and for the overall safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, for noncompliance.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (b) is complete, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward meeting the ADS–B mandate by 2020, including any recommendations of the Inspector General to carry out such mandate.

SEC. 4106. NEXTGEN INTEROPERABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To implement a more effective international strategy for achieving NextGen interoperability with foreign countries, the Administrator shall take the following actions:

(1) Conduct a gap analysis to identify potential risks to NextGen interoperability with other Air Navigation Service Providers and establish a schedule for periodically reevaluating such risks.

(2) Develop a plan that identifies and documents actions the Administrator will undertake to mitigate such risks, using information from the gap analysis as a basis for making management decisions about how to allocate resources for such actions.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the analysis conducted under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) and on the actions the Administrator has taken under paragraph (2) of such subsection.

SEC. 4107. NEXTGEN TRANSITION MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(1) identify and analyze technical and operational maturity gaps in NextGen transition and implementation plans; and

(2) develop a plan to mitigate the gaps identified in paragraph (1).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the actions taken to carry out the plan required by subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 4108. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEXTGEN OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To help ensure that NextGen operational improvements are fully implemented in the midterm, the Administrator shall—

(1) work with airlines and other users of the national airspace system (referred to in this section as ''NAS'') to develop and implement a system to systematically track the use of existing performance based navigation (referred to in this section as ''PBN'') procedures;

(2) require consideration of other key operational improvements in planning for NextGen improvements, including identifying additional metroplexes for PBN projects, non-metroplex PBN procedures, as well as the identification of unused flight routes for decommissioning;

(3) develop and implement guidelines for ensuring timely inclusion of appropriate stakeholders, including airport representatives, in the planning and implementation of NextGen improvement efforts; and

(4) assure that NextGen planning documents provide stakeholders information on how and when operational improvements are expected to achieve NextGen goals and targets.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements of subsection (a), and on the schedule and process that will be used to implement PBN at additional airports, including information on how the Administration will partner and coordinate with private industry to ensure expeditious implementation of performance based navigation.

SEC. 4109. CYBERSECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(1) identify and implement ways to better incorporate cybersecurity measures as a systems characteristic at all levels and phases of the architecture and design of air traffic control programs, including NextGen programs;

(2) develop a threat model that will identify vulnerabilities to better focus resources to mitigate cybersecurity risks;

(3) develop an appropriate plan to mitigate cybersecurity risk, to respond to an attack, intrusion, or otherwise unauthorized access and to adapt to evolving cybersecurity threats; and

(4) foster a cybersecurity culture throughout the Administration, including air traffic control programs and relevant contractors.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4110. DEFINING NEXTGEN.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) assess how the line items included in the Administration's NextGen budget request relate to the goals and expected outcomes of NextGen, including how NextGen programs directly contribute to a measurably safer and more efficient air traffic control system; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations for the removal of line items that do not pertain to the overall vision for NextGen.

SEC. 4111. HUMAN FACTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to avoid having to subsequently modify products and services developed as a part of NextGen, the Administrator shall—

(1) recognize and incorporate, in early design phases of all relevant NextGen programs, the human factors and procedural and airspace implications of stated goals and associated technical changes; and

(2) ensure that a human factors specialist, separate from the research and certification groups, is directly involved with the NextGen approval process.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4112. MAJOR ACQUISITION REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate the current acquisition practices of the Administration to ensure that such practices—

(1) identify the current estimated costs for each acquisition system, including all segments;

(2) separately identify cumulative amounts for acquisition costs, technical refresh, and other enhancements in order to identify the total baselined and re-baselined costs for each system; and

(3) account for the way funds are being used when reporting to managers, Congress, and other stakeholders.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4113. EQUIPAGE MANDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Before NextGen-related equipage mandates are imposed on users of the national airspace system, the Administrator, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, shall—

(1) provide a statement of estimated cost and benefits that is based upon mature and stable technical specifications; and

(2) create a schedule for Administration deliverables and investments by both users and the Administration, including for procedure and airspace design, infrastructure deployment, and training.

SEC. 4114. WORKFORCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) identify and assess barriers to attracting, developing, training, and retaining a talented workforce in the areas of systems engineering, architecture, systems integration, digital communications, and cybersecurity;

(2) develop a comprehensive plan to attract, develop, train, and retain talented individuals; and

(3) identify the resources needed to attract, develop, and retain this talent.

(b) REPORT.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward

implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4115. ARCHITECTURAL LEADERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to provide an adequate technical foundation for steering NextGen's technical governance and managing inevitable changes in technology and operations, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop a plan that—

(A) uses an architecture leadership community and an effective governance approach to assure a proper balance between documents and artifacts and to provide high-level guidance;

(B) enables effective management and communication of dependencies;

(C) provides flexibility and the ability to evolve to ensure accommodation of future needs; and

(D) communicates changing circumstances in order to align agency and airspace user expectations;

(2) determine the feasibility of conducting a small number of experiments among the Administration's system integration partners to prototype candidate solutions for establishing and managing a vibrant architectural community; and

(3) develop a method to initiate, grow, and engage a capable architecture community, from both within and outside of the Administration, who will expand the breadth and depth of expertise that is steering architectural changes.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4116. PROGRAMMATIC RISK MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To better inform the Administration's decisions regarding the prioritization of efforts and allocation of resources for NextGen, the Administrator shall—

(1) solicit input from specialists in probability and statistics to identify and prioritize the programmatic and implementation risks to NextGen; and

(2) develop a method to manage and mitigate the risks identified in paragraph (1).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4117. NEXTGEN PRIORITIZATION.

The Administrator shall consider expediting NextGen modernization implementation projects at public use airports that share airspace with active military training ranges and do not have radar coverage where such implementation would improve the safety of aviation operations.

Subtitle B—Administration Organization and Employees

SEC. 4201. COST-SAVING INITIATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To ensure that Administration initiatives are being implemented in a timely and fiscally responsible manner, the Administrator shall—

(1) identify and implement agencywide cost-saving initiatives; and

(2) develop appropriate schedules and metrics to measure whether the initiatives are successful in reducing costs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4202. TREATMENT OF ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES DURING FURLOUGHS.

(a) DEFINITION OF ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEE.—In this section, the term ''essential employee'' means an employee of the Administration who performs work involving the safety of human life or the protection of property, as determined by the Administrator.

(b) IN GENERAL.—In implementing spending reductions under Federal law, the Administrator may furlough 1 or more employees of the Administration, except an essential employee, if the Administrator determines the furlough is necessary to achieve the required spending reductions.

(c) TRANSFER OF BUDGETARY RESOURCES.—The Administrator may transfer budgetary resources within the Administration to carry out subsection (b), except that the transfer may only be made to maintain essential employees.

SEC. 4203. CONTROLLER CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall require that an in-person interview be conducted with each individual applying for an air traffic control specialist position before that individual may be hired to fill that position.

(b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish guidelines regarding the in-person interview process described in subsection (a).

SEC. 4204. HIRING OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44506 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) HIRING OF CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SPECIALISTS.—

''(1) CONSIDERATION OF APPLICANTS.—

''(A) ENSURING SELECTION OF MOST QUALIFIED APPLICANTS.—In appointing individuals to the position of air traffic controllers, the Administrator shall give preferential consideration to qualified individuals maintaining 52 consecutive weeks of air traffic control experience involving the full-time active separation of air traffic after receipt of an air traffic certification or air traffic control facility rating within 5 years of application while serving at—

''(i) a Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control facility;

''(ii) a civilian or military air traffic control facility of the Department of Defense; or

''(iii) a tower operating under contract with the Federal Aviation Administration under section 47124 of this title.

''(B) CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL APPLICANTS.—The Administrator shall consider additional applicants for the position of air traffic controller by referring an approximately equal number of employees for appointment among the 2 applicant pools. The number of employees referred for consideration from each group shall not differ by more than 10 percent.

''(i) POOL ONE.—Applicants who:

''(I) have successfully completed air traffic controller training and graduated from an institution participating in the Collegiate Training Initiative program maintained under subsection (c)(1) who have received from the institution—

''(aa) an appropriate recommendation; or

''(bb) an endorsement certifying that the individual would have met the requirements in effect as of December 31, 2013, for an appropriate recommendation;

''(II) are eligible for a veterans recruitment appointment pursuant to section 4214 of title 38, United States Code, and provide a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty within 120 days of the announcement closing;

''(III) are eligible veterans (as defined in section 4211 of title 38, United States Code) maintaining aviation experience obtained in the course of the individual's military experience; or

''(IV) are preference eligible veterans (as defined in section 2108 of title 5, United States Code).

''(ii) POOL TWO.—Applicants who apply under a vacancy announcement recruiting from all United States citizens.

''(2) USE OF BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—

''(A) BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—The Administration shall not use any biographical assessment when hiring under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B)(i) of paragraph (1).

''(B) RECONSIDERATION OF APPLICANTS DISQUALIFIED ON THE BASIS OF BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—If an individual described in subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B)(i) of paragraph (1) who applied for the position of air traffic controller with the Administration in response to Vacancy Announcement FAA–AMC–14–ALLSRCE–33537 (issued on February 10, 2014) and was disqualified from the position as the result of a biographical assessment, the Administrator shall provide the applicant an opportunity to reapply as soon as practicable for the position under the revised hiring practices.

''(ii) WAIVER OF AGE RESTRICTION.—The Administrator shall waive any maximum age restriction for the position of air traffic controller with the Administration that would otherwise disqualify an individual from the position if the individual—

''(I) is reapplying for the position pursuant to clause (i) on or before December 31, 2017; and

''(II) met the maximum age requirement on the date of the individual's previous application for the position during the interim hiring process.

''(3) MAXIMUM ENTRY AGE FOR EXPERIENCED CONTROLLERS.—Notwithstanding section 3307 of title 5, United States Code, the maximum limit of age for an original appointment to a position as an air traffic controller shall be 35 years of age for those maintaining 52 weeks of air traffic control experience involving the full-time active separation of air traffic after receipt of an air traffic certification or air traffic control facility rating in a civilian or military air traffic control facility.''.

(b) NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES.—The Administrator shall consider directly notifying secondary schools and institutes of higher learning, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Minority Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities, of the vacancy announcement under section 44506(f)(1)(B)(ii) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 4205. COMPUTATION OF BASIC ANNUITY FOR CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8415(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(f) The annuity of an air traffic controller or former air traffic controller retiring under section 8412(a) is computed under subsection (a), except that if the individual has at least 5 years of service in any combination as:

''(1) an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i);

''(2) a first level supervisor of an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i); or

''(3) a second level supervisor of an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i);

so much of the annuity as is computed with respect to such type of service shall be computed by multiplying 1 7/10 percent of the individual's average pay by the years of such service.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall be deemed to be effective on December 12, 2003.

(c) PROCEDURES REQUIRED.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall establish such procedures as are necessary to provide for—

(1) notification to each annuitant affected by the amendments made by this section;

(2) recalculation of the benefits of affected annuitants;

(3) an adjustment to applicable monthly benefit amounts pursuant to such recalculation, to begin as soon as is practicable; and

(4) a lump sum payment to each affected annuitant equal to the additional total benefit amount that such annuitant would have received had the amendment made by subsection (a) been in effect on December 12, 2003.

SEC. 4206. AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES AT AVIATION EVENTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND RELATED SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall provide air traffic services and aviation safety support for aviation events, including airshows and fly-ins, without the imposition or collection of any fee, tax, or other charge for that purpose. Amounts for the provision of such services and support shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise available for the Federal Aviation Administration.

(b) DETERMINATION OF SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO BE PROVIDED.—In determining the services and support to be provided for an aviation event for purposes of subsection (a), the Administrator shall take into account the following:

(1) The services and support required to meet levels of activity at prior events, if any, similar to the event.

(2) The anticipated need for services and support at the event.

SEC. 4207. FULL ANNUITY SUPPLEMENT FOR CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

Section 8421a of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''The amount'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subsection (c), the amount'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) This section shall not apply to an individual described in section 8412(e) during any period in which the individual, after separating from the service as described in that section, is employed full-time as an air traffic control instructor under contract with the Federal Aviation Administration, including an instructor working at an on-site facility (such as an airport).''.

SEC. 4208. INCLUSION OF DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE IN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 40122(g)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (I)(iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(J) subject to paragraph (4), section 6329, relating to disabled veteran leave.''.

(b) CERTIFICATION OF LEAVE.—Section 40122(g) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) CERTIFICATION OF DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE.—In order to verify that leave credited to an employee pursuant to paragraph (2)(J) is used for treating a service-connected disability, that employee shall, notwithstanding section 6329(c) of title 5, submit to the Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management of the Federal Aviation Administration certification, in such form and manner as the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may prescribe, that the employee used that leave for purposes of being furnished treatment for that disability by a health care provider.''.

(c) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any employee of the Federal Aviation Administration hired on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall prescribe policies and procedures to carry out the amendments made by this section that are comparable, to the maximum extent practicable, to the regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management under section 6329 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter until the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish on a publicly accessible Internet Web site a report on—

(1) the effect carrying out this section and the amendments made by this section has had on the workforce; and

(2) the number of veterans benefitting from carrying out this section and the amendments made by this section.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 5001. NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD INVESTIGATIVE OFFICERS.

Section 1113 is amended by striking subsection (h).

SEC. 5002. PERFORMANCE-BASED NAVIGATION.

Section 213(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) NOTIFICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS.—Not later than 90 days before applying a categorical exclusion under this subsection to a new procedure at an OEP airport, the Administrator shall—

''(A) notify and consult with the operator of the airport at which the procedure would be implemented; and

''(B) consider consultations or other engagement with the community in the which the airport is located to inform the public of the procedure.

''(4) REVIEW OF CERTAIN CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall review any decision of the Administrator made on or after February 14, 2012, and before the date of enactment of this paragraph to grant a categorical exclusion under this subsection with respect to a procedure to be implemented at an OEP airport that was a material change from procedures previously in effect at the airport to determine if the implementation of the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located if the operator of that airport—

''(i) requests such a review; and

''(ii) demonstrates that there is good cause to believe that the implementation of the procedure had such an effect.

''(B) CONTENT OF REVIEW.—If, in conducting a review under subparagraph (A) with respect to a procedure implemented at an OEP airport, the Administrator, in consultation with the operator of the airport, determines that implementing the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located, the Administrator shall—

''(i) consult with the operator of the airport to identify measures to mitigate the effect of the procedure on the human environment; and

''(ii) in conducting such consultations, consider the use of alternative flight paths that do not substantially degrade the efficiencies achieved by the implementation of the procedure being reviewed.

''(C) HUMAN ENVIRONMENT DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term 'human environment' has the meaning given such term in section 1508.14 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this paragraph).''.

SEC. 5003. OVERFLIGHTS OF NATIONAL PARKS.

Section 40128 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking ''the'' before ''title 14''; and

(2) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

''(f) TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—This section shall not apply to any air tour operator while flying over or near any Federal land managed by the Director of the National Park Service, including Lake Mead National Recreation Area, solely as a transportation route, to conduct an air tour over the Grand Canyon National Park.

''(2) EN ROUTE.—For purposes of this subsection, an air tour operator flying over the Hoover Dam in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area en route to the Grand Canyon National Park shall be deemed to be flying solely as a transportation route.''.

SEC. 5004. NAVIGABLE AIRSPACE ANALYSIS FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH SITE RUNWAYS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44718(b)(1) is amended–

(1) by striking ''air navigation facilities and equipment'' and inserting ''air or space navigation facilities and equipment'';

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) the impact on launch and reentry for launch and reentry vehicles arriving or departing from a launch site or reentry site licensed by the Secretary.''.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to implement the amendments made by subsection (a).

SEC. 5005. SURVEY AND REPORT ON SPACEPORT DEVELOPMENT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on

the existing system of spaceports licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration that includes recommendations regarding—

(1) the extent to which, and the manner in which, the Federal Government could participate in the construction, improvement, development, or maintenance of such spaceports; and

(2) potential funding sources.

SEC. 5006. AVIATION FUEL.

(a) USE OF UNLEADED AVIATION GASOLINE.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall allow the use of an unleaded aviation gasoline in an aircraft as a replacement for a leaded gasoline if the Administrator—

(1) determines that the unleaded aviation gasoline qualifies as a replacement for an approved leaded gasoline;

(2) identifies the aircraft and engines that are eligible to use the qualified replacement unleaded gasoline; and

(3) adopts a process (other than the traditional means of certification) to allow eligible aircraft and engines to operate using qualified replacement unleaded gasoline in a manner that ensures safety.

(b) TIMING.—The Administrator shall adopt the process described in subsection (a)(3) not later than 180 days after the later of—

(1) the date on which the Administration completes the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative; or

(2) the date on which the American Society for Testing and Materials publishes a production specification for an unleaded aviation gasoline.

SEC. 5007. COMPREHENSIVE AVIATION PREPAREDNESS PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and representatives of other Federal departments and agencies, as necessary, shall develop a comprehensive national aviation communicable disease preparedness plan.

(b) MINIMUM COMPONENTS.—The plan developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be developed in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, including State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, air carriers, first responders, and the general public;

(2) provide for the development of a communications system or protocols for providing comprehensive, appropriate, and up-to-date information regarding communicable disease threats and preparedness between all relevant stakeholders;

(3) document the roles and responsibilities of relevant Federal department and agencies, including coordination requirements;

(4) provide guidance to air carriers, airports, and other appropriate aviation stakeholders on how to develop comprehensive communicable disease preparedness plans for their respective organizations, in accordance with the plan to be developed under subsection (a);

(5) be scalable and adaptable so that the plan can be used to address the full range of communicable disease threats and incidents;

(6) provide information on communicable threats and response training resources for all relevant stakeholders, including Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial government employees, airport officials, aviation industry employees and contractors, first responders, and health officials;

(7) develop protocols for the dissemination of comprehensive, up-to-date, and appropriate information to the traveling public concerning communicable disease threats and preparedness;

(8) be updated periodically to incorporate lessons learned with supplemental information; and

(9) be provided in writing, electronically, and accessible via the Internet.

(c) INTERAGENCY FRAMEWORK.—The plan developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be conducted under the existing interagency framework for national level all hazards emergency preparedness planning or another appropriate framework; and

(2) be consistent with the obligations of the United States under international agreements.

SEC. 5008. ADVANCED MATERIALS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 445 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 44518. Advanced Materials Center of Excellence

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall continue operation of the Advanced Materials Center of Excellence (referred to in this section as the 'Center') under its structure as in effect on March 1, 2016, which shall focus on applied research and training on the durability and maintainability of advanced materials in transport airframe structures.

''(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Center shall—

''(1) promote and facilitate collaboration among academia, the Transportation Division of the Federal Aviation Administration, and the commercial aircraft industry, including manufacturers, commercial air carriers, and suppliers; and

''(2) establish goals set to advance technology, improve engineering practices, and facilitate continuing education in relevant areas of study.

''(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator $500,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to carry out this section.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 445 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''44518. Advanced Materials Center of Excellence.''.

SEC. 5009. INTERFERENCE WITH AIRLINE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) complete a study of crimes of violence (as defined in section 16 of title 18, United States Code) committed against airline customer service representatives while they are performing their duties and on airport property; and

(2) submit the findings of the study, including any recommendations, to Congress.

(b) GAP ANALYSIS.—The study shall include a gap analysis to determine if State and local laws and resources are adequate to deter or otherwise address the crimes of violence described in subsection (a) and recommendations on how to address any identified gaps.

SEC. 5010. SECONDARY COCKPIT BARRIERS.

(a) THREAT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, shall complete a detailed risk assessment of the need for physical secondary barriers on aircraft flown by air carriers operating under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, for passenger operations.

(b) DETERMINATION AND RULEMAKING.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines that there is a threat based on the threat assessment under subsection (a), then not later than 18 months after the date of that determination, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may promulgate regulations for the risk-based equipage of air carriers operating under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, for passenger operations, as appropriate.

SEC. 5011. GAO EVALUATION AND AUDIT.

Section 15(a)(1) of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 165(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''2 years'' and inserting ''4 years''.

SEC. 5012. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS.

(a) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall establish performance measures relating to the administration of the Federal Aviation Administration, which shall, at a minimum, include measures to assess—

(1) the reduction of delays in the completion of projects; and

(2) the effectiveness of the Administration in achieving the goals described in section 47171 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary establishes performance measures in accordance with subsection (a), the Secretary shall establish performance targets relating to each of the measures described in that subsection.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to Congress a report describing the progress of the Secretary in meeting the performance targets established under subsection (b).

SEC. 5013. STAFFING OF CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure appropriate staffing at the Core 30 air traffic control towers and associated terminal radar approach control facilities and air route traffic control centers and ensure, as appropriate, staffing levels at those control towers, facilities, and centers are not below the average number of air traffic controllers between the ''high'' and ''low'' staffing ranges, as specified in the document of the Federal Aviation Administration entitled, ''A Plan for the Future: 10-Year Strategy for Air Traffic Control Workforce 2015–2024''.

(b) RETENTION.—The Administrator shall review strategies to improve retention of experienced certified professional controllers at the control towers, facilities, and centers described in subsection (a)(1).

SEC. 5014. CRITICAL AIRFIELD MARKINGS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue a request for proposal for a study that includes—

(1) an independent, third-party study to assess the durability of Type III and Type I glass beads applied to critical markings over a 12-month period at no fewer than 2 primary airports in varying weather conditions to measure the retroflectivity levels of such markings on a quarterly basis; and

(2) a study at 2 other airports carried out by applying Type III beads on one half of the centerline and Type I beads to the other half and providing for assessments from pilots through surveys administered by a third party as to the visibility and performance of the Type III glass beads as compared to the Type I glass beads over a 6-month period.

SEC. 5015. RESEARCH AND DEPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN AIRFIELD PAVEMENT TECHNOLOGIES.

Using amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall carry out a program for the research and deployment of aircraft pavement technologies under which the Administrator makes grants to, and enters into cooperative agreements with, institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations that—

(1) research concrete and asphalt airfield pavement technologies that extend the life of airfield pavements;

(2) develop and conduct training;

(3) provide for demonstration projects; and

(4) promote the latest airfield pavement technologies to aid in the development of safer, more cost effective, and more durable airfield pavements.

SEC. 5016. REPORT ON GENERAL AVIATION FLIGHT SHARING.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report assessing the feasibility of flight sharing for general aviation. The report shall include an assessment of any regulations that may need to be updated to allow for safe and efficient flight sharing, including regulations imposing limitations on the forms of communication persons who hold private pilot certificates may use.

SEC. 5017. INCREASE IN DURATION OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to increase the duration of aircraft registrations for noncommercial general aviation aircraft to 5 years.

SEC. 5018. MODIFICATION OF LIMITATION OF LIABILITY RELATING TO AIRCRAFT.

Section 44112(b) is amended—

(1) by striking ''on land or water''; and

(2) by inserting ''operational'' before ''control''.

SEC. 5019. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF ILLEGAL DRUGS SEIZED AT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of illegal drugs, including heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine, seized by Federal authorities at international airports in the United States.

(b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall address, at a minimum—

(1) the types and quantities of drugs seized;

(2) the origin of the drugs seized;

(3) the airport at which the drugs were seized;

(4) the manner in which the drugs were seized; and

(5) the manner in which the drugs were transported.

(c) USE OF DATA; RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTION.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall use all available data. If the Comptroller General determines that additional data is needed to fully understand the extent to which illegal drugs enter the United States through international airports in the United States, the Comptroller General shall develop recommendations for the collection of that data.

(d) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subsection (a) that includes any recommendations developed under subsection (c).

SEC. 5020. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PREVENTING THE TRANSPORTATION OF DISEASE-CARRYING MOSQUITOES AND OTHER INSECTS ON COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Agriculture should, in coordination and consultation with the World Health Organization, develop a framework and guidance for the use of safe, effective, and nontoxic means of preventing the transportation of disease-carrying mosquitoes and other insects on commercial aircraft.

SEC. 5021. WORK PLAN FOR THE NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY/PHILADELPHIA METROPLEX PROGRAM.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop and publish in the Federal Register a work plan for the New York/New Jersey/Philadelphia metroplex program.

SEC. 5022. REPORT ON PLANS FOR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES IN THE NEW YORK CITY AND NEWARK REGION.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Federal Aviation Administration's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark region for the 1-year period beginning on such date of enactment.

SEC. 5023. GAO STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE ALLIANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of certain cooperative agreements between United States air carriers and non-United States air carriers (referred to in this section as ''alliances''), which—

(1) have been created pursuant to section 41309 of title 49, United States Code; and

(2) have been exempted from antitrust laws (as defined in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12)) pursuant to section 41308 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—The study conducted under subsection (a) shall assess—

(1) the consequences of alliances, including reduced competition, stifling new entrants into markets, increasing prices in markets, and other adverse consequences;

(2) the representations made by air carriers to the Secretary of Transportation for the necessity of an antitrust exemption;

(3) the Department of Transportation's expectations of public benefits resulting from alliances, including whether such expected benefits were actually achieved;

(4) the adequacy of the Department of Transportation's efforts in the approval and monitoring of alliances, including possessing relevant experience and expertise in the fields of antitrust and consumer protection;

(5) whether there has been sufficient transparency in the approval of alliances, including opportunities for public review and feedback;

(6) the role of the Department of Justice in the oversight of alliances;

(7) whether there are alternatives to antitrust immunity that could be conferred that would also produce public benefits;

(8) whether alliances should be required to expire;

(9) the level of competition between air carriers who are members of the same alliance;

(10) the level of competition between alliances;

(11) whether the Department of Transportation should amend, modify, or revoke any exemption from the antitrust laws granted by the Secretary of Transportation in connection with an alliance; and

(12) the effect of alliances on the number and quality of jobs for United States air carrier flight crew employees, including the share of alliance flying done by such employees.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations on the reforms needed to improve competition and enhance choices for consumers, including—

(1) whether oversight of alliances should be exercised by the Department of Justice rather than by the Department of Transportation; and

(2) whether antitrust immunity for alliances should expire.

SEC. 5024. TREATMENT OF MULTI-YEAR LESSEES OF LARGE AND TURBINE-POWERED MULTIENGINE AIRCRAFT.

The Secretary of Transportation shall revise such regulations as may be necessary to ensure that multi-year lessees and owners of large and turbine-powered multiengine aircraft are treated equally for purposes of joint ownership policies of the Federal Aviation Administration.

SEC. 5025. EVALUATION OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with representatives of the aviation community and institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1964 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))), shall conduct a study to evaluate the potential impact of emerging technologies, such as electric propulsion and autonomous control, on the current state of aircraft design, operations, maintenance, and licensing.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that summarizes the results of the study conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 5026. STUDENT OUTREACH REPORT.

Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that describes the Administration's existing outreach efforts, such as the STEM Aviation and Space Education Outreach Program, to elementary and secondary students who are interested in careers in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics—

(1) to prepare and inspire such students for aeronautical careers; and

(2) to mitigate an anticipated shortage of pilots and other aviation professionals.

SEC. 5027. RIGHT TO PRIVACY WHEN USING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Aviation Administration, as appropriate, shall upon request of a private aircraft owner or operator, block the registration number of the aircraft of the owner or operator from any public dissemination or display, except in data made available to a Government agency, for the noncommercial flights of the owner or operator.

SEC. 5028. CONDUCT OF SECURITY SCREENING BY THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AT CERTAIN AIRPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide for security screening to be conducted by the Transportation Security Administration at, and provide all necessary staff and equipment to, any airport—

(1) that lost commercial air service on or after January 1, 2013; and

(2) the operator of which, following the loss described in paragraph (1), submits to the Administrator—

(A) a request for security screening to be conducted at the airport by the Transportation Security Administration; and

(B) written confirmation of a commitment from a commercial air carrier—

(i) that the air carrier wants to provide commercial air service at the airport; and

(ii) that such service will commence not later than 1 year after the date of the submission of the request under subparagraph (A).

(b) DEADLINE.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall ensure that the process of implementing security screening by the Transportation Security Administration at an airport described in subsection (a) is complete not later than the later of—

(1) the date that is 90 days after the date on which the operator of the airport submits to the Administrator a request for such screening under paragraph (2)(A) of that subsection; or

(2) the date on which the air carrier intends to provide commercial air service at the airport.

(c) EFFECT ON OTHER AIRPORTS.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall carry out this section in a manner that does not negatively affect operations at airports that are provided security screening by the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. 5029. AVIATION CYBERSECURITY.

(a) COMPREHENSIVE AVIATION FRAMEWORK.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall facilitate and support the development of a comprehensive framework of principles and policies to reduce cybersecurity risks to the national airspace system, civil aviation, and agency information systems.

(2) SCOPE.—As part of the principles and policies under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) clarify cybersecurity roles and responsibilities of offices and employees, including governance structures of any advisory committees addressing cybersecurity at the Federal Aviation Administration;

(B) recognize the interactions of different components of the national airspace system and the interdependent and interconnected nature of aircraft and air traffic control systems;

(C) identify and implement objectives and actions to reduce cybersecurity risks to the air traffic control information systems, including actions to improve implementation of information security standards and best practices of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and policies and guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget for agency systems;

(D) support voluntary efforts by industry, RTCA, Inc., or standards-setting organizations to develop and identify consensus standards, best practices, and guidance on aviation systems information security protection, consistent with the activities described in section 2(e) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act (15 U.S.C. 272(e)); and

(E) establish guidelines for the voluntary sharing of information between and among aviation stakeholders pertaining to aviation-related cybersecurity incidents, threats, and vulnerabilities.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—In carrying out the activities under this section, the Administrator shall—

(A) coordinate with aviation stakeholders, including industry, airlines, manufacturers, airports, RTCA, Inc., and unions;

(B) consult with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, Director of National Institute of Standards and Technology, the heads of other relevant agencies, and international regulatory authorities; and

(C) evaluate on a periodic basis, but not less than once every 2 years, the effectiveness of the principles established under this subsection.

(b) THREAT MODEL.—The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, shall implement the open recommendation issued in 2015 by the Government Accountability Office to assess the potential cost and timetable of developing and maintaining an agency-wide threat model to strengthen cybersecurity across the Federal Aviation Administration.

(c) SECURE ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND SYSTEMS.—

(1) IDENTITY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall implement open recommendations issued in 2014 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation—

(A) to work with the Federal Aviation Administration to revise its plan to effectively transition remaining users to require personal identity verification, including create a plan of actions and milestones with a planned completion date to monitor and track progress; and

(B) to work with the Director of the Office of Security of the Department of Transportation to develop or revise plans to effectively transition remaining facilities to require personal identity verification cards at the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) IDENTITY MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prepare a plan to implement the use of identity management, including personal identity verification, at the Federal Aviation Administration, consistent with section 504 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–274; 15 U.S.C. 7464) and section 225 of title II of division N of the Cybersecurity Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–113; 129 Stat. 2242).

(B) CONTENTS.—The plan shall include—

(i) an assessment of the current implementation and use of identity management, including personal identity verification, at the Federal Aviation Administration for secure access to government facilities and information systems, including a breakdown of requirements for use and identification of which systems and facilities are enabled to use personal identity verification; and

(ii) the actions to be taken, including specified deadlines, by the Chief Information Officers of the Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration to increase the implementation and use of such measures, with the goal of 100 percent implementation across the agency.

(3) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit the plan to the appropriate committees of Congress.

(4) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—The report submitted under paragraph (3) shall be in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) AIRCRAFT SECURITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group shall periodically review rulemaking, policy, and guidance for certification of avionics software and hardware (including any system on board an aircraft) and continued airworthiness in order to reduce cybersecurity risks to aircraft systems.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In conducting the reviews, the working group—

(A) shall assess the cybersecurity risks to aircraft systems, including recognizing the interactions of different components of the national airspace system and the interdependent and interconnected nature of aircraft and air traffic control systems;

(B) shall assess the extent to which existing rulemaking, policy, and guidance to promote safety also promote aircraft systems information security protection; and

(C) based on the results of subparagraphs (A) and (B), may make recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration if separate or additional rulemaking, policy, or guidance is needed to address aircraft systems information security protection.

(3) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In any recommendation under paragraph (2)(C), the working group shall identify a cost-effective and technology-neutral approach and incorporate voluntary consensus standards and best practices and international practices to the fullest extent possible.

(4) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the working group shall provide a report to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the findings of the review and any recommendations.

(B) CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a copy of each report provided by the working group.

(5) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—Each report submitted under this subsection shall be in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(e) CYBERSECURITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter until the completion date, provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing on the actions the Administrator has taken to improve information security management, including the steps taken to

implement subsections (a), (b) and (c) and all of the issues and open recommendations identified in cybersecurity audit reports issued in 2014 and 2015 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation and the Government Accountability Office; and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, issue a final report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the steps taken to improve information security management, including implementation of subsections (a), (b) and (c) and all of the issues and open recommendations identified in the cybersecurity audit reports issued in 2014 and 2015 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation and the Government Accountability Office.

SEC. 5030. PROHIBITIONS AGAINST SMOKING ON PASSENGER FLIGHTS.

Section 41706 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES.—

''(1) INCLUSION.—The use of an electronic cigarette shall be treated as smoking for purposes of this section.

''(2) ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'electronic cigarette' means a device that delivers nicotine or other substances to a user of the device in the form of a vapor that is inhaled to simulate the experience of smoking.''.

SEC. 5031. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) AIRPORT CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS AT CONGESTED AIRPORTS.—Section 40104(c) is amended by striking ''47176'' and inserting ''47175''.

(b) CONSULTATION ON CARRIER RESPONSE NOT COVERED BY PLAN.—Section 41313(c)(16), as amended by section 3104 of this Act, is further amended by striking ''the foreign air carrier will consult'' and inserting ''will consult''.

(c) WEIGHING MAIL.—Section 41907 is amended by striking ''and –administrative'' and inserting ''and administrative''.

(d) FLIGHT ATTENDANT CERTIFICATION.—Section 44728 is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking ''chapter'' and inserting ''title''; and

(2) in subsection (d)(3), by striking ''is'' and inserting ''be''.

(e) SCHEDULE OF FEES.—Section 45301(a)(1) is amended by striking ''United States government'' and inserting ''United States Government''.

(f) CLASSIFIED EVIDENCE.—Section 46111(g)(2)(A) is amended by striking ''(18 U.S.C. App.)'' and inserting ''(18 U.S.C. App.))''.

(g) ALLOWABLE COST STANDARDS.—Section 47110(b)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''compatability'' and inserting ''compatibility''; and

(2) in subparagraph (D)(i), by striking ''climactic'' and inserting ''climatic''.

(h) DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED HUBZONE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—Section 47113(a)(3) is amended by striking ''(15 U.S.C. 632(o))'' and inserting ''(15 U.S.C. 632(p))''.

(i) DISCRETIONARY FUND.—Section 47115, as amended by section 1006 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by striking subsection (i); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (i).

(j) SPECIAL APPORTIONMENT CATEGORIES.—Section 47117(e)(1)(B) is amended by striking ''at least'' and inserting ''At least''.

(k) SOLICITATION AND CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS.—Section 47171(l) is amended by striking ''4371'' and inserting ''4321''.

(l) OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE.—Section 48104 is amended by striking ''(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—the'' and inserting ''The''.

(m) EXPENDITURES FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.—Section 9502(d)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''farms'' and inserting ''farms)''.

SA 3465. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RAILROAD PURPOSE.

Section 24202 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) SCOPE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any activity, including a commercial activity, undertaken or conducted by a railroad company, or undertaken or conducted by another entity and authorized by a railroad company using a railroad right-of-way shall be expressly deemed to derive from or further a railroad purpose within the scope of the right-of-way grant, regardless of whether such activity is necessary, primarily intended, or originated for the operation, maintenance, or construction of a railroad, if such activity—

''(A) contributes to any aspect of a railroad company's business, subject to paragraph (2); and

''(B) does not interfere with the operation of the railroad.

''(2) NONAPPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to an activity using a railroad right-of-way if such activity does not have any benefit to the railroad company other than payment for the use of the railroad right-of-way.

''(3) AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED.—Except as otherwise provided by the Act, no activity using a railroad right-of-way by an entity other than the railroad company granted the railroad right-of-way shall be permitted without authorization from the railroad company if the railroad right-of-way has not been abandoned by the railroad company.

''(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect the rights to—

''(A) the mineral estate underlying a railroad right-of-way;

''(B) a railroad right-of-way that has been abandoned; or

''(C) the airspace of a railroad right-of-way.

''(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

''(A) the term 'the Act' means the Act of March 3, 1875 (18 Stat. 482; chapter 152; 43 U.S.C. 934 et seq.), which granted rights-of-way to railroads; and

''(B) the term 'railroad right-of-way' means the subsurface and surface of a right-of-way granted under the Act.''.

SA 3466. Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. PROHIBITION ON USE OF UNITED STATES AIRSPACE FOR TRANSFER OF DETAINEES FROM UNITED STATES NAVAL STATION, GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA, TO THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no flight may be operated in United States airspace if the flight is operated to transfer an individual detained at Guantanamo to a State, territory, or possession of the United States.

(b) INDIVIDUAL DETAINED AT GUANTANAMO DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''individual detained at Guantanamo'' means any individual who—

(1) is in detention, on or after January 20, 2009, at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba;

(2) is not a citizen of the United States or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(3) is—

(A) in the custody or under the control of the Department of Defense; or

(B) otherwise under detention at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

SA 3467. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REGULATIONS PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF FEES THAT ARE NOT REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONAL TO THE COSTS INCURRED.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AIR CARRIER.—The term ''air carrier'' means any air carrier that holds an air carrier certificate under section 41101 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) INTERSTATE AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term ''interstate air transportation'' has the meaning given that term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations—

(1) prohibiting an air carrier from imposing fees described in subsection (c) that are unreasonable or disproportional to the costs incurred by the air carrier; and

(2) establishing standards for assessing whether such fees are reasonable and proportional to the costs incurred by the air carrier.

(c) FEES DESCRIBED.—The fees described in this subsection are—

(1) any fee for a change or cancellation of a reservation for a flight in interstate air transportation;

(2) any fee relating to checked baggage to be transported on a flight in interstate air transportation; and

(3) any other fee imposed by an air carrier relating to a flight in interstate air transportation.

(d) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the standards required by subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall consider—

(1) with respect to a fee described in subsection (c)(1) imposed by an air carrier for a change or cancellation of a flight reservation—

(A) any net benefit or cost to the air carrier from the change or cancellation, taking into consideration—

(i) the ability of the air carrier to anticipate the expected average number of cancellations and changes and make reservations accordingly;

(ii) the ability of the air carrier to fill a seat made available by a change or cancellation;

(iii) any difference in the fare likely to be paid for a ticket sold to another passenger for a seat made available by the change or cancellation, as compared to the fare paid by the passenger who changed or canceled the passenger's reservation; and

(iv) the likelihood that the passenger changing or cancelling the passenger's reservation will fill a seat on another flight by the same air carrier;

(B) the costs of processing the change or cancellation electronically; and

(C) any related labor costs;

(2) with respect to a fee described in subsection (c)(2) imposed by an air carrier relating to checked baggage—

(A) the costs of processing checked baggage electronically; and

(B) any related labor costs; and

(3) any other considerations the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) UPDATED REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall update the standards required by subsection (b)(2) not less frequently than once every 3 years.

SA 3468. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 356, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

(f) DISCLOSURE OF CYBERATTACKS BY THE AVIATION INDUSTRY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations requiring covered air carriers and covered manufacturers to disclose to the Federal Aviation Administration any attempted or successful cyberattack on any system on board an aircraft, whether or not the system is critical to the safe and secure operation of the aircraft, or any maintenance or ground support system for aircraft, operated by the air carrier or produced by the manufacturer, as the case may be.

(2) USE OF DISCLOSURES BY THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall use the information obtained through disclosures made under paragraph (1) to improve the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration and to notify air carriers, aircraft manufacturers, and other Federal agencies of cybersecurity vulnerabilities in systems on board an aircraft or maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft.

(g) ANNUAL REPORT ON CYBERATTACKS ON AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AND MAINTENANCE AND GROUND SUPPORT SYSTEMS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on attempted and successful cyberattacks on any system on board an aircraft, whether or not the system is critical to the safe and secure operation of the aircraft, and on maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft, that includes—

(1) the number of such cyberattacks during the year preceding the submission of the report;

(2) with respect to each such cyberattack—

(A) an identification of the system that was targeted;

(B) a description of the effect on the safety of the aircraft as a result of the cyberattack; and

(C) a description of the measures taken to counter or mitigate the cyberattack;

(3) recommendations for preventing a future cyberattack;

(4) an analysis of potential vulnerabilities to cyberattacks in systems on board an aircraft and in maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft; and

(5) recommendations for improving the regulatory oversight of aircraft cybersecurity.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In subsections (f) and (g):

(1) COVERED AIR CARRIER.—The term ''covered air carrier'' means an air carrier or a foreign air carrier (as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code).

(2) COVERED MANUFACTURER.—The term ''covered manufacturer'' means an entity that—

(A) manufactures or otherwise produces aircraft and holds a production certificate under section 44704(c) of title 49, United States Code; or

(B) manufactures or otherwise produces electronic control, communications, maintenance, or ground support systems for aircraft.

(3) CYBERATTACK.—The term ''cyberattack'' means the unauthorized access to aircraft electronic control or communications systems or maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft, either wirelessly or through a wired connection.

SA 3469. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 353, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

(d) INCORPORATION OF CYBERSECURITY INTO REQUIREMENTS FOR AIR CARRIER OPERATING CERTIFICATES AND PRODUCTION CERTIFICATES.—

(1) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall prescribe regulations to incorporate requirements relating to cybersecurity into the requirements for obtaining an air carrier operating certificate or a production certificate under chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In prescribing the regulations required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) require all entry points to the electronic systems of each aircraft operating in United States airspace and maintenance or ground support systems for such aircraft to be equipped with reasonable measures to protect against cyberattacks, including the use of isolation measures to separate critical software systems from noncritical software systems;

(B) require the periodic evaluation of the measures described in subparagraph (A) for security vulnerabilities using best security practices, including the appropriate application of techniques such as penetration testing, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Director of National Intelligence; and

(C) require the measures described in subparagraph (A) to be periodically updated based on the results of the evaluations conducted under subparagraph (B).

(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) CYBERATTACK.—The term ''cyberattack'' means the unauthorized access to aircraft electronic control or communications systems or maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft, either wirelessly or through a wired connection.

(B) CRITICAL SOFTWARE SYSTEMS.—The term ''critical software systems'' means software systems that can affect control over the operation of an aircraft.

(C) ENTRY POINT.—The term ''entry point'' means the means by which signals to control a system on board an aircraft or a maintenance or ground support system for aircraft may be sent or received.

SA 3470. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 356, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

(f) MANAGING CYBERSECURITY RISKS OF CONSUMER COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commercial Aviation Communications Safety and Security Leadership Group established by the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission entitled ''Framework for DOT-FCC Coordination of Commercial Aviation Communications Safety and Security Issues'' and dated January 29, 2016 (in this section known as the ''Leadership Group'') shall be responsible for evaluating the cybersecurity vulnerabilities of broadband wireless communications equipment designed for consumer use on board aircraft operated by covered air carriers that is installed before, on, or after, or is proposed to be installed on or after, the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—To address cybersecurity risks arising from malicious use of communications technologies on board aircraft operated by covered air carriers, the Leadership Group shall—

(A) ensure the development of effective methods for preventing foreseeable cyberattacks that exploit broadband wireless communications equipment designed for consumer use on board such aircraft; and

(B) require the implementation by covered air carriers, covered manufacturers, and communications service providers of all technical and operational security measures that are deemed necessary and sufficient by

the Leadership Group to prevent cyberattacks described in subparagraph (A).

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Leadership Group shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on—

(A) the technical and operational security measures developed to prevent foreseeable cyberattacks that exploit broadband wireless communications equipment designed for consumer use on board aircraft operated by covered air carriers; and

(B) the steps taken by covered air carriers, covered manufacturers, and communications service providers to implement the measures described in subparagraph (A).

(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) COVERED AIR CARRIER.—The term ''covered air carrier'' means an air carrier or a foreign air carrier (as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code).

(B) COVERED MANUFACTURER.—The term ''covered manufacturer'' means an entity that—

(i) manufactures or otherwise produces aircraft and holds a production certificate under section 44704(c) of title 49, United States Code; or

(ii) manufactures or otherwise produces electronic control, communications, maintenance, or ground support systems for aircraft.

(C) CYBERATTACK.—The term ''cyberattack'' means the unauthorized access to aircraft electronic control or communications systems or maintenance or ground support systems for aircraft, either wirelessly or through a wired connection.

SA 3471. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 62, line 17, insert ''and commercial'' after ''public''.

SA 3472. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 2152, add the following:

(d) NO PREEMPTION OF PRIVACY LAWS.—Nothing in this subtitle may be construed to preempt any State or political subdivision of a State from enacting or enforcing privacy laws pertaining to the use of an unmanned aircraft system.

SA 3473. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 60, lines 10 through 13, strike '', to the extent practicable and consistent with applicable law and without compromising national security, homeland defense, or law enforcement,''.

On page 60, line 18, insert ''This subsection shall not apply to situations involving immediate danger of death or serious physical injury to any person or activities threatening the national security interest.'' after the period at the end.

SA 3474. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SECURING AIRCRAFT AVIONICS SYSTEMS.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise Federal Aviation Administration regulations regarding aircraft-airworthiness certification to include assurance that cybersecurity for avionics systems, including software components, is addressed and require that aircraft avionics systems used for flight guidance or aircraft control be isolated and separate from other networking platforms such as by using an air gap or such other means as the Administrator determines appropriate, except firewall, to protect the avionics systems from unauthorized external and internal access.

SA 3475. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS EQUIVALENT FOR PURPOSES OF INLAND WATERWAYS TRUST FUND FINANCING RATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4042(b)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(A) The Inland Waterways Trust Fund financing rate is 29 cents per gallon (per energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel, in the case of liquefied natural gas).''.

(b) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF DIESEL.—Section 4042(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF DIESEL WITH RESPECT TO LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS.—For purposes of paragraph (2)(A), the term 'energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel' means 6.06 pounds of liquefied natural gas.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any sale or use of fuel after December 31, 2016.

SA 3476. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. AUTHORIZATION OF CERTAIN FLIGHTS BY STAGE 2 AIRPLANES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 47534 of title 49, United States Code, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise part 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before such date of enactment) to permit the operator of a Stage 2 airplane to operate that airplane in revenue or nonrevenue service into a medium hub airport or nonhub airport if—

(1) the airport—

(A) is certified under part 139 of such title;

(B) has a runway that—

(i) is longer than 8,000 feet and not less than 200 feet wide; and

(ii) is load bearing with a pavement classification number of not less than 38; and

(C) has a maintenance facility with a maintenance certificate issued under part 145 of such title; and

(2) the operator of the Stage 2 airplane operates not more than 10 flights per month using that airplane.

(b) TERMINATION.—The regulations required by subsection (a) shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the Administrator determines that no Stage 2 airplanes remain in service.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MEDIUM HUB AIRPORT; NONHUB AIRPORT.—The terms ''medium hub airport'' and ''nonhub airport'' have the meanings given those terms in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) STAGE 2 AIRPLANE.—The term ''Stage 2 airplane'' has the meaning given that term in section 91.851 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act).

SA 3477. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 91, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

''(b) ASSISTANCE BY FEDERAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Secretary shall include, in the guidance regarding the operation of public unmanned aircraft systems required by subsection (a), guidance with respect to allowing unmanned aircraft systems owned or operated by a Federal agency to assist Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement organizations in conducting law enforcement activities in the national airspace system in situations in which a certificate of authorization does not apply.

SA 3478. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 86, line 19, insert after ''unmanned aircraft'' the following: '', including in circumstances in which the associated unmanned aircraft has been deemed air worthy

by the government of a country with which the United States maintains a bilateral airworthiness agreement''.

SA 3479. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 69, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

''(G) dedicated frequency spectrum for commercial uses of unmanned aircraft systems;

SA 3480. Mr. ISAKSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF CREDIT FOR PRODUCTION FROM ADVANCED NUCLEAR POWER FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (B) of section 45J(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2021'' and inserting ''January 1, 2026''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2020.

SA 3481. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATORY TAXATION OF AIRPORT BUSINESSES.

Section 40116(d)(2)(A) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) except as otherwise provided under section 47133(a) of this title, levy or collect a tax, fee, or charge first taking effect after the date of enactment of this clause, upon any business located at a commercial service airport or operating as a permittee of such an airport that is not generally imposed on sales or services by that State, political subdivision of a State, or authority acting for a State or political subdivision unless wholly utilized for airport or aeronautical purposes.''.

SA 3482. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5032. VISIBLE DETERRENT.

Section 1303 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1112) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) if the VIPR team is deployed to an airport, shall require, as appropriate based on risk, that the VIPR team conduct operations—

''(A) in the sterile area and any other areas to which only individuals issued security credentials have unescorted access; and

''(B) in non-sterile areas.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2007 through 2011'' and inserting ''such sums as necessary, including funds to develop not less than 60 VIPR teams, for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 5033. LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FOR MASS CASUALTY AND ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENTS.

Section 2006(a)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 607(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (I) as subparagraphs (F) through (J), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

''(E) training exercises to enhance preparedness for and response to mass casualty and active shooter incidents and security events at public locations, including airports and mass transit systems;''.

SEC. 5034. ASSISTANCE TO AIRPORTS AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS.

Section 2008(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (9) through (13) as paragraphs (10) through (14), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

''(9) enhancing the security and preparedness of secure and non-secure areas of eligible airports and surface transportation systems.''.

SA 3483. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. REGULATIONS RELATING TO SPACE FOR PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT.

(a) MORATORIUM ON REDUCTIONS TO AIRCRAFT SEAT SIZE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall prohibit any air carrier from reducing the size, width, padding, or pitch of seats on passenger aircraft operated by the air carrier, the amount of leg room per seat on such aircraft, or the width of aisles on such aircraft.

(b) REGULATIONS RELATING TO SPACE FOR PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall prescribe regulations—

(1) establishing minimum standards for space for passengers on passenger aircraft, including the size, width, padding, and pitch of seats, the amount of leg room per seat, and the width of aisles on such aircraft for the safety, health, and comfort of passengers; and

(2) requiring each air carrier to prominently display on the website of the air carrier the amount of space available for each passenger on passenger aircraft operated by the air carrier, including the size, width, padding, and pitch of seats, the amount of leg room per seat, and the width of aisles on such aircraft.

(c) CONSULTATIONS.—In prescribing the regulations required by subsection (b), the Administrator shall consult with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, passenger advocacy organizations, physicians, and ergonomic engineers.

(d) AIR CARRIER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means an air carrier (as defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code) that transports passengers by aircraft as a common carrier for compensation.

SA 3484. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE FACILITIES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Carbon Capture Improvement Act of 2016''.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Capture and long-term storage of carbon dioxide from coal, natural gas, and biomass-fired power plants, as well as from industrial sectors such as oil refining and production of fertilizer, cement, and ethanol, can help protect the environment while improving the economy and national security of the United States.

(2) The United States is a world leader in the field of carbon dioxide capture and long-term storage, as well as the beneficial use of carbon dioxide in enhanced oil recovery operations, with many manufacturers and licensors of carbon dioxide capture technology based in the United States.

(3) While the prospects for large-scale carbon capture in the United States are promising, costs remain relatively high. Lowering the financing costs for carbon dioxide capture projects would accelerate the deployment of this technology, and if the captured carbon dioxide is subsequently sold for industrial use, such as for use in enhanced oil recovery operations, the economic prospects are further improved.

(4) Since 1968, tax-exempt private activity bonds have been used to provide access to lower-cost financing for private businesses that are purchasing new capital equipment for certain specified environmental facilities, including facilities that reduce, recycle, or dispose of waste, pollutants, and hazardous substances.

(5) Allowing tax-exempt financing for the purchase of capital equipment that is used to capture carbon dioxide will reduce the costs of developing carbon dioxide capture projects, accelerate their deployment, and, in conjunction with carbon dioxide utilization and long-term storage, help the United States meet critical environmental, economic, and national security goals.

(c) CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE FACILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 142 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (14), by striking ''or'' at the end,

(ii) in paragraph (15), by striking the period at the end and inserting '', or'', and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(16) qualified carbon dioxide capture facilities.'', and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(n) QUALIFIED CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE FACILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a)(16), the term 'qualified carbon dioxide capture facility' means the eligible components of an industrial carbon dioxide facility.

''(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) ELIGIBLE COMPONENT.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'eligible component' means any equipment installed in an industrial carbon dioxide facility that satisfies the requirements under paragraph (3) and is—

''(I) used for the purpose of capture, treatment and purification, compression, transportation, or on-site storage of carbon dioxide produced by the industrial carbon dioxide facility, or

''(II) integral or functionally related and subordinate to a process described in section 48B(c)(2), determined by substituting 'carbon dioxide' for 'carbon monoxide' in such section.

''(B) INDUSTRIAL CARBON DIOXIDE FACILITY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the term 'industrial carbon dioxide facility' means a facility that emits carbon dioxide (including from any fugitive emissions source) that is created as a result of any of the following processes:

''(I) Fuel combustion.

''(II) Gasification.

''(III) Bioindustrial.

''(IV) Fermentation.

''(V) Any manufacturing industry described in section 48B(c)(7).

''(ii) EXCEPTIONS.—For purposes of clause (i), an industrial carbon dioxide facility shall not include—

''(I) any geological gas facility (as defined in clause (iii)), or

''(II) any air separation unit that—

''(aa) does not qualify as gasification equipment, or

''(bb) is not a necessary component of an oxy-fuel combustion process.

''(iii) GEOLOGICAL GAS FACILITY.—The term 'geological gas facility' means a facility that—

''(I) produces a raw product consisting of gas or mixed gas and liquid from a geological formation,

''(II) transports or removes impurities from such product, or

''(III) separates such product into its constituent parts.

''(3) CAPTURE AND STORAGE REQUIREMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the eligible components of an industrial carbon dioxide facility shall have a capture and storage percentage (as determined under subparagraph (C)) that is equal to or greater than 65 percent.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—In the case of an industrial carbon dioxide facility with a capture and storage percentage that is less than 65 percent, the percentage of the cost of the eligible components installed in such facility that may be financed with tax-exempt bonds may not be greater than the capture and storage percentage.

''(C) CAPTURE AND STORAGE PERCENTAGE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the capture and storage percentage shall be an amount, expressed as a percentage, equal to the quotient of—

''(I) the total metric tons of carbon dioxide annually captured, transported, and injected into—

''(aa) a facility for geologic storage, or

''(bb) an enhanced oil or gas recovery well followed by geologic storage, divided by

''(II) the total metric tons of carbon dioxide which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere each year as industrial emission of greenhouse gas if the eligible components were not installed in the industrial carbon dioxide facility.

''(ii) LIMITED APPLICATION OF ELIGIBLE COMPONENTS.—In the case of eligible components that are designed to capture carbon dioxide solely from specific sources of emissions or portions thereof within an industrial carbon dioxide facility, the capture and storage percentage under this subparagraph shall be determined based only on such specific sources of emissions or portions thereof.''.

(2) VOLUME CAP.—Section 146(g)(4) of such Code is amended by striking ''paragraph (11) of section 142(a) (relating to high-speed intercity rail facilities)'' and inserting ''paragraph (11) or (16) of section 142(a)''.

(3) CLARIFICATION OF PRIVATE BUSINESS USE.—Section 141(b)(6) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) CLARIFICATION RELATING TO QUALIFIED CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE FACILITIES.—For purposes of this subsection, the sale of carbon dioxide produced by a qualified carbon dioxide capture facility (as defined in section 142(n)) which is owned by a governmental unit shall not constitute private business use.''.

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to obligations issued after December 31, 2015.

SA 3485. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1305. PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN CONTRACTS, SUBCONTRACTS, AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FUNDED USING PASSENGER FACILITY REVENUES AND IN AIRPORT CONCESSIONS.

Section 40117, as amended by sections 1302 and 1303, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(p) PARTICIPATION BY DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.—

''(1) APPLICABILITY OF REQUIREMENTS.—Except to the extent otherwise provided by the Secretary, requirements relating to disadvantaged business enterprises, as set forth in parts 23 and 26 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), shall apply to an airport collecting passenger facility revenue.

''(2) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue any regulations necessary to implement this subsection, including—

''(A) goal setting requirements for an eligible agency to ensure that contracts, subcontracts, and business opportunities funded using passenger facility revenues, and airport concessions, are awarded consistent with the levels of participation of disadvantaged business enterprises and airport concessions disadvantaged business enterprises that would be expected in the absence of discrimination;

''(B) provision for an assurance that requires that an eligible agency will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of any contract funded using passenger facility revenues; and

''(C) a requirement that an eligible agency will take all necessary and reasonable steps to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of contracts funded using passenger facility revenues.

''(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall take effect on the day following the date on which the Secretary issues final regulations under paragraph (2).

''(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) AIRPORT CONCESSIONS DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.—The term 'airport concessions disadvantaged business enterprise' has the meaning given that term in section 23.3 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

''(B) DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.—The term 'disadvantaged business enterprise' has the meaning given that term in section 26.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).''.

SA 3486. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2506. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF SECURITY SCREENERS AT PRIMARY AIRPORTS.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall develop and submit to Congress recommendations for the appropriate number of individuals to conduct security screening at primary airports (as defined in section 47102 of title 49, United States Code).

SA 3487. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1226. DEFINITION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.

Section 47113(a)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) 'small business concern' has the same meaning given that term in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632);''.

SA 3488. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. VISA WAIVER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

(a) INFORMATION SHARING PROCESS.—The Director of National Intelligence shall—

(1) develop a process to share information derived from the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) database and the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB), including biometric and biographic information, with countries participating in the visa waiver program established under section 217(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187(a)); and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, certify to Congress that such process may be utilized by such countries.

(b) CONTINUING QUALIFICATION AND DESIGNATION TERMINATIONS.—Paragraph (2) of section 217(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(H) BORDER SECURITY.—The government of the country utilizes the process developed by the Director of National Intelligence under section ___(a) of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 to utilize information derived from the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) database and the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB) for border security and immigration purposes, including the screening of aliens seeking asylum or refugee status in that country.''.

SEC. ___. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOREIGN EQUIPMENT TRANSFER AUTHORITY.

Section 879 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 459) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) EQUIPMENT TRANSFER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to transfer, with or without reimbursement, excess nonlethal equipment and supplies to a foreign government.

''(2) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary is authorized to transfer equipment and supplies pursuant to paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that such transfer would—

''(A) further the homeland security interests of the United States; or

''(B) enhance the recipient government's capacity to—

''(i) mitigate the risk or threat of terrorism, infectious disease, or natural disaster;

''(ii) protect and expedite lawful trade and travel; or

''(iii) enforce intellectual property rights.

''(3) LIMITATION ON TRANSFER.—The Secretary may not—

''(A) transfer any equipment or supplies that are designated as a munitions item or controlled on the United States Munitions List pursuant to section 38(a)(1) of the Foreign Military Sales Act (22 U.S.C. 2778(a)(1)); or

''(B) transfer any vessel or aircraft.

''(4) RELATED TRAINING.—In conjunction with a transfer of equipment pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary may provide such equipment-related training and assistance as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

''(5) MAINTENANCE OF TRANSFERRED EQUIPMENT.—The Secretary may provide for the maintenance of transferred equipment through service contracts or other means, with or without reimbursement, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

''(6) REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—The Secretary is authorized to collect payment from the receiving entity for the provision of training, shipping costs, supporting materials, maintenance, supplies, or other assistance in support of transferred equipment.

''(7) RECEIPTS CREDITED AS OFFSETTING COLLECTIONS.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, any amount collected under this section—

''(A) shall be credited as offsetting collections to the account that finances the activities and services for which the payment is received; and

''(B) shall remain available until expended for the purpose of providing for the security interests of the homeland.

''(8) CONSTRUCTION.—This subsection shall not be construed to affect, augment, or diminish the authority of the Secretary of State.

''(9) EXCESS NONLETHAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'excess nonlethal equipment and supplies' means equipment and supplies the Secretary has determined are either not required for United States domestic operations, or would be more effective to homeland security if deployed for use outside of the United States.''.

SA 3489. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. MODIFICATION OF FINAL RULE RELATING TO FLIGHTCREW MEMBER DUTY AND REST REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSENGER OPERATIONS TO APPLY TO ALL-CARGO OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall modify the final rule specified in subsection (b) so that the flightcrew member duty and rest requirements under that rule apply to flightcrew members in all-cargo operations conducted by air carriers in the same manner as those requirements apply to flightcrew members in passenger operations conducted by air carriers.

(b) FINAL RULE SPECIFIED.—The final rule specified in this subsection is the final rule of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) published in the Federal Register on January 4, 2012 (77 Fed. Reg. 330); and

(2) relating to flightcrew member duty and rest requirements.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF RULEMAKING REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the modification required by subsection (a).

SA 3490. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5009 and insert the following:

SEC. 5009. INTERFERENCE WITH AIR CARRIER EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 46503 is amended by inserting after ''to perform those duties'' the following '', or who assaults an air carrier customer representative in an airport, including a gate or ticket agent, who is performing the duties of the representative or agent,''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46503 is amended in the section heading by inserting ''**or air carrier customer representatives**'' after ''**screening personnel**''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 465 is amended by striking the item relating to section 46503 and inserting the following:

''46503. Interference with security screening personnel or air carrier customer representatives.''.

SA 3491. Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 285, line 18, strike ''may'' and insert ''shall''.

SA 3492. Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 84, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

''(f) OPERATION BY OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Secretary of Transportation shall establish a process under the authority of this section, or a process under this subsection, pursuant to which a covered person may operate an unmanned aircraft system to conduct activities described in paragraph (2)—

''(A) beyond the visual line of sight of the individual operating the unmanned aircraft system; and

''(B) without any restriction on the time of the operation.

''(2) ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.—The activities described in this paragraph that a covered

person may use an unmanned aircraft system to conduct are the following:

''(A) Activities for which compliance with current law or regulation can be accomplished by the use of manned aircraft, including—

''(i) conducting activities to ensure compliance with Federal or State regulatory, permit, or other requirements, including to conduct surveys associated with applications for permits for new pipeline or pipeline systems construction or maintenance or rehabilitation of existing pipelines or pipeline systems; or

''(ii) conducting activities relating to ensuring compliance with—

''(I) the requirements of part 192 or 195 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations; or

''(II) any Federal, State, or local governmental or regulatory body or industry best practice pertaining to the construction, ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of covered facilities.

''(B) Activities to inspect, repair, construct, maintain, or protect covered facilities, including to respond to a pipeline, pipeline system, or electric energy infrastructure incident, or in response to or in preparation for a natural disaster, man-made disaster, severe weather event, or other incident beyond the control of the covered person that may cause material damage to a covered facility.

''(C) Activities not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) if the covered person notifies the local Flight Standards District Office before the operation of the unmanned aircraft system for such activities.

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) COVERED FACILITY.—The term 'covered facility' means a pipeline, pipeline system, electric energy generation, transmission, or distribution facility (including renewable electric energy), oil or gas production, refining, or processing facility, or other critical infrastructure.

''(B) COVERED PERSON.—The term 'covered person' means a person that—

''(i) owns or operates a covered facility;

''(ii) is the sponsor of a covered facility project;

''(iii) is an association of persons described by clause (i) or (ii) and is seeking programmatic approval for an activity in accordance with this subsection; or

''(iv) is an agent of any person described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii).

''(C) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term 'critical infrastructure' has the meaning given that term in section 2339D of title 18.''.

SA 3493. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEER PILOTS WHO FLY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(A) Many volunteer pilots fly for the public benefit for nonprofit organizations and provide valuable services to communities and individuals in need.

(B) In each calendar year volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for provide long-distance, no-cost transportation for tens of thousands of people during times of special need. Flights provide patient and medical transport, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance, and conduct other charitable missions that benefit the public.

(C) Such nonprofit organizations have supported the homeland security of the United States by providing volunteer pilot services during and following disasters and during other times of national emergency.

(D) Most other kinds of volunteers are protected from liability by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14501 et seq.), but volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for are not.

(E) Such nonprofit organizations are not able to purchase liability insurance for aircraft they do not own to provide liability protection at a reasonable cost, and therefore face a highly detrimental liability risk.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are, by amending the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997—

(A) to extend the protection of that Act to volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for;

(B) to promote the activities of volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for in providing flights for the public benefit; and

(C) to sustain and enhance the availability of the services that such pilots and nonprofit organizations provide, including—

(i) transportation at no cost to financially needy medical patients for medical treatment, evaluation, and diagnosis;

(ii) flights for humanitarian and charitable purposes; and

(iii) other flights of compassion.

(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS AND STAFF OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Section 4 of the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14503) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (f) as subsections (c) through (g), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''subsections (b), (c), and (e)'';

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS AND STAFF OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Except as provided in subsections (c) and (e), no volunteer of a volunteer pilot nonprofit organization that arranges flights for public benefit shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization if, at the time of the act or omission, the volunteer—

''(1) was operating an aircraft in furtherance of the purpose of, and acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities on behalf of, the nonprofit organization;

''(2) was properly licensed and insured for the operation of the aircraft;

''(3) was in compliance with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for recent flight experience; and

''(4) did not cause the harm through willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer.''.

(4) in subsection (d), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''Nothing in this section'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), nothing in this section''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) EXCEPTION.—A volunteer pilot nonprofit organization that arranges flights for public benefit, the staff, mission coordinators, officers, and directors (whether volunteer or otherwise) of that nonprofit organization, and a referring agency of that nonprofit organization, shall not be liable for harm caused to any person by an act or omission of a volunteer on behalf of the organization if, at the time of the act or omission, the volunteer—

''(A) is operating an aircraft in furtherance of the purpose of, and acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities on behalf of, the nonprofit organization;

''(B) is properly licensed for the operation of the aircraft; and

''(C) has certified to the nonprofit organization that the volunteer—

''(i) has insurance covering the volunteer's operation of the aircraft; and

''(ii) is in compliance with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for recent flight experience.''.

SA 3494. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

PART IV—OPERATOR SAFETY

SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Drone Operator Safety Act''.

SEC. 2162. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that educating operators of unmanned aircraft about the laws and regulations that govern such aircraft helps to ensure their safe operation.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration should continue to prioritize the education of operators of unmanned aircraft through public outreach efforts like the ''Know Before You Fly'' campaign.

SEC. 2163. UNSAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 31—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(ii) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

''(10) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49.''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by inserting '' 'airport','' before '' 'appliance' ''; and

(2) by inserting after section 39A the following:

''§ 39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft

''(a) OFFENSE.—Any person who intentionally or recklessly operates an unmanned aircraft in a manner that interferes with, or disrupts the operation of, an aircraft carrying 1 or more occupants operating in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, in a manner that poses an imminent safety hazard to such occupants, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b).

''(b) PENALTY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the punishment for an offense under subsection (a) shall be a fine under

this title, imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

''(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—The punishment for an offense under subsection (a) during which the offender attempts to cause, or intentionally or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or death shall be a fine under this title, imprisonment for any term of years or for life, or both.

''(c) OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO AIRPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The operation of an unmanned aircraft within a runway exclusion zone shall be considered a violation of subsection (a) unless such operation is approved by the air traffic control facility at the airport or is the result of a malfunction or another cause that could not have been reasonably foreseen or prevented by the operator.

''(2) RUNWAY EXCLUSION ZONE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'runway exclusion zone' means a rectangular area—

''(A) centered on the centerline of an active runway of an airport immediately around which the airspace is designated as class B, class C, or class D airspace at the surface under part 71 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(B) the length of which extends parallel to the runway's centerline to points that are 1 statute mile from each end of the runway and the width of which is ½ statute mile.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 39A the following:

''39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.''.

SA 3495. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INCORPORATION OF FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OCCUPATIONS RELATING TO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT INTO VETERANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Labor, shall determine whether occupations of the Administration relating to unmanned aircraft systems technology and regulations can be incorporated into the Veterans Employment Program of the Administration, particularly in the interaction between such program and the New Sights Work Experience Program and the Vet-Link Cooperative Education Program.

SA 3496. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. POLICIES TO ADDRESS SECURITY THREATS AFTER A TERRORIST ATTACK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR POLICIES.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State, shall develop policies with respect to inter-agency communication in the event of a terrorist attack in a foreign country, which shall include—

(1) communication with the relevant United States embassy and the heads of the appropriate agencies concerned regarding the existing threat; and

(2) communication regarding the impact of such threat on the security efforts of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Homeland Security, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Transportation Security Administration.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the policies developed under subsection (a).

SA 3497. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INCLUSION OF CERTAIN RETIREES IN THE MULTIEMPLOYER HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN.

Section 402 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1232) is amended—

(1) in subsection (h)(2)(C)—

(A) by striking ''A transfer'' and inserting the following:

''(i) TRANSFER TO THE PLAN.—A transfer'';

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and moving such subclauses 2 ems to the right; and

(C) by striking the matter following such subclause (II) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following:

''(ii) CALCULATION OF EXCESS.—The excess determined under clause (i) shall be calculated by taking into account only—

''(I) those beneficiaries actually enrolled in the Plan as of the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, who are eligible to receive health benefits under the Plan on the first day of the calendar year for which the transfer is made; and

''(II) those beneficiaries whose health benefits, defined as those benefits payable directly following death or retirement or upon a finding of disability by an employer in the bituminous coal industry under a coal wage agreement (defined in section 9701(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), would be denied or reduced as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding commenced in 2012 or 2015.

''(iii) ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN RETIREES.—Individuals referred to in clause (ii)(II) shall be treated as eligible to receive health benefits under the Plan.

''(iv) REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSFER.—The amount of the transfer otherwise determined under this subparagraph for a fiscal year shall be reduced by any amount transferred for the fiscal year to the Plan, to pay benefits required under the Plan, from a voluntary employees' beneficiary association established as a result of the bankruptcy proceeding described in clause (ii).

''(v) VEBA TRANSFER.—The administrator of such voluntary employees' beneficiary association shall transfer to the Plan any amounts received as a result of such bankruptcy proceeding, reduced by an amount for administrative costs of such association.'';

and

(2) in subsection (i)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—

''(A) CALCULATION.—If the dollar limitation specified in paragraph (3)(A) exceeds the aggregate amount required to be transferred under paragraphs (1) and (2) for a fiscal year, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer an additional amount equal to the difference between such dollar limitation and such aggregate amount to the trustees of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan to pay benefits required under that plan.

''(B) CESSATION OF TRANSFERS.—The transfers described in subparagraph (A) shall cease as of the first fiscal year beginning after the first plan year for which the funded percentage (as defined in section 432(i)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan is at least 100 percent.

''(C) PROHIBITION ON BENEFIT INCREASES, ETC.—During a fiscal year in which the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan is receiving transfers under subparagraph (A), no amendment of such plan which increases the liabilities of the plan by reason of any increase in benefits, any change in the accrual of benefits, or any change in the rate at which benefits become nonforfeitable under the plan may be adopted unless the amendment is required as a condition of qualification under part I of subchapter D of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(D) TREATMENT OF TRANSFERS FOR PURPOSES OF WITHDRAWAL LIABILITY UNDER ERISA.—The amount of any transfer made under subparagraph (A) (and any earnings attributable thereto) shall be disregarded in determining the unfunded vested benefits of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan and the allocation of such unfunded vested benefits to an employer for purposes of determining the employer's withdrawal liability under section 4201.

''(E) REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN CONTRIBUTION RATE.—A transfer under subparagraph (A) shall not be made for a fiscal year unless the persons that are obligated to contribute to the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan on the date of the transfer are obligated to make the contributions at rates that are no less than those in effect on the date which is 30 days before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016.

''(F) ENHANCED ANNUAL REPORTING.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the 90th day of each plan year beginning after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the trustees of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan shall file with the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation a report (including appropriate documentation and actuarial certifications from the plan actuary, as required by the Secretary of Labor) that contains—

''(I) whether the plan is in endangered or critical status under section 305 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 432 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as of the first day of such plan year;

''(II) the funded percentage (as defined in section 432(i)(2) of such Code) as of the first day of such plan year, and the underlying actuarial value of assets and liabilities taken into account in determining such percentage;

''(III) the market value of the assets of the plan as of the last day of the plan year preceding such plan year;

''(IV) the total value of all contributions made during the plan year preceding such plan year;

''(V) the total value of all benefits paid during the plan year preceding such plan year;

''(VI) cash flow projections for such plan year and either the 6 or 10 succeeding plan years, at the election of the trustees, and the assumptions relied upon in making such projections;

''(VII) funding standard account projections for such plan year and the 9 succeeding plan years, and the assumptions relied upon in making such projections;

''(VIII) the total value of all investment gains or losses during the plan year preceding such plan year;

''(IX) any significant reduction in the number of active participants during the plan year preceding such plan year, and the reason for such reduction;

''(X) a list of employers that withdrew from the plan in the plan year preceding such plan year, and the resulting reduction in contributions;

''(XI) a list of employers that paid withdrawal liability to the plan during the plan year preceding such plan year and, for each employer, a total assessment of the withdrawal liability paid, the annual payment amount, and the number of years remaining in the payment schedule with respect to such withdrawal liability;

''(XII) any material changes to benefits, accrual rates, or contribution rates during the plan year preceding such plan year;

''(XIII) any scheduled benefit increase or decrease in the plan year preceding such plan year having a material effect on liabilities of the plan;

''(XIV) details regarding any funding improvement plan or rehabilitation plan and updates to such plan;

''(XV) the number of participants and beneficiaries during the plan year preceding such plan year who are active participants, the number of participants and beneficiaries in pay status, and the number of terminated vested participants and beneficiaries;

''(XVI) the information contained on the most recent annual funding notice submitted by the plan under section 101(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974;

''(XVII) the information contained on the most recent Department of Labor Form 5500 of the plan; and

''(XVIII) copies of the plan document and amendments, other retirement benefit or ancillary benefit plans relating to the plan and contribution obligations under such plans, a breakdown of administrative expenses of the plan, participant census data and distribution of benefits, the most recent actuarial valuation report as of the plan year, copies of collective bargaining agreements, and financial reports, and such other information as the Secretary of Labor or the Secretary of the Treasury may require by request to such Corporation.

''(ii) ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION.—The report required under clause (i) shall be submitted electronically.

''(iii) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation shall share the information in the report under clause (i) with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor.

''(iv) EXCISE TAX.—If the report required under clause (i) is not filed as of the date described in such clause, there shall be a tax on the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan in the amount of $100 for each day occurring after such date and before the date on which such report is actually filed. The preceding sentence shall not apply if the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation determines that reasonable diligence has been exercised by the trustees of such plan in attempting to timely file such report.

''(G) 1974 UMWA PENSION PLAN DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term '1974 UMWA Pension Plan' has the meaning given the term in section 9701(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, but without regard to the limitation on participation to individuals who retired in 1976 and thereafter.''.

SA 3498. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. AIR CARRIER ACCESS ACT IMPROVEMENTS.

Section 41705(c) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (6) and (7), respectively;

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) RESOLUTION.—The Secretary shall submit a determination of facts in writing to the complainant and respondent.

''(4) REFERRAL.—If the Secretary has reasonable cause to believe that—

''(A) any person or group of persons is engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination under this subchapter; or

''(B) any person or group of persons has been discriminated against under this subchapter and such discrimination raises an issue of general public importance,

the Secretary shall refer such matter to the Attorney General.

''(5) ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—

''(A) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General may commence a civil action in any appropriate United States district court.

''(B) AUTHORITY OF COURT.—In a civil action under subparagraph (A), the court may—

''(i) grant any equitable relief that such court considers to be appropriate;

''(ii) award such other relief as the court considers to be appropriate, including monetary damages to persons aggrieved when requested by the Attorney General; and

''(iii) assess a civil penalty against the entity.''; and

(3) in paragraph (7), as redesignated, by striking ''Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the'' and inserting ''The''.

SA 3499. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2405. HEADS-UP GUIDANCE SYSTEM TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a review of heads-up guidance system displays (in this section referred to as ''HGS'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) evaluate the impacts of single- and dual-installed HGS technology on the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations within the national airspace system;

(2) review a sufficient quantity of commercial aviation accidents or incidents in order to evaluate if HGS technology would have produced a better outcome in that accident or incident; and

(3) update previous HGS studies performed by the Flight Safety Foundation in 1991 and 2009.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the results of the review required by subsection (a).

SA 3500. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HELLER, Mr. REID, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 67, line 13, strike ''2017'' and insert ''2022''.

SA 3501. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. EXPANSION OF ALLOWABLE COSTS UNDER PORT OF ENTRY PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 559(e)(3) of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) FOR CERTAIN COSTS.—The authority found in this subsection may only be used at U.S. Customs and Border Protection-serviced air ports of entry to enter into reimbursable fee agreements for—

''(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

''(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employees;

''(iii) the salaries and expenses of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

''(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such individuals.''; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (D).

(b) TRANSITION RULE.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may modify a reimbursable fee agreement entered into under section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, to include costs specified in subsection (e)(3)(B) of that section, as amended by subsection (a).

SA 3502. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5_____. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

Section 5303(r)(2)(C) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''and 25 square miles of land area'' after ''145,000''; and

(2) by inserting ''and 12 square miles of land area'' after ''65,000''.

SA 3503. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2405. COMPLETION OF CERTAIN PROJECTS BY STATE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION.

With respect to a proposed construction or alteration for which notice to the Federal Aviation Administration is required under section 77.9 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, upon receiving such notice, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall allow a State department of transportation to carry out such construction or alteration, and shall not require an aeronautical study under section 77.27 of such title, if such State department of transportation—

(1) has appropriate engineering expertise to perform the construction or alteration; and

(2) complies with applicable Federal Aviation Administration standards for the construction or alteration.

SA 3504. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 4209. OKLAHOMA REGISTRY OFFICE.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider the aircraft registry office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, as excepted during a Government shutdown or emergency (as it provides excepted services) to ensure that it remains open during any Government shutdown or emergency.

SA 3505. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. GAO STUDY OF UNIVERSAL DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to redesign airport security areas to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which security screening operations are conducted by the Transportation Security Administration or through the Screening Partnership Program; and

(2) to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all airports not described in paragraph (1).

(b) COST ANALYSIS.—As a part of the study conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall identify the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to purchase the equipment and other assets necessary to deploy advanced imaging technologies at each airport;

(2) to install such equipment and assets in each airport; and

(3) to maintain such equipment and assets.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) to the appropriate committees of Congress.

SA 3506. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. UNIVERSAL DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—Beginning not later than September 30, 2018, all commercial airports at which security screening operations are conducted by the Transportation Security Administration or through the Screening Partnership Program shall utilize advanced imaging technologies for their security screening operations.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning on October 1, 2018, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit an annual report to the appropriate committees of Congress that—

(1) explains the reasons for the noncompliance of any of the airports described in subsection (a) with the advanced imaging technologies requirement described in that subsection; and

(2) describes the steps that are being taken by the Transportation Security Administration to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all such airports.

SA 3507. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5_____. EXPANSION OF ALLOWABLE COSTS UNDER PORT OF ENTRY PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 559(e)(3) of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) FOR CERTAIN COSTS.—The authority found in this subsection may only be used at U.S. Customs and Border Protection-serviced air ports of entry to enter into reimbursable fee agreements for—

''(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

''(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employees;

''(iii) the salaries and expenses of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

''(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such individuals.''; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (D).

(b) TRANSITION RULE.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may modify a reimbursable fee agreement entered into under section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, to include costs specified in subsection (e)(3)(B) of that section, as amended by subsection (a).

SA 3508. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 40, line 15, strike ''and'' and all that follows through line 25, and insert the following:

(3) indicating how airports can comply with applicable Federal Aviation Administration orders governing weather observations given the current documented limitations of automated surface observing systems; and

(4) identifying the process through which the Federal Aviation Administration analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program.

(b) CONTINUED USE OF CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.—The Administrator may not discontinue the contract weather observer program at any airport until October 1, 2017.

SA 3509. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3205.

SA 3510. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3205 and insert the following:

SEC. 3205. WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING AIR SERVICE TO SMALL COMMUNITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a working group—

(1) to identify obstacles to attracting and maintaining air transportation service to and from small communities; and

(2) to develop recommendations for maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

(b) OUTREACH.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall consult with—

(1) interested Governors;

(2) representatives of State and local agencies, and other officials and groups, representing rural States and other rural areas;

(3) other representatives of relevant State and local agencies; and

(4) members of the public with experience in aviation safety, economic development, and related issues.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall—

(1) consider whether funding for, and terms of, current or potential new programs is sufficient to help ensure continuation of or improvement to air transportation service to small communities, including the Essential Air Service Program and the Small Community Air Service Development Program;

(2) consider whether Federal funding for airports serving small communities, including airports that have lost air transportation services or had decreased enplanements in recent years, is adequate to ensure that small communities have access to quality, affordable air transportation service;

(3) identify innovative State or local efforts that have established public-private partnerships that are successful in attracting and retaining air transportation service in small communities;

(4) identify programs and initiatives that would encourage young people to pursue careers as pilots; and

(5) consider such other issues as the Secretary and Administrator consider appropriate.

(d) COMPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be facilitated through the Administrator or the Administrator's designee.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the working group shall be appointed by the Administrator and shall include representatives of—

(A) State and local government, including State and local aviation officials;

(B) State governors;

(C) aviation safety experts;

(D) economic development officials;

(E) air carrier pilots; and

(F) the traveling public from small communities.

(e) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—The working group shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report, including—

(1) a summary of the views expressed by the participants in the outreach under subsection (b);

(2) a description of the working group's findings, including the identification of any areas of general consensus among the non-Federal participants in the outreach under subsection (b); and

(3) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would assist in maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to support weakening the pilot qualification standards for first officers, as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3511. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENT OF EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE TEAMS TO CONDUCT AIRPORT SECURITY SCREENING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall train certified explosives detection canine teams—

(1) to assist the Transportation Security Administration to conduct the screening of passengers at airports; and

(2) to assist State and local law enforcement agencies to conduct all aspects of airport security other than screening of passengers.

(b) ASSIGNMENT OF EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE TEAMS TO HIGHEST-RISK AIRPORTS.—The Administrator shall assign explosives detection canine teams trained under subsection (a) to the airports the Administrator determines to be the highest-risk airports. In determining which airports are the highest-risk airports, the Administrator shall consider, among other factors, the annual number of takeoffs and landings at each airport.

(c) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report on the number of explosives detection canine teams in use at airports around the United States and the number of such teams in training to—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

SA 3512. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. AYOTTE, and Ms. CANTWELL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE _____—TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND TERRORISM PREVENTION

Subtitle A—Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act

SEC. __101. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act''.

SEC. __102. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) A number of recent airport security breaches in the United States have involved the use of Secure Identification Display Area (referred to in this section as ''SIDA'') badges, the credentials used by airport and airline workers to access the secure areas of an airport.

(2) In December 2014, a Delta ramp agent at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was charged with using his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and facilitate an interstate gun smuggling operation over a number of months via commercial aircraft.

(3) In January 2015, an Atlanta-based Aviation Safety Inspector of the Federal Aviation Administration used his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and transport a firearm in his carry-on luggage.

(4) In February 2015, a local news investigation found that over 1,000 SIDA badges at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport were lost or missing.

(5) In March 2015, and again in May 2015, Transportation Security Administration contractors were indicted for participating in a drug smuggling ring using luggage passed through the secure area of the San Francisco International Airport.

(6) The Administration has indicated that it does not maintain a list of lost or missing SIDA badges, and instead relies on airport operators to track airport worker credentials.

(7) The Administration rarely uses its enforcement authority to fine airport operators that reach a certain threshold of missing SIDA badges.

(8) In April 2015, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee issued 28 recommendations for improvements to airport access control.

(9) In June 2015, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security reported that the Administration did not have all relevant information regarding 73 airport

workers who had records in United States intelligence-related databases because the Administration was not authorized to receive all terrorism-related information under current interagency watchlisting policy.

(10) The Inspector General also found that the Administration did not have appropriate checks in place to reject incomplete or inaccurate airport worker employment investigations, including criminal history record checks and work authorization verifications, and had limited oversight over the airport operators that the Administration relies on to perform criminal history and work authorization checks for airport workers.

(11) There is growing concern about the potential insider threat at airports in light of recent terrorist activities.

SEC. __103. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(C) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

(4) ASAC.—The term ''ASAC'' means the Aviation Security Advisory Committee established under section 44946 of title 49, United States Code.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(6) SIDA.—The term ''SIDA'' means Secure Identification Display Area as defined in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation to such section.

SEC. __104. THREAT ASSESSMENT.

(a) INSIDER THREATS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall conduct or update an assessment to determine the level of risk posed to the domestic air transportation system by individuals with unescorted access to a secure area of an airport (as defined in section 44903(j)(2)(H)) in light of recent international terrorist activity.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting or updating the assessment under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) domestic intelligence;

(B) international intelligence;

(C) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to domestic airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(D) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to foreign airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(E) the processes and practices designed to mitigate the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access privileges granted to airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(F) the recent security breaches at domestic and foreign airports; and

(G) the recent security improvements at domestic airports, including the implementation of recommendations made by relevant advisory committees.

(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) a report on the results of the assessment under subsection (a), including any recommendations for improving aviation security;

(2) a report on the implementation status of any recommendations made by the ASAC; and

(3) regular updates about the insider threat environment as new information becomes available and as needed.

SEC. __105. OVERSIGHT.

(a) ENHANCED REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to public notice and comment, and in consultation with airport operators, the Administrator shall update the rules on access controls issued by the Secretary under chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—As part of the update under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) increased fines and advanced oversight for airport operators that report missing more than 5 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(B) best practices for Category X airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(C) additional audits and status checks for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(D) review and analysis of the prior 5 years of audits for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(E) increased fines and direct enforcement requirements for both airport workers and their employers that fail to report within 24 hours an employment termination or a missing credential for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(F) a method for termination by the employer of any airport worker that fails to report in a timely manner missing credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(b) TEMPORARY CREDENTIALS.—The Administrator may encourage the issuance by airport and aircraft operators of free one-time, 24-hour temporary credentials for workers who have reported their credentials missing, but not permanently lost, stolen, or destroyed, in a timely manner, until replacement of credentials under section 1542.211 of title 49 Code of Federal Regulations is necessary.

(c) NOTIFICATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall—

(1) notify the appropriate committees of Congress each time an airport operator reports that more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA at a Category X airport are missing or more than 5 percent of credentials to access any SIDA at any other airport are missing; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report on the number of violations and fines related to unescorted access to the SIDA of an airport collected in the preceding fiscal year.

SEC. __106. CREDENTIALS.

(a) LAWFUL STATUS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidance to airport operators regarding placement of an expiration date on each airport credential issued to a non-United States citizen no longer than the period of time during which that non-United States citizen is lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

(b) REVIEW OF PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) issue guidance for transportation security inspectors to annually review the procedures of airport operators and air carriers for applicants seeking unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(B) make available to airport operators and air carriers information on identifying suspicious or fraudulent identification materials.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The guidance shall require a comprehensive review of background checks and employment authorization documents issued by the Citizenship and Immigration Services during the course of a review of procedures under paragraph (1).

SEC. __107. VETTING.

(a) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and subject to public notice and comment, the Administrator shall revise the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section and current knowledge of insider threats and intelligence, to enhance the eligibility requirements and disqualifying criminal offenses for individuals seeking or having unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(2) DISQUALIFYING CRIMINAL OFFENSES.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider adding to the list of disqualifying criminal offenses and criteria the offenses and criteria listed in section 122.183(a)(4) of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations and section 1572.103 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) WAIVER PROCESS FOR DENIED CREDENTIALS.—Notwithstanding section 44936(b) of title 49, United States Code, in revising the regulations under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Administrator shall—

(A) ensure there exists or is developed a waiver process for approving the issuance of credentials for unescorted access to the SIDA, for an individual found to be otherwise ineligible for such credentials; and

(B) consider, as appropriate and practicable—

(i) the circumstances of any disqualifying act or offense, restitution made by the individual, Federal and State mitigation remedies, and other factors from which it may be concluded that the individual does not pose a terrorism risk or a risk to aviation security warranting denial of the credential; and

(ii) the elements of the appeals and waiver process established under section 70105(c) of title 46, United States Code.

(4) LOOK BACK.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall propose that an individual be disqualified if the individual was convicted, or found not guilty by reason of insanity, of a disqualifying criminal offense within 15 years before the date of an individual's application, or if the individual was incarcerated for that crime and released from incarceration within 5 years before the date of the individual's application.

(5) CERTIFICATIONS.—The Administrator shall require an airport or aircraft operator, as applicable, to certify for each individual who receives unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport that—

(A) a specific need exists for providing that individual with unescorted access authority; and

(B) the individual has certified to the airport or aircraft operator that the individual

understands the requirements for possessing a SIDA badge.

(6) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of the revision to the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section.

(7) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect existing aviation worker vetting fees imposed by the Administration.

(b) RECURRENT VETTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall fully implement the Rap Back service for recurrent vetting of eligible Administration-regulated populations of individuals with unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—As part of the requirement in paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that—

(A) any status notifications the Administration receives through the Rap Back service about criminal offenses be limited to only disqualifying criminal offenses in accordance with the regulations promulgated by the Administration under section 44903 of title 49, United States Code, or other Federal law; and

(B) any information received by the Administration through the Rap Back service is provided directly and immediately to the relevant airport and aircraft operators.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation status of the Rap Back service.

(c) ACCESS TO TERRORISM-RELATED DATA.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of National Intelligence shall coordinate to ensure that the Administrator is authorized to receive automated, real-time access to additional Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) data and any other terrorism related category codes to improve the effectiveness of the Administration's credential vetting program for individuals that are seeking or have unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(d) ACCESS TO E-VERIFY AND SAVE PROGRAMS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall authorize each airport operator to have direct access to the E-Verify program and the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) automated system to determine the eligibility of individuals seeking unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

SEC. __108. METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop and implement performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of security for the SIDAs of airports.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the performance metrics under subsection (a), the Administrator may consider—

(1) adherence to access point procedures;

(2) proper use of credentials;

(3) differences in access point requirements between airport workers performing functions on the airside of an airport and airport workers performing functions in other areas of an airport;

(4) differences in access point characteristics and requirements at airports; and

(5) any additional factors the Administrator considers necessary to measure performance.

SEC. __109. INSPECTIONS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(a) MODEL AND BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the ASAC, shall develop a model and best practices for unescorted access security that—

(1) use intelligence, scientific algorithms, and risk-based factors;

(2) ensure integrity, accountability, and control;

(3) subject airport workers to random physical security inspections conducted by Administration representatives in accordance with this section;

(4) appropriately manage the number of SIDA access points to improve supervision of and reduce unauthorized access to these areas; and

(5) include validation of identification materials, such as with biometrics.

(b) INSPECTIONS.—Consistent with a risk-based security approach, the Administrator shall expand the use of transportation security officers and inspectors to conduct enhanced, random and unpredictable, data-driven, and operationally dynamic physical inspections of airport workers in each SIDA of an airport and at each SIDA access point—

(1) to verify the credentials of airport workers;

(2) to determine whether airport workers possess prohibited items, except for those that may be necessary for the performance of their duties, as appropriate, in any SIDA of an airport; and

(3) to verify whether airport workers are following appropriate procedures to access a SIDA of an airport.

(c) SCREENING REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall conduct a review of airports that have implemented additional airport worker screening or perimeter security to improve airport security, including—

(A) comprehensive airport worker screening at access points to secure areas;

(B) comprehensive perimeter screening, including vehicles;

(C) enhanced fencing or perimeter sensors; and

(D) any additional airport worker screening or perimeter security measures the Administrator identifies.

(2) BEST PRACTICES.—After completing the review under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify best practices for additional access control and airport worker security at airports; and

(B) disseminate the best practices identified under subparagraph (A) to airport operators.

(3) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Administrator may conduct a pilot program at 1 or more airports to test and validate best practices for comprehensive airport worker screening or perimeter security under paragraph (2).

SEC. __110. COVERT TESTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall increase the use of red-team, covert testing of access controls to any secure areas of an airport.

(b) ADDITIONAL COVERT TESTING.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall conduct red-team, covert testing of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) ADMINISTRATOR REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the progress to expand the use of inspections and of red-team, covert testing under subsection (a).

(2) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the effectiveness of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports based on red-team, covert testing under subsection (b).

SEC. __111. SECURITY DIRECTIVES.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator, in consultation with the appropriate regulated entities, shall conduct a comprehensive review of every current security directive addressed to any regulated entity—

(1) to determine whether the security directive continues to be relevant;

(2) to determine whether the security directives should be streamlined or consolidated to most efficiently maximize risk reduction; and

(3) to update, consolidate, or revoke any security directive as necessary.

(b) NOTICE.—For each security directive that the Administrator issues, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress notice of—

(1) the extent to which the security directive responds to a specific threat, security threat assessment, or emergency situation against civil aviation; and

(2) when it is anticipated that the security directive will expire.

SEC. __112. IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) assess the progress made by the Administration and the effect on aviation security of implementing the requirements under sections __104 through __111 of this Act; and

(2) report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the results of the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.

SEC. __113. MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS.

(a) ASAC TERMS OF OFFICE.—Section 44946(c)(2)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) TERMS.—The term of each member of the Advisory Committee shall be 2 years, but a member may continue to serve until the Assistant Secretary appoints a successor. A member of the Advisory Committee may be reappointed.''.

(b) FEEDBACK.—Section 44946(b)(5) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) FEEDBACK.—Not later than 90 days after receiving recommendations transmitted by the Advisory Committee under paragraph (2) or paragraph (4), the Assistant Secretary shall respond in writing to the Advisory Committee with feedback on each of the recommendations, an action plan to implement any of the recommendations with which the Assistant Secretary concurs, and a justification for why any of the recommendations have been rejected.''.

Subtitle B—TSA PreCheck Expansion Act

SEC. __201. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''TSA PreCheck Expansion Act''.

SEC. __202. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(3) PRECHECK PROGRAM.—The term ''PreCheck Program'' means the trusted traveler program implemented by the Transportation Security Administration under section 109(a)(3) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114).

(4) TSA.—The term ''TSA'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. __203. PRECHECK PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator shall continue to administer the PreCheck Program established under the authority of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107–71; 115 Stat. 597).

SEC. __204. PRECHECK PROGRAM ENROLLMENT EXPANSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish PreCheck Program enrollment standards that add multiple private sector application capabilities for the PreCheck Program to increase the public's enrollment access to the program, including standards that allow the use of secure technologies, including online enrollment, kiosks, tablets, or staffed laptop stations at which individuals can apply for entry into the program.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Upon publication of the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with interested parties—

(A) to deploy TSA-approved ready-to-market private sector solutions that meet the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a);

(B) to make available additional PreCheck Program enrollment capabilities; and

(C) to offer secure online and mobile enrollment opportunities;

(2) partner with the private sector to collect biographic and biometric identification information via kiosks, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms to increase enrollment flexibility and minimize the amount of travel to enrollment centers for applicants;

(3) ensure that any information, including biographic information, is collected in a manner that—

(A) is comparable with the appropriate and applicable standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(B) protects privacy and data security, including that any personally identifiable information is collected, retained, used, and shared in a manner consistent with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as ''Privacy Act of 1974''), and with agency regulations;

(4) ensure that the enrollment process is streamlined and flexible to allow an individual to provide additional information to complete enrollment and verify identity; and

(5) ensure that any enrollment expansion using a private sector risk assessment instead of a fingerprint-based criminal history records check is determined, by the Secretary of Homeland Security, to be equivalent to a fingerprint-based criminal history records check conducted through the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(c) MARKETING OF PRECHECK PROGRAM.—Upon publication of PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) in accordance with those standards, develop and implement—

(A) a continual process, including an associated timeframe, for approving private sector marketing of the PreCheck Program; and

(B) a long-term strategy for partnering with the private sector to encourage enrollment in such program;

(2) submit to Congress, at the end of each fiscal year, a report on any PreCheck Program application fees collected in excess of the costs of administering the program, including to access the feasibility of the program, for the preceding fiscal year; and

(3) include in the report under paragraph (2) recommendations for using such amounts to support marketing of the program under this subsection.

(d) IDENTITY VERIFICATION ENHANCEMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with the heads of appropriate components of the Department to leverage department-held data and technologies to verify the citizenship of individuals enrolling in the PreCheck Program;

(2) partner with the private sector to use biometrics and authentication standards, such as relevant standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to facilitate enrollment in the program; and

(3) consider leveraging the existing resources and abilities of airports to conduct fingerprint and background checks to expedite identity verification.

(e) PRECHECK PROGRAM LANES OPERATION.—The Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that PreCheck Program screening lanes are open and available during peak and high-volume travel times at appropriate airports to individuals enrolled in the PreCheck Program; and

(2) make every practicable effort to provide expedited screening at standard screening lanes during times when PreCheck Program screening lanes are closed to individuals enrolled in the program in order to maintain operational efficiency.

(f) VETTING FOR PRECHECK PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall initiate an assessment to identify any security vulnerabilities in the vetting process for the PreCheck Program, including determining whether subjecting PreCheck Program participants to recurrent fingerprint-based criminal history records checks, in addition to recurrent checks against the terrorist watchlist, could be done in a cost-effective manner to strengthen the security of the PreCheck Program.

Subtitle C—Securing Aviation From Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016

SEC. __301. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Securing Aviation from Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016''.

SEC. __302. LAST POINT OF DEPARTURE AIRPORT SECURITY ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall conduct a comprehensive security risk assessment of all last point of departure airports with nonstop flights to the United States.

(b) CONTENTS.—The security risk assessment required under subsection (a) shall include consideration of the following:

(1) The level of coordination and cooperation between the Transportation Security Administration and the foreign government of the country in which the last point of departure airport with nonstop flights to the United States is located.

(2) The intelligence and threat mitigation capabilities of the country in which such airport is located.

(3) The number of known or suspected terrorists annually transiting through such airport.

(4) The passenger security screening practices, capabilities, and capacity of such airport.

(5) The security vetting undergone by aviation workers at such airport.

(6) The access controls utilized by such airport to limit to authorized personnel access to secure and sterile areas of such airports.

SEC. __303. SECURITY COORDINATION ENHANCEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress and the Government Accountability Office a plan—

(1) to enhance and bolster security collaboration, coordination, and information sharing relating to securing international-inbound aviation between the United States and domestic and foreign partners, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, foreign government entities, passenger air carriers, cargo air carriers, and United States Government entities, in order to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports, including airports that may not have nonstop flights to the United States but are nonetheless determined by the Administrator to be high risk; and

(2) that includes an assessment of the ability of the Administration to enter into a mutual agreement with a foreign government entity that permits Administration representatives to conduct without prior notice inspections of foreign airports.

(b) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the submission of the plan required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the efforts, capabilities, and effectiveness of the Transportation Security Administration to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports and determine if the implementation of such efforts and capabilities effectively secures international-inbound aviation.

SEC. __304. WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress a comprehensive workforce assessment of all Administration personnel within the Office of Global Strategies of the Administration or whose primary professional duties contribute to the Administration's global efforts to secure transportation security, including a review of whether such personnel are assigned in a risk-based, intelligence-driven manner.

SEC. __305. DONATION OF SCREENING EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration is authorized to donate security screening equipment to a foreign last point of departure airport operator if such equipment can be reasonably expected to mitigate a specific vulnerability to the security of the United States or United States citizens.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days before any donation of security screening equipment pursuant to subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide to the Committee

on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a detailed written explanation of the following:

(1) The specific vulnerability to the United States or United States citizens that will be mitigated by such donation.

(2) An explanation as to why the recipient of such donation is unable or unwilling to purchase security screening equipment to mitigate such vulnerability.

(3) An evacuation plan for sensitive technologies in case of emergency or instability in the country to which such donation is being made.

(4) How the Administrator will ensure the security screening equipment that is being donated is used and maintained over the course of its life by the recipient.

(5) The total dollar value of such donation.

SEC. __306. NATIONAL CARGO SECURITY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration may evaluate foreign countries' air cargo security programs to determine whether such programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs.

(b) APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines that a foreign country's air cargo security program evaluated under subsection (a) provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator shall approve and officially recognize such foreign country's air cargo security program.

(2) EFFECT OF APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration approves and officially recognizes pursuant to paragraph (1) a foreign country's air cargo security program, cargo aircraft of such foreign country shall not be required to adhere to United States air cargo security programs that would otherwise be applicable.

(c) REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines at any time that a foreign country's air cargo security program approved and officially recognized under subsection (b) no longer provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator may revoke or temporarily suspend such approval and official recognition until such time as the Administrator determines that such foreign country's cargo security programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by such United States air cargo security programs.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration revokes or suspends pursuant to paragraph (1) a foreign country's air cargo security program, the Administrator shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate not later than 30 days after such revocation or suspension.

Subtitle D—Miscellaneous

SEC. __401. INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 114 of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish an international training and capacity development program to train the appropriate authorities of foreign governments in air transportation security.

(b) CONTENTS OF TRAINING.—If the Administrator determines that a foreign government would benefit from training and capacity development assistance, the Administrator may provide to the appropriate authorities of that foreign government technical assistance and training programs to strengthen aviation security in managerial, operational, and technical areas, including—

(1) active shooter scenarios;

(2) incident response;

(3) use of canines;

(4) mitigation of insider threats;

(5) perimeter security;

(6) operation and maintenance of security screening technology; and

(7) recurrent related training and exercises.

SEC. __402. CHECKPOINTS OF THE FUTURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, in accordance with chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code, shall request the Aviation Security Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for more efficient and effective passenger screening processes.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making recommendations to improve existing passenger screening processes, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee shall consider—

(1) the configuration of a checkpoint;

(2) technology innovation;

(3) ways to address any vulnerabilities identified in audits of checkpoint operations;

(4) ways to prevent security breaches at airports where Federal security screening is provided;

(5) best practices in aviation security;

(6) recommendations from airport and aircraft operators, and any relevant advisory committees; and

(7) ''curb to curb'' processes and procedures.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee review, including any recommendations for improving screening processes.

SA 3513. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 111, strike line 14, and insert the following:

''(d) CRIMINAL PENALTY.—A person who violates subsection (a) may be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

''(e) COMPROMISE AND SETOFF.—The United States''.

SA 3514. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING WOMEN IN AVIATION.

It is the sense of Congress that the aviation industry should explore all opportunities, including pilot training, science, technology, engineering, and math education, and mentorship programs, to encourage and support female students and aviators to pursue a career in aviation.

SA 3515. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. LEADERSHIP WITH RESPECT TO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY AIRCRAFT.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) exercise leadership in establishing an international approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions attributable to aircraft; and

(2) encourage the deployment of advanced technology to further reduce such emissions.

SA 3516. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—CROSS-BORDER TRADE ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2016

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act of 2016''.

SEC. __02. REPEAL AND TRANSITION PROVISION.

(a) REPEAL.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) and section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) are repealed.

(b) AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act may be construed as affecting in any manner an agreement entered into pursuant to section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) or section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that is in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, and any such agreement shall continue to have full force and effect on and after such date.

(c) PROPOSED AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act may be construed as affecting in any manner a proposal accepted for consideration by U.S. Customs and Border Protection pursuant to section 559 of the Department of Homeland

Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that was accepted prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. __03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' mean the General Services Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' mean the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) COMMISSIONER.—The term ''Commissioner'' means the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(4) DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term ''donation agreement'' means an agreement made under section __05(a).

(5) FEE AGREEMENT.—The term ''fee agreement'' means an agreement made by the Commissioner under section __04(a)(1).

(6) PERSON.—The term ''person'' means—

(A) an individual;

(B) a corporation, partnership, trust, estate, association, or any other private or public entity;

(C) a Federal, State, or local government;

(D) any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a Federal, State, or local government; or

(E) any other governmental entity.

(7) RELEVANT COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''relevant committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. __04. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO FEE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN SERVICES OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.

(a) FEE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) AUTHORITY FOR FEE AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding section 13031(e) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(e)) and section 451 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1451), the Commissioner may, upon the request of any person, enter into an agreement with that person under which—

(A) U.S. Customs and Border Protection will provide the services described in paragraph (2) at a port of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services;

(B) such person will remit a fee imposed under subsection (b) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection in an amount equal to the full costs incurred or that will be incurred in providing such services; and

(C) any additional facilities which U.S. Customs and Border Protection deems necessary for the provision of services under an agreement entered into under this section shall be provided, maintained, and equipped by such person in accordance with U.S. Customs and Border Protection specifications.

(2) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—Services described in this paragraph are any services related to, or in support of, customs, agricultural processing, border security, or inspection-related immigration matters provided by an employee or contractor of U.S. Customs and Border Protection at ports of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services.

(3) MODIFICATION OF PRIOR AGREEMENTS.—The Commissioner, at the request of a person who has previously entered into an agreement with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the reimbursement of fees in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, may modify such agreement to implement any provisions of this title.

(4) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Except as provided in paragraphs (5) and (6), there shall be no limit to the number of fee agreements that may be entered into by the Commissioner.

(5) AUTHORITY FOR NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—

(A) RESOURCE AVAILABILITY.—If the Commissioner finds that resource or allocation constraints would prevent U.S. Customs and Border Protection from fulfilling, in whole or in part, requests for services under the terms of existing or proposed fee agreements, the Commissioner shall impose annual limits on the number of new fee agreements.

(B) ANNUAL REVIEW.—If the Commissioner limits the number of new fee agreements under this paragraph, the Commissioner shall annually evaluate and reassess such limits and publish the results of such evaluation and affirm any such limits that shall remain in effect in a publicly available format.

(6) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS AT AIR PORTS OF ENTRY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner may not enter into more than 10 fee agreements to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at air ports of entry.

(B) CERTAIN COSTS.—A fee agreement for U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at an air port of entry may only provide for the reimbursement of—

(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employee;

(iii) the salaries and expenses of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at air ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such employees.

(C) PRECLEARANCE.—The authority in the section may not be used to enter into new preclearance agreements or initiate the provision of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services outside of the United States.

(7) DENIED APPLICATION.—If the Commissioner denies a proposal for a fee agreement, the Commission shall provide the person who submitted the proposal a detailed justification for the denial.

(8) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(A) to require a person entering into a fee agreement to cover costs that are otherwise the responsibility of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection or any other agency of the Federal Government and are not incurred, or expected to be incurred, to cover services specifically covered by an agreement entered into under authorities provided by this title; or

(B) to unduly and permanently reduce the responsibilities or duties of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide services at ports of entry that have been authorized or mandated by law and are funded in any appropriation Act or from any accounts in the Treasury of the United States derived by the collection of fees.

(b) FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who enters into a fee agreement shall pay a fee pursuant to such agreement in an amount equal to the full cost of U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

(A) of the salaries and expenses of individuals employed or contracted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide such services; and

(B) of other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection related to providing such services, such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of employees.

(2) ADVANCE PAYMENT.—The Commissioner, with approval from a person requesting services of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services pursuant to a fee agreement, may accept the fee for services prior to providing such services.

(3) OVERSIGHT OF FEES.—The Commissioner shall develop a process to oversee the activities for which fees are charged pursuant to a fee agreement that includes the following:

(A) A determination and report on the full cost of providing services, including direct and indirect costs, as well as a process, through consultation with affected parties and other interested stakeholders, for increasing such fees as necessary.

(B) The establishment of a periodic remittance schedule to replenish appropriations, accounts or funds, as necessary.

(C) The identification of costs paid by such fees.

(4) DEPOSIT OF FUNDS.—Amounts collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall—

(A) be deposited as an offsetting collection;

(B) remain available until expended, without fiscal year limitation; and

(C) be credited to the applicable appropriation, account, or fund for the amount paid out of that appropriation, account, or fund for—

(i) any expenses incurred or to be incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection in providing such services; and

(ii) any other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to such services.

(5) TERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner shall terminate the services provided pursuant to a fee agreement with a person that, after receiving notice from the Commissioner that a fee imposed under the fee agreement is due, fails to pay such fee in a timely manner.

(B) EFFECT OF TERMINATION.—At the time services are terminated pursuant to subparagraph (A), all costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection which have not been paid, will become immediately due and payable.

(C) INTEREST.—Interest on unpaid fees will accrue based on the quarterly rate(s) established under sections 6621 and 6622 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(D) PENALTIES.—Any person that fails to pay any fee incurred under a fee agreement in a timely manner, after notice and demand for payment, shall be liable for a penalty or liquidated damage equal to 2 times the amount of such fee.

(E) AMOUNT COLLECTED.—Any amount collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall be deposited into the account specified under paragraph (4) and shall be available as described therein.

(F) RETURN OF UNUSED FUNDS.—The Commissioner shall return any unused funds collected under a fee agreement that is terminated for any reason, or in the event that the terms of such agreement change by mutual

agreement to cause a reduction of U.S. Customs and Border Protections services. No interest shall be owed upon the return of any unused funds.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each fee agreement made during the previous year; and

(2) not less than 3 days before entering into a fee agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(d) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission to enter into new fee agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any fee agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that fee agreement.

SEC. _05. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) COMMISSIONER.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator as provided under subsection (f), may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, for activities in subsection (b) at a new or existing land, sea, or air port of entry, or any facility or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services within the United States.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—Where the Administrator owns or leases a new or existing land port of entry, facility, or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services, the Administrator, in collaboration with the Commissioner, may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, at that location for activities set forth in subsection (b).

(b) USE.—A donation made under a donation agreement may be used for activities related to construction, alteration, operation or maintenance, including expenses related to—

(1) land acquisition, design, construction, repair, and alteration;

(2) furniture, fixtures, equipment, and technology, including installation and the deployment thereof; and

(3) operation and maintenance of the facility, infrastructure, equipment, and technology.

(c) LIMITATION ON MONETARY DONATIONS.—Any monetary donation accepted pursuant to a donation agreement may not be used to pay the salaries of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection who perform inspection services.

(d) TRANSFER.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER.—Donations accepted by the Commissioner or the Administrator under a donation agreement may be transferred between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Administration.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—Prior to executing a transfer under this subsection, the Commissioner or Administrator shall notify a person that entered into the donation agreement of an intent to transfer the donated property or services.

(e) TERM OF DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term of a donation agreement may be as long as is required to meet the terms of the agreement.

(f) ROLE OF ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator's role, involvement, and authority under this section is limited with respect to donations made at new or existing land ports of entry, facilities, or other infrastructure owned or leased by the Administration.

(g) EVALUATION PROCEDURES.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROCEDURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment, the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administrator as appropriate, shall issue procedures for evaluating proposals for donation agreements.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The procedures issued under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public.

(3) COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS.—In issuing the procedures under paragraph (1), the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administration, shall evaluate the use of authorities provided under this section to enter into cost-sharing or reimbursement agreements with eligible persons and determine whether such agreements may improve facility conditions or inspection services at new or existing land, sea, or air ports of entry.

(h) DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after receiving a proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall notify the person that submitted the proposal as to whether it is complete or incomplete.

(2) INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS.—If the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, determines that a proposal is incomplete, the person that submitted the proposal shall be notified and provided with—

(A) a detailed description of all specific information or material that is needed to complete review of the proposal; and

(B) allow the person to resubmit the proposal with additional information and material described under subparagraph (A) to complete the proposal.

(3) COMPLETE APPLICATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a completed and final proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall—

(A) make a determination whether to deny or approve the proposal; and

(B) notify the person that submitted the proposal of the determination.

(4) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making the determination under paragraph (3)(A), the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall consider—

(A) the impact of the proposal on reducing wait times at that port of entry or facility and other ports of entry on the same border;

(B) the potential of the proposal to increase trade and travel efficiency through added capacity; and

(C) the potential of the proposal to enhance the security of the port of entry or facility.

(i) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING.—Any property, including monetary donations and nonpersonal services, donated pursuant to a donation agreement may be used in addition to any other funds, including appropriated funds, property, or services made available for the same purpose.

(j) RETURN OF DONATION.—If the Commissioner or the Administrator does not use the property or services donated pursuant to a donation agreement, such donated property or services shall be returned to the person that made the donation.

(k) INTEREST PROHIBITED.—No interest may be owed on any donation returned to a person under this subsection.

(l) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator if applicable, shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each donation agreement made during the previous year; and

(2) not less than 3 days before entering into a donation agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(m) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, nothing in this section may be construed as affecting in any manner the responsibilities, duties, or authorities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection or the Administration.

(n) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission or the Administrator to enter into new donation agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any donation agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that donation agreement.

SA 3517. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 45, after line 20, add the following:

(e) GAO REPORT ON MOTHERS' ROOMS AT AIRPORTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study of the availability and quality of lactation areas (as defined in section 47102 of title 49, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)) at major national airports; and

(2) make recommendations for improving accessibility to and quality of such areas at such airports.

SEC. 1223. PUBLIC-PRIVATE WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING AIR SERVICE FOR FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a public-private working group (in this section referred to as the ''working group'')—

(1) to examine current policies and practices of airports and air carriers for accommodating the needs of traveling families and pregnant women; and

(2) to develop recommendations for improving air service for families and pregnant women.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements under subsection (a), the working group shall—

(1) review current air carrier, security screening, and airport policies and practices for accommodating families and pregnant women;

(2) identify best practices and innovations for easing travel for families with children or older adults and pregnant women;

(3) propose improvements to security screening procedures that minimize the instances requiring parents to be separated from their children;

(4) suggest accommodations and changes that should be made in airports for pregnant passengers and pregnant workers, such as access to clean nursing rooms;

(5) suggest accommodations and changes that should be made in airports for new parents traveling with young children, including play areas for children;

(6) recommend improvements for on-boarding and off-boarding for pregnant women and families traveling with children or older adults, including advance boarding, and to ensure that families travel together in the aircraft cabin, to the extent possible;

(7) identify initiatives for ensuring all relevant stakeholders, including airport operators and air carriers, have the latest information regarding the effect of air transportation on the health needs of pregnant women and young children; and

(8) consider such other issues as the working group considers appropriate for improving the overall travel experience for families and pregnant women.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the working group shall be appointed by the Administrator and shall include representatives of—

(1) the Department of Transportation;

(2) the Federal Aviation Administration;

(3) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(4) the Department of Labor;

(5) other relevant agencies;

(6) nongovernmental organizations that represent women and families caring for children or older adults;

(7) consumer advocacy groups; and

(8) air carriers.

(d) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress, and release on a publicly accessible website, a report that includes—

(1) an overview of the working group's findings;

(2) a description of the working group's recommendations for airport operators and air carriers; and

(3) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would assist in improving air service for families and pregnant women.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group.

(f) TERMINATION.—The working group shall terminate on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Transportation Security: Protecting Passengers and Freight.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight Hearing: The President's FY 2017 Budget Request for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Strategic Implications of the U.S. Debt.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SH–216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 2 p.m., in SR–428A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Federal Disaster Response and SBA Implementation of the RISE Act.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 10 a.m. in room 328A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''USDA Rural Development Programs and their Economic Impact Across America.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 6, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Finding a Cure: Assessing Progress Toward the Goal of Ending Alzheimer's by 2025.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Christopher Loring, Federal Aviation Administration detailee on the Commerce Committee, be granted floor privileges throughout the debate on H.R. 636, the vehicle for the FAA reauthorization.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY HEADQUARTERS CONSOLIDATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 387, S. 1638.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1638) to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is shown in italic.)

S. 1638

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Consolidation Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. INFORMATION ON DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY HEADQUARTERS CONSOLIDATION PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress information on the implementation of the enhanced plan for the Department headquarters consolidation project within the National Capital Region, approved by the Office of Management and Budget and included in the budget of the President for fiscal year 2016 (as submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code), that includes the following:

(1) A proposed occupancy plan for the consolidation project that includes specific information about which Department-wide operations, component operations, and support offices will be located at the site, the aggregate number of full time equivalent employees projected to occupy the site, the seat-to-staff ratio at the site, and schedule estimates for migrating operations to the site.

(2) A comprehensive assessment of the difference between the current real property and facilities needed by the Department in the National Capital Region in order to carry out the mission of the Department and the future needs of the Department.

(3) A current plan for construction of the headquarters consolidation at the St. Elizabeths campus that includes—

(A) the estimated costs and schedule for the current plan, which shall conform to relevant Federal guidance for cost and schedule estimates, consistent with the recommendation of the Government Accountability Office in the September 2014 report entitled ''Federal Real Property: DHS and GSA Need to Strengthen the Management of DHS Headquarters Consolidation'' (GAO–14–648); and

(B) any estimated cost savings associated with reducing the scope of the consolidation project and increasing the use of existing capacity developed under the project.

(4) A current plan for the leased portfolio of the Department in the National Capital Region that includes—

(A) an end-state vision that identifies which Department-wide operations, component operations, and support offices do not migrate to the St. Elizabeths campus and continue to operate at a property in the leased portfolio;

(B) for each year until the consolidation project is completed, the number of full-time equivalent employees who are expected to operate at each property, component, or office;

(C) the anticipated total rentable square feet leased per year during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which the consolidation project is completed; and

(D) timing and anticipated lease terms for leased space under the plan referred to in paragraph (3).

(5) An analysis that identifies the costs and benefits of leasing and construction alternatives for the remainder of the consolidation project that includes—

(A) a comparison of the long-term cost that would result from leasing as compared to consolidating functions on Government-owned space; and

(B) the identification of any cost impacts in terms of premiums for short-term lease extensions or holdovers due to the uncertainty of funding for, or delays in, completing construction required for the consolidation.

(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW.—

(1) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall review the cost and schedule estimates submitted under subsection (a) to evaluate the quality and reliability of the estimates.

(2) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the submittal of the cost and schedule estimates under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall report to the appropriate [congressional] committees *of Congress* on the results of the review required under paragraph (1).

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(3) The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(4) The term ''National Capital Region'' has the meaning given the term under section 2674(f)(2) of title 10, United States Code.

(5) The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

The bill (S. 1638), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CONVEYING FEDERAL PROPERTY TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 390, S. 1492.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1492) to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. REAL PROPERTY CONVEYANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ARCHIVIST.—The term ''Archivist'' means the Archivist of the United States.

(2) CITY.—The term ''City'' means the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska.

(b) CONVEYANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act and after completion of the survey and appraisal described in this section, the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist, shall offer to convey to the City by quitclaim deed for the consideration and under the conditions described in subsection (d), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property described in subsection (c).

(2) COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—The City shall be responsible for paying—

(A) the costs of an appraisal conducted pursuant to subsection (d)(1)(B); and

(B) any other costs relating to the conveyance of the Federal property under this Act.

(c) LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The parcel to be conveyed under subsection (b) consists of approximately 9 acres and improvements located at 400 East Fortieth Avenue in the City that is administered by the National Archives and Records Administration.

(2) SURVEY REQUIRED.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the exact acreage and legal description of the real property to be conveyed under subsection (b) shall be determined by a survey, paid for by the City, that is satisfactory to the Archivist.

(d) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) CONSIDERATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As consideration for the conveyance of the property under subsection (b), the City shall pay to the Archivist an amount not less than the fair market value of the conveyed property, to be determined as provided in subparagraph (B).

(B) APPRAISAL.—The fair market value of the property to be conveyed under subsection (b) shall be determined based on an appraisal that—

(i) is conducted by a licensed, independent appraiser that is approved by the Archivist and the City;

(ii) is based on the highest and best use of the property;

(iii) is approved by the Archivist; and

(iv) is paid for by the City.

(2) PRECONVEYANCE ENTRY.—The Archivist, on terms and conditions the Archivist determines to be appropriate, may authorize the City to enter the property at no charge for preconstruction and construction activities.

(3) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Archivist may require additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (b) as the Archivist considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(e) PROCEEDS.—Any net proceeds received by the Archivist as a result of the conveyance under this Act shall be deposited in the Treasury and used for deficit reduction, in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury considers appropriate.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1492), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CONGRATULATING THE VILLANOVA WILDCATS FOR WINNING THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 415, submitted earlier today.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 415) congratulating the 2016 national champions, the Villanova Wildcats, for their win in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 415) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2016

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 7; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, we expect votes on pending amendments to the FAA bill during tomorrow's session of the Senate and will notify offices when they are scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:18 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 7, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 12

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the status of innovative technologies in advanced manufacturing.
SD–366

Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine cybersecurity and protecting taxpayer information.
SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the spread of ISIS and transnational terrorism.
SD–419

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine Every Student Succeeds Act implementation in states and school districts, focusing on perspectives from the Secretary of Education.
SD–430

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Securities and Exchange Commission and Commodity Futures Trading Commission.
SD–138

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine the strategy and implementation of the Department of Defense's technology offsets initiative in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Committee on Environment and Public Works
Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight
To hold hearings to examine American small businesses perspectives on Environmental Protection Agency regulatory actions.
SD–406

APRIL 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine the role of environmental policies on access to energy and economic opportunity.
SD–406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine America's insatiable demand for drugs.
SD–342

10 a.m.
Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine EB–5 targeted employment areas.
SD–226

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Missile Defense Agency.
SD–192

Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine budgeting for outcomes to maximize taxpayer value.
SD–608

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine S. 2205, to establish a grant program to assist tribal governments in establishing tribal healing to wellness courts, S. 2421, to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska, and to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation located in Dillingham, Alaska, S. 2564, to modernize prior legislation relating to Dine College, S. 2643, to improve the implementation of the settlement agreement reached between the Pueblo de Cochiti of New Mexico and the Corps of Engineers, and S. 2717, to improve the safety and address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams to prevent flooding on Indian reservations.
SD–628

Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies—2016
Organizational business meeting to consider an original resolution authorizing expenditures for committee operations and committee's rules and procedure for the 114th Congress.
S–219

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 14

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.
SD–538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine options for addressing the continuing lack of reliable emergency medical transportation for the isolated community of King Cove, Alaska.
SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the Federal perspective on the state of our nation's biodefense.
SD–342

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Land Management's proposed rule, entitled ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resources Conservation,'' published in the *Federal Register* on February 8, 2016.
SD–366

APRIL 19

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine challenges and opportunities for oil and gas development in different price environments.
SD–366

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''
SD–628

MAY 9

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–232A

MAY 10

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–232A

11 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SD–G50

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SD–G50

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SD–G50

5:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–232A

MAY 11

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

MAY 12

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

MAY 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

SENATE—*Thursday, April 7, 2016*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we are safe with You. Give our lawmakers the wisdom to put their entire trust in You. Help them to remember Your promise to guide their steps on the right path. Lord, fill them with courage so that they will stand for right in every circumstance. When they experience setbacks, may they rest in the victory of Your love. Help them to experience the length, breadth, and height of Your sovereign grace.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was glad to see Senators in both parties vote to advance the FAA Reauthorization Act yesterday. We will now continue our work to pass this bipartisan legislation that will support American jobs. It will also enhance safety and security measures to help protect travelers in our airports and in the skies. It will look out for consumers' interests by providing more information on things such as seat availability and baggage fees. It will maintain rural access and promote American manufacturing as well. That is what the FAA bill before us will do. Here is what it won't do: It won't raise taxes or fees on airline passengers or enact heavyhanded regulations that could diminish choices or services for travelers.

I appreciate the diligent work of Chairman THUNE and Senator AYOTTE, the chair of the committee's aviation panel, as well as that of their Democratic counterparts, Senators NELSON and CANTWELL.

The FAA Reauthorization Act has been a bipartisan effort from the very start. Let's keep working together in the same spirit today. I urge colleagues to work with the bill managers to process amendments, if they have them.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, President Obama will fly to Chicago, where he will try to convince Americans that, despite his own actions while in the Senate to deny a Supreme Court nominee a vote, the Constitution somehow now requires the Senate to have a vote on his nominee no matter what, and thereby deny the American people a voice in the future of the Supreme Court. In the words of the Washington Post's Fact Checker, he will be ''telling supporters a politically convenient fairy tale.'' That is the Washington Post. I am sure he will gloss over the fact that the decision about filling this pivotal seat could impact our country for decades, that it could dramatically affect the most cherished constitutional rights, such as those contained in the First and Second Amendments. I am sure he will continue to demand that Washington spend its time fighting on one issue where we don't agree rather than working together on issues where we do. I am sure he will spend some time refuting the words of his own Vice President. I am sure he will repeatedly claim that his nominee is ''moderate''—not that he means it; it is just a useful piece of spin that has been dutifully echoed across the spans of the left and in the media for years.

Consider the recent Democratic Supreme Court nominees. One Washington Post columnist hailed the ''moderate'' record of President Obama's first pick to the Supreme Court. One New York newspaper proclaimed his second nominee a ''pragmatic centrist.'' When President Clinton made his Supreme Court nominations, the Post declared one a—you guessed it—''moderate,'' and the New York Times practically fell all over itself exalting the ''resolutely centrist'' style of the other. That last nominee—who said it would be a good idea to abolish Mother's Day, by the way—was not just firmly centrist, not just decisively centrist, but resolutely centrist, in the Times' opinion. The records of every one of these Supreme Court Justices have been anything—anything—but moderate or centrist in the years since. They have been resolutely leftwing. But that is the point. ''Moderate'' isn't exactly a true descriptor for Democratic Supreme Court nominees; it is just burned into the printing presses of the editorial boards.

Yet, even the New York Times has had to admit that President Obama's current nominee would give Americans the most leftwing Supreme Court in 50 years—in 50 years. That is why the far left is squarely behind President Obama's campaign to deny the American people a say in this momentous decision.

The American people understand what is at stake. The administration doesn't want the American people messing this up for them, and they will say what they always say to get what they want today: a far-left Supreme Court for decades to come. That is just one more reason why the American people are lucky to have a Judiciary chairman like Senator GRASSLEY in their corner. Senator GRASSLEY is passionate about giving the people of this country a voice in such a critical conversation. He has stood strong for the people throughout this debate, and he has proven himself a dedicated legislator throughout this new majority, with yet another Judiciary Committee-passed bill clearing the Senate on a bipartisan basis just this week. He understands that we don't need to get stuck fighting about one issue. He understands that we can let the American people have their voices heard on this matter while the Senate continues doing its work on important legislation.

REMEMBERING STEPHANIE AND JUSTIN SHULTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was deeply saddened by the death of Lexington, KY, native Stephanie Moore Shults. Ms. Shults, 29, along with her husband Justin Shults, 30, was killed in the terrorist attacks in Brussels last month. Funeral services for the young couple will be held in Lexington tomorrow.

Stephanie Shults graduated from Bryan Station High School and Transylvania University and was looking forward to the promising future ahead of her. She found part of that future when she met Justin, a native of Tennessee, at Vanderbilt University, where the two earned their master's in accounting. The pair moved to Brussels in 2014 for work and loved to travel extensively through Europe. They recently visited Barcelona. They were planning a future trip to Finland, where they hoped to stay in a glass

igloo under the Northern Lights. Now that spirit of adventure is gone, stolen by a brutal act of terror that targeted the innocent.

My wife Elaine and I join all Kentuckians in sending our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of this young couple. We share their heartbreak over the fact that Stephanie and Justin were taken from us entirely too soon. And we extend our prayers and sympathies to all the families who lost loved ones in Belgium.

Attacks like these remind Americans everywhere that we must defeat ISIL and other terrorist groups who not only threaten our interests but critically, importantly, threaten innocent civilians.

Today we honor the lives of Stephanie and Justin. We mourn their loss. And we rededicate ourselves to our important fight against terror.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I agree with the Republican leader that it is important that we get the FAA bill done as soon as possible, but I would just have everyone reflect—when we were in the majority, we tried to bring up the FAA bill, and that went on for weeks and weeks, with unnecessary filibusters. The FAA came to a screeching halt.

As we have said, if you are a responsible minority, you work to get things done. That is what we have done. We have worked hard with the majority to come up with an FAA bill we can support. So I hope everyone understands that obstruction doesn't work. We understand that. That is why we have tried to be as collegial as we can be on legislation.

I just finished my ''Welcome to Washington'' this morning. A little boy asked me: How do you get things done?

I said: Well, you know, things in Congress are done just like in life. I have had the good fortune in my time in public service, my time in Congress, to be able to have things with my name on them, bills that have passed, but I have never ever gotten something that I wanted—it was always a compromise. We always have had to compromise to get something passed.

Frankly, that is the way life is. Life is a time where we work with people to try to get along to work things out. That is the way things used to be done here, but with the untoward obstruction during the Obama years, it has been difficult to get things done.

So I agree that the FAA bill is something we need to pass. As I have said, we are constructively working with the Republicans—those on the other side of the aisle—to get things done.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we can play around all we want with the Supreme Court and what the Constitution says or doesn't say, but we know that the Constitution says that the President shall—not may, but shall—nominate Supreme Court Justices. He has an obligation. He has to do that. The Constitution is also very affirmative: There has to be advice and consent. That is what we are instructed in the Constitution.

It is a little strange how we can have from the Republicans advice and consent when the vast majority of the Republicans won't even meet with the man. They refuse to hold hearings and certainly to have a vote.

So I don't know how anyone is reading the Constitution, but we need to do our job. We are not doing our job when we don't hold hearings and have a vote. We shouldn't be here talking about Supreme Court nominees being far left or far right or moderate.

To show how off track this has gotten, 2 days ago the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Iowa, gave a speech here. Guess who he was attacking. Justice Roberts, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He said to the Chief Justice: Heal yourself. The Chief Justice. Is there anyone in the world—anyone in the United States, anyone in the legal field, anyone in the political field—who thinks he is some kind of crazy liberal, John Roberts, who worked on the court with Merrick Garland? They wrote opinions together. They agreed almost 90 percent of the time on their opinions.

So it is really too bad that now we are here with a Supreme Court Justice—for the first time in the history of the country, because we are in the final year of a Presidency, we are not going to do anything. We are going to wait. In the meantime, justice will be delayed. We have already had a significant number of tied, 4-to-4 decisions by the Court, and, using the logic of the Republicans, this is going to go on for another 18 months. So it is unfortunate that this has turned into something that has never happened before.

They go back and keep repeating: The Biden rule. The Biden rule. The Biden rule.

The year he gave that speech—and he gave a speech at Georgetown University just a week ago saying: Read my speech. Read the whole thing.

And what was the result of his action as chairman of the committee that year? He brought nominations to the floor even though they didn't get enough votes in the committee to be reported. The nominees lost in the Judiciary Committee, but Biden brought them here anyway.

There was an op-ed written by one of my predecessors, former Democratic leader George Mitchell, a stunningly good Senator from Maine. He wrote that 2 days ago. It appeared in a Boston newspaper. He said that when Clarence Thomas came before the Senate, he had lost in the committee. He didn't get enough votes to be reported out of the committee. Biden reported him out anyway: Bring him to the floor. Let's have a debate.

That is what Senator Mitchell talked about. We had a debate. And he had pressure. It wasn't tremendous, but he had pressure. People asked: Why don't you filibuster him? He said: I am not going to filibuster. Let's have a vote, and that is the way it used to be done. He had 52 votes. Could that have been stopped? Of course. Would the Court have been better? Observers can make the determination themselves as to whether we would be better off without Clarence Thomas on that Court. But the fact is he could have been stopped easily, and it wasn't done.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am gratified that the Presiding Officer today is from the State of Nevada—my friend, the junior Senator from Nevada. When I think of home, I think of the desert, and you can't talk about Nevada as a desert only, even though the vast majority of the State of Nevada is a very arid place. Nevada also has beautiful Sierra Nevada—the Ruby Mountains. We are the most mountainous State in the Union except for Alaska. We have 314 separate mountain ranges. We have 32 mountains over 11,000 feet high. We have one mountain that we share with California that is almost 14,000 feet high. It is a beautiful State, but today I am going to focus on some of those arid places—the place where I was born and raised.

Having been back here such a long time—37 years—I often think of the blue skies in Nevada. They hover over a beautiful canvas. No one can paint a picture as beautiful as these mountains, which are in the middle of the desert, Joshua trees, or sagebrush. It is that beauty that is drawing thousands of visitors to Nevada and Nevada's wilderness every year.

Yesterday, the Reno Gazette-Journal had a tremendous article that reported just how important this quiet recreational industry is to our country. They said:

> The big time solitude found in the big empty spaces of the western U.S. generates big money for regional economies. That's according to a study that attempts to put a dollar value on ''quiet recreation'' on Bureau of Land Management property.

That is an editorial comment by me: ''quiet recreation.'' People are now

biking, packing, and camping. Quiet is what is referred to as when there are no motorized vehicles.

To continue the quote:

It found that sports like hiking and mountain biking on BLM land generated more than $1.8 billion in spending in 2014, that's roughly equivalent to two months of gambling revenue in Las Vegas casinos.

Our public lands are jewels that we must protect. To its credit, the Bureau of Land Management—when I was first elected here, the BLM was the hiss and cry of government. They were on par with the Internal Revenue Service. No one liked them, but now they are admired. They have done a remarkably good job in taking care of public lands. As I said, to their credit, the BLM and their dedicated employees do a remarkable job in safeguarding these national treasures so that all Americans can enjoy them.

John Sterling, the executive director of The Conservation Alliance, told the Reno Gazette-Journal:

The BLM is the final frontier for a primitive experience on our public lands. They represent the future of outdoor recreation.

Unfortunately, there is a growing threat to these public lands and to the Americans who protect and preserve those areas. Most Americans are familiar with what happened earlier this year in Oregon when the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon was taken over when a dangerous group of militants staged an armed takeover of the refuge. They came with their canvas shirts, camouflaged pants, guns, assault rifles, and pistols that were obvious. They had their all-terrain vehicles and set out to take over this Federal property, and they did. They damaged it to the tune of about—we don't know for sure—$20 million. They defecated on some of the ruins and different facilities. They stopped the Indians from being able to do their annual fishing.

I am sorry to say this particular episode of domestic terrorism has roots in Nevada.

Ammon and Ryan Bundy—who are now in jail, which is where they should be—are the sons of Cliven Bundy. They were two of the participants in the unlawful takeover. Cliven Bundy is, of course, a Nevadan and has been breaking Federal laws for decades. I have been disappointed that some of my colleagues have supported this outrageous lawbreaker.

Teddy Roosevelt created the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. This radical President, Theodore Roosevelt—and I say that sarcastically because he was, in fact, a great President—created the refuge in 1908. Roosevelt used the tools at his disposal as President of this great country, including the Antiquities Act, in order to protect our national heritage so that generations of Americans could enjoy it, as they have for more than 100 years in Oregon. Congress created the Antiquities Act to empower the President to protect our cultural, historic, and natural resources when and where Congress cannot—or will not. These cultural resources are stunning. For more than 100 years Presidents have done just what Theodore Roosevelt did.

Our current national parks were created using this authority—not all of them, but some of them. In fact, 16 Presidents—8 Democrats and 8 Republicans—have used this authority to protect lands for the benefit of the American people. The younger George Bush used the Antiquities Act. Republican Presidents have been doing this a lot, but unfortunately many Senate Republicans want to undermine this act. They refuse to defend our cultural and historic antiquities that are being systematically destroyed. That is why the Antiquities Act was created—to safeguard against these threats in the absence of congressional action. Take, for example, a stunningly beautiful place called Gold Butte, the area where Cliven Bundy illegally grazed his cattle for decades. It is a stunning landscape.

Is this worth protecting? This chart shows the beautiful landscape. Look at it. This picture is not doctored up; that is the way it is. The sky isn't as blue as I have seen it so many times. We don't get a lot of clouds in Nevada, especially in this part of Nevada. We don't get many storm clouds. It doesn't happen often, but this is part of the greatness of Nevada.

Look at that. Is that worth preserving? Of course it is. This State has such magnificent areas. There are sandstone formations just like these petroglyphs, which date back thousands of years.

Take a look at this. This is a picture of petroglyphs. These Indian writings and drawings are centuries old. They are in an area we want to protect—Gold Butte. Look at that. The picture shows panel after panel of this magnificent part of history. But because of the trouble caused by the Bundys and their pals, the Federal employees have been prevented from doing their job of safeguarding these antiquities. About 19 of the vandals have been indicted. Most of them are still in jail where they belong. These employees have been under constant physical and mental threat for doing what the American people have asked them to do—that is their job.

Petroglyphs are being destroyed, drawn over, shot at, and stolen. This is an example of one panel they have destroyed. Look at what they have done. We can see that there are bullet holes. There is graffiti all over these beautiful Indian writings. These are not bricks that have been put in place. This is the way that nature has created this land, and they are destroying it. Look at what they have done. They have also cut pieces out of this and hauled them away. It is a crime, but they are criminals. They don't mind doing it, and that is what they do. What a shame.

This is only one example, and it is right here in the middle of the picture. It was, frankly, a vulgar drawing. They knew what they were drawing. They were telling everybody how they felt about this antiquity. We can see the bullet holes here. They used it for target practice.

The final picture I will show is the damage that was done to the Joshua trees. I know a lot about Joshua trees because where I lived and had my home for many years—and I still own quite a bit of property in Searchlight—has one of the thickest Joshua tree forests in the world. These trees are stunning. They grow about two inches a year. They last for up to 150 years. People don't understand that these trees are so terrific. These trees have been brutalized by these criminals. They chopped this one down. One of my staffers said: Well, maybe they used it for firewood. Well, folks, have you ever tried to start a fire with cantaloupe? You can't burn this. I guess you can burn anything, but you will not stay warm. They are soft inside. It is not something you can burn.

We don't know how old the tree in this picture was, but it was probably 80 or 100 years old. Look at that beautiful tree behind it. It is really unfortunate, but that is what they are doing. They are just destroying these beautiful trees.

One of them who was part of the Oregon crowd had a brand. He went out branding everything with his brand. He stamped his brand on different things that should be protected. This is sad.

I have tried to protect Gold Butte for a long time, and the reason we haven't been able to do anything up to this point is that the Bundy boys and their pals kept everybody off of that property, and that is why I am grateful for the Antiquities Act. Because of this legislation, the Bundys are in jail.

I will reach out to the White House—and there is no guarantee we will get it done, that's for sure—to see if President Obama will protect this area. He has the authority, as any President does, to stop this sort of destruction and stop it now. Threats to our public lands are threats to our economy, our environment, and our culture. When we preserve our lands, we preserve America, and that is what we are trying to do: Preserve this beautiful place.

I say again: Is this worth protecting and preserving? Of course it is.

Mr. President, please announce the Senate business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Thune/Nelson amendment No. 3464, in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Gardner) amendment No. 3460 (to amendment No. 3464), to require the FAA Administrator to consider the operational history of a person before authorizing the person to operate certain unmanned aircraft systems.

Thune amendment No. 3512 (to amendment No. 3464), to enhance airport security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, we have the FAA bill on the floor. I would like to discuss some of the amendments that are proposed and, hopefully, a couple that we will be voting on this morning. There are a couple of amendments—one offered by Senator THUNE on behalf of himself and this Senator, the ranking member of the Commerce Committee, and another offered by Senator HEINRICH. Both amendments deal with the issue of security but in different arenas.

Let me explain. The Thune-Nelson amendment applies to the question of perimeter security, of allowing employees to get into an airport—not the sterile area controlled by TSA, although, as I will explain, it can definitely affect the sterile area as well. On the other hand, the Heinrich amendment addresses security in the areas where passengers bunch up outside of TSA security, such as in a queue-up line going through TSA security, or passengers bunched up at the ticket counters, checking in their luggage.

Either way, as we saw from the experience of the Brussels airport explosion, those are very tempting targets for a terrorist. Therefore, the proposal in the Heinrich amendment, which I would commend to the Senate, is to increase the level of security, particularly with what are called VIPR teams, which, in essence, are not only at airports but at seaports and at transportation hubs.

Remember that in Brussels there was a bombing in one of the train stations as well. So we need to increase the surveillance and the security there, including dogs. As a matter of fact, our K–9 friends are some of the best that we have when it comes to protecting us because their noses are attuned to being able to sniff out the explosives that you cannot detect with metal detectors or with the AIT machine that we go through where we hold up our hands to see if we have anything on us.

It can detect if you have a package, if you have an explosive that is somewhere in one of your body cavities. It is going to be very, very difficult.

Dogs, because of their God-given sense of smell, can detect that. A properly trained dog is just amazing to watch. Now, interestingly, concurrently there is research going on at NIST, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, for an artificial dog nose, a mechanical item or a piece of software and hardware that would actually do the same job.

But that has not been perfected yet. That is going to be really interesting to see what they come up with. This Senator will report to the Senate later on that. But for the time being, the Heinrich amendment, which I hope we will vote on this morning, is concerned with that security that we have seen as a result of the Brussels bombing.

We certainly want to enhance security in our airports. Thank goodness we have the intelligence apparatus that we do in this country to be able to smoke out the terrorist before he ever does his dirty deed. It is more difficult for them to do it here in America than it is in Europe because of the alienation of those communities that then harbor the terrorists. We see the result in Brussels as well as Paris. That is the Heinrich amendment. That is a broad characterization of it, but basically that is the thrust.

The Thune-Nelson amendment is going at the perimeter security. OK, think Egypt and the Russian airliner. It was an airport employee who smuggled the bomb onto the plane, not as a passenger but as an airport employee. Think the Atlanta airport, 2 years ago. In a gunrunning scheme over 3 months, over 100 guns were transported from Atlanta to New York.

The police in New York could not figure out how all of these guns were getting on the streets in New York. They kept checking the trains, and they kept checking the interstates. They could not figure it out. Here is how they did it. An employee at the Atlanta airport—because Atlanta was not checking their employees—would smuggle the guns in. Then that employee had access in the terminal to get into the sterile area—the TSA sterile area—and he would go into the men's room, meet the passenger who had already come through security and was clean, and give the guns to him to put them in his empty knapsack, his backpack. This employee, over the course of 17 times, over 3 months, smuggled over 100 guns. Thank goodness it was a criminal enterprise, not a terrorist, because you can imagine what would have happened.

The Miami International Airport 10 years ago figured this out. What they did was, instead of having hundreds of entry points into the airport for airport employees in a very large airport like Atlanta, in Miami they boiled it down to a handful. There the employees went through similar security that passengers do to check to see if they had any weapons. They had a special identification card that they would have to stick into an electronic machine and put in their code, which was another way of checking to make sure that the employee was who they said they were.

Miami solved the problem after having a problem with drugs 10 years ago. Interestingly, in the interim, the Orlando International Airport, likewise, about 4 years ago had a similar drug problem. They did the same thing. They boiled down hundreds of entry points for airport employees to a handful. They had those checks. I have gone to see those checks at those two airports. That is exactly how they do it.

The fact is, we have 300 airports in the United States. There were only two that were doing this kind of perimeter checking. Atlanta then became the poster boy of what can happen in a gunrunning scheme. I am happy to report to the Senate that, in fact, the Atlanta airport has now done exactly what Miami and Orlando have done. But we have 297 other airports that need to do the same thing.

So the Thune-Nelson amendment is exactly getting at that kind of perimeter security situation. I highly commend both the Thune-Nelson amendment as well as the Heinrich amendment. There are a whole bunch of cosponsors—bipartisan—on each of these. I highly recommend both of these to the Senate. I hope we will vote on those today—hopefully, this morning.

Now, there are going to be, of course, a series of many other amendments, some very well intentioned that have some technical glitches, and we have our very expert staff right now starting to try to work out some of these technical glitches. Then we can get moving with this FAA bill.

I would mention one other amendment that this Senator will be offering, and that is on a cyber security bill. Did the Presiding Officer see the ''60 Minutes'' segment where people with a laptop could take over an automobile by going through the electronics of the automobile? They can speed it up, they can make it stop it, and they can make it turn and completely take over the operation of an automobile.

Can the Presiding Officer imagine somebody being able to do that with an airliner with 250 people on board? Therefore, whether we want to face it or not, we better face it because we are in an era that what we need to do is to make sure technically that the systems in an airliner are separate, that there is an air gap, and that whatever those systems are—it might be Wi-Fi for the airplane, it might be music, or it may be whatever it is—there is an air gap so that someone cannot go into

that system and suddenly get into the aircraft controls.

That is super important. One other thing I would mention is what we know as unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones. They have become quite popular. But, obviously, one of the things that is already in the bill, which Senator THUNE and I have insisted on as we approach this FAA bill, is that we have to come face-to-face with the reality that drones are now impairing the safety of an ascending or a descending aircraft. We have seen—the two of us—an operation where you can now take over the operation of a drone.

Education can do so much. People have to understand that you basically have to not fly a drone within 5 miles of an airport. Just recently, at Miami International Airport, there was an inbound American Airlines plane, and there was a drone about 1,000 feet off on the left side. Remember Captain Sully Sullenberger, when a flock of geese suddenly got sucked into the engines and all power was lost. Fortunately, he had the Hudson River that he could belly it in after he had taken off from LaGuardia.

You put a drone with plastic and metal, let that get sucked into the engine, and you will have a catastrophic failure. You don't want to put your passengers in that kind of operation. Therefore, education is one thing, but there is always going to be a young person that does not know about this. We don't know the answer. We know we can take over the operation of the drone, send it over here, have it set down, and have it land. The technology is there, but how do we apply that technology so we avoid this aircraft collision? There is an increasing use of drones that are so helpful for so many commercial purposes, not to mention the pure pleasure of flying a drone around, which we are seeing has become exceptionally popular. We address that in the bill by giving the appropriate direction to the FAA to start coming up with the solutions of how we are going to protect aircraft in and around airports.

On down the line, there are going to be so many different issues with regard to drones, far beyond the scope of the FAA bill. On the question of privacy—a drone suddenly coming down and coming at eye level outside your bedroom window snooping—there are all kinds of questions about privacy. What about the fact that you can now put a gun on a drone? We know in a war zone we have the capability of doing that with very sophisticated weapons, such as Hellfire missiles, but now some people are experimenting with putting a gun on a drone. We have the ramifications of what that means for society to deal with in the future. For the immediate future, the FAA bill on the floor—we have this problem of avoiding drones colliding into aircraft, and that is in the bill and it is addressed.

We have a lot of interesting issues to talk about. Let's get the Senate on it, and hopefully we can get agreement so we can at least vote on two of these amendments this morning.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3482, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3482, as modified, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. HEINRICH] proposes an amendment numbered 3482, as modified, to amendment No. 3464.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To expand and enhance visible deterrents at major transportation hubs and to increase the resources to protect and secure the United States)

At the end of title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5032. VISIBLE DETERRENT.

Section 1303 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1112) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) if the VIPR team is deployed to an airport, shall require, as appropriate based on risk, that the VIPR team conduct operations—

''(A) in the sterile area and any other areas to which only individuals issued security credentials have unescorted access; and

''(B) in non-sterile areas.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2007 through 2011'' and inserting ''such sums as necessary, including funds to develop not more than 60 VIPR teams, for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 5033. LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FOR MASS CASUALTY AND ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENTS.

Section 2006(a)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 607(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (I) as subparagraphs (F) through (J), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

''(E) training exercises to enhance preparedness for and response to mass casualty and active shooter incidents and security events at public locations, including airports and mass transit systems;''.

SEC. 5034. ASSISTANCE TO AIRPORTS AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS.

Section 2008(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesigning paragraphs (9) through (13) as paragraphs (10) through (14), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

''(9) enhancing the security and preparedness of secure and non-secure areas of eligible airports and surface transportation systems.''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, this amendment would strengthen U.S. airport security, especially in nonsecure or soft-target areas of airports—places such as check-in and baggage claim areas. It would also update Federal security programs to provide active shooter training for law enforcement and increase the presence of Federal agents with bomb-sniffing canines at these nonsecure areas.

I thank the cosponsors of the amendment: Senator MANCHIN, Senator SCHUMER, Senator NELSON, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator CANTWELL, Senator CARPER, Senator BALDWIN, Senator DURBIN, Senator BENNET, and Senator BLUMENTHAL.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the adoption of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the bill and ask consent to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by my colleague from Pennsylvania Senator TOOMEY to talk about an issue we began to discuss on the floor yesterday, but we have been working many months on this issue.

It is a rather simple issue, but it is a matter that has some real urgency connected to it because we are talking about a secondary barrier on airplanes—meaning a barrier other than what we know now to be a reinforced cockpit door—to prevent terrorists from getting into the cockpit. What we need to do in addition to that, after Congress mandated the installation of these reinforced cockpit doors, is add a secondary barrier.

This is something that arises because we not only know from the attack on 9/11 but thereafter, we know that, No. 1, this is still an intention that terrorists have to take over an airplane. We know since 9/11, 51—I will correct the record from yesterday, I think I said

15, I had transposed the number—but it is 51 hijacking attempts around the world since 9/11. This is not a problem that is going away, and we have to deal with it.

This is the barrier we are talking about. So people understand the nature of this barrier, this is a lightweight wire mesh gate that would prevent a terrorist from getting into the cockpit or even getting to the door of the cockpit, which, as we said, is already reinforced. What it does fundamentally is block access to the flight deck. That is what we are talking about. That is what our amendment does.

We know the substantial number of groups that support this. I will just read the list for the record. And this actually is support for the underlying bill that Senator TOOMEY and I and others have been working on for a while. The underlying bill itself was S. 911. Also, the amendment, amendment No. 3458, is endorsed by the following groups: the Airline Pilots Association, the Allied Pilots Association, the Association of Flight Attendants, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the US Airline Pilots Association, the Coalition of Airline Pilots Association, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, and Families of September 11.

There have been numerous studies done. I am holding a study—although you can't see it from a distance—which was conducted by the Cato Institute, among others, on terrorism risk and cost-benefit analysis of aviation security.

So we not only have substantial support from virtually every group you could point toward, but we have some expertise on how to protect pilots in the cockpit, how to protect passengers on an airplane, and, of course, how to do that by preventing terrorists from getting through or near the cockpit because of a good secondary barrier.

This effort started literally from folks we now know in Pennsylvania. It started with, among other people, the Saracini family, Ellen Saracini, the wife of Captain Victor Saracini, who piloted United Flight 175, which terrorists hijacked and flew into the World Trade Center on 9/11. So in memory of Captain Saracini and inspired by the great work of his wife Ellen Saracini, we offer this amendment.

Again, I am very pleased to be working on this with my colleague Senator TOOMEY, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I would like to underscore the points made by my colleague Senator CASEY. I thank him for his leadership.

This is a very simple matter that is very straightforward and common sense. We know there is a very real vulnerability in our commercial aircraft. We know this. There is no mystery here. And we have a very simple, affordable, reasonable solution that will provide the security we need.

After September 11, 2001, Congress very rightly mandated that the cockpit door be reinforced so that it is virtually impossible to destroy that door, to knock down that door, to defeat the purpose of that door when it is closed and latched. The problem is that when it is open—which it must be open periodically during many flights—a very strong door is useless. We know what happens now on airlines because we have all witnessed it, right? When a pilot needs to come out or go in or there is access to the cockpit when that door is open, the flight attendant rolls a little serving cart in front of the door. I suppose that is better than nothing, but it is not much better than nothing. That cart can be rolled away.

We are not the only ones who have observed this. An FAA advisory has observed this risk. The 9/11 Commission pointed out that the terrorists were very focused on the opportunity created by the opening of the cockpit door. As Senator CASEY pointed out, there have been multiple attempts to breach that door. Several have been successful. We have an amendment that solves this problem in a very affordable, reasonable, sensible way. It is a lightweight, collapsible barrier made of wire mesh, and a flight attendant can simply draw it across the opening, lock it, and then at that point the cockpit door can be opened and there is no way someone would be able to rush through that wire mesh in time to get to the cockpit during that moment when the door is open. That is what our amendment does.

It passed the Transportation Committee in the House unanimously. As Senator CASEY pointed out, it has very broad support from many of the stakeholders who care about the security of our commercial aviation.

It is our hope and understanding that we will be very soon propounding a unanimous consent agreement which will allow this amendment to be pending and that this will be one of the amendments which will be on the docket for a subsequent vote. I hope we will get to that momentarily. I hope we will get that locked in, and then I would urge my colleagues to vote yes on our amendment and enhance commercial aviation safety.

I yield the floor.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to discuss an important matter before the Senate, the reauthorization of our Nation's Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA is tasked with a critical mission to manage the safety and the security of our Nation's airspace.

Our Nation's airspace is an incredible resource that fuels our economy. According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, in 2015, a record 896 million passengers traversed America's skies. Our aviation system contributes $1.5 trillion to our Nation's economy and it supports 11.8 million jobs for hard-working Americans, as noted by the National Air Traffic Controllers Association.

The Senate's FAA reauthorization bill will make our aviation system stronger for families, children, veterans, and the traveling public. It will also benefit Nebraska's rural airports and local aviation stakeholders. Notably, this carefully negotiated bill will strengthen America's aviation system without raising fees or taxes on airline passengers.

Our robust, bipartisan legislation includes several major priorities I championed. I am proud of bipartisan language I worked to include in the bill, along with Senators BOOKER, CANTWELL, and AYOTTE. Our provision would compel the FAA to work with the airline industry to comprehensively assess and update guidelines for emergency medical kits on commercial aircraft. These kits, which haven't been statutorily updated since 1998, provide lifesaving resources for passengers. It is well past time for the FAA to evaluate medications and equipment included in these kits. Doing so will ensure all passengers, particularly families with young infants facing unknown allergic reactions, have access to the medical supplies they might need in an emergency situation.

In addition, I worked with Senator MCCASKILL to include an amendment that would make it easier for traveling mothers to care for their young infants. Our amendment unanimously passed the Commerce Committee. We worked closely with airport stakeholders, including Omaha's Eppley Airfield, to establish reasonable minimum standards for both medium- and large-hub airports to develop private rooms for nursing mothers in future capital development plans. Traveling as a new mom can be challenging and it can be stressful at times, but I believe this important change will provide increased flexibility and also peace of mind for mothers traveling through airports across our country.

I also joined Senator HIRONO to include an amendment that would ensure disabled veterans working at the FAA have access to service-connected disability leave. The FAA was one of the few agencies not included in the recently passed Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act. That bill required Federal agencies to ensure disabled vets

have access to service-connected disability leave. Our disabled veterans bravely served our country, and they deserve access to benefits they have earned. I am grateful for the achievements this bill will advance for the flying public. At the same time, the bill is also a victory for Nebraska's rural communities and airports.

The Small Airport Regulation Relief Act, which is included in the FAA bill, would create a temporary exemption for small airports so they can continue to receive airport improvement program funds—those AIP funds—despite downturns in air service. The survival of smaller airports, such as Scottsbluff's Western Nebraska Regional Airport, depends on these crucial funds to provide service to local passengers and businesses. Several of Nebraska's small and community airports, such as Alliance, Chadron, Grand Island, McCook, North Platte, and Scottsbluff, will also benefit from a continuation of the Essential Air Service, or EAS, Program. The EAS Program incentivizes air carriers to provide service to underserved and rural areas, and it is critical to ensuring air service continues for Nebraska's rural communities.

Meanwhile, the Central Nebraska Regional Airport in Grand Island is growing and hosts a privately operated Federal contract tower. I encouraged the inclusion of provisions to compel the FAA to complete a pending cost-benefit analysis for Federal contract tower airports. This analysis would reflect the cost-share arrangement more accurately between our local airports and the FAA for those contract towers. Through this legislation, we can help to reduce the burden on local airports such as Grand Island, NE.

One of the major challenges facing aviation manufacturers has been the FAA's inconsistent and often unclear regulatory process. I collaborated with Duncan Aviation of Lincoln, NE, the largest family-owned maintenance, repair, and overhaul organization in the world, to address this challenge. In fact, Chairman THUNE toured the facilities at Duncan Aviation with me in Lincoln last fall.

Our bill would provide clarity to aviation businesses like Duncan Aviation by compelling the FAA to establish a centralized safety guidance database. Moreover, the bill would require the FAA to establish a Regulatory Consistency Communications Board. The Board would set standards to ensure the consistent application of regulations and guidance at regional offices throughout our country. Agricultural aviators in Nebraska will also benefit from safety enhancements in this bill. Far too many of our agricultural pilots have died in recent years after collisions with unmarked utility towers.

This legislation would ensure that towers are marked to create safer skies for our agriculture pilots. Passing our FAA bill will be a major accomplishment for the Senate. I appreciate and commend the hard work of Chairman THUNE, Ranking Member NELSON, and their committee staffers on this meaningful FAA reauthorization bill. In the coming days, I look forward to working together to help pass this critical legislation that will benefit the flying public, our national aviation system, and Nebraska's rural airports and aviation stakeholders.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my amendment numbered 3512 be modified with the changes at the desk and that at 12:05 p.m. today the Senate vote on the following amendments in the order listed: Thune No. 3512, as modified; and Heinrich No. 3482, as modified; further that at 1:45 p.m. today the Senate vote on the Schumer amendment No. 3483 and that no second-degree amendments be in order to any of the amendments prior to the vote and that there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3512), as modified, is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE _____—TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND TERRORISM PREVENTION

Subtitle A—Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act

SEC. _101. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act''.

SEC. _102. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) A number of recent airport security breaches in the United States have involved the use of Secure Identification Display Area (referred to in this section as ''SIDA'') badges, the credentials used by airport and airline workers to access the secure areas of an airport.

(2) In December 2014, a Delta ramp agent at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was charged with using his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and facilitate an interstate gun smuggling operation over a number of months via commercial aircraft.

(3) In January 2015, an Atlanta-based Aviation Safety Inspector of the Federal Aviation Administration used his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and transport a firearm in his carry-on luggage.

(4) In February 2015, a local news investigation found that over 1,000 SIDA badges at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport were lost or missing.

(5) In March 2015, and again in May 2015, Transportation Security Administration contractors were indicted for participating in a drug smuggling ring using luggage passed through the secure area of the San Francisco International Airport.

(6) The Administration has indicated that it does not maintain a list of lost or missing SIDA badges, and instead relies on airport operators to track airport worker credentials.

(7) The Administration rarely uses its enforcement authority to fine airport operators that reach a certain threshold of missing SIDA badges.

(8) In April 2015, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee issued 28 recommendations for improvements to airport access control.

(9) In June 2015, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security reported that the Administration did not have all relevant information regarding 73 airport workers who had records in United States intelligence-related databases because the Administration was not authorized to receive all terrorism-related information under current interagency watchlisting policy.

(10) The Inspector General also found that the Administration did not have appropriate checks in place to reject incomplete or inaccurate airport worker employment investigations, including criminal history record checks and work authorization verifications, and had limited oversight over the airport operators that the Administration relies on to perform criminal history and work authorization checks for airport workers.

(11) There is growing concern about the potential insider threat at airports in light of recent terrorist activities.

SEC. _103. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(C) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

(4) ASAC.—The term ''ASAC'' means the Aviation Security Advisory Committee established under section 44946 of title 49, United States Code.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(6) SIDA.—The term ''SIDA'' means Secure Identification Display Area as defined in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation to such section.

SEC. _104. THREAT ASSESSMENT.

(a) INSIDER THREATS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall conduct or update an assessment to determine the level of risk posed to the domestic air transportation system by individuals with unescorted access to a secure area of an airport (as defined in section 44903(j)(2)(H)) in light of recent international terrorist activity.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting or updating the assessment under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) domestic intelligence;

(B) international intelligence;

(C) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to domestic airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(D) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to foreign airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(E) the processes and practices designed to mitigate the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access privileges granted to airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(F) the recent security breaches at domestic and foreign airports; and

(G) the recent security improvements at domestic airports, including the implementation of recommendations made by relevant advisory committees.

(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) a report on the results of the assessment under subsection (a), including any recommendations for improving aviation security;

(2) a report on the implementation status of any recommendations made by the ASAC; and

(3) regular updates about the insider threat environment as new information becomes available and as needed.

SEC. __105. OVERSIGHT.

(a) ENHANCED REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to public notice and comment, and in consultation with airport operators, the Administrator shall update the rules on access controls issued by the Secretary under chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—As part of the update under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) increased fines and advanced oversight for airport operators that report missing more than 5 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(B) best practices for Category X airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(C) additional audits and status checks for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(D) review and analysis of the prior 5 years of audits for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(E) increased fines and direct enforcement requirements for both airport workers and their employers that fail to report within 24 hours an employment termination or a missing credential for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(F) a method for termination by the employer of any airport worker that fails to report in a timely manner missing credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(b) TEMPORARY CREDENTIALS.—The Administrator may encourage the issuance by airport and aircraft operators of free one-time, 24-hour temporary credentials for workers who have reported their credentials missing, but not permanently lost, stolen, or destroyed, in a timely manner, until replacement of credentials under section 1542.211 of title 49 Code of Federal Regulations is necessary.

(c) NOTIFICATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall—

(1) notify the appropriate committees of Congress each time an airport operator reports that more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA at a Category X airport are missing or more than 5 percent of credentials to access any SIDA at any other airport are missing; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report on the number of violations and fines related to unescorted access to the SIDA of an airport collected in the preceding fiscal year.

SEC. __106. CREDENTIALS.

(a) LAWFUL STATUS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidance to airport operators regarding placement of an expiration date on each airport credential issued to a non-United States citizen no longer than the period of time during which that non-United States citizen is lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

(b) REVIEW OF PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) issue guidance for transportation security inspectors to annually review the procedures of airport operators and air carriers for applicants seeking unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(B) make available to airport operators and air carriers information on identifying suspicious or fraudulent identification materials.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The guidance shall require a comprehensive review of background checks and employment authorization documents issued by the Citizenship and Immigration Services during the course of a review of procedures under paragraph (1).

SEC. __107. VETTING.

(a) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and subject to public notice and comment, the Administrator shall revise the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section and current knowledge of insider threats and intelligence, to enhance the eligibility requirements and disqualifying criminal offenses for individuals seeking or having unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(2) DISQUALIFYING CRIMINAL OFFENSES.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider adding to the list of disqualifying criminal offenses and criteria the offenses and criteria listed in section 122.183(a)(4) of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations and section 1572.103 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) WAIVER PROCESS FOR DENIED CREDENTIALS.—Notwithstanding section 44936(b) of title 49, United States Code, in revising the regulations under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Administrator shall—

(A) ensure there exists or is developed a waiver process for approving the issuance of credentials for unescorted access to the SIDA, for an individual found to be otherwise ineligible for such credentials; and

(B) consider, as appropriate and practicable—

(i) the circumstances of any disqualifying act or offense, restitution made by the individual, Federal and State mitigation remedies, and other factors from which it may be concluded that the individual does not pose a terrorism risk or a risk to aviation security warranting denial of the credential; and

(ii) the elements of the appeals and waiver process established under section 70105(c) of title 46, United States Code.

(4) LOOK BACK.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall propose that an individual be disqualified if the individual was convicted, or found not guilty by reason of insanity, of a disqualifying criminal offense within 15 years before the date of an individual's application, or if the individual was incarcerated for that crime and released from incarceration within 5 years before the date of the individual's application.

(5) CERTIFICATIONS.—The Administrator shall require an airport or aircraft operator, as applicable, to certify for each individual who receives unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport that—

(A) a specific need exists for providing that individual with unescorted access authority; and

(B) the individual has certified to the airport or aircraft operator that the individual understands the requirements for possessing a SIDA badge.

(6) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of the revision to the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section.

(7) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect existing aviation worker vetting fees imposed by the Administration.

(b) RECURRENT VETTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall fully implement the Rap Back service for recurrent vetting of eligible Administration-regulated populations of individuals with unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—As part of the requirement in paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that—

(A) any status notifications the Administration receives through the Rap Back service about criminal offenses be limited to only disqualifying criminal offenses in accordance with the regulations promulgated by the Administration under section 44903 of title 49, United States Code, or other Federal law; and

(B) any information received by the Administration through the Rap Back service is provided directly and immediately to the relevant airport and aircraft operators.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation status of the Rap Back service.

(c) ACCESS TO TERRORISM-RELATED DATA.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of National Intelligence shall coordinate to ensure that the Administrator is authorized to receive automated, real-time access to additional Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) data and any other terrorism related category codes to improve the effectiveness of the Administration's credential vetting program for individuals that are seeking or have unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(d) ACCESS TO E-VERIFY AND SAVE PROGRAMS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall authorize each airport operator to have direct access to the E-Verify program and the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) automated system to determine the eligibility of individuals seeking unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

SEC. __108. METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop and implement performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of security for the SIDAs of airports.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the performance metrics under subsection (a), the Administrator may consider—

(1) adherence to access point procedures;

(2) proper use of credentials;

(3) differences in access point requirements between airport workers performing functions on the airside of an airport and airport workers performing functions in other areas of an airport;

(4) differences in access point characteristics and requirements at airports; and

(5) any additional factors the Administrator considers necessary to measure performance.

SEC. __109. INSPECTIONS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(a) MODEL AND BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the ASAC, shall develop a model and best practices for unescorted access security that—

(1) use intelligence, scientific algorithms, and risk-based factors;

(2) ensure integrity, accountability, and control;

(3) subject airport workers to random physical security inspections conducted by Administration representatives in accordance with this section;

(4) appropriately manage the number of SIDA access points to improve supervision of and reduce unauthorized access to these areas; and

(5) include validation of identification materials, such as with biometrics.

(b) INSPECTIONS.—Consistent with a risk-based security approach, the Administrator shall expand the use of transportation security officers and inspectors to conduct enhanced, random and unpredictable, data-driven, and operationally dynamic physical inspections of airport workers in each SIDA of an airport and at each SIDA access point—

(1) to verify the credentials of airport workers;

(2) to determine whether airport workers possess prohibited items, except for those that may be necessary for the performance of their duties, as appropriate, in any SIDA of an airport; and

(3) to verify whether airport workers are following appropriate procedures to access a SIDA of an airport.

(c) SCREENING REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall conduct a review of airports that have implemented additional airport worker screening or perimeter security to improve airport security, including—

(A) comprehensive airport worker screening at access points to secure areas;

(B) comprehensive perimeter screening, including vehicles;

(C) enhanced fencing or perimeter sensors; and

(D) any additional airport worker screening or perimeter security measures the Administrator identifies.

(2) BEST PRACTICES.—After completing the review under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify best practices for additional access control and airport worker security at airports; and

(B) disseminate the best practices identified under subparagraph (A) to airport operators.

(3) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Administrator may conduct a pilot program at 1 or more airports to test and validate best practices for comprehensive airport worker screening or perimeter security under paragraph (2).

SEC. __110. COVERT TESTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall increase the use of red-team, covert testing of access controls to any secure areas of an airport.

(b) ADDITIONAL COVERT TESTING.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall conduct red-team, covert testing of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) ADMINISTRATOR REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the progress to expand the use of inspections and of red-team, covert testing under subsection (a).

(2) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the effectiveness of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports based on red-team, covert testing under subsection (b).

SEC. __111. SECURITY DIRECTIVES.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator, in consultation with the appropriate regulated entities, shall conduct a comprehensive review of every current security directive addressed to any regulated entity—

(1) to determine whether the security directive continues to be relevant;

(2) to determine whether the security directives should be streamlined or consolidated to most efficiently maximize risk reduction; and

(3) to update, consolidate, or revoke any security directive as necessary.

(b) NOTICE.—For each security directive that the Administrator issues, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress notice of—

(1) the extent to which the security directive responds to a specific threat, security threat assessment, or emergency situation against civil aviation; and

(2) when it is anticipated that the security directive will expire.

SEC. __112. IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) assess the progress made by the Administration and the effect on aviation security of implementing the requirements under sections __104 through __111 of this Act; and

(2) report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the results of the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.

SEC. __113. MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS.

(a) ASAC TERMS OF OFFICE.—Section 44946(c)(2)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) TERMS.—The term of each member of the Advisory Committee shall be 2 years, but a member may continue to serve until the Assistant Secretary appoints a successor. A member of the Advisory Committee may be reappointed.''.

(b) FEEDBACK.—Section 44946(b)(5) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) FEEDBACK.—Not later than 90 days after receiving recommendations transmitted by the Advisory Committee under paragraph (2) or paragraph (4), the Assistant Secretary shall respond in writing to the Advisory Committee with feedback on each of the recommendations, an action plan to implement any of the recommendations with which the Assistant Secretary concurs, and a justification for why any of the recommendations have been rejected.''.

Subtitle B—TSA PreCheck Expansion Act

SEC. __201. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''TSA PreCheck Expansion Act''.

SEC. __202. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(3) PRECHECK PROGRAM.—The term ''PreCheck Program'' means the trusted traveler program implemented by the Transportation Security Administration under section 109(a)(3) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114).

(4) TSA.—The term ''TSA'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. __203. PRECHECK PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator shall continue to administer the PreCheck Program established under the authority of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107–71; 115 Stat. 597).

SEC. __204. PRECHECK PROGRAM ENROLLMENT EXPANSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish PreCheck Program enrollment standards that add multiple private sector application capabilities for the PreCheck Program to increase the public's enrollment access to the program, including standards that allow the use of secure technologies, including online enrollment, kiosks, tablets, or staffed laptop stations at which individuals can apply for entry into the program.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Upon publication of the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with interested parties—

(A) to deploy TSA-approved ready-to-market private sector solutions that meet the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a);

(B) to make available additional PreCheck Program enrollment capabilities; and

(C) to offer secure online and mobile enrollment opportunities;

(2) partner with the private sector to collect biographic and biometric identification information via kiosks, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms to increase enrollment flexibility and minimize the amount of travel to enrollment centers for applicants;

(3) ensure that any information, including biographic information, is collected in a manner that—

(A) is comparable with the appropriate and applicable standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(B) protects privacy and data security, including that any personally identifiable information is collected, retained, used, and shared in a manner consistent with section

552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as ''Privacy Act of 1974''), and with agency regulations;

(4) ensure that the enrollment process is streamlined and flexible to allow an individual to provide additional information to complete enrollment and verify identity; and

(5) ensure that any enrollment expansion using a private sector risk assessment instead of a fingerprint-based criminal history records check is evaluated and certified by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and verified by the Government Accountability Office or a federally funded research and development center after award to be equivalent to a fingerprint-based criminal history records check conducted through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with respect to the effectiveness in identifying individuals who are not qualified to participate in the PreCheck Program due to disqualifying criminal history; and

(6) ensure that the Secretary has certified that reasonable procedures are in place with regard to the accuracy, relevancy, and proper utilization of information employed in private sector risk assessments.

(c) MARKETING OF PRECHECK PROGRAM.—Upon publication of PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) in accordance with those standards, develop and implement—

(A) a continual process, including an associated timeframe, for approving private sector marketing of the PreCheck Program; and

(B) a long-term strategy for partnering with the private sector to encourage enrollment in such program;

(2) submit to Congress, at the end of each fiscal year, a report on any PreCheck Program application fees collected in excess of the costs of administering the program, including to access the feasibility of the program, for the preceding fiscal year; and

(3) include in the report under paragraph (2) recommendations for using such amounts to support marketing of the program under this subsection.

(d) IDENTITY VERIFICATION ENHANCEMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with the heads of appropriate components of the Department to leverage department-held data and technologies to verify the citizenship of individuals enrolling in the PreCheck Program;

(2) partner with the private sector to use biometrics and authentication standards, such as relevant standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to facilitate enrollment in the program; and

(3) consider leveraging the existing resources and abilities of airports to conduct fingerprint and background checks to expedite identity verification.

(e) PRECHECK PROGRAM LANES OPERATION.—The Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that PreCheck Program screening lanes are open and available during peak and high-volume travel times at appropriate airports to individuals enrolled in the PreCheck Program; and

(2) make every practicable effort to provide expedited screening at standard screening lanes during times when PreCheck Program screening lanes are closed to individuals enrolled in the program in order to maintain operational efficiency.

(f) VETTING FOR PRECHECK PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall initiate an assessment to identify any security vulnerabilities in the vetting process for the PreCheck Program, including determining whether subjecting PreCheck Program participants to recurrent fingerprint-based criminal history records checks, in addition to recurrent checks against the terrorist watchlist, could be done in a cost-effective manner to strengthen the security of the PreCheck Program.

Subtitle C—Securing Aviation From Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016

SEC. __301. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Securing Aviation from Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016''.

SEC. __302. LAST POINT OF DEPARTURE AIRPORT SECURITY ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall conduct a comprehensive security risk assessment of all last point of departure airports with nonstop flights to the United States.

(b) CONTENTS.—The security risk assessment required under subsection (a) shall include consideration of the following:

(1) The level of coordination and cooperation between the Transportation Security Administration and the foreign government of the country in which the last point of departure airport with nonstop flights to the United States is located.

(2) The intelligence and threat mitigation capabilities of the country in which such airport is located.

(3) The number of known or suspected terrorists annually transiting through such airport.

(4) The degree to which the foreign government of the country in which such airport is located mandates, encourages or prohibits the collection, analysis, and sharing of passenger name records.

(5) The passenger security screening practices, capabilities, and capacity of such airport.

(6) The security vetting undergone by aviation workers at such airport.

(7) The access controls utilized by such airport to limit to authorized personnel access to secure and sterile areas of such airports.

SEC. __303. SECURITY COORDINATION ENHANCEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress and the Government Accountability Office a plan—

(1) to enhance and bolster security collaboration, coordination, and information sharing relating to securing international-inbound aviation between the United States and domestic and foreign partners, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, foreign government entities, passenger air carriers, cargo air carriers, and United States Government entities, in order to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports, including airports that may not have nonstop flights to the United States but are nonetheless determined by the Administrator to be high risk; and

(2) that includes an assessment of the ability of the Administration to enter into a mutual agreement with a foreign government entity that permits Administration representatives to conduct without prior notice inspections of foreign airports.

(b) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the submission of the plan required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the efforts, capabilities, and effectiveness of the Transportation Security Administration to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports and determine if the implementation of such efforts and capabilities effectively secures international-inbound aviation.

SEC. __304. WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress a comprehensive workforce assessment of all Administration personnel within the Office of Global Strategies of the Administration or whose primary professional duties contribute to the Administration's global efforts to secure transportation security, including a review of whether such personnel are assigned in a risk-based, intelligence-driven manner.

SEC. __305. DONATION OF SCREENING EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration is authorized to donate security screening equipment to a foreign last point of departure airport operator if such equipment can be reasonably expected to mitigate a specific vulnerability to the security of the United States or United States citizens.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days before any donation of security screening equipment pursuant to subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a detailed written explanation of the following:

(1) The specific vulnerability to the United States or United States citizens that will be mitigated by such donation.

(2) An explanation as to why the recipient of such donation is unable or unwilling to purchase security screening equipment to mitigate such vulnerability.

(3) An evacuation plan for sensitive technologies in case of emergency or instability in the country to which such donation is being made.

(4) How the Administrator will ensure the security screening equipment that is being donated is used and maintained over the course of its life by the recipient.

(5) The total dollar value of such donation.

SEC. __306. NATIONAL CARGO SECURITY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration may evaluate foreign countries' air cargo security programs to determine whether such programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs.

(b) APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines that a foreign country's air cargo security program evaluated under subsection (a) provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator shall approve and officially recognize such foreign country's air cargo security program.

(2) EFFECT OF APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration approves and officially recognizes pursuant to paragraph (1) a

foreign country's air cargo security program, cargo aircraft of such foreign country shall not be required to adhere to United States air cargo security programs that would otherwise be applicable.

(c) REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines at any time that a foreign country's air cargo security program approved and officially recognized under subsection (b) no longer provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator may revoke or temporarily suspend such approval and official recognition until such time as the Administrator determines that such foreign country's cargo security programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by such United States air cargo security programs.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration revokes or suspends pursuant to paragraph (1) a foreign country's air cargo security program, the Administrator shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate not later than 30 days after such revocation or suspension.

Subtitle D—Miscellaneous

SEC. __401. INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 114 of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish an international training and capacity development program to train the appropriate authorities of foreign governments in air transportation security.

(b) CONTENTS OF TRAINING.—If the Administrator determines that a foreign government would benefit from training and capacity development assistance, the Administrator may provide to the appropriate authorities of that foreign government technical assistance and training programs to strengthen aviation security in managerial, operational, and technical areas, including—

(1) active shooter scenarios;

(2) incident response;

(3) use of canines;

(4) mitigation of insider threats;

(5) perimeter security;

(6) operation and maintenance of security screening technology; and

(7) recurrent related training and exercises.

SEC. __402. CHECKPOINTS OF THE FUTURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, in accordance with chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code, shall request the Aviation Security Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for more efficient and effective passenger screening processes.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making recommendations to improve existing passenger screening processes, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee shall consider—

(1) the configuration of a checkpoint;

(2) technology innovation;

(3) ways to address any vulnerabilities identified in audits of checkpoint operations;

(4) ways to prevent security breaches at airports where Federal security screening is provided;

(5) best practices in aviation security;

(6) recommendations from airport and aircraft operators, and any relevant advisory committees; and

(7) ''curb to curb'' processes and procedures.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee review, including any recommendations for improving screening processes.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3458, AS MODIFIED; 3495; AND 3524 EN BLOC TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, finally, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up the following amendments: Casey-Toomey No. 3458, as modified; Heller No. 3495; and Bennet No. 3524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I obviously support the agreement. This is a good first step in moving this FAA bill along.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendments en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3458, as modified; and 3495 en bloc to amendment No. 3464.

The Senator from Florida [Mr. NELSON], for Mr. BENNET, proposes an amendment numbered 3524 to amendment No. 3464.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3458, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To protect passengers in air transportation, pilots, and flight attendants from terrorists and mentally unstable individuals by requiring the installation of secondary barriers to prevent cockpit intrusions)

Strike section 5010 and insert the following:

SEC. 5010. SECONDARY COCKPIT BARRIERS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Saracini Aviation Safety Act of 2016''.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue an order requiring installation of a secondary cockpit barrier on each new aircraft that is manufactured for delivery to a passenger air carrier in the United States operating under the provisions of part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

AMENDMENT NO. 3495

(Purpose: To improve employment opportunities for veterans by requiring the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to determine whether occupations at the Administration relating to unmanned aircraft systems technology and regulations can be incorporated into the Veterans Employment Program of the Administration)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INCORPORATION OF FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OCCUPATIONS RELATING TO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT INTO VETERANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Labor, shall determine whether occupations of the Administration relating to unmanned aircraft systems technology and regulations can be incorporated into the Veterans Employment Program of the Administration, particularly in the interaction between such program and the New Sights Work Experience Program and the Vet-Link Cooperative Education Program.

AMENDMENT NO. 3524

(Purpose: To improve air service for families and pregnant women)

Strike section 3113 and insert the following:

SEC. 3113. LASTING IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY TRAVEL.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Lasting Improvements to Family Travel Act'' or the ''LIFT Act''.

(b) ACCOMPANYING MINORS FOR SECURITY SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall formalize security screening procedures that allow for one adult family caregiver to accompany a minor child throughout the entirety of the security screening process.

(c) SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations under section 41705 of title 49, United States Code, that direct all air carriers to include pregnant women in their nondiscrimination policies, including policies with respect to preboarding or advance boarding of aircraft.

(d) FAMILY SEATING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations directing each air carrier to establish a policy that ensures that, if a family is traveling on a reservation with a child under the age of 13, that child is able to sit in a seat adjacent to the seat of an accompanying family member over the age of 13 at no additional cost.

AMENDMENT NO. 3512, AS MODIFIED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if I might just speak to amendment No. 3512, which we will be voting on momentarily, I know Senator NELSON has already spoken on this issue. We worked very hard on a series of security bills that we could bring to the floor. We are trying to move them separately, but I think they fit nicely into the debate we are having on the FAA reauthorization.

Senators NELSON, AYOTTE, CANTWELL, and I have been leading oversight of airport and airline workers abusing their secure area access badges. This oversight led our committee to approve bipartisan legislation—S. 2361, Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act—to tighten the vetting of airport workers with ties to terrorists and serious criminal behavior that should disqualify them from accessing sensitive airport areas.

Just in the past few weeks, a number of badged aviation industry workers have been caught in the act of helping criminal organizations. On March 18, a flight attendant abandoned a suitcase with 68 pounds of cocaine after being

confronted by transportation security officers in California. On March 26 in Florida, an airline gate agent was arrested with a backpack containing $282,400 in cash that he intended to hand off to an associate.

As we work to address the threat of an aviation insider helping terrorists, criminals who break laws for financial gain and those with a history of violence are a really good place to start. It is high time that we start cracking down on these types of offenses for people who are working in sensitive areas of our airports.

U.S. terrorism experts believe that ISIS is recruiting criminals to join its ranks in Europe, and some of the perpetrators in the deadly attacks in Brussels were previously known to authorities as criminals. Ensuring that airport workers with security credentials are trustworthy is especially important, considering that experts believe an ISIS affiliate may have planted a bomb on a Russian Metrojet flight leaving Egypt with the help of an airport employee, which killed 224 people on board. The recent attacks by ISIS in the unsecured area of the Brussels Airport also underscore the vulnerability of airport areas outside of TSA security screening checkpoints.

The House of Representatives and the Commerce Committee also approved legislation—H.R. 2843, the PreCheck Expansion Act—in December of 2015 to expand the PreCheck program by developing private sector partnerships and capabilities to vet and enroll more individuals. These private sector partners would be required to use an assessment equivalent to a fingerprint-based criminal history record check conducted through the FBI. These changes would increase the number of passengers who are vetted before they get to the airport. As a result, more passengers would receive expedited airport screening and get through security checkpoints more quickly, ensuring they don't pose the kind of easy target that the ISIS suicide bombers exploited at the Brussels Airport.

In addition to the bills approved by our committee on March 23, the House Homeland Security Committee approved H.R. 4698, the SAFE GATES Act of 2016, which would strengthen security at international airports with direct flights to the United States. Specifically, the bill would require TSA to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of all last-point-of-departure airports, a security coordination enhancement plan, and a workforce assessment. It would authorize the TSA to donate security screening equipment to foreign last-point-of-departure airports and to evaluate foreign countries' air cargo security programs to prevent any shipment of nefarious materials via air cargo.

I believe these bills will help make air travel more secure, and they should advance in the full Senate in this amendment to the FAA bill. I encourage my colleagues to support the Thune-Nelson amendment and then also follow-on with the Heinrich amendment, which will come up shortly after a vote on that amendment. I think the Heinrich amendment also makes a number of important security improvements that will also strengthen airport security.

There has been a discussion about whether there ought to be more VIPR teams. I think there are 30 or so at this point, and the amendment would allow that number to go up to 60. Yesterday we had the opportunity to question the TSA Administrator, Admiral Neffenger, about whether additional VIPR teams would be useful. He said they could put to use anything they were given in terms of additional units that might be deployed to places around the country where they think there is a need. So that is the principal component of the Heinrich amendment, which also addresses some of the security issues.

I don't think we can understate how important security is in light of everything that is going on in the world today. We have people who want to harm Americans, and it is our job to make sure we are giving those authorities who are there to prevent those types of attacks against Americans all the tools they need in order to do their jobs effectively.

I encourage our colleagues here in the Senate—when we have an opportunity to vote here momentarily on both of these security amendments—to support those amendments. They improve and strengthen security at our airports around this country, and I think they fit nicely within the context of the FAA reauthorization bill and the debate we are currently having on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 3483 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up Schumer amendment No. 3483 and ask that the Schumer and Bennet amendments be NELSON for SCHUMER and BENNET.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. NELSON], for Mr. SCHUMER, proposes an amendment numbered 3483 to amendment No. 3464.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Federal Aviation Administration to establish minimum standards for space for passengers on passenger aircraft)

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. REGULATIONS RELATING TO SPACE FOR PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT.

(a) MORATORIUM ON REDUCTIONS TO AIRCRAFT SEAT SIZE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall prohibit any air carrier from reducing the size, width, padding, or pitch of seats on passenger aircraft operated by the air carrier, the amount of leg room per seat on such aircraft, or the width of aisles on such aircraft.

(b) REGULATIONS RELATING TO SPACE FOR PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall prescribe regulations—

(1) establishing minimum standards for space for passengers on passenger aircraft, including the size, width, padding, and pitch of seats, the amount of leg room per seat, and the width of aisles on such aircraft for the safety, health, and comfort of passengers; and

(2) requiring each air carrier to prominently display on the website of the air carrier the amount of space available for each passenger on passenger aircraft operated by the air carrier, including the size, width, padding, and pitch of seats, the amount of leg room per seat, and the width of aisles on such aircraft.

(c) CONSULTATIONS.—In prescribing the regulations required by subsection (b), the Administrator shall consult with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, passenger advocacy organizations, physicians, and ergonomic engineers.

(d) AIR CARRIER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means an air carrier (as defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code) that transports passengers by aircraft as a common carrier for compensation.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, in just 5 minutes we will have our first series of votes on amendments on this bill. This is a good start to the FAA bill. It is improving the underlying bill that has a lot of attention to security already in it. But these are clearly amendments that will improve the bill.

I spoke about it earlier today. I certainly commend these amendments to the Senate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3512, AS MODIFIED.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 3512, as modified, offered by the Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I yield back whatever time remains.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Further, if present and voting the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 41 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Franken	Paul
Ayotte	Gardner	Perdue
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Bennet	Grassley	Reed
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reid
Blunt	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boxer	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Scott
Cassidy	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Sullivan
Corker	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	McCain	Thune
Crapo	McCaskill	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Toomey
Donnelly	Menendez	Vitter
Enzi	Mikulski	Warner
Ernst	Moran	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wicker
Fischer	Murphy	
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—10

Booker	Leahy	Warren
Brown	Markey	Wyden
Casey	Merkley	
Hirono	Murray	

NOT VOTING—5

Cornyn	Durbin	Udall
Cruz	Sanders	

The amendment (No. 3512), as modified, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3482, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 3482, as modified, offered by the Senator from New Mexico.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, airports, bus depots, and train stations are things that we all rely on every day to have the freedom of movement we enjoy in this country.

In the wake of the recent terror attacks in the Brussels Airport and Metro, Americans are worried about their security, and they want to feel safe when traveling with their loved ones.

While we relentlessly target terrorists overseas, we must also do all we can to intelligently protect Americans here at home. My amendment would increase the number of TSA VIPR teams, who provide a visible deterrent to terrorist threats in high-priority locations. These teams are recognizable as they often have bomb-sniffing canines. My amendment would also provide active shooter training for law enforcement and strengthen security in nonsecure so-called soft-target areas, such as check-in and baggage claim areas.

By employing these additional commonsense safeguards, we will intelligently respond to these threats. Most importantly, by preserving our freedom to go about our daily lives, we will ensure that the terrorists have failed to change how we live and who we are.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I urge my colleagues to support the Heinrich amendment.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3482, as modified.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ). Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 42 Leg.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Booker	Capito
Ayotte	Boozman	Cardin
Baldwin	Boxer	Carper
Bennet	Brown	Casey
Blumenthal	Burr	Cassidy
Blunt	Cantwell	Coats
Cochran	Kaine	Risch
Collins	King	Roberts
Coons	Kirk	Rounds
Corker	Klobuchar	Rubio
Cotton	Lankford	Sasse
Crapo	Leahy	Schatz
Daines	Lee	Schumer
Donnelly	Manchin	Sessions
Ernst	Markey	Shaheen
Feinstein	McCain	Shelby
Fischer	McCaskill	Stabenow
Franken	McConnell	Sullivan
Gardner	Menendez	Tester
Gillibrand	Merkley	Thune
Graham	Mikulski	Tillis
Grassley	Moran	Toomey
Hatch	Murkowski	Udall
Heinrich	Murphy	Vitter
Heitkamp	Murray	Warner
Heller	Nelson	Warren
Hirono	Perdue	Whitehouse
Hoeven	Peters	Wicker
Inhofe	Portman	Wyden
Isakson	Reed	
Johnson	Reid	

NAYS—5

Barrasso	Flake	Scott
Enzi	Paul	

NOT VOTING—4

Cornyn	Durbin
Cruz	Sanders

The amendment (No. 3482), as modified, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

IRANIAN ACCESS TO U.S. FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, when Obama administration officials sold the President's nuclear deal last summer to the American people, they were clearly sensitive to charges that they gave too much away. They knew that giving Iran $100 billion that we could never get back in exchange for a mere temporary deal that expired in 10 to 15 years would be viewed with deep skepticism.

They knew that an inspection system that gives the ayatollahs a 24-day heads-up before an inspection would not pass the laugh test. They knew that granting the ayatollahs massive sanctions relief while still allowing them to develop an industrial-scale nuclear enrichment program would invite accusations that the President was, to put it frankly, swindled.

So in their sales pitch, these administration officials sought to blunt these expected criticisms. They repeatedly stated that the United States would maintain certain tough sanctions, even after the deal became effective. They said the United States would hold the line on measures that punish and suppress Iran's nonnuclear malign activities. They emphatically stated that in no way would the U.S. economy be allowed to bolster an Iranian economy that is significantly controlled by the Iranian regime, tainted by illicit financing of terrorism, and used by the ayatollahs to fund domestic oppression and international aggression—including blowing up hundreds of American soldiers in Iraq with roadside bombs.

In particular, these administration officials were emphatic that the United States would never, ever, ever grant

Iran access to the U.S. financial system and U.S. dollars to facilitate Iran's trade in oil and other goods.

For instance, when testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in July, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew stated:

Iranian banks will not be able to clear U.S. dollars through New York, hold correspondent account relationships with U.S. financial institutions, or enter into financing arrangements with U.S. banks. Iran, in other words, will continue to be denied access to the world's largest financial and commercial market.

Likewise, Adam Szubin, the Acting Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, echoed that sentiment and was even more precise. In September he stated:

Iran will not be able to open bank accounts with U.S. banks, nor will Iran be able to access the U.S. banking sector, even for that momentary transaction to, what we call, dollarize a foreign payment. . . . That is not in the cards. That is not part of the relief offered under the JCPOA. So, the U.S. sanctions on Iran, which, of course, had their origins long before Iran had a nuclear program, will remain in place.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of these statements uttered just a few months ago. The U.S. dollar is the standard currency in which international trade is conducted. Because the ayatollahs can't deal in dollars, they haven't fully opened their economy to the world—thankfully. In addition, the U.S. financial system hasn't yet been tainted by Iran's terror financing, its international aggression, and its crackdown on domestic democratic dissent.

But now, a mere 7 months into a 15-year agreement, the Obama administration is shedding the resolve its officials tried to so hard to display before Congress. According to numerous reports, the administration intends to backtrack on the statements of Secretary Lew and Adam Szubin. It is looking for some way, somehow to give Iran access to U.S. dollars to boost Iranian trade and investment.

I want to be very clear. If the President moves to grant Iran access to the U.S. dollar—whether directly or indirectly—there will be consequences. If there is any statement, guidance, regulation, or Executive action that opens the U.S. banking sector to Iran even a crack, the Senate will hold hearings with each official who assured the American people last summer that the ayatollahs would never access the dollar. We will explore whether they lied back then or whether they intend to resign in protest now.

If this policy change moves forward, I will dedicate myself to working with my colleagues to pass legislation blocking the change. If the Obama administration proceeds with this massive concession to the ayatollahs, every Member of the Senate who voted to accept the Iranian deal will have to go home and explain why the U.S. economy is now complicit in Iran's financing of terrorist attacks against Americans and American allies.

That the Obama administration would even consider allowing Iran access to the U.S. banking sector is extremely disconcerting, but it is not surprising. It follows a steady pattern that has become increasingly clear since the conclusion of the nuclear deal. Time and again, Iran provokes the United States, commits brazen acts to destabilize its neighbors, and threatens to undo the Iran deal. In response, the United States rushes to grant the ayatollahs more concessions in order to placate them.

Iran has tested ballistic missiles, captured U.S. sailors, and fueled conflicts in Syria and Yemen with fresh arms and troops—all while employing ''Death to America'' as a rallying cry.

But in the face of Iran's continued aggression, the President has displayed only weakness. Instead of steeling himself for a fight with the ayatollahs, he has laid down and rolled over for them.

He has repeatedly refused to designate Iran's tests of ballistic missiles as the violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions they so clearly are.

The President also agreed to send an additional $1.7 billion to the ayatollahs, ostensibly to settle outstanding claims. For good measure, that $1.7 billion includes $1.3 billion in gratuitous interest payments.

The President granted clemency to seven convicted Iranian criminals and dismissed arrest warrants for 14 Iranian fugitives who faced charges for sanctions violations. Now the President may be on the verge of granting the largest concession yet—dollarizing Iran's international trade and declaring Iran truly open for business.

We should call this for what it is—concession creep. In the same manner that no Member of the Senate should trust Iran to abide by its commitments made in the Iranian nuclear deal, we can no longer trust the administration to hold fast to the specific concessions contained in the four corners of that deal. The ink is hardly dry on the deal, and the President has already shown himself all too susceptible to the temptations of appeasement.

The ayatollahs reportedly have complained to U.S. officials that it is too hard to transact business without access to U.S. dollars. The answer to that should be ''too bad.''

It should not be easy for the world's worst sponsor of terrorism to do business with the global economy. It should not be easy for industries dominated by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to trade in financial markets. International business leaders, directors, CEOs, and general counsels should not rush into Iran for fear of the grave reputational, financial, political, and legal consequences of doing business with this outlaw regime.

The Iranians know the Obama administration is desperate to preserve the nuclear deal. They hold the possibility of walking away from the agreement as a sword of Damocles over the President's head in order to extract concession after concession. They lord it over him in order to forestall any U.S. action that would meaningfully stop their regional aggression and campaign of terror. So intense is President Obama's fear that the Ayatollah will rip up the nuclear agreement, he has completely upended U.S. strategy in the Middle East to the point where adversaries are allies and allies are becoming adversaries.

This parade of concessions must stop, and it must stop now. The administration must fully implement all new sanctions passed by Congress to punish Iran's development of ballistic missiles, its sponsorship of terrorism, and its human rights abuses. It must work with our traditional allies in the Middle East to neutralize Iran's attempt to foment instability throughout the region. The President should issue a very clear order that Iran will not be granted any direct or indirect access to the U.S. banking system and the dollar.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

(The remarks of Mr. MERKLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2760 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

AMENDMENT NO. 3490 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3490.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington [Ms. CANTWELL] proposes an amendment numbered 3490 to amendment No. 3464.

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To extend protections against physical assault to air carrier customer service representatives)

Strike section 5009 and insert the following:

SEC. 5009. INTERFERENCE WITH AIR CARRIER EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 46503 is amended by inserting after ''to perform those duties'' the following '', or who assaults an air carrier customer representative in an airport, including a gate or ticket agent, who is performing the duties of the representative or agent,''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46503 is amended in the section heading by inserting ''**or air carrier customer representatives**'' after ''**screening personnel**''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 465 is amended by striking the item relating to section 46503 and inserting the following:

''46503. Interference with security screening personnel or air carrier customer representatives.''.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I call up this amendment and offer it because the issue is making sure that those who work in the air transportation system are safe and secure. This is an important issue to the men and women who work at Sea-Tac and at other airports and are part of the delivery system of making sure air transportation is safe. They are an integral part of air transportation at every airport in the United States of America.

This issue is something that has been considered in the House of Representatives as part of the transportation package as well, and it is part of what we think should be in this package in the Senate; that is, making sure that those who are part of the delivery system—ticket counter agents, agents who are aiding and assisting in getting passengers through the terminals and onto planes at the gate, assisting, as many of the challenging days go by, in delivering good air transportation service. What has happened is that these individuals have become victims—the victims of physical, violent abuse; that is, the public has taken to bodily harm against these individuals. So this amendment puts in similar safeguards that are in line with other transportation officials who are protected from this kind of physical abuse.

I will have more to say on it, but I know my colleague is trying to get to the floor to speak as well. I will put into the RECORD examples of individuals who are ticketing agents, baggage agents, air transportation delivery system workers who have been hurt, and they deserve to have protection.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3483

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to urge a ''yes'' vote on the upcoming amendment to require the FAA to set a minimum standard seat size.

This amendment would ensure that airlines can't keep chopping down on seat size and legroom until consumers are packed in like sardines in a can on every flight.

Over the last few decades, between the size of the seat and the distance between the seats, the flying public has lost half a foot of their space. Flying is not pleasant anymore. You are crammed in. I am not that tall—a little under 6-foot-1. What I do when I fly is I take out the magazine and the airsickness bag and the little folder that shows you where the exits are to gain one-sixteenth of an inch more legroom. Moms with kids have a lot of trouble in those very narrow seats. Have you ever been in the situation where you are in the middle and there are two sort of large people on either side of you? It is not the most pleasant flying experience.

We don't have too much competition anymore. We have very few airlines. This is a place where the public is clamoring for change. When I said I was going to offer this amendment, I got more feedback on it than most other things. And you don't have to be 6-foot-4 to understand the problem.

You would think that by cramming in more and more passengers on each flight, the airlines could lower their prices. Instead, several major airlines went in the other direction: They started charging for the extra inches and legroom that were once considered standard. So it practically costs you an arm and a leg just to have space for your arms and legs.

At a time when airlines are making record profits, at a time when fuel costs are extremely low, we need this amendment to protect consumers' safety and comfort.

This amendment would do three things. It doesn't set a standard seat size; it freezes the current seat size in place so they can't shrink it any further. It directs the FAA to set minimum standard seat size and pitch for all commercial flights. And some of this involves comfort, but some of it involves safety. God forbid there is something terrible happening on a plane—the seats are so narrow, it is harder for people to get out. Finally, we focus on transparency. We require airlines to post their seat sizes on their Web sites, providing at least a commercial incentive for airlines to offer more comfortable seat arrangements.

Most folks travel under the expectation that the airlines are going to set the guidelines and that is that; there is nothing they can do about it. We actually had to put in the underlying bill that airlines should refund bag fees charged to consumers if the airline lost their bags. And I would say to my good friends on the other side, if we can mandate that bag fees be returned—not leave it up to the free market—we can mandate that the FAA at least set a proper seat size. They can't say: Well, leave it up to the free market on one but not on the other. It is not a little fair.

Now we see why we need these amendments. The bag fee—and I agree that if they lose your bags or delay your bags, they shouldn't keep the extra bag fee. It should be refunded. In most industries, that would be a standard practice. If you fail to deliver a service somebody paid for, they should get their money back. But sometimes in the airline industry you have to require basic courtesy.

In conclusion, the great Abraham Lincoln was once asked how long a man's legs should be, and he famously answered: Long enough to reach from the body to the ground. If you asked a major airline today how long a man's legs should be, they would say: Short enough to miss the tray table. That is no way to fly.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and move this bill in a more consumer-friendly direction.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, some of my colleagues have to catch planes, and it takes extra time for them to squeeze into those small seats with no legroom. So I yield back my time, and I ask unanimous consent that we move the vote up to right now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3483.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted ''nay.''

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 43 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Baldwin	Coons	Klobuchar
Bennet	Donnelly	Leahy
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Manchin
Booker	Franken	Markey
Boxer	Gillibrand	Menendez
Brown	Heinrich	Merkley
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Mikulski
Cardin	Hirono	Murphy
Casey	Kaine	Murray
Collins	King	Nelson

Peters	Schumer	Warner
Reed	Shaheen	Warren
Reid	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Schatz	Udall	Wyden

NAYS—54

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Ayotte	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rounds
Capito	Hoeven	Rubio
Carper	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott
Coats	Johnson	Sessions
Cochran	Kirk	Shelby
Corker	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Tester
Crapo	McCain	Thune
Daines	McCaskill	Tillis
Enzi	McConnell	Toomey
Ernst	Moran	Vitter
Fischer	Murkowski	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Cornyn	Durbin
Cruz	Sanders

The amendment (No. 3483) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass the legislation we passed here in the Senate a few weeks ago called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. We passed it on March 10, which was 27 days ago—almost a month. It is estimated that we lose about 120 Americans every day to drug overdoses. That means that during that time period—those 27 days—we lost about 3,240 additional Americans who we represent to substance abuse and death from heroin and prescription drug overdoses.

Since 2007, drug overdoses have killed more people in Ohio than any other cause of accidental death, even surpassing car accidents. It is probably true nationally now as well. Addiction is treatable, but 9 out of 10 people who need treatment aren't getting it. That is a tragedy. It shows that the system we have right now just isn't working, and that is what our legislation addresses, among other things. In one 5-day span since we passed CARA, just in the last month, we had five people die from heroin and Fentanyl overdoses in one of the cities I represent—Cleveland, OH.

I was in Athens, OH, more than 2 weeks after we passed CARA, and received a tour of the Rural Women's Addiction Recovery Bassett House facility. Dr. Joe Gay and Ruth Tarter took me around so I could meet some of the brave women who stepped forward to treat their addiction issues. Some of them were there with their kids. They have an amazing success rate.

I will tell you that 3 days after I left Athens, OH, $40,000 of heroin was seized at a traffic stop very close to this treatment facility. It is everywhere. It knows no ZIP code. It is in rural areas, suburban areas, and inner cities. States are starting to take action. Ohio is taking action, your States are taking action, and communities are taking action. Local leaders know this is a problem, but they want the Federal Government to be a better partner. That is what CARA provides. It provides best practices from around the country. It provides more funding for some critical elements that are evidence-based—based on research and what actually works. Our States and local communities are desperate for this right now.

By the way, this legislation is not just bipartisan. It is also bicameral. In other words, not only have Republicans and Democrats worked across the aisle here in the Senate over the last 3 years putting this bill together, but our colleagues in the House have worked together as well. I am encouraged by the fact that the CARA legislation in the House has 113 cosponsors. It is bipartisan. It is based on good evidence. It is based on a lot of work and effort. Today I heard through a media account that one of the House leaders said there is interest in moving something even this month. That is great. But he also talked about hearings and markups and so on. Let's be sure the hearings and markups don't delay what we know we should do, which is to pass the CARA legislation. It has been bicameral and bipartisan. It passed the Senate with a 94-to-1 vote. That never happens around here—94 to 1. This is legislation which we know will make a difference right now in our communities that are dealing with a crisis we all face. Let's move this legislation.

I say to my friends in the House with all due respect, this legislation has been carefully crafted and we have done the hard work. I mentioned that we spent 3 years of factfinding on this bill. We didn't think we had all the right answers, so we went out to experts all over the country. We took time to listen. We consulted with them. We listened to experts, doctors, law enforcement, and patients in recovery. We listened to the drug experts in the Obama administration, such as the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP. They have been very helpful. We brought in people from Health and Human Services and listened to them. We brought in people from my home State of Ohio and other States around the country.

We heard from family members, many of whom have channelled their grief at losing a loved one into advocacy for the CARA legislation because they know it is going to help. One testified in the Judiciary Committee when we marked up the legislation. Tonda DaRe from Carrollton, OH, talked about having lost her daughter, who was a very successful high school student and engaged to be married. Everything was going great. When she turned 21, she made a mistake: She tried heroin. She went into recovery. She relapsed. She ended up dying of an overdose.

Unfortunately, this is a story that is retold all over our country. There are moms, there are dads, there are aunts and uncles and brothers and sisters who come forward to tell us these tragic stories about losing a loved one. They want this legislation to pass because they know it is going to help another family member or a friend or a coworker or someone whom they have never met but whom they want to help so they don't have to go through the grief they have gone through.

Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE—a Democrat—and I have worked on this legislation together, along with many other people in this Chamber. We have also worked, as I said, with many on the House side. We worked with folks on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol because this has become an issue that affects us all. It is a nonpartisan issue. We have to move it forward.

We held five forums here in Washington, DC, and brought in experts to get counsel and advice. They helped us develop a legislative proposal that was thoughtful because it actually addressed the real problem.

In April 2014, we had a forum on the criminal justice system which included alternatives to incarceration, and you will see that in our legislation. The notion is, for users who get arrested for possession, let's not just throw them in jail because that hasn't worked. Let's get them into treatment and get them into a recovery program that works.

In July 2014, we held a forum on how women are impacted by this drug epidemic, looking particularly at addiction and treatment responses. Some new data that is out there now shows that most of the people who are suffering from heroin and prescription drug addiction are women.

In December 2014, we held a forum on the science of addiction—how we could get at this from a medical point of view, how we could come up with better medical approaches to this to be able to stop the craving, to deal with the addiction problem, to get people through withdrawal. We also talked about how to address some of the collateral consequences of addiction.

In April of 2015, we held a forum on our youth and how we can better promote drug prevention. After all, keeping people from getting into the funnel of addiction in the first place has to be a priority. To help people avoid going down that funnel of addiction, we need better prevention, better education. That is part of our legislation. We also had input about what is working in recovery and what is not working in recovery.

We held a forum in July of 2015 to talk about our veterans, to talk about the very sad situation with veterans who are coming back to our shores who

have PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder—and who have brain injuries. Some recent data shows that about 20 percent of returning veterans with those issues are becoming addicted to prescription drugs or heroin; therefore, veterans courts are a major part of our legislation. These are drug courts that are focused on mental health and addiction specifically for our veterans. I have seen them in Ohio. They are working great. It is unbelievable.

I talked to a guy who has been in and out of the system his whole life. He is about 45 years old now. He finally found this court that was going to help him—took him out of jail and got him into treatment. Hanging over his head was the possibility of incarceration if he didn't do the right thing and stay clean. He is now a senior at Ohio State University and is about to get his degree, and he reunited with his family for the first time in many years. He is clean. It can work.

The final result was the legislative text that reflected this open and deliberative process I am talking about. This bill—just like the research it supports—is evidence-based. We didn't ask who had the idea; we just asked whether it was a good idea.

It is no wonder that CARA now has support from 130 national groups, from the Fraternal Order of Police, to stakeholders in public health—doctors and nurses, those in recovery, experts in the field, people who actually know what is going on because they are in the trenches working on this. They want this bill passed. They know it will help them and help them now.

As I said, that vote was 94 to 1, which means 94 Senators say this bill is ready to go. These are Senators from every State in the Union who support this legislation, therefore representing every congressional district in the United States of America. It makes sense. It expands prevention and educational efforts to prevent opiate abuse, the use of heroin and prescription drugs.

It increases drug-disposal sites to get medications out of people's hands and get it into the right hands. It takes this medication off the bathroom shelves.

It has a drug-monitoring program to get at the overprescribing issue. So many people who are currently addicted to heroin started with prescription drugs. In fact, the majority did. There is different data out there, but it is very clear that prescription drugs are a huge part of heroin addiction.

It also authorizes law enforcement task forces to combat heroin and meth. Law enforcement has an important role to play here. It expands training and the availability of naloxone, or Narcan, to law enforcement. This is for our firefighters. When you go to a firehouse in your State—for those listening in the House, in your district—ask them: Are you going on more fire runs or are you going on more runs to help people with overdoses? They will tell you what they tell me: overdoses. That is what it has come to. That is happening in your fire department in your community.

By the way, to tell you how much this law can make a difference—because we do help get the training for them to be able to use Narcan and get the Narcan or naloxone into the right hands—Ohio public safety officials have administered naloxone over 16,000 times since 2015—16,000 overdoses that might otherwise have resulted in death. For the most part, this miracle drug works. First responders know how important it is. That is why the Fraternal Order of Police supports this bill. They want to equip their officers, but so do the firefighters.

CARA also supports recovery programs, including those focused on youth and building communities of recovery. To avoid people getting into addiction in the first place, it also creates a national task force on recovery because there is a lot of information out there we need to bring together to find out what works and what doesn't work precisely in terms of dealing with the collateral consequences imposed by addiction.

CARA expands treatment for pregnant women who struggle with addiction and provides support for babies who suffer from what is called neonatal abstinence syndrome. What does that mean? That means babies who are born addicted. In Ohio, tragically, we had a 750-percent increase in the number of babies born with addiction in the last 12 years. I have been to the hospitals. I have been to St. Rita's in Lima. I have been to Rainbow Babies in Cleveland. I have been to Cincinnati Children's Hospital. I have seen these babies. These are tiny babies who are addicted, and they have to be taken through withdrawal.

The compassionate nurses and doctors who are doing it—God bless them—I asked them: What is going to happen to these babies?

They told me: ROB, we don't know. We don't know the long-term consequences because it is so new.

But it is dramatic and it is happening in all of your hospitals. These neonatal units are now taking on a whole other task, which is helping babies through withdrawal.

I visited folks who are not only pregnant but are addicted, and I talked to them about what they are going through and what the consequences are going to be, and it is sad. Many say: ROB, the grip of addiction is so great. I am now in treatment, but I worry about what is going to happen to my baby.

We also expand treatment for expectant and postpartum women for that reason. And these expectant and postpartum women who need this help can make the right decision with more help from us. It expands residential treatment programs for pregnant women who are struggling with addiction. It creates a pilot program to provide family-based services to women who are addicted to opiates.

CARA also helps veterans, as I said. It allows those veterans to get into a veterans court, where they can get help to walk through how they get out of this addiction, how they get into recovery. They can get support from other veterans around them to provide the kind of help they need to get out of this cycle of incarceration and addiction.

What do we say to the 40 million Americans who are struggling with addiction when they ask ''Why don't you guys act?'' The Senate acted 94 to 1. Why can't we get this done? It is time to move. They shouldn't have to wait. We shouldn't have to wait.

To those 40 million who struggle, to those who think they can't overcome this addiction, to those who believe there is no one out there to help them, the message is, you are not alone. There is hope. You can beat this. I have seen it. There are people who care and want to help.

There are so many heartbreaking stories of addiction, but there are also so many stories of hope. I think about Vanessa Perkins from Nelsonville, OH. Vanessa became addicted to heroin. Once she became addicted, she also became a victim of sex trafficking.

Those two are related. In Ohio, they tell me that most sex trafficking has now to do with heroin addiction. In other words, the trafficker gets these women—usually women—addicted to heroin, and that is one way they become dependent on their trafficker.

What Vanessa tells me is that it took her a long time to turn her life around, but she was courageous and brave enough to seek treatment, and she is now back on track. For the last 6 years she has been helping others, taking her experience and using it to help others deal with their addiction. She is on the board of a group called Freedom a la Cart, which is a company in Columbus, OH, that I visited last month that provides job opportunities for trafficking victims. They do a heck of a job and teach these women a trade, too—culinary arts. Now so many of these women who had been trafficked, who had been heroin addicts, are back on their feet, reunited with their families, and know the dignity and self-respect that come from the work they are doing and from helping others.

There is hope. Treatment can work.

Mr. President, leaders in the House say they want to move anti-heroin legislation through regular order. Again, I heard today that one of the leaders said they are planning to take action. I had conversations with Speaker RYAN

on this issue. I had conversations with other leaders in the House on it. I take them at their word. I am hopeful we will see the House begin to act next week when that Chamber returns, but I will say this: The House must act, and they must act soon. I am not going to be patient on this. This is urgent, and people's lives are at stake. The House must pass this bill so the President can sign it and so it can begin to make a real difference in the lives of the people we represent. This is our responsibility. We need to take advantage of this opportunity that the Senate has given us by this huge vote—94 to 1—to get this legislation to the President and get it enacted into law.

Mr. President, I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I would like to speak about two different subjects. Both are connected in the sense that they involve lack of action and people counting on us to act as a Senate.

The first involves the fact that today in the city of Flint, MI, we still have people who can't drink the water coming out of the tap. I think any one of us would have trouble if that happened for 1 day, but we are talking about months and months—going on 2 years now—that we have seen a system completely broken down because of decisions, because of lack of treating the water, a whole range of things.

From my perspective, the most important thing is the fact that people still don't have access to clean, safe water. They can't bathe their babies. They can't take a shower themselves. I can't imagine what it must be like for families in Flint who are waiting and waiting for help.

I want to thank President Obama for doing what he can do through the administration to help from the standpoint of health and nutrition and education, but the fundamental problem is replacing the damaged pipes.

As my colleagues know, we have been working very hard and we have developed a bipartisan proposal. I wish to thank the chair and ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator CANTWELL, for working with us, and so many colleagues who are now bipartisan cosponsors on a bill with myself and Senator PETERS. I wish to thank Senator INHOFE as chair of EPW and ranking member Senator BOXER and so many people who have come together to support this effort, not only for Flint, but we now are seeing headlines across the country about other areas where lead poisoning in water is a serious issue and where we have all kinds of communities with water infrastructure needs.

We have put together a proposal. We have a bipartisan proposal. We are ready to move forward. We need a vote on this proposal. As people in this building know, the junior Senator from Utah is holding us up from being able to get that vote. We have spent weeks now—weeks—trying to find a way to get beyond this objection. We thought we had an agreement, and then the bar just keeps changing.

This is not a game. These are real people, and we are trying to solve a real problem. We have put forward a proposal fully paid for that actually reduces the deficit, paid for out of a program that I care deeply about because I authored it in 2007, and prior to Senator PETERS being a Senator, when he was in the House, he was the champion of the program that we are offering to use as a payfor.

So I just want to remind everyone—and I am going to continue to come to the floor and remind colleagues every day—that a group of Americans in a city of 100,000 where there has been a Federal emergency declared are still waiting for us to act to help them—not to do the whole thing, not to pay for all of what needs to be done in terms of water infrastructure, but to do our part as a Federal Government, as we have done in communities across the country for other kinds of emergencies.

We need to help the children of Flint. Nine thousand children under the age of six are being exposed to lead poisoning; some homes have exposure higher than a toxic waste dump. I can tell my colleagues as a mother and now as a grandmother, I would never tolerate something like that. I can't imagine what is happening for families.

We have the opportunity to do something. It is easy. It is fully paid for. It is fully paid for by something that colleagues on the other side of the aisle have wanted to eliminate—fully paid for. It helps communities across the country. Now we have a situation where one Member has indicated, well, it is not his problem. He doesn't care; it is not his problem.

I hope as Americans we are willing to say that other people's problems—I would think we care about them, whether it is our own children, our own grandchildren, people we know or not. That is what we expect when there are emergencies and disasters across the country. And whether it is in the farm bill that I worked on with the distinguished Presiding Officer where we strengthened livestock disaster assistance—even though that is not a huge issue to me in the State of Michigan, but I know it is for a lot of States and a lot of communities. That is what we do as Americans. We care about people and communities.

We have a group of people right now who are not being seen. I want my colleagues to see this baby and the picture this represents of a group of people who are waiting for help and deserve help.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I wish to address something else now and turn to history to talk about somebody else who is waiting. He can drink his water and take a shower. That is a good thing. But we have a very distinguished jurist, the Chief Judge of the DC Court of Appeals, nominated by the President of the United States to be a Supreme Court Justice, who is waiting for the opportunity to be heard, to have a hearing, to meet with people, to have a vote, yes or no.

We have spoken a lot about the Constitution, about responsibilities, about debates. Our three branches of government are sworn to uphold both the written word of the Constitution and the spirit of the Constitution. This spirit was expressed in a series of articles beginning in 1787. I wasn't there at the time. But in reading what our Founding Fathers said—those who framed the Constitution—I think it is important to look at what they intended through the Federalist Papers.

On April 1, 1788, Alexander Hamilton, writing in Federalist Paper No. 76, outlined two specific roles for Supreme Court nominees: that the President nominate Justices and the Senate provide advice and consent. Hamilton explained how the Senate held the power to reject a nominee, to prevent the appointment of unfit characters from family connection, from personal attachment, or from other biases.

As my colleagues know, Senators can investigate the character of a nominee by meeting the nominee in person, by holding hearings, and by looking at their writings. At the Senate Judiciary Committee they can ask the nominee questions in full view of the public. Based on responses, if they believe a nominee does not have the appropriate character, they can reject the nomination. They can vote no. That is our right as Senators.

But Senators in the current Republican majority are refusing to do any of that. They have said they will not hold hearings. Most of them will not even meet with the nominee, Judge Merrick Garland. I want to commend Republican Senators who are, in fact, meeting with Judge Garland. This is their job. This is our job—the job established for us by America's Founding Fathers—and a majority of the majority is refusing to do it.

Now, according to the average time for moving a Supreme Court nominee through the process, if the Republican majority did their job, as previous Senates did, then there would be a hearing of the Judiciary Committee by April 27, but there is none scheduled. The Judiciary Committee would hold a vote by May 12, but there is no vote coming. And based on historical precedent, the Supreme Court nominee would then come to the floor for a vote on confirmation before Memorial Day. But

because my colleagues across the aisle are refusing to do their job, that vote will not happen.

My Republican colleagues like to say that the Senate does not confirm Supreme Court nominees during a Presidential year, but that doesn't square with the facts. More than a dozen Supreme Court nominees have been confirmed by the Senate in an election year. In 1988, also a Presidential year, the Senate did its job by confirming President Reagan's Supreme Court nominee, Justice Anthony Kennedy, with a Democratically controlled Senate. In 1940, another Presidential election year, the Senate did its job by confirming President Franklin Roosevelt's nominee, Justice Frank Murphy. In 1932, the Senate did its job by confirming President Hoover's Supreme Court nominee. In 1916, the Senate did its job twice by confirming President Wilson's two nominees for the Supreme Court.

The U.S. Constitution was ratified in June 1788, just a few months after Hamilton published the Federalist Paper I mentioned a few minutes ago. And for nearly 228 years—228 years—during times of war, times of peace, periods of prosperity, and periods of economic hardship, America has balanced the powers between the executive and the legislative branches in selecting who would serve in the third branch of government. We have done it during Democratic majorities and Republican majorities for 228 years.

To those who are refusing to hold hearings on a nomination, my question is this: What has changed? What has changed this year? What is it about this President that causes him to be treated this way? What is it that is leading my colleagues to question the judgment and the wisdom of Alexander Hamilton and the rest of the Founding Fathers who signed the Constitution and gave us the responsibility for advice and consent?

In short, why now are you refusing to do your job? Just do your job. Do what we are paid to do.

Last month, I went over in front of the Supreme Court on a beautiful, sunny day when a lot of people were here visiting, and I talked to a number of citizens and asked them what they thought about what was happening, the debate going on about filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court. I also asked them what would happen to you if during a year you told your employer that a major part of your job—a very big responsibility that you have in your job—you were going to refuse to do for a year or so. What would happen? Well, the answer is pretty easy. People said: I would be fired.

People say: Why aren't you doing your job? Why isn't the majority doing its job? Because if you are not willing to do the work, why should you have the job? Nobody else can do that in their job.

That is why the polls show overwhelmingly that the American people side with those of us on the Democratic side, with all of us who stand together as Democratic Senators to say: Do your job. We are willing to do our job. People stand with the Constitution and with the overwhelming history of our country.

It is very simple. It is a very simple idea. It is a phrase we say all the time in all kinds of circumstances. We say to our children, we say to people we work with: Just do your job. Well, this is our job. Hold a hearing, meet with the nominee, have a vote. You can vote yes; you can vote no. You could skip that day. But this judge deserves a vote, and it is our responsibility to vote and to fill the vacancy on the highest Court in the land. That is what the American people expect us to do. That is what they deserve.

It is time that the Senate do its job.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss several provisions in an amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill that is currently before the Senate and that specifically benefits my home State of Louisiana.

There are more than 253 air traffic control towers throughout the country operating through a successful public-private partnership called the Federal Contract Tower Program. This program is especially critical to rural areas—as I have in Louisiana and as does the Presiding Officer—to ensure that America's airspace and the traveling public are safe. However, there are currently 30 towers awaiting the FAA to finalize an internal agency formula called the benefit-cost analysis, referred to as the BCA, which will allow eligible towers to enter the Federal Contract Tower Program. One of these airports is the Hammond Northshore Regional Airport in Hammond, LA.

The Federal Contract Tower Program has been in place for more than 30 years and is a prime example of an effective public-private partnership between government and the private sector. Contract towers handle approximately 28 percent of the Nation's air traffic control tower operations but account for only 14 percent of the FAA's total tower operations budget. Repeated studies by the U.S. Department of Transportation inspector general have shown that the Contract Tower Program increases aviation safety while reducing costs to taxpayers and the Federal Government. It is also important to note that approximately 80 percent of the contract controller workforce are veterans.

Congress has demonstrated numerous times in bipartisan fashion the merit and need for the Federal Contract Tower Program. Given the success of the program and the increasing likelihood of further FAA delays, I am pleased the Commerce Committee included language in the FAA reauthorization bill to strengthen and improve the Federal Contract Tower Program. Senators CORNYN, VITTER, PORTMAN, and WICKER have been leaders on this issue, and their work is greatly appreciated.

Currently, America's trade and economy are being hampered because many cargo planes from other countries are prohibited from flying into U.S. airports because they have not been upgraded to newer types of technology. Some aircraft are what is called ''Stage 2 aircraft.'' These aircraft were phased out following the passage of the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990, which mandated the phaseout for Stage 2 aircraft over 75,000 pounds. I have introduced an amendment that would permit flights to a small number of airports under limited circumstances for revenue and nonrevenue flights of Stage 2 aircraft over 75,000 pounds.

One of the airports that meets the criteria is the Acadiana Regional Airport in New Iberia, LA. This airport is located in a heavy industrial complex and surrounded by agricultural land. The Acadiana Regional Airport has an advantage over other types of airports because it is surrounded by land use compatible with airport operations. Additionally, it is situated near the Port of Iberia, which is home to more than 100 companies employing close to 5,000 people in industries such as construction, energy, equipment rental, and trucking. This would bolster Louisiana's economy, help working families, and improve America's ability to trade with the world.

Louisiana's economy relies on the thriving maritime industry. In 2014 a study from the Transportation Institute showed that 54,850 maritime-related jobs contribute more than $11 billion annually to Louisiana's economy. One in every 83 Louisiana jobs is connected to the domestic maritime industry, nearly twice that of any other State.

With ports along the Mississippi and Red Rivers, our State sees vessels of varying sizes and types. While loading cargo, these ships must drain ballast water that they have taken on to maintain the balance of the ship. This can have varying degrees of environmental effects, with costly and confusing State and Federal regulations making compliance difficult.

Senator RUBIO is sponsoring the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, which

creates a uniform, enforceable, and scientifically based national standard on ballast water discharges. This is needed in order to simplify the highly complicated and overly burdensome patchwork of State and Federal regulations that are in place today.

Everyone I talk to in Louisiana's maritime industry and also in the inland marine, which would take the agriculture products from States such as the State the Presiding Officer represents, says it is necessary for these regulations to be harmonized, and they emphasize the importance of passing this bill. I am a cosponsor of this bill, and I am glad to see that Senator RUBIO has filed the amendment to the bill we are considering on the floor today.

The FAA Reauthorization Act contains many measures that will protect Americans, improve our economy, and protect our environment. I urge all my fellow Senators to support the bill and these amendments.

I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3512, AS MODIFIED

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, aviation safety, as much as all national security, must be of paramount importance. I am increasingly concerned with reports from across the country that Secure Identification Display Area, SIDA, badges have gone missing, either through loss or theft. These badges, which grant access to secure areas of airports, allow employees to bypass traditional security checkpoints and, in the wrong hands, can pose a considerable security threat.

An amendment considered and adopted earlier today by the Senate, Thune amendment No. 3512, is aimed at addressing this problem and would implement additional accountability and oversight methods to ensure that these SIDA badges do not fall into the wrong hands. It would provide for further employer accountability and allow for increased fines and enforcement actions against workers that fail to report the loss or theft of a badge. These are well-intentioned goals and ones that I support.

I opposed this amendment, however, because extraneous provisions included in the amendment directly contradict bipartisan efforts in this Congress to reform our criminal justice system, including by reducing unnecessary barriers to employment for people with criminal records. The amendment will require the TSA Administrator to propose increasing the lookback period from 10 years to 15 years for background checks of airport and airline workers who have or are seeking SIDA badges. Under current regulations, there are a number of offenses that disqualify a potential employee, if the individual was convicted of the offense during the 10-year lookback period.

The amendment would also require the TSA Administrator to consider adding more offenses to the list of disqualifying crimes. Disqualifying offenses already include a number of low-level offenses, such as felony drug possession. These provisions would exacerbate barriers to reentry. The scope of the changes will still exclude many potential employees and lead to the firing of a number of current employees. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks a letter from Transport Workers Union of America, the AFL–CIO, the Association of Flight Attendants, CWA—the Communication Workers of America, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the Transportation Trades Department—AFL–CIO, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the National Employment Law Project in opposition to this amendment.

I am committed to working with Senator THUNE to ensure greater accountability for Secure Identification Display Area badges. It must be a priority. I hope that he and others will work with me through the conference of this bill to eliminate these barriers to employment for individuals with certain criminal records.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

APRIL 6, 2016.

OPPOSE THE AIRPORT SECURITY ENHANCEMENT AND OVERSIGHT ACT (S. 2361) AS AN AMENDMENT TO THE FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT (H.R. 636)

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to oppose any efforts to expand background checks on aviation workers as proposed in the Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act (S. 2361). In particular, we are opposed to the inclusion of S. 2361 as an amendment to H.R. 636, the FAA Reauthorization Act, which is currently under consideration in the Senate. As drafted, S. 2361 would undermine reforms around the nation that have reduced barriers to employment of people with criminal records, thus representing a serious setback for the bipartisan criminal justice reform movement.

The Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act would alter the requirements for airport workers to obtain Secure Identification Display Area (SIDA) badges by instructing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Administrator to propose increasing the lookback period on many aviation workers' employment background checks from 10 years to 15 years. This provision undermines the goal of promoting rehabilitation, and it conflicts with the substantial research documenting that criminal history lookback periods should not extend back more than seven years.

The bill also instructs the TSA Administrator to consider increasing disqualifying criminal offenses to include crimes that do not appear to be related to transportation security. These reforms would have far reaching impact and exacerbate barriers to reentry. As many as one in three Americans have a criminal record and nearly half of U.S. children have a parent with a criminal record, creating life-long barriers to opportunity, including employment, for entire families. This change will also have an overwhelming discriminatory impact on communities of color, who have been hardest hit by a flawed criminal justice system. Moreover, this proposal does not account for the compelling evidence documenting the impact of gainful employment on those who have previously been convicted of a crime. Full integration into society is essential to successful anti-terror programs and efforts to lower recidivism rates. By requiring the dismissal of many current employees who have worked in a position for years, the legislation ignores these widely accepted principles.

We do support some elements of this legislation. The bill would create a waiver process for those who are denied credentials. This would ensure the consideration of circumstances from which it may be concluded that an individual does not pose a risk of terrorism or to security. The waiver process would consider the circumstances surrounding an offense, restitution, mitigation remedies, and other factors. This provision is modeled on a very successful program in the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), a credential that is similar to a SIDA, which is used at secure areas of port facilities.

We strongly encourage you oppose the inclusion of any amendment providing blanket categorical exclusions that would increase background checks on aviation workers and act as additional barriers to the employment of people with criminal records. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Brendan Danaher, Director of Government Affairs at the Transport Workers Union, or Greg Regan, Senior Legislative Representative at the Transportation Trades Department, AFL–CIO.

Sincerely,

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA.
AFL–CIO.
ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS—CWA.
COMMUNICATION WORKERS OF AMERICA.
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS.
THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS.
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW PROJECT.
TRANSPORTATION TRADES DEPARTMENT, AFL–CIO.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was absent from today's votes on three amendments to the pending business, H.R. 636, the vehicle for a bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, due to events I attended with President Obama in Illinois. Had I been present, my votes would have been as follows.

On rollcall vote No. 41, Thune amendment No. 3512, as modified, I would have voted against adoption. I am concerned about the impact that a provision in this amendment will have on formerly incarcerated individuals who have successfully reintegrated into society after completing sentences for low-level crimes unrelated to transportation security. The provision, which will make it more difficult for these individuals to obtain certain aviation

jobs years after a criminal conviction, undermines efforts to reduce barriers to reentry, lower recidivism rates, and reform our criminal justice system.

On rollcall vote No. 42, Heinrich amendment No. 3482, as modified, I would have voted in favor of adoption. This amendment will further strengthen the homeland by increasing security in soft targets at airports, in areas like check-ins and baggage claims, where terrorists recently carried out deadly attacks in Brussels. The amendment will expand and enhance visible deterrents, create a new eligible use under Homeland Security grants for training exercises to enhance preparedness for active shooter incidents, and authorize and make explicit that Homeland Security grants can be used for airport and surface transportation in these nonsecure soft target areas. I am proud to have cosponsored this amendment.

On rollcall vote No. 43, Schumer amendment No. 3483, I would have voted in favor of adoption. This amendment would establish consumer safeguards like minimum standards for space for passengers on aircrafts, including the size and pitch of seats, the amount of leg room, and the width of aisles.

As these votes demonstrate, after a series of temporary extensions, the Senate is finally considering a long-term FAA reauthorization bill. In light of recent threats both here and abroad, it is important that we get this right. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on a bipartisan basis on these important security reforms, consumer protections, and other pressing aviation-related issues in the coming days and weeks.●

Mr. CASSIDY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, April 11, at 5 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 215; that there be 30 minutes for debate only on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House to accompany S. 192.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 192) entitled ''An Act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes,'' do pass with an amendment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment and know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE PROSECUTION AND CONVICTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMED NASHEED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 402, S. Res. 392.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 392) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 392) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 8, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have a unique opportunity for the American people to have a voice in the direction of the Supreme Court. The American people should be afforded the opportunity to weigh in on this very important matter.

Our side, meaning the Republican side, believes very strongly that the people deserve to be heard, and they should be allowed to decide through their vote for the next President the type of person who should be on the Supreme Court.

As I have stated previously, this is a reasonable approach, it is a fair approach, and it is a historical approach—one echoed by then-Chairman BIDEN, Senator SCHUMER, and other Senators.

The other side, meaning the Democratic side, has been talking a great deal about the so-called pressure campaign to try to get Members to change their position. It is no secret that the White House strategy is to put pressure on this chairman of the Judiciary Committee and other Republicans in the hopes that we can be worn down and ultimately agree to hold hearings on the nominee.

This pressure campaign, which is targeted at me and a handful of my colleagues, is based on the supposition that I and they will crack and move forward on the consideration of President Obama's pick.

This strategy has failed to recognize that I am no stranger to political pressure and to strong-arm tactics—not necessarily just from Democratic Presidents but also from Republican Presidents.

When I make a decision based on sound principle, I am not about to flip-flop because the left has organized what they call a pressure campaign.

As many of my colleagues—and especially my constituents—know, I have done battle with administrations of both parties. I have fought over irresponsible budgets, waste, fraud, and policy disagreements. I have made tough decisions. I have stuck with those tough decisions regardless of what pressure was applied.

The so-called pressure being applied to me now is nothing. It is absolutely nothing compared to what I withstood from heavyhanded White House political operations in the past.

Let me say, by the way, that most of that has come from Republican White Houses. To just give a few examples, in 1981, as a new Member of the Senate and a brand-new member of the Senate Budget Committee, I voted against President Reagan's first budget proposal because we were promised a balanced budget and it didn't balance. I

remember very specifically the Budget Committee markup in April 1981 on President Reagan's first budget.

It happened to be that I wasn't alone on this. I was one of three Republicans to vote against that resolution because it did not put us on a path to a balanced budget. You can imagine that when a budget has to come out on a party-line vote, you cannot lose three Republicans, and three Republicans who were elected in 1980 on a promise to balance the budget did not go along with it.

What a loss this was for this new President Reagan—that his budget might not get adopted by the Budget Committee. We were under immense pressure to act on the President's budget regardless of the deficits that it would cause. But we stood on principle and didn't succumb to the pressure.

As an example, right after that vote where the President's budget wasn't voted out of the Budget Committee, I was home on a spring recess. I remember calls from the White House. I remember threats from the Chamber of Commerce while I was home for Easter break, even interrupting my town meetings. Four years later, I led the charge to freeze spending and to end the Reagan defense buildup as a way to get the Federal budget under control. In 1984 I teamed up with Senator BIDEN, a Democrat, and Senator Kassebaum of Kansas, a Republican, to propose a freeze of the defense budget that would have cut hundreds of billions of dollars from the annual deficit.

At the time, it was known as the Kassebaum-Grassley Budget or the KGB defense freeze. We were going to make sure that across-the-board budgets were responsible.

For months, I endured pressure from the Reagan administration and from my Republican colleagues who argued a freeze on defense spending would constitute unilateral disarmament. President Reagan had put together a less aggressive deficit reduction plan. We didn't think it went far enough. My bipartisan plan was attacked for being dangerous and causing draconian cuts to the defense budget. I knew it was realistic and a responsible approach. I didn't back down.

We forced a vote that year in the Budget Committee. We forced a vote on the Senate floor on May 2, 1984, and that particular year we were not successful. However, this effort required the Senate and the Nation to have a debate about a growing defense budget. We started that debate, about the waste and inefficiency in the Pentagon and the growing Federal fiscal deficits. Despite the weeks-long pressure from conservatives in the Reagan administration, I did not back down because I knew the policy was on my side.

In this process I stood up to pressure from President Reagan, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger, Secretary Barry Goldwater, Senator John Tower, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and many others. I remember a meeting at the White House where I reminded the President that he had been talking through the campaign about the Welfare queens impacting the budget. It happens that I reminded him there were Defense queens as well.

I started doing oversight on the Defense Department. It wasn't long before the evidence of waste and fraud began appearing. We uncovered contractors that billed the Defense Department $435 for a claw hammer, $750 for toilet seats, $695 for ashtrays. We even found a coffee pot that cost $7,600.

I had no problem finding Democrats to join my oversight effort back then, but it is interesting how difficult it is to find bipartisan help when doing oversight in the current Democrat administration. Nevertheless, 12 months later, on May 2, 1985, after a year of work to make the case that the Defense Department needed structural reforms and slower spending growth, I was successful. My amendment to freeze the defense budget and allow for increases based on inflation was agreed to when a motion to table failed by a vote of 48 to 51.

A majority of the Republicans opposed me, and a majority of the Democrats were with me. That didn't matter because I knew we were doing the right thing. I went against my own party, my own President, to hold the Pentagon accountable, and I never backed off.

I had a similar experience with President George W. Bush in 1991. In January 1991, the Senate debated a resolution to authorize the use of U.S. Armed Forces to remove Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. I opposed the resolution because I felt the economic and diplomatic sanctions that I voted for should have been given more time to work. I was not ready to give up on sanctions in favor of war.

In the end, I was one of just two Republicans, along with Senator Hatfield of Oregon, to oppose the resolution. I was under pressure from President Bush, Vice President Quayle, and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu. I was even pressured by Iowa Governor Terry Branstad. I heard from a lot of Iowans, particularly Republicans, who were disappointed and even angry with my position. Some were even considering a public rebuke because of my vote. As one of just two Republicans, it was difficult to differ with a Republican President on such a major issue. But as I stated at the time, my decision was above any partisanship. It was a decision of conscience rather than a matter of Republican versus Democrat.

After a tremendous amount of soul-searching, I did what I thought was right, regardless of the political pressure. The same is true today with regard to the Supreme Court vacancy.

Under President George W. Bush, I faced another dilemma. The President and the Republican congressional leadership determined that they wanted to provide $1.6 trillion in tax relief in 2001.

I was chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance. The problem is, we had a Senate that was divided 50–50 at the time. The parties' numbers also equal, on the Senate Finance Committee. I had two members on my side who were reluctant to support a huge tax cut because they had concerns about the deficit and the debt.

As we saw a few years later, their concerns were not totally unwarranted. But, at the time, the administration leadership would have nothing to do with anything except what the President wanted—$1.6 trillion in tax relief. Obviously, the White House wasn't thinking about how many Republicans might vote against it, and when you have a 50–50 Senate, you can't lose a lot of Republicans.

After very difficult negotiations, I finally rounded up enough votes to support $1.3 trillion in tax relief. A hailstorm of criticism followed. There were Republican House Members who held press conferences denouncing the fact that the Committee wasn't able get enough votes for the whole $1.6 trillion. Those House Members were more professional in their criticism of my position, than what we currently witness almost every day from the current minority leader about my role as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. But, it was still a very contentious and difficult period that included both the budget and the reconciliation process.

Minority Leader REID has already recently brought up the pressure I came under in regard to ObamaCare back in 2009. Of course, his version is his usual attempt to rewrite the actual history. At that time, I was the ranking member of the Finance Committee. I was involved in very in-depth negotiations to try to come up with a health care solution. We started in November of 2008. We had negotiations between three Republicans and three Democrats on the Finance Committee. We met for hours and hours at a time.

We met between November 2008 and mid-September 2009, and then the other side decided they ought to go political and not worry about Republicans. The minority leader, in his usual inaccurate statement of facts has tried to say that Republicans walked out of those negotiations on ObamaCare. The fact is, we were given a deadline and told that if we didn't agree with the latest draft of the bill, then Democrats would have to move on.

I would suggest that anybody in the Senate who wants some reference on this should talk to Senator Snowe or Senator ENZI. I was the other Republican. Talk to Senator Baucus, talk to Senator Conrad and the then-Senator from New Mexico. The President called

six of us to the White House in early August of 2009. The first question I got was this: Would you, Senator GRASSLEY, be willing to go along with two or three Republicans to have a bipartisan bill with ObamaCare at that point? And I said: Mr. President, the answer is no. What do you think we have been working on for 9 months? We have been working, trying to get a broad bipartisan agreement. It's something like 70 to 75 votes you need to get if you really want to have a changed social policy and have it stick.

We didn't abandon this until 2009. But my idea is that probably it was that meeting at the White House in early August 2009 where this President decided: we don't want to mess around with those Republicans anymore. We have 60 votes; we are going to move ahead. Well, that happened then in that September.

The fact is, we were given that deadline, and we were shoved out of the room. So when we didn't bow to this pressure and agree to Democratic demands, it ended up being a partisan document. That is why it still doesn't have the majority support of the American people.

I want the minority leader to know that is what happened, not what he described a couple of weeks ago. Eventually, as we all know, the former majority leader—now minority leader—had his staff rewrite the bill that came out of the HELP Committee and in secret in the back rooms of his leadership office. And we ended up with the disaster called ObamaCare that we have today.

The Senate minority leader also recently proclaimed that rather than follow Leader MCCONNELL—and these are Senator REID's words—''Republicans are sprinting in the opposite direction.'' The minority leader also wishfully claimed that the Republican facade was cracking on the issue. Senator SCHUMER fancifully stated that ''because of the pressure, Republicans are beginning to change.''

You can almost hear the ruby slippers on the other side clicking while they wish this narrative they describe were true. The fact is, the pressure they have applied thus far has had no impact on this Senator's principled position or the principled position of almost everybody on this side of the aisle. Our side knows and believes that what we are doing is right, and when that is the case, it is not hard to withstand the outrage and the pressure they and the White House have manufactured.

The pressure we are now getting on this issue pales in comparison to the pressure I have endured and withstood from both Democrats and Republicans in the past.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the bill that is on the floor, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act. I thank Senator THUNE and Senator NELSON for their leadership.

I serve on the Commerce Committee. I am proud of this bill. Our State has a long history of aviation. It was the childhood home of Charles Lindbergh. We are home to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, the 13th busiest airport in the United States. We are home to Cirrus Design Corporation in Duluth, which makes planes and is a very successful company, as well as many people whose jobs and ways of life depend on the aviation industry, not to mention the 148th Fighter Wing National Guard base, as well as the one in the Twin Cities and the one in Duluth.

I see my colleague from Arizona is here, so I will focus on one issue, and that is aviation security.

Mr. President, 9/11 was our country's wake-up call that our transportation system is a target, and the attacks in Brussels last month remind us that we must continue to do everything we can to strengthen security, and not just in our security lines at the airports but also in places like baggage claim areas and other forms of transportation, like train stations. We need to make sure our soft-target areas, as they are called—like the security lines, baggage claims, and ticketing counters at the airport—are safe.

I am a cosponsor of the amendment that passed today that will help address the issue by doubling the number of visible intermodal prevention and response teams from 30 to 60. These teams help provide important deterrent security at potential air and ground transportation targets across our country.

This amendment which passed today will also improve existing security systems in airports and train stations by expanding bomb-sniffing dog patrols, law enforcement training for emergency situations, and security in all perimeter areas of the airport.

We must also improve the secure areas of airports where airline employees have secure access to what are called sterile areas. In March, as we all know, an airline employee was arrested after attempting to use his badge to enter the boarding area of a terminal from the tarmac, bypassing security gates. He had a backpack with $282,000 in it. In the same month, we saw another employee try to smuggle 70 pounds of cocaine in her suitcase at LAX, and she was caught at a security checkpoint. The most egregious breach of security happened at the Atlanta airport, where airline employees helped to facilitate a gun-smuggling ring and were successful at getting guns on at least 20 flights from Atlanta to New York. Needless to say, there continues to be significant concern, as much as we know that the vast majority of our airline employees are hard-working and good employees.

Eighty-five Senators just voted in support of the Airport Security Enforcement and Oversight Act, a bill I cosponsored that would help address this issue of security at the airport, but I would like to add our own story out of Minnesota-St. Paul.

First of all, it is a story of inefficiency, so we made a reconfiguration at our airport. There were lines at one point where the average time was 45 to 50 minutes—average time. That was just a month ago. There were passengers waiting for 2 hours and missing their flights. There were simply not enough TSA agents. They were out at a training, which was, of course, necessary because of the inspector general's report that came out this June and showed some severe problems in security at our airports. So we had a perfect storm of people out for training, a new reconfiguration, and finally the spring break travel. But it was simply unacceptable when our taxpayers are paying for TSA. In fact, this Congress authorized $100 million—$90 million more than they asked for in the last budget year.

I have appreciated TSA Administrator Neffenger coming to Minnesota, saying that it was unacceptable, saying that they were hiring people with the budget money that was provided.

There are also plans to use these K–9 units not just in the perimeters of the bill we passed today but also on these lines. Not only do these dog teams add more security, by working a line of passengers, they actually speed up that line because then those passengers essentially become precheck passengers and they don't have to be prechecked. They become prechecked because of the dogs, and that speeds up everything for all airport passengers.

I think we have seen enough of these terrorist attacks across the country, planes with bombs going down in other places. We know this is a danger. We don't want this in our homeland.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues on these amendments. We will continue to work on security issues.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

PERMANENT VA CHOICE CARD ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the urgent need for Congress to reform how the Department of Veterans Affairs delivers health care to our Nation's veterans. One of the great scandals and shameful aspects of the greatest Nation in the world is the way we treat our veterans. I believe important progress has been made since the scandal in which veterans died, waiting on nonexisting wait-lists for care at the Phoenix VA medical center and VA hospitals around the country, but we have a long way to go to fulfill our solemn promise

to every veteran who has served and sacrificed.

In the matter of that terrible scandal, I was proud that Congress quickly acted to pass the bipartisan Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act. That bill was an important first step—and I emphasize ''first step''—in reforming the gross mismanagement and lack of accountability at the VA.

In my view, the hallmark of the bill is the Choice Card Program, which for the first time allows any veteran who is waiting more than 30 days for an appointment or who lives more than 40 miles from a VA health care facility to receive a Choice Card that they can use to visit a participating doctor in their community instead of being forced to wait with no recourse.

So how is the VA Choice Card working? My colleagues in the Senate and I continue to hear from veterans in Arizona and across the country about their ongoing problems receiving care. Veterans find that VA staff don't know about the Choice Card or how to authorize care through it. Veterans are forced to wait on hold for hours with a call center in order to schedule an appointment. Community doctors and hospitals that volunteered to participate in the Choice Program are not getting paid for their services. Veterans who are able to use the Choice Card once and need to use it again have to start all over from scratch. Veterans still have to drive long distances to get prescription medications.

There should be no doubt that the VA is failing to fully and effectively implement the Choice Card. In doing so, it is preventing our veterans from receiving the flexible care they have earned and deserve.

We know that when implemented correctly, the Choice Card Program is improving care for our veterans. After an extremely difficult start, the VA Choice Card is now authorizing more than 110,000 appointments for veteran care per month—over 5,000 per workday. Each of these appointments represents a veteran's appointment that would otherwise be delayed and pending for months in the VA scheduling system. It also frees up appointments at the VA for veterans who do not use the Choice Card, helping countless veterans receive an appointment faster.

We have also seen what can happen when the VA properly reimburses community doctors for their services. In the western region alone, community doctors participating in the VA Choice Program have increased from around 95,000 to nearly 160,000. More than 90 percent of all doctors are being paid within 30 days, and the vast majority of doctors are choosing to stay in the VA Choice Program—mainly because of their love of country—to treat our Nation's veterans.

Moreover, we have seen that when the VA is equipped to handle the demand for Choice Program appointments made through call centers, veterans are getting their appointments faster. Recent openings of new call centers have greatly reduced wait and on-hold times among our veterans. Today, wait time averages for veterans calling into the western region call centers for Choice Card appointments are less than 1 minute.

As a result of a positive VA policy change last year, contractors are now able to contact veterans and ensure that their authorizations for care are approved ahead of time so that appointments can be made much faster over the phone.

While we are seeing important progress as a result of the Choice Card, far too many veterans are still experiencing long wait and on-hold times with call centers and confronting difficulties getting an appointment. Unfortunately, some veterans, veterans service organizations, and opponents of the VA Choice Card cite these shortcomings as evidence that the whole Choice Card Program is broken and needs to be eliminated. These opponents are wrong, and they know it. The problem isn't the Choice Card; it is that the VA refuses to implement it correctly.

Instead of working to solve the problems at the VA head-on, the same bureaucrats who have completely bungled the implementation of the VA Choice Card are using their own failures as an excuse to shut down the entire program. Allowing them to do so would only send veterans back to the unacceptable status quo of never-ending wait times for appointments. Does anybody want to return to the status quo?

I refuse to send our veterans back to the nonexistent wait-lists that led to the scandal of denied and delayed care in the first place. Every representative in Congress and every official at the VA should too. According to a poll recently released by Gallup, the American people overwhelmingly agree. Ninety-one percent of survey respondents believe that veterans should be allowed to get health care from any provider who accepts Medicare, not just the VA.

This chart describes the main problems with VA health care before the Choice Program. Today, military and civilian retirees; Federal employees, including VA employees; ObamaCare enrollees; civilians on employer insurance plans; and refugees and illegal immigrants have the ability to choose their doctors. The only group of Americans who is still being denied universal choice in health care is disabled veterans. How is it that we have created a system where virtually everyone in America gets to choose their doctor except for our Nation's disabled veterans?

Our veterans want and need the opportunity to choose the health care that works best for them. It is simply unacceptable that half a million veterans nationwide today are waiting for a medical appointment that is scheduled more than 30 days from now. We can address this crisis now by making simple changes to the law. Under the law, the VA Choice Card pilot program expires next year. We cannot and will not go back to the way our VA operated before the scandal.

While some senior VA leaders are aggressively implementing the Choice Program, many others believe veterans should be forced to stay within the walls of the VA no matter what. Making the program permanent will send a clear message that we refuse to send veterans back to the days of denied and delayed care. That is why I introduced legislation to make the VA Choice Card permanent and universal. I believe every veteran—no matter where they live or how long they are waiting for an appointment—should have the ability to see a doctor of their choice in their community.

Last week I held a townhall meeting with veterans in Phoenix, AZ, along with Mike Broomhead, a distinguished leader in our community. With tears in their eyes and frustration in their voices, veterans described the unending wait times for appointments and difficulty obtaining and using the Choice Card to receive the care they want and need. More than 2 years after the scandal in care first arose in Phoenix, AZ, and more than a year after reform legislation was signed into law, the VA is still failing our veterans.

It doesn't have to be this way. There are additional steps we can take now to reform this broken health care system. That is why I recently announced my Care Veterans Deserve action plan. The elements of my plan address some of the most urgent problems still plaguing the VA.

First, the action plan proposes keeping the VA open later during the week and opening the VA on weekends for local doctors and nurses to treat our veterans. This would address the most common complaint we hear that wait times for appointments are still too long. In Arizona, wait times have gotten worse—not better—over the last year, with more than 10 percent of all the Arizona veterans having to wait more than 30 days for care at the VA.

Despite these long wait times, veterans are still not allowed to make appointments past 3 p.m. during the week and have very few appointment options on weekends. VA employees abruptly close clinics no matter what a veteran needs at the end of the day. By keeping the VA open later and adding hours on weekends, we can address these unacceptably high wait times and maximize the use of our VA facilities.

I have also proposed in the Care Veterans Deserve action plan that the VA allow community walk-in clinics to treat veterans for minor injuries and

illnesses such as a cold, the flu, allergies, sinus infections, immunizations, vaccines, sore throats, and minor headaches. Again, this would greatly reduce the need for veterans to visit VA emergency rooms after hours and would free up appointments for everyone waiting for care at the VA.

The plan also proposes that we require VA pharmacies to stay open until 8 p.m. during the week and for at least 8 hours on Saturday and Sundays. This would tackle a common complaint among our working veterans who cannot visit VA pharmacies during their limited workday hours to obtain a prescription. It is absurd that a civilian can go to a pharmacy 24 hours a day in most cities in America, but VA pharmacies close early on weekdays and completely on the weekends.

I also propose in this action plan that individual VA hospitals undergo peer review from the best in health care: Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic—there is a long line of them—and other top-tier health care networks. I was disappointed that the independent review required by the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act only resulted in a high-level review of the VA health care system. Its findings were so broad and general that they provided Congress with very little guidance on what is happening at individual VA hospitals in our States. By requiring the VA to undergo peer reviews from the best in health care, we will have better insight into how to fully reform the VA health care system.

I intend to include the elements of that action plan in a bill I will introduce in this Congress. By enacting legislation as soon as possible, we can fix the serious inequity in veterans health care. It is absurd to me and many others that virtually every American receives Federal subsidies for choice and freedom in health care while veterans are forced to wait in line and ask permission from a VA bureaucrat before getting access to care.

I thank my colleagues for working with me on these and other measures that will help finish the work we started nearly 2 years ago with the Veteran Access, Choice and Accountability Act and urge passage of my commonsense reforms as soon as possible.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to applaud the efforts of my friend from Georgia, the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, JOHNNY ISAKSON, for his leadership, particularly on the issue of accountability at the VA. One of the most disgraceful aspects of the scandal at the VA is that only a small number of senior VA executives responsible for the wait-time scandal were fired. This was despite the fact that Congress provided the VA Secretary broad authority to hold corrupt executives accountable for wrongdoing. I look forward to working with Chairman ISAKSON and my colleagues in the Senate to pass legislation that would ensure we hold all those responsible for denied and delayed care, even the deaths of some, accountable.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EUREKA ACT

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President and my fellow colleagues, I once again come to the floor to talk about Alzheimer's and the efforts being made in this country and in this Senate and in this city to find a cure and find better treatments for the scourge of Alzheimer's. Many of you know this is the most expensive disease our country has ever seen; one-half trillion dollars a year in costs to programs that we need to protect like Medicare, Medicaid. This will rise to $1 trillion per year in the lifetime of many people within the sound of my voice unless something is done.

I am so appreciative of the some 1,200 people who descended on Washington this week advocating on behalf of the millions of Americans living with Alzheimer's and their family members. I was honored to be invited to their conference and to speak to over 1,000 people in the hotel where they were meeting earlier this week. They then came to Capitol Hill to visit in the offices of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, and I had a great meeting on Wednesday in my office. We want to reaffirm our dedication to putting an end to this terrible disease. My mom died with dementia. Most of us have family members who have had Alzheimer's or who have been impacted by Alzheimer's.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues in this Congress for NIH funding. It is very important to continue funding, to continue increasing the funding for the excellent work done by the National Institutes of Health to fight Alzheimer's disease and fund Alzheimer's research.

I appreciate my colleagues voting for a $350 million increase in research for Alzheimer's disease, but of course this falls far short. This is funding that experts say is needed to reach our goal of curing Alzheimer's within the next decade. Along those lines, I have introduced legislation that I think gives us a different way to approach the disease of Alzheimer's. My bill is called the EUREKA Act that involves a prize competition, in addition to everything we are doing in research, everything NIH is doing, and all the research being done around the country. It is a prize competition inviting innovators, inviting people to think outside the box, come forward, and give us their ideas.

EUREKA stands for ''Ensuring Useful Research Expenditures is Key for Alzheimer's.'' Of course, the Greek translation for Eureka is ''I found it.'' That is what we are trying to do—trying to find a cure for Alzheimer's, trying to find milestones that will lead to a cure, and trying to find treatments to help those suffering from the disease.

The goal of my EUREKA Act is to find the best and brightest minds in the country, the best and brightest minds in the world, to come forward and use their ingenuity to solve this complex problem. As I have reiterated in visits with Member after Member, and I have reiterated on the floor, with a prize competition, we pay only for success. Regardless of the amount of money we put on the prize, you don't pay the money until we have success, which is one of the reasons this EUREKA provision wouldn't come out of NIH funding. It would add to it, and we would only pay the money if we got the result, which of course would be far more valuable than the prize.

The numbers associated with Alzheimer's are daunting—even worse, chilling. The disease affects 5 million Americans. The number of people with Alzheimer's is on the rise, as we all know. It is the sixth leading cause of death in America and, again, it is the most expensive disease in America: $236 billion this year and $1 trillion per year by the year 2050. Of course, there is a huge burden for the caregivers also.

There is good news, to be sure. It was announced last week that there's been an analysis by UsAgainstAlzheimer's, and it showed some 17 drugs for Alzheimer's could be launched in the next 5 years. In Mississippi, the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson has developed a service called TeleMIND as part of its MIND Center. Telehealth technology is being used to attack Alzheimer's, to treat Alzheimer's patients, and make life better for them and their family.

Let us try the concept of EUREKA also. Let us try the concept of offering a prize to young minds. Perhaps people from around the world might come to the United States. This might be someone in a basement or in his mom's garage or might be some major international corporation. We don't care. We want to offer an incentive for somebody to come around, think outside the box, and get us to a cure quicker.

Prizes have a history of success. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh achieved a nonstop flight between New York and Paris. He won a prize of $25,000 in so doing. In 2004, the XPRIZE—sponsored by the XPRIZE Foundation—offered $10 million for the first reusable manned spacecraft. You know what happened. It drew down $100 million in investments, this $10 million prize. In 2011, $1 million was awarded for a

breakthrough in oilspill cleanup. So prizes work. It can work, in addition to the research NIH is doing around the country.

Let me say, in addition to myself as principal sponsor of this act, we now have 39 cosponsors among this 100-person Senate. We are day-by-day, step-by-step getting toward a majority. It is my hope the leadership of the HELP Committee that is now working on the 21st Century Cures Act that came over from the House with an overwhelming bipartisan vote—I hope we can, in a bipartisan fashion, with the leadership of Senator ALEXANDER, with the leadership of Senator MURRAY—his lead Democrat on the committee—I hope we can make a decision to add the EUREKA bill to the 21st Century Cures Act, to have this extra opportunity, in addition to everything we are doing, to cure Alzheimer's.

I would urge my colleagues, I would urge the staff members who might be listening to this, to check and see if their Members have cosponsored this and to help us with an additional tool to attack the problem of Alzheimer's.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I thank my colleague from Michigan for deferring for a moment or two while I make these remarks.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, it is very hard for me to believe I am once again standing on this floor. I have to come before my colleagues in the Senate to report that despite the fact that we have been building bipartisan support for legislation that will address the catastrophic situation in Flint, we still have one Senator standing in the way of this coming to a vote.

It has been now nearly 2 months since Senator STABENOW and I introduced legislation to deal with the catastrophic crisis in the city of Flint, MI. Since that time, we have been able to build a broad coalition of folks on both sides of the aisle, Republican cosponsors who have joined with us to say it is time for this body, it is time for the Senate, to stand and help those in need in the city of Flint, as well as issues all across this country. Senator STABENOW and I offered legislation, along with Senator INHOFE, and a long list of Democrats and Republicans, including Senators BURR, CAPITO, KIRK, and PORTMAN, have been working very closely with Senator MURKOWSKI as chair of the committee as well.

Yet we have one Senator, one Senator who says that is not enough. He wants to have more, and he is standing in the way of the people of Flint getting the help they desperately need. He is standing in the way of children like this young infant who appeared on the cover of Time magazine. To me, those eyes are very compelling, and I think those eyes are very compelling to every American who has witnessed what has happened in that city, who has witnessed the horror and the tragedy of having poisoned water going into people's bodies for many months while the State government dropped the ball.

I will say folks around the country have responded. There has been an outpouring of help from people in every corner of this great country of ours. People have sent bottled water. They have sent filters and are providing resources. It is what our country does. It is what our people do when we see people in crisis. We stand and lend that helping hand. We know any one of us at any time could be in that situation. The wonderful thing about being an American is that as Americans we look out for each other. We know we are a community, a very special place in this world, and we look out for each other.

That is why people back home in Michigan—and as I travel around the country—people are at a loss and wondering why the U.S. Congress hasn't done something to address this issue. When I tell them we have legislation that will help deal with infrastructure, not just in Flint but in communities all across the country, that will plus-up public health programs to deal with lead poisoning at a time when we realize lead poisoning is not just an issue for Flint but is an issue for communities all across this country and one we need to focus on and probably ignored for far too long, they wonder why we have not acted. When I tell them we have one Senator—just one Senator—standing in the way, it only adds to their belief that this is a dysfunctional place; that partisanship and polarization have prevented this body from doing what is right.

We can't forget the people of Flint, and I know many of my colleagues on the Senate floor have not. That is why we have been able to get broad support from both Democrats and Republicans, who have come together and said to both my senior Senator, Ms. STABENOW, and me: We understand it is a problem in Flint, but we also understand it is a problem in other communities around the country. Let us design legislation to deal with that.

That is what we have before us. We have legislation that will provide money for those cities that may be in a declared emergency, which is where we are with the city of Flint, but we also know there may be other communities in this country—in fact, we think there will be a community very soon—that will also have a declared water emergency that will be able to access those funds. We also know aging infrastructure is not unique to the city of Flint. It is with cities all across the country, especially older urban areas that have lead surface lines, but there are certainly many rural areas that have that as well. Those pipes need to be taken out.

In this legislation, we create a fund that will allow money to be loaned to those communities—oftentimes, communities that don't have a lot of resources but desperately need infrastructure improvement. It is a loan fund that will be paid back to the taxpayers but will extend the money necessary to make improvements that truly will be lifesaving improvements for the citizens in those cities.

We also plus-up a number of public health programs from the CDC that deal with lead poisoning in children.

The insidious thing about lead poisoning is that once it gets into the brain of a young child—like this child who is looking at us right now in this picture I have in the Chamber—it has lasting effects. It has lifetime effects. We need not only to embrace that child with our love but understand that the child is going to need health care for decades. That child is going to need educational support to be able to pursue his or her version of the American dream that he or she may have. They are going to need to have, in addition to education and health care, good nutrition, making sure the food they eat will provide their bodies with the nourishment that can counter some of the impacts of lead.

But it is not just the children; it is everybody in the city of Flint. Senior citizens have also been impacted. I have gone door to door in Flint and worked with volunteers, including the American Red Cross, delivering bottled water to the people of Flint. I never thought I would have to go with the American Red Cross to deliver bottled water to a community because the water they were getting out of their pipes was poisoned—not in this country, not in the United States of America. But that is what people are doing, and filters as well are being given door to door.

The people of Flint are appreciative. Please know they are extremely appreciative of the generosity they have seen from people across this country and from FEMA response as well, but they are also frustrated. People can't bathe with bottled water. They are cooking and cleaning food—all of the basic things we take for granted each and every day. It is simply impossible to live just on bottled water and have that bottled water delivered to them every few days. It is not a workable system. It is unacceptable, and it certainly should be unacceptable to everybody in this country.

That is why we need to have a long-term solution. It has to be a long-term solution that will fix the problem permanently by making sure the infrastructure improvements are there, lead pipes are pulled out, but makes sure other support services are going to be there for decades.

My fear for the people of the city of Flint is that although they have been

the beneficiaries of a great outpouring of love and support from people around the country, they have been able to get that because the spotlight has been on Flint and the TV cameras are in Flint. We all know in today's media world that those cameras will eventually go away. There won't be media attention for Flint. There won't be the bright lights of publicity motivating people to do what is needed in the city of Flint. When those lights go down and when it goes dark, the people of the city of Flint will still be confronted with this absolutely catastrophic situation that is impacting them in their homes. It is impacting businesses—businesses that have been rocked as a result of this. People don't want to go to restaurants because they are not sure of the water there. Real estate values have plummeted. This is a different kind of a disaster than a natural disaster if a hurricane goes through or a tornado goes through. Then we can rebuild, and it can be as good as new.

Our concern with Flint is that there will always be this stigma attached to the city as a result of this, and if that stigma is there, it is going to make it even more difficult.

The people of Flint are resilient and courageous and brave and strong. They will survive, but we need to be there to lend that helping hand. That is why it is even more frustrating to me, given the fact that when we have natural disasters across this country, this body—the Senate—acts. We send money. We help those local governments. The State governments provide help.

Now, I know some colleagues have said that this is not a natural disaster, that this is a manmade disaster. All I can say is to ask that child when he or she grows up: Does it make a difference that it was a manmade disaster or a natural disaster? Ask the senior citizen in Flint right now. Ask the parent who is concerned about that child. Does it make any difference? I don't think any American here thinks it makes a difference. There isn't anybody in this country who thinks it makes a difference. A disaster is a disaster.

Now, it is true the State government messed up horribly in Michigan. In fact, the Governor's own task force that he appointed to look into it clearly points the finger at the State of Michigan and the incompetence that was shown by the government of the State of Michigan. That is a given. They are primarily responsible and need to step up, and they have. But they need to do a whole lot more than what they have done so far.

But even though the State has to do that and must do that, that doesn't prevent us, the Federal Government, from also standing up and saying: We can help as well because that is what we do. It is what the American people expect us to do. I certainly hope my colleagues will help Senator STABENOW and I move this legislation forward. If we can't get around this one Senator who wants to constantly move the goalpost, who wants to change the basis of negotiations even though this legislation is completely paid for—we have used a pay-for that Senator STABENOW fought for, authored to help manufacturers in the Midwest. I fought aggressively to keep that fund when I was a Member of the House. This is something that is important to us, but we know that dealing with a catastrophic situation in Flint and water infrastructure across this country so that we don't have any more Flints is more important. That money will be used to help the people of Flint and communities across this country. Not only does it pay for this, but it actually reduces the deficit at the same time.

I think it is important to say that usually when a disaster hits this country, we don't look for pay-fors. We step up and provide money for people in need. We have been asked to come up with a pay-for, and we did—completely paid for while reducing the Federal deficit at the same time. Yet we have one Senator who wants more. He wants more.

I don't know how that one Senator can hold up something that has been able to get this kind of bipartisan support and can hold up something that is so important to this child in this picture. How can you stand in the way? If that one Senator does not like this legislation, that is fine. They can vote against it. But allow the other 99 Senators in this body an opportunity to have their say. That is the way this institution is supposed to work.

I still believe in this institution. I still believe the Senate can do better than allowing one Member to stand in the way of helping this child and other children just like this one.

It is now our task as Members of this body to come together and say: Enough is enough. We are going to help somebody in this country no matter who you are, no matter where you live, no matter the circumstances. If you have been hit by a major disaster, we will stand with you. We will help you. That is who we are as Americans. It goes to the very core of our values.

It is now up to my colleagues here in the Senate to please join Senator STABENOW and me and our long list of both Democratic and Republican cosponsors. Put this legislation on the floor. Let's vote on it, let's pass it, and let's help the people of Flint and other folks all across the country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO TRENT HARMON AND LA'PORSHA RENAE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I don't know what other Members of the Senate will be doing at 8 p.m. eastern time, but I can tell you I will be in front of my television set watching ''American Idol.'' We all take pride in people from our own States, but I want to boldly predict that the winner of ''American Idol'' tonight will be a contestant from my State of Mississippi. The reason I am so certain of this is that two talented Mississippians are the two finalists remaining in the ''American Idol'' competition tonight.

They say this will be the final season of ''American Idol.'' Perhaps we are only going to have a timeout for a few years, and we will see it back. This is the 15th season of ''American Idol.'' I am so proud to announce to my colleagues in the Senate and to the Presiding Officer that the two finalists are none other than Trent Harmon of Amory, MS, and La'Porsha Renae of McComb, MS.

Now, in Mississippi we proudly call ourselves the Birthplace of America's Music, and I think we do that with some justification. From blues to country to rock and roll, our State has produced more Grammy award winners per capita than any other State in the Nation. Elvis Presley comes from Mississippi, as well as Robert Johnson, B.B. King, Jimmie Rodgers, Charley Pride, Faith Hill, and the list goes on and on and on.

Last month, I was honored to participate in the opening of the Grammy Museum in Cleveland, MS. There are now two Grammy museums in the country. One is in Los Angeles and the other is in the Mississippi Delta in Cleveland. The Mississippi Delta is a testament to the many musical inspirations that have emerged there.

In 1986, Paul Simon sang: ''The Mississippi Delta is shining like a National guitar.'' He sang that line 20 years before the first Mississippi Blues Trail marker was placed, but he was correct. We now have some 200 Blues Trail markers across our State, and I invite each and every Member and all the rest of you to come and visit those locations in Mississippi.

But tonight, the entire State of Mississippi will be shining like a national guitar with talents like La'Porsha Renae and Trent Harmon. They are keeping our legacy alive. They represent the wide range of Mississippi's musical influences. It was wonderfully touching to watch the video of their hometown visits, where the people came out to support them, showing off their Mississippi talent and the dedication of their fans.

Trent Harmon is from Amory, MS. He grew up on his family's farm, working in his parents' restaurant, the Longhorn Fish and Steakhouse. Growing up in Amory is truly a small town beginning. The town has a population of around 7,500 people. Trent's interest in music was apparent from early on, as he spent his time in high school and college performing in musicals. My

wife and I have numerous times been to Amory High School to see Trent Harmon perform in programs such as ''Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,'' ''Forever Plaid,'' and other performances. He was a star then, and he is going to be a star in the future. Trent's powerful voice and versatility seem effortless. He can do it all, from southern soul to R & B.

La'Porsha Renae comes from McComb, MS, down in the southwestern part of our State. She worked for a call center before auditioning for ''American Idol.'' She has shared with America the details about her story of survival from an abusive relationship in which she had to seek refuge in a women's shelter. Her soulful voice has been compared to Aretha Franklin, and the emotion she pours into every performance is truly show-stopping. She credits her former high school algebra teacher, Angelia Johnson, as one of her biggest mentors who encouraged her to embrace her own signature style. La'Porsha dedicated last night's moving performance of ''Diamonds'' to her young daughter who was in the audience.

So when it comes to talent, I believe ''American Idol'' may have saved the best for last, and I very much anticipate a great performance tonight. Millions of Americans will choose one of these outstanding young Mississippians as the latest, but perhaps not the last, ''American Idol.''

Trent and La'Porsha have made Mississippi proud. They have made me proud, and I wish them all the best tonight and in their future musical careers. I am quite certain that both of them will be incredibly successful.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3499, AS MODIFIED; 3508; AND 3505 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: Wyden No. 3499, as modified; Collins No. 3508; and Tester No. 3505.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3499, as modified; 3508; and 3505 to amendment No. 3464.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3499, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To require a review of heads-up guidance system displays)

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2405. HEADS-UP GUIDANCE SYSTEM TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a review of heads-up guidance system displays (in this section referred to as ''HGS'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) evaluate the impacts of single- and dual-installed HGS technology on the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations within the national airspace system;

(2) review a sufficient quantity of commercial aviation accidents or incidents in order to evaluate if HGS technology would have produced a better outcome in that accident or incident; and

(3) update previous HGS studies performed by the Flight Safety Foundation in 1991 and 2009.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the results of the review required by subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 3508

(Purpose: To continue the contract weather observers program through the end of fiscal year 2017 and to require the FAA report to identify the process through which the FAA analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program)

On page 40, line 15, strike ''and'' and all that follows through line 25, and insert the following:

(3) indicating how airports can comply with applicable Federal Aviation Administration orders governing weather observations given the current documented limitations of automated surface observing systems; and

(4) identifying the process through which the Federal Aviation Administration analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program.

(b) CONTINUED USE OF CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.—The Administrator may not discontinue the contract weather observer program at any airport until October 1, 2017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3505

(Purpose: To direct the Comptroller General of the United States to study the costs of deploying advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which TSA security screening operations procedures are conducted)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. GAO STUDY OF UNIVERSAL DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to redesign airport security areas to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which security screening operations are conducted by the Transportation Security Administration or through the Screening Partnership Program; and

(2) to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all airports not described in paragraph (1).

(b) COST ANALYSIS.—As a part of the study conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall identify the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to purchase the equipment and other assets necessary to deploy advanced imaging technologies at each airport;

(2) to install such equipment and assets in each airport; and

(3) to maintain such equipment and assets.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) to the appropriate committees of Congress.

VOTE ON AMENDMENTS NOS. 3499, AS MODIFIED; 3508; 3505; 3495; AND 3458, AS MODIFIED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now vote on these amendments, as well as the Heller amendment No. 3495 and the Casey-Toomey amendment No. 3458, as modified, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on these amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 3499, as modified; 3508; 3505; 3495; and 3458, as modified) were agreed to en bloc.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBSERVING CONGRESS WEEK

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to call the attention of my colleagues to the 227th anniversary of Congress' first quorum, which the House of Representatives achieved on April 1, 1789, and which the Senate achieved 5 days later. In the first week of April, the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress remembers these milestones by observing Congress Week—an annual celebration which includes commemorative events at member institutions across the country.

The Association of Centers for the Study of Congress is composed of more than 40 universities that work to preserve the historical collections of Members of Congress. The organization's goal is to promote public understanding of the House and the Senate by focusing on the history of Congress and its role in our constitutional system of government. Having served as a member of this body for nearly four decades, I understand well the importance of keeping good records, which is why I am sincerely grateful for the Association of Centers for the Study of

Congress and its efforts to help us in this endeavor.

While Presidents have Presidential libraries maintained by the National Archives, we—the Members of Congress—are responsible for preserving our own personal documents. Only by archiving these records will historians, students, and teachers be able to appreciate the vital role that Congress has played in our national history.

As President Pro Tempore, I am committed to upholding the reputation and dignity of this institution. Part and parcel to that effort is preserving the Senate's history. To this end, I strongly encourage my colleagues to keep comprehensive records of their work in Congress. Just as important as writing legislation is maintaining a thorough record of the bills we pass, so that future generations can appreciate the historical importance of our accomplishments.

Serving as a Member of the world's greatest deliberative body is no small honor; it is a tremendous privilege that none of us should take for granted. The American people have placed their confidence in our ability to effect meaningful change for the good of the country. May we honor this sacred trust by keeping detailed archives of the work we do here.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16–14, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J. W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16–14

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.
Other $ 200 million.
Total $ 200 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of three years of support services by the United States Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia (USMTM). USMTM is the Security Cooperation Organization (SCO) responsible for identifying, planning, and executing U.S. Security Cooperation training and advisory support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Defense.

(iv) Military Department: U.S. Army (ABT, Basic Case).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: SR–B–ABS–A01; $90M; implemented 30 Dec 13.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 17, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—Support Services

The Government of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of support services by the United States Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia (USMTM). USMTM is the Security Cooperation Organization (SCO) responsible for identifying, planning, and executing U.S. Security Cooperation training and advisory support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Defense. The estimated cost is $200 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of an important partner which has been and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

This proposed sale will provide the continuation of Technical Assistance Field Teams (TAFT) and other support for USMTM services to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The proposed sale supports the United States' continued commitment to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's security and strengthens U.S.-Saudi Arabia strategic partnership. Sustaining the USMTM supports Saudi Arabia in deterring hostile action and increases U.S.–Saudi Arabia military interoperability. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale will not alter the basic military balance in the region. It will support Combatant Command initiatives in the region by enabling Saudi Arabia's efforts to combat aggression and terrorism.

There is no prime contractor associated with this proposed sale. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will approve the permanent or temporary assignment of up to 202 case-funded U.S. Government or contractor personnel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. Defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRIBUTE TO HARRIS WOFFORD

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to extend my best wishes to former Pennsylvania Senator Harris Wofford as he celebrates his 90th birthday this April 9. Harris is a close friend and trusted adviser, and I would like to take this time to not only wish him the best on this milestone, but to reflect upon his remarkable life. His story is interwoven into the fabric of our Nation; from a young boy campaigning for Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression, to a pilot defending freedom in World War II; from a trusted adviser to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and President John F. Kennedy during the civil rights movement; to a participant in the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery; from a peace activist arrested in protest of police brutality during the 1968 Democratic National Convention; to a Senator championing universal healthcare in the 1990s. The story of Harris Wofford is the story of the steady march of equality and progress. He answered President Kennedy's call on a cold inaugural day in 1961 to ''Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.''

Harris's potential for leadership was evident early in high school amidst the chaos of World War II when he founded the Student Federalists, an organization which advocated for a united world government in order to bring about lasting peace. By the time he turned 18, the organization had grown to over 1,000 members in 30 chapters and led Newsweek to predict that the intrepid young man would one day rise to be President. He went on to graduate from the University of Chicago in 1948 and then enrolled in Howard University Law School, finishing his education with a degree from Yale Law School in 1954, just as the civil rights movement was truly picking up momentum.

In 1957, Harris joined the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as a legal assistant to Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, the president of Notre Dame University. When Senator John Kennedy ran for President in 1960, he was asked to join the campaign as a civil rights coordinator. It was during that close election that Harris made one of his most lasting contributions to American history. In October 1960, Dr. King was arrested in Georgia while battling segregation, and in those tense hours after his arrest, Harris Wofford suggested to Sargent Shriver that Kennedy call Dr. King's wife, Coretta Scott

King, and offer his support. Kennedy made the call despite the political risk. The news of the Democratic candidate for President—the nominee of a party that still held deep roots in the Jim Crow South—calling the wife of Dr. King was powerful and helped sway many African-American voters to Kennedy, which some feel decided the election.

After the election, Harris Wofford joined the Kennedy Administration as special assistant to the President for civil rights and the chairman of the Subcabinet group on civil rights. He helped Shriver in the founding of the Peace Corps in 1961, and, as was common for him, he not only advocated for the idea, but also served as the director of operations in Ethiopia and the organization's special representative to Africa. In 1964, he was named associate director of the Peace Corps.

He reentered the world of academia in 1966 as president of the State University of New York at Old Westbury. His career brought him to Pennsylvania as president of Bryn Mawr College in 1970. Later he practiced law in Philadelphia. After 16 years in Pennsylvania, he was asked to reenter the political world in June 1986 as chairman of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party. When my father was elected Governor of Pennsylvania that year, he asked Harris Wofford to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry for the Commonwealth. In May 1991, after the tragic death of Senator John Heinz in a plane crash, my father appointed Harris Wofford to fill the vacancy until a special election could be held. After winning a surprise victory in the special election under the banner of universal healthcare, Senator Wofford used his time in the Senate to foster the development of national service and to push for health insurance. He was a key sponsor in the establishment of the Corporation for National and Community Service and worked closely with Representative JOHN LEWIS to establish Martin Luther King, Jr., Day as a National Day of Service.

Although Senator Wofford was defeated in his reelection attempt in 1994, President Bill Clinton appointed him as the chief executive officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, CNCS. His lifelong advocacy for national and community service made him an ideal choice to lead the CNCS into an influential organization, and, under his leadership, the organization's volunteer branches grew to over 50,000 members. After leaving the CNCS in 2001, he continued his dedication to public service and civil rights through his work on the boards of the America's Promise Alliance, Malaria No More, Youth Service America, the Points of Light Foundation, and as a trustee of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Non-Violent Social Change.

Throughout his life, Harris Wofford has left an indelible mark on our Nation's history and the lives of those who have had the privilege to work with him. When I took the oath of office for the U.S. Senate in 2007 to fill the seat he once held, I was honored and humbled to have him with me at the ceremony. For over 90 years, he has stood for courage, idealism, and a steadfast defense of equal rights for all Americans. As we look back on the growth of community service and the march of civil rights in our Nation's history, we see the steady, guiding hand of Harris Wofford. I am grateful for his experienced counsel and support on the many issues facing our Nation today, and I am pleased that he shows no signs of slowing down. On behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a grateful Nation, I am pleased to once again wish Harris Wofford a happy birthday and many more years of health and happiness.

HONORING CARL ALLEN KOONTZ

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today, on the eve of what would have been his 27th birthday, I rise to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and ultimate sacrifice of Howard County, IN, deputy Carl Koontz. Dedicated, loyal, and, above all, compassionate to those in need, Deputy Koontz served with the Howard County Sheriff's Department for nearly 3 years.

A native of Kokomo, IN, and a graduate of Western High School and Indiana University Kokomo, Carl served his community with dedication as a corrections officer prior to attending the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy and achieving his dream of becoming a sheriff's deputy. Those who served alongside Deputy Koontz describe him as selfless, dedicated, and determined. A respected friend, leader, and mentor, he touched the lives of all who had the privilege to know him, including the students and staff of the Northwestern School Corporation, where he served as a school resource officer.

On March 20, 2016, while serving a search warrant, Deputy Koontz and Sergeant Jordan Buckley were shot in the line of duty. We mourn the loss of Deputy Koontz, who succumbed to his injuries, and we wish Sergeant Buckley a quick recovery. Every day, our law enforcement professionals and first responders get up, go to work, and put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. That is exactly what Deputy Koontz, Sergeant Buckley, and their fellow officers were doing in the early hours of that Sunday morning—their job. They put their lives on the line so that we have the chance to live in safety, and we are eternally grateful.

Deputy Koontz is survived and deeply missed by his wife, Kassie; son, Noah; parents, Allen and Jackie; sister, Alice; grandparents, Ann and Allen Koontz and Alice and Carl Durham, as well as the entire Koontz and Floyd family and the Howard County Sheriff's Department. No words or sentiment can adequately express our sadness and grief. As a community, we can only offer our prayers, our support, and our continued commitment to honor his service.

Deputy Koontz loved his work, and he gave his life to serve and protect the citizens of Howard County. Although he would not have considered himself a hero, Deputy Koontz demonstrated his character daily by conducting himself with compassion, honor, courage, and integrity. Let us always remember and emulate the shining example this brave man set for us and honor him for his selfless commitment to serving his fellow citizens. May God welcome Carl home and give comfort to his family and friends.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ZEESY BRUK

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I am happy to acknowledge a very special little girl from Montana who was named Montana's 2016 Children's Miracle Network Hospitals Champion Child.

Five-year-old Zeesy Bruk is a very courageous little girl who battles GLUT–1 deficiency, which I have learned is a rare genetic metabolic disorder.

Zeesy is a fellow Bozemanite and lives there with her parents—Rabbi Chaim and Chavie Bruk, who are co-directors of Chabad-Lubavitch of Montana and leaders in Montana's Jewish community, and her brother and sister.

Zeesy has been bravely battling this disease all her life, but it took some time—and a lot of determination from her family—to find the right diagnosis. Now, thanks to a dedicated team at Shodair Children's Hospital in Helena, MT, I hear that Zeesy is doing wonderful and facing her diagnosis head on.

During her time as a Champion Child, Zeesy and her parents will travel across the country—serving as an ambassador for the Treasure State and bringing awareness to the various medical challenges facing many young people across our country today.

Thank you to Zeesy and the Bruk family for what you will do as ambassadors for this great State and for what you do every day for Montana's Jewish community. Zeesy, I look forward to following your year as a Champion Child—safe travels and God bless.●

TRIBUTE TO PAUL KANNING

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Paul Kanning of Daniels County, a fourth-generation Montana farmer. This week, Paul testified

before the Senate Committee on Appropriations about the importance of assisting veterans find employment opportunities in agriculture.

Paul is the current owner and operator of 103-year-old TomTilda farm, where he produces small grains, pulses, and oilseed crops through no-till, continuous cropping practices. He began his farm career in 2013 following his retirement as an Air Force lieutenant colonel after 20 years of Active-Duty service.

During the hearing, I heard Paul speak about his experiences as a veteran starting a career in the agriculture industry and how programs like those offered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture helped provide the training and education he needed on the farm. Throughout his career, he has displayed incredible leadership both in our agriculture community and in our Armed Forces.

He is a living success story of a man who has combined his leadership, dedication, and discipline for both defending our country and providing food security for Montanans and our Nation. It was truly an honor to hear Paul testify this week, and I am proud to honor his terrific testimony and hard work for Montana.●

CONGRATULATING ADAM GARCIA

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate University of Nevada, Reno, UNR, chief of police services Adam Garcia on being named Police Director of the Year by the National Association of Campus Safety Administrators. It gives me great pleasure to see him receive this prestigious award after years of hard work within the university system and local community.

Police Chief Garcia assumed the role of director at UNR police services in 2001. Since then, he has worked to expand both the size and diversity of police services and create a safe campus environment where students are engaged with the department. Police Chief Garcia spearheaded the development of services for public notification in the event of an active shooter or emergency situation, a service critical to ensuring the safety of UNR students. Due to the great success of police services, Police Chief Garcia has successfully integrated the department into a regional partnership, serving an even greater community. His dedication to keeping students across the UNR campus safe is invaluable to our great State. I am grateful to have someone like Police Chief Garcia leading this incredibly important department.

The Police Director of the Year award is given each year to an individual who goes above and beyond to ensure safety on campus, as well as maintaining a professional and healthy relationship between the department and the university it serves. Without a doubt, Police Chief Garcia's actions warrant only the greatest recognition, including this significant accolade. I am pleased to see Police Chief Garcia recognized on a national level, representing our great State as role model to other departments.

It is the brave men and women who serve in local police departments that keep our communities safe. These heroes selflessly put their lives on the line every day. I extend my deepest gratitude to Police Chief Garcia for his courageous contributions to students across the UNR campus and to the people of Reno. His sacrifice and courage earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly put their lives on the line to benefit others.

Throughout his tenure with UNR police services, Police Chief Garcia has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of UNR police services. I am honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Police Chief Garcia on receiving this award, and I give my deepest appreciation for all that he has done to ensure safety on the UNR campus. I offer him my best wishes as he continues in his role as police chief.●

RECOGNIZING COMMUNITY HEALTH ALLIANCE'S CENTER FOR COMPLEX CARE

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Community Health Alliance's Center for Complex Care, which offers innovative and complex health care services to those in need. The advanced health care this facility provides is invaluable to northern Nevada, bringing an improved quality of life and well-being to those with chronic health conditions.

The Center for Complex Care is the only facility out of several Community Health Alliance centers located throughout the Truckee Meadows that offers a team-based approach to health care for patients with chronic care conditions. A health care team, consisting of a primary care provider, social worker, care coordinator, psychiatric nurse specialist, medical assistant, clinical pharmacist, and support staff, address both the primary health care and behavioral health care of each patient. This team serves as a singular, collaborative unit in order to make a comprehensive patient assessment. Effective communication within the facility connects the physical, social, and emotional health of patients, creating a better understanding of the patient's needs. Those leading the way at this center stand as role models to our local community, demonstrating a genuine concern for improving the health of Nevadans. The Silver State is fortunate to have a facility like this available to our local community.

In addition to the Center for Complex Care, the Community Health Alliance offers a variety of care options, including pediatric care, women's health care, dental care, behavioral health care, a school-based health center, a supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children, and health care for the homeless. I would like to congratulate this alliance on recently reaching an important milestone, its 20th anniversary. This achievement is well deserved, and I am grateful to have this significant health care resource available to residents across northern Nevada.

Those serving at this center have gone above and beyond to provide high-quality care to Nevadans. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Community Health Alliance's Center for Complex Care for all it does for the Silver State.●

CONGRATULATING THE AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Augustana University men's basketball team as they celebrate winning their first National Collegiate Athletic Association, NCAA, Division II men's basketball championship.

The Augustana Vikings men's basketball team had an outstanding season, finishing with a school record 34 wins and only 2 losses. Their formidable opponents in the championship game, the Lincoln Memorial Railsplitters, were on a 24-game winning streak before facing Augustana. The first half of the game was close, with the two teams exchanging the lead. The Vikings maintained their lead throughout the entirety of the second half, however, and eventually won 90–81.

The Vikings are coached by Tom Billeter, who has led the Vikings to seven NCAA tournament appearances during his 13-year career with the school. Three senior Vikings players, Alex Richter, Daniel Jansen, and Casey Schilling, were named to the Elite Eight All-Tournament team, and all three scored more than 20 points during the championship game. Richter was named the Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament, and Jansen was recognized as the 2016 National Association of Basketball Coaches' Division II Player of the Year.

On behalf of the State of South Dakota, I am pleased to congratulate the Augustana Vikings men's basketball team on this impressive accomplishment. I commend the players and coaching staff for all of their hard work and wish them the best of luck in future seasons.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4991. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Hexythiazox; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9942–32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4992. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pendimethalin; Tolerance Exemptions; Technical Correction'' (FRL No. 9943–79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4993. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, the quarterly exception Selected Acquisition Reports (SARs) as of December 31, 2015 (OSS–2016–0443); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4994. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Support for Non-Federal Development and Testing of Material for Chemical Agent Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4995. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report (NGRER) for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4996. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Army Industrial Facilities Cooperative Activities with Non-Army Entities for Fiscal Year 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4997. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Philip M. Breedlove, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4998. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Temporary General License'' (RIN0694–AG82) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4999. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Operations in Rural Areas Under the Truth in Lending Act (Regulation Z); Interim Final Rule'' (RIN3170–AA59) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5000. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5001. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Conduct on Bureau of Engraving and Printing Property'' (31 CFR Part 605) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5002. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Assessments'' (RIN3064–AE40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5003. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5004. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Burundi Sanctions Regulations'' (31 CFR Part 554) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5005. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Notice of Availability for Plant-Specific Adoption of TSTF–545, Revision 3, 'TS Inservice Testing Program and Clarify SR Usage Rule Application to Section 5.5 Testing''' (NUREG–1430; NUREG–1431; NUREG–1432; NUREG–1433; and NUREG–1434) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5006. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval and Designation of Areas; MS; Redesignation of the DeSoto County, 2008 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment'' (FRL No. 9944–74–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5007. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Minnesota and Michigan; Revision to 2013 Taconite Federal Implementation Plan establishing BART for Taconite Plants'' (FRL No. 9944–22–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5008. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; South Carolina; Transportation Conformity Update'' (FRL No. 9944–55–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5009. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Attainment Plan and Base Year Inventory for the North Reading Area for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9944–73–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5010. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds State Implementation Plan'' (FRL No. 9944–71–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5011. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''OMB Approvals Under the Paperwork Reduction Act; Technical Amendment'' (FRL No. 9943–62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5012. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; California; South Coast; Moderate Area Plan for the 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS'' (FRL No. 9944–16–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5013. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Arizona; Regional Haze Federal Implementation Plan; Reconsideration'' (FRL No. 9944–68–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5014. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; California; Infrastructure Requirements for Ozone, Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5), Lead (Pb), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), and Sulfur Dioxide (SO2)'' (FRL No. 9939–89–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5015. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Priorities List'' (FRL No. 9944–36–OLEM) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5016. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Clean Air Plans; 1-Hour and 1997 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Requirements; San Joaquin Valley, California'' (FRL No. 9943–78–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5017. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections'' (FRL No. 9944–56–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5018. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Empowerment Zone Designation Extension'' (Notice 2016–28) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5019. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disclosures of Return Information Reflected on Returns to Officers and Employees of the Department of Commerce for Certain Statistical Purposes and Related Activities'' ((RIN1545–BL59) (TD 9754)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5020. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2016 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures'' (Notice 2016–24) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5021. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—April 2016'' (Rev. Rul. 2016–09) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5022. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Limitations on the Importation of Net Built-In Losses'' (TD 9759) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5023. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Indirect Stock Transfers and the Coordination Rule Exceptions; Transfers of Stock or Securities in Outbound'' ((RIN1545–BJ74) (TD 9760)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5024. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–113); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5025. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–136); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5026. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–099); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5027. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–133); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5028. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–107); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5029. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–103); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5030. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–061); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5031. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–148); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5032. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to overseas surplus property; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5033. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–088); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5034. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5035. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updating OSHA Standards Based on National Consensus Standards; Eye and Face Protection'' (RIN1218–AC87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5036. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Occupational Exposure to Respirable Crystalline Silica'' (RIN1218–AB70) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 30, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5037. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Personnel Management's Fiscal Year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5038. A communication from the Chief Human Resources Officer, United States Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Postal Service's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5039. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5040. A communication from the President, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5041. A communication from the Chairperson, Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5042. A communication from the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee

on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5043. A communication from the Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5044. A communication from the Chairman, National Indian Gaming Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5045. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Authority's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5046. A communication from the Diversity and Inclusion Programs Director, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5047. A communication from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5048. A communication from the Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5049. A communication from the Staff Director, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5050. A communication from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Credit Union Administration's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5051. A communication from the Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion Director, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5052. A communication from the Equal Employment Opportunity Director, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Farm Credit Administration's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5053. A communication from the Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5054. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2966)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5055. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2963)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5056. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–5815)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5057. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4816)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5058. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3636)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5059. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Quest Aircraft Design, LLC Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–5318)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5060. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Pratt and Whitney Canada Corp. Turboprop Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3732)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5061. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2016 Gulf of Alaska Pollock and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts'' (RIN0648–XE383) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5062. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE523) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5063. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 15'' (RIN0648–BE93) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5064. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 54th Annual Report of the activities of the Federal Maritime Commission for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5065. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Closed Captioning of Video Programming; Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc., Petition for Rulemaking'' ((FCC 16–17) (CG Docket No. 05–231)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–141. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing the United States Congress to extend Louisiana's seaward boundary in the Gulf of Mexico to three marine leagues; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4

Whereas, in *United States of America v. States of Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida*, 363 U.S. 1 (1960), the seaward boundary of the state of Louisiana in the Gulf of Mexico was judicially determined by the United States Supreme Court to be three geographical miles, despite evidence showing that Louisiana's seaward boundary historically consisted instead of three marine leagues, a distance equal to nine geographic miles or 10.357 statute miles; and

Whereas, the seaward boundaries in the Gulf of Mexico for the states of Texas and Florida were determined to be three marine leagues; and

Whereas, the unequal seaward boundary imposed upon Louisiana has resulted in (1) economic disparity and hardship for Louisiana citizens and entities; (2) economic loss to the state of Louisiana and its political subdivisions; and (3) the inability of the state of Louisiana and its political subdivisions to fully exercise their powers and duties under the federal and state constitutions and state laws and ordinances, including but not limited to protection and restoration of coastal lands, waters, and natural resources, and regulation of activities affecting them; and

Whereas, in recognition of all of the above the Legislature of Louisiana in the 2011 Regular Session enacted Act No. 336, which amended Louisiana statutes to provide that the seaward boundary of the state of Louisiana extends a distance into the Gulf of Mexico of three marine leagues from the coastline, and further defines ''three marine leagues'' as equal to nine geographic miles or 10.357 statute miles; and

Whereas, Act No. 336 further provides that the jurisdiction of the state of Louisiana or any political subdivision thereof shall not extend to the boundaries recognized in such Act until the United States Congress acknowledges the boundary described therein by an Act of Congress or any litigation resulting from the passage of Act No. 336 with respect to the legal boundary of the state is resolved and a final nonappealable judgment is rendered; and

Whereas, through the federal Submerged Lands Act of 1953, Congress has the power to fix the unequal disparity of the lesser seaward boundary forced upon Louisiana by recognizing and approving that Louisiana's seaward boundary extends three marine leagues into the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, as shown by the national impact of natural and manmade disasters such as hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and the Deepwater Horizon BP Oil Spill in 2010, the seaward boundary of Louisiana is vital to the economy and well-being of the entire United States, since among other benefits the Louisiana coastal area: (1) serves as both host and corridor for significant energy and commercial development and transportation; (2) serves as a storm and marine forces buffer protecting ports and the vast infrastructure of nationally significant oil and gas facilities located in such area; (3) provides critical environmental, ecological, ecosystem, and fish, waterfowl, and wildlife habitat functions; (4) provides protection from storms for more than 400 million tons of water-borne commerce; and (5) offers recreational and ecotourism opportunities and industries that are known and appreciated throughout the world; and

Whereas, the Louisiana coastal area accounts for 80% of the nation's coastal land loss, with its valuable wetlands disappearing at a dramatically high rate of between 25–35 square miles per year; and

Whereas, hurricanes Katrina and Rita turned approximately 100 square miles of southeast Louisiana coastal wetlands into open water, and destroyed more wetlands east of the Mississippi River in one month than experts estimated to be lost in over 45 years; and

Whereas, the economic, environmental, and ecological damage of the Deepwater Horizon BP Oil Spill is already calculated in terms of billions of dollars, and potential longer-lasting impacts are still being determined; and

Whereas, adopted in 2006, the federal Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) would provide ongoing revenues to Louisiana from federal oil revenue derived from gulf leasing and drilling, with the first payment in 2017 estimated to be approximately $176 million, and with such monies dedicated to coastal restoration, hurricane protection and coastal infrastructure; and

Whereas, despite strenuous objection, efforts are now underway to repeal or amend GOMESA that would result in depriving Louisiana and other gulf coast states of such monies; and

Whereas, the extension of Louisiana's seaward boundary into the Gulf of Mexico for three marine leagues will provide a much-needed stream of revenue for use in the state's ongoing efforts to clean up, rebuild, protect and restore the Louisiana coastal area from losses suffered due to both natural and manmade disasters, and will benefit both the state and the entire nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to extend Louisiana's seaward boundary in the Gulf of Mexico to three marine leagues; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM–142. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing the United States Congress to maintain the Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing arrangements established under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 for the creation of a recurring funding stream in support of Louisiana's coastal program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA) provides for the sharing of qualified Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues to Gulf Coast states and their political subdivisions that host energy production in order to help mitigate the demands associated with that production on infrastructure and natural resources; and

Whereas, GOMESA stipulates that funds can only be used for the purposes of coastal protection including conservation, restoration, hurricane protection, the mitigation of damage to wildlife and natural resources, and the mitigation of effects from Outer Continental Shelf activities through onshore infrastructure projects, and associated administrative costs; and

Whereas, in 2006, the people of Louisiana voted overwhelmingly to constitutionally dedicate the revenues received through GOMESA to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund for the purposes of coastal wetlands conservation, coastal restoration, hurricane protection, or infrastructure directly impacted by coastal wetland losses; and

Whereas, revenues received by Louisiana and its eligible coastal parishes from 2009 to 2015 under phase one of GOMESA provided only $11.5 million to the state, but phase two is estimated to generate more than ten times as much revenue each year for coastal projects; and

Whereas, GOMESA revenues have long been seen as a crucial, reliable and recurring revenue stream to support Louisiana's coastal protection and restoration work; and

Whereas, since 2007, Louisiana has created a framework for its coastal protection and restoration program and set the national standard for utilizing world-class science and engineering and public outreach to meet the challenges of a vanishing coast through its Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast (Coastal Master Plan); and

Whereas, the 2012 Coastal Master Plan further evolved Louisiana's approach to coastal protection and restoration with the prioritization of projects in a resource-constrained funding and physical environment; and

Whereas, Louisiana's land loss crisis demands a robust and integrated coastal protection and restoration program that operates effectively and urgently for the safety, livelihood, culture, and enjoyment of its people; and

Whereas, the entire United States derives fantastic benefit from the natural assets of coastal Louisiana including its energy resources, the commerce and connections provided by its ports and waterways, its seafood production, and many other invaluable ecosystem services; and

Whereas, Louisiana's coastline has already lost twenty-five percent of its 1932 land area and without the implementation of large scale restoration projects it could lose an additional 1,750 square miles of land at the end of fifty years; and

Whereas, Louisiana has a science-based plan to meet these challenges that include massive public investments in the restoration of America's largest river delta, structural protection where necessary, and an extensive program to floodproof, elevate, and voluntarily acquire homes and businesses at greatest risk of flooding; and

Whereas, Louisiana aims to pioneer the engineered replication of natural processes such as the construction of sediment diversions off of the Mississippi River, and develop other expertise that can be exported around the globe to other cities, states, and countries adapting to climate change; and

Whereas, by maintaining GOMESA, Congress can follow through on a promise nearly ten years old, support Louisiana's efforts to provide for a sustainable coast, help to protect and maintain nationally significant economic and natural resources, and help reduce federal liabilities like insured properties in the National Flood Insurance Program and future hurricane disaster payouts: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to maintain the Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing arrangements established under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 for the creation of a recurring funding stream in support of Louisiana's coastal program; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM–143. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would clarify that any agreement arrived at between the President of the United States and any foreign government or governments constitutes a ''treaty'' thereby necessitating a two-thirds affirmative vote of ''concurrence'' by the United States Senate as provided in Article II, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2758. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove consideration of certain pain-related issues from calculations under the Medicare hospital value-based purchasing program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself, Mr. BENNET, Ms. AYOTTE, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2759. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a nonrefundable credit for working family caregivers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2760. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to address certain issues related to the extension of consumer credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 2761. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to improve the process for establishing and revising flight paths and procedures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COATS (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2762. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for full recapture of the refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan in the case of individuals who are not lawfully present in the United States or who are incarcerated; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2763. A bill to provide the victims of Holocaust-era persecution and their heirs a fair opportunity to recover works of art confiscated or misappropriated by the Nazis; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2764. A bill to require the disclosure of information relating to cyberattacks on aircraft systems and maintenance and ground support systems for aircraft, to identify and address cybersecurity vulnerabilities to the United States commercial aviation system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2765. A bill to provide for the overall health and well-being of young people, including the promotion of comprehensive sexual health and healthy relationships, the reduction of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, and the prevention of dating violence and sexual assault, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2766. A bill to strengthen penalties for tax return identity thieves, establish enhanced sentences for crimes against vulnerable and frequently targeted victims, clarify the state of mind proof requirement in identity theft prosecutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. PETERS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2767. A bill to provide that service of the members of the organization known as the United States Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II constituted active military service for purposes of laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 2768. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to update a program to provide assistance for the planning, design, and construction of treatment works to intercept, transport, control, or treat municipal combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows, and to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to update certain guidance used to develop and determine the financial capability of communities to implement clean water infrastructure programs; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2769. A bill to require the Federal Aviation Administration to establish minimum standards for space for passengers on passenger aircraft; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 416. A resolution recognizing the contributions of Hawaii to the culinary heritage of the United States and designating the week beginning on June 12, 2016, as ''National Hawaiian Food Week''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 185

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to create a limited population pathway for approval of certain antibacterial drugs.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 689

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 689, a bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 860, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1205

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1205, a bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

S. 1333

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1333, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude cannabidiol and cannabidiol-rich plants from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 1567

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1567, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a review of the characterization or terms of discharge from the Armed Forces of individuals with mental health disorders alleged to affect terms of discharge.

S. 1775

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1895

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1895, a bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act for purposes of making claims under such Act based on exposure to atmospheric nuclear testing.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2125

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2125, a bill to make the Community Advantage Pilot Program of the Small Business Administration permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 2173

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2173, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to mental health services under the Medicare program.

S. 2236

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2236, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 2289

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2289, a bill to modernize and improve the Family Unification Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2441

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2441, a bill to provide that certain Cuban entrants are ineligible to receive refugee assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2467

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2467, a bill to reduce health care-associated infections and improve antibiotic stewardship through enhanced data collection and reporting, the implementation of State-based quality improvement efforts, and improvements in provider education in patient safety, and for other purposes.

S. 2494

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2494, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

S. 2536

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2536, a bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking regarding the inclusion in aircraft medical kits of medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2649

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2649, a bill to modify the treatment of the costs of health care furnished under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to veterans covered by health-plan contracts.

S. 2650

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2650, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games.

S. 2694

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2694, a bill to ensure America's law enforcement officers have access to lifesaving equipment needed to defend themselves and civilians from attacks by terrorists and violent criminals.

S. 2725

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2725, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2730

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2730, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the ''Ghost Army'', collectively, in recognition of its unique and incredible service during World War II.

S. 2736

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2736, a bill to improve access to durable medical equipment for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2746

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2746, a bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 2755

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2755, a bill to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty.

S.J. RES. 27

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 27, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

AMENDMENT NO. 3482

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3482 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3485

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3485 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3490

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3490 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3492

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3492 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3493

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3493 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3500

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3500 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3508

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3508 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3516

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3516 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2760. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to address certain issues related to the extension of consumer credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, an American historian, James Truslow Adams, wrote a book in 1931 entitled ''The Epic of America,'' and in this book he coined the term the ''American dream.'' He went on to say this: ''Ever since we have become an independent nation, each generation has seen an uprising of the ordinary Americans to save that dream from the forces which appeared to be overwhelming and dispelling it.''

One of those forces that has been overwhelming the effort of middle-class, hard-working Americans to be successful is predatory lending. Today I am specifically rising to discuss the introduction of the SAFE Lending Act. SAFE stands for stopping abuse and fraud in electronic lending.

The focus of this is short-term, high-interest loans, often referred to as ''payday'' loans. These loans often have interest rates of 300 percent, 400 percent, 500 percent. The debt a family has with one of those loans just grows and grows and grows. Consider this: If you take out $1,000 today, a year from now, at 500 percent interest, you owe $5,000. In 2 years you owe $25,000—an impossible sum for a family of modest means. So these payday loans pull families into a vortex of debt from which they cannot escape, and this vortex destroys them financially. These are huge consequences for the parents, certainly, but huge consequences for the children. It does a tremendous amount of damage to American families. This is why many major religions in the world have come out over time—over thousands a year—and said high-interest lending destroys and shouldn't be done, but here we have it, right here in America.

Many States, including my State of Oregon, have worked to end this vortex of debt. They have put a cap on the interest rate. They have stopped the every-2-week rollovers, and so they have returned, if you will, small-dollar lending to being an affordable instrument that doesn't destroy families. These tough State laws are under assault by new tactics of the payday loan industry, and we need to address those new tactics.

Specifically, the industry is starting to use an instrument called remotely created checks. How does this work? Let's say you have your bank account and you take out a payday loan. The dollars are put into your bank account, and you think they are going to stay there, but now this online payday loan company—and who knows where in the world these people really are; they may be overseas in any remote location, extremely difficult to find, extremely difficult to enforce our laws—has your bank account number, and that is all they need to write a check to themselves to withdraw the money from your account and put it in their account, an account that is likely to be

so remotely located no one can enforce the State laws.

In other words—let me say this again—the payday lender, once they have your checking account number, can reach into your account without your permission and take your money out; thereby, having the ability to bypass the State laws. An Oregon law may say if you have interest rates over those established by Oregon law your loan is uncollectible; that it is illegal in our State. Well, these online predatory payday lenders do not care that it is illegal in Oregon. They have your account number, and they are going to reach in and take your money illegally.

That is not the only predatory practice that is evolving. These payday loan companies have also established a practice whereby instead of putting money into your bank account, they give you a prepaid card. This prepaid card looks very convenient. You use it like a credit card, a debit card, and we are familiar with that in America, but here is the ringer. They put fees on these cards that add to the 300-percent, 400-percent, or 500-percent interest rate that is already destroying families, particularly over balance fees.

You may not know whether your card has $20 or $30 or $50 left on it. Some of these prepaid cards, in other parts of the financial industry, charge for all kinds of things. They charge you to call and ask what your balance is. They charge if you call and ask a question about how the card works or even what the fees are. They charge a fee just for asking what the fees are. Some of them charge a fee every time you use the card. Some might charge an additional monthly fee, but particularly these prepaid payday loan cards are notorious for their overbalance fees.

Let us assume you have perhaps $50 left in your account, you buy something for $52, and maybe immediately you get charged a $35 fee, which they can reach into your account and take, but then that is an overdraft fee on the bank, so the bank is now charging you a fee. Then, because you don't know it is an overdraft because they didn't turn down the transaction, you buy a pack of gum for 50 cents, and there is another $35 fee. You buy a hamburger at Burger King for lunch, and there is another fee. So you can see how these predatory fees line up very quickly on top of the 300-percent, 400-percent, or 500-percent interest rates.

So here is the thing. State after State has said these are destroying families and we are going to act. In fact, in the U.S. Senate years ago we acted to protect military families from these predatory loans. The admirals and generals came to Capitol Hill to testify. They said: At our military bases these predatory payday loans are destroying our military families, and it is not just their finances. When their finances are destroyed, relationships are frayed, children's opportunities are damaged. We cannot have this type of terrible impact on our military families. So we established a national cap of interest on these short-term loans.

It is good we did. It is good we protected our military families from these abusive, destructive practices, but if these practices are so damaging to families in the military, aren't they equally damaging to families who are not in the military? Shouldn't we apply the same protection to every American family we apply to a military family? Don't we value the success of every American family more than we value protection for legalized loan sharking? Certainly we should, in this Chamber, extend to all families in America the same protection we gave to military families. Until we do that, we should at least make sure the Federal framework requires honoring the tough laws passed by State after State after State to stop these practices. I think the total is about 19 States at this point.

That is why I introduced the SAFE Lending Act today. The SAFE Lending Act—stop the abuse and fraud in electronic lending. This act does a couple of key things. First of all, it says these remotely created checks in which a company reaches in and takes your money without your permission—those are banned. You regain control of your checking account. Second, the legislation bans the overdraft fees on these prepaid payday loan cards and other predatory fees established through the Commission. Third, it says that all small-dollar lenders have to register in order to be monitored by their States so they are not in an unregulated world out there without people even knowing they exist. Furthermore, it says that every lender of every type has to abide by the State laws. It doesn't matter whom they are regulated by. Finally, it bans lead generators.

Now, what is a lead generator? A lead generator is a fake Web site that pretends it is a payday loan company, offers you a product, and their whole goal is to get your bank account number. Again, once they have that bank account number, they can reach in and take funds out of your account. It is incredible that this is true; that you don't have to sign the check. They basically just use your number and ask to take away the money from John Consumer or Jane Consumer and give it to us, and the bank complies and does it. As amazing as that sounds, that is the way the banking system works. That is what these remotely created checks do.

So we to make sure that regardless of what your financial regulator is, you have to abide by the State rules, and we ban these lead generators that are fishing for these bank account numbers. Once they have them, they sell them to the lending industry, to the payday loan industry, and who knows what other hands these numbers end up in.

I was surprised a couple of years ago when I noticed a charge on my bank account that wasn't something that either my wife Mary or I had purchased from a store we don't go to. I looked at it carefully and discovered the number of the check was out of the order of my checkbook. So I pulled up the copy of the check on the computer, looking through my account on the computer, and I could see the number matched my account, but the name on the check didn't match my account, the address didn't match my account, and the signature didn't match my signature. None of it matched. The only thing on this check was the number of the bank account that matched my bank account, and that is all that is required for someone to reach in and take money out of your account.

That type of fraud is surprising as well, but it reinforces the point that once an online electronic payday loan company has your number, they can reach in. That is all they need to take the money out of your account. So we are going to ban these lead generators as another piece of this predatory profile of the electronic payday loan industry. It is why I am introducing the act.

I greatly appreciate my cosponsors on this act, and I would like to thank them all. They are Senator TOM UDALL, Senator BERNIE SANDERS, Senator PATTY MURRAY, Senator DICK DURBIN, Senator DICK BLUMENTHAL, Senator ELIZABETH WARREN, Senator TAMMY BALDWIN, Senator ED MARKEY, Senator RON WYDEN, and Senator CORY BOOKER. Thank you to all of my colleagues who care a lot about ending predatory financial transactions that strip billions of dollars out of hard-working Americans' accounts.

We have a lot of work to do on this. We have accomplished some. There is much more to be done. Certainly, when James Truslow Adams said that individuals of each generation will have to stand and fight against practices designed to destroy the American dream, he was talking about things such as this—practices that proceed to undermine the success of America's working families. Let us stop those predatory practices in their tracks and pass the SAFE Lending Act.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2763. A bill to provide the victims of Holocaust-era persecution and their heirs a fair opportunity to recover works of art confiscated or misappropriated by the Nazis; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2763

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Holocaust Expropriated Art Recovery Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) It is estimated that the Nazis confiscated or otherwise misappropriated as many as 650,000 works of art throughout Europe as part of their genocidal campaign against the Jewish people and other persecuted groups. This has been described as the ''greatest displacement of art in human history''.

(2) Following World War II, the United States and its allies attempted to return the stolen artworks to their countries of origin. Despite these efforts, many works of art were never reunited with their owners. Some of the art has since been discovered in the United States.

(3) In 1998, the United States convened a conference with 44 nations in Washington, D.C., known as the Washington Conference, which produced Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art. One of these principles is that ''steps should be taken expeditiously to achieve a just and fair solution'' to claims involving such art that has not been restituted if the owners or their heirs can be identified.

(4) The same year, Congress enacted the Holocaust Victims Redress Act (Public Law 105–158, 112 Stat. 15), which expressed the sense of Congress that ''all governments should undertake good faith efforts to facilitate the return of private and public property, such as works of art, to the rightful owners in cases where assets were confiscated from the claimant during the period of Nazi rule and there is reasonable proof that the claimant is the rightful owner.''.

(5) In 2009, the United States participated in a Holocaust Era Assets Conference in Prague, Czech Republic, with 45 other nations. At the conclusion of this conference, the participating nations issued the Terezin Declaration, which reaffirmed the 1998 Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art and urged all participants ''to ensure that their legal systems or alternative processes, while taking into account the different legal traditions, facilitate just and fair solutions with regard to Nazi-confiscated and looted art, and to make certain that claims to recover such art are resolved expeditiously and based on the facts and merits of the claims and all the relevant documents submitted by all parties.''. The Declaration also urged participants to ''consider all relevant issues when applying various legal provisions that may impede the restitution of art and cultural property, in order to achieve just and fair solutions, as well as alternative dispute resolution, where appropriate under law.''.

(6) Numerous victims of Nazi persecution and their heirs have taken legal action to recover Nazi-confiscated art. These lawsuits face significant procedural obstacles partly due to State statutes of limitations, which typically bar claims within some limited number of years from either the date of the loss or the date that the claim should have been discovered. In some cases, this means that the claims expired before World War II even ended. (See, e.g., The Detroit Institute of Arts v. Ullin, No. 06–10333, 2007 WL 1016996 (E.D. Mich. Mar. 31, 2007)). The unique and horrific circumstances of World War II and the Holocaust make statutes of limitations and other time-based procedural defenses especially burdensome to the victims and their heirs. Those seeking recovery of Nazi-confiscated art must painstakingly piece together their cases from a fragmentary historical record ravaged by persecution, war, and genocide. This costly process often cannot be done within the time constraints imposed by existing law.

(7) Federal legislation is needed because the only court that has considered the question held that the Constitution prohibits States from making exceptions to their statutes of limitations to accommodate claims involving the recovery of Nazi-confiscated art. In Von Saher v. Norton Simon Museum of Art, 592 F.3d 954 (9th Cir. 2009), the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit invalidated a California law that extended the State statute of limitations for claims seeking recovery of Holocaust-era artwork. The Court held that the law was an unconstitutional infringement of the Federal Government's exclusive authority over foreign affairs, which includes the resolution of war-related disputes. In light of this precedent, the enactment of a Federal law is the best way to ensure that claims to Nazi-confiscated art are adjudicated on their merits.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are the following:

(1) To ensure that laws governing claims to Nazi-confiscated art further United States policy as set forth in the Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, the Holocaust Victims Redress Act, and the Terezin Declaration.

(2) To ensure that claims to artwork stolen or misappropriated by the Nazis are not barred by statutes of limitations and other similar legal doctrines but are resolved in a just and fair manner on the merits.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''actual discovery'' does not include any constructive knowledge imputed by law;

(2) the term ''artwork or other cultural property'' includes any painting, sculpture, drawing, work of graphic art, print, multiples, book, manuscript, archive, or sacred or ceremonial object;

(3) the term ''persecution during the Nazi era'' means any persecution by the Nazis or their allies during the period from January 1, 1933, to December 31, 1945, that was based on race, ethnicity, or religion; and

(4) the term ''unlawfully lost'' includes any theft, seizure, forced sale, sale under duress, or any other loss of an artwork or cultural property that would not have occurred absent persecution during the Nazi era.

SEC. 5. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal law, any provision of State law, or any defense at law or equity relating to the passage of time (including the doctrine of laches), a civil claim or cause of action against a defendant to recover any artwork or other cultural property unlawfully lost because of persecution during the Nazi era or for damages for the taking or detaining of any artwork or other cultural property unlawfully lost because of persecution during the Nazi era may be commenced not later than 6 years after the actual discovery by the claimant or the agent of the claimant of—

(1) the identity and location of the artwork or cultural property; and

(2) information or facts sufficient to indicate that the claimant has a claim for a possessory interest in the artwork or cultural property that was unlawfully lost.

(b) POSSIBLE MISIDENTIFICATION.—For purposes of subsection (a)(1), in a case in which there is a possibility of misidentification of the artwork or cultural property, the identification of the artwork or cultural property shall occur on the date on which there are facts sufficient to determine that the artwork or cultural property is likely to be the artwork or cultural property that was unlawfully lost.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) shall apply to any civil claim or cause of action (including a civil claim or cause of action described in paragraph (2)) that is—

(A) pending on the date of enactment of this Act; or

(B) filed during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on December 31, 2026.

(2) INCLUSION OF PREVIOUSLY DISMISSED CLAIMS.—A civil claim or cause of action described in this paragraph is a civil claim or cause of action—

(A) that was dismissed before the date of enactment of this Act based on the expiration of a Federal or State statute of limitations or any other defense at law or equity relating to the passage of time (including the doctrine of laches); and

(B) in which final judgment has not been entered.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 416—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF HAWAII TO THE CULINARY HERITAGE OF THE UNITED STATES AND DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING ON JUNE 12, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL HAWAIIAN FOOD WEEK''

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 416

Whereas when individuals first came to the Hawaiian islands more than 1,500 years ago, there was little to eat other than birds and a few species of ferns, but the individuals found rich volcanic soil, a year-round growing season, and abundant fisheries;

Whereas the history of Hawaii is inextricably linked with—

(1) foods brought to the Hawaiian islands by the first individuals who came to Hawaii and successive waves of voyagers to the Hawaiian islands;

(2) the agricultural and ranching potential of the land of Hawaii; and

(3) the readily available seafood from the ocean and coasts of Hawaii;

Whereas the food cultures initially brought to Hawaii came from places including French Polynesia, China, Japan, Portugal, North Korea, South Korea, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Samoa;

Whereas the foods first brought to Hawaii were simple, hearty fare of working men and women that reminded the men and women of their distant homes;

Whereas individuals in Hawaii, in the spirit of Aloha, shared favorite dishes with each other, and as a result, the individuals began to appreciate new tastes and learned how to bring new ideas into their cooking;

Whereas the blend of styles in Hawaiian cooking evolves as new groups of individuals make Hawaii their home;

Whereas the fusion of dishes from around the world creates a unique cuisine for Hawaii that is as much a part of a visit to Hawaii as the welcoming climate, friendly individuals, and beautiful beaches in Hawaii;

Whereas the food of Hawaii is appealing because it came from hard-working communities of individuals that farmed, fished, or ranched for their livelihoods, which are core experiences of individuals throughout the United States;

Whereas the growing appreciation for the food of Hawaii comes from hard-working and ingenious farmers, fishers, educators, ranchers, chefs, and businesses that innovate and export the taste of Hawaii all over the world; and

Whereas as the taste for the food of Hawaii spreads across the United States, individuals in Hawaii proudly welcome individuals in the State of Georgia to partner and bring the cuisine of the individuals ''home'' to new communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning on June 12, 2016, as ''National Hawaiian Food Week''; and

(2) recognizes the contributions of Hawaii to the culinary heritage of the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3518. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3519. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3520. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3521. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3522. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3523. Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3524. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3525. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3526. Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3527. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3528. Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3529. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3530. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3531. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3532. Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3533. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3534. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. THUNE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3535. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3536. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3537. Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3538. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3539. Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. VITTER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BURR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3540. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3541. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3542. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3543. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3544. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3545. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3546. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3547. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3548. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3549. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3550. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3551. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3552. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3553. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3554. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3555. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3556. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3557. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3558. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3559. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3560. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3561. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3562. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3563. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3564. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3518. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle ____—Arm All Pilots Act

SEC. ___01. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Arm All Pilots Act of 2016''.

SEC. ___02. FACILITATION OF AND LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) IMPROVED ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(ii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The training of'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The training of''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Arm All Pilots Act of 2016, the Secretary shall—

''(aa) designate 5 additional firearms training facilities located in various regions of the United States for Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment;

''(bb) designate firearms training facilities approved before such date of enactment for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers as facilities approved for initial training and certification of pilots seeking to be deputized as Federal flight deck officers; and

''(cc) designate additional firearms training facilities for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment.''.

(b) FIREARMS REQUALIFICATION FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(iii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Under Secretary shall'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall'';

(2) in subclause (I), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking ''the Under Secretary'' and inserting ''the Secretary, but not more frequently than once every 6 months,''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) USE OF FACILITIES FOR REQUALIFICATION.—The Secretary shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to requalify to carry a firearm under the program through training at a private or government-owned gun range certified to provide firearm requalification training.

''(III) SELF-REPORTING.—The Secretary shall determine that a Federal flight deck officer has met the requirements to requalify to carry a firearm under the program if—

''(aa) the officer reports to the Secretary that the officer has participated in a sufficient number of hours of training to requalify to carry a firearm under the program; and

''(bb) the administrator of the facility at which the officer conducted the requalification training verifies that the officer participated in that number of hours of training.''.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—Section 44921(c)(2) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—

''(i) INITIAL TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) initial training of not more than 5 days for a pilot to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for not more than 2 days of such training; and

''(III) not more than 3 days of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.

''(ii) RECURRENT TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) recurrent training of not more than 2 days, not more frequently than once every 5 years, for a pilot to maintain deputization as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for a full-day training session for not more than one day of such training; and

''(III) not more than one day of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.''.

(d) OTHER MEASURES TO FACILITATE TRAINING.—Section 44921(e) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Pilots participating'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Pilots participating''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) FACILITATION OF TRAINING.—

''(A) TIME OFF FOR TRAINING.—An air carrier shall permit a Federal flight deck officer or a pilot seeking to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer to take a reasonable amount of leave from work to participate in initial and recurrent training for the program. An air carrier shall not be obligated to provide such an officer or pilot compensation for such leave.

''(B) PRACTICE AMMUNITION.—At the request of a Federal flight deck officer, the Secretary shall provide to the officer sufficient practice ammunition to conduct at least one practice course every month.''.

SEC. ___03. CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS BY FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Section 44921(f) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall authorize a Federal flight deck officer to carry a firearm while engaged in providing air transportation or intrastate air transportation. The authority provided to a Federal flight deck officer under this paragraph includes the authority to carry a firearm—

''(A) on the officer's body, loaded, and holstered;

''(B) when traveling to a flight duty assignment, throughout the duty assignment, and when traveling from a flight duty assignment to the officer's home or place where the officer is residing when traveling; and

''(C) in the passenger cabin and while traveling in a cockpit jump seat.

''(2) CONCEALED CARRY.—A Federal flight deck officer shall make reasonable efforts to keep the officer's firearm concealed when in public.

''(3) PURCHASE OF FIREARM BY OFFICER.—Notwithstanding subsection (c)(1), a Federal flight deck officer may purchase a firearm and carry that firearm aboard an aircraft of which the officer is the pilot in accordance with this section if the firearm is of a type that may be used under the program.''.

(b) CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS.—Paragraph (5) of section 44921(f), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended to read as follows:

''(5) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary—

''(i) may take such action as may be necessary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm in a foreign country whenever necessary to participate in the program; and

''(ii) shall take such actions as are within the authority of the Secretary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm while engaged in providing foreign air transportation.

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH FEDERAL AIR MARSHAL PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall work to make policies relating to the carriage of firearms on flights in foreign air transportation by Federal flight deck officers consistent with the policies of the Federal air marshal program for carrying firearms on such flights.''.

(c) CARRIAGE OF FIREARM IN PASSENGER CABIN.—

(1) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Section 44921 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a Federal flight deck officer to place a firearm

in a locked container, or in any other manner render the firearm unavailable, when the cockpit door is opened.''.

(2) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 44921(b)(3) is amended—

(A) by striking subparagraph (G); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (H) through (N) as subparagraphs (G) through (M), respectively.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

(1) prescribe regulations on the proper storage of firearms when a Federal flight deck officer is at home or where the officer is residing when traveling; and

(2) revise the procedural requirements established under section 44921(b)(1) of title 49, United States Code, to implement the amendments made by subsection (c).

SEC. ___04. PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921(d)(2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as clauses (i), (ii), and (iii), respectively, and by moving such clauses, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(2) by striking ''A pilot is'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A pilot is''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL CERTIFICATES.—In establishing standards under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary may not establish medical or physical standards for a pilot to become a Federal flight deck officer that are inconsistent with or more stringent than the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for the issuance of a first- or second-class airman medical certificate under part 67 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. ___05. TRANSFER OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.

Section 44921(d) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) TRANSFER FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.—A pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer who moves to inactive status may return to active status after completing one program of recurrent training described in subsection (c).''.

SEC. ___06. FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921, as amended by section ___03(c)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—

''(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPEDITED SCREENING.—The Secretary shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to be screened through the crew member identity verification program of the Transportation Security Administration (commonly known as the 'Known Crew Member program') when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(2) PROHIBITION ON PAPERWORK.—The Secretary may not require a Federal flight deck officer to fill out any forms or paperwork when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(3) STERILE AREA DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'sterile area' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. ___07. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 44921, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Under Secretary of Transportation for Security'' and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security'';

(2) in subsection (d)(4), by striking ''may,'' and inserting ''may'';

(3) in subsection (i)(2), by striking ''the Under Secretary may'' and inserting ''may'';

(4) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(B) by striking ''APPLICABILITY'' and all that follows through ''This section'' and inserting ''APPLICABILITY.—This section'';

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(n) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) PILOT.—The term 'pilot' means an individual who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight or any other flight deck crew member.

''(2) ALL-CARGO AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term 'air transportation' includes all-cargo air transportation.''; and

(6) by striking ''Under Secretary'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary''.

SEC. ___08. REFUNDS OF CERTAIN SECURITY SERVICE FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.

Section 44940 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) REFUND OF FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.—From fees received in a fiscal year under subsection (a)(1), each air carrier that certifies to the Secretary of Homeland Security that all flights operated by the air carrier have on board a pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer under section 44921 shall receive an amount equal to 10 percent of the fees collected under subsection (a)(1) from passengers on flights operated by that air carrier in that fiscal year.''.

SEC. ___09. TREATMENT OF INFORMATION ABOUT FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS AS SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revise section 15.5(b)(11) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to classify information about pilots deputized as Federal flight deck officers under section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as sensitive security information in a manner consistent with the classification of information about Federal air marshals.

SEC. ___10. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SA 3519. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 41, line 25, strike ''Section'' and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section

On page 42, between lines 7 and 8, insert the following:

(b) GRANDFATHER RULE.—Section 47109(c)(2) is amended by inserting ''or non-primary commercial service airport that is'' after ''primary non-hub airport''.

SA 3520. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 201, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

(e) REPORT ON COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE AFFORDABILITY.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of—

(A) the costs associated with conducting air ambulance operations;

(B) prices charged to consumers for air ambulance operations;

(C) methods for consumers to cover costs of air ambulance operations; and

(D) solutions to improve the overall affordability of air ambulance operations.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall consider—

(A) data pertaining to the final cost to the consumer for utilizing air ambulance operations;

(B) the frequency of inclusion of coverage for air ambulance operations in health insurance plans; and

(C) any unique qualities of air ambulance operations that would warrant additional Federal or State oversight on prices, routes, and service.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report containing the results of the study conducted under this subsection and the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations to—

(A) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Finance of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(F) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives; and

(H) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

SA 3521. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PERIODIC AUDITS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OF BUY AMERICAN ACT CONTRACTING COMPLIANCE.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC AUDITS OF CONTRACTING COMPLIANCE.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall conduct periodic audits of contracting

practices and policies related to procurement requirements under chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall ensure that findings and other information resulting from audits conducted pursuant to subsection (a) are included in the semiannual report transmitted to congressional committees under section 8(f) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App).

SA 3522. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 189, strike lines 2 through 11, and insert the following:

(b) CONTENTS.—In revising the regulations under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that a flight attendant scheduled to a duty period of 14 hours or less is given a scheduled rest period of at least 10 consecutive hours and that such rest period is not reduced under any circumstances.

SA 3523. Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF CREDIT FOR PRODUCTION FROM ADVANCED NUCLEAR POWER FACILITIES.

(a) SPECIAL RULE FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 45J of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f), and

(B) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection:

''(e) SPECIAL RULE FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.—

''(1) TRANSFER OF CREDIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an advanced nuclear power facility which is owned by a public private partnership or co-owned by a qualified public entity and a non-public entity, any qualified public entity which is a member of such partnership or a co-owner of such facility may transfer such entity's allocation of the credit under subsection (a), or any portion thereof, to—

''(i) any non-public entity which is a member of such partnership or which is a co-owner of such facility,

''(ii) any person responsible for designing the facility, or

''(iii) any person responsible for, or participating in, construction of the facility.

Any amount transferred to another person under this paragraph shall be subject to the limitations under subsections (b) and (c) and section 38.

''(B) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN TAXPAYERS.—Under regulations promulgated by the Secretary, in the case of any person described in subparagraph (ii) and (iii) of subparagraph (A) to whom a credit is transferred—

''(i) such person shall be treated as an owner of the advanced nuclear power facility to which the credit relates, and

''(ii) such person shall be treated as the producer and seller of so much of the electricity produced and sold at such facility as bears the same ratio to all such electricity produced and sold as the amount of credit transferred under paragraph (1) bears to the total amount of credit allocated to the qualified public entity.

''(2) QUALIFIED PUBLIC ENTITY.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'qualified public entity' means—

''(A) a Federal, State, or local government entity, or any political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality thereof,

''(B) a mutual or cooperative electric company described in section 501(c)(12) or section 1381(a)(2), or

''(C) a not-for-profit electric utility which has or had received a loan or loan guarantee under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.

''(3) VERIFICATION OF TRANSFER OF ALLOCATION.—A qualified public entity that makes a transfer under paragraph (1), and a nonpublic entity that receives an allocation under such a transfer, shall provide verification of such transfer in such manner and at such time as the Secretary shall prescribe.

''(4) TREATMENT OF TRANSFER UNDER PRIVATE USE RULES.—For purposes of section 141(b)(1), any benefit derived by a non-public entity in connection with a transfer under paragraph (1) shall not be taken into account as a private business use.''.

(2) COORDINATION WITH GENERAL BUSINESS CREDIT.—Subsection (c) of section 38 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) SPECIAL RULE FOR CREDIT FOR PRODUCTION FROM ADVANCED NUCLEAR POWER FACILITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of the credit for production from advanced nuclear power facilities determined under section 45J(a), paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to any qualified public entity (as defined in section 45J(e)(2)) which transfers the entity's allocation of such credit as provided in section 45J(e)(1).

''(B) VERIFICATION OF TRANSFER.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any qualified public entity unless such entity provides verification of a transfer of credit allocation as required under section 45J(e)(3).''.

(b) SPECIAL RULE FOR PROCEEDS OF TRANSFERS FOR MUTUAL OR COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC COMPANIES.—Section 501(c)(12) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(I) In the case of a mutual or cooperative electric company described in this paragraph or an organization described in section 1381(a)(2), income received or accrued from a transfer described in section 45J(e)(1) shall be treated as an amount collected from members for the sole purpose of meeting losses and expenses.''.

(c) PERMANENT EXTENSION FOR QUALIFICATION AS ADVANCED NUCLEAR POWER FACILITY.—Subparagraph (B) of section 45J(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and before January 1, 2021''.

(d) MODIFICATION OF LIMITATION.—Section 45J(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking paragraphs (3) and (4) and inserting the following:

''(3) ALLOCATION OF LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall allocate the national megawatt capacity limitation to each facility in an amount equal to the nameplate capacity of the facility in the order in which the facility was placed in service.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), the amendments made by this section shall apply to electricity produced in taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) PROCEEDS OF MUTUAL OR COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC COMPANIES.—The amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) ALLOCATION OF LIMITATION.—The amendment made by subsection (d) shall apply to allocations made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3524. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike section 3113 and insert the following:

SEC. 3113. LASTING IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY TRAVEL.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Lasting Improvements to Family Travel Act'' or the ''LIFT Act''.

(b) ACCOMPANYING MINORS FOR SECURITY SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall formalize security screening procedures that allow for one adult family caregiver to accompany a minor child throughout the entirety of the security screening process.

(c) SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations under section 41705 of title 49, United States Code, that direct all air carriers to include pregnant women in their nondiscrimination policies, including policies with respect to preboarding or advance boarding of aircraft.

(d) FAMILY SEATING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations directing each air carrier to establish a policy that ensures that, if a family is traveling on a reservation with a child under the age of 13, that child is able to sit in a seat adjacent to the seat of an accompanying family member over the age of 13 at no additional cost.

SA 3525. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 121, line 26, strike ''shall'' and insert ''may''.

SA 3526. Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment

intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2506. AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish an advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

(b) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall—

(1) conduct a review of the practices and procedures of the Federal Aviation Administration for developing proposals with respect to changes in regulations, policies, or guidance of the Federal Aviation Administration relating to airspace that affect airport operations, airport capacity, the environment, or communities in the vicinity of airports, including—

(A) an assessment of the extent to which there is consultation, or a lack of consultation, with respect to such proposals—

(i) between and among the affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration, including the Air Traffic Organization, the Office of Airports, the Flight Standards Service, the Office of NextGen, and the Office of Energy and Environment; and

(ii) between the Federal Aviation Administration and affected entities, including airports, aircraft operators, communities, and State and local governments;

(2) recommend revisions to such practices and procedures to improve communications and coordination between and among affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration and with other affected entities with respect to proposals described in paragraph (1) and the potential effects of such proposals;

(3) conduct a review of the management by the Federal Aviation Administration of systems and information used to evaluate data relating to obstructions to air navigation or navigational facilities under part 77 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(4) make recommendations to ensure that the data described in paragraph (3) is publicly accessible and streamlined to ensure developers, airport operators, and other interested parties may obtain relevant information concerning potential obstructions when working to preserve and create a safe and efficient navigable airspace.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the advisory committee established under subsection (a) shall include representatives of—

(1) air carriers, including passenger and cargo air carriers;

(2) general aviation, including business aviation and fixed wing aircraft and rotocraft;

(3) airports of various sizes and types;

(4) air traffic controllers; and

(5) State aviation officials.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the establishment of the advisory committee under subsection (a), the advisory committee shall submit to Congress a report on the actions taken by the advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

SA 3527. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGE ACT

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Vessel Incidental Discharge Act''.

SEC. __02. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Since the enactment of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (22 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) in 1980, the United States Coast Guard has been the principal Federal authority charged with administering, enforcing, and prescribing regulations relating to the discharge of pollutants from vessels engaged in maritime commerce and transportation.

(2) The Coast Guard estimates there are approximately 21,560,000 State-registered recreational vessels, 75,000 commercial fishing vessels, and 33,000 freight and tank barges operating in United States waters.

(3) From 1973 to 2005, certain discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel were exempted by regulation from otherwise applicable permitting requirements.

(4) During the 32 years during which this regulatory exemption was in effect, Congress enacted several statutes to deal with the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, including—

(A) the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) in 1980;

(B) the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. 4701 et seq.);

(C) the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (110 Stat. 4073);

(D) section 415 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 3434) and section 623 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 (33 U.S.C. 1901 note), which established interim and permanent requirements, respectively, for the regulation of vessel discharges of certain bulk cargo residue;

(E) title XIV of division B of Appendix D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001 (114 Stat. 2763), which prohibited or limited certain vessel discharges in certain areas of Alaska;

(F) section 204 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 1902a), which established requirements for the regulation of vessel discharges of agricultural cargo residue material in the form of hold washings; and

(G) title X of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (33 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), which provided for the implementation of the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title is to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards and requirements for the management of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

SEC. __03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES.—The term ''aquatic nuisance species'' means a nonindigenous species (including a pathogen) that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of navigable waters or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural, or recreational activities dependent on such waters.

(3) BALLAST WATER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''ballast water'' means any water and water-suspended matter taken aboard a vessel—

(i) to control or maintain trim, list, draught, stability, or stresses of the vessel; or

(ii) during the cleaning, maintenance, or other operation of a ballast water treatment technology of the vessel.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''ballast water'' does not include any substance that is added to water described in subparagraph (A) that is not directly related to the operation of a properly functioning ballast water treatment technology under this title.

(4) BALLAST WATER DISCHARGE STANDARD.—The term ''ballast water discharge standard'' means the numerical ballast water discharge standard set forth in section 151.2030 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations or section 151.1511 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, as applicable, or a revised numerical ballast water discharge standard established under subsection (a)(1)(B), (b), or (c) of section __05.

(5) BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM; MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.—The terms ''ballast water management system'' and ''management system'' mean any system, including all ballast water treatment equipment and associated control and monitoring equipment, used to process ballast water to kill, remove, render harmless, or avoid the uptake or discharge of organisms.

(6) BIOCIDE.—The term ''biocide'' means a substance or organism, including a virus or fungus, that is introduced into or produced by a ballast water management system to reduce or eliminate aquatic nuisance species as part of the process used to comply with a ballast water discharge standard under this title.

(7) DISCHARGE INCIDENTAL TO THE NORMAL OPERATION OF A VESSEL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel'' means—

(i) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel of—

(I)(aa) ballast water, graywater, bilge water, cooling water, oil water separator effluent, anti-fouling hull coating leachate, boiler or economizer blowdown, byproducts from cathodic protection, controllable pitch propeller and thruster hydraulic fluid, distillation and reverse osmosis brine, elevator pit effluent, firemain system effluent, freshwater layup effluent, gas turbine wash water, motor gasoline and compensating effluent, refrigeration and air condensate effluent, seawater pumping biofouling prevention substances, boat engine wet exhaust, sonar dome effluent, exhaust gas scrubber washwater, or stern tube packing gland effluent; or

(bb) any other pollutant associated with the operation of a marine propulsion system, shipboard maneuvering system, habitability system, or installed major equipment, or from a protective, preservative, or absorptive application to the hull of a vessel;

(II) weather deck runoff, deck wash, aqueous film forming foam effluent, chain locker

effluent, non-oily machinery wastewater, underwater ship husbandry effluent, welldeck effluent, or fish hold and fish hold cleaning effluent; or

(III) any effluent from a properly functioning marine engine; or

(ii) a discharge of a pollutant into navigable waters in connection with the testing, maintenance, or repair of a system, equipment, or engine described in subclause (I)(bb) or (III) of clause (i) whenever the vessel is waterborne.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel'' does not include—

(i) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel of—

(I) rubbish, trash, garbage, incinerator ash, or other such material discharged overboard;

(II) oil or a hazardous substance as those terms are defined in section 311 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321);

(III) sewage as defined in section 312(a)(6) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1322(a)(6)); or

(IV) graywater referred to in section 312(a)(6) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1322(a)(6));

(ii) an emission of an air pollutant resulting from the operation onboard a vessel of a vessel propulsion system, motor driven equipment, or incinerator; or

(iii) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel when the vessel is operating in a capacity other than as a means of transportation on water.

(8) GEOGRAPHICALLY LIMITED AREA.—The term ''geographically limited area'' means an area—

(A) with a physical limitation, including limitation by physical size and limitation by authorized route such as the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, that prevents a vessel from operating outside the area, as determined by the Secretary; or

(B) that is ecologically homogeneous, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other Federal departments or agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(9) MANUFACTURER.—The term ''manufacturer'' means a person engaged in the manufacture, assemblage, or importation of ballast water treatment technology.

(10) NAVIGABLE WATERS.—The term ''navigable waters'' has the meaning given the term in section 2.36 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(11) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

(12) VESSEL.—The term ''vessel'' means every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or practically or otherwise capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water.

SEC. __04. REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall establish, implement, and enforce uniform national standards and requirements for the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

(2) BASIS.—Except as provided under paragraph (3), the standards and requirements established under paragraph (1)—

(A) with respect to ballast water, shall be based upon the best available technology that is economically achievable;

(B) with respect to discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water, shall be based on best management practices; and

(C) shall supersede any permitting requirement or prohibition on discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under any other provision of law.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The standards and requirements established under paragraph (1) shall not supersede regulations, in place on the date of the enactment of this Act or established by a rulemaking proceeding after such date of enactment, which cover a discharge in a national marine sanctuary or in a marine national monument.

(b) ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary shall administer and enforce the uniform national standards and requirements under this title. Each State may enforce the uniform national standards and requirements under this title.

(c) SANCTIONS.—

(1) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(A) BALLAST WATER.—Any person who violates a regulation issued pursuant to this title regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel of ballast water shall be liable for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed $25,000. Each day of a continuing violation constitutes a separate violation.

(B) OTHER DISCHARGE.—Any person who violates a regulation issued pursuant to this title regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water shall be liable for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed $10,000. Each day of a continuing violation constitutes a separate violation.

(C) IN REM LIABILITY.—A vessel operated in violation of a regulation issued under this title shall be liable in rem for any civil penalty assessed under this subsection for that violation.

(2) CRIMINAL PENALTIES.—

(A) BALLAST WATER.—Any person who knowingly violates a regulation issued pursuant to this title regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel of ballast water shall be punished by a fine of not more than $100,000, imprisonment for not more than 2 years, or both.

(B) OTHER DISCHARGE.—Any person who knowingly violates a regulation issued pursuant to this title regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water shall be punished by a fine of not more than $50,000, imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

(3) REVOCATION OF CLEARANCE.—The Secretary shall withhold or revoke the clearance of a vessel required under section 60105 of title 46, United States Code, if the owner or operator of the vessel is in violation of a regulation issued pursuant to this Act.

(4) EXCEPTION TO SANCTIONS.—It shall be an affirmative defense to any charge of a violation of this title that compliance with this title would, because of adverse weather, equipment failure, or any other relevant condition, have threatened the safety or stability of a vessel, its crew, or its passengers.

SEC. __05. UNIFORM NATIONAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REGULATION OF DISCHARGES INCIDENTAL TO THE NORMAL OPERATION OF A VESSEL.

(a) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the requirements set forth in the final rule, Standards for Living Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water Discharged in U.S. Waters (77 Fed. Reg. 17254 (March 23, 2012), as corrected at 77 Fed. Reg. 33969 (June 8, 2012)), shall be the management requirements for a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel until the Secretary revises the ballast water discharge standard under subsection (b) or adopts a more stringent State standard under subparagraph (B).

(B) ADOPTION OF MORE STRINGENT STATE STANDARD.—If the Secretary makes a determination in favor of a State petition under section 610, the Secretary shall adopt the more stringent ballast water discharge standard specified in the statute or regulation that is the subject of that State petition instead of the ballast water discharge standard in the final rule described under subparagraph (A).

(2) INITIAL MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCHARGES OTHER THAN BALLAST WATER.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall issue a final rule establishing best management practices for discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water.

(b) REVISED BALLAST WATER DISCHARGE STANDARD; 8-YEAR REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the feasibility review under paragraph (2), not later than January 1, 2024, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall issue a final rule revising the ballast water discharge standard under subsection (a)(1) so that a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel will contain—

(A) less than 1 organism that is living or has not been rendered harmless per 10 cubic meters that is 50 or more micrometers in minimum dimension;

(B) less than 1 organism that is living or has not been rendered harmless per 10 milliliters that is less than 50 micrometers in minimum dimension and more than 10 micrometers in minimum dimension;

(C) concentrations of indicator microbes that are less than—

(i) 1 colony-forming unit of toxicogenic Vibrio cholera (serotypes O1 and O139) per 100 milliliters or less than 1 colony-forming unit of that microbe per gram of wet weight of zoological samples;

(ii) 126 colony-forming units of Escherichia coli per 100 milliliters; and

(iii) 33 colony-forming units of intestinal enterococci per 100 milliliters; and

(D) concentrations of such additional indicator microbes and of viruses as may be specified in regulations issued by the Secretary in consultation with the Administrator and such other Federal agencies as the Secretary and the Administrator consider appropriate.

(2) FEASIBILITY REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less than 2 years before January 1, 2024, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall complete a review to determine the feasibility of achieving the revised ballast water discharge standard under paragraph (1).

(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW OF BALLAST WATER DISCHARGE STANDARD.—In conducting a review under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider whether revising the ballast water discharge standard will result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species, taking into account—

(i) improvements in the scientific understanding of biological and ecological processes that lead to the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species;

(ii) improvements in ballast water management systems, including—

(I) the capability of such management systems to achieve a revised ballast water discharge standard;

(II) the effectiveness and reliability of such management systems in the shipboard environment;

(III) the compatibility of such management systems with the design and operation of a vessel by class, type, and size;

(IV) the commercial availability of such management systems; and

(V) the safety of such management systems;

(iii) improvements in the capabilities to detect, quantify, and assess the viability of aquatic nuisance species at the concentrations under consideration;

(iv) the impact of ballast water management systems on water quality; and

(v) the costs, cost-effectiveness, and impacts of—

(I) a revised ballast water discharge standard, including the potential impacts on shipping, trade, and other uses of the aquatic environment; and

(II) maintaining the existing ballast water discharge standard, including the potential impacts on water-related infrastructure, recreation, propagation of native fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and other uses of navigable waters.

(C) LOWER REVISED DISCHARGE STANDARD.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines on the basis of the feasibility review and after an opportunity for a public hearing that no ballast water management system can be certified under section __06 to comply with the revised ballast water discharge standard under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall require the use of the management system that achieves the performance levels of the best available technology that is economically achievable.

(ii) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that the management system under clause (i) cannot be implemented before the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) with respect to a class of vessels, the Secretary shall extend the implementation deadline for that class of vessels for not more than 36 months.

(iii) COMPLIANCE.—If the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) is extended, the Secretary shall recommend action to ensure compliance with the extended implementation deadline under clause (ii).

(D) HIGHER REVISED DISCHARGE STANDARD.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that a ballast water management system exists that exceeds the revised ballast water discharge standard under paragraph (1) with respect to a class of vessels and is the best available technology that is economically achievable, the Secretary shall revise the ballast water discharge standard for that class of vessels to incorporate the higher discharge standard.

(ii) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that the management system under clause (i) can be implemented before the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) with respect to a class of vessels, the Secretary shall accelerate the implementation deadline for that class of vessels. If the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) is accelerated, the Secretary shall provide not less than 24 months notice before the accelerated deadline takes effect.

(3) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—The revised ballast water discharge standard under paragraph (1) shall apply to a vessel beginning on the date of the first drydocking of the vessel on or after January 1, 2024, but not later than December 31, 2026.

(4) REVISED DISCHARGE STANDARD COMPLIANCE DEADLINES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish a compliance deadline for compliance by a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel) with a revised ballast water discharge standard under this subsection.

(B) PROCESS FOR GRANTING EXTENSIONS.—In issuing regulations under this subsection, the Secretary shall establish a process for an owner or operator to submit a petition to the Secretary for an extension of a compliance deadline with respect to the vessel of the owner or operator.

(C) PERIOD OF EXTENSIONS.—An extension issued under subparagraph (B) may—

(i) apply for a period of not to exceed 18 months from the date of the applicable deadline under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) be renewable for an additional period of not to exceed 18 months.

(D) FACTORS.—In issuing a compliance deadline or reviewing a petition under this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider, with respect to the ability of an owner or operator to meet a compliance deadline, the following factors:

(i) Whether the management system to be installed is available in sufficient quantities to meet the compliance deadline.

(ii) Whether there is sufficient shipyard or other installation facility capacity.

(iii) Whether there is sufficient availability of engineering and design resources.

(iv) Vessel characteristics, such as engine room size, layout, or a lack of installed piping.

(v) Electric power generating capacity aboard the vessel.

(vi) Safety of the vessel and crew.

(vii) Any other factors the Secretary considers appropriate, including the availability of a ballast water reception facility or other means of managing ballast water.

(E) CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS.—

(i) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall approve or deny a petition for an extension of a compliance deadline submitted by an owner or operator under this paragraph.

(ii) DEADLINE.—If the Secretary does not approve or deny a petition referred to in clause (i) on or before the last day of the 90-day period beginning on the date of submission of the petition, the petition shall be deemed approved.

(c) FUTURE REVISIONS OF VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGE STANDARDS; DECENNIAL REVIEWS.—

(1) REVISED BALLAST WATER DISCHARGE STANDARDS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall complete a review, 10 years after the issuance of a final rule under subsection (b) and every 10 years thereafter, to determine whether further revision of the ballast water discharge standard would result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species.

(2) REVISED STANDARDS FOR DISCHARGES OTHER THAN BALLAST WATER.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may include in a decennial review under this subsection best management practices for discharges covered by subsection (a)(2). The Secretary shall initiate a rulemaking to revise 1 or more best management practices for such discharges after a decennial review if the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that revising 1 or more of such practices would substantially reduce the impacts on navigable waters of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting a review under paragraph (1), the Secretary, the Administrator, and the heads of other Federal agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate, shall consider the criteria under section __05(b)(2)(B).

(4) REVISION AFTER DECENNIAL REVIEW.—The Secretary shall initiate a rulemaking to revise the current ballast water discharge standard after a decennial review if the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that revising the current ballast water discharge standard would result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species.

(d) ALTERNATIVE BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this title may be construed to preclude the Secretary from authorizing the use of alternate means or methods of managing ballast water (including flow-through exchange, empty/refill exchange, and transfer to treatment facilities in place of a vessel ballast water management system required under this section) if the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that such means or methods would not pose a greater risk of introduction of aquatic nuisance species in navigable waters than the use of a ballast water management system that achieves the applicable ballast water discharge standard.

(e) GREAT LAKES REQUIREMENTS.—In addition to the other standards and requirements imposed by this section, in the case of a vessel that enters the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River after operating outside the exclusive economic zone of the United States the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall establish a requirement that the vessel conduct saltwater flushing of all ballast water tanks onboard prior to entry.

SEC. __06. TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATION.

(a) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date on which the requirements for testing protocols are issued under subsection (i), no manufacturer of a ballast water management system shall sell, offer for sale, or introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce, or import into the United States for sale or resale, a ballast water management system for a vessel unless it has been certified under this section.

(b) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—

(1) EVALUATION.—Upon application of a manufacturer, the Secretary shall evaluate a ballast water management system with respect to—

(A) the effectiveness of the management system in achieving the current ballast water discharge standard when installed on a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel);

(B) the compatibility with vessel design and operations;

(C) the effect of the management system on vessel safety;

(D) the impact on the environment;

(E) the cost effectiveness; and

(F) any other criteria the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) APPROVAL.—If after an evaluation under paragraph (1) the Secretary determines that the management system meets the criteria, the Secretary may certify the management

system for use on a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel).

(3) SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION.—The Secretary shall establish, by regulation, a process to suspend or revoke a certification issued under this section.

(c) CERTIFICATION CONDITIONS.—

(1) IMPOSITION OF CONDITIONS.—In certifying a ballast water management system under this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may impose any condition on the subsequent installation, use, or maintenance of the management system onboard a vessel as is necessary for—

(A) the safety of the vessel, the crew of the vessel, and any passengers aboard the vessel;

(B) the protection of the environment; or

(C) the effective operation of the management system.

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—The failure of an owner or operator to comply with a condition imposed under paragraph (1) shall be considered a violation of this section.

(d) PERIOD FOR USE OF INSTALLED TREATMENT EQUIPMENT.—Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this title or any other provision of law, the Secretary shall allow a vessel on which a management system is installed and operated to meet a ballast water discharge standard under this title to continue to use that system, notwithstanding any revision of a ballast water discharge standard occurring after the management system is ordered or installed until the expiration of the service life of the management system, as determined by the Secretary, if the management system—

(1) is maintained in proper working condition; and

(2) is maintained and used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and any management system certification conditions imposed by the Secretary under this section.

(e) CERTIFICATES OF TYPE APPROVAL FOR THE TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) ISSUANCE.—If the Secretary approves a ballast water management system for certification under subsection (b), the Secretary shall issue a certificate of type approval for the management system to the manufacturer in such form and manner as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) CERTIFICATION CONDITIONS.—A certificate of type approval issued under paragraph (1) shall specify each condition imposed by the Secretary under subsection (c).

(3) OWNERS AND OPERATORS.—A manufacturer that receives a certificate of type approval for the management system under this subsection shall provide a copy of the certificate to each owner and operator of a vessel on which the management system is installed.

(f) INSPECTIONS.—An owner or operator who receives a copy of a certificate under subsection (e)(3) shall retain a copy of the certificate onboard the vessel and make the copy of the certificate available for inspection at all times while the owner or operator is utilizing the management system.

(g) BIOCIDES.—The Secretary may not approve a ballast water management system under subsection (b) if—

(1) it uses a biocide or generates a biocide that is a pesticide, as defined in section 2 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136), unless the biocide is registered under that Act or the Secretary, in consultation with Administrator, has approved the use of the biocide in such management system; or

(2) it uses or generates a biocide the discharge of which causes or contributes to a violation of a water quality standard under section 303 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1313).

(h) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the use of a ballast water management system by an owner or operator of a vessel shall not satisfy the requirements of this title unless it has been approved by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

(A) COAST GUARD SHIPBOARD TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION PROGRAM.—An owner or operator may use a ballast water management system that has not been certified by the Secretary to comply with the requirements of this section if the technology is being evaluated under the Coast Guard Shipboard Technology Evaluation Program.

(B) BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS CERTIFIED BY FOREIGN ENTITIES.—An owner or operator may use a ballast water management system that has not been certified by the Secretary to comply with the requirements of this section if the management system has been certified by a foreign entity and the certification demonstrates performance and safety of the management system equivalent to the requirements of this section, as determined by the Secretary.

(i) TESTING PROTOCOLS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary, shall issue requirements for land-based and shipboard testing protocols or criteria for—

(1) certifying the performance of each ballast water management system under this section; and

(2) certifying laboratories to evaluate such treatment technologies.

SEC. __07. EXEMPTIONS.

(a) INCIDENTAL DISCHARGES.—Except in a national marine sanctuary or a marine national monument, no permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any standards regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under this title apply to—

(1) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is less than 79 feet in length and engaged in commercial service (as such terms are defined in section 2101(5) of title 46, United States Code);

(2) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is a fishing vessel, including a fish processing vessel and a fish tender vessel, (as defined in section 2101 of title 46, United States Code); or

(3) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is a recreational vessel (as defined in section 2101(25) of title 46, United States Code).

(b) DISCHARGES INTO NAVIGABLE WATERS.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any standards regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under this title apply to—

(1) any discharge into navigable waters from a vessel authorized by an on-scene coordinator in accordance with part 300 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or part 153 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) any discharge into navigable waters from a vessel that is necessary to secure the safety of the vessel or human life, or to suppress a fire onboard the vessel or at a shoreside facility; or

(3) a vessel of the armed forces of a foreign nation when engaged in noncommercial service.

(c) BALLAST WATER DISCHARGES.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any ballast water discharge standard under this title apply to—

(1) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel determined by the Secretary to—

(A) operate exclusively within a geographically limited area;

(B) take up and discharge ballast water exclusively within 1 Captain of the Port Zone established by the Coast Guard unless the Secretary determines such discharge poses a substantial risk of introduction or establishment of an aquatic nuisance species;

(C) operate pursuant to a geographic restriction issued as a condition under section 3309 of title 46, United States Code, or an equivalent restriction issued by the country of registration of the vessel; or

(D) continuously take on and discharge ballast water in a flow-through system that does not introduce aquatic nuisance species into navigable waters;

(2) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel consisting entirely of water sourced from a United States public water system that meets the requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.) or from a foreign public water system determined by the Administrator to be suitable for human consumption; or

(3) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel in an alternative compliance program established pursuant to section __08.

(d) VESSELS WITH PERMANENT BALLAST WATER.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced regarding a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under any other provision of law for, nor shall any ballast water discharge standard under this title apply to, a vessel that carries all of its permanent ballast water in sealed tanks that are not subject to discharge.

(e) VESSELS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—Nothing in this title may be construed to apply to—

(1) a vessel owned or operated by the Department of Defense (other than a time-chartered or voyage-chartered vessel); or

(2) a vessel of the Coast Guard, as designated by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

SEC. __08. ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may promulgate regulations establishing 1 or more compliance programs as an alternative to ballast water management regulations issued under section __05 for a vessel that—

(1) has a maximum ballast water capacity of less than 8 cubic meters; or

(2) is less than 3 years from the end of the useful life of the vessel, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) RULEMAKING.—

(1) FACILITY STANDARDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary, shall promulgate standards for—

(A) the reception of ballast water from a vessel into a reception facility; and

(B) the disposal or treatment of the ballast water under paragraph (1).

(2) TRANSFER STANDARDS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, is authorized to promulgate standards for the arrangements necessary on a vessel to transfer ballast water to a facility.

SEC. __09. JUDICIAL REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An interested person may file a petition for review of a final regulation

promulgated under this title in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

(b) DEADLINE.—A petition shall be filed not later than 120 days after the date that notice of the promulgation appears in the Federal Register.

(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), a petition that is based solely on grounds that arise after the deadline to file a petition under subsection (b) has passed may be filed not later than 120 days after the date that the grounds first arise.

SEC. __10. EFFECT ON STATE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No State or political subdivision thereof may adopt or enforce any statute or regulation of the State or political subdivision with respect to a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a State or political subdivision thereof may adopt or enforce a statute or regulation of the State or political subdivision with respect to ballast water discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel that specifies a ballast water discharge standard that is more stringent than the ballast water discharge standard under section __05(a)(1)(A) if the Secretary, after consultation with the Administrator and any other Federal department or agency the Secretary considers appropriate, makes a determination that—

(1) compliance with any discharge standard specified in the statute or regulation can in fact be achieved and detected;

(2) the technology and systems necessary to comply with the statute or regulation are commercially available and economically achievable; and

(3) the statute or regulation is consistent with obligations under relevant international treaties or agreements to which the United States is a party.

(c) PETITION PROCESS.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—The Governor of a State seeking to adopt or enforce a statute or regulation under subsection (b) shall submit a petition to the Secretary requesting the Secretary to review the statute or regulation.

(2) CONTENTS; TIMING.—A petition shall be accompanied by the scientific and technical information on which the petition is based, and may be submitted within 1 year of the date of enactment of this Act and every 10 years thereafter.

(3) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall make a determination on a petition under this subsection not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary determines that a complete petition has been received.

SEC. __11. APPLICATION WITH OTHER STATUTES.

(a) EXCLUSIVE STATUTORY AUTHORITY.—Except as otherwise provided in this section and notwithstanding any other provision of law, this title shall be the exclusive statutory authority for regulation by the Federal Government of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel to which this title applies.

(b) EFFECT OF EXISTING REGULATIONS.—Except as provided under section __05(a)(1)(A), any regulation in effect on the date immediately preceding the effective date of this Act relating to any permitting requirement for or prohibition on discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel to which this title applies—

(1) shall be deemed to be a regulation issued pursuant to the authority of this title; and

(2) shall remain in full force and effect unless or until superseded by new regulations issued under this title.

(c) ACT TO PREVENT POLLUTION FROM SHIPS.—The Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) shall be the exclusive statutory authority for the regulation by the Federal Government of any discharge or emission that is covered under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978, done at London February 17, 1978. Nothing in this title may be construed to alter or amend such Act or any regulation issued pursuant to the authority of such Act.

(d) TITLE X OF THE COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2010.—Title X of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2010 (33 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.) shall be the exclusive statutory authority for the regulation by the Federal Government of any anti-fouling system that is covered under the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001. Nothing in this title may be construed to alter or amend such title X or any regulation issued pursuant to the authority under such title.

SEC. __12. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS.

Section 1205 of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. 4725) is amended—

(1) by striking ''All actions'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), all actions''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGES.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act shall be the exclusive statutory authority for the regulation by the Federal Government of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.''.

SEC. __13. SAVINGS PROVISION.

Any action taken by the Federal Government under this Act shall be in full compliance with its obligations under applicable provisions of international law.

SA 3528. Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. CUBAN IMMIGRANTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Cuban Immigrant Work Opportunity Act of 2016''.

(b) CERTAIN CUBANS INELIGIBLE FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (8 U.S.C. 1522 note) is amended—

(A) in the title heading, by striking ''**CUBAN AND**'';

(B) in section 501—

(i) by striking ''Cuban and'' each place such phrase appears;

(ii) in subsection (d), by striking ''Cuban or''; and

(iii) in subsection (e)—

(I) in paragraph (1)—

(aa) by striking ''Cuban/'' and

(bb) by striking ''Cuba or''; and

(II) in paragraph (2), by striking ''Cuba or''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996.—Section 403(d) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1613(d)) is amended—

(i) in the subsection heading, by striking ''CUBAN AND''; and

(ii) by striking ''1980, for Cuban and Haitian entrants'' and all that follows and inserting ''1980 (8 U.S.C. 1522 note), for Haitian entrants (as defined in subsection (e)(2) of such section)''.

(B) IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.—Section 245A(h)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255a(h)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''Cuban and''.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this subsection shall only apply to nationals of Cuba who enter the United States on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Social Security Administration shall submit a report to Congress that describes the methods by which the provision described in section 416.215 of title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, is being enforced.

SA 3529. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2_____. PROHIBITION ON OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT CARRYING A FIREARM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a firearm

''(a) IN GENERAL.—A person shall not operate an unmanned aircraft with a firearm attached to, installed on, or otherwise carried by the aircraft.

''(b) PENALTIES.—A person who violates subsection (a)—

''(1) shall be liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $27,500; and

''(2) may be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

''(c) NONAPPLICATION TO PUBLIC AIRCRAFT.—This section does not apply to public aircraft.

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of the Administrator with respect to manned or unmanned aircraft.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) FIREARM.—The term 'firearm' has the meaning given that term in section 921 of title 18.

''(2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given that term in section 44801.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46301(d)(2) of such title is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting ''section 46320,'' before ''or section 47107(b)''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 463 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a firearm.''.

SA 3530. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PROHIBITION ON SALE, MANUFACTURE, IMPORT, AND DISTRIBUTION IN COMMERCE OF LASER POINTERS.

(a) AUTHORITY FOR CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION TO REGULATE LASER POINTERS.—Section 31(a) of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2080(a)) is amended, in the second sentence, by striking ''The Commission'' and inserting ''Except for a laser pointer (as defined in section 39A of title 18, United States Code), the Commission''.

(b) CLASSIFICATION OF LASER POINTERS AS BANNED HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), all laser pointers are hereby declared banned hazardous products within the meaning of section 8 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2057).

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to such laser pointers as the Consumer Product Safety Commission determines are for legitimate and professional use.

(c) TREATMENT OF CLASSIFICATION.—For purposes of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2051 et seq.), subsection (b) of this section shall be treated as if it were a rule promulgated under section 8 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2057).

(d) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Consumer Product Safety Commission may promulgate such rules as the Commission considers appropriate to carry out this section.

(2) MANNER OF PROMULGATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a rule promulgated under paragraph (1) shall be promulgated in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) LASER POINTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''laser pointer'' has the meaning given such term in section 39A of title 18, United States Code.

SA 3531. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 284, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

(3) choices that consumers have in choosing an air carrier based on change, cancellation, and baggage fees in large, medium, and small markets; and

(4) the potential effect on availability of air service if change, cancellation, or baggage fees were regulated by the Federal Government.

SA 3532. Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 204, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 206, line 9, and insert the following:

(a) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES ON AIRCRAFT.—

(1) ADOPTION OF ICAO INSTRUCTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall conform United States regulations on the air transport of lithium cells and batteries with the lithium cells and battery requirements in the 2015–2016 edition of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (referred to in this subsection as ''ICAO'') Technical Instructions (to include all addenda) including the revised standards adopted by ICAO which became effective on April 1, 2016.

(B) FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.—Beginning on the date the revised regulations under subparagraph (A) are published in the Federal Register, any lithium cell and battery rulemaking action or update commenced on or after that date shall continue to comply with the requirements under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

(2) REVIEW OF OTHER REGULATIONS.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), the Secretary of Transportation may initiate a review of other existing regulations regarding the air transportation, including passenger-carrying and cargo aircraft, of lithium batteries and cells.

(3) MEDICAL DEVICE BATTERIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For United States applicants, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider and either grant or deny, within 45 days, applications submitted in compliance with part 107 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations for special permits or approvals for air transportation of lithium cells or batteries specifically used by medical devices. Not later than 30 days after the date of application, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall provide a draft special permit based on the application to the Federal Aviation Administration. The Federal Aviation Administration shall conduct an on-site inspection for issuance of the special permit not later than 10 days after the date of receipt of the draft special permit from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

(B) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL DEVICE.—In this paragraph, the term ''medical device'' has the meaning given the term ''device'' in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or constricting any other authority the Secretary of Transportation has under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

SA 3533. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. AMOUNTS PAID FOR AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 4261 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) AMOUNTS PAID FOR AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No tax shall be imposed by this section or section 4271 on any amounts paid by an aircraft owner for aircraft management services related to—

''(i) maintenance and support of the aircraft owner's aircraft; or

''(ii) flights on the aircraft owner's aircraft.

''(B) AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'aircraft management services' includes assisting an aircraft owner with administrative and support services, such as scheduling, flight planning, and weather forecasting; obtaining insurance; maintenance, storage and fueling of aircraft; hiring, training, and provision of pilots and crew; establishing and complying with safety standards; or such other services necessary to support flights operated by an aircraft owner.

''(C) LESSEE TREATED AS AIRCRAFT OWNER.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'aircraft owner' includes a person who leases the aircraft other than under a disqualified lease.

''(ii) DISQUALIFIED LEASE.—For purposes of clause (i), the term 'disqualified lease' means a lease from a person providing aircraft management services with respect to such aircraft (or a related person (within the meaning of section 465(b)(3)(C)) to the person providing such services), if such lease is for a term of 31 days or less.

''(D) PRO RATA ALLOCATION.—If any amount paid to a person represents in part an amount paid for services not described in subparagraph (A), the tax imposed by subsection (a), if applicable to such amount, shall be applied to such payment on a pro rata basis.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to amounts paid beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3534. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. THUNE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. NATIONAL MULTIMODAL FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish a national multimodal freight advisory committee (referred to in this section as the ''Committee'') in the Department of Transportation, which shall consist of a balanced cross-section of public and private freight stakeholders representative of all freight transportation modes, including—

(1) airports, highways, ports and waterways, rail, and pipelines;

(2) shippers;
(3) carriers;
(4) freight-related associations;
(5) the freight industry workforce;
(6) State departments of transportation;
(7) local governments;
(8) metropolitan planning organizations;
(9) regional or local transportation authorities, such as port authorities;
(10) freight safety organizations; and
(11) university research centers.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Committee shall be to promote a safe, economically efficient, and environmentally sustainable national freight system.

(c) DUTIES.—The Committee, in consultation with State departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations, shall provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation on matters related to freight transportation in the United States, including—

(1) the implementation of freight transportation requirements;
(2) the establishment of a National Multimodal Freight Network under section 70103 of title 49, United States Code;
(3) the development of the national freight strategic plan under section 70102 of such title;
(4) the development of measures of conditions and performance in freight transportation;
(5) the development of freight transportation investment, data, and planning tools; and
(6) recommendations for Federal legislation.

(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each member of the Committee shall be sufficiently qualified to represent the interests of the member's specific stakeholder group, such as—

(1) general business and financial experience;
(2) experience or qualifications in the areas of freight transportation and logistics;
(3) experience in transportation planning, safety, technology, or workforce issues;
(4) experience representing employees of the freight industry;
(5) experience representing State or local governments or metropolitan planning organizations in transportation-related issues; or
(6) experience in trade economics relating to freight flows.

(e) SUPPORT STAFF, INFORMATION, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary of Transportation shall provide support staff for the Committee. Upon the request of the Committee, the Secretary shall provide such information, administrative services, and supplies as the Secretary considers necessary for the Committee to carry out its duties under this section.

SA 3535. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 46, line 15, insert after ''National Guard'' the following: '', without regard to whether that component operates aircraft at the airport''.

SA 3536. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 93, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

(d) FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION TO ENHANCE THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY CAPABILITIES OF PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Administrator shall assist and enable, without undue interference, Federal civilian government agencies that operate unmanned aircraft systems within civil-controlled airspace, in operationally deploying and integrating sense and avoid capabilities, as necessary to operate unmanned aircraft systems safely and effectively within the National Air Space.

SA 3537. Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. UNWARRANTED SURVEILLANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''law enforcement party'' means a person or entity authorized by law, or funded by the Government of the United States or by a political subdivision of a State, to investigate or prosecute offenses against the United States or to make arrests; and

(2) the term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121(a) of this Act.

(b) PROHIBITED USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), a person or entity acting under the authority, or funded in whole or in part by, the Government of the United States or by a political subdivision of a State shall not use an unmanned aircraft system to gather evidence or other information pertaining to criminal conduct or conduct in violation of a statute or regulation or for intelligence purposes except to the extent authorized in a warrant that satisfies the requirements of the Federal Rules of Procedure and the Constitution of the United States.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—This section does not prohibit any of the following:

(1) PATROL OF BORDERS.—The use of an unmanned aircraft system to patrol national borders to prevent or deter illegal entry of any persons or illegal substances within 3 miles of the physical border.

(2) EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES.—The use of an unmanned aircraft system by a law enforcement party when exigent circumstances exist. For the purposes of this paragraph, exigent circumstances exist when the law enforcement party possesses reasonable suspicion that under particular circumstances, swift action to prevent imminent danger to life is necessary.

(3) HIGH RISK.—The use of an unmanned aircraft system to counter a high risk of an imminent terrorist attack by a specific individual or organization, when the Secretary of Homeland Security determines credible intelligence indicates there is such a risk.

(4) INFORMATION OR DATA UNRELATED TO EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES.—A person operating an unmanned aircraft system under the exception set forth in paragraph (2) shall minimize the collection by the unmanned aircraft system of information and data that is unrelated to the exigent circumstances. If the unmanned aircraft system incidentally collects any such unrelated information or data while being operated under such exception, the person operating the unmanned aircraft system shall destroy such unrelated information and data.

(5) PROHIBITION ON INFORMATION SHARING.—A person may not intentionally divulge information collected in accordance with this section with any other person, except as authorized by law.

(d) REMEDIES FOR VIOLATION.—Any aggrieved party may in a civil action obtain all appropriate relief to prevent or remedy a violation of this section.

(e) PROHIBITION ON USE OF EVIDENCE.—No evidence obtained or collected in violation of this section may be admissible as evidence in a criminal prosecution in any court of law in the United States.

SA 3538. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2143. EXEMPTION FOR THE OPERATION OF CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT AT TEST SITES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and without the opportunity for prior public notice and comment, the Administrator shall grant an exemption for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems for any non-hobby or non-recreational purpose under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site to all persons that meet the terms, conditions, and limitations described in subsection (b) for the exemption. All such operations of unmanned aircraft systems shall be conducted in accordance with a certificate of waiver or authorization issued to the unmanned aircraft system test site by the Administrator.

(b) TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND LIMITATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The exemption granted under subsection (a) or any amendment to that exemption—

(A) shall, at a minimum, exempt the operator of an unmanned aircraft system from the provisions of parts 21, 43, 61, and 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, that are applicable only to civil aircraft or civil aircraft operations;

(B) may contain such other terms, conditions, and limitations as the Administrator may deem necessary in the interest of aviation safety or the efficiency of the national airspace system; and

(C) shall require a person, before initiating an operation under the exemption, to provide written notice to the unmanned aircraft system test site overseeing the operation, in a form and manner specified by the Administrator, that states, at a minimum, that the person has read, understands, and will comply with all terms, conditions, and limitations of the exemption and applicable certificates of waiver or authorization.

(2) TRANSMISSION TO FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.—The unmanned aircraft system test site overseeing an operation shall transmit to the Federal Aviation Administration copies of all notices under paragraph (1)(C) relating to the operation in a form and manner specified by the Administrator.

(c) NO AIRWORTHINESS OR AIRMAN CERTIFICATE REQUIRED.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), (2)(A), or (3) of section 44711(a) of title 49, United States Code, a person may operate, or employ an airman who operates, an unmanned aircraft system for any non-hobby or non-recreational purpose under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site without an airman certificate and without an airworthiness certificate for the aircraft if the operations of the unmanned aircraft system meet all terms, limitations, and conditions of an exemption issued under subsection (a) and of a certificate of waiver or authorization issued to the unmanned aircraft system test site by the Administrator.

(d) DATA AVAILABLE FOR CERTIFICATE OF AIRWORTHINESS.—The Administrator shall accept data collected or developed as a result of an operation of an unmanned aircraft system conducted under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site pursuant to an exemption issued under subsection (a) for consideration in an application for an airworthiness certificate for the unmanned aircraft system.

(e) SUNSET.—The exemption issued under subsection (a), and any amendment to that exemption, shall cease to be valid on the date of the termination of the unmanned aircraft system test site program under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(f) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROCEDURE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The issuance of an exemption under subsection (a), the issuance of a certificate of waiver or authorization (including the issuance of a certificate of waiver or authorization to an unmanned aircraft test site), the amendment of such an exemption or certificate, the imposition of a term, condition, or limitation on such an exemption or certificate, and any other activity carried out by the Federal Aviation Administration under this section shall be made without regard to—

(A) the notice and comment provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'').

(2) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to—

(A) affect the issuance of a rule by or any other activity of the Secretary of Transportation or the Administrator under any other provision of law; or

(B) invalidate an exemption granted or certificate of waiver or authorization issued by the Administrator before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) AIRMAN CERTIFICATE.—The term ''airman certificate'' means an airman certificate issued under section 44703 of title 49, United States Code.

(3) CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''certificate of waiver or authorization'' means an authorization issued by the Federal Aviation Administration for the operation of aircraft in deviation from a rule or regulation and includes the terms, conditions, and limitations of the authorization.

(4) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The terms ''unmanned aircraft'' and ''unmanned aircraft system'' have the meanings given those terms in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121.

(5) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM TEST SITE.—The term ''unmanned aircraft system test site'' means an entity designated under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) to operate a test range under that section.

SA 3539. Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. VITTER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BURR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, insert the following:

TITLE VI—CRAFT BEVERAGE MODERNIZATION AND TAX REFORM

SEC. 6001. SHORT TITLE; RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This title may be cited as the ''Craft Beverage Modernization and Tax Reform Act of 2016''.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this title, the amendments made by this title, or any regulation promulgated under this title or the amendments made by this title, shall be construed to preempt, supersede, or otherwise limit or restrict any State, local, or tribal law that prohibits or regulates the production or sale of distilled spirits, wine, or malt beverages.

Subtitle A—Production Period

SEC. 6011. PRODUCTION PERIOD FOR BEER, WINE, AND DISTILLED SPIRITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 263A(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5), and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) EXEMPTION FOR AGING PROCESS OF BEER, WINE, AND DISTILLED SPIRITS.—For purposes of this subsection, the production period shall not include the aging period for—

''(A) beer (as defined in section 5052(a)),

''(B) wine (as described in section 5041(a)), or

''(C) distilled spirits (as defined in section 5002(a)(8)), except such spirits that are unfit for use for beverage purposes.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (5)(B)(ii) of section 263A(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as redesignated by this section, is amended by inserting ''except as provided in paragraph (4),'' before ''ending on the date''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to interest costs paid or incurred in taxable years ending on or after December 31, 2017.

Subtitle B—Beer

SEC. 6021. REDUCED RATE OF EXCISE TAX ON BEER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 5051(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) IMPOSITION OF TAX.—A tax is hereby imposed on all beer brewed or produced, and removed for consumption or sale, within the United States, or imported into the United States. Except as provided in paragraph (2), the rate of such tax shall be—

''(i) $16 on the first 6,000,000 barrels of beer brewed by the brewer or imported by the importer which are removed during the calendar year for consumption or sale by such brewer or imported into the United States in such year by such importer, and

''(ii) $18 on any barrels of beer to which clause (i) does not apply.

''(B) BARREL.—For purposes of this section, a barrel shall contain not more than 31 gallons of beer, and any tax imposed under this section shall be applied at a like rate for any other quantity or for fractional parts of a barrel.''.

(b) REDUCED RATE FOR CERTAIN DOMESTIC PRODUCTION.—Subparagraph (A) of section 5051(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''$7'' and inserting ''$3.50'', and

(2) by striking ''$7'' and inserting ''$3.50''.

(c) APPLICATION OF REDUCED TAX RATE FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—Subsection (a) of section 5051 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(i) of paragraph (1), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, by inserting ''and assigned to such electing importer pursuant to paragraph (4)'' after ''by such importer'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) REDUCED TAX RATE FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any barrels of beer which have been brewed or produced outside of the United States and imported into the United States, the rate of tax applicable under clause (i) of paragraph (1)(A) (referred to in this paragraph as the 'reduced tax rate') may be assigned by the brewer (provided that the brewer makes an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii)) to any electing importer of such barrels pursuant to the requirements established by the Secretary of the Treasury under subparagraph (B).

''(B) ASSIGNMENT.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, shall, through such rules, regulations, and procedures as are determined appropriate, establish procedures for assignment of the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph, which shall include—

''(i) a limitation to ensure that the number of barrels of beer for which the reduced tax rate has been assigned by a brewer to any importer does not exceed the number of barrels of beer brewed or produced by such brewer during the calendar year which were imported into the United States by such importer,

''(ii) procedures that allow the election of a brewer to assign and an importer to receive the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph,

''(iii) requirements that the brewer provide any information as the Secretary determines necessary and appropriate for purposes of carrying out this paragraph, and

''(iv) procedures that allow for revocation of eligibility of the brewer and the importer for the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph in the case of any erroneous or fraudulent information provided under

clause (iii) which the Secretary deems to be material to qualifying for such reduced rate.

''(C) CONTROLLED GROUP.—For purposes of this section, any importer making an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii) shall be deemed to be a member of the controlled group of the brewer, as described under paragraph (5).''.

(d) CONTROLLED GROUP AND SINGLE TAXPAYER RULES.—Subsection (a) of section 5051 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by this section, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (B), and

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B), and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) CONTROLLED GROUP AND SINGLE TAXPAYER RULES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), in the case of a controlled group, the 6,000,000 barrel quantity specified in paragraph (1)(A)(i) and the 2,000,000 barrel quantity specified in paragraph (2)(A) shall be applied to the controlled group, and the 6,000,000 barrel quantity specified in paragraph (1)(A)(i) and the 60,000 barrel quantity specified in paragraph (2)(A) shall be apportioned among the brewers who are component members of such group in such manner as the Secretary or his delegate shall by regulations prescribe. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term 'controlled group' has the meaning assigned to it by subsection (a) of section 1563, except that for such purposes the phrase 'more than 50 percent' shall be substituted for the phrase 'at least 80 percent' in each place it appears in such subsection. Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary or his delegate, principles similar to the principles of the preceding two sentences shall be applied to a group of brewers under common control where one or more of the brewers is not a corporation.

''(B) FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—For purposes of paragraph (4), in the case of a controlled group, the 6,000,000 barrel quantity specified in paragraph (1)(A)(i) shall be applied to the controlled group and apportioned among the members of such group in such manner as the Secretary or his delegate shall by regulations prescribe. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term 'controlled group' has the meaning given such term under subparagraph (A). Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary or his delegate, principles similar to the principles of the preceding two sentences shall be applied to a group of brewers under common control where one or more of the brewers is not a corporation.

''(C) SINGLE TAXPAYER.—Pursuant to rules issued by the Secretary, 2 or more entities (whether or not under common control) that produce beer marketed under a similar brand, license, franchise, or other arrangement shall be treated as a single taxpayer for purposes of the application of this subsection.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to beer removed after September 30, 2018.

(2) PRORATION.—For purposes of the fourth calendar quarter of 2018, the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall issue such guidance, rules, or regulations as are deemed appropriate to provide that the amendments made by this section are applied on a prorated basis for purposes of beer removed during such quarter.

SEC. 6022. USE OF WHOLESOME PRODUCTS SUITABLE FOR HUMAN FOOD CONSUMPTION IN THE PRODUCTION OF FERMENTED BEVERAGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of the Treasury's delegate shall amend subpart F of part 25 of subchapter A of chapter I of title 27, Code of Federal Regulations to ensure that, for purposes of such part, wholesome fruits, vegetables, and spices suitable for human food consumption that are generally recognized as safe for use in an alcoholic beverage and that do not contain alcohol are generally recognized as a traditional ingredient in the production of fermented beverages.

(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ''fruit'' means whole fruit, fruit juices, fruit puree, fruit extract, or fruit concentrate.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to revoke, prescribe, or limit any other exemptions from the formula requirements under subpart F of part 25 of subchapter A of chapter I of title 27, Code of Federal Regulations for any ingredient that has been recognized before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act as a traditional ingredient in the production of fermented beverages.

SEC. 6023. SIMPLIFICATION OF RULES REGARDING RECORDS, STATEMENTS, AND RETURNS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 5555 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following: ''The Secretary shall permit a person to employ a unified system for any records, statements, and returns required to be kept, rendered, or made under this section for any beer produced in the brewery for which the tax imposed by section 5051 has been determined, including any beer which has been removed for consumption on the premises of the brewery.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any calendar quarters beginning more than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6024. TRANSFER OF BEER BETWEEN BONDED FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 5414. TRANSFER OF BEER BETWEEN BONDED FACILITIES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Beer may be removed from one brewery to another bonded brewery, without payment of tax, and may be mingled with beer at the receiving brewery, subject to such conditions, including payment of the tax, and in such containers, as the Secretary by regulations shall prescribe, which shall include—

''(1) any removal from one brewery to another brewery belonging to the same brewer,

''(2) any removal from a brewery owned by one corporation to a brewery owned by another corporation when—

''(A) one such corporation owns the controlling interest in the other such corporation, or

''(B) the controlling interest in each such corporation is owned by the same person or persons, and

''(3) any removal from one brewery to another brewery when—

''(A) the proprietors of transferring and receiving premises are independent of each other and neither has a proprietary interest, directly or indirectly, in the business of the other, and

''(B) the transferor has divested itself of all interest in the beer so transferred and the transferee has accepted responsibility for payment of the tax.

''(b) TRANSFER OF LIABILITY FOR TAX.—For purposes of subsection (a)(3), such relief from liability shall be effective from the time of removal from the transferor's bonded premises, or from the time of divestment of interest, whichever is later.''.

(b) REMOVAL FROM BREWERY BY PIPELINE.—Section 5412 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting ''pursuant to section 5414 or'' before ''by pipeline''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any calendar quarters beginning more than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Wine

SEC. 6031. REDUCED RATE OF EXCISE TAX ON CERTAIN WINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5041(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''FOR SMALL DOMESTIC PRODUCERS'',

(2) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—There shall be allowed as a credit against any tax imposed by this title (other than chapters 2, 21, and 22) an amount equal to the sum of—

''(i) $1 per wine gallon on the first 30,000 wine gallons of wine, plus

''(ii) 90 cents per wine gallon on the first 100,000 wine gallons of wine to which clause (i) does not apply, plus

''(iii) 53.5 cents per wine gallon on the first 620,000 wine gallons of wine to which clauses (i) and (ii) do not apply,

on wine gallons produced by the producer or imported by the importer which are removed during the calendar year for consumption or sale by such producer or imported into the United States in such year by such importer.

''(B) ADJUSTMENT OF CREDIT FOR HARD CIDER.—In the case of wine described in subsection (b)(6), subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall be applied—

''(i) in clause (i) of such subparagraph, by substituting '6.2 cents' for '$1',

''(ii) in clause (ii) of such subparagraph, by substituting '5.6 cents' for '90 cents', and

''(iii) in clause (iii) of such subparagraph, by substituting '3.3 cents' for '53.5 cents'.'',

(3) by striking paragraph (2),

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (7) as paragraphs (2) through (6), respectively, and

(5) by amending paragraph (6), as redesignated by paragraph (4) of this subsection, to read as follows:

''(6) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this subsection, including regulations to ensure proper calculation of the credit provided in this subsection.''.

(b) CONTROLLED GROUP AND SINGLE TAXPAYER RULES.—Paragraph (3) of section 5041(c), as redesignated by subsection (a)(4), is amended by striking ''section 5051(a)(2)(B)'' and inserting ''section 5051(a)(5)''.

(c) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—Subsection (c) of section 5041 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1), by inserting ''and assigned to such electing importer pursuant to paragraph (6)'' after ''by such importer'',

(2) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7), and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

''(6) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any wine gallons of wine which have been produced outside of the United States and imported into the United States, the credit allowable under paragraph (1) (referred to in this paragraph as the 'tax credit') may be assigned by the person who produced such wine (referred to in this paragraph as the 'foreign producer'), provided that such person makes an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii), to any electing importer of such wine gallons pursuant to the requirements established by the Secretary of the Treasury under subparagraph (B).

''(B) ASSIGNMENT.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, shall, through such rules, regulations, and procedures as are determined appropriate, establish procedures for assignment of the tax credit provided under this paragraph, which shall include—

''(i) a limitation to ensure that the number of wine gallons of wine for which the tax credit has been assigned by a foreign producer to any importer does not exceed the number of wine gallons of wine produced by such foreign producer during the calendar year which were imported into the United States by such importer,

''(ii) procedures that allow the election of a foreign producer to assign and an importer to receive the tax credit provided under this paragraph,

''(iii) requirements that the foreign producer provide any information as the Secretary determines necessary and appropriate for purposes of carrying out this paragraph, and

''(iv) procedures that allow for revocation of eligibility of the foreign producer and the importer for the tax credit provided under this paragraph in the case of any erroneous or fraudulent information provided under clause (iii) which the Secretary deems to be material to qualifying for such credit.

''(C) CONTROLLED GROUP.—For purposes of this section, any importer making an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii) shall be deemed to be a member of the controlled group of the foreign producer, as described under paragraph (3).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to wine removed after September 30, 2018.

(2) PRORATION.—For purposes of the fourth calendar quarter of 2018, the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall issue such guidance, rules, or regulations as are deemed appropriate to provide that the amendments made by this section are applied on a prorated basis for purposes of wine removed during such quarter.

SEC. 6032. ADJUSTMENT OF ALCOHOL CONTENT LEVEL FOR APPLICATION OF EXCISE TAX RATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 5041(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 are amended by striking ''14 percent'' each place it appears and inserting ''16 percent''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to wine removed during calendar years beginning after December 31, 2017.

SEC. 6033. DEFINITION OF MEAD AND LOW ALCOHOL BY VOLUME WINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5041 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by section 335 of the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Still wines'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (h), still wines'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) MEAD AND LOW ALCOHOL BY VOLUME WINE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsections (a) and (b)(1), mead and low alcohol by volume wine shall be deemed to be still wines containing not more than 16 percent of alcohol by volume.

''(2) DEFINITIONS.—

''(A) MEAD.—For purposes of this section, the term 'mead' means a wine—

''(i) containing not more than 0.64 gram of carbon dioxide per hundred milliliters of wine, except that the Secretary may by regulations prescribe such tolerances to this limitation as may be reasonably necessary in good commercial practice,

''(ii) which is derived solely from honey and water,

''(iii) which contains no fruit product or fruit flavoring, and

''(iv) which contains less than 8.5 percent alcohol by volume.

''(B) LOW ALCOHOL BY VOLUME WINE.—For purposes of this section, the term 'low alcohol by volume wine' means a wine—

''(i) containing not more than 0.64 gram of carbon dioxide per hundred milliliters of wine, except that the Secretary may by regulations prescribe such tolerances to this limitation as may be reasonably necessary in good commercial practice,

''(ii) which is derived—

''(I) primarily from grapes, or

''(II) from grape juice concentrate and water,

''(iii) which contains no fruit product or fruit flavoring other than grape, and

''(iv) which contains less than 8.5 percent alcohol by volume.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to wine removed during calendar years beginning after December 31, 2017.

Subtitle D—Distilled Spirits

SEC. 6041. REDUCED RATE OF EXCISE TAX ON CERTAIN DISTILLED SPIRITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5001 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d) and by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) REDUCED RATE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a distilled spirits operation, the otherwise applicable tax rate under subsection (a)(1) shall be—

''(A) $2.70 per proof gallon on the first 100,000 proof gallons of distilled spirits, and

''(B) $13.34 per proof gallon on the first 22,130,000 of proof gallons of distilled spirits to which subparagraph (A) does not apply,

on proof gallons which have been distilled or processed by such operation or imported by the importer which are removed during the calendar year for consumption or sale by such operation or imported into the United States in such year by such importer.

''(2) CONTROLLED GROUPS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a controlled group, the proof gallon quantities specified under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) shall be applied to such group and apportioned among the members of such group in such manner as the Secretary or his delegate shall by regulations prescribe.

''(B) DEFINITION.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'controlled group' shall have the meaning given such term by subsection (a) of section 1563, except that 'more than 50 percent' shall be substituted for 'at least 80 percent' each place it appears in such subsection.

''(C) RULES FOR NON-CORPORATIONS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, principles similar to the principles of subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall be applied to a group under common control where one or more of the persons is not a corporation.

''(D) SINGLE TAXPAYER.—Pursuant to rules issued by the Secretary, 2 or more entities (whether or not under common control) that produce distilled spirits marketed under a similar brand, license, franchise, or other arrangement shall be treated as a single taxpayer for purposes of the application of this subsection.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 7652(f)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''section 5001(a)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)(1) of section 5001, determined as if subsection (c)(1) of such section did not apply''.

(c) APPLICATION OF REDUCED TAX RATE FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—Subsection (c) of section 5001 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''and assigned to such electing importer pursuant to paragraph (3)'' after ''by such importer'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) REDUCED TAX RATE FOR FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any proof gallons of distilled spirits which have been produced outside of the United States and imported into the United States, the rate of tax applicable under paragraph (1) (referred to in this paragraph as the 'reduced tax rate') may be assigned by the distilled sprits operation (provided that such operation makes an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii)) to any electing importer of such proof gallons pursuant to the requirements established by the Secretary of the Treasury under subparagraph (B).

''(B) ASSIGNMENT.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, shall, through such rules, regulations, and procedures as are determined appropriate, establish procedures for assignment of the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph, which shall include—

''(i) a limitation to ensure that the number of proof gallons of distilled spirits for which the reduced tax rate has been assigned by a distilled spirits operation to any importer does not exceed the number of proof gallons produced by such operation during the calendar year which were imported into the United States by such importer,

''(ii) procedures that allow the election of a distilled spirits operation to assign and an importer to receive the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph,

''(iii) requirements that the distilled spirits operation provide any information as the Secretary determines necessary and appropriate for purposes of carrying out this paragraph, and

''(iv) procedures that allow for revocation of eligibility of the distilled spirits operation and the importer for the reduced tax rate provided under this paragraph in the case of any erroneous or fraudulent information provided under clause (iii) which the Secretary deems to be material to qualifying for such reduced rate.

''(C) CONTROLLED GROUP.—For purposes of this section, any importer making an election described in subparagraph (B)(ii) shall be deemed to be a member of the controlled group of the distilled spirits operation, as described under paragraph (2).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to distilled spirits removed after September 30, 2018.

(2) PRORATION.—For purposes of the fourth calendar quarter of 2018, the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall issue such guidance, rules, or regulations as are deemed appropriate to provide that the amendments made by this section are applied on a prorated basis for purposes of distilled spirits removed during such quarter.

SEC. 6042. BULK DISTILLED SPIRITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5212 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''Bulk distilled spirits on which'' and inserting ''Distilled spirits on which'', and

(2) by striking ''bulk'' each place it appears.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply distilled spirits transferred in bond in any calendar quarters beginning more than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle E—Excise Tax Administration

SEC. 6051. INCREASE INFORMATION SHARING TO ADMINISTER EXCISE TAXES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6103(o) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) TAXES IMPOSED BY SECTION 4481.—Returns and return information with respect to taxes imposed by section 4481 shall be open to inspection by or disclosure to officers and employees of United States Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security whose official duties require such inspection or disclosure for purposes of administering such section.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Paragraph (4) of section 6103(p) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or (o)(1)(A)'' each place it appears and inserting '', (o)(1)(A) or (o)(3)''.

SA 3540. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF NEXT GENERATION AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall, in consultation with State and local governments and where applicable local resident advisory committees, conduct a study of the effect of the Next Generation Air Transportation System of the Federal Aviation Administration on the human environment in the vicinity of large hub airports and selected medium hub airports located in densely populated areas.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(A) An analysis regarding the increase in noise related complaints in communities located near large hub airports and selected medium hub airports located in densely populated areas since the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

(B) A review and evaluation of the Administration's current policies and abilities to respond and address these concerns.

(C) An evaluation of the human environment and health effects of increased flight traffic in these communities, including concerns regarding aircraft noise, pollution, and safety.

(D) An analysis of how Next Generation Air Transportation System flight paths could be altered to better distribute the noise caused by these flights.

(E) Recommendations on the best and most cost-effective approaches to address increased noise complaints associated with the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

(F) Such other maters relating to the Next Generation Air Transportation System as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations with respect to the study.

SA 3541. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

Subtitle C—Accountability to Community

SEC. 4301. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''FAA Community Accountability Act of 2016''.

SEC. 4302. FLIGHT PATHS AND PROCEDURES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in considering new or revised flight paths or procedures as part of the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) shall take actions to limit negative impacts on the human environment in the vicinity of an affected airport; and

(2) may give preference to overlays of existing flight paths or procedures to ensure compatibility with land use in the vicinity of an affected airport.

SEC. 4303. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION COMMUNITY OMBUDSMAN.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall appoint a Federal Aviation Administration Community Ombudsman for each region of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(b) DUTIES.—The Ombudsmen appointed in accordance with subsection (a) shall—

(1) act as a liaison between affected communities and the Administrator with respect to problems related to the impact of commercial aviation on the human environment, including concerns regarding aircraft noise, pollution, and safety;

(2) monitor the impact of the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System on communities in the vicinity of affected airports;

(3) make recommendations to the Administrator—

(A) to address concerns raised by communities; and

(B) to improve the use of community comments in Administration decisionmaking processes; and

(4) report to Congress periodically on issues related to the impact of commercial aviation on the human environment and on Administration responsiveness to concerns raised by affected communities.

SEC. 4304. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in implementing the Next Generation Air Transportation System, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not treat the establishment or revision of a flight path or procedure as covered by a categorical exclusion (as defined in section 1508.4 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations) if an Federal Aviation Administration Community Ombudsman or the operator of an airport affected by such establishment or revision submits written notification to the Administrator that—

(1) extraordinary circumstances exist; or

(2) the establishment or revision will have a significant adverse impact on the human environment in the vicinity of such airport.

(b) NOTIFICATIONS.—At least 30 days before treating the establishment or revision of a flight path or procedure as covered by a categorical exclusion, the Administrator shall provide notice and an opportunity for comment to persons affected by such establishment or revision, including the operator of any affected airport.

SEC. 4305. RECONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN FLIGHT PATHS AND PROCEDURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall reconsider a flight path or procedure established or revised after February 14, 2012, as part of the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System if a Federal Aviation Administration Community Ombudsman or the operator of an airport affected by such establishment or revision submits written notification to the Administrator that the establishment or revision is resulting in a significant adverse impact on the human environment in the vicinity of such airport.

(b) PROCESS.—In reconsidering a flight path or procedure under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) provide notice of the reconsideration and an opportunity for public comment;

(2) assess the impacts on the human environment of such flight path or procedure; and

(3) not later than 180 days after the date on which the relevant notification was received, submit to Congress and make available to the public a report that—

(A) addresses comments received pursuant to paragraph (1);

(B) describes the results of the assessment carried out under paragraph (2); and

(C) describes any changes to be made to such flight path or procedure or the justification for not making any change.

SA 3542. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to

the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. STATE REGULATION OF AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, including section 41713 of title 49, United States Code, a State may enact or enforce a law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law that regulates the price or service of an air carrier that provides air ambulance service in that State.

SA 3543. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 117, line 17, insert after ''subsection (a).'' the following: ''In developing and carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage the capabilities of and utilize the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the test sites established under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

SA 3544. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subsection (a) of section 3114 add the following:

(5) by adding after subsection (d), as redesignated, the following:

''(e) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Upon receipt of any complaint, an air carrier shall send the content of the complaint to the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation.''.

SA 3545. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. IMPROVING AIRLINE COMPETITIVENESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The people of the United States and the United States economy depend on a strong and competitive passenger air transportation industry to move people and goods in the fastest, most efficient manner.

(2) In a global economy, air carriers connect the people of the United States with the rest of the world. A strong air transportation industry is essential to the ability of the United States to compete in the international marketplace.

(3) A strong air transportation industry depends on competition between a number of air carriers servicing a variety of routes for domestic and international travelers, at both the national and local levels.

(4) Important stakeholders contribute to, and are dependent on, a robust air transportation industry, including—

(A) business and leisure travelers;

(B) the tourism sector;

(C) shippers;

(D) State and local governments and port authorities;

(E) aircraft manufacturers; and

(F) domestic and foreign air carriers.

(5) As a result of the consolidation of United States air carriers, there has been a precipitous decline in the number of major passenger air carriers in the United States.

(6) In the past few years, the air transportation industry has become increasingly concentrated. In 2015, the top 4 major air carriers accounted for 80 percent of passenger air traffic in the United States.

(7) The continued success of a deregulated air carrier system requires actual competition to encourage all participants in the industry to provide high quality service at competitive fares.

(8) Further consolidation among air carriers threatens to leave the industry without sufficient competition to ensure that the people of the United States share in the benefits of a well-functioning air transportation industry.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL COMMISSION TO ENSURE ALL AMERICANS HAVE ACCESS TO AND BENEFIT FROM A STRONG AND COMPETITIVE AIR TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY.—There is established a Commission, which shall be known as the ''National Commission to Ensure All Americans Have Access to and Benefit from a Strong and Competitive Air Transportation Industry'' (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'').

(c) FUNCTIONS.—

(1) STUDY.—The Commission shall conduct a study of the passenger air transportation industry, with priority given to issues specified in subsection (d).

(2) POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.—Based on the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), the Commission shall recommend to the President and to Congress the adoption of policies that will—

(A) achieve the national goal of a strong and competitive air carrier system and facilitate the ability of the United States to compete in the global economy;

(B) provide robust levels of competition and air transportation at reasonable fares in cities of all sizes;

(C) provide a stable work environment for employees of air carriers;

(D) account for the interests of different stakeholders that contribute to, and are dependent on, the air transportation industry; and

(E) provide appropriate levels of protection for consumers, including access to information to enable consumer choice.

(d) SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED.—In conducting the study under subsection (c)(1), the Commission shall investigate—

(1) the current state of competition in the air transportation industry, how the structure of that competition is likely to change during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, whether that expected level of competition will be sufficient to secure the consumer benefits of air carrier deregulation, and the effects of—

(A) air carrier consolidation and practices on consumers, including the competitiveness of fares and services and the ability of consumers to engage in comparison shopping for air carrier fees;

(B) airfare pricing policies, including whether reduced competition artificially inflates ticket prices;

(C) the level of competition as of the date of the enactment of this Act on the travel distribution sector, including online and traditional travel agencies and intermediaries;

(D) economic and other effects on domestic air transportation markets in which 1 or 2 air carriers control the majority of available seat miles;

(E) the tactics used by incumbent air carriers to compete against smaller, regional carriers, or inhibit new or potential new entrant air carriers into a particular market; and

(F) the ability of new entrant air carriers to provide new service to underserved markets;

(2) the legislative and administrative actions that the Federal Government should take to enhance air carrier competition, including changes that are needed in the legal and administrative policies that govern—

(A) the initial award and the transfer of international routes;

(B) the allocation of gates and landing rights, particularly at airports dominated by 1 air carrier or a limited number of air carriers;

(C) frequent flier programs;

(D) the rights of foreign investors to invest in the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(E) the access of foreign air carriers to the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(F) the taxes and user fees imposed on air carriers;

(G) the responsibilities imposed on air carriers;

(H) the bankruptcy laws of the United States and related rules administered by the Department of Transportation as such laws and rules apply to air carriers;

(I) the obligations of failing air carriers to meet pension obligations;

(J) antitrust immunity for international air carrier alliances and the process for approving such alliances and awarding that immunity;

(K) competition of air carrier codeshare partnerships and joint ventures; and

(L) constraints on new entry into the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(3) whether the policies and strategies of the United States in international air transportation are promoting the ability of United States air carriers to achieve long-term competitive success in international air transportation markets, and to secure the benefits of robust competition, including—

(A) the general negotiating policy of the United States with respect to international air transportation;

(B) the desirability of multilateral rather than bilateral negotiations with respect to international air transportation;

(C) whether foreign countries have developed the necessary infrastructure of airports and airways to enable United States air carriers to provide the service needed to meet the demand for air transportation between the United States and those countries;

(D) the desirability of liberalization of United States domestic air transportation markets; and

(E) the impediments to access by foreign air carriers to routes to and from the United States;

(4) the effect that air carrier consolidation has had on business and leisure travelers, and travel and tourism more broadly; and

(5) the effect that air carrier consolidation has had on—

(A) employment and economic development opportunities of localities, particularly small and mid-size localities; and

(B) former hub airports, including the positive and negative consequences of routing air traffic through hub airports.

(e) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 21 members, of whom—

(A) 7 shall be appointed by the President;

(B) 4 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(C) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(D) 4 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; and

(E) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be appointed from among United States citizens who bring knowledge of, and informed insights into, aviation, transportation, travel, and tourism policy.

(B) REPRESENTATION.—Members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be appointed in a manner so that at least 1 member of the Commission represents the interests of each of the following:

(i) The Department of Transportation.

(ii) The Department of Justice.

(iii) Legacy, networked air carriers.

(iv) Non-legacy air carriers.

(v) Air carrier employees.

(vi) Large aircraft manufacturers.

(vii) Ticket agents not part of an Internet-based travel company.

(viii) Large airports.

(ix) Small or mid-size airports with commercial service.

(x) Shippers.

(xi) Consumers.

(xii) General aviation.

(xiii) Local governments or port authorities that operate commercial airports.

(xiv) Internet-based travel companies.

(xv) The travel and tourism industry.

(xvi) Global distribution systems.

(xvii) Corporate business travelers.

(3) TERMS.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(4) CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman of the Commission shall be elected by the members of the Commission.

(5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(6) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members shall serve without pay, but shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) STAFF.—The Commission may appoint and fix the pay of such personnel as the Commission considers appropriate.

(g) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon the request of the Commission, the head of any Federal agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of that agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties under this section.

(h) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon the request of the Commission, the Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, the administrative support services necessary for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

(i) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal agency information (other than information required by any provision of law to be kept confidential by that agency) that is necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this section. Upon the request of the Commission, the head of such agency shall furnish such nonconfidential information to the Commission.

(j) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which initial appointments of members to the Commission are made under subsection (e)(1), and after a public comment period of not less than 30 days, the Commission shall submit a report to the President and Congress that—

(1) describes the activities of the Commission;

(2) includes recommendations made by the Commission under subsection (c)(2); and

(3) contains a summary of the comments received during the public comment period.

(k) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate on the date that is 180 days after the date of the submission of the report under subsection (j). Upon the submission of such report, the Commission shall deliver all records and papers of the Commission to the Administrator of General Services for deposit in the National Archives.

SA 3546. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3214. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF DISABILITY FOR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS AGAINST AIR CARRIERS.

Section 41705(a) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In providing air transportation, an air carrier, including (subject to section 40105(b)) any foreign air carrier, may not discriminate against an individual on the basis of disability, as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102).''.

SA 3547. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REGULATIONS RELATING TO E-CIGARETTES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall, in coordination and consultation with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) finalize the interim final rule of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration issued October 30, 2015, pertaining to e-cigarettes; and

(2) expand that rule to prohibit the carrying of battery-powered portable electronic smoking devices in checked baggage and in carry-on baggage.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''battery-powered portable electronic smoking devices'' means e-cigarettes, e-cigs, e-cigars, e-pipes, e-hookahs, personal vaporizers, and electronic nicotine delivery systems.

SA 3548. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION FOR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS AGAINST AIR CARRIERS.

Section 41705 is amended—

''(d) CIVIL ACTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person aggrieved by a violation by an air carrier of this section or a regulation prescribed under this section may, not later than 2 years after the date of the violation, bring a civil action in the district court of the United States in the district in which the person resides, in the district in which the principal place of business of the air carrier is located, or in the district in which the violation occurred.

''(2) RELIEF.—In a civil action brought under paragraph (1) in which the plaintiff prevails—

''(A) the plaintiff may obtain equitable and legal relief, including compensatory and punitive damages; and

''(B) the court shall award reasonable attorney's fees, reasonable expert fees, and the costs of the action to the plaintiff.

''(3) NO REQUIREMENT FOR EXHAUSTION OF REMEDIES.—Any person aggrieved by a violation by an air carrier of this section or a regulation prescribed under this section is not required to exhaust administrative complaint procedures before filing a civil action under paragraph (1).

''(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to invalidate or limit other Federal or State laws affording to people with disabilities greater legal rights or protections than those granted in this section.''.

SA 3549. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. ENERGY CREDIT FOR QUALIFIED OFFSHORE WIND FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 48 of the Internal Revenue Code is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(A)(i)—

(i) in subclause (III), by striking ''and'' at the end, and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

''(V) qualified offshore wind property, and'', and

(B) in paragraph (3)(A)—

(i) in clause (vi), by striking ''or'' at the end,

(ii) in clause (vii), by adding ''or'' at the end, and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(viii) qualified offshore wind property, but only with respect to periods ending before January 1, 2026,''.

(2) in subsection (c), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) QUALIFIED OFFSHORE WIND PROPERTY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified offshore wind property' means an offshore facility using wind to produce electricity.

''(B) OFFSHORE FACILITY.—The term 'offshore facility' means any facility located in the inland navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes, or in the coastal waters of the United States, including the territorial seas of the United States, the exclusive economic zone of United States, and the outer Continental Shelf of the United States.

''(C) EXCEPTION FOR QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—The term 'qualified offshore wind property' shall not include any property described in paragraph (4).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3550. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. BENEFIT SUSPENSIONS FOR MULTIEMPLOYER PLANS IN CRITICAL AND DECLINING STATUS.

(a) ERISA AMENDMENTS.—Section 305(e)(9)(H) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1085(e)(9)(H)) is amended—

(1) in clause (ii)—

(A) by striking ''Except as provided in clause (v), the'' and inserting ''The''; and

(B) by striking ''a majority of all participants and beneficiaries of the plan'' and inserting '', of the participants and beneficiaries of the plan who cast a vote, a majority'';

(2) by striking clause (v);

(3) by redesignating clause (vi) as clause (v); and

(4) in clause (v), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''(or following a determination under clause (v) that the plan is a systemically important plan)''; and

(B) by striking ''(or, in the case of a suspension that goes into effect under clause (v), at a time sufficient to allow the implementation of the suspension prior to the end of the 90-day period described in clause (v)(I))''.

(b) IRC AMENDMENTS.—Section 432(e)(9)(H) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in clause (ii)—

(A) by striking ''Except as provided in clause (v), the'' and inserting ''The''; and

(B) by striking ''a majority of all participants and beneficiaries of the plan'' and inserting '', of the participants and beneficiaries of the plan who cast a vote, a majority'';

(2) by striking clause (v);

(3) by redesignating clause (vi) as clause (v); and

(4) in clause (v), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''(or following a determination under clause (v) that the plan is a systemically important plan)''; and

(B) by striking ''(or, in the case of a suspension that goes into effect under clause (v), at a time sufficient to allow the implementation of the suspension prior to the end of the 90-day period described in clause (v)(I))''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to any vote on the suspension of benefits under section 305(e)(9)(H) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1085(e)(9)(H)) and section 432(e)(9)(H) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that occurs after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3551. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

PART IV—SAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Safety for Airports and Firefighters by Ensuring Drones Refrain from Obstructing Necessary Equipment Act of 2016'' or the ''SAFE DRONE Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2162. CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR OPERATING DRONES IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 40A. Operating drones in certain locations

''(a) OFFENSE.—It shall be unlawful for a person to knowingly operate a drone in a restricted area without proper authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to operations conducted for purposes of firefighting or emergency response by a Federal, State, or local unit of government (including any individual conducting such operations pursuant to a contract or other agreement entered into with the unit).

''(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Attorney General shall, by regulation, establish penalties for a violation of this section that the Attorney General determines are reasonably calculated to provide a deterrent to operating drones in restricted areas, which may include a term of imprisonment.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'drone' has the meaning given the term 'unmanned aircraft' in section 44801 of title 49;

''(2) the terms 'large hub airport', 'medium hub airport', and 'small hub airport' have the meanings given those terms in section 47102 of title 49; and

''(3) the term 'restricted area' means—

''(A) within a 2-mile radius of a small hub airport, medium hub airport, or large hub airport;

''(B) within 2 miles of the outermost perimeter of an ongoing firefighting operation involving the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior; or

''(C) in an area that is subject to a temporary flight restriction issued by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''40A. Operating drones in certain locations.''.

SA 3552. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATIONS TO INCOME EXCLUSION FOR CONSERVATION SUBSIDIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 136 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''any subsidy provided'' and inserting ''any subsidy—

''(1) provided'',

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting a comma, and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(2) provided (directly or indirectly) by a public utility to a customer, or by a State or local government to a resident of such State or locality, for the purchase or installation of any water conservation measure, or

''(3) provided (directly or indirectly) by a storm water management provider to a customer, or by a State or local government to a resident of such State or locality, for the purchase or installation of any storm water management measure.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITION OF WATER CONSERVATION MEASURE AND STORM WATER MANAGEMENT MEASURE.—Section 136(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking ''ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURE'' in the heading thereof and inserting ''DEFINITIONS'',

(B) by striking ''IN GENERAL'' in the heading of paragraph (1) and inserting ''ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURE'', and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4) and by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) WATER CONSERVATION MEASURE.—For purposes of this section, the term 'water conservation measure' means any installation or modification primarily designed to reduce consumption of water or to improve the management of water demand with respect to a dwelling unit.

''(3) STORM WATER MANAGEMENT MEASURE.—For purposes of this section, the term 'storm water management measure' means any installation or modification of property primarily designed to reduce or manage

amounts of storm water with respect to a dwelling unit.''.

(2) DEFINITION OF PUBLIC UTILITY.—Section 136(c)(4) of such Code (as redesignated by paragraph (1)(C)) is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

''(B) PUBLIC UTILITY.—The term 'public utility' means a person engaged in the sale of electricity, natural gas, or water to residential, commercial, or industrial customers for use by such customers.

''(C) STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROVIDER.—The term 'storm water management provider' means a person engaged in the provision of storm water management measures to the public.

''(D) PERSON.—For purposes of subparagraphs (B) and (C), the term 'person' includes the Federal Government, a State or local government or any political subdivision thereof, or any instrumentality of any of the foregoing.''.

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(A) The heading of section 136 of such Code is amended—

(i) by inserting ''**AND WATER**'' after ''**ENERGY**'', and

(ii) by striking ''**PROVIDED BY PUBLIC UTILITIES**''.

(B) The item relating to section 136 in the table of sections of part III of subchapter B of chapter 1 of such Code is amended—

(i) by inserting ''and water'' after ''energy'', and

(ii) by striking ''provided by public utilities''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to amounts received after January 1, 2015.

(d) NO INFERENCE.—Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to create any inference with respect to the proper tax treatment of any subsidy received directly or indirectly from a public utility, a storm water management provider, or a State or local government for any water conservation measure or storm water management measure before January 1, 2015.

SA 3553. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 270, strike lines 2 through 11 and insert the following:

(a) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund or other compensation to a passenger if the covered air carrier—

(A) has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage; and

(B) fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

(2) CHOICE OF COMPARABLE COMPENSATION.—The final regulations issued under paragraph (1) shall not prescribe specific compensation, but shall permit covered air carriers to provide the passenger with a choice of comparable compensation so long as a full refund of the ancillary fee is one of the choices simultaneously offered by the covered air carrier.

SA 3554. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5023. MINIMUM ALTITUDES FOR HELICOPTERS OVER POPULATED AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish a process for evaluating—

(1) whether minimum altitude requirements for helicopter routes over populated areas can be safely set for the purpose of reducing noise effects on the surrounding community; and

(2) in the case of routes for which minimum altitudes cannot be safely set, whether those routes should be otherwise modified, restricted, or eliminated due to excessive noise effects.

(b) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.—In establishing the process required by subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) review and respond to requests made by States, political subdivisions of States, other elected officials, and community organizations to evaluate specific helicopter routes to reduce noise; and

(2) provide a means for the public to participate in the process.

SA 3555. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PRIVATE PILOT PRIVILEGES AND LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue or revise regulations to ensure that a person who holds a private pilot certificate may communicate with the public, in any manner the person determines appropriate, to facilitate a covered flight.

(b) COVERED FLIGHT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered flight'' means an aircraft flight for which the pilot and passengers share operating expenses in accordance with section 61.113(c) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or successor regulation.

SA 3556. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. ELIMINATION OF EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN DUAL NATIONALS FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM.

Section 217(a)(12) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187(a)(12)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking clause (ii);

(B) by striking ''(C)—'' and all that follows through ''the alien has not been present'' and inserting ''(C), the alien has not been present''; and

(C) by redesignating subclauses (I), (II), and (III) as clauses (i), (ii), and (iii), respectively, and realigning the margin of each such clause two ems to the left; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(A)''.

SA 3557. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. TRAVEL TO CUBA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subsections (b) and (c)—

(1) the President may not prohibit or otherwise restrict, directly or indirectly, travel to or from Cuba by United States citizens or legal residents, or any of the transactions incident to such travel, including banking transactions; and

(2) any regulation in effect on such date of enactment that prohibits or otherwise restricts travel to or from Cuba by United States citizens or legal residents, or any of the transactions incident to such travel, including banking transactions, shall cease to have any force or effect.

(b) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to limit the authority of the President to restrict travel described in subsection (a), or any transaction incident to such travel, on a case-by-case basis, if such restriction—

(1) is important to the national security of the United States; or

(2) is designed to protect the health or safety of United States citizens or legal residents resulting from traveling to or from Cuba.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall apply to actions taken by the President—

(1) before the date of the enactment of this Act, which are in effect on such date of enactment; or

(2) on or after such date of enactment.

SA 3558. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2152 and insert the following:

SEC. 2152. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

(a) FEDERAL PREEMPTION RELATING TO MANUFACTURE AND DESIGN OF CIVIL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Subject to the limitations in subsection (c), no State or political subdivision of a State may enact or enforce any law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law relating to the design, manufacture, testing, certification, or maintenance of a civil unmanned aircraft system, including equipment or technology requirements.

(b) LIMITED PREEMPTION RELATING TO OPERATIONS OF CIVIL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—

(1) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this title, any amendment made by this title, or any standard, rule, requirement, standard of performance, safety determination, or certification implemented pursuant to this title or any amendment made by this title, shall be construed to preempt any State or local law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law relating to the operation of a civil unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system, unless the Secretary of Transportation has issued a regulation governing such operation, and only to the extent that the State or local law, regulation, or other provision presents an obstacle to that regulation.

(2) PROTECTION OF STATE AND LOCAL INTERESTS.—Any Federal regulation relating to the operation of civil unmanned aircraft systems shall preserve, to the greatest extent practicable, legitimate State and local interests in protecting—

(A) public safety;

(B) personal privacy;

(C) private property and land use;

(D) nuisance and noise pollution;

(E) public buildings, such as police departments, courthouses, and prisons;

(F) schools, including institutions of primary, secondary, and higher education;

(G) stadiums, parks, amusement parks, and beaches;

(H) power plants, electrical infrastructure, highways, bridges, roads, and other infrastructure; and

(I) special events, including sporting events, parades, and festivals.

(c) ADDITIONAL LIMITS ON PREEMPTION.—Nothing in this title, any amendment made by this title, or any standard, rule, regulation, requirement, standard of performance, safety determination, or certification implemented pursuant to this title or any amendment made by this title, shall be construed to limit, preempt, preclude, displace, or supplant any of the following, whether created before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act:

(1) Any cause of action for personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, or other injury based on negligence, strict liability, products liability, failure to warn, or any other legal theory of liability under any State law, maritime law, or State or Federal common law or statutory theory.

(2) Any State, local, or Federal statute, policy, or rule creating a remedy for civil relief (including those for civil damage), a penalty for criminal conduct, or another other lawfully imposed penalty, including laws (and the enforcement thereof) relating to trespass, nuisance, voyeurism, privacy, data security, harassment, reckless endangerment, wrongful death, personal injury, property damage, speed limits, land use or other illegal acts arising from the use of unmanned aircraft systems.

(3) Any right to the exclusive control of the immediate reaches of the airspace above property, as described by the Supreme Court of the United States in United States v. Causby, 328 U.S. 256 (1946).

(d) CONCURRENT ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AUTHORIZED.—In any case in which the attorney general of a State, or an official or agency of a State or political subdivision of a State, has reason to believe that an interest of the residents of that State or political subdivision has been or is threatened or adversely affected by any operator of a civil unmanned aircraft who violates any rule, regulation, or standard promulgated under this Act or other provision of Federal law related to the operation of civil unmanned aircraft, the attorney general of the State or official or agency of the State or political subdivision, is authorized to take enforcement action under this subsection.

(2) AUTHORIZED ACTIONS.—Enforcement actions authorized under this subsection include—

(A) a civil action on behalf of the residents of a State or political subdivision of a State in State court or in a district court of the United States of appropriate jurisdiction to enjoin further violation of Federal law;

(B) appropriate monetary penalties as may be authorized under the laws and procedures of the State or political subdivision; and

(C) an order to produce the proof of passage of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test described in section 44808(a)(7) of title 49, United States Code.

(3) GUIDANCE.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance to State and local governments with respect to enforcement under this subsection that clearly and concisely describes the requirements of Federal law and regulations as applicable to operators of civil unmanned aircraft to enable enforcement as described in paragraph (2).

SA 3559. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 23, strike line 17 and all that follows through page 24, line 6, and insert the following:

(A) in consultation with airport operators, general aviation users, and the exclusive representative certified to represent air traffic controllers under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, a pilot program at public-use airports to construct and operate remote towers; and

(B) a selection process for participation in the pilot program.

(2) SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the pilot program, the Administrator shall consult with operators of remote towers in foreign countries to design the pilot program in a manner that leverages as many safety and airspace efficiency benefits as possible.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In selecting the airports for participation in the pilot program, the Administrator shall—

(A) complete a Safety Risk Management Panel (SRM–P) for the pilot program at the current pilot program location;

SA 3560. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 73, strike line 24 and all that follows through page 74, line 12, and insert the following:

(a) RESEARCH PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the United States Unmanned Aircraft System Executive Committee shall, in coordination with industry, users, the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and test site operators, jointly develop a research plan to identify ongoing research into the broad range of technical, procedural, and policy concerns arising from the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system, and research needs regarding those concerns.

(2) MILESTONES AND GOALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall include—

(i) milestones with specific dates; and

(ii) near-term goals and specific goals after 5 years, after 10 years, and for the period beyond 10 years.

(B) INTEGRATION OF LARGER UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Goals required by subparagraph (A)(ii) shall include goals relating to integration into the national airspace system of unmanned aircraft systems that are heavier than 55 pounds and fly higher than 500 feet above ground level.

(3) INTEGRATION WITH NEXT GENERATION AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall specify where and how integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system fits within ongoing programs and research relating to the Next Generation Air Transportation System

(4) SPECIFICATION OF FUNDS REQUIRED.—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall specify the amount of funds necessary to achieve the integration of unmanned aircraft systems, of all sizes and at all altitudes, into the national airspace system.

(5) ENGAGEMENT WITH APPROPRIATE ENTITIES.—In developing the plan, the Administrator shall determine and engage the appropriate entities to meet the research needs identified in the plan.

SA 3561. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 119, line 18, insert ‘‘, or certified commercial operators operating under contract with a public entity,’’ after ‘‘operators’’.

SA 3562. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

DIVISION B—BRIDGE ACT

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This division may be cited as the ''Building and Renewing Infrastructure for Development and Growth in Employment Act'' or the ''BRIDGE Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this division is as follows:

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this division is to facilitate investment in, and the long-term financing of, economically viable eligible infrastructure projects of regional or national significance that are in the public interest in a manner that complements existing Federal, State, local, and private funding sources for these projects and introduces a merit-based system for financing those projects, in order to mobilize significant private sector investment, create long-term jobs, and ensure United States competitiveness through a self-sustaining institution that limits the need for ongoing Federal funding.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this division:

(1) BLIND TRUST.—The term ''blind trust'' means a trust in which the beneficiary has no knowledge of the specific holdings and no rights over how those holdings are managed by the fiduciary of the trust prior to the dissolution of the trust.

(2) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—The term ''Board of Directors'' means the Board of Directors of IFA.

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The term ''Chairperson'' means the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of IFA.

(4) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The term ''Chief Executive Officer'' means the chief executive officer of IFA, appointed under section 103.

(5) COST.—The term ''cost'' has the meaning given the term in section 502 of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661a).

(6) DIRECT LOAN.—The term ''direct loan'' has the meaning given the term in section 502 of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661a).

(7) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means—

(A) an individual;

(B) a corporation;

(C) a partnership, including a public-private partnership;

(D) a joint venture;

(E) a trust;

(F) a State or any other governmental entity, including a political subdivision or any other instrumentality of a State; or

(G) a revolving fund.

(8) ELIGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''eligible infrastructure project'' means the construction, consolidation, alteration, or repair of the following sectors:

(i) Intercity passenger or freight rail lines, intercity passenger rail facilities or equipment, and intercity freight rail facilities or equipment.

(ii) Intercity passenger bus facilities or equipment.

(iii) Public transportation facilities or equipment.

(iv) Highway facilities, including bridges and tunnels.

(v) Airports and air traffic control systems.

(vi) Port or marine terminal facilities, including approaches to marine terminal facilities or inland port facilities, and port or marine equipment, including fixed equipment to serve approaches to marine terminals or inland ports.

(vii) Transmission or distribution pipelines.

(viii) Inland waterways.

(ix) Intermodal facilities or equipment related to 2 or more of the sectors described in clauses (i) through (viii).

(x) Water treatment and solid waste disposal facilities.

(xi) Storm water management systems.

(xii) Dams and levees.

(xiii) Facilities or equipment for energy transmission, distribution or storage.

(B) AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO MODIFY SECTORS.—The Board of Directors may make modifications, at the discretion of the Board, to any of the sectors described in subparagraph (A) by a vote of not fewer than 5 of the voting members of the Board of Directors.

(9) IFA.—The term ''IFA'' means the Infrastructure Financing Authority established under section 101.

(10) INVESTMENT-GRADE RATING.—The term ''investment-grade rating'' means a rating of BBB minus, Baa3, or higher assigned to an eligible infrastructure project by a ratings agency.

(11) LOAN GUARANTEE.—The term ''loan guarantee'' has the meaning given the term in section 502 of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661a).

(12) OTRA.—The term ''OTRA'' means the Office of Technical and Rural Assistance created pursuant to section 106.

(13) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP.—The term ''public-private partnership'' means any eligible entity—

(A)(i) that is undertaking the development of all or part of an eligible infrastructure project that will have a measurable public benefit, pursuant to requirements established in 1 or more contracts between the entity and a State or an instrumentality of a State; or

(ii) the activities of which, with respect to such an eligible infrastructure project, are subject to regulation by a State or any instrumentality of a State;

(B) that owns, leases, or operates or will own, lease, or operate, the project in whole or in part; and

(C) the participants in which include not fewer than 1 nongovernmental entity with significant investment and some control over the project or entity sponsoring the project vehicle.

(14) RATING AGENCY.—The term ''rating agency'' means a credit rating agency registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission as a nationally recognized statistical rating organization (as defined in section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a))).

(15) REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACCELERATOR.—The term ''regional infrastructure accelerator'' means an organization created by public sector agencies through a multi-jurisdictional or multi-state agreement to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions that will facilitate the implementation of innovative financing and procurement models to public infrastructure projects.

(16) RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT.—The term ''rural infrastructure project''—

(A) has the same meaning given the term in section 601(15) of title 23, United States Code; and

(B) includes any eligible infrastructure project sector described in clauses (i) through (xvii) of paragraph (8)(A) located in any area other than a city with a population of more than 250,000 inhabitants within the city limits.

(17) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Treasury or the designee of the Secretary of the Treasury.

(18) SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—The term ''senior management'' means the chief financial officer, chief risk officer, chief compliance officer, general counsel, chief lending officer, and chief operations officer of IFA, and such other officers as the Board of Directors may, by majority vote, add to senior management.

(19) STATE.—The term ''State'' means—

(A) each of the several States of the United States; and

(B) the District of Columbia.

TITLE I—INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING AUTHORITY

SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT AND GENERAL AUTHORITY OF IFA.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF IFA.—The Infrastructure Financing Authority is established as a wholly owned Government corporation.

(b) GENERAL AUTHORITY OF IFA.—IFA shall—

(1) provide direct loans and loan guarantees to facilitate eligible infrastructure projects that are economically viable, in the public interest, and of regional or national significance; and

(2) carry out any other activities and duties authorized under this division.

(c) INCORPORATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board of Directors first appointed shall be deemed the incorporator of IFA, and the incorporation shall be held to have been effected from the date of the first meeting of the Board of Directors.

(2) CORPORATE OFFICE.—IFA shall—

(A) maintain an office in Washington, DC; and

(B) for purposes of venue in civil actions, be considered to be a resident of Washington, DC.

(d) RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to assist in implementing IFA and in carrying out the purpose of this division.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Chapter 91 of title 31, United States Code, does not apply to IFA, unless otherwise specifically provided in this division.

SEC. 102. VOTING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

(a) VOTING MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—IFA shall have a Board of Directors consisting of 7 voting members appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, not more than 4 of whom shall be from the same political party.

(2) CHAIRPERSON.—One of the voting members of the Board of Directors shall be designated by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve as Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

(3) CONGRESSIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this division, the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives shall each submit a recommendation to the President for appointment of a member of the Board of Directors, after consultation with the appropriate committees of Congress.

(4) SPECIAL CONSIDERATION OF RURAL INTERESTS AND GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—In making an appointment under this subsection, the President shall give consideration to the geographic areas of the United States in which the members of the Board of Directors live and work, particularly to ensure that the infrastructure priorities and concerns of each region of the country, including rural areas and small communities, are represented on the Board of Directors.

(b) VOTING RIGHTS.—Each voting member of the Board of Directors shall have an equal vote in all decisions of the Board of Directors.

(c) QUALIFICATIONS OF VOTING MEMBERS.—Each voting member of the Board of Directors shall—

(1) be a citizen of the United States; and

(2) have significant demonstrated expertise in—

(A) the management and administration of a financial institution relevant to the operation of IFA; or

(B) the financing, development, or operation of infrastructure projects, including in the evaluation and selection of eligible infrastructure projects based on the purposes, goals, and objectives of this division.

(d) TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this division, each voting member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed for a term of 5 years.

(2) INITIAL STAGGERED TERMS.—Of the voting members first appointed to the Board of Directors—

(A) the initial Chairperson and 3 of the other voting members shall each be appointed for a term of 5 years; and

(B) the remaining 3 voting members shall each be appointed for a term of 2 years.

(3) DATE OF INITIAL NOMINATIONS.—The initial nominations for the appointment of all voting members of the Board of Directors shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this division.

(4) BEGINNING OF TERM.—The term of each of the initial voting members appointed under this section shall commence immediately upon the date of appointment, except that, for purposes of calculating the term limits specified in this subsection, the initial terms shall each be construed as beginning on January 22 of the year following the date of the initial appointment.

(5) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy in the position of a voting member of the Board of Directors shall be filled by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(B) TERM.—A member appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors occurring before the expiration of the term for which the predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term.

(e) MEETINGS.—

(1) OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; NOTICE.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), all meetings of the Board of Directors shall be—

(A) open to the public; and

(B) preceded by reasonable public notice.

(2) FREQUENCY.—The Board of Directors shall meet—

(A) not later than 60 days after the date on which all members of the Board of Directors are first appointed;

(B) at least quarterly after the date described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) at the call of the Chairperson or 3 voting members of the Board of Directors.

(3) EXCEPTION FOR CLOSED MEETINGS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The voting members of the Board of Directors may, by majority vote, close a meeting to the public if, during the meeting to be closed, there is likely to be disclosed proprietary or sensitive information regarding an eligible infrastructure project under consideration for assistance under this division.

(B) AVAILABILITY OF MINUTES.—The Board of Directors shall prepare minutes of any meeting that is closed to the public, which minutes shall be made available as soon as practicable, but not later than 1 year after the date of the closed meeting, with any necessary redactions to protect any proprietary or sensitive information.

(4) QUORUM.—For purposes of meetings of the Board of Directors, 5 voting members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

(f) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each voting member of the Board of Directors shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Board of Directors.

(g) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—A voting member of the Board of Directors may not participate in any review or decision affecting an eligible infrastructure project under consideration for assistance under this division, if the member has or is affiliated with an entity who has a financial interest in that project.

SEC. 103. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer shall—

(1) be a nonvoting member of the Board of Directors;

(2) be responsible for all activities of IFA; and

(3) support the Board of Directors in accordance with this division and as the Board of Directors determines to be necessary.

(b) APPOINTMENT AND TENURE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint the Chief Executive Officer, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) TERM.—The Chief Executive Officer shall be appointed for a term of 6 years.

(3) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any vacancy in the office of the Chief Executive Officer shall be filled by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(B) TERM.—The person appointed to fill a vacancy in the Chief Executive Officer position that occurs before the expiration of the term for which the predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term.

(c) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Chief Executive Officer—

(1) shall have significant expertise in management and administration of a financial institution, or significant expertise in the financing and development of infrastructure projects; and

(2) may not—

(A) hold any other public office;

(B) have any financial interest in an eligible infrastructure project then being considered by the Board of Directors, unless that interest is placed in a blind trust; or

(C) have any financial interest in an investment institution or its affiliates or any other entity seeking or likely to seek financial assistance for any eligible infrastructure project from IFA, unless any such interest is placed in a blind trust for the tenure of the service of the Chief Executive Officer plus 2 additional years.

(d) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Chief Executive Officer shall have such executive functions, powers, and duties as may be prescribed by this division, the bylaws of IFA, or the Board of Directors, including—

(1) responsibility for the development and implementation of the strategy of IFA, including—

(A) the development and submission to the Board of Directors of the annual business plans and budget;

(B) the development and submission to the Board of Directors of a long-term strategic plan; and

(C) the development, revision, and submission to the Board of Directors of internal policies; and

(2) responsibility for the management and oversight of the daily activities, decisions, operations, and personnel of IFA.

(e) COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any compensation assessment or recommendation by the Chief Executive Officer under this section shall be without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 or subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The compensation assessment or recommendation required under this subsection shall take into account merit principles, where applicable, as well as the education, experience, level of responsibility, geographic differences, and retention and recruitment needs in determining compensation of personnel.

SEC. 104. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

The Board of Directors shall—

(1) as soon as practicable after the date on which all members are appointed, approve or disapprove senior management appointed by the Chief Executive Officer;

(2) not later than 180 days after the date on which all members are appointed—

(A) develop and approve the bylaws of IFA, including bylaws for the regulation of the affairs and conduct of the business of IFA, consistent with the purpose, goals, objectives, and policies set forth in this division;

(B) establish subcommittees, including an audit committee that is composed solely of members of the Board of Directors, other than the Chief Executive Officer;

(C) develop and approve, in consultation with senior management, a conflict-of-interest policy for the Board of Directors and for senior management;

(D) approve or disapprove internal policies that the Chief Executive Officer shall submit to the Board of Directors, including—

(i) policies regarding the loan application and approval process, including application procedures and project approval processes; and

(ii) operational guidelines; and

(E) approve or disapprove a 1-year business plan and budget for IFA;

(3) ensure that IFA is at all times operated in a manner that is consistent with this division, by—

(A) monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of IFA in achieving its strategic goals;

(B) reviewing and approving internal policies, annual business plans, annual budgets, and long-term strategies submitted by the Chief Executive Officer;

(C) reviewing and approving annual reports submitted by the Chief Executive Officer;

(D) engaging 1 or more external auditors, as set forth in this division; and

(E) reviewing and approving all changes to the organization of senior management;

(4) appoint and fix, by a vote of not less than 5 of the 7 voting members of the Board of Directors, and without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 or subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, the compensation and adjustments to compensation of all IFA personnel, provided that in appointing and fixing any compensation or adjustments to compensation under this paragraph, the Board shall—

(A) consult with, and seek to maintain comparability with, other comparable Federal personnel, as the Board of Directors may determine to be appropriate;

(B) consult with the Office of Personnel Management; and

(C) carry out those duties consistent with merit principles, where applicable, as well as the education, experience, level of responsibility, geographic differences, comparability to private sector positions, and retention and recruitment needs in determining compensation of personnel;

(5) serve as the primary liaison for IFA in interactions with Congress, the Secretary of Transportation and other executive branch officials, and State and local governments, and to represent the interests of IFA in those interactions and others;

(6) approve by a vote of not less than 5 of the 7 voting members of the Board of Directors any changes to the bylaws or internal policies of IFA;

(7) have the authority and responsibility—

(A) to oversee entering into and carrying out such contracts, leases, cooperative agreements, or other transactions as are necessary to carry out this division;

(B) to approve of the acquisition, lease, pledge, exchange, and disposal of real and personal property by IFA and otherwise approve the exercise by IFA of all of the usual incidents of ownership of property, to the extent that the exercise of those powers is appropriate to and consistent with the purposes of IFA;

(C) to determine the character of, and the necessity for, the obligations and expenditures of IFA, and the manner in which the obligations and expenditures will be incurred, allowed, and paid, subject to this division and other Federal law specifically applicable to wholly owned Federal corporations;

(D) to execute, in accordance with applicable bylaws and regulations, appropriate instruments;

(E) to approve other forms of credit enhancement that IFA may provide to eligible projects, as long as the forms of credit enhancements are consistent with the purposes of this division and terms set forth in title II;

(F) to exercise all other lawful powers which are necessary or appropriate to carry out, and are consistent with, the purposes of IFA;

(G) to sue or be sued in the corporate capacity of IFA in any court of competent jurisdiction;

(H) to indemnify the members of the Board of Directors and officers of IFA for any liabilities arising out of the actions of the members and officers in that capacity, in accordance with, and subject to the limitations contained in this division;

(I) to review all financial assistance packages to all eligible infrastructure projects, as submitted by the Chief Executive Officer and to approve, postpone, or deny the same by majority vote;

(J) to review all restructuring proposals submitted by the Chief Executive Officer, including assignation, pledging, or disposal of the interest of IFA in a project, including payment or income from any interest owned or held by IFA, and to approve, postpone, or deny the same by majority vote;

(K) to enter into binding commitments, as specified in approved financial assistance packages;

(L) to determine whether—

(i) to obtain a lien on the assets of an eligible entity that receives assistance under this division; and

(ii) to subordinate a lien under clause (i) to any other lien securing project obligations; and

(M) to ensure a measurable public benefit in the selection of eligible infrastructure projects and to provide for reasonable public input in the selection of such projects;

(8) delegate to the Chief Executive Officer those duties that the Board of Directors determines to be appropriate, to better carry out the powers and purposes of the Board of Directors under this section; and

(9) to approve a maximum aggregate amount of principal exposure of IFA at any given time.

SEC. 105. SENIOR MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Senior management shall support the Chief Executive Officer in the discharge of the responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer.

(b) APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—The Chief Executive Officer shall appoint such senior managers as are necessary to carry out the purposes of IFA, as approved by a majority vote of the voting members of the Board of Directors, including a chief compliance officer, general counsel, chief operating officer, chief lending officer, and other positions as determined to be appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors.

(c) TERM.—Each member of senior management shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors.

(d) REMOVAL OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—Any member of senior management may be removed—

(1) by a majority of the voting members of the Board of Directors at the request of the Chief Executive Officer; or

(2) by a vote of not fewer than 5 voting members of the Board of Directors.

(e) SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each member of senior management shall report directly to the Chief Executive Officer, other than the chief risk officer, who shall report directly to the Board of Directors.

(2) CHIEF RISK OFFICER.—The chief risk officer shall be responsible for all functions of IFA relating to—

(A) the creation of financial, credit, and operational risk management guidelines and policies;

(B) the establishment of guidelines to ensure diversification of lending activities by region, infrastructure project type, and project size;

(C) the creation of conforming standards for infrastructure finance agreements;

(D) the monitoring of the financial, credit, and operational exposure of IFA; and

(E) risk management and mitigation actions, including by reporting those actions, or recommendations of actions to be taken, directly to the Board of Directors.

(f) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—No individual appointed to senior management may—

(1) hold any other public office;

(2) have any financial interest in an eligible infrastructure project then being considered by the Board of Directors, unless that interest is placed in a blind trust; or

(3) have any financial interest in an investment institution or its affiliates, IFA or its affiliates, or other entity then seeking or likely to seek financial assistance for any eligible infrastructure project from IFA, unless any such interest is placed in a blind trust during the term of service of that individual in a senior management position, and for a period of 2 years thereafter.

SEC. 106. OFFICE OF TECHNICAL AND RURAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer shall create and manage, within IFA, the ''Office of Technical and Rural Assistance''.

(b) DUTIES.—The OTRA shall—

(1) in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, provide technical assistance to State and local governments and parties in public-private partnerships in the development and financing of eligible infrastructure projects, including rural infrastructure projects;

(2) assist the entities described in paragraph (1) with coordinating loan and loan guarantee programs available through Federal agencies, including the Department of Transportation and other Federal agencies, as appropriate;

(3) work with the entities described in paragraph (1) to identify and develop a pipeline of projects suitable for financing through innovative project financing and performance based project delivery, including those projects with the potential for financing through IFA; and

(4) establish a regional infrastructure accelerator demonstration program to assist

the entities described in paragraph (1) in developing improved infrastructure priorities and financing strategies, for the accelerated development of covered infrastructure projects, including those projects with the potential for financing through IFA.

(c) DESIGNATION OF REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACCELERATORS.—In carrying out the program established pursuant to subsection (b)(3), the OTRA is authorized to designate regional infrastructure accelerators that will—

(1) serve a defined geographic area; and

(2) act as a resource in such area to entities described in subsection (b)(1), in accordance with this subsection.

(d) APPLICATION PROCESS.—To be eligible for a designation under subsection (c), regional infrastructure accelerators shall submit a proposal to the OTRA at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the OTRA determines is appropriate.

(e) CONSIDERATIONS.—In evaluating proposals submitted pursuant to subsection (d), the OTRA shall consider—

(1) the need for geographic diversity among regional infrastructure accelerators; and

(2) promoting investment in covered infrastructure projects, which shall include a plan—

(A) to evaluate and promote innovative financing methods for local projects, including the use of IFA;

(B) to build capacity of governments to evaluate and structure projects involving the investment of private capital;

(C) to provide technical assistance and information on best practices with respect to financing such projects;

(D) to increase transparency with respect to infrastructure project analysis and utilizing innovative financing for public infrastructure projects;

(E) to deploy predevelopment capital programs designed to facilitate the creation of a pipeline of infrastructure projects available for investment;

(F) to bundle smaller-scale and rural projects into larger proposals that may be more attractive for investment; and

(G) to reduce transaction costs for public project sponsors.

(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—The OTRA shall submit an annual report to Congress that describes the findings and effectiveness of the infrastructure accelerator demonstration program.

SEC. 107. SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IFA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) INITIAL PERIOD.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this division, the Inspector General of the Department of the Treasury shall serve as the Special Inspector General for IFA in addition to the existing duties of the Inspector General of the Department of the Treasury.

(2) OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Beginning on the day that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this division, there is established the Office of the Special Inspector General for IFA.

(b) APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR GENERAL; REMOVAL.—

(1) HEAD OF OFFICE.—The head of the Office of the Special Inspector General for IFA shall be the Special Inspector General for IFA (referred to in this division as the ''Special Inspector General''), who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) BASIS OF APPOINTMENT.—The appointment of the Special Inspector General shall be made on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations.

(3) TIMING OF NOMINATION.—The nomination of an individual as Special Inspector General shall be made as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this division.

(4) REMOVAL.—The Special Inspector General shall be removable from office in accordance with the provisions of section 3(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—For purposes of section 7324 of title 5, United States Code, the Special Inspector General shall not be considered an employee who determines policies to be pursued by the United States in the nationwide administration of Federal law.

(6) RATE OF PAY.—The annual rate of basic pay of the Special Inspector General shall be the annual rate of basic pay for an Inspector General under section 3(e) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(c) DUTIES.—The Special Inspector General shall—

(1) conduct, supervise, and coordinate audits and investigations of the business activities of IFA;

(2) establish, maintain, and oversee such systems, procedures, and controls as the Special Inspector General considers appropriate to discharge the duty under paragraph (1); and

(3) carry out any other duties and responsibilities of inspectors general under the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(d) POWERS AND AUTHORITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the duties specified in subsection (c), the Special Inspector General shall have the authorities provided in section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(2) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The Special Inspector General shall carry out the duties specified in subsection (c)(1) in accordance with section 4(b)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(e) PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, AND OTHER RESOURCES.—

(1) ADDITIONAL OFFICERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Special Inspector General may select, appoint, and employ such officers and employees as may be necessary for carrying out the duties of the Special Inspector General, subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title, relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

(B) EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION.—The Special Inspector General may exercise the authorities of subsections (b) through (i) of section 3161 of title 5, United States Code (without regard to subsection (a) of that section).

(2) RETENTION OF SERVICES.—The Special Inspector General may obtain services as authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, at daily rates not to exceed the equivalent rate prescribed for grade GS–15 of the General Schedule by section 5332 of such title.

(3) ABILITY TO CONTRACT FOR AUDITS, STUDIES, AND OTHER SERVICES.—The Special Inspector General may enter into contracts and other arrangements for audits, studies, analyses, and other services with public agencies and with private persons, and make such payments as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the Special Inspector General.

(4) REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request of the Special Inspector General for information or assistance from any department, agency, or other entity of the Federal Government, the head of that entity shall, insofar as is practicable and not in contravention of any existing law, furnish the information or assistance to the Special Inspector General or an authorized designee.

(B) REFUSAL TO COMPLY.—If information or assistance requested by the Special Inspector General is, in the judgment of the Special Inspector General, unreasonably refused or not provided, the Special Inspector General shall report the circumstances to the Secretary, without delay.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Special Inspector General is confirmed, and every calendar year thereafter, the Special Inspector General shall submit to the President and appropriate committees of Congress a report summarizing the activities of the Special Inspector General during the previous 1-year period ending on the date of that report.

(2) PUBLIC DISCLOSURES.—Nothing in this subsection authorizes the public disclosure of information that is—

(A) specifically prohibited from disclosure by any other provision of law;

(B) specifically required by Executive order to be protected from disclosure in the interest of national defense or national security or in the conduct of foreign affairs; or

(C) a part of an ongoing criminal investigation.

SEC. 108. OTHER PERSONNEL.

(a) APPOINTMENT, REMOVAL, AND DEFINITION OF DUTIES.—Except as otherwise provided in the bylaws of IFA, the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Board of Directors, shall appoint, remove, and define the duties of such qualified personnel as are necessary to carry out the powers, duties, and purpose of IFA, other than senior management, who shall be appointed in accordance with section 105.

(b) COORDINATION IN IDENTIFYING QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE.—In appointing qualified personnel pursuant to subsection (a), the Chief Executive Officer shall coordinate with, and seek assistance from, the Secretary of Transportation in identifying the appropriate qualifications and expertise in infrastructure project finance.

SEC. 109. COMPLIANCE.

The provision of assistance by IFA pursuant to this division does not supersede any provision of State law or regulation otherwise applicable to an eligible infrastructure project.

TITLE II—TERMS AND LIMITATIONS ON DIRECT LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES

SEC. 201. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ASSISTANCE FROM IFA AND TERMS AND LIMITATIONS OF LOANS.

(a) PUBLIC BENEFIT; FINANCEABILITY.—A project is not be eligible for financial assistance from IFA under this division if—

(1) the use or purpose of such project is private or such project does not create a public benefit, as determined by the Board of Directors; or

(2) the applicant is unable to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors, a sufficient revenue stream to finance the loan that will be used to pay for such project.

(b) FINANCIAL CRITERIA.—If the project meets the requirements under subsection (a), an applicant for financial assistance under this division shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors, that—

(1) for public-private partnerships, the project has received contributed capital or commitments for contributed capital equal to not less than 10 percent of the total cost of the eligible infrastructure project for which assistance is being sought if such contributed capital includes—

(A) equity;

(B) deeply subordinate loans or other credit and debt instruments, which shall be junior to any IFA assistance provided for the project;

(C) appropriated funds or grants from governmental sources other than the Federal Government; or

(D) irrevocable private contributions of funds, grants, property (including rights-of-way), and other assets that directly reduce or offset project costs; and

(2) the eligible infrastructure project for which assistance is being sought—

(A) is not for the refinancing of an existing infrastructure project; and

(B) meets—

(i) any pertinent requirements set forth in this division;

(ii) any criteria established by the Board of Directors under subsection (c) or by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with this division; and

(iii) the definition of an eligible infrastructure project.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—The criteria established by the Board of Directors under this subsection shall provide adequate consideration of—

(1) the economic, financial, technical, environmental, and public benefits and costs of each eligible infrastructure project under consideration for financial assistance under this division, prioritizing eligible infrastructure projects that—

(A) demonstrate a clear and measurable public benefit;

(B) offer value for money to taxpayers;

(C) contribute to regional or national economic growth;

(D) lead to long-term job creation; and

(E) mitigate environmental concerns;

(2) the means by which development of the eligible infrastructure project under consideration is being financed, including—

(A) the terms, conditions, and structure of the proposed financing;

(B) the creditworthiness and standing of the project sponsors, providers of equity, and cofinanciers;

(C) the financial assumptions and projections on which the eligible infrastructure project is based; and

(D) whether there is sufficient State or municipal political support for the successful completion of the eligible infrastructure project;

(3) the likelihood that the provision of assistance by IFA will cause the development to proceed more promptly and with lower costs for financing than would be the case without IFA assistance;

(4) the extent to which the provision of assistance by IFA maximizes the level of private investment in the eligible infrastructure project or supports a public-private partnership, while providing a significant public benefit;

(5) the extent to which the provision of assistance by IFA can mobilize the participation of other financing partners in the eligible infrastructure project;

(6) the technical and operational viability of the eligible infrastructure project;

(7) the proportion of financial assistance from IFA;

(8) the geographical location of the project, prioritizing geographical diversity of projects funded by IFA;

(9) the size of the project and the impact of the project on the resources of IFA; and

(10) the infrastructure sector of the project, prioritizing projects from more than 1 sector funded by IFA.

(d) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any eligible entity seeking assistance from IFA under this division for an eligible infrastructure project shall submit an application to IFA at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Board of Directors or the Chief Executive Officer may require.

(2) REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—IFA shall review applications for assistance under this division on an ongoing basis.

(B) PREPARATION.—The Chief Executive Officer, in cooperation with the senior management, shall prepare eligible infrastructure projects for review and approval by the Board of Directors.

(3) DEDICATED REVENUE SOURCES.—The Federal credit instrument shall be repayable, in whole or in part, from tolls, user fees, or other dedicated revenue sources derived from users or beneficiaries that also secure the eligible infrastructure project obligations.

(e) ELIGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), to be eligible for assistance under this division, an eligible infrastructure project shall have project costs that are reasonably anticipated to equal or exceed $50,000,000.

(2) RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.—To be eligible for assistance under this division a rural infrastructure project shall have project costs that are reasonably anticipated to equal or exceed $10,000,000.

(f) LOAN ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of a direct loan or loan guarantee under this division shall not exceed the lesser of—

(A) 49 percent of the reasonably anticipated eligible infrastructure project costs; and

(B) the amount of the senior project obligations, if the direct loan or loan guarantee does not receive an investment grade rating.

(2) MAXIMUM ANNUAL LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE VOLUME.—The aggregate amount of direct loans and loan guarantees made by IFA shall not exceed—

(A) during the first 2 fiscal years of the operations of IFA, $10,000,000,000 per year;

(B) during fiscal years 3 through 9 of the operations of IFA, $20,000,000,000 per year; and

(C) during any fiscal year thereafter, $50,000,000,000.

SEC. 202. LOAN TERMS AND REPAYMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A direct loan or loan guarantee under this division with respect to an eligible infrastructure project shall be on such terms, subject to such conditions, and contain such covenants, representations, warranties, and requirements (including requirements for audits) as the Chief Executive Officer determines appropriate.

(b) TERMS.—A direct loan or loan guarantee under this division—

(1) shall—

(A) be payable, in whole or in part, from tolls, user fees, or other dedicated revenue sources derived from users or beneficiaries; and

(B) include a rate covenant, coverage requirement, or similar security feature supporting the project obligations; and

(2) may be secured by a lien—

(A) on the assets of the obligor, including revenues described in paragraph (1); and

(B) which may be subordinated to any other lien securing project obligations.

(c) BASE INTEREST RATE.—The base interest rate on a direct loan under this division shall be not less than the yield on Treasury obligations of a similar maturity to the maturity of the direct loan on the date of execution of the loan agreement.

(d) RISK ASSESSMENT.—Before entering into an agreement for assistance under this division, the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and each rating agency providing a preliminary rating opinion letter under this section, shall determine an appropriate Federal credit subsidy amount for each direct loan and loan guarantee, taking into account that preliminary rating opinion letter, as well as any comparable market rates available for such a loan or loan guarantee, should any exist.

(e) CREDIT FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each agreement for assistance under this division, the Chief Executive Officer shall charge a credit fee to the recipient of that assistance to pay for, over time, all or a portion of the Federal credit subsidy determined under subsection (d), with the remainder paid by the account established for IFA.

(2) DIRECT LOANS.—In the case of a direct loan, the credit fee described in paragraph (1) shall be in addition to the base interest rate established under subsection (c).

(f) MATURITY DATE.—The final maturity date of a direct loan or loan guaranteed by IFA under this division shall be not later than 35 years after the date of substantial completion of the eligible infrastructure project, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

(g) PRELIMINARY RATING OPINION LETTER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer shall require each applicant for assistance under this division to provide a preliminary rating opinion letter from at least 1 rating agency, indicating that the senior obligations of the eligible infrastructure project, which may be the Federal credit instrument, have the potential to achieve an investment-grade rating.

(2) RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.—With respect to a rural infrastructure project, a rating agency opinion letter described in paragraph (1) shall not be required, except that the loan or loan guarantee shall receive an internal rating score, using methods similar to the rating agencies generated by IFA, measuring the proposed direct loan or loan guarantee against comparable direct loans or loan guarantees of similar credit quality in a similar sector.

(h) INVESTMENT-GRADE RATING REQUIREMENT.—

(1) LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES.—The execution of a direct loan or loan guarantee under this division shall be contingent on the senior obligations of the eligible infrastructure project receiving an investment-grade rating.

(2) RATING OF IFA OVERALL PORTFOLIO.—The average rating of the overall portfolio of IFA shall be not less than investment grade after 5 years of operation.

(i) TERMS AND REPAYMENT OF DIRECT LOANS.—

(1) SCHEDULE.—The Chief Executive Officer shall establish a repayment schedule for each direct loan under this division, based on the projected cash flow from eligible infrastructure project revenues and other repayment sources.

(2) COMMENCEMENT.—Scheduled loan repayments of principal or interest on a direct loan under this division shall commence not later than 5 years after the date of substantial completion of the eligible infrastructure project, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer of IFA.

(3) DEFERRED PAYMENTS OF DIRECT LOANS.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION.—If, at any time after the date of substantial completion of an eligible infrastructure project assisted under this division, the eligible infrastructure project is unable to generate sufficient revenues to pay the scheduled loan repayments of principal and interest on the direct loan under this division, the Chief Executive Officer may allow the obligor to add unpaid principal and interest to the outstanding balance of the direct loan, if the result would benefit the taxpayer.

(B) INTEREST.—Any payment deferred under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) continue to accrue interest, in accordance with the terms of the obligation, until fully repaid; and

(ii) be scheduled to be amortized over the remaining term of the loan.

(C) CRITERIA.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Any payment deferral under subparagraph (A) shall be contingent on the eligible infrastructure project meeting criteria established by the Board of Directors.

(ii) REPAYMENT STANDARDS.—The criteria established under clause (i) shall include standards for reasonable assurance of repayment.

(4) PREPAYMENT OF DIRECT LOANS.—

(A) USE OF EXCESS REVENUES.—Any excess revenues that remain after satisfying scheduled debt service requirements on the eligible infrastructure project obligations and direct loan and all deposit requirements under the terms of any trust agreement, bond resolution, or similar agreement securing project obligations under this division may be applied annually to prepay the direct loan, without penalty.

(B) USE OF PROCEEDS OF REFINANCING.—A direct loan under this division may be prepaid at any time, without penalty, from the proceeds of refinancing from non-Federal funding sources.

(j) LOAN GUARANTEES.—The terms of a loan guaranteed by IFA under this division shall be consistent with the terms set forth in this section for a direct loan, except that the rate on the guaranteed loan and any payment, prepayment, or refinancing features shall be negotiated between the obligor and the lender (as defined in section 601(a) of title 23, United States Code) with the consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

(k) COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL CREDIT REFORM ACT OF 1990.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), direct loans and loan guarantees authorized by this division shall be subject to the provisions of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

(2) EXCEPTION.—Section 504(b) of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661c(b)) shall not apply to a loan or loan guarantee under this division.

(l) POLICY OF CONGRESS.—It is the policy of Congress that IFA shall only make a direct loan or loan guarantee under this division if IFA determines that IFA is reasonably expected to recover the full amount of the direct loan or loan guarantee.

SEC. 203. ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—As soon as practicable after IFA approves financing for a proposed project under this title, the President shall convene a meeting of representatives of all relevant and appropriate permitting agencies—

(1) to establish or update a permitting timetable for the proposed project;

(2) to coordinate concurrent permitting reviews by all necessary agencies; and

(3) to coordinate with relevant State agencies and regional infrastructure development agencies to ensure—

(A) adequate participation; and

(B) the timely provision of necessary documentation to allow any State review to proceed without delay.

(b) GOAL.—The permitting timetable for each proposed project established pursuant to subsection (a)(1) shall ensure that the environmental review process is completed as soon as practicable.

(c) EARLIER.—The President may carry out the functions set forth in subsection (a) with respect to a proposed project before the IFA has approved financing for such project upon the request of the Chief Executive Officer.

(d) CONCURRENT REVIEWS.—Each agency, to the greatest extent permitted by law, shall—

(1) carry out the obligations of the agency under other applicable law concurrently, and in conjunction with other reviews being conducted by other participating agencies, including environmental reviews required under the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), unless such concurrent reviews would impair the ability of the agency to carry out its statutory obligations; and

(2) formulate and implement administrative, policy, and procedural mechanisms to enable the agency to ensure the completion of the environmental review process in a timely, coordinated, and environmentally responsible manner.

SEC. 204. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT.

(a) CREDIT AGREEMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each eligible entity that receives assistance under this division shall enter into a credit agreement that requires such entity to comply with all applicable policies and procedures of IFA, in addition to all other provisions of the loan agreement.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL LAWS.—Each eligible entity that receives assistance under this division shall provide written assurance, in such form and manner and containing such terms as are to be prescribed by IFA, that the eligible infrastructure project will be performed in compliance with the requirements of all Federal laws that would otherwise apply to similar projects to which the United States is a party, or financed in whole or in part from Federal funds or in accordance with guarantees of a Federal agency or financed from funds obtained by pledge of any contract of a Federal agency to make a loan, grant, or annual contribution (except where a different meaning is expressly indicated).

(c) IFA AUTHORITY ON NONCOMPLIANCE.—In any case in which an eligible entity that receives assistance under this division is materially out of compliance with the loan agreement, or any applicable policy or procedure of IFA, the Board of Directors may take action—

(1) to cancel unused loan amounts; or

(2) to accelerate the repayment terms of any outstanding obligation.

SEC. 205. AUDITS; REPORTS TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS.

(a) ACCOUNTING.—The books of account of IFA shall be—

(1) maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; and

(2) subject to an annual audit by independent public accountants of nationally recognized standing appointed by the Board of Directors.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—Not later than 90 days after the last day of each fiscal year, the Board of Directors shall submit to the President and Congress a complete and detailed report with respect to the preceding fiscal year, setting forth—

(A) a summary of the operations of IFA for that fiscal year;

(B) a schedule of the obligations of IFA and capital securities outstanding at the end of that fiscal year, with a statement of the amounts issued and redeemed or paid during that fiscal year;

(C) the status of eligible infrastructure projects receiving funding or other assistance pursuant to this division during that fiscal year, including—

(i) all nonperforming loans; and

(ii) disclosure of all entities with a development, ownership, or operational interest in those eligible infrastructure projects;

(D) a description of the successes and challenges encountered in lending to rural communities, including the role of the Office of Technical and Rural Assistance established under this division; and

(E) an assessment of the risks of the portfolio of IFA, which shall be prepared by an independent source.

(2) GAO.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this division, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an evaluation of, and submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on the activities of IFA for the fiscal years covered by the report that includes—

(A) an assessment of the impact and benefits of each funded eligible infrastructure project, including a review of how effectively each eligible infrastructure project accomplished the goals prioritized by the eligible infrastructure project criteria of IFA; and

(B) an evaluation of the effectiveness of, and challenges facing, loan programs at the Department of Transportation and Department of Energy, and an analysis of the advisability of consolidating those programs within IFA.

(c) BOOKS AND RECORDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—IFA shall maintain adequate books and records to support the financial transactions of IFA, with a description of financial transactions and eligible infrastructure projects receiving funding, and the amount of funding for each project maintained on a publically accessible database.

(2) AUDITS BY THE SECRETARY AND GAO.—The books and records of IFA shall at all times be open to inspection by the Secretary, the Special Inspector General, and the Comptroller General of the United States.

SEC. 206. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

Nothing in this division may be construed to affect or alter the responsibility of an eligible entity that receives assistance under this division to comply with applicable Federal and State laws (including regulations) relating to an eligible infrastructure project.

TITLE III—FUNDING OF IFA

SEC. 301. FEES.

The Chief Executive Officer shall establish fees with respect to loans and loan guarantees under this division that—

(1) are sufficient to cover all the administrative costs to the Federal Government for the operations of IFA;

(2) may be in the form of an application or transaction fee, or interest rate adjustment; and

(3) may be based on the risk premium associated with the loan or loan guarantee, taking into consideration—

(A) the price of Treasury obligations of a similar maturity;

(B) prevailing market conditions;

(C) the ability of the eligible infrastructure project to support the loan or loan guarantee; and

(D) the total amount of the loan or loan guarantee.

SEC. 302. SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF IFA.

The Chief Executive Officer shall, to the extent practicable, take actions consistent with this division to make IFA a self-sustaining entity, with administrative costs and Federal credit subsidy costs fully funded by fees and risk premiums on loans and loan guarantees.

SEC. 303. FUNDING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to IFA to make direct loans and loan guarantees under this division $10,000,000,000, which shall remain available until expended.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Of the amounts appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1), the IFA may expend, for administrative costs, not more than—

(A) $25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 and 2017; and

(B) not more than $50,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.

(b) INTEREST.—The amounts made available to IFA pursuant to subsection (a) shall be placed in interest-bearing accounts.

(c) RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.—Of the amounts made available to IFA under this section, not less than 5 percent shall be used to offset subsidy costs associated with rural infrastructure projects.

SEC. 304. CONTRACT AUTHORITY.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, approval by the Board of Directors of a Federal credit instrument that uses funds made available under this division shall impose upon the United States a contractual obligation to fund the Federal credit investment.

SEC. 305. LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY.

IFA shall not have the authority to issue debt in its own name.

TITLE IV—TAX EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE AND LOCAL BONDS

SEC. 401. NATIONAL LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF TAX-EXEMPT FINANCING FOR FACILITIES.

Section 142(m)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''$15,000,000,000'' and inserting ''$16,000,000,000''.

TITLE V—BUDGETARY EFFECTS

SEC. 501. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this division, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this division, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

SA 3563. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. EXTENSION OF ENERGY CREDIT FOR CERTAIN ENERGY PROPERTY.

(a) QUALIFIED FUEL CELL PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(1)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(b) QUALIFIED MICROTURBINE PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(2)(D) of such Code is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(c) COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEM PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(3)(A)(iv) of such Code is amended by striking ''which is placed in service before January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022''.

(d) QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(4)(C) of such Code is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(e) THERMAL ENERGY PROPERTY.—Section 48(a)(3)(A)(vii) of such Code is amended by striking ''periods ending before January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''property the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022''.

(f) GEOTHERMAL ENERGY PROPERTY.—Subclause (II) of section 48(a)(2)(A)(i) of such Code is amended by striking ''paragraph (3)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''clause (i) or (iii) of paragraph (3)(A)''.

(g) PHASEOUT OF 30 PERCENT CREDIT RATE FOR FUEL CELL, SMALL WIND, AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 48 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) PHASEOUT FOR QUALIFIED FUEL CELL PROPERTY, QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY, AND GEOTHERMAL PROPERTY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of qualified fuel cell property, qualified small wind energy property, or property described in paragraph (3)(A)(iii), the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022, the energy percentage determined under paragraph (2) shall be equal to—

''(i) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2019, and before January 1, 2021, 26 percent, and

''(ii) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2020, and before January 1, 2022, 22 percent.

''(B) PLACED IN SERVICE DEADLINE.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any property which is not placed in service before January 1, 2024.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''paragraph (6)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (6) and (7)''.

(h) PHASEOUT OF 10 PERCENT CREDIT RATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 48 of such Code, as amended by subsection (g), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(8) PHASEOUT OF 10 PERCENT CREDIT RATE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of property to which paragraph (2)(A)(ii) applies (before the application of this paragraph), the energy percentage determined under paragraph (2) shall be equal to—

''(i) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2019, and before January 1, 2021, 8 percent, and

''(ii) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2020, and before January 1, 2022, 6 percent.

''(B) PLACED IN SERVICE DEADLINE.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any property which is not placed in service before January 1, 2024.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(2) of such Code, as amended by subsection (g), is amended by striking ''(6) and (7)'' and inserting ''(6), (7), and (8).''.

(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3564. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. TREATMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION TRUSTED TRAVELER PROGRAM FEES.

Section 540 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–90; 49 U.S.C. 114 note) is amended by striking ''and shall be credited'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''; *Provided further*, That such fees shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury and shall be available to the Transportation Security Administration as provided in advance in appropriations Acts.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7,

2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The Federal Role in Keeping Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Affordable.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 7, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''A Progress Report on the West Africa Ebola Epidemic.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jessica Hagens-Jordan, an intern in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the balance of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, April 11; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; finally, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:06 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 11, 2016, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DIMITRI FRANK KUSNEZOV, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR DEFENSE PROGRAMS, NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, VICE DONALD L. COOK, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MATTHEW LEHRICH, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE PETER CUNNINGHAM.

AMY MCINTOSH, OF NEW YORK, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, EVALUATION, AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE CARMEL MARTIN, RESIGNED.

ANTONIA WHALEN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE DEBORAH S. DELISLE, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 716:

To be major

ALBERT E. WHITE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

TRAVIS H. OWEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS CHAPLAINS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

JOSHUA T. ADE
KEITH L. ADERHOLD
PAUL R. BELCHER
ROBERT W. BOETTCHER
STEPHAN H. BUCHANAN
KEVIN E. BURTON
MATTHEW S. CANADA
DAVID M. CHAPMAN
DANIEL L. CLAYPOOLE
JAMES D. DICE
CHARLES G. GILBERTSON
JONATHAN L. GINDER
LEE R. GREENFIELD, JR.
TIMOTHY B. GRESHAM
CHAN Y. HAM
JOSEPH E. HAMILTON
DARRELL E. HARLOWCURTIS
ANSELMO HERNANDEZ
JASON E. HESSELING
JAMES D. HOGSTEN
CURTIS E. HULSHIZER
WALLACE A. JACKSON IV
MICHAEL D. JONES
BENJAMIN H. JUNG
BRADLEY D. KATTELMANN
SCOTT G. KENNIS
SCOTT P. KING
RICHARD C. KUHLMAN
JONATHAN C. G. LEE
HERBERT A. LEMKE
GARLAND D. MASON III
KENNETH R. MAY
JESSE MCCULLOUGH
DAVID T. MORRISON
KEVIN E. NAGY
MACIEJ A. NAPIERALSKI
WILLIE J. NEWTON
MARK J. OLSON
SAMUEL RICO
BRIAN C. SATTERLEE II
CHARLES E. SHIELDS, JR.
RONALDO O. SILVA
JOHN F. SMITH
JONATHAN R. SMITH
MARK A. SMITH
MICHAEL N. SMITH
CARL A. SUBLER
JOHN F. TILLMAN
OWEN VAZQUEZ
BRYAN T. WRIGHT
DOUGLAS YODER
BRADFORD T. ZWETSCHKE
D012793
D012875

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

JOSHUA D. WRIGHT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

TIMOTHY R. TEAGUE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

ERIC E. HALSTROM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

BRIAN D. BOBO
DAVID E. CASEY
THERESA K. COGSWELL
ANTHONY D. FOURNIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DENNIS N. SNELLING

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 7, 2016 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

KARL BOYD BROOKS, OF KANSAS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE CRAIG E. HOOKS, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON MAY 14, 2015.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Monday, April 11, 2016*

The House met at 3:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROONEY of Florida).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 11, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS J. ROONEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Gracious and Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

In this Chamber, where the people's House gathers, we pause to offer You gratitude for the gift of this good land on which we live, and for this great Nation which You have inspired in developing over so many years. Continue to inspire the American people that, through the difficulties of these days, we might keep liberty and justice alive in our Nation and in the world.

Give to us and all people a vivid sense of Your presence, that we may learn to understand each other, to respect each other, to work with each other, to live with each other, and to do good to each other. So shall we make our Nation great in goodness, and good in its greatness.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 653, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bills were signed by Speaker pro tempore MESSER on Thursday, March 31, 2016:

S. 1180, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes;

S. 2393, to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

TRACI BEAUBIAN,
Chief Financial Officer.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

JOHN NADEAU,
Director, Financial Counseling.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

ANDREW TODD CAULK,
Supervisor, Financial Counseling.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

NORMAN GUGLIOTTA,
Counselor.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 5, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 5, 2016 at 11:42 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1890.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 7, 2016 at 12:39 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1638.

That the Senate passed S. 1492.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 7, 2016 at 5:37 p.m.:

That the Senate concur in the House amendment to the bill S. 192.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

HOUSE BILLS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates, he had approved and signed bills of the following titles:

February 8, 2016:

H.R. 515. An Act to protect children and others from sexual abuse and exploitation, including sex trafficking and sex tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4188. An Act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes.

February 18, 2016:

H.R. 757. An Act to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 907. An Act to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 3033. An Act to require the President's annual budget request to Congress each year to include a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation and to require the National Science Foundation to conduct research on dyslexia.

February 24, 2016:

H.R. 644. An Act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1428. An Act to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

February 29, 2016:

H.R. 487. An Act to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

H.R. 890. An Act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 3262. An Act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 4056. An Act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as ''The Community Living Center'' at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida.

H.R. 4437. An Act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

March 18, 2016:

H.R. 1755. An Act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

March 30, 2016:

H.R. 1831. An Act to establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4721. An Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

SENATE BILLS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates, he had approved and signed bills of the Senate of the following titles:

January 28, 2016:

S. 142. An Act to require special packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes.

S. 1115. An Act to close out expired grants.

S. 1629. An Act to revise certain authorities of the District of Columbia courts, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, and the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

February 8, 2016:

S. 2152. An Act to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth, and for other purposes.

February 29, 2016:

S. 2109. An Act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

March 9, 2016:

S. 238. An Act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

S. 1596. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building''.

March 18, 2016:

S. 1172. An Act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An Act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

S. 2426. An Act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A Bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1890. An act to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker pro tempore, Mr. MESSER, on Thursday, March 31, 2016, announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1180. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to modernize the integrated

public alert and warning system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2393. To extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services related to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on March 24, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 4721. To amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1831. To establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 653, the House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 3 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, April 12, 2016, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4758. A letter from the Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Trade Options (RIN: 3038-AE26) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4759. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Alternative to Fingerprinting Requirement for Foreign Natural Persons (RIN: 3038-AE16) received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4760. A letter from the PRAO Branch Chief, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program [FNS: 2011-0017] (RIN: 0584-AE07) received April 6, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4761. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting FY 2017 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Energy, Homeland Security, State and Other International Programs, Transportation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, the Surface Transportation Board, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Legislative Branch (H. Doc. No. 114–122); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

4762. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting FY 2017 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Energy, Homeland Security, State and Other International Programs, Transportation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, the Surface Transportation Board, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Legislative Branch (H. Doc. No. 114–123); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

4763. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the 2016 Major Automated Information System Annual Reports, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2445b(a); Public Law 109-364, Sec. 816(a)(1); (120 Stat. 2323); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4764. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the 2015 Report to Congress on Support for Non-Federal Development and Testing of Material for Chemical Agent Defense, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 372 note; Public Law 110-181, Sec. 1034(d); (122 Stat. 308); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4765. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Philip M. Breedlove, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4766. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Rear Admiral (lower half) Robert D. Sharp, United States Navy, to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4767. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Logistics and Materiel Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter stating that the biennial report, identifying, for each of the armed forces, the Department's core depot-level maintenance and repair capability requirements, and sustaining workloads, will be reported no later than May 1, 2016, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2464(d); Public Law 112-239, Sec. 322(d); (126 Stat. 1695); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4768. A letter from the Lieutenant General, Director, Army National Guard, Department of Defense, transmitting the FY 2015 Annual Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a); (104 Stat. 2849); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4769. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Buy American and Balance of Payments Program-Clause Prescription (DFARS Case 2015-D037) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0053] (RIN: 0750-AI77) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4770. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Extension and Modification of Contract Authority for Advanced Component Development and Prototype Units (DFARS Case 2015-D008) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0042] (RIN: 0750-AI62) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4771. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Clauses with Alternates-Small Business Programs (DFARS Case 2015-D017) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0044] (RIN: 0750-AI68) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4772. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Warranty Tracking of Serialized Items (DFARS Case 2014-D026) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0054] (RIN: 0750-AI39) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4773. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Prohibition on Requiring the Use of Fire-resistant Rayon Fiber (DFARS Case 2016-D012) [Docket No.: DARS-2016-0003] (RIN: 0750-AI85) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4774. A letter from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's Major interim final rule — Operations in Rural Areas Under the Truth in Lending Act (Regulation Z) [Docket No.: CFPB-2016-0013] (RIN: 3170-AA59) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4775. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Consumer Response Annual Report: January 1–December 31, 2015, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 5493(b)(3)(C); Public Law 111-203, Sec. 1013(b)(3)(C); (124 Stat. 1969); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4776. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the 2015 annual report entitled ''Office of Minority and Women Inclusion of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau'', pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 5452(e); Public Law 111-203, Sec. 342(e); (124 Stat. 1543); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4777. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendments to the HUD Acquisition Regulation (HUDAR) [Docket No.: FR-5814-F-02] (RIN: 2501-AD73) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4778. A letter from the Deputy Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the

Department's final rule — Imposition of Special Measure against FBME Bank Ltd., formerly known as the Federal Bank of the Middle East Ltd., as a Financial Institution of Primary Money Laundering Concern (RIN: 1506-AB27) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4779. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Conduct on Bureau of Engraving and Printing Property received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4780. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Legal, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's Major final rule — Assessments (RIN: 3064-AE40) received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4781. A letter from the Executive Director, Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, transmitting the FY 2015 Annual Report of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 5452(e); Public Law 111-203, Sec. 342(e); (124 Stat. 1543); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4782. A letter from the President and CEO, Securities Investor Protection Corporation, transmitting a Report Regarding Standard Maximum Cash Advance Amount, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 78fff-3(e)(3); Public Law 91-598, Sec. 9(e)(3) (as amended by Public Law 111-203, Sec. 929H(a)(2)); (124 Stat. 1857); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4783. A letter from the PRAO Branch Chief, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Employment and Training Program Monitoring, Oversight and Reporting Measures (RIN: 0584-AE33) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4784. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2013 Report to Congress on Community Services Block Grant Discretionary Activities — Community Economic Development and Rural Community Development Programs, pursuant to Sec. 680(c) of the Community Services Block Grant Act of 1981, Public Law 97-35, as amended by the Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Training and Educational Services Act of 1998; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4785. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2014, as required by the Older Americans Act of 1965, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 3018(a); Public Law 89-73, Sec. 207(a) (as amended by Public Law 106-501, Sec. 205); (114 Stat. 2234); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4786. A letter from the Director, Office of Labor-Management Standards, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Interpretation of the ''Advice'' Exemption in Section 203(c) of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (RIN: 1215-AB79; 1245-AA03) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4787. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Updating OSHA Standards Based on National Consensus Standards; Eye and Face Protection [Docket No.: OSHA-2014-0024] (RIN: 1218-AC87) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4788. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Occupational Exposure to Respirable Crystalline Silica [Docket No.: OSHA-2010-0034] (RIN: 1218-AB70) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4789. A letter from the Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under the Employee Protection Provision of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 [Docket No.: OSHA-2011-0540] (RIN: 1218-AC58) received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4790. A letter from the Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under Section 31307 of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) [Docket No.: OSHA-2015-0021] (RIN: 1218-AC88) received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4791. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4792. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting the FY 2014 report on Federal Government energy management, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 8258(b); Public Law 95-619, Sec. 548 (as amended by Public Law 109-58, Sec. 102(g)); (119 Stat. 608); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4794. A letter from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Closed Captioning of Video Programming; Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. Petition for Rulemaking [CG Docket No.: 05-231] received April 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4795. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report on FDA Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures'', pursuant to Sec. 712(e) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4796. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Food and Drug Administration's FY 2015 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4797. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Patient Engagement Advisory Committee [Docket No.: FDA-2016-N-0001] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4798. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMCS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs; Mental Heath Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008; the Application of Mental Health Parity Requirements to Coverage Offered by Medicaid Managed Care Organizations, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Alternative Benefit Plans [CMS-2333-F] (RIN: 0938-AS24) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4799. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Use of Materials Derived From Cattle in Human Food and Cosmetics [Docket No.: FDA-2004-N-0188; (Formerly 2004N-0081)] (RIN: 0910-AF47) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4800. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Investigational New Drug Applications for Biological Products; Bioequivalence Regulations; Technical Amendment [Docket No.: FDA-2016-N-0011] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4801. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Nevada: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions [EPA-R09-RCRA-2015-0822; FRL-9943-99-Region 9] received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4802. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants from Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units and Standards of Performance for Fossil-Fuel-Fired Electric Utility, Industrial-Commercial-Institutional, and Small Industrial-Commercial-Institutional Steam Generating Units; Technical Correction [EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234 and EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0044; FRL-9942-28-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS41) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121,

Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4803. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans (SIP); State of Iowa; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS); Correction [EPA-R07-OAR-2015-0394; FRL-9944-19-Region 7] received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4804. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Washington; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [EPA-R10-OAR-2015-0448; FRL-9943-19-Region 10] received March 24, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4805. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District and South Coast Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0552; FRL-9943-40-Region 9] received March 24, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4806. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Mandipropamid; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0031; FRL-9943-00] received March 24, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4807. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Partial Exemption of Certain Chemical Substances from Reporting Additional Chemical Data [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0809; FRL-9941-19] received March 24, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4808. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Salicylaldehyde; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0019; FRL-9944-12] received March 24, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4809. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's partial withdrawal of direct final rule — Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections [EPA-R09-OAR-2016-0028; FRL-9944-56-Region 9] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4810. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Clean Air Plans; 1-Hour and 1997 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Requirements; San Joaquin Valley, California [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0048; FRL-9943-78-Region 9] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4811. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Priorities List [EPA-HQ-SFUND-2015-0573, 0574, 0578, 0579, and 0580; FRL-9944-36-OLEM] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4812. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; California; Infrastructure Requirements for Ozone, Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5), Lead (Pb), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), and Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) [EPA-R09-OAR-2014-0547; FRL-9939-89-Region 9] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4813. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pendimethalin; Tolerance Exemptions; Technical Correction [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0397; FRL-9943-79] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4814. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Spokane, Washington: Second 10-Year PM10 Limited Maintenance Plan [EPA-R10-OAR-2016-0003; FRL-9944-83-Region 10] received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4815. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 1,2-Propanediol, 3-[3-[1, 3, 3, 3-tetramethyl-1-[(trimethylsilyl)oxy]-1-disiloxanyl]propoxy]—; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0449; FRL-9944-11] received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4816. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's correcting amendments — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Colorado; Revisions to Common Provisions and Regulation Number 3; Corrections [EPA-R08-OAR-2015-0493; FRL-9942-84-Region 8] received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4817. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Trichloroethylene; Significant New Use Rule [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0697; FRL-9943-83] (RIN: 2070-AK05) received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4818. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluazinam; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0197; FRL-9942-99] received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4819. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval and Designation of Areas; MS; Redesignation of the DeSoto County, 2008 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment [EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0743; FRL-9944-74-Region 4] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4820. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Minnesota and Michigan; Revision to 2013 Taconite Federal Implementation Plan establishing BART for Taconite Plants [EPA-R05-OAR-2015-0196; FRL-9944-22-Region 5] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4821. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; South Carolina; Transportation Conformity Update [EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0696; FRL-9944-55-Region 4] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4822. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Attainment Plan and Base Year Inventory for the North Reading Area for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2015-0773; FRL-9944-73-Region 3] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4823. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds State Implementation Plan [EPA-R06-OAR-2015-0497; FRL-9944-71-Region 6] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4824. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Hexythiazox; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0338 and EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0339; FRL-9942-32] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4825. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — OMB Approvals Under the Paperwork Reduction Act; Technical Amendment [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0486; FRL-9943-62]

received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4826. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; California; South Coast; Moderate Area Plan for the 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0204; FRL-9944-16-Region 9] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4827. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Arizona; Regional Haze Federal Implementation Plan; Reconsideration [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0165; FRL-9944-68-Region 9] received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4828. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollack in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE410) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4829. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Model Safety Evaluation for Plant-Specific Adoption of Technical Specifications Task Force Traveler TSTF-545, Revision 3, ''TS Inservice Testing Program Removal and Clarify SR Usage Rule Application to Section 5.5 Testing'', Using the Consolidated Line Item Improvement Process received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4830. A letter from the Chairman, Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, transmitting the Survey of National Programs for Managing High-Level Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel: Update, pursuant to Public Law 100-203; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4831. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's direct final rule — Amendment To Clarify When Component Part Testing Can Be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits [Docket No. CPSC-2011-0081] received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4832. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements Limits for Unfinished and Untreated Wood [Docket No.: CPSC-2011-0081] received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4833. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Memorandum of Justification for Determination and Certification on the Major Methamphetamine Precursor Chemical Exporting and Importing Countries, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2291j(b)(1)(A); Public Law 87-195, Sec. 490 (as added by Public Law 102-583, Sec. 5(a)); (106 Stat. 4924); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4834. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report entitled ''Overseas Surplus Property'', as required by the Omnibus Appropriation, 1999, Public Law 105-277, Sec. 2215; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4835. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-113, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4836. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-103, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4837. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-136, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4838. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism that was declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4839. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014, with respect to South Sudan is to continue in effect beyond April 3, 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 114–118); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4840. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities, originally declared in Executive Order 13694 of April 1, 2015, is to continue in effect beyond April 1, 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 114–119); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4841. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency with respect to Somalia, originally declared on April 12, 2010, by Executive Order 13536, is to continue in effect beyond April 12, 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 114–121); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4842. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain Persons and Modification to Entries on the Entity List; and Removal of Certain Persons from the Entity List [Docket No.: 160229152-6152-01] (RIN: 0694-AG87) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4843. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuba: Revisions to License Exceptions and Licensing Policy [Docket No.: 160303178-6178-01] (RIN: 0694-AG86) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4844. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Temporary General License [Docket No.: 160106014-6262-02] (RIN: 0694-AG82) received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4845. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia, Transmittal No. 16-23, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(b) (as amended by Public Law 106-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 536); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4846. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations Based on the 2015 Missile Technology Control Regime Plenary Agreements [Docket No.: 160204079-6079-01] (RIN: 0694-AG77) received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4847. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the United Kingdom, Transmittal No. 16-26, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(b) (as amended by Public Law 106 6-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 536); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4848. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report entitled ''Presidential Report to Congress: Treaty with Australia Concerning Defense Trade Cooperation'', pursuant to Treaty Doc. 110-10, Sec. 2(8); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4849. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Determination pursuant to Sec. 451 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4850. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-128, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(d)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(d) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (90 Stat. 740); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4851. A letter from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury,

transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuban Assets Control Regulations received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4852. A letter from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Burundi Sanctions Regulations received April 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4853. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 2015 Freedom of Information Act Litigation and Compliance Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(F)(ii)(II); Public Law 89-554, Sec. 5(ii)(II) (as added by Public Law 110-175, Sec. 5); (121 Stat. 2526); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4854. A letter from the Chairman, Council of District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-334, ''Military Installation Public Charter School Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4855. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-335, ''Child Support Guideline Revision Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4856. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-336, ''Carcinogenic Flame Retardant Prohibition Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4857. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-337, ''Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4858. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-338, ''Health Care Benefits Lien Reduction Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4859. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-339, ''Workers' Compensation Benefits Lien Reduction Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4860. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-340, ''Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4861. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-341, ''Higher Education Tax Exemption Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4862. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-342, ''Maverick Room Way Designation Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4863. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-343, ''Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 5197, S.O. 11-4822, Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4864. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-344, ''Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 2882, S.O. 14-21729, Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4865. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-345, ''Dedication of Land for Street Purposes in Squares 3185 and 3186, S.O. 13-11003 Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4866. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-355, ''Construction Codes Harmonization Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4867. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-356, ''Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4868. A letter from the Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, transmitting the 2015 District of Columbia Family Court Report, pursuant to Public Law 107-114, Sec. 4(a); (115 Stat. 2111); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4869. A letter from the Diversity and Inclusion Program Director, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4870. A letter from the Executive Director, Central Intelligence Agency, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4871. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4872. A letter from the Chairperson, Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4873. A letter from the Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4874. A letter from the Officer, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4875. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, transmitting notification of designation of acting officer and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4876. A letter from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4877. A letter from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4878. A letter from the Staff Director, Federal Election Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4879. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4880. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4881. A letter from the Executive Analyst, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting notification of action on nomination and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4882. A letter from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4883. A letter from the President, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4884. A letter from the Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4885. A letter from the Chairman, National Indian Gaming Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4886. A letter from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4887. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569);

to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4888. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled ''DYRS Can Strengthen the Management of DC YouthLink, Community-Based Residential Facilities, and Performance Reporting''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4889. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2016 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4890. A letter from the President and CEO, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4891. A letter from the Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer, Postal Regulatory Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4892. A letter from the Oversight Board, Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4893. A letter from the EEO Director, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4894. A letter from the Director, Congressional Affairs, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4895. A letter from the Chief Human Resources Officer and Executive Vice President, United States Postal Service, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4896. A letter from the Chief Administrative Officer, transmitting the quarterly report of receipts and expenditures of appropriations and other funds for the period January 1, 2016 to March 31, 2016, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 104a (H. Doc. No. 114–120); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

4897. A letter from the Director, U.S. Government Publishing Office, transmitting the Annual Report of the U.S. Government Publishing Office for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015; to the Committee on House Administration.

4898. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary — Indian Affairs, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the FY 2014 Report to Congress on the Funding Requirements for Contract Support Costs, pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 450j-1(c); Public Law 93-638, Sec. 106(c) (as added by Public Law 106-260, Sec. 9(2)); (114 Stat. 733); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4899. A letter from the Director, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the 2015 Report to Congress on the Disclosure of Financial Interest and Recusal Requirements for Regional Fishery Management Councils (Councils) and Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSCs) and on Apportionment of Membership on the Regional Fishery Management Councils, pursuant to Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Secs. 302(b)(2)(B) and 302(j)(9); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4900. A letter from the Chairman, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, transmitting the FY 2016 report of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 8903 note; Public Law 106-79, Sec. 8162(k)(2); (113 Stat. 1275); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4901. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE368) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4902. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Western Aleutian Islands District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE471) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4903. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE450) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4904. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No.: 140117052-4402-02] (RIN: 0648-XE449) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4905. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Increase [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XE480) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4906. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE495) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4907. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction [Docket No.: 130312235-3658-02] (RIN: 0648-XE455) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4908. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2016 Recreational Accountability Measure and Closure for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XE445) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4909. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish Longline Component [Docket No.: 120404257-3325-02] (RIN: 0648-XE489) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4910. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; 2016 Commercial Run-Around Gillnet Closure [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XE406) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4911. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE495) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4912. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Trawl Catcher Vessels in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE505) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4913. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final

rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program [Docket No.: 150313268-6008-02] (RIN: 0648-BE98) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4914. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fisheries; 2016-2018 Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Specifications [Docket No.: 150903814-5999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE171) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4915. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Adjustments to 2016 Annual Catch Limits [Docket No.: 151223999-6135-01] (RIN: 0648-XE379) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4916. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Annual Specifications [Docket No.: 150708591-6096-02] (RIN: 0648-XE043) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4917. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE482] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4918. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Other Hook-and-Line Fishery by Catcher Vessels in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE493) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4919. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 150818742-6210-02] (RIN: 0648-XE523) received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4920. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plan [Docket No.: 160203073-6073-01] (RIN: 0648-BF75) received April 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4921. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery and Golden Crab Fishery of the South Atlantic, and Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery of the Atlantic [Docket No.: 140819686-5999-02] (RIN: 0648-BE38) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4922. A letter from the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting notification that the Department has determined not to file a petition for a writ of certiorari in Elven Joe Swisher v. United States, No. 11-35796, 811 F.3d 299 (9th Cir. Jan. 11, 2016) (en banc), pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 530D(a); Public Law 107-273, Sec. 202(a); (116 Stat. 1771); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4923. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting a report entitled ''Report to the Congress of the United States on the Activities of the Department of Justice in Relation to the Prison Rape Elimination Act'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 15604(b); Public Law 108-79, Sec. 5(b)(1); (117 Stat. 978); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4924. A letter from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting the Executive Summary of the 2015 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts and Judicial Business of the United States Courts, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 604(a)(4); June 25, 1948, ch. 646, Sec. 604(a)(4); (62 Stat. 914); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4925. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendments to the Rules of Practice for Trials Before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board [Docket No.: PTO-P-2015-0053] (RIN: 0651-AD01) received April 4, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4926. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting a letter regarding the Department's response to the National Transportation Safety Board's 2016 Most Wanted List, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1135(e)(1); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(d) (as amended by Public Law 111-216, Sec. 202(b)); (124 Stat. 2351); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4927. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0561; Directorate Identifier 2014-NE-12-AD; Amendment 39-18407; AD 2016-04-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4928. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31066; Amdt. No.: 525] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4929. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; B-N Group Ltd. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7777; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-036-AD; Amendment 39-18432; AD 2016-06-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4930. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2006-25970; Directorate Identifier 99-NE-12-AD; Amendment 39-18426; AD 2016-05-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4931. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Engine Alliance Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3713; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-23-AD; Amendment 39-18425; AD 2016-05-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4932. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation [Docket No.: FAA-2016-4280; Directorate Identifier 2016-SW-008-AD; Amendment 39-18429; AD 2016-05-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4933. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2984; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-21-AD; Amendment 39-18405; AD 2016-04-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4934. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2568; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-026-AD; Amendment 39-18424; AD 2016-05-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4935. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of

Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3146; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-249-AD; Amendment 39-18411; AD 2016-04-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4936. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0681; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-201-AD; Amendment 39-18400; AD 2016-04-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 206, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4937. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; M7 Aerospace LLC Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3607; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-010-AD; Amendment 39-18398; AD 2016-04-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4938. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0243; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-114-AD; Amendment 39-18423; AD 2016-05-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4939. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7205; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-025-AD; Amendment 39-18419; AD 2016-05-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4940. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's notice of proposed rulemaking — Seaway Regulations and Rules: Periodic Update, Various Categories [Docket No.: SLSDC-2016-0004] (RIN: 2135-AA39) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4941. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's notice of proposed rulemaking — Tariff of Tolls [Docket No.: SLSDC-2016-0003] (RIN: 2135-AA38) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4942. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3981; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-053-AD; Amendment 39-18417; AD 2016-04-23] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4943. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4070; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-31-AD; Amendment 39-18408; AD 2016-04-14] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4944. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbojet Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1331; Directorate Identifier 2012-NE-44-AD; Amendment 39-18390; AD 2016-03-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4945. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0529; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-260-AD; Amendment 39-18420; AD 2016-05-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4946. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3149; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-014-AD; Amendment 39-18394; AD 2016-03-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4947. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4381; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-009-AD; Amendment 39-18428; AD 2016-05-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4948. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters, Inc. (MDHI) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3658; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-039-AD; Amendment 39-18427; AD 2016-05-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4949. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0248; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-143-AD; Amendment 39-18410; AD 2016-04-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4950. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Salem, OR [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3751; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-20] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4951. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace, South Bend, WA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3771; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-28] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4952. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Enid Vance AFB, OK; Enid Woodring Municipal Airport, Enid, OK; and Enid, OK [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7489; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ASW-20] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4953. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Minot, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7485; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-25] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4954. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace, South Naknek, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3108; Airspace Docket No.: 12-AAL-15] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4955. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q-35; Western United States [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6001; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-10] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4956. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following North Dakota towns; Harvey, ND, and Rolla, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2016-3695; Airspace Docket No.: 16-AGL-5] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4957. A letter from the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review [Docket No.: EP 712] received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4958. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Seaway Regulations and Rules: Periodic Update, Various Categories [Docket No.: SLSDC-2016-0004] (RIN: 2135-AA39) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4959. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tariff of Tolls [Docket No.: SLSDC 2016-0003](RIN: 2135-AA38) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4960. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-5815; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-039-AD; Amendment 39-18443; AD 2016-06-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4961. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4816; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-238-AD; Amendment 39-18444; AD 2016-06-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4962. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3636; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-043-AD; Amendment 39-18442; AD 2016-06-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4963. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2966; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-051-AD; Amendment 39-18441; AD 2016-06-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4964. A letter from the Management Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2963; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-016-AD; Amendment 39-18434; AD 2016-06-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4965. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Quest Aircraft Design, LLC Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-5318; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-035-AD; Amendment 39-18437; AD 2016-06-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4966. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Pratt and Whitney Canada Corp. Turboprop Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3732; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-25-AD; Amendment 39-18431; AD 2016-05-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4967. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2459; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-002-AD; Amendment 39-18436; AD 2016-06-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4968. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2961; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-145-AD; Amendment 39-18430; AD 2016-05-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4969. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2016-2701; Directorate Identifier 2016-NE-03-AD; Amendment 39-18440; AD 2016-06-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4970. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0495; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-172-AD; Amendment 39-18435; AD 2016-06-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4971. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-4227; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-025-AD; Amendment 39-18439; AD 2016-06-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4972. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Minot, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7485; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-25] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4973. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0774; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-154-AD; Amendment 39-18438; AD 2016-06-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4974. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following Tennessee Towns: Jackson, TN; Tri-Cities, TN [Docket No.: FAA-2016-0735; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ASO-2] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4975. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace for the following Minnesota Towns: Rochester, MN; and St. Cloud, MN [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7484; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-24] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4976. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Deer Lodge, MT [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3773; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-22] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4977. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3753; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-26-AD; Amendment 39-18406; AD 2016-04-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4978. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-4222; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-017-AD; Amendment 39-18433; AD 2016-06-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110

Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4979. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3633; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-097-AD; Amendment 39-18416; AD 2016-04-22] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4980. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Butte, MT [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3772; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-21] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4981. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Redesignation and Expansion of Restricted Area R-4403; Gainesville, MS [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0370; Airspace Docket No.: 14-ASO-2] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4982. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31064; Amdt. No.: 3685] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4983. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31065; Amdt. No.: 3686] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4984. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31068; Amdt. No.: 3688] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4985. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31067; Amdt. 3687] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4986. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D Airspace and Class E Airspace; Lynchburg, VA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6231; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-12] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4987. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D Airspace and Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4532; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-10] received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4988. A letter from the Senior Assistant Chief Counsel, PHMSA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Hazardous Materials: Reverse Logistics (RRR) [Docket No.: PHMSA-2011-0143 (HM-253)] (RIN: 2137-AE81) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4989. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Flight Simulation Training Device Qualification Standards for Extended Envelope and Adverse Weather Event Training Tasks [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0391; Amdt. No.: 60-4] (RIN: 2120-AK08) received April 1, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4990. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Departments of Defense and the Interior, transmitting the Departments' 2015 Report to Congress on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, pursuant to Public Law 106-541, Sec. 601(l); (114 Stat. 2692); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4991. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 Annual Report, pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 306(a); Public Law 109-304, Sec. 4; (120 Stat. 1489); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4992. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, Office of Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — NASA FAR Supplement: NASA Suspending and Debarring Official (RIN: 2700-AE26) received March 23, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

4993. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, ORPM, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Telephone enrollment in the VA healthcare system (RIN: 2900-AP68) received March 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4994. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-357, ''Walter Reed Development Omnibus Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814) (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4995. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations and removal of temporary regulations — Indirect Stock Transfers and the Coordination Rule Exceptions; Transfers of Stock or Securities in Outbound Asset Reorganizations [TD 9760] (RIN: 1545-BJ74) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4996. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Limitations on the Importation of Net Built-In Losses [TD 9759] (RIN: 1545-BF43; 1545-BC88) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4997. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2016 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures [Notice 2016-24] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4998. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Determination of Issue Price in the Case of Certain Debt Instruments Issued for Property (Rev. Rul. 2016-09) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4999. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Empowerment Zone Designation Extension [Notice 2016-28] received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5000. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations and removal of temporary regulations — Disclosures of Return Information Reflected on Returns to Officers and Employees of the Department of Commerce for Certain Statistical Purposes and Related Activities [TD 9754] (RIN: 1545-BL59) received March 30, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5001. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Section 911(d)(4) — 2015 Update (Rev. Proc. 2016-21) received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5002. A letter from the Attorney, Office of the Chief Counsel for Trade Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Enforcement and Compliance, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Regulations Regarding Price Adjustments in Antidumping Duty Proceedings [Docket No.: 140929814-6136-02] (RIN: 0625-AB02) received April 5, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5003. A letter from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the 2015 Annual Report for the National Security Education Program, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. Sec. 1906(a); jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Intelligence (Permanent Select).

5004. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting additional legislative proposals relating to acquisition matters that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 114th Congress; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Small Business.

5005. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 114th Congress; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, the Judiciary, Foreign Affairs, Education and the Workforce, Science, Space, and Technology, Ways and Means, and Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Pursuant to the provisions of section 5 of H. Res. 653, the following report was filed on March 30, 2016]

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2666. A bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service; with an amendment (Rept. 114–478). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

[Submitted on April 11, 2016]

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1815. A bill to facilitate certain pinyon-juniper related projects in Lincoln County, Nevada, to modify the boundaries of certain wilderness areas in the State of Nevada, and to provide for the implementation of a conservation plan for the Virgin River, Nevada; with an amendment (Rept. 114–479). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4403. A bill to authorize the development of open-source software based on certain systems of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to facilitate the vetting of travelers against terrorist watchlists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–480, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4407. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish in the Department of Homeland Security a board to coordinate and integrate departmental intelligence, activities, and policy related to counterterrorism, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–481). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4890. A bill to impose a ban on the payment of bonuses to employees of the Internal Revenue Service until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 4891. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4892. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to pay special compensation to certain veterans with the loss or loss of use of creative organs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SANFORD (for himself, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER):

H.R. 4893. A bill to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to prohibit the use of guarantee fees as offsets; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 4894. A bill to repeal title II of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, the Judiciary, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4895. A bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 4896. A bill to amend the Agricultural Act of 2014 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to use data from each State to calculate average feed cost and actual dairy production margins, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. HOYER (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 4897. A bill to establish an information technology modernization fund and board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 4898. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from issuing licenses to permit offshore dollar clearing outside of the United States financial system for transactions involving or benefitting Iran; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Mr. TAKAI):

H. Res. 669. A resolution recognizing the 150th anniversary of the Royal Order of Kamehameha I; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

186. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, relative to House Resolution No. 169, memorializing the Congress of the United States to take actions necessary to help families enduring mental health crisis; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

187. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7, memorializing the Congress of the United States to maintain the Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing arrangement passed under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

188. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 3, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the states to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

189. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Nevada, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 2, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the states to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

190. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4, memorializing the Congress of the United States to extend Louisiana's seaward boundary in the Gulf of Mexico to three marine leagues; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

191. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, relative to House Resolutions urging the members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation and the leaders of the Congress of the United States to adopt House Joint Resolution 58, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to the authority of Congress and the states to regulate contributions and expenditures in political campaigns and to enact public financing systems for such campaigns; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

192. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, relative to resolution No. 263, to encourage the President and the Congress of the United States, and United States Office of Management and Budget to support plans to upgrade the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and encourage the United States Army Corps of Engineers to take expeditious action in preparing an Economic Reevaluation Report; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

193. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, relative to House Resolution No. 263, encouraging the President and the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget to support plans to upgrade the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

194. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Colorado, relative to Senate Resolution 16-002, Concerning Restoring the Presumption of Service Connection for Agent Orange Exposure for United States Vietnam Veterans Through the ''Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4890.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 and clause 18 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 4891.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 and 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, and Amendment XVI to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4892.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SANFORD:

H.R. 4893.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 4894.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Consitution.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4895.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4896.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3—The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with Foreign Nations, and among several States, and with Indian Tribes.

By Mr. HOYER:

H.R. 4897.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1, Sec. 8, Clause 18)

The US Constitution Article 1, Section 8: Powers of Congress Clause 18

The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer therof.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 4898.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 135: Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 140: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 320: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 402: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 430: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 503: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 556: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 563: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 605: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 612: Mr. ROYCE, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 664: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 711: Mr. CARTER of Texas and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 762: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 784: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 816: Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 837: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 864: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 911: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 932: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 953: Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 969: Mr. WHITFIELD and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1111: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 1197: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1198: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1336: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 1439: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 1488: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1534: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1567: Mr. ROKITA, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1608: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. YODER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1625: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1655: Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 1687: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1784: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 1854: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 2096: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 2144: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 2290: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2411: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2536: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 2622: Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 2694: Mr. KILMER, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2793: Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 2802: Mr. TIPTON and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 2812: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 2858: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 3071: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 3119: Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. FARR, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 3268: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 3326: Ms. MOORE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. WALKER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. BARLETTA, Miss RICE of New York, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3337: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3355: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. LANCE, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 3384: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 3406: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LEWIS and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 3604: Ms. LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 3706: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. FARR, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 3712: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 3846: Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 3852: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H.R. 3870: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 3886: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 3936: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.

H.R. 3970: Mr. TURNER.

H.R. 3997: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 4055: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 4131: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 4223: Mrs. LAWRENCE and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 4275: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 4364: Mr. TED LIEU of California and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 4400: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4499: Mr. MOULTON, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 4534: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 4559: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 4570: Mrs. LAWRENCE and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 4614: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 4625: Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. DELAURO, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 4626: Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. JONES, Mr. REED, and Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 4637: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 4664: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 4678: Mr. WOODALL.

H.R. 4694: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 4731: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 4763: Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 4776: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 4813: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 4885: Mr. SESSIONS.

H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. PETERS.

H. Res. 230: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H. Res. 290: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 617: Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Res. 629: Ms. DELBENE.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

55. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Attorneys General of the States of West Virginia and Texas, relative to a letter to the President of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the Co-Presidents of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies regarding the Clean Power Plan stay; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

56. Also, a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson, a citizen of Austin, TX, relative to urging Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would disallow the enactment of any law that exempts Members of Congress, the President, Federal Judges, or appointees and employees, within all three branches of the Federal Government, from the application of such law; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE—*Monday, April 11, 2016*

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Savior of all, make us patient and kind. Help us to not do to others what we wouldn't want done to us.

Lord, fill the hearts of our Senators with Your overflowing love. Enable them to love their neighbors as You have commanded them to do. Plant within our lawmakers a sure confidence in Your prevailing providence. Renew and refresh them for the challenges of this day. Keep them congenial with their colleagues, ever eager to explore common ground.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator THUNE, says that keeping Americans safe from future attacks is a top priority. He is right, of course. From Brussels to Egypt, events around the world underscore the need for stronger security measures for our Nation's air traffic.

That is why I was glad when large bipartisan majorities voted last week to advance the FAA Reauthorization Act and then to strengthen it further with the most comprehensive airline security reforms in years.

We appreciate Senator THUNE's work with the Aviation Subcommittee chair, Senator AYOTTE, as well as Senators NELSON and CANTWELL, to move an amendment designed to keep passengers safer and to help deter terrorism in airports on U.S. soil. The amendment will help shore up security measures for international flights coming into the United States as well as improve vetting and inspections of airport employees.

I would also like to recognize Senator HEINRICH for his work to include provisions that will increase security measures in prescreening airport zones and expand preparation for active shooter events.

This FAA reauthorization legislation will do more for security than any other in years. It will do more for passengers than any other in years as well.

Don't take my word for it. A consumer columnist for the Washington Post labeled it ''one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation.'' It includes a number of consumer-friendly provisions, like fee disclosures and refunds for lost bags or services paid for but not received, and does so without imposing choice-limiting regulations or fees and taxes on airline passengers.

This is a good bill and a good example of what can get accomplished with a Senate that is back to work. It would help keep Americans safe, both in our airports and in the skies. It has enjoyed support from both sides of the aisle.

If Members have additional ideas they think might strengthen the bill further, I would again encourage them to work with the bill managers so we can continue moving forward.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, later today the Senate will confirm Waverly Crenshaw to serve as a district judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Mr. Crenshaw is a superb nominee with impeccable credentials and a sharp legal mind. He works at a prestigious law firm in Nashville, where he became the first ever African-American partner.

Mr. Crenshaw is well liked by Democrats and well liked by Republicans. His nomination is supported by the Republican Senators from Tennessee, and the Judiciary Committee reported his nomination unanimously.

Waverly Crenshaw's confirmation is desperately needed. The vacancy he will fill in the Middle District of Tennessee is a judicial emergency, meaning there are more cases than the judges in that district can administer.

While I am pleased the Senate will confirm Mr. Crenshaw later today, I wonder why this eminently qualified nominee wasn't confirmed a long time ago. It has been more than a year since President Obama nominated him. The Judiciary Committee reported his nomination unanimously more than 9 months ago.

That a consensus nominee like Waverly Crenshaw had to wait so long to be confirmed is another example—and not a good one—of Senate Republicans' concerted effort to undermine the American judiciary system. The Republican leader and the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee are leading an all-out assault on our Nation's courts by depriving them of qualified judges.

Americans know of Republicans' unprecedented obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland. Republican gridlock is precluding Judge Garland from a hearing and a vote. But that same gridlock is extending to important lower court nominees also.

Republicans' slow-walking and obstruction of circuit and district court nominees is so pronounced that it is actually making history, and I am not sure it is good history.

To date, this Republican-controlled Senate has confirmed only 16 judicial nominations. Today will be the 17th. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, that is good enough to make this Republican Senate the worst at confirming circuit court and district court judges.

Chairman GRASSLEY is running the least productive Judiciary Committee since World War II, measured in both judges reported out of committee and judges confirmed. Because of the Republicans' sloth, judiciary emergencies have nearly tripled, leaving our courts overworked and Americans without prompt access to their judiciary system. Republicans are refusing to do their job, and the American people are suffering as a result. Republican efforts to cripple our judiciary will reverberate for decades, preventing Americans from obtaining justice.

It is time for the Republican leader and the senior Senator from Iowa to put an end to this obstruction. It is time they discontinue using the Senate Judiciary Committee as a political arm of the Republican leader's office and start doing their job. This should begin by doing their constitutional duty to provide advice and consent on President Obama's Supreme Court nominee.

The Republican leader and Senator GRASSLEY should give Judge Garland a hearing and a vote. They should stop stalling, hoping that Donald Trump or TED CRUZ will nominate Justice

Scalia's successor. This should give even Republicans pause.

Then the Republican leader and the Judiciary Committee should move the backlog of qualified judicial nominations who are awaiting confirmation—and there are a lot of them—nominees like Paula Xinis, whom President Obama nominated to serve as a judge for the District Court of Maryland. Ms. Xinis, who is a partner in a renowned Baltimore law firm, has 13 years of experience as a Federal public defender. For 5 years she worked as the director of training for the Office of the Federal Public Defender in all of Maryland.

The Judiciary Committee reported Ms. Xinis 7 months ago. Yet, for more than half a year, Senator GRASSLEY has ignored her nomination.

She is not alone. The Republican leader is delaying other qualified, consensus nominations.

Edward Stanton was nominated to the Western District of Tennessee and is supported by Senator ALEXANDER and, of course, Senator CORKER. The committee reported his nomination in October.

Robert Rossiter was nominated to the District of Nebraska and has the support of both of his home State Republican Senators. The committee reported his nomination in October.

And there are two nominees to the Western District of Pennsylvania, Susan Paradise Baxter and Marilyn Jean Horan, who were recommended by Senators CASEY and TOOMEY. But even though it was recommended by a Republican Senator, the committee reported the nominations in January but hasn't done anything since.

There are many other nominees whom the Judiciary Committee is ignoring altogether—not even holding hearings.

So why aren't Republican Senators pressing the Republican leader to do his job and schedule votes on these stalled nominations? Why isn't the Judiciary Committee doing their part to get these judges confirmed? Why isn't the chairman of the committee doing his part?

This is the same Senator GRASSLEY who in 2008 said this:

> We should get our job done and confirm these nominees because that is what it takes for the judicial branch to get their work done. The judiciary needs to have the personnel to get their job done.

So let's do what Senator GRASSLEY said a few years ago. Let's get the job done.

From the Supreme Court down to the district courts, let's get the job done for our Nation's judiciary.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last Thursday a Gallup and Healthways survey revealed more good news about the ever-shrinking rate of uninsured Americans.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, 91 percent of American adults now have health insurance. ObamaCare has been especially helpful to working Americans. For adults making less than $36,000, the uninsured rate has been cut by one-third. Ninety-two percent of Americans making between $36,000 and $90,000 a year now have health insurance.

Every day more and more people who were previously without health insurance are now covered. That is especially true across racial and ethnic lines, where the uninsured rate is plummeting. According to this survey, ''across key subgroups, blacks and Hispanics have experienced the largest declines in their uninsured rates since the fourth quarter of 2013.''

The numbers really bear that out. The uninsured rate for African-Americans has dropped by more than 50 percent, and the uninsured rate for Hispanics has dropped by more than 25 percent. These are the facts. All across the Nation, our constituents are getting the health care coverage they were promised when Congress passed the Affordable Care Act.

So I think it is time for our Republican colleagues to stop denying the evidence. The evidence is that ObamaCare is working for the American people.

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor. I ask the Chair to announce the business for the remainder of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a number of my amendments to the FAA reauthorization bill.

I filed Markey amendment No. 3467 to protect consumers from ridiculously high airline fees. In recent years, fees have gone up despite the fact that gas prices and airline choices have gone down. Regrettably, the only thing competitive about the current airline industry is the battle for overhead compartment space. Since 2001, 10 major airlines have become 4, allowing air carriers to charge ridiculous fees and act in uncompetitive ways. The four major airlines now control 80 percent of the seat capacity in the United States. At some major airports, passengers only have one or two airlines to choose from.

Airline fees have climbed as high as the planes on which passengers are traveling. We must stop their rapid ascent to protect the everyday airline passenger. According to an excellent report released by Ranking Member NELSON last year, three airlines increased checked baggage fees by 67 percent between 2009 and 2014 and four airlines increased domestic cancellation fees by 33 percent. One increased its fee by 50 percent, and one increased its fee by 66 percent. Airlines should not be allowed to overcharge captive passengers just because they need to change their flight or check a couple of bags. It is just not fair. There is no justification for charging consumers a $200 fee to resell a $150 ticket that was cancelled well in advance when the airline can then resell that ticket for a higher fare to a different traveler. Further, airlines such as Delta, United, and American charge as much as $25 for the first checked bag and $35 for the second bag even though there appears to be no appreciable cost increase for processing the second bag. That is $60 to check two bags one-way or $120 round-trip to check two bags.

My amendment prohibits airlines from imposing fees that are not reasonable and proportional to the costs of the services provided. This commonsense consumer protection does not prevent airlines from charging fees; the amendment simply caps airline fees at a fair rate to ensure that passengers are not getting tipped upside down at the ticket counter.

I am pleased that Senators BLUMENTHAL and KLOBUCHAR have cosponsored my amendment. I offered this amendment in the Commerce Committee, and it received a vote of 12 to 12. It is time to break this tie on the Senate floor.

Further, my amendment enjoys broad support from several groups, including the National Consumers League, the Consumer Federation of America, and Travelers United.

Mr. President, I intend to offer my cyber security amendments as well, Markey amendment Nos. 3468, 3469, and 3470.

In December, I sent letters to 12 domestic airlines and two airplane manufactures requesting information on the cyber security protections on their aircraft and computer systems. What I found was startling. Currently, airlines

are not required to report attempted or successful cyber attacks to the government. Let me say that again. Airlines are not required to report attempted or successful cyber attacks to the Federal Government.

According to the National Air Carrier Association, which represents Allegiant, Spirit, and Sun Country—some of the country's smaller airlines—some of their carriers experience several hundred hacking attempts into their system every single day, but since there is no requirement to share this information with the FAA, potentially valuable cyber security information may not get to the other airlines, manufacturers, and regulators. My amendments address these concerns by mandating that airlines disclose cyber attacks to the FAA, directing the FAA to establish comprehensive cyber security standards, and commissioning a study to evaluate the safety and security risks associated with Wi-Fi on planes.

My amendments enjoy broad support from the Association of Flight Attendants, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

Mr. President, finally, on drone privacy, in committee we added a requirement that government operators disclose where they fly drones, the purpose of the flight, and whether the drone contains cameras, thermal imaging, or cell phone interceptors. My amendment would extend those requirements to commercial drone operators.

I encourage all Senators to support my amendments.

I thank the Chair for giving me this opportunity to address the Chamber.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Thune/Nelson amendment No. 3464, in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Gardner) amendment No. 3460 (to amendment No. 3464), to require the FAA Administrator to consider the operational history of a person before authorizing the person to operate certain unmanned aircraft systems.

Nelson (for Bennet) amendment No. 3524 (to amendment No. 3464), to improve air service for families and pregnant women.

Cantwell amendment No. 3490 (to amendment No. 3464), to extend protections against physical assault to air carrier customer service representatives.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this week the Senate is continuing its consideration of the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration and bringing important improvements in terms of aviation infrastructure and public safety. I am glad the Senate voted—notwithstanding the impression I think people get from the outside that all we do is bicker and we don't actually solve any problems. I am glad the Senate has worked in a bipartisan way to move this legislation forward. We have a lot of heavy lifting left to do on this legislation this week, and none of these issues is easy, but it is important we do everything we can to demonstrate to the American people that our interests are their interests in moving bipartisan solutions forward for their benefit.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

Mr. President, I wish to just take a moment and point out that this week is also a very important week because it is National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Too often crime victims in our country aren't treated with the fairness and respect they deserve. So often it seems as though we focus our attention on those who commit the crime and not nearly enough on those who are victims of crime they had no part in instigating but perhaps happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. When we don't show the proper respect for victims of crime, it can lead to distrust in our communities between law enforcement and the public, and it can make our country a more dangerous place.

The fact is, our law enforcement professionals work best with community cooperation. Frequently, the community can be the eyes and the ears for law enforcement and help give them information they need in order to prevent crime from occurring in the first place or to make a show of force to in fact deter the commission of a crime.

When I was Texas attorney general, I had the privilege of overseeing our State's Crime Victims' Compensation Fund. This is an idea which said we ought to take the fines and the penalties from people who commit crimes and then use those funds to make grants to the victims of crime and the people who attempt to help them heal and recover from the consequences. Time and time again, I saw that when we don't support the victims of crime, they and their families aren't the only ones who suffer. It can also impede law enforcement efforts when they feel this disjuncture or disconnection between the victims and the law enforcement professionals. So it is important for many reasons—out of basic fairness and compassion but also in the interests of law enforcement, generally, to make sure we do everything we can to keep law enforcement and the victims of crime on the same page and the communities in which they reside.

We need to continually look for ways to improve our support for crime victims. One way we can do this is by continuing assistance to State and local governments in a variety of ways. We recently had a hearing on the intersection of mental illness and law enforcement. Unfortunately, in our society today—because of the deinstitutionalization of people with mental illness, with no safety net to take its place—many people who suffer from mental illness are residing in our jails, filling our emergency rooms, or simply living on our streets. So we need to redirect more than just the 1 percent of funds currently directed by the Federal Government to State and local law enforcement for support and training. We need to redirect more of that in a targeted fashion to deal with this crisis in mental illness.

Here is an anecdote. Recently, I had the chance to meet with some members of the Major County Sheriffs' Association. The sheriff of Bexar County, TX, a friend of mine, said: How would you like to meet the largest mental health provider in the United States? I said: Well, sure. Who is that? She said: Meet the sheriff of Los Angeles County.

This made a deep impression on me, and it tells me we still have a lot to do.

Another example of where the Federal Government can play an appropriate support role for local and State law enforcement—and I am not suggesting the Federal Government take over State and local law enforcement, far from it. Rather, the Federal Government should recognize and support the important role that local and State law enforcement play and provide that support, where possible, here at the Federal level.

Nowhere else have I found that more important recently than our efforts to try to audit and test the massive nationwide rape kit backlog. It has been estimated there are 400,000 rape kits collected from the forensic evidence from sexual assaults that remain untested. We know these rape kits contain vital DNA evidence that can put criminals behind bars, exonerate the falsely accused, and help detect those who commit crimes serially—not just

once but over and over and over again until they are ultimately caught. As we know, many communities at the local level simply do not have the resources or expertise to test these rape kits in a timely fashion, so that is an area where we can help. That means that while evidence is collecting dust on a shelf for years, criminals will remain loose—unless we continue to act—and make it impossible for the victims of these crimes to find closure. I will give just one example.

Last year Houston had a backlog of thousands of rape kits going back into the 1980s. Fortunately, due to resources provided by the Federal Government under the Debbie Smith Act, and with the determination of the local leadership, Mayor Annise Parker, the city of Houston, began to work with the State of Texas and the Federal Government to eliminate Houston's rape kit backlog. So far they have tested thousands of rape kits, resulting in 850 CODIS matches. That is the DNA check system run by the FBI, where when people have been arrested for offenses in the past, their DNA information is recorded in this data base and then can be matched against that collected in a rape kit or other forensic evidence. So just as a result of the city of Houston undertaking this massive effort—again, with the cooperation of the State and Federal Government—to eliminate its rape kit backlog, they have gotten 850 hits in the CODIS system. In other words, by testing the evidence they already had, Houston officials have been able to identify hundreds of people who are perpetrators of crime—because the DNA evidence does not lie—and to place them at the scene of a crime. Again, as we find out, sadly, people who commit sexual assaults frequently don't do it just once in their life. Many of them do it serially or until they get caught, looking for victims of opportunity—sometimes even children. It is terrible.

Fortunately, with the tools and resources provided by the Debbie Smith Act and something called the SAFER Act, Houston will complete the testing of all backlogged rape kits this year. This is important because in the past, testing of these rape kits was viewed as mainly a way of just confirming the identity of the assailant using DNA evidence, but frequently the identity of the assailant is not an issue in these cases, and it is expensive to test rape kits. Frequently, the assailant is known and the question is one of consent or nonconsent. What we have found is by testing more rape kits—even where the issue of identity is not in question—we can literally tie these defendants in criminal cases to other sexual assaults in a way that is a pretty powerful and pretty revolutionary way.

I am proud of the work Houston and the State of Texas are doing, working with the Federal Government, to end the rape kit backlog, but it is going to take a lot more work from us on an ongoing and long-term basis because, first, one of the things we need to do, which Congress has already required, is an audit to make sure we know where all of these rape kits are—whether they are sitting in an evidence locker or whether they are still sitting in a police station in an investigation locker. We need to make sure there is an audit done so we can get our arms around the size and scope of the problem. Then we need to redirect more of the resources the Federal Government has already appropriated money for under the Debbie Smith Act to actually test these rape kits. This is very important because we need the survivors of sexual assault to know we continue to stand with them in their fight.

Thank goodness for brave women such as Debbie Smith and so many others whom I have met along the way who I think demonstrate not only their own courage but also give other people courage to stand up for their own rights when they are, through no fault of their own, victims of sexual assault.

The Crime Victims' Rights Week is more than just about this crime of sexual assault. It is about respect for all victims of crime. That is why I am proud to be working with the senior Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, and Congressman TED POE of Houston, TX, on the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. This is comprehensive legislation to increase rights and protections for crime victims across the country. It will reauthorize the landmark Justice for All Act signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2004.

As part of the reauthorization, it will also increase the collection of compensation and restitution for crime victims, it will protect the housing rights of domestic violence victims, and it will strengthen the forensic sciences to swiftly put criminals behind bars and to improve the integrity of the forensic testing.

Frequently, we know that both the expertise and the equipment used by local governments and law enforcement are sometimes pretty spotty. In order to maintain the integrity of this important and powerful type of evidence, it is very importants we provide some guidance—perhaps best practices—for forensic sciences. We have the ability to do that because of the resources of the Federal Government; again, not to commander or mandate but basically to help local and State governments improve their forensic sciences and their testing.

This legislation will also improve access to legal and health care resources for all victims and will ensure that we are efficiently providing direct services for crime victims on a national basis. This legislation is supported by more than 130 different law enforcement and victim advocacy organizations nationwide, including the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network—the so-called RAINN organization—the National District Attorneys Association, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the International Union of Police Organizations, the National Network to End Domestic Violence, and the National Organization for Women. It is a pretty broad spectrum of organizations along the political or ideological spectrum, and they are all unified in supporting this important bill.

This Chamber has done what it takes to help victims in the past, and we should continue to build on the legacy of legislation like the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, a law that is already making a clear difference in the lives of victims across the country.

One of the best moments in this Chamber last year was when we passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act by a vote of 99 to 0. It was a rare and welcomed coming together of all Members, from all different parts of the country, all across the ideological spectrum, to enact the most important assistance for victims of human trafficking that we have done in basically 25 years, providing for something as basic as shelter for victims of human trafficking, when many of them had nowhere to live or to turn.

One of the important pieces of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act was something called the HERO Program. This was primarily inserted into the legislation at the request of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. MARK KIRK, a veteran of the U.S. Navy himself.

Just yesterday, the Army Times ran a story on a program that was permanently authorized under the bill known as HERO, which trains veterans to work alongside Federal law enforcement officials to go after child predators—in other words, using some of the expertise the veterans acquired in their training and their service in the military to help victims of child pornography and the predation, unfortunately, that happens too often on the most innocent.

So far, according to this article, the program has already trained about 80 different veterans with plans to train 40 more this year, giving many of these veterans—some of whom have been seriously injured during the course of their military service—a real purpose in life. Indeed, in the Army Times story I mentioned just a moment ago, there are some heartrending, touching stories about how, even for people who suffered very traumatic injuries during their military service, this gives them a new sense of purpose and focus, and it is very, very encouraging.

I had the chance to see the HERO program in action last year in San Antonio, and it is protecting our children and taking criminals off the street. It is pretty clear that when we set our

minds to it, we can make a difference in the lives of crime victims. We proved that with the passage of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and we can do it again.

I encourage all of our colleagues to consider supporting the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. This is a bicameral, bipartisan proposal that would help victims get the support they need and they deserve.

As advocates and survivors across the country use this week to highlight the needs of millions of crime victims, let's also remember that we have a responsibility and an opportunity to do something about it right here in this Chamber.

Mr. President, I don't see anyone interested in recognition, so I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the Zika virus is getting very serious. Today one of the officials at the Centers for Disease Control said that ''this is scarier than we initially thought.'' As to a pregnant woman who is infected with the Zika virus, it may not only cause the fetus to be deformed with a much smaller head, but they are finding other birth defects as well as premature births. Normal, otherwise healthy people who become infected with the virus usually have relatively mild flu-like symptoms, but there are devastating consequences when the virus is contracted by a woman who is pregnant. Today the CDC said: ''Most of what we've learned is not reassuring.'' They also said: ''Everything we look at with this virus seems to be a bit scarier than we initially thought.'' That is coming straight from the experts at CDC.

When you look at where this virus is, unfortunately, there are more people in my State of Florida who have the virus than in any other State in the country. Nationwide, there are multiples of hundreds who have the virus. In the State of Florida, we have identified just under 100 people who have the virus. Thankfully, of those who were infected in Florida, none of them contracted it in Florida; they contracted the virus someplace else.

There is a vast amount of traveling that goes on between Florida and Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is one source where the virus is coming from. When that mosquito bites you, it transmits the virus, and that mosquito is quite prevalent in Puerto Rico. So the island is having its own trauma with the Zika virus manifesting there, but there is also a source in other countries throughout Central America, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

What do we need to do? Well, one little bit of good news I can give you is that the bill we passed in the Senate before the Easter recess is now in the House, and it will be taken up by the House tomorrow. They should pass it and send it to the President's desk for signature. What that bill does is give financial incentive to the drug companies by adding Zika as a virus to the list of tropical diseases for which the drug companies have a financial incentive to go and find a cure or a vaccine. This bill is complicated as far as what the financial incentives will be. I could explain that, but for purposes of discussion here, I just wanted to share that little bit of good news. We are going to have that bill in law, and we want to unleash the creative potential of our pharmaceutical industry to go and find a cure or vaccine that will take care of it.

The other side of it is what the CDC is saying is scarier than we thought, and that is the fact that it is having such devastating societal and medical consequences for a woman who is pregnant and gets the virus. We can imagine the trauma to that family with a deformed child being born as a result of the virus. We can imagine the expense to society of a child who is severely handicapped. As a result, we are talking about major effort.

There is something else we can do about it; that is, the President's budgetary request has $1.9 billion specifically targeted for helping to do the research on the Zika virus. It is my hope, and I know I have the cooperation and, indeed, the considerable help and energy of my colleague from Florida, Senator RUBIO, in wanting to seek this and to get successfully in the appropriations bill for the Department of HHS the $1.9 billion to continue the research and all of the ancillary expenses that are coming as a result of it.

Down the road, we will find a vaccine. Down the road, we will be able to manage this problem. But, in the meantime, there is a great deal of trauma, some extraordinary heartbreak to some families, which should be, again, the warning: If you are pregnant, do not go anywhere exposing the skin to a mosquito bite, particularly in those regions with that variety of mosquito that carries the Zika virus.

So I hope by this time tomorrow night, we will say one hallelujah that the House bill has passed, the Senate bill has passed the House, and it is on the way to the President's desk for signature. Then, let's take up this issue in the appropriations bill when it hits the floor in another few weeks.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Waverly D. Crenshaw, Jr., of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes for debate only on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during quorum calls be charged equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in December of 2014, Judge William Joseph Haynes, Jr., of the Middle District of Tennessee, assumed senior status, creating a vacancy on the Middle District bench. That vacancy has resulted in increased caseloads for the three active Federal district judges—Judge Sharp, Judge Campbell, and Judge Trauger.

Fortunately, help is on the way.

In June, Senator CORKER and I had the pleasure of introducing Waverly Crenshaw to the Senate Judiciary Committee when it met to consider his nomination. I was pleased that the committee agreed with our position, and they reported out his nomination by voice vote the following month.

It's easy to see why Tennesseans support Mr. Crenshaw and are excited about his nomination—and the prospect that the Senate will confirm him tonight. He was born in Nashville, and then he stayed—attending Vanderbilt University for both college and law school.

After law school, he clerked for Judge John Nixon in the Middle District of Tennessee, the same court where we hope he will soon serve. After his clerkship, he worked for the Tennessee attorney general before entering

private practice. In 1987 he became an associate of a small labor and employment law firm in Nashville. In 1990 he joined one of our largest firms—Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis—where he is currently a partner.

He is also active in the Nashville community serving as unpaid legal counsel to the Nashville Conventions and Visitors Corporation, the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, and the YWCA, among others.

The Middle District of Tennessee is fortunate to have such a well-qualified nominee. Waverly Crenshaw is a man of good character and of good temperament, and today I encourage my colleagues to vote for his confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I am glad to join the senior Senator, as I have many times, but I thank him for his comments about this distinguished person whom I hope is going to be confirmed this afternoon as a district court judge.

When the White House began looking for someone to fill this position, I spoke with people, as I am sure Senator ALEXANDER did, across Middle Tennessee to really find someone who not only would serve in his position well but had, in his current role, been involved in the community and had done many other things outside of law to benefit the community itself. Certainly, this is someone who has done that.

It became very clear that he has distinguished himself not only as a talented attorney but also as a well respected leader in the Nashville community. As LAMAR has mentioned, he is a lifelong Middle Tennessee resident. He received his law degree from Vanderbilt University. He was the first African-American attorney at the Waller law firm, and he has been a partner since 1994.

He served as Tennessee's assistant attorney general from 1984 to 1987, and as a law clerk, as was mentioned, for the Honorable John Nixon. This is exactly the branch he hopes to serve in.

I am confident he will serve the people of Middle Tennessee in this new role in an honorable fashion. I am proud to be here to support him with our senior Senator and with so many other people, by the way, in Middle Tennessee who want to see him confirmed in this position. I hope others will join us today in confirming him, and I look forward to him serving. By the way, it is a place where there is a dire need to have someone of his capacity. We have many cases that are backed up. This is one of those places where we not only need someone to fill the role, but we need someone as distinguished as Mr. Crenshaw.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the time. This Senator looks forward to his confirmation. I hope everyone will join in confirming this nominee.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we will finally vote on the nomination of Waverly Crenshaw to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Federal District Court in the Middle District of Tennessee. This vacancy has been open since December 2014, and Mr. Crenshaw was nominated over a year ago, on February 4, 2015. He has the support of his two Republican home State Senators, Senators ALEXANDER and CORKER. He was voted out of the Judiciary Committee by unanimous voice vote last summer on July 9, 2015. There is no good reason why it has taken 14 months to confirm this nominee.

Mr. Crenshaw is currently a partner at the law firm Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis, LLP, in Nashville. Mr. Crenshaw was the first African-American partner at Waller, and in his nearly three-decade career in private practice, he has tried approximately 50 cases to verdict. Mr. Crenshaw also served for 3 years in the Tennessee attorney general's office as an assistant attorney general. He has the experience and qualifications necessary to serve on the Federal bench, and he should be confirmed.

This is our first judicial confirmation vote in 2 months. In the last 2 years of the Bush administration—with a Democratic majority—the Senate confirmed 68 judges. This new Congress, the Republican leadership has allowed only 16 judges to be confirmed since they gained the majority last year. This record of obstruction began last year, when Senate Republicans confirmed the fewest judicial nominees in more than half a century.

Senate Republican leadership is failing our Federal judiciary with their obstruction of judicial confirmations. When Senate Republicans took over the majority in January of last year, there were 43 judicial vacancies. Since then, vacancies have dramatically increased more than 75 percent to 79. Furthermore, the number of judicial vacancies deemed to be ''emergencies'' by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts because caseloads in those courts are unmanageably high has nearly tripled under Republican Senate leadership—from 12 when Republicans took over last year to 34 today.

After we vote on Mr. Crenshaw's nomination, 19 judicial nominees will remain pending on the Executive Calendar. This includes nominees with home state support from Republican Senators, including Robert Rossiter for the Federal District Court in the District of Nebraska; Edward Stanton for the Federal District Court in the Western District of Tennessee; and Susan Baxter and Marilyn Horan for the Federal District Court in the Western District of Pennsylvania.

We can reduce the empty judgeships in those states if Republican leadership would allow timely votes on the pending judicial nominees on the Executive Calendar. All of those nominees were reported out of the Judiciary Committee by voice vote. There should not be any further delay in confirming them.

Last Thursday, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and 42 other organizations submitted a letter to Chairman GRASSLEY expressing their dismay with the failure of the Judiciary Committee to do its job to process nominees for our Federal trial and appellate courts, creating a growing backlog of judicial nominations. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of this letter at the end of my statement.

The American people expect Senators to do their jobs. This is true with judicial nominations to the lower courts, but it is even more crucial for the Supreme Court of the United States because no one can fill in for the vacant seat on our highest Court. In just the last few weeks, the Supreme Court has deadlocked twice, so it was unable to serve its constitutional function. Refusing to consider Chief Judge Merrick Garland for the Supreme Court is not only unfair to him, it is irresponsible and a threat to a functioning democracy.

A recent poll shows that nearly 70 percent of Americans—including a majority of Republicans—say that the Senate should hold a hearing for Chief Judge Garland. That is what the American people are saying, but Republicans are refusing to hear them. Instead of listening to their constituents, they are listening to powerful interest groups.

Since public confirmation hearings of Supreme Court nominees began in 1916, the Senate has never denied a Supreme Court nominee a hearing and a vote. And based on the Senate's precedent for decades, the Senate Judiciary Committee should hold a hearing for Chief Judge Garland this month.

A public hearing would allow Americans to engage in the process of considering the nomination and hear directly from Chief Judge Garland, but Senate Republicans continue to refuse to do their jobs. Instead, Republicans have outsourced their job to political interest groups whose only goal is to raise millions of dollars to launch a smear campaign against the nominee's admirable record of public service. These outside groups are not accountable to the American people. They do not have the American people's interest in mind. They are private, powerful groups whose only goal is to advance their own special interests at any cost.

These special interest groups are spending millions of dollars in dark money to run ads distorting Chief Judge Garland's record. At the same time, Republican Senators are planning to deny Chief Judge Garland a

chance to defend himself at a public hearing. It is wrong, it is harmful, and it is unfair.

Some Senators have claimed that their unprecedented obstruction against Chief Judge Garland is based on ''principle, not the person.'' But it is not principled to attack Chief Judge Garland's sterling career and then refuse to allow him the chance to respond at a public hearing.

Rather than following the demands of unaccountable interest groups, Republicans should listen to the American people who want to see real leadership in Washington. Americans want Republicans to do their jobs and consider for themselves the merits of Chief Judge Garland's record through a public hearing and a vote.

I am glad that several Republican Senators have agreed to meet with Chief Judge Garland. This is a person who has spent almost three decades in public service and has more Federal judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in history. Those who meet with Chief Judge Garland will see what I have seen: that he has an exceptional legal mind and a deep respect for the Constitution. His commitment to public service is inspiring, from his days at the Justice Department working as a prosecutor on the ground in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing to his nearly two decades as a Federal appellate judge.

But simply meeting with Chief Judge Garland is not enough. The Senate must act on his nomination. In the last several weeks, the Supreme Court deadlocked twice and was not able to carry out its constitutional role as the final arbiter of our Nation's laws. Where you live will impact what your rights are. That is unacceptable and contrary to our constitutional system. If Republicans' irresponsible obstruction of Chief Judge Garland does not stop, this will continue at the Supreme Court for two terms.

I hope Senate Republicans will listen to the American people, roll up their sleeves, and do their job. We must carry out one of our most important and solemn responsibilities and consider the Supreme Court nomination before us.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS,
Washington DC, April 7, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY,
Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY: On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the 42 undersigned organizations, we write to express our dismay with the failure of the Judiciary Committee to address a growing backlog of federal judicial nominations. With only 16 judges confirmed so far, the 114th Congress is on pace to have the lowest number of judges confirmed since the 82nd Congress in 1951–1952. Even worse, in the face of rising caseloads and continuing judicial emergencies, it appears that the Committee is determined to shut down the confirmation process entirely—putting political considerations ahead of the national interest in a well-functioning judicial branch, and ahead of the constitutional responsibility of the Senate to do its job of providing advice and consent on presidential appointments.

While a great deal of public attention has rightly been focused on the pending nomination of Chief Judge Merrick Garland to the U.S. Supreme Court, vacancies on the lower courts must not be lost amidst the debate. This year, President Obama has nominated seven individuals to serve on U.S. Courts of Appeal in various circuits throughout the country, including several in circuits that are currently experiencing judicial emergencies. While some senators have expressed vague and superficial reasons for opposing consideration of individual nominees, the qualifications of these nominees cannot be seriously disputed— every one of the nominees below has an outstanding background, as well as the widespread respect of those in the legal community who know them best:

Rebecca Ross Haywood (Third Circuit): Nominated on March 15, Ms. Haywood has spent most of her legal career as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, including as the Appellate Chief of the Civil Division since 2010. She regularly practices before the court to which she has been nominated—and, if confirmed, would be the first African-American woman to serve there.

Lisabeth Tabor Hughes (Sixth Circuit): Nominated on March 17, Judge Hughes was appointed to the Kentucky Supreme Court in 2007 by then-Governor Ernie Fletcher and was reelected twice, including without opposition in 2014. She previously served on the Kentucky Court of Appeals (also having been appointed by Gov. Fletcher), and has extensive experience in both private practice and as a trial judge in Jefferson County, Kentucky. She would be the first woman from Kentucky on the court.

Donald Karl Schott (Seventh Circuit): Nominated on Jan. 12, Mr. Schott graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School in 1980. Since then, he has spent most of his legal career in private practice at Quarles & Brady, where he became a partner in 1987, and has extensive trial and appellate litigation experience, at both the state and federal levels, specializing in securities and business fraud, commercial disputes, health care, and energy-related issues.

Myra C. Selby (Seventh Circuit): Nominated on Jan. 12, Ms. Selby spent 15 years in private practice and Indiana state government before being nominated in 1995 to the Indiana Supreme Court. She was the first African American and first woman to serve there, and authored more than 100 majority opinions, before returning to private practice in 1999. Since then, she has specialized in commercial and health care litigation. She would be the first African American from Indiana and the first woman from Indiana on the Seventh Circuit.

Jennifer Klemestrud Puhl (Eighth Circuit): Nominated on Jan. 28, Ms. Puhl spent several years in private practice and as a clerk on the North Dakota Supreme Court. In 2002, she joined the criminal division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of North Dakota, where she prosecutes a wide range of criminal cases and specializes in computer hacking and cybersecurity, intellectual property, and human trafficking. She would be the first woman federal judge at any level in North Dakota.

Lucy H. Koh (Ninth Circuit): Nominated on Feb. 25, Judge Koh became the first Asian American judge to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, having been confirmed in 2010 by a 90–0 vote. Prior to her current position, she worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee, held several positions within the Department of Justice, and spent six years in private practice. In 2008, she was appointed as a judge to the Superior Court of California for Santa Clara County by then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. She would be only the second Asian American woman ever to serve on a federal circuit court.

Abdul K. Kallon (Eleventh Circuit): Nominated on Feb. 11, Judge Kallon has served on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama since 2009, after being confirmed by the Senate by unanimous consent. For the previous fifteen years, Judge Kallon specialized in labor and employment law as a partner at the Birmingham, Alabama firm Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP. If confirmed, Judge Kallon would be the first African American from Alabama to serve on the Circuit.

In addition, the committee has failed to act on dozens of pending district court nominees—too many to list here—from throughout the country. As with the above appellate nominees, many of these nominees would fill seats in districts that are currently facing judicial emergencies. Many of the district and appellate nominees come from states in which both senators have returned their so-called ''blue slips,'' indicating their approval of the nominees. Normally, this should clear the way for hearings and up-or-down confirmation votes. Instead, these nominees have fallen victim to election-year gamesmanship.

The complete obstruction of nominees is unprecedented, and the arguments some are making in defense of this obstruction are wholly unpersuasive. In 2008, the Democratic party-controlled Senate confirmed 22 judges in the last seven months of George W. Bush's presidency, including 10 in September 2008. During Ronald Reagan's presidency, the Senate on average confirmed 16 judges in the second half of presidential election years. There is no legitimate reason why things should be any different in the last year of President Obama's second term.

While the Committee refuses to do its job, the American people are left to pay the price. There are currently 32 judicial emergencies nationwide (16 of the pending nominees would fill these seats), and more than 40 total nominees pending in committee or on the Senate floor. Many of the pending nominees would fill vacancies in courts that have been left shorthanded for years. Donald Schott would fill a Seventh Circuit seat that has been vacant for more than six years, and more than 30 of the 46 pending nominees are nominated to seats that have been empty for more than a year.

Meanwhile, the inaction is slowing the wheels of justice for all types of parties who are seeking to vindicate their legal and constitutional rights. Numerous judges have explained the consequences they and litigants face: long delays on even the most simple filings and motions, protracted waits for post-conviction sentences, spoiled evidence, witnesses whose memories fade, lost businesses and the jobs that go with them while waiting for trials, and many more. Not only is the situation rife with injustices, but it is also completely unsustainable.

The Committee has a constitutional responsibility to provide advice and consent on presidential nominees, and a duty to the American people to simply do its job. In the coming weeks and months, our organizations will continue to make the case until it does.

If you have any questions, please contact Rob Randhava, Senior Counsel at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights at (202) 466–3311, or any of the organizations listed below. As organizations that collectively represent millions of diverse Americans who have a stake in a fair, effective judicial system, we thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, AFL-CIO, Alliance for Justice, American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Americans for Democratic Action, Asian Americans Advancing Justice AAJC, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA), Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, The Center for Asian Pacific American Women, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Constitutional Accountability Center, CREDO, Defenders of Wildlife, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, Earthjustice, Human Rights Campaign, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, League of Conservation Voters, NAACP.

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., National Association of Human Rights Workers, National Association of Social Workers, National Black Justice Coalition, National Center on Time and Learning, National Community Reinvestment Coalition, National Congress of American Indians, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA), National Council of Jewish Women, National Education Association, National Employment Lawyers Association, National Fair Housing Alliance, National Hispanic Media Coalition, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Women's Law Center, People For the American Way, Pride at Work, South Asian Americans Leading, Together (SAALT) United Auto Workers (UAW), The Workmen's Circle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 3524

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, while we are waiting for members of the Judiciary Committee to come and speak to the judicial nomination we will vote on shortly, I want to take the opportunity to talk about a pending amendment which is being offered by Senator BENNET of Colorado and which I would recommend to the Senate that they favorably consider. It is dealing with families traveling on airlines.

As you know, things get very specific about seats and how much they charge for the seats. You pay extra for some baggage and other services, and then you get into seats that are getting increasingly smaller. It is even worse for a woman who is pregnant or is traveling with small children.

Senator BENNET's amendment is a family-friendly amendment. If a parent has a minor child who is going on the plane by themselves, it would require TSA to allow the parent to accompany the child throughout the screening process. To a small child, that can be quite intimidating.

Secondly, it would require the airlines to provide pregnant women with the opportunity to preboard the flight. How many times have we seen everybody queueing up to get on the flight? The special advantage passengers get on, the first class passengers get on, the members of the frequent flyer program get on, and here is a lady who is quite along in her pregnancy still standing. That is just common sense. That is being gentlemanly about the rules of airlines.

Thirdly, the amendment tries to keep families together because it would require the airlines to make sure that at least one adult of the family who is traveling together can sit next to the child on the plane without the airlines saying the parent will have to pay an extra fee in order to guarantee having a seat next to their minor child. This is common sense, and it is encouraging family travel.

I certainly urge my colleagues to support this amendment as we will be taking up the FAA bill after this judicial nomination confirmation vote.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield back any remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Crenshaw nomination?

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 44 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Grassley	Reed
Blunt	Hatch	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boxer	Heller	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Scott
Casey	King	Sessions
Cassidy	Kirk	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Enzi	Mikulski	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—8

Capito	Johnson	Sanders
Cruz	Murkowski	Vitter
Graham	Paul	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority whip.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VIEQUES

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, we are all concerned about the plight right now of Puerto Rico and what is happening over there financially. And later on this week I will revisit the

issue of the 4-year battle of Vieques that took place from 1999 to 2003. I am very much concerned that we might have an opportunity here to rectify something that was done that should not have been done back in 2002.

The island off of Puerto Rico called Vieques had been an integrated training center for many years—about 60 years—up until 2002. For purely political reasons at that time, it became quite an issue. First of all, joint training took place on the island of Vieques. Joint training means you have different branches of the military trying to accomplish something together that they couldn't do individually. In the case of Vieques, it was the Marines, the Navy, and the Air Force. We were able to do the type of training we couldn't do anyplace else.

It sounds kind of ridiculous, but when they were talking about doing away with using Vieques for a military center—what they had been doing for 60 years—it was all around an establishment called Roosevelt Roads. Roosevelt Roads was a major naval station. We had about 7,000 sailors there. They added something like $600 million a year to the economy of Puerto Rico.

Anyway, we found out there was a great effort by a lot of people who I will always suspect wanted to ultimately develop that island for private purposes and to financially gain from that. Consequently, with no regard for the contribution it made to our defense, they started a major problem. One person was killed in 60 years on that island, and because that happened to have taken place, they used it as a reason to try to shut that down. It became quite a political football at that time. I know Al Gore was very much involved in that, and there were some great benefits, I am sure.

From World War II through the operation in Kosovo, our military has been ready to execute combat operations due to the training they were able to get on the island of Vieques. In fact, during Kosovo they used those individuals to conduct successful operations. They were all trained at no place other than Vieques. The reason for that is if they were going into Kosovo, as our Air Force was going in, they would have to be able to draw coordinates from a high enough elevation that the surface-to-air missiles would not be able to reach them, for their safety. And if we hadn't had all those guys over there who were trained at Vieques, it was speculated that they would not have been successful.

Secretary Richard Danzig, who was then the Secretary of the Navy, said that ''only by providing this preparation can we fairly ask our servicemembers to put their lives at risk.'' Admiral Johnson, then Chief of Naval Operations, and General Jones, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, said that Vieques provides integrated live-fire training ''critical to our readiness'' and that the failure to provide for adequate live-fire training for our naval forces before deployment will place those forces at an unacceptably high risk during deployment. Those are quotes from those two individuals.

Admiral Ellis, then director of operations, plans, and policies on the staff of the commander in chief of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, said during his confirmation hearing—and I was there at that time—to be commander of Strategic Command, ''Those types of facilities, particularly those in which we can bring together all of the naval, and that means both Navy and Marine Corps, combat power for integrated and joint training, are particularly useful elements of the overall warfighting preparation.''

At the time we felt there was a problem, I personally went around the world to every place that might have been a substitute for Vieques. I went to Cape Wrath—I always remember that—which I think is in northern Scotland, and I went to Southern Sardinia in Italy, and none of those places were adequate and none could provide the same type of support.

Admiral Fallon, then commander of the Navy's Second Fleet, and General Pace—remember Peter Pace—the commander of all Marine Forces in the Atlantic, testified that the United States needs Vieques as a training ground to prepare our young men and women for the challenges of deployed military operations.

GEN Wes Clark, the Supreme Allied Commander at that time, said: ''The live fire training that our forces were exposed to at training ranges such as Vieques helped ensure that the forces assigned to this theater''—and he was talking about Kosovo. That is when we had to be ready on arrival to fight and win and survive, which we did.

CAPT James Stark, then the commanding officer of Roosevelt Roads Naval Station—there were about 7,000 of our sailors there—said:

> When you steam off to battle you're either ready or you're not. If you're not, that means casualties. That means more POWs. That means less precision and longer campaigns. You pay a price for all this in war, and that price is blood.

Admiral Murphy, then commander of the Sixth Fleet of the Navy, said the loss of training on Vieques would ''cost American lives.'' And it has cost American lives, and that has been since 2002. We are talking about American lives unnecessarily put at risk if they are not fully trained for combat operations.

I remember one person back at that time talking about the analogous situation of a football team where you have all the quarterbacks training over here, all the backs over here, and all the defensive people training over here, but never training together, and then they go and lose. You have to have integrated training. We don't even have that today. We have tried to find and to replicate that effort, and it isn't there.

This week, I understand—and the reason I came down quite unprepared is because I didn't know this was coming up—the House Natural Resources Committee is going to consider legislation that provides bankruptcy powers to Puerto Rico while subjecting it to the authority of a Federal oversight board. This is something that is going to become very controversial. There will be a lot of people around saying: Why are we doing this? And once you provide these benefits to Puerto Rico, there is no reason why others won't line up and want the same thing.

I really am concerned that Puerto Rico, apparently—and I don't know if this is true, but they are saying it—owes some $73 billion in government debt. In January, Puerto Rico started defaulting on part of that debt.

Section 411 of this legislation—we are talking about the legislation that will be discussed tomorrow over in the House—would turn over approximately 3,000 acres of Department of Interior conservation zones that were formerly part of Vieques.

What happened in 2002 was that the land that had been used for the training range was turned over to this department. Now they are talking about taking it out, I suppose, for people to develop.

I remember so well the time when we were talking about closing Vieques. I was the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Readiness Subcommittee. Puerto Rico's Governor Rossello came. He is not in office anymore. But he made all kinds of threats: It is just a bluff that it would be closing.

I made the statement that if we are denied the opportunity to use the island of Vieques for joint training, then we were going to lose Roosevelt Roads.

Governor Rossello sat there and said: INHOFE is not telling the truth. We are not going to lose that.

Of course, they did lose it. So in 2003 the total impact from the Navy was estimated to be $600 million a year. The departure of the Navy also impacted business and contracts, as we know.

I was visiting with Miriam Ramirez just today. At the time, she was in the State Senate in Puerto Rico and was talking about the disastrous economic effects if they closed Vieques. She is still concerned about that, and many of the people who were the strongest opponents of my efforts at that time to keep Vieques operating are now saying we should have left it open.

So I think any kind of a deal that is made has to include consideration that the training is still available. There is still no range like Vieques anywhere in the Western Hemisphere. What can be

done in Vieques cannot be done in one location by a joint force. I understand firsthand both the importance and the significance of having a range in your home State.

I remember a popular TV show at that time called ''Crossfire.'' I was on the show in May of 2000. Juan Figueroa was the president of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, and we were debating this on live TV.

He said: Well, how would you, INHOFE, like to have a live range in your State of Oklahoma?

I said: Let me tell you about Fort Sill. They train 360 days out of the year, 24 hours a day, and they make all kinds of noise. It is within 1 mile of a population of 100,000 people—at that time, Vieques was within 9.5 miles of 9,000 people—and there are all these people who hear this noise down there. They were in town last week. They said: When we hear that noise, it is the sound of freedom.

Here is something interesting. They opened up what is considered to be the most modern, most progressive elementary school. They call it Freedom Elementary School. They named it after that phrase: It is the sound of freedom.

So this is what is happening. I am very much concerned that we are going to stumble and pass up an opportunity that might still be there. We have an opportunity to actually go back and use that for some of our joint training.

So later this week I am going to go back and relive the history on the 4-year battle of Vieques. Hopefully, this might be an opportunity for us to save American lives and to have integrated training, which we still don't have today and which we had back in that time.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT HAWKES GRAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to an extraordinary Vermonter, Robert Hawkes Gray. Bob, as he is known to family and friends, grew up in Putney where his parents worked at the Putney School. His father, Edward, was in charge of buildings and grounds, and his mother, Mabel, ran the kitchen. Ed's ability to fix anything and Mabel's cooking and way of keeping order are remembered vividly and fondly to this day by thousands of Putney graduates.

Bob attended Putney where he learned to ski cross-country thanks to Olympian skier John Caldwell, the father of cross-country skiing in America who taught at the school. Bob went on to run the outdoor work program at Putney and coached cross-country skiing and running. He became an Olympian himself, competing in the 1968 and 1972 winter games, and was inducted into Vermont's Ski and Snowboard Museum Hall of Fame.

After skiing, Bob's lifetime passion has been farming. He and his wife, Kim, own and manage Four Corners Farm, one of the most successful vegetable and dairy farms in Vermont. Located on a beautiful hillside that levels off along the Connecticut River in South Newbury, the sprawling acreage of the farm is a model of order and astonishing productivity. Just about anything that will grow in Vermont, either in fields or in greenhouses heated by wood stoves, can be found there in abundance.

Everyone knows that farm work is hard by any standard. It means rising before sunrise and long hours of strenuous physical labor that continues into the night. Anyone who visits Four Corners Farm can't help but wonder how they do it all. It is a testament to the benefits of regular physical exercise, as Bob, now 76, looks closer to 60 and has the strength of someone half his age. It wasn't all due to farming though. It is said that, when Jack Dempsey was the world heavyweight champion, Ed Gray's biceps measured the same diameter. Of course, Ed was an accomplished gardener himself.

I could go on about Bob's talents as a farmer. A teacher by instinct, anyone who visits the farm may find themselves treated to a lesson in pruning tomato plants, planting and mulching strawberry seedlings, or the peculiar habits of honey bees. Kim, a former alpine ski racer herself, is also a gifted farmer whose stamp on the business can be seen everywhere. Neither could have made Four Corners Farm what it is today without the other.

Bob never stopped skiing for fun, but he didn't take up racing again until the 1990s. This past winter he showed that, if you love something enough and give it everything you have got, just about anything is possible.

At the World Masters cross-country ski races in Voukatti, Finland, and at the National Masters at Royal Gorge, CA, Bob won a gold medal, two silvers, and a bronze. Some might think that, by the time you get to be 76, you are probably skiing pretty slowly and there isn't that much competition in your age group anyway. Let's just say that at the Masters no one skis slowly—no one skis anything remotely like slowly. These are the best skiers in the world, and to the rest of us mere mortals, there isn't that much difference between them and today's Olympians.

A March 31, 2016, article in the Valley News, entitled ''Septuagenarian Gray Skiing His Way to Wins'' tells the story. I congratulate Bob Gray. He exemplifies the very best of Vermont for his inspiring work ethic, his ski racing accomplishments, and the example he has set for future generations of Vermont skiers and farmers. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Valley News, Mar. 31, 2016]

SEPTUAGENARIAN GRAY SKIING HIS WAY TO WINS

(By Jared Pendak, Valley News Staff Writer)

NEWBURY, VT.—Bob Gray returned to cross country skiing several years ago, primarily as a way to keep his heart pumping. As it turned out, he's more than capable of breaking the hearts of opponents.

Gray, 76, recently swept a pair of races at the National Masters Championships in Soda Springs, Calif., winning the Masters 5B (ages 75–79) 10K classic race on March 19 in 33 minutes, 58.6 seconds, more than nine minutes faster than runner up Hans Muehlegger, of Idaho, and good for 20th overall in a field of 53.

The next day, Gray placed fifth overall while winning his 70–79 age group in the season-ending U.S. Marathon National Championship, finishing the 14K bronze race in 48:12.1—again more than nine minutes ahead of Muehlegger.

A two-time Olympian who competed on the U.S. Nordic Ski Team from 1960–74, Gray had also swept both events in the 2015 National Masters Championships, held closer to home at the Craftsbury (Vt.) Nordic Center.

''There isn't much competition for my age group in that event,'' said Gray, who co-owns the Four Corners produce and dairy farm in Newbury, Vt. ''I'd like to think part of it is that I'm in pretty good shape.''

Gray's competition was stiffer last month at the Masters World Cup in Vuokatti, Finland, where he left with two silver medals and a bronze. On Feb. 6, he bettered 75–year-old Frenchman Daniel Chopard by two seconds for second place in the 10K skate in 33:40, then beat Chopard by 35 seconds with a time of 47:34.1 in the 15K skate Feb. 12.

Norwegian Finn Magnar Hagen decidedly won both skate races, finishing the 10K a good 2:40 ahead of Gray and besting him in the 15K by nearly four minutes.

''There was just no catching Finn; he was just gone,'' said Gray. ''On the other hand, me and Chopard had a great time going back and forth. We'd pass each other and say, 'All right, I'll see you up ahead on the hill.'''

Neither Hagen nor Chopard competed in the 5K classic on Feb. 8, a race in which the top four were separated by just 17 seconds. Russia's Gennady Ushakov won in 18:10.9, followed by Austrian Josef Schniagl, Gray (18:19.7) and Finland's Taplo Wallenkus (18:27.9).

''I think I had a chance to win that race, but my skis just weren't up to par with some of the skis these other guys had,'' Gray said. ''I made one tactical error, started kicking too lightly and it got me off-track. I was still able to make up most of the places I lost and close the gap. It was a close race, a fun race.''

Gray, a Vermont Ski & Snowboard Museum Hall of Fame inductee whose wife, Kim, is a former U.S. Alpine skier, competed in the 1968 and '72 Olympic Games. His best finish was 12th place in the 4x10K relay in

the '68 Games in Grenoble, France, complementing three combined top-50s in individual events at Grenoble and the '72 Games in Sapporo, Japan.

The Putney, Vt., native also skied four seasons in the FIS Cup (now known as the FIS World Cup), winning national titles in the 15K and 50K and earning the top U.S. ranking in 1973.

The Grays opened the Green Mountain Touring Center in Randolph in 1977 while running their first farm in Hartland Four Corners, inspiring the moniker they kept even after moving operations to their plot in Newbury.

Bob Gray later had about a 12-year hiatus from the sport while devoted to raising the couple's three children and farming, not strapping on skis again until the early 1990s.

He competed off and on in various national and international competitions, capturing bronze at an event in Quebec City in 2001 and two silvers and a bronze five years later in British Columbia. He began refocusing on training and competing in earnest several years ago, motivated equally by the desire to keep his heart rate up as much as keeping his competitive juices going.

''When you get older, if you don't keep moving, you get sick and die,'' Gray said plainly. ''So much of your health is about staying active and exercising. I get some of that on the farm, but I'm much more of a manager type now than I used to be. So (returning to skiing) is a way to keep my heart beating.''

Like any snow sports athlete based in the area, Gray faced challenges finding suitable surfaces to train on this winter. He ventured to Craftsbury Nordic Center at times to practice on their manmade trails, but most often settled for dry-land exercises.

''I'd go up (North Haverhill's) Black Mountain, Mount Moosilauke, sometimes Mount Ascutney, always with ski poles to help practice balance,'' Gray said. ''I'd go uphill on paved roads on rollerblades—I like rollerblades better than roller skis. I can go from here up Snake Road to West Newbury, which is about three miles, so that's perfect. The only problem with that is that I'm too tired to skate home after that so I have to have someone come get me.''

Gray, who was trained in his youth by former Dartmouth skier and Olympian John Caldwell, would like to see more kids today on Nordic skis. He's given lessons in recent years at Strafford Nordic Center and elsewhere.

''It's a great sport, a great way to get kids off of the couch or away from the computer,'' Gray said. ''Plus, you can do it until you're my age.''

TRIBUTE TO MAURICE GEIGER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Maurice Geiger, known by family and friends as Maury, an extraordinary individual who, although a longtime resident of Conway, NH, with his wife, Nancy, is deserving of the title of honorary Vermonter.

Maury Geiger's lengthy career began in the U.S. Navy back in the 1950s, from where he went on to Georgetown Law School and jobs at the Bureau of Prisons and the Department of Justice. He later served as a county prosecutor in New Hampshire, founded the Rural Justice Center in Montpelier, VT, where I first got to know him, became a national expert in court administration, and has provided advice and guidance to help reform dysfunctional justice systems in foreign countries for more than two decades.

In no country has Maury devoted more passion, time, and energy than Haiti, where justice has long been more of a fantasy than a reality for the majority of the Haitian people.

Since the 1990s, Maury has traveled to Haiti scores of times, often paying out of his own pocket. His purpose was simple: to help improve access to justice for thousands of people caught up in a byzantine system in which it is common to be detained in squalid, grossly overcrowded, sweltering prisons rampant with life-threatening diseases, for months and years, without ever seeing a lawyer or judge or being formally charged with any crime.

Over the years, often against great odds, Maury has worked to train numerous Haitian prosecutors, judges, and other judicial officials and to institute recordkeeping systems to improve case management and reduce the chance that inmates are forgotten or their case files are lost.

Maury is not only among a handful of the most experienced experts in the field of court administration; he is a person of exemplary integrity. He has never had the slightest interest in profiting himself, as his modest lifestyle demonstrates, but rather to do whatever he could to provide help and dignity to those who are the least able to help themselves. He has done so, year after year, with uncommon compassion and commitment, never losing his wry sense of humor, in a country where the political will for justice reform at the highest levels of government has often been weak or lacking altogether.

Maury is in Haiti again this week, and I want him to know that the example he has set of selflessness, of caring, commitment to human rights and equal access to justice, and of an unwavering belief in the basic dignity of all people regardless of their station in life, is one that every law student, every lawyer, every prosecutor, every judge, and every prison warden should strive to emulate.

HONORING POLICE OFFICER SUSAN FARRELL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Des Moines police officer Susan Farrell had a lifelong dream of a career in law enforcement. At the young age of 30, she was living out her dream and on course for a bright career.

But on March 26, just five months after joining the Des Moines Police Department, Officer Farrell lost her life in the line of duty along with fellow officer Carlos Puente-Morales when their vehicle was struck by another that was driving the wrong direction on Interstate 80 near Waukee. I wish to take a moment to celebrate Officer Farrell's life and service.

Early on, growing up in the Des Moines area, Officer Farrell knew she wanted a career in public service. She studied criminal justice at Hamilton College and returned to her home town after graduating to begin living her dream. She worked as a detention officer in Polk County Jail for several years and was promoted to deputy just a year ago. She joined the Des Moines Police Department last fall and was excited to expand her education there.

Along the way, Officer Farrell quickly earned the respect of her colleagues. She was someone they could always count on to help resolve situations. She also received awards of commendation and lifesaving for her work on the response team. One colleague summed up her abilities like this: ''There wasn't a situation where I wouldn't want Susan with me.''

Officer Farrell will be greatly missed by her family and friends, as well as the Des Moines community that she worked to protect.

I express my deepest sympathies to Officer Farrell's family, friends, and colleagues and my sincere gratitude for her service to our State and for her work to keep our communities safe.

HONORING POLICE OFFICER CARLOS PUENTE-MORALES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Des Moines Police Officer Carlos Puente-Morales's life was marked by a commitment to serving others and frequent expressions of love—love for his family and love for those he worked with.

On March 26, Officer Puente-Morales lost his life in the line of duty along with fellow officer Susan Farrell when their vehicle was struck by another that was driving the wrong direction on Interstate 80 near Waukee. I wish to take a moment to celebrate the life and service of Officer Puente-Morales.

Officer Puente-Morales served tours in Iraq and Afghanistan in the Iowa Army National Guard, where he attained the rank of staff sergeant. He served his community as a deputy sheriff for Franklin County and as an Ottumwa police officer before coming to Des Moines to be closer to family. He joined the Des Moines police force just last year.

Des Moines Police Chief Dana Wingert has referred to Officer Puente-Morales as a loyal servant. I believe this to be a very fitting description. He was loyal to his family, to his community, to his country, and he did it with a heart full of love. He was just 34 years old when he left us, but his service and the example he set for all of us will endure for many years to come.

Officer Puente-Morales will be missed by his family and the community that he served.

Officer Puente-Morales's mother wisely said, ''We shouldn't wait for a

tragedy to recognize our heroes.'' She is exactly right. On behalf of Iowans and all Americans, I express my gratitude for Officer Puente-Morales's service to community and country. My deepest sympathy is with his family in this difficult time. I thank all those who walk in Officer Puente-Morales's footsteps to protect and serve.

CONGRATULATING LEONARD MINSKY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, at its 214th commencement on May 14, 2016, the University of Maine at Orono will award an honorary doctorate degree to Leonard Minsky of Bangor. Today I wish to congratulate my dear friend for this recognition and to join people throughout Maine in thanking him for his uncommon generosity, vision, and dedication that have made our university's flagship campus a center for the arts and humanities.

A member of the class of 1950, Leonard received an outstanding education at UMaine and has never stopped giving back. His passion for the arts and commitment to the highest expressions of human ideals are evident throughout the beautiful Orono campus. Minsky Recital Hall in the school of performing arts is a marvelous place for students, faculty, and world-class visiting artists to perform. In recent years, I have had the pleasure of hearing the University Singers, which included my niece, perform there.

The Minsky Gallery in the Maine Center for the Arts celebrates the visual arts around the world. The Minsky Culture Lab at the Hudson Museum offers interactive, hands-on experiences for Maine schoolchildren and UMaine students. With Leonard's support, the UMaine Museum of Art in downtown Bangor features the best in modern and contemporary art, from Andrew Wyeth to Andy Warhol.

Leonard's partner in these endeavors is his partner in life, his extraordinary wife, Renee. Leonard's service has included leadership roles on the university's development council, the Campaign for Maine, and the UMaine Board of Visitors. Renee, one of the first volunteer docents at the Hudson Museum, has held leadership roles on advisory boards for both the Hudson Museum and the Maine Center for the Arts. Both have been active Patrons of the Arts, the UMaine program that supports tours by university performing arts ensembles and that encourages student involvement in the arts through outreach to elementary and secondary schools across Maine.

The university's Fogler Library, Maine's largest research library, is home to the Minsky Jewish Heritage Collection. This priceless cultural and historical resource is a gift from Renee and Leonard Minsky, along with his brother, Norman.

For several years, I had the good fortune to live just across the street in Bangor from Renee and Leonard Minsky. They were wonderful neighbors. Since that time, I have been blessed with their friendship and inspired by their leadership.

Students, faculty, and visitors to the UMaine campus cannot help but feel similarly blessed and inspired. The energy and excitement of the University of Maine's arts and humanities community that Leonard Minsky has helped to create enriches our State today and will do so for generations to come.

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN OF KINGFIELD, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the town of Kingfield, ME. Known today as a gateway to the rugged and beautiful Longfellow Mountains, Kingfield was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today.

Kingfield's incorporation on January 24, 1816, was but one milestone on a long journey of progress. For thousands of years, the mountains and river valleys of western Maine were the hunting grounds of the Abenaki Tribe. The reverence the Abenaki had for the natural beauty and resources of the region is upheld by the people of Kingfield today.

The town's namesake is a central figure in Maine history. In 1807, merchant and shipbuilder William King and his partners purchased lands in the wilderness and began attracting settlers. In 1820, Maine achieved statehood, and William King, by then a respected statesman and decorated military officer, became its first Governor.

The early settlers were drawn by fertile soil, vast forests, and fast-moving waters, which they turned into productive farms and busy mills. Roads and a railway were built, and the wealth produced by hard work and determination was invested in schools and churches to create a true community.

Among the earliest settlers was Salomon Stanley, whose descendants became the business, social, and religious leaders of the town. At the dawn of the 20th century, his twin sons Francis Edgar and Freelan Oscar invented the groundbreaking Stanley Steamer automobile and were renowned violin makers. Along with their sister, Chansonetta, they introduced many technological and artistic advancements to the growing field of photography. The Stanley Museum, located in a beautiful century-old Georgian schoolhouse, celebrates the genius of a remarkable family.

When industry in Kingfield began to decline in the 1950s, outdoor recreation rose to prominence, driven by the energy, enthusiasm, and vision of the townspeople. Today skiing at Sugarloaf Mountain Resort, hiking, golf, and snowmobiling, along with some of the most spectacular scenery of the Appalachian Trail, place Kingfield among America's favorite destinations for the outdoor enthusiast. The decision by Nestle's Poland Spring to open a bottling plant in the town is a testament to the region's pristine environment and diversifying economy.

From the valiant service of Colonel William King in the War of 1812 to the conflicts of our time, Kingfield is a town of patriots. It is significant that the town's plans for its yearlong bicentennial celebration include enhancements to the memorials honoring Kingfield veterans.

Kingfield is also a town of involved citizens. The active historical society, volunteer fire department, and library are evidence of a strong community spirit. The planning and volunteerism that have gone into the bicentennial festivities are evidence that Kingfield's spirit only grows stronger.

This 200th anniversary is not just about something that is measured in calendar years; it is about human accomplishment and an occasion to celebrate the people who, for more than two centuries, have worked together and cared for one another. Thanks to those who came before, Kingfield has a wonderful past. Thanks to those who are there today, Kingfield has a bright future.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL EDWARD P. ASH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to my constituent LTC Edward P. ''Ned'' Ash for his exemplary dedication to duty and service to the U.S. Army and to the United States of America. Lieutenant Colonel Ash will retire this summer after more than two decades in the U.S. Army.

Entering the Army from Vancouver, WA, Lieutenant Colonel Ash earned a commission from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point with a degree in international relations and was commissioned an armor officer in 1994.

Lieutenant Colonel Ash served in a variety of cavalry units and assignments during his 22 years of service. As a lieutenant, he served as a tank platoon leader, scout platoon leader, troop executive officer, and as a squadron staff officer in the 2nd Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment. As a captain from 1999 to 2001, Lieutenant Colonel Ash remained in a hardship assignment with the 2nd Infantry Division for 3 years to serve in Korea. While assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division, he commanded Bravo Troop and Headquarters Troop in the 4th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment. After working at the national training center, where Lieutenant Colonel Ash trained units that were preparing to deploy in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, he was assigned to the 1st

Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment. He deployed with this unit to Iraq while serving as the operations officer and then to Afghanistan as the squadron executive officer.

Lieutenant Colonel Ash spent his last 4 years in the Army as a budget liaison in the office around the corner from mine in the Russell Senate Office Building and has become a fixture in the Halls of the U.S. Senate. My staff have called on him many times to help with issues affecting the soldiers and military families in Washington State and around the country. Lieutenant Colonel Ash has approached every inquiry from my staff, from requisition requests for tents to detailed questions about national strategy, with the same calm wisdom and thoughtfulness that puts serving people and getting results above all else. Lieutenant Colonel Ash has also led the teams that supported the logistic requirements for the funerals of two of my colleagues who served in the Army: Senator Daniel Inouye and Senator Frank Lautenberg. His efforts during these funerals helped ensure that they were conducted with the dignity befitting the memories of these giants of the Senate. I can confidently say that Lieutenant Colonel Ash's leadership has positively impacted his soldiers, peers, and superiors throughout his career.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending LTC Edward P. Ash for over two decades of service to his country. We wish Ned and his wife, Jamie Skaluba, all the best as they continue their journey of service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JORDAN HANSON

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Jordan Hanson, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Jordan is a graduate of Watertown High School in Watertown, SD. Currently, she is attending the University of South Dakota, where she is studying political science and strategic communications. Jordan is a hard worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jordan for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JOSH JORGENSEN

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Josh Jorgensen, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Josh is a graduate of O'Gorman Catholic High School in Sioux Falls, SD. In May he will graduate from the University of South Dakota with his degrees in political science and media and journalism. Josh is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience and who has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Josh for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–5066. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5067. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, five (5) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5068. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report to Congress on Federal Government Energy Management and Conservation Programs, Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5069. A communication from the Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under the Employee Protection Provision of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010'' (RIN1218–AC58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5070. A communication from the Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under Section 31307 of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21)'' (RIN1218–AC88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5071. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Interior (Indian Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2014 Report to Congress Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 450j–1(c) on the Funding Requirements for Contract Support Costs''; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–5072. A communication from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to the Rules of Practice for Trials Before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board'' (RIN0651–AD01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–5073. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting draft legislation entitled ''Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Enhancement Act''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–5074. A communication from the Senior Assistant Chief Counsel for Hazmat Safety Law, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Hazardous Materials: Reverse Logistics (RRR)'' (RIN2137–AE81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5075. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Tariff of Tolls'' (RIN2135–AA38) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5076. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Seaway Regulations and Rules: Periodic Update, Various Categories'' (RIN2135–AA39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2770. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide call location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical injury or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 2771. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the qualifications for licensed mental health counselors of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2772. A bill to eliminate the requirement that veterans pay a copayment to the Department of Veterans Affairs to receive opioid antagonists or education on the use of opioid antagonists; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BURR, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2773. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in

the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mrs. ERNST):

S. 2774. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income certain amounts realized on the disposition of property raised or produced by a student farmer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2775. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2776. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to condition the receipt of funds by a State for a drinking water treatment revolving loan fund on the State carrying out a program to test for lead in drinking water for schools; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 2777. A bill to modernize the prescription verification process for contact lenses, to clarify consumer protections regarding false advertising of contact lenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. SASSE):

S. Res. 417. A resolution celebrating the 144th anniversary of Arbor Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1503

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to provide for enhanced Federal efforts concerning the prevention, education, treatment, and research activities related to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, including the establishment of a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, supra.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1911

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1911, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 2180

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2180, a bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

S. 2210

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2210, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to establish peer specialists in patient aligned care teams at medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2217

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2217, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

S. 2251

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2251, a bill to provide for a supplementary payment to Social Security beneficiaries, supplemental security income beneficiaries, and recipients of veterans benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 2332

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2332, a bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system.

S. 2348

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2348, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2548

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2548, a bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 2612

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2612, a bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.

S. 2614

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2614, a bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

S. 2726

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr.

BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2726, a bill to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 2755

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2755, a bill to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty.

S. 2769

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2769, a bill to require the Federal Aviation Administration to establish minimum standards for space for passengers on passenger aircraft.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

AMENDMENT NO. 3483

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3483 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3492

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3492 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3500

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3500 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3522

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3522 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3524

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3524 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3527

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3527 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3539

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3539 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3556

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3556 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3557

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3557 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3558

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3558 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2775. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN and I introduce S. 2775, the Technical Corrections Act of 2016, which, if enacted, will make technical and clerical corrections to the PATH Act, the major tax bill passed and signed into law this past December, and other recently passed pieces of tax legislation.

Ranking Member WYDEN and I have asked the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation to make available to the public a technical explanation of S. 2775. That technical explanation, which can be found in report number JCX–16–16, expresses the Finance Committee's understanding of this important legislation and is available on the JCT's website at www.jct.gov.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 417—CELEBRATING THE 144TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARBOR DAY

Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 417

Whereas Arbor Day was founded in Nebraska City, Nebraska on April 10, 1872, to recognize the importance of planting trees;

Whereas it is estimated that on the first Arbor Day, more than 1,000,000 trees were planted in the State of Nebraska alone;

Whereas Arbor Day is observed in all 50 States and across the world;

Whereas participating in Arbor Day activities promotes civic participation and highlights the importance of planting and caring for trees and vegetation;

Whereas those activities provide an opportunity to convey to future generations the value of land and stewardship;

Whereas National Arbor Day is observed on the last Friday of April each year; and

Whereas April 29, 2016, marks the 144th anniversary of Arbor Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes April 29, 2016, as ''National Arbor Day'';

(2) celebrates the 144th anniversary of Arbor Day;

(3) supports the goals and ideals of National Arbor Day; and

(4) encourages the people of United States to participate in National Arbor Day activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3565. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3566. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3567. Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3568. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3569. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3570. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3571. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3572. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3573. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3574. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3575. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3576. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3577. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3578. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3579. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3580. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3581. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3582. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3583. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3584. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3585. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3586. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3587. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3588. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3589. Mr. KING (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3590. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3591. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3592. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3593. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3594. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3595. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3596. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3597. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3598. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3599. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3600. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3601. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3602. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3603. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3604. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself

and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3605. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3606. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3607. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3608. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3609. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3610. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3611. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3612. Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3613. Mr. ISAKSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3614. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3615. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3616. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. COATS, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3617. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3618. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3619. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3620. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3621. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3622. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3623. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3624. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3625. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3626. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3627. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3628. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3629. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3630. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3631. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3632. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3633. Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3634. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3635. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3636. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3637. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3638. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3639. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3565. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—CROSS-BORDER TRADE ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2016

SEC. _01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act of 2016''.

SEC. _02. REPEAL AND TRANSITION PROVISION.

(a) REPEAL.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) and section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) are repealed.

(b) AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act may be construed as affecting in any manner an agreement entered into pursuant to section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) or section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that is in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, and any such agreement shall continue to have full force and effect on and after such date.

(c) PROPOSED AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act may be construed as affecting in any manner a proposal accepted for consideration by U.S. Customs and Border Protection pursuant to section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that was accepted prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. __03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' mean the General Services Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' mean the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) COMMISSIONER.—The term ''Commissioner'' means the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(4) DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term ''donation agreement'' means an agreement made under section __05(a).

(5) FEE AGREEMENT.—The term ''fee agreement'' means an agreement made by the Commissioner under section __04(a)(1).

(6) PERSON.—The term ''person'' means—

(A) an individual;

(B) a corporation, partnership, trust, estate, association, or any other private or public entity;

(C) a Federal, State, or local government;

(D) any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a Federal, State, or local government; or

(E) any other governmental entity.

(7) RELEVANT COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''relevant committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. __04. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO FEE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN SERVICES OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.

(a) FEE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) AUTHORITY FOR FEE AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding section 13031(e) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(e)) and section 451 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1451), the Commissioner may, upon the request of any person, enter into an agreement with that person under which—

(A) U.S. Customs and Border Protection will provide the services described in paragraph (2) at a port of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services;

(B) such person will remit a fee imposed under subsection (b) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection in an amount equal to the full costs incurred or that will be incurred in providing such services; and

(C) any additional facilities which U.S. Customs and Border Protection deems necessary for the provision of services under an agreement entered into under this section shall be provided, maintained, and equipped by such person in accordance with U.S. Customs and Border Protection specifications.

(2) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—Services described in this paragraph are any services related to, or in support of, customs, agricultural processing, border security, or inspection-related immigration matters provided by an employee or contractor of U.S. Customs and Border Protection at ports of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services.

(3) MODIFICATION OF PRIOR AGREEMENTS.—The Commissioner, at the request of a person who has previously entered into an agreement with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the reimbursement of fees in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, may modify such agreement to implement any provisions of this title.

(4) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Except as provided in paragraphs (5) and (6), there shall be no limit to the number of fee agreements that may be entered into by the Commissioner.

(5) AUTHORITY FOR NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—

(A) RESOURCE AVAILABILITY.—If the Commissioner finds that resource or allocation constraints would prevent U.S. Customs and Border Protection from fulfilling, in whole or in part, requests for services under the terms of existing or proposed fee agreements, the Commissioner shall impose annual limits on the number of new fee agreements.

(B) ANNUAL REVIEW.—If the Commissioner limits the number of new fee agreements under this paragraph, the Commissioner shall annually evaluate and reassess such limits and publish the results of such evaluation and affirm any such limits that shall remain in effect in a publicly available format.

(6) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS AT AIR PORTS OF ENTRY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner may not enter into more than 10 fee agreements per year to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at air ports of entry.

(B) CERTAIN COSTS.—A fee agreement for U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at an air port of entry may only provide for the reimbursement of—

(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employee;

(iii) the salaries and expenses of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at air ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such employees.

(C) PRECLEARANCE.—The authority in the section may not be used to enter into new preclearance agreements or initiate the provision of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services outside of the United States.

(7) DENIED APPLICATION.—If the Commissioner denies a proposal for a fee agreement, the Commission shall provide the person who submitted the proposal a detailed justification for the denial.

(8) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(A) to require a person entering into a fee agreement to cover costs that are otherwise the responsibility of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection or any other agency of the Federal Government and are not incurred, or expected to be incurred, to cover services specifically covered by an agreement entered into under authorities provided by this title; or

(B) to unduly and permanently reduce the responsibilities or duties of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide services at ports of entry that have been authorized or mandated by law and are funded in any appropriation Act or from any accounts in the Treasury of the United States derived by the collection of fees.

(b) FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who enters into a fee agreement shall pay a fee pursuant to such agreement in an amount equal to the full cost of U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

(A) of the salaries and expenses of individuals employed or contracted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide such services; and

(B) of other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection related to providing such services, such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of employees.

(2) ADVANCE PAYMENT.—The Commissioner, with approval from a person requesting services of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services pursuant to a fee agreement, may accept the fee for services prior to providing such services.

(3) OVERSIGHT OF FEES.—The Commissioner shall develop a process to oversee the activities for which fees are charged pursuant to a fee agreement that includes the following:

(A) A determination and report on the full cost of providing services, including direct and indirect costs, as well as a process, through consultation with affected parties and other interested stakeholders, for increasing such fees as necessary.

(B) The establishment of a periodic remittance schedule to replenish appropriations, accounts or funds, as necessary.

(C) The identification of costs paid by such fees.

(4) DEPOSIT OF FUNDS.—Amounts collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall—

(A) be deposited as an offsetting collection;

(B) remain available until expended, without fiscal year limitation; and

(C) be credited to the applicable appropriation, account, or fund for the amount paid out of that appropriation, account, or fund for—

(i) any expenses incurred or to be incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection in providing such services; and

(ii) any other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to such services.

(5) TERMINATION BY THE COMMISSIONER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner shall terminate the services provided pursuant to a fee agreement with a person that, after receiving notice from the Commissioner that a fee imposed under the fee agreement is due, fails to pay such fee in a timely manner.

(B) EFFECT OF TERMINATION.—At the time services are terminated pursuant to subparagraph (A), all costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection which have not been paid, will become immediately due and payable.

(C) INTEREST.—Interest on unpaid fees will accrue based on the quarterly rate(s) established under sections 6621 and 6622 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(D) PENALTIES.—Any person that fails to pay any fee incurred under a fee agreement in a timely manner, after notice and demand for payment, shall be liable for a penalty or liquidated damage equal to 2 times the amount of such fee.

(E) AMOUNT COLLECTED.—Any amount collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall be deposited into the account specified under paragraph (4) and shall be available as described therein.

(F) RETURN OF UNUSED FUNDS.—The Commissioner shall return any unused funds collected under a fee agreement that is terminated for any reason, or in the event that the terms of such agreement change by mutual agreement to cause a reduction of U.S. Customs and Border Protections services. No interest shall be owed upon the return of any unused funds. (i)

(6) TERMINATION BY THE SPONSOR.—Any person who has previously entered into an agreement with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the reimbursement of fees in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, or under the provisions of this Act, may request that such agreement make provision for termination at the request of such person upon advance notice, the length and terms of which shall be negotiated between such person and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each fee agreement made during the previous year and, consistent with the requirements of section 907 of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–125), or pertaining to authorities and programs repealed and transitioned under section ___02 of this title or otherwise authorized by this section; and

(2) not less than 3 days before entering into a fee agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(d) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission to enter into new fee agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any fee agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that fee agreement.

SEC. __05. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) COMMISSIONER.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator as provided under subsection (f), may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, for activities in subsection (b) at a new or existing land, sea, or air port of entry, or any facility or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services within the United States.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—Where the Administrator owns or leases a new or existing land port of entry, facility, or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services, the Administrator, in collaboration with the Commissioner, may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, at that location for activities set forth in subsection (b).

(b) USE.—A donation made under a donation agreement may be used for activities related to construction, alteration, operation or maintenance, including expenses related to—

(1) land acquisition, design, construction, repair, and alteration;

(2) furniture, fixtures, equipment, and technology, including installation and the deployment thereof; and

(3) operation and maintenance of the facility, infrastructure, equipment, and technology.

(c) LIMITATION ON MONETARY DONATIONS.—Any monetary donation accepted pursuant to a donation agreement may not be used to pay the salaries of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection who perform inspection services.

(d) TRANSFER.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER.—Donations accepted by the Commissioner or the Administrator under a donation agreement may be transferred between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Administration.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—Prior to executing a transfer under this subsection, the Commissioner or Administrator shall notify a person that entered into the donation agreement of an intent to transfer the donated property or services.

(e) TERM OF DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term of a donation agreement may be as long as is required to meet the terms of the agreement.

(f) ROLE OF ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator's role, involvement, and authority under this section is limited with respect to donations made at new or existing land ports of entry, facilities, or other infrastructure owned or leased by the Administration.

(g) EVALUATION PROCEDURES.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROCEDURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment, the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administrator as appropriate, shall issue procedures for evaluating proposals for donation agreements.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The procedures issued under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public.

(3) COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS.—In issuing the procedures under paragraph (1), the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administration, shall evaluate the use of authorities provided under this section to enter into cost-sharing or reimbursement agreements with eligible persons and determine whether such agreements may improve facility conditions or inspection services at new or existing land, sea, or air ports of entry.

(h) DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after receiving a proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall notify the person that submitted the proposal as to whether it is complete or incomplete.

(2) INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS.—If the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, determines that a proposal is incomplete, the person that submitted the proposal shall be notified and provided with—

(A) a detailed description of all specific information or material that is needed to complete review of the proposal; and

(B) allow the person to resubmit the proposal with additional information and material described under subparagraph (A) to complete the proposal.

(3) COMPLETE APPLICATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a completed and final proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall—

(A) make a determination whether to deny or approve the proposal; and

(B) notify the person that submitted the proposal of the determination.

(4) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making the determination under paragraph (3)(A), the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall consider—

(A) the impact of the proposal on reducing wait times at that port of entry or facility and other ports of entry on the same border;

(B) the potential of the proposal to increase trade and travel efficiency through added capacity; and

(C) the potential of the proposal to enhance the security of the port of entry or facility.

(i) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING.—Any property, including monetary donations and nonpersonal services, donated pursuant to a donation agreement may be used in addition to any other funds, including appropriated funds, property, or services made available for the same purpose.

(j) RETURN OF DONATION.—If the Commissioner or the Administrator does not use the property or services donated pursuant to a donation agreement, such donated property or services shall be returned to the person that made the donation.

(k) INTEREST PROHIBITED.—No interest may be owed on any donation returned to a person under this subsection.

(l) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator if applicable, shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each donation agreement made during the previous year; and

(2) not less than 3 days before entering into a donation agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(m) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, nothing in this section may be construed as affecting in any manner the responsibilities, duties, or authorities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection or the Administration.

(n) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission or the Administrator to enter into new donation agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any donation agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that donation agreement.

SA 3566. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM FOR IMPROVEMENT OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT GRANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Transportation is authorized to carry out a demonstration program for improved administration of general aviation airport grants, as described in this section.

(2) GUIDANCE.—

(A) REQUIREMENT FOR GUIDANCE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue guidance to carry out a demonstration program authorized under paragraph (1).

(B) REPORTING AND REVIEW.—The guidance required by subparagraph (A) may include periodic reporting and review guidelines for States participating in the such demonstration program, as specified by the Secretary.

(b) AUTHORITY FOR AN ALTERNATE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—States that are selected to participate in the demonstration program shall not be subject to the allocation requirements of paragraph (3)(A) of section 47114(d) of title 49, United States Code, for funds made available under such section after the date of the enactment of this Act for use at nonprimary classified airports within such States.

(c) PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the period of availability for an amount made

available to States under the terms of the demonstration program shall be available to be obligated for grants only during the fiscal year for which such amount was apportioned and the two fiscal years immediately after that year. If such amount is not obligated under the terms of the demonstration program within that time, such amount shall be added to the discretionary fund provided for under section 47115 of title 49, United States Code.

(d) AIR SIDE NEEDS.—In selecting projects at nonprimary entitlement airports, States participating in the demonstration program shall ensure that funds apportioned to airport sponsors are only made available for construction costs of revenue producing aeronautical support facilities if such sponsor has made adequate provision for financing airside needs consistent with the terms of section 47110(h) of title 49, United States Code.

(e) STATE PARTICIPATION.—

(1) NUMBER OF STATES.—The Secretary of Transportation may select not more than 5 States to participate in the demonstration program.

(2) DURATION OF PARTICIPATION.—A State selected to participate in the demonstration program shall remain in the demonstration program until the State terminates its participation. If a State terminates participation under this paragraph, the Secretary may select another State to participate in the demonstration program.

(3) STATE ELIGIBILITY.—A State is eligible to participate in the demonstration program if the State—

(A) for not less than 3 States, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, is authorized by the Secretary to carry out a block grant program under section 47128 of title 49, United States Code; and

(B) submits an application for the participation that includes the certification described in paragraph (4) and that make adequate provision for airside needs.

(4) CERTIFICATION.—The certification described in this paragraph is a certification made by a State that includes each of the following:

(A) That the alternate distribution permitted under the demonstration program will occur in a manner that ensures all nonprimary classified airports in the State are adequately maintained in accordance with all relevant safety standards.

(B) That the State has a capital improvement planning process and priority system sufficient to carry out such alternate distribution in a manner consistent with airport safety and security needs.

(C) That the State has sufficient communication capabilities and protocols to notify and consult with local jurisdictions having control over nonprimary classified airports regarding such alternate distribution.

(D) That the State—

(i) continues to meet other application and selection requirements set out in section 47128(b) of title 48, United States Code; or

(ii) if the State is not carrying out a block grant program under section 47128 of title 49, United States Code, meets requirements that are equivalent, as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

SA 3567. Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 74, strike line 19 and insert the following: under section 44802(a) of that title, and in coordination with the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

(c) USE OF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Administrator, in carrying out research necessary to establish the consensus safety standards and certification requirements in section 44803 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2124, shall, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage the research and testing capacity and capabilities of the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the test sites (as defined in 44801 of such title, as added by section 2121).

SA 3568. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. TRANSIT STOPS IN THE UNITED STATES BY FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS TRAVELING TO OR FROM CUBA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the President may not regulate or prohibit, directly or indirectly, the provision of technical services otherwise permitted under an international air transportation agreement in the United States for an aircraft of a foreign air carrier that is en route to or from Cuba.

(b) EFFECT OF EXISTING REGULATIONS.—Any regulation in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act that regulates or prohibits the services described in subsection (a) shall cease to have any force or effect with respect to such services.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—This section shall not apply if—

(A) the United States is at war with Cuba;

(B) armed hostilities between the United States and Cuba are in progress; or

(C) there is imminent danger to the public health or physical safety of United States citizens.

(2) CUBAN AIR CARRIERS.—This section shall not apply to foreign air carriers that are owned by the Government of Cuba or are based in Cuba.

(d) APPLICABILITY.—The provisions of this section shall apply to—

(1) actions taken by the President before the date of the enactment of this Act that are in effect on such date of enactment; and

(2) actions taken on or after such date of enactment.

(e) INAPPLICABILITY.—The provisions of this section shall apply notwithstanding section 102(h) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (22 U.S.C. 6032(h)) and section 910(b) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7209(b)).

SA 3569. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. MODIFICATIONS IN CREDIT FOR COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEM PROPERTY.

(a) INCREASED ENERGY PERCENTAGE.—Clause (i) of section 48(a)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subclause (III), by redesignating subclause (IV) as subclause (V), and by inserting after subclause (III) the following new subclause:

''(IV) energy property described in paragraph (3)(A)(v), and''.

(b) MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN CAPACITY LIMITATIONS.—Section 48(c)(3)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''15 megawatts'' in clause (ii) and inserting ''25 megawatts'',

(2) by striking ''20,000 horsepower'' in clause (ii) and inserting ''34,000 horsepower'', and

(3) by striking clause (iii).

(c) EXTENSION OF CREDIT FOR COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEM PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(3)(A)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2022''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to periods after the date of the enactment of this Act, under rules similar to the rules of section 48(m) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990).

(2) EXTENSION OF CREDIT.—The amendment made by subsection (c) shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2016.

SEC. ___. ENERGY CREDIT FOR WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of clause (vi), by inserting ''or'' at the end of clause (vii), and by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(viii) waste heat to power property,''.

(b) WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.—Subsection (c) of section 48 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.—

''(A) WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.—The term 'waste heat to power property' means property comprising a system which generates electricity through the recovery of a qualified waste heat resource.

''(B) QUALIFIED WASTE HEAT RESOURCE DEFINED.—The term 'qualified waste heat resource' means—

''(i) exhaust heat or flared gas from any industrial process,

''(ii) waste gas or industrial tail gas that would otherwise be flared, incinerated, or vented,

''(iii) a pressure drop in any gas for an industrial or commercial process, or

''(iv) such other forms of waste heat resources as the Secretary may determine.

''(C) EXCEPTION.—The term 'qualified waste heat resource' does not include any heat resource from a process whose primary purpose is the generation of electricity utilizing a fossil fuel or nuclear energy.

''(D) TERMINATION.—The term 'waste heat to power property' shall not include any property placed in service after December 31, 2021.''.

(c) INCREASED ENERGY PERCENTAGE.—Clause (i) of section 48(a)(2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by this Act, is further amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subclause (IV) and inserting after the new subclause (V) the following new subclause:

''(VI) energy property described in paragraph (3)(A)(viii), and''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to periods after the date of the enactment of this Act, under rules similar to the rules of section 48(m) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990).

SA 3570. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REPORT ON EFFECTS ON AIRPORTS OF COLLEGIATE AVIATION FLIGHT TRAINING OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to Congress a report assessing the importance of collegiate aviation flight training operations and the effect of such operations on the economy and infrastructure of airports in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.

(b) ELEMENTS.—In the report required by subsection (a), the Administrator shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the total capacity of collegiate aviation flight training programs in the United States to meet the needs of the United States to train commercial pilots.

(2) An assessment of the footprint of collegiate aviation flight training operations at the airports in the United States.

(3) An assessment of whether infrastructure beyond that necessary for operations of commercial air carriers is needed at airports at which collegiate aviation flight training operations are conducted.

(4) If such infrastructure is needed, an estimate of the cost of such infrastructure.

(5) An identification of funding sources, available before the date of the enactment of this Act or that may become available after such date of enactment, that may be used to construct such infrastructure.

(6) Recommendations for improving technical and financial assistance to airports to construct such infrastructure.

SA 3571. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 197, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(c) JOINT TASK FORCE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the head of the Federal agency authorized to regulate the use of laser pointers, and any other appropriate Federal stakeholders, shall establish a joint task force (referred to in this section as the ''Laser Pointer Safety Task Force'') to address dangers from laser pointers by establishing a coordinated response to mitigate the threat of laser pointers aimed at aircraft.

(2) REPRESENTATION.—The Administrator shall appoint a representative of the Federal Aviation Administration to lead the Laser Pointer Safety Task Force, which shall also includes representatives of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal agency authorized to regulate the use of laser pointers, and any other appropriate Federal stakeholder.

(3) PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.—The Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall develop a public education campaign to inform the public of the dangers of pointing a laser at aircraft.

(4) INCIDENT DETECTION AND REPORTING.—The Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall develop methods for—

(A) encouraging the reporting of incidents of laser pointers aimed at an aircraft; and

(B) assess what technology could be used to enhance the detection of such incidents and to protect pilots from such incidents.

(5) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall submit a report to Congress that describes its efforts under this subsection and includes recommendations for further measures needed to prevent or respond to the use of laser pointers against aircraft.

(6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the Laser Pointer Safety Task Force to carry out the objectives set forth in this subsection.

SA 3572. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 188, beginning on line 14, strike ''first- or second-class airman'' and insert ''first-, second-, or third-class airman''.

SA 3573. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike subtitle F of title II and insert the following:

Subtitle F—Exemption From Medical Certification Requirements

SEC. 2601. REPORTING BY PILOTS EXEMPT FROM MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall require any pilot who is exempt from medical certification requirements to submit, not less frequently than once every 180 days, a report to the Department of Transportation that—

(1) identifies the pilot's status as an active pilot; and

(2) includes a summary of the pilot's recent flight hours.

SEC. 2602. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ASSESSING EFFECT ON PUBLIC SAFETY OF EXEMPTION FOR SPORT PILOTS FROM REQUIREMENT FOR A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives that assesses the effect of section 61.23(c)(ii) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (permitting a person to exercise the privileges of a sport pilot certificate without holding a medical certificate), on public safety since 2004.

SA 3574. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 244, between lines 7 and 8, insert the following:

(m) RULEMAKING ESTABLISHING MINIMUM LIABILITY INSURANCE LEVELS FOR PILOTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to establish minimum levels of liability insurance for any pilot covered under this section.

SA 3575. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 57, line 12, strike ''A violation'' and insert the following:

(a) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION AGAINST UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE PRACTICES.—Section 41712 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person aggrieved by an action prohibited under this section may file a civil action for damages and injunctive relief in any Federal district court or State court located in the State in which—

''(A) the unlawful action is alleged to have been committed; or

''(B) the aggrieved person resides.

''(2) ENFORCEMENT BY A STATE.—The attorney general of any State, as parens patriae, may bring a civil action to enforce the provisions of this section in—

''(A) any district court of the United States in that State; or

''(B) any State court that is located in that State and has jurisdiction over the defendant.''.

(b) VIOLATION OF A PRIVACY POLICY.—A violation

SA 3576. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 264, line 16, strike ''Not later than'' and insert the following:

(a) NO PREEMPTION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION CLAIMS.—Section 41713(b)(4) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) NO PREEMPTION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION CLAIMS.—Nothing in subparagraphs (A) through (C) may be construed—

''(i) to preempt, displace, or supplant any action for civil damages or injunctive relief based on a State consumer protection statute; or

''(ii) to restrict the authority of any government entity, including a State attorney general, from bringing a legal claim on behalf of the citizens of such State.''.

(b) SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—Not later than

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SA 3577. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 211, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 2320. CABIN AIR QUALITY TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate research and development work on effective air cleaning and sensor technology for the engine and auxiliary power unit for bleed air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck of a pressurized aircraft.

(b) TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS.—The technology developed under subsection (a) shall be capable of—

(1) removing oil-based contaminants from the bleed air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck; and

(2) detecting and recording oil-based contaminants in the bleed air fraction of the total air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report to Congress that describes the results of the research and development work carried out under subsection (a).

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SA 3578. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. DIVERSIONS TO BRADLEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the operator of Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Connecticut, to develop and implement a plan for irregular operations that result in aircraft being diverted to the airport to ensure that the airport is not adversely affected.

SA 3579. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ON BAGGAGE FEES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report assessing—

(1) the extent to which baggage fees imposed by air carriers have led to—

(A) increased security costs at airports, as reflected by the need for more security screening officials and security screening equipment; and

(B) economic disruption, such as requiring passengers to spend increased time waiting in line instead of pursuing more worthwhile, productive pursuits; and

(2) whether any increased costs have been borne disproportionately by taxpayers instead of air carriers.

SA 3580. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 106, strike line 22 and all that follows through page 107, line 9, and insert the following

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of publication of the guidance under subsection (b)(1), it shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured unless a safety statement is attached to the unmanned aircraft or accompanying the unmanned aircraft in its packaging.

''(b) SAFETY STATEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance for implementing this section.

SA 3581. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 271, strike line 15 and all that follows through page 272, line 4, and insert the following:

(1) each covered air carrier to disclose to a consumer any ancillary fees, including the baggage fee, cancellation fee, change fee, ticketing fee, and seat selection fee of that covered air carrier in a standardized format; and

(2) notwithstanding the manner in which information regarding the fees described in paragraph (1) is collected, each ticket agent to disclose to a consumer such fees of a covered air carrier in the standardized format described in paragraph (1).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that each disclosure—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service—

(A) be prominently displayed to the consumer through a link on the homepage of the covered air carrier or ticket agent and prior to the point of purchase; and

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SA 3582. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31___. UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE PRACTICES RELATING TO TRAVEL INSURANCE.

Section 2 of the Act of the Act of March 9, 1945 (59 Stat. 33, chapter 20; 15 U.S.C. 1012) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), the Secretary of Transportation may investigate, and take action under section 41712(a) of title 49, United States Code, with respect to, unfair or deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition with respect to insurance relating to travel in air transportation.''.

SA 3583. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REGULATIONS RELATING TO DISCLOSURE OF FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations prohibiting an air carrier

from limiting the access of consumers to information relating to schedules, fares, and fees for flights in passenger air transportation.

(b) AIR CARRIER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means an air carrier or foreign air carrier, as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3584. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 192, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

''(3) the existence and utility of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center.

SA 3585. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 2307, insert the following:

SEC. 2307A. TRAINING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR ADDITIONAL AIR CARRIER PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each air carrier shall provide ticket counter agents, gate agents, and other personnel of such air carrier whose duties include regular interaction with passengers training on recognizing and responding to victims and potential victims of human trafficking. Such training shall be in addition to any other training provided by an air carrier to such personnel.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means a person, including a commercial enterprise, that has been issued an air carrier operating certificate under section 44705 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3586. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PLANS FOR COORDINATION TO RESPOND TO SECURITY THREATS AT AIR TRAFFIC FACILITIES.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure that the Administration provides air navigation facilities with, as appropriate—

(1) a plan for coordination with appropriate law enforcement and other authorities in the event of an emergency or insider threat;

(2) guidelines and training for response to security threats and active shooter incidents; and

(3) guidelines for coordination between offices within the Administration, including the Office of Security and Hazardous Materials Safety and the Air Traffic Organization, on integrating security and resiliency concepts into assessment and oversight activities, including guidelines for the inspection of resiliency-focused elements including electrical systems, telecommunications, and the incorporation of best practices in risk assessment capabilities.

SA 3587. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. GREENHOUSE GAS USE AND REUSE CREDIT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Greenhouse Gas Biological Use and Reuse Act of 2016''.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 45S. CREDIT FOR GREENHOUSE GAS USE AND REUSE.

''(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—For purposes of section 38, the greenhouse gas use and reuse credit determined under this section for any taxable year is an amount equal to the sum of—

''(1) 30 percent of the qualified investment for such taxable year with respect to greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment, plus

''(2) the applicable amount (as determined under subsection (g)) per metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions—

''(A) for a facility—

''(i) in which greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment has been placed in service,

''(ii) for which the Secretary has determined that the property described in clause (i) satisfies the requirements under subsection (b)(2), and

''(iii) which is located within the United States (within the meaning of section 638(1)) or a possession of the United States (within the meaning of section 638(2)), and

''(B) which the taxpayer demonstrates, based upon an analysis of lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions (as described in section 211(o)(1)(H) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7545(o)(1)(H)), as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section) and subject to such requirements as the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, determines appropriate, were avoided through the use of the property described in subparagraph (A)(i).

''(b) QUALIFIED INVESTMENT WITH RESPECT TO GREENHOUSE GAS USE AND REUSE EQUIPMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a)(1), the qualified investment with respect to greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment for any taxable year is the basis of any greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment placed in service at a facility by the taxpayer during such taxable year.

''(2) GREENHOUSE GAS USE AND REUSE EQUIPMENT.—The term 'greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment' means property—

''(A) installed in an industrial facility which is owned by the taxpayer,

''(B) which captures and diverts qualified greenhouse gases,

''(C) which results in a significant reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions rate for such facility as compared to such rate prior to the installation of such property through the use and reuse of the qualified greenhouse gases captured and diverted at such facility,

''(D) with respect to which depreciation is allowable,

''(E) which is constructed, reconstructed, erected, or acquired by the taxpayer,

''(F) the original use of which commences with the taxpayer, and

''(G) which is placed in service before the date which is 15 years after the date of the enactment of the Greenhouse Gas Biological Use and Reuse Act of 2016.

''(3) CAPTURE, TRANSPORTATION, AND STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE.—For purposes of paragraph (2), greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment shall include infrastructure for the purification, transportation, and storage of qualified greenhouse gas, such as pipelines, wells, and monitoring systems.

''(c) CERTAIN PROGRESS EXPENDITURE RULES MADE APPLICABLE.—Rules similar to the rules of subsections (c)(4) and (d) of section 46 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990) shall apply for purposes of subsection (a)(1).

''(d) 10-YEAR LIMITATION ON CREDIT FOR USE AND REUSE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (2) of subsection (a), the credit allowed under such subsection shall be not be applicable to any emissions avoided through the use of greenhouse gas use and reuse equipment installed at a facility following the applicable credit period.

''(2) APPLICABLE CREDIT PERIOD.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the 'applicable credit period' is the 10-year period beginning in the first taxable year in which a credit is allowed under paragraph (2) of subsection (a) for such facility.

''(e) RECAPTURE.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall provide for recapturing the benefit of any credit allowable under subsection (a) with respect to any project which fails to attain or maintain the applicable requirements under this section.

''(f) PERSON TO WHOM CREDIT IS ALLOWABLE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) or in regulations prescribed by the Secretary, for purposes of paragraph (2) of subsection (a), any credit under such subsection shall be allowed to the taxpayer who—

''(A) captures and diverts the qualified greenhouse gas, and

''(B) through contract or otherwise, uses or reuses the qualified greenhouse gas in a manner meeting the requirements of subparagraph (B) of subsection (a)(2).

''(2) ELECTION TO ALLOW CREDIT TO PERSON DISPOSING OF CARBON DIOXIDE.—If the person described in paragraph (1) makes an election under this paragraph in such manner as the Secretary may prescribe by regulations, the credit under this section—

''(A) shall be allowable to the person that uses or reuses the qualified greenhouse gas in a manner meeting the requirements of subparagraph (B) of subsection (a)(2), and

''(B) shall not be allowable to the person described in paragraph (1).

''(g) APPLICABLE AMOUNT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (2) of subsection (a), the applicable amount is—

''(A) for calendar year 2016, $45, and

''(B) for any calendar year beginning after 2016, the sum of—

''(i) the product of the amount in effect under this subparagraph for the preceding calendar year and 102 percent, and

''(ii) the inflation adjustment amount determined under paragraph (2).

''(2) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT AMOUNT.—The inflation adjustment amount for any calendar year shall be an amount (not less than zero) equal to the product of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (1)(B)(i), and

''(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting 'calendar year 2015' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof.

''(3) ROUNDING.—The applicable amount determined under this subsection shall be rounded to the nearest dollar.

''(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CARBON DIOXIDE EQUIVALENT.—The term 'carbon dioxide equivalent' means, with respect to a greenhouse gas, the quantity of such gas that has a global warming potential equivalent to 1 metric ton of carbon dioxide, as determined by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

''(2) GREENHOUSE GAS.—The term 'greenhouse gas' has the same meaning given such term under section 211(o)(1)(G) of the Clean Air Act, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section.

''(3) QUALIFIED GREENHOUSE GAS.—The term 'qualified greenhouse gas' means a greenhouse gas captured from an industrial source which—

''(A) would otherwise be released into the atmosphere as industrial emission of greenhouse gas, and

''(B) is measured at the source of capture and verified at the point of sequestration.

''(4) USE AND REUSE.—The term 'use and reuse' means a process consisting of the biofixation of greenhouse gas through photosynthesis or chemosynthesis, such as through the growing of algae or bacteria.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections for subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 45S. Credit for greenhouse gas use and reuse.''.

(2) GENERAL BUSINESS CREDIT.—Section 38(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''plus'' at the end of paragraph (35), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (36) and inserting '', plus'', and by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(37) the credit for greenhouse gas use and reuse determined under section 45S(a),''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3588. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REQUIREMENT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES AT AIRPORTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—The Administration of the Transportation Security Administration shall require that the air transportation security program required by section 44903(c)(1) of title 49, United States Code, for each covered airport include the following:

(1) Beginning not more than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that a State or local law enforcement officer is stationed not more than 300 feet from each passenger screening checkpoint at each covered airport.

(2) Beginning not more than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that an explosives detection canine team of a State or local law enforcement agency is assigned to each terminal at each covered airport.

(b) TECHNICAL SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide technical and other support to State or local law enforcement agencies providing the personnel described in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a).

(c) COVERED AIRPORT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered airport'' means the 25 airports in the United States with the highest numbers of passengers enplaned each year.

(d) FUNDING.—Out of funds made available to the Transportation Security Administration for fiscal year 2016, $20,000,000 shall be available for State and local law enforcement agencies, as a transfer of funds, to train, certify, and utilize explosives detection canines.

SA 3589. Mr. KING (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RESIDENTIAL ENERGY-EFFICIENT PROPERTY CREDIT FOR BIOMASS FUEL PROPERTY EXPENDITURES.

(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—Subsection (a) of section 25D of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (4),

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting '', and'', and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) in the case of taxable years beginning before January 1, 2021, 30 percent of the qualified biomass fuel property expenditures made by the taxpayer during such year.''.

(b) QUALIFIED BIOMASS FUEL PROPERTY EXPENDITURES.—Subsection (d) of section 25D of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) QUALIFIED BIOMASS FUEL PROPERTY EXPENDITURE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified biomass fuel property expenditure' means an expenditure for property—

''(i) which uses the burning of biomass fuel to heat a dwelling unit located in the United States and used as a residence by the taxpayer, or to heat water for use in such a dwelling unit, and

''(ii) which has a thermal efficiency rating of at least 75 percent (measured by the higher heating value of the fuel).

''(B) BIOMASS FUEL.—For purposes of this section, the term 'biomass fuel' means any plant-derived fuel available on a renewable or recurring basis, including agricultural crops and trees, wood and wood waste and residues, plants (including aquatic plants), grasses, residues, and fibers. Such term includes densified biomass fuels such as wood pellets.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to expenditures paid or incurred in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SEC. ___. INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT FOR BIOMASS HEATING PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of clause (vi), by inserting ''or'' at the end of clause (vii), and by inserting after clause (vii) the following new clause:

''(viii) open-loop biomass (within the meaning of section 45(c)(3)) heating property, including boilers or furnaces which operate at thermal output efficiencies of not less than 65 percent (measured by the higher heating value of the fuel) and which provide thermal energy in the form of heat, hot water, or steam for space heating, air conditioning, domestic hot water, or industrial process heat,''.

(b) 30-PERCENT AND 15-PERCENT CREDITS.—

(1) ENERGY PERCENTAGE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii) and by inserting after clause (i) the following new clause:

''(ii) except as provided in clause (i)(V), 15 percent in the case of energy property described in paragraph (3)(A)(viii), but only with respect to periods ending before January 1, 2021, and''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph of section 48(a)(2)(A)(iii) of such Code, as so redesignated, is amended by inserting ''or (ii)'' after ''clause (i)''.

(2) INCREASED CREDIT FOR GREATER EFFICIENCY.—Clause (i) of section 48(a)(2)(A) of such Code is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subclause (III) and by inserting after subclause (IV) the following new subclause:

''(V) energy property described in paragraph (3)(A)(viii) which operates at a thermal output efficiency of not less than 80 percent (measured by the higher heating value of the fuel), but only with respect to periods ending before January 1, 2021,''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to periods after December 31, 2015, in taxable years ending after such date, under rules similar to the rules of section 48(m) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990).

SA 3590. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 120, line 1, insert '', or certified commercial operators operating under contract with a public entity,'' after ''systems''.

SA 3591. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REQUIREMENT FOR AUTOMATED ENTRY AND EXIT SYSTEM AT NEW OR MODIFIED AIR PORTS OF ENTRY.

No funds shall be obligated or expended for the physical modification of any existing air navigation facility that is a port of entry, or for the construction of a new air navigation facility intended to be a port of entry, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security certifies that the owner or sponsor of the facility has entered into an agreement that guarantees the installation and implementation of the automated entry and exit system described in section 7208 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (8 U.S.C. 1365b) at such facility not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3592. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike sections 3201, 3202, 3203, and 3204 and insert the following:

SEC. 3202. REPEAL OF THE ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE PROGRAM.

Strike subchapter II of chapter 417.

SA 3593. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike sections 3202 and 3203 and insert the following:

SEC. 3202. REPEAL OF SMALL COMMUNITY AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Chapter 417 is amended by striking section 41743.

SA 3594. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 289, line 7, strike ''$10,000,000'' and insert ''$6,000,000''.

SA 3595. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 264, strike lines 3 through 9, and insert the following:

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the review required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall take into consideration the refund policy and alternative travel options provided or offered by an air carrier.

SA 3596. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 75, beginning on line 11, strike ''integration'' and all that follows and insert the following: ''integration into the national airspace system of small unmanned aircraft systems that are capable of navigating beyond the visual sight of the operator through an automated onboard control system or via a data downlink that provides the operator a virtual means of onboard navigation''.

On page 80, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

''(h) NONAPPLICABILITY TO MODEL AIRCRAFT.—This section shall not apply to model aircraft, as defined in section 44808, and operating in accordance with that section.''.

On page 99, beginning on line 19, strike ''specific only'' and all that follows through ''model aircraft'' on line 20, and insert the following: ''applicable to an unmanned aircraft operating as a model aircraft or an unmanned aircraft being developed as a model aircraft''.

On page 100, beginning on line 11, strike '', where applicable'' and all that follows through ''the operation from each'' on line 15, and insert the following: ''with prior notice, where applicable, and coordinates with the airport air traffic control tower, to the extent practicable, when an air traffic facility is located at the airport, with respect to the operation''.

On page 101, beginning on line 2, strike ''administered'' and all that follows through ''section 44809'' on line 5, and insert the following: ''developed and administered by the community-based organization for the operation of model aircraft''.

On page 101, lines 10 and 11, strike ''with government and industry stakeholders, including'' and insert ''the''.

On page 104, strike lines 1 through 3 and insert the following:

(1)(A) the individual has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test under subsection (c); or

(B) the individual is operating a model aircraft under section 44808 and has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test in accordance with the safety program of the community-based organization described in subsection (a)(7) of that section;

Beginning on page 106, strike ''introduction'' on line 25 and all the follows through ''unmanned'' on page 107, line 1, and insert the following: ''initial retail sale any unmanned''.

SA 3597. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3110 and insert the following:

SEC. 3110. REFUNDS FOR OTHER FEES THAT ARE NOT HONORED BY A COVERED AIR CARRIER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations that require each covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, of any ancillary fees paid by the passenger for a service, as defined and disclosed by the air carrier, that, except as provided in subsection (b), the passenger does not receive, including on the passenger's scheduled flight or, if the flight is rescheduled, a subsequent replacement itinerary.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) VOLUNTARY CHANGES IN ITINERARY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if a passenger does not receive a service described in that subsection because the passenger voluntarily chose to make changes to the passenger's flight itinerary.

(2) EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANES.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to a fee for a service if the carrier is prevented from provide the service by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

SA 3598. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3109 and insert the following:

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid by the passenger if the air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage and, except as provided in subsection (b), the air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger within 24 hours of the time of arrival of the passenger at the passenger's destination.

(b) EXCEPTION.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to checked baggage if the air carrier is prevented from delivering checked baggage by the time specified in subsection (a) by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

SA 3599. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment

intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. FACILITATE WATER LEASING AND WATER TRANSFERS TO PROMOTE CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (12) of section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(I) TREATMENT OF MUTUAL DITCH IRRIGATION COMPANIES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a mutual ditch or irrigation company or of a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company, subparagraph (A) shall be applied without taking into account any income received or accrued—

''(I) from the sale, lease, or exchange of fee or other interests in real property, including interests in water,

''(II) from the sale or exchange of stock in a mutual ditch or irrigation company (or in a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company) or contract rights for the delivery or use of water, or

''(III) from the investment of proceeds from sales, leases, or exchanges under subclauses (I) and (II),

except that any income received under subclause (I), (II), or (III) which is distributed or expended for expenses (other than for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements) of the mutual ditch or irrigation company or of the like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company (as the case may be) shall be treated as nonmember income in the year in which it is distributed or expended. For purposes of the preceding sentence, expenses (other than for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements) include expenses for the construction of conveyances designed to deliver water outside of the system of the mutual ditch or irrigation company or of the like organization.

''(ii) TREATMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE.—In the case of a mutual ditch or irrigation company or of a like organization to a mutual ditch or irrigation company, where State law provides that such a company or organization may be organized in a manner that permits voting on a basis which is pro rata to share ownership on corporate governance matters, subparagraph (A) shall be applied without taking into account whether its member shareholders have one vote on corporate governance matters per share held in the corporation. Nothing in this clause shall be construed to create any inference about the requirements of this subsection for companies or organizations not included in this clause.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3600. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall—

''(A) develop a joint plan to carry out the research described in subsection (a); and

''(B) submit to Congress a report on such joint plan.''.

SA 3601. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 171, line 26, strike the period and insert the following: ''or the acceptance or validation by the FAA of a certificate or design approval of a foreign authority.''.

SA 3602. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 215, strike lines 1 through 11, and insert the following:

(3) UNDEVELOPED DEFINED.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(F), the term ''undeveloped'' means a defined geographic area where the Administrator determines low-flying aircraft are operated on a routine basis, such as low-lying forested areas with predominate tree cover under 200 feet and pasture and range land.

(4) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—The Administrator shall define such other terms as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) DATABASE.—The Administrator shall—

(1) develop a database that contains the location and height of each covered tower;

(2) keep the database current to the extent practicable;

(3) ensure that any proprietary information in the database is protected from disclosure in accordance with law; and

(4) ensure that, by virtue of accessing the database, users will be deemed to agree and acknowledge—

(A) that the information will be used for aviation safety purposes only; and

(B) not to disclose any such information regardless of whether the information is marked or labeled as proprietary or with a similar designation.

SA 3603. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 257, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

SEC. 2606. USE OF GRAPHICS FOR TEMPORARY FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS IN NOTICES TO AIRMEN AND USE FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) incorporate graphics for temporary flight restrictions (TFR) into the notices to airmen (NOTAM) search Internet website; and

(2) ensure that such graphics are—

(A) available for operational purposes; and

(B) recognized as an acceptable source of temporary flight restriction data for flight planning.

(b) TERMINATION OF PREVIOUS INTERNET WEBSITE.—After carrying out subsection (a)(1), the Administrator shall terminate the graphic temporary flight restriction Internet website of the Administration that was in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3604. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 270, strike lines 2 through 11 and insert the following:

(a) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund or other compensation to a passenger if the covered air carrier—

(A) has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage; and

(B) fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

(2) CHOICE OF COMPENSATION.—The final regulations issued under paragraph (1) may allow a passenger to select another form of

compensation offered by a covered air carrier in lieu of an automatic refund if the passenger is immediately notified that he or she is entitled to a refund, among the options for compensation.

SA 3605. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5023. HELICOPTER NOISE ABATEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue a final rule setting forth guidelines and regulations relating to stringency standards for Stage 3 noise levels for helicopters that—

(1) create a requirement to retrofit existing helicopters to comply with Stage 3 noise levels as prescribed in subpart H of part 36 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(2) require the retirement of helicopters not in compliance with Stage 3 noise levels by December 31, 2024.

(b) EXEMPTIONS.—Helicopters utilized for medical purposes or governmental functions (as defined in section 1.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations) shall be exempt from the guidelines and regulations required by subsection (a).

(c) STAGE 3 NOISE LEVELS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Stage 3 noise level'' has the meaning given that term in section 36.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SA 3606. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2153(a) and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Small unmanned aircraft systems may use spectrum for wireless control link, tracking, diagnostics, payload communication, and collaborative-collision avoidance, such as vehicle-to-vehicle communication, and other uses, consistent with the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), Federal Communications Commission rules, and the safety-of-life determination made by the Federal Aviation Administration, and through voluntary commercial arrangements with service providers, whether they are operating within a UTM system under section 2138 of this Act or outside such a system.

SA 3607. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

Section 40122(g)(2)(B) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''3304(f),'' before ''3308-3320''; and

(2) by inserting ''3330a, 3330b, 3330c, and 3330d,'' before ''relating''.

SA 3608. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 324, strike line 21, and all that follows through page 325, line 3, and insert the following:

(c) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any employee of the Federal Aviation Administration or the Transportation Security Administration hired on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall

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SA 3609. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 45(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(12) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN QUALIFIED FACILITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of electricity produced at a qualified facility described in paragraph (3) or (7) of subsection (d) and placed in service before the date of the enactment of this paragraph, a taxpayer may elect to apply subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii) by substituting 'the period beginning after December 31, 2016, and ending before January 1, 2018' for 'the 10-year period beginning on the date the facility was originally placed in service'.

''(B) LIMITATION.—No credit shall be allowed under subsection (a) to any taxpayer making an election under this paragraph with respect to electricity produced and sold at a facility during any period which, when aggregated with all other periods for which a credit is allowed under this section with respect to electricity produced and sold at such facility, is in excess of 10 years.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

SA 3610. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3103 and insert the following:

SEC. 3103. PROTECTIONS FOR CONSUMERS PURCHASING MULTI-CITY ITINERARIES.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review whether it is an unfair and deceptive practice under section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, for an air carrier to withhold from consumers any fare options for a flight based on whether that flight is booked as an individual flight or as part of a multi-city itinerary.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the review under subsection (a) is complete, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review under subsection (a), including any recommendations resulting from the review.

(c) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Secretary may use the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection, established under section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note), to assist in conducting the review under subsection (a) and providing recommendations under subsection (b).

SEC. 3104. ADDITIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date that the reviews under sections 3101, 3102, and 3103 of this Act are complete, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking to its notice of proposed rulemaking published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2014 (DOT–OST–2014–0056) (relating to the transparency of airline ancillary fees and other consumer protection issues) to consider the following:

(1) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by delays or cancellations when an air carrier has a choice as to which flights to cancel or delay during a weather-related event.

(2) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by involuntary changes to the consumer's itinerary.

(3) Requiring an air carrier to advertise to consumers all fare options for a flight, regardless of whether that flight is booked as an individual flight or multi-city itinerary.

SA 3611. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PILOT PROGRAM ON FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR AIRPORTS TO IMPROVE PHYSICAL LAYOUT OF SCREENING OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing financial assistance to airports to improve the physical layout of screening operations to improve security at airports.

(b) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator may provide financial assistance under subsection (a) in the form of long-term funding obligations through letters of intent or such other instruments as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(c) COMPLETION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall complete the pilot program before December 31, 2019.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SA 3612. Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 297, between lines 23 and 24, insert the following:

(3) utilize available resources of the Federal Aviation Administration as needed to support the development and certification of Category III Ground-Based Augmentation System (GBAS) capability and complete the investment decision process for Administration procurement and operation of GBAS capability at the key National Airspace System airports, as per the recommendations of the Performance-Based Airspace Aviation Rulemaking Committee.

SA 3613. Mr. ISAKSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 178, strike line 13, and all that follows through page 180, line 15, and insert the following:

''(A) ACCEPTANCE.—Subject to subparagraph (D), the Administrator may accept an airworthiness directive (as defined in section 39.3 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations) issued by an aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country, and leverage that aeronautical safety authority's regulatory process, if—

''(i) the country is the state of design for the product that is the subject of the airworthiness directive;

''(ii) the United States has a bilateral safety agreement relating to aircraft certification with the country;

''(iii) as part of the bilateral safety agreement with the country, the Administrator has determined that the aeronautical safety authority has an aircraft certification system relating to safety that produces a level of safety equivalent to the level produced by the system of the Federal Aviation Administration;

''(iv) the aeronautical safety authority utilizes an open and transparent public notice and comment process, including considering comments from owners and operators of foreign-registered aircraft and other aeronautical products and appliances in the issuance of airworthiness directives; and

''(v) the airworthiness directive addresses a specific issue necessary for the safe operation of aircraft subject to the directive.

''(B) ALTERNATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Administrator may issue a Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive instead of accepting the airworthiness directive issued by the aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country if the Administrator determines that such issuance is necessary for safety or operational reasons due to the complexity or unique features of the Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive or the United States aviation system.

''(C) ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF COMPLIANCE.—The Administrator may—

''(i) accept an alternative means of compliance, with respect to an airworthiness directive under subparagraph (A), that was approved by the aeronautical safety authority of the foreign country that issued the airworthiness directive; or

''(ii) notwithstanding subparagraph (A), and at the request of any person affected by an airworthiness directive under that subparagraph, the Administrator shall consider an alternative means of compliance with respect to the airworthiness directive and may approve such alternative means, if appropriate.

''(D) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator may not accept an airworthiness directive issued by an aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country if the airworthiness directive addresses matters other than those involving the safe operation of an aircraft.''.

SA 3614. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF CREDITS FOR ELECTRICITY PRODUCED FROM QUALIFIED HYDROPOWER AND MARINE AND HYDROKINETIC RENEWABLE ENERGY.

(a) QUALIFIED HYDROPOWER FACILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Clause (ii) of section 45(d)(9)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph (C) of section 45(d)(9) of such Code is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

(b) MARINE AND HYDROKINETIC RENEWABLE ENERGY.—Subparagraph (B) of section 45(d)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

(c) ELECTION TO TREAT QUALIFIED FACILITIES AS ENERGY PROPERTY.—Clause (ii) of section 48(a)(5)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting '', (9), or (11)'' after ''paragraph (1)''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2016.

SA 3615. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF PUBLICLY TRADED PARTNERSHIP OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE TO ENERGY POWER GENERATION PROJECTS, TRANSPORTATION FUELS, AND RELATED ENERGY ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (E) of section 7704(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''income and gains derived from the exploration'' and inserting ''income and gains derived from the following:

''(i) MINERALS, NATURAL RESOURCES, ETC.—The exploration'',

(2) by inserting ''or'' before ''industrial source'',

(3) by inserting a period after ''carbon dioxide'', and

(4) by striking '', or the transportation or storage'' and all that follows and inserting the following:

''(ii) RENEWABLE ENERGY.—The generation of electric power (including the leasing of tangible personal property used for such generation) exclusively utilizing any resource described in section 45(c)(1) or energy property described in section 48 (determined without regard to any termination date), or in the case of a facility described in paragraph (3) or (7) of section 45(d) (determined without regard to any placed in service date or date by which construction of the facility is required to begin), the accepting or processing of such resource.

''(iii) ELECTRICITY STORAGE DEVICES.—The receipt and sale of electric power that has been stored in a device directly connected to the grid.

''(iv) COMBINED HEAT AND POWER.—The generation, storage, or distribution of thermal energy exclusively utilizing property described in section 48(c)(3) (determined without regard to subparagraphs (B) and (D) thereof and without regard to any placed in service date).

''(v) RENEWABLE THERMAL ENERGY.—The generation, storage, or distribution of thermal energy exclusively using any resource described in section 45(c)(1) or energy property described in clause (i) or (iii) of section 48(a)(3)(A).

''(vi) WASTE HEAT TO POWER.—The use of recoverable waste energy, as defined in section 371(5) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6341(5)) (as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016).

''(vii) RENEWABLE FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The storage or transportation of any fuel described in subsection (b), (c), (d), or (e) of section 6426.

''(viii) RENEWABLE FUELS.—The production, storage, or transportation of any renewable

fuel described in section 211(o)(1)(J) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7545(o)(1)(J)) (as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016) or section 40A(d)(1).

''(ix) RENEWABLE CHEMICALS.—The production, storage, or transportation of any qualifying renewable chemical (as defined in paragraph (6)).

''(x) ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS.—The audit and installation through contract or other agreement of any energy efficient building property described in section 179D(c)(1).

''(xi) GASIFICATION WITH SEQUESTRATION.—The production of any product or the generation of electric power from a project that meets the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 48B(c)(1) and that separates and sequesters in secure geological storage (as determined under section 45Q(d)(2)) at least 75 percent of such project's total qualified carbon dioxide (as defined in section 45Q(b)).

''(xii) CARBON CAPTURE AND SEQUESTRATION.—

''(I) POWER GENERATION FACILITIES.—The generation or storage of electric power (including associated income from the sale or marketing of energy, capacity, resource adequacy, and ancillary services) produced from any power generation facility which is, or from any power generation unit within, a qualified facility described in section 45Q(c) which—

''(aa) in the case of a power generation facility or power generation unit placed in service after January 8, 2013, captures 50 percent or more of the qualified carbon dioxide (as defined in section 45Q(b)) of such facility and disposes of such captured qualified carbon dioxide in secure geological storage (as determined under section 45Q(d)(2)), and

''(bb) in the case of a power generation facility or power generation unit placed in service before January 9, 2013, captures 30 percent or more of the qualified carbon dioxide (as defined in section 45Q(b)) of such facility and disposes of such captured qualified carbon dioxide in secure geological storage (as determined under section 45Q(d)(2)).

''(II) OTHER FACILITIES.—The sale of any good or service from any facility (other than a power generation facility) which is a qualified facility described in section 45Q(c) and the captured qualified carbon dioxide (as so defined) of which is disposed of in secure geological storage (as determined under section 45Q(d)(2)).''.

(b) RENEWABLE CHEMICAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7704(d) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) QUALIFYING RENEWABLE CHEMICAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualifying renewable chemical' means any renewable chemical (as defined in section 9001 of the Agriculture Act of 2014)—

''(i) which is produced by the taxpayer in the United States or in a territory or possession of the United States,

''(ii) which is the product of, or reliant upon, biological conversion, thermal conversion, or a combination of biological and thermal conversion, of renewable biomass (as defined in section 9001(13) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002),

''(iii) the biobased content of which is 95 percent or higher,

''(iv) which is sold or used by the taxpayer—

''(I) for the production of chemical products, polymers, plastics, or formulated products, or

''(II) as chemicals, polymers, plastics, or formulated products,

''(v) which is not sold or used for the production of any food, feed, or fuel, and

''(vi) which is—

''(I) acetic acid, acrylic acid, acyl glutamate, adipic acid, algae oils, algae sugars, 1,4-butanediol (BDO), iso-butanol, n-butanol, C10 and higher hydrocarbons produced from olefin metathesis, carboxylic acids produced from olefin metathesis, cellulosic sugar, diethyl methylene malonate, dodecanedioic acid (DDDA), esters produced from olefin metathesis, ethyl acetate, ethylene glycol, farnesene, 2,5-furandicarboxylic acid, gamma-butyrolactone, glucaric acid, hexamethylenediamine (HMD), 3-hydroxy propionic acid, isoprene, itaconic acid, levulinic acid, polyhydroxyalkonate (PHA), polylactic acid (PLA), polyethylene furanoate (PEF), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyitaconic acid, polyols from vegetable oils, poly(xylitan levulinate ketal), 1,3-propanediol, 1,2-propanediol, rhamnolipids, succinic acid, terephthalic acid, or *p*-Xylene, or

''(II) any chemical not described in clause (i) which is a chemical listed by the Secretary for purposes of this paragraph.

''(B) BIOBASED CONTENT.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(iii), the term 'biobased content percentage' means, with respect to any renewable chemical, the biobased content of such chemical (expressed as a percentage) determined by testing representative samples using the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) D6866.''.

(2) LIST OF OTHER QUALIFYING RENEWABLE CHEMICALS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate), in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall establish a program to consider applications from taxpayers for the listing of chemicals under section 7874(d)(6)(A)(vi)(II) (as added by paragraph (1)).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, in taxable years ending after such date.

SA 3616. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. COATS, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. NOTICE REQUIRED BEFORE REVOCATION OF TAX EXEMPT STATUS FOR FAILURE TO FILE RETURN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6033(j) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(2) REQUIREMENT OF NOTICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date an organization described in paragraph (1) fails to file the annual return or notice referenced in paragraph (1) for 2 consecutive years, the Secretary shall notify the organization—

''(i) that the Internal Revenue Service has no record of such a return or notice from such organization for 2 consecutive years, and

''(ii) about the penalty that will occur under this subsection if the organization fails to file such a return or notice by the date of the next filing deadline.

The notification under the preceding sentence shall include information about how to comply with the filing requirements under subsection (a)(1) and (i).''.

(b) REINSTATEMENT WITHOUT APPLICATION.—Paragraph (3) of section 6033(j) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as redesignated under subsection (a), is amended—

(1) by striking ''Any organization'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), any organization'', and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(B) RETROACTIVE REINSTATEMENT WITHOUT APPLICATION IF ACTUAL NOTICE NOT PROVIDED.—If an organization described in paragraph (1)—

''(i) demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the organization did not receive the notice required under paragraph (2), and

''(ii) files an annual return or notice referenced in paragraph (1) for the current year, then the Secretary may reinstate the organization's exempt status effective from the date of the revocation under paragraph (1) without the need for an application.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to notices and returns required to be filed after December 31, 2015.

SA 3617. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CREDIT FOR STATE LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION COSTS OF MILITARY SPOUSES ARISING BY REASON OF A PERMANENT CHANGE IN THE DUTY STATION OF THE MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES TO ANOTHER STATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart A of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 25D the following new section:

''SEC. 25E. STATE LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION COSTS OF MILITARY SPOUSE ARISING FROM TRANSFER OF MEMBER OF ARMED FORCES TO ANOTHER STATE.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an eligible individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year an amount equal to the qualified relicensing costs of such individual which are paid or incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year.

''(b) MAXIMUM CREDIT.—The credit allowed by this section with respect to each change of duty station shall not exceed $500.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'eligible individual' means any individual—

''(A) who is married to a member of the Armed Forces of the United States at the time that the member moves to another State under a permanent change of station order, and

''(B) who moves to such other State with such member.

''(2) QUALIFIED RELICENSING COSTS.—The term 'qualified relicensing costs' means costs—

''(A) which are for a license or certification required by the State referred to in paragraph (1) to engage in the profession that such individual engaged in while within the State from which the individual moved, and

''(B) which are paid or incurred during the period beginning on the date that the orders referred to in paragraph (1)(A) are issued and ending on the date which is 1 year after the reporting date specified in such orders.

''(d) DENIAL OF DOUBLE BENEFIT.—The amount of any deduction or other credit allowable under this chapter for any expense taken into account in determining the credit allowed under this section shall be reduced by the amount of the credit under this section.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such subpart A is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 25D the following new item:

''Sec. 25E. State licensure and certification costs of military spouse arising from transfer of member of Armed Forces to another State.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SA 3618. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INVESTMENT CREDIT FOR WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of clause (vi), by striking the comma at the end of clause (vii) and inserting '', or'', and by inserting after clause (vii) the following new clause:

''(viii) waste heat to power property,''.

(b) WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.—Subsection (c) of section 48 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) WASTE HEAT TO POWER PROPERTY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'waste heat to power property' means property—

''(i) comprising a system which generates electricity through the recovery of a qualified waste heat resource, and

''(ii) which is placed in service before January 1, 2018.

''(B) QUALIFIED WASTE HEAT RESOURCE.—The term 'qualified waste heat resource' means—

''(i) exhaust heat or flared gas from an industrial process that does not have, as its primary purpose, the production of electricity, and

''(ii) a pressure drop in any gas for an industrial or commercial process.

''(C) LIMITATIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a)(1), the basis of any waste heat to power property taken into account under this section shall not exceed the excess of—

''(I) the basis of such property, over

''(II) the fair market value of comparable property which does not have the capacity to capture and convert a qualified waste heat resource to electricity.

''(ii) CAPACITY LIMITATION.—The term 'waste heat to power property' shall not include any property comprising a system if such system has a capacity in excess of 50 megawatts.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to periods after the date of the enactment of this Act, in taxable years ending after such date, under rules similar to the rules of section 48(m) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990).

SA 3619. Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXCEPTION FROM PRIVATE FOUNDATION EXCESS BUSINESS HOLDING TAX FOR CERTAIN PHILANTHROPIC BUSINESS HOLDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4943 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN PHILANTHROPIC BUSINESS HOLDINGS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to the holdings of a private foundation in any business enterprise which for the taxable year meets—

''(A) the exclusive ownership requirements of paragraph (2),

''(B) the all profits to charity requirement of paragraph (3), and

''(C) the independent operation requirements of paragraph (4).

''(2) EXCLUSIVE OWNERSHIP.—The exclusive ownership requirements of this paragraph are met if—

''(A) all ownership interests in the business enterprise are held by the private foundation at all times during the taxable year, and

''(B) all the private foundation's ownership interests in the business enterprise were acquired under the terms of a will or trust upon the death of the testator or settlor, as the case may be.

''(3) ALL PROFITS TO CHARITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The all profits to charity requirement of this paragraph is met if the business enterprise, not later than 120 days after the close of the taxable year, distributes an amount equal to its net operating income for such taxable year to the private foundation.

''(B) NET OPERATING INCOME.—For purposes of this paragraph, the net operating income of any business enterprise for any taxable year is an amount equal to the gross income of the business enterprise for the taxable year, reduced by the sum of—

''(i) the deductions allowed by chapter 1 for the taxable year which are directly connected with the production of such income,

''(ii) the tax imposed by chapter 1 on the business enterprise for the taxable year, and

''(iii) an amount for a reasonable reserve for working capital and other business needs of the business enterprise.

''(4) INDEPENDENT OPERATION.—The independent operation requirements of this paragraph are met if, at all times during the taxable year—

''(A) no substantial contributor (as defined in section 4958(c)(3)(C)) to the private foundation, or family member of such a contributor (determined under section 4958(f)(4)), is a director, officer, trustee, manager, employee, or contractor of the business enterprise (or an individual having powers or responsibilities similar to any of the foregoing),

''(B) at least a majority of the board of directors of the private foundation are individuals other than individuals who are either—

''(i) directors or officers of the business enterprise, or

''(ii) members of the family (determined under section 4958(f)(4)) of a substantial contributor (as defined in section 4958(c)(3)(C)) to the private foundation, and

''(C) there is no loan outstanding from the business enterprise to a substantial contributor (as so defined) to the private foundation or a family member of such contributor (as so determined).

''(5) CERTAIN DEEMED PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS EXCLUDED.—This subsection shall not apply to—

''(A) any fund or organization treated as a private foundation for purposes of this section by reason of subsection (e) or (f),

''(B) any trust described in section 4947(a)(1) (relating to charitable trusts), and

''(C) any trust described in section 4947(a)(2) (relating to split-interest trusts).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SA 3620. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1226. DEFINITION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.

Section 47113(a)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) 'small business concern'—

''(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), has the same meaning given that term in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

''(B) in the case of a concern in the construction industry, a concern shall be considered a small business concern if the concern meets the size standard for the North American Industry Classification System Code 237310, as adjusted by the Small Business Administration;''.

SA 3621. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SECURING AIRCRAFT AVIONICS SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider revising Federal Aviation Administration regulations regarding airworthiness certification—

(1) to address cybersecurity for avionics systems, including software components; and

(2) to require that aircraft avionics systems used for flight guidance or aircraft control be secured against unauthorized access via passenger in-flight entertainment systems through such means as the Administrator determines appropriate to protect the avionics systems from unauthorized external and internal access.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—The Administrator's consideration and any action taken under subsection (a) shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group under section 5029(d) of this Act.

On page 354, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(3) IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW.—As part of its review under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2), the working group shall review the cybersecurity risks of in-flight entertainment systems to consider whether such systems can and should be isolated and separate from systems required for safe flight and operations, including reviewing standards for air gaps or other means determined appropriate.

On page 354, line 17, strike ''(3)'' and insert ''(4)''.

On page 354, line 23, strike ''(4)'' and insert ''(5)''.

On page 355, line 9, strike ''(5)'' and insert ''(6)''.

SA 3622. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 45, after line 20, add the following:

SEC. 1223. PUBLIC-PRIVATE WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING AIR TRAVEL FOR FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a public-private working group (in this section referred to as the ''working group'')—

(1) to examine current policies and practices of airports and air carriers for accommodating the needs of traveling families and pregnant women; and

(2) to develop recommendations for improving air travel for families and pregnant women.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements under subsection (a), the working group shall—

(1) review current air carrier, security screening, and airport policies and practices for accommodating families and pregnant women;

(2) identify best practices and innovations for easing travel for families with children or older adults and pregnant women;

(3) propose improvements to security screening procedures that minimize the instances requiring parents to be separated from their children;

(4) suggest accommodations and changes that should be made in airports for pregnant passengers and pregnant workers, such as access to clean nursing rooms;

(5) suggest accommodations and changes that should be made in airports for new parents traveling with young children, including play areas for children;

(6) recommend improvements for on-boarding and off-boarding for pregnant women and families traveling with children or older adults, including advance boarding, and to ensure that families travel together in the aircraft cabin, to the extent possible;

(7) identify initiatives for ensuring all relevant stakeholders, including airport operators and air carriers, have the latest information regarding the effect of air transportation on the health needs of pregnant women and young children; and

(8) consider such other issues as the working group considers appropriate for improving the overall travel experience for families and pregnant women.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the working group shall be appointed by the Administrator and shall include representatives of—

(1) the Department of Transportation;

(2) the Federal Aviation Administration;

(3) the Administration for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(4) the Transportation Security Administration;

(5) other relevant agencies;

(6) nongovernmental organizations that represent women and families caring for children or older adults;

(7) consumer advocacy groups;

(8) airports or organizations that represent airports; and

(9) air carriers.

(d) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress, and release on a publicly accessible website, a report that includes—

(1) an overview of the working group's findings;

(2) a description of the working group's recommendations for airport operators and air carriers; and

(3) any policy recommendations for improving air travel for families and pregnant women.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group.

(f) TERMINATION.—The working group shall terminate on the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3623. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

PART IV—OPERATOR SAFETY

SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Drone Operator Safety Act''.

SEC. 2162. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that educating operators of unmanned aircraft about the laws and regulations that govern such aircraft helps to ensure their safe operation.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration should continue to prioritize the education of operators of unmanned aircraft through public outreach efforts like the ''Know Before You Fly'' campaign.

SEC. 2163. UNSAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 31—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(ii) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

''(10) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49.''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by inserting '' 'airport','' before '' 'appliance' ''; and

(2) by inserting after section 39A the following:

''§ 39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft

''(a) OFFENSE.—Any person who operates an unmanned aircraft and, in so doing, knowingly or recklessly interferes with, or disrupts the operation of, an aircraft carrying 1 or more occupants operating in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, in a manner that poses an imminent safety hazard to such occupants, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b).

''(b) PENALTY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the punishment for an offense under subsection (a) shall be a fine under this title, imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

''(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—Any person who attempts to cause, or knowingly or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or death during the commission of an offense under subsection (a) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both.

''(c) OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO AIRPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The operation of an unmanned aircraft within a runway exclusion zone shall be considered a violation of subsection (a) unless such operation is approved by the airport's air traffic control facility or is the result of a circumstance, such as a malfunction, that could not have been reasonably foreseen or prevented by the operator.

''(2) RUNWAY EXCLUSION ZONE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'runway exclusion zone' means a rectangular area—

''(A) centered on the centerline of an active runway of an airport immediately around which the airspace is designated as class B, class C, or class D airspace at the surface under part 71 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(B) the length of which extends parallel to the runway's centerline to points that are 1 statute mile from each end of the runway and the width of which is ½ statute mile.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 39A the following:

''39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.''.

SA 3624. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to

the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. ENERGY CREDIT FOR BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subclause (II) of section 48(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''paragraph (3)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''clause (i) or (viii) of paragraph (3)(A)''.

(b) BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGY.—Subparagraph (A) of section 48(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of clause (vi), by adding ''or'' at the end of clause (vii), and by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(viii) battery storage technology,''.

(c) PHASEOUT OF CREDIT.—Paragraph (6) of section 48(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''SOLAR'' in the heading and inserting ''CERTAIN'', and

(2) by striking ''paragraph (3)(A)(i)'' both places it appears and inserting ''clause (i) or (viii) of paragraph (3)(A)''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2015.

SEC. _____. RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENT PROPERTY CREDIT FOR BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 25D of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting '', and'', and by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) 30 percent of the qualified battery storage technology expenditures made by the taxpayer during such year.''.

(b) QUALIFIED BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGY EXPENDITURE.—Subsection (d) of section 25D of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) QUALIFIED BATTERY STORAGE TECHNOLOGY EXPENDITURE.—The term 'qualified battery storage technology expenditure' means an expenditure for battery storage technology installed on or in connection with a dwelling unit located in the United States and used as a residence by the taxpayer.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to expenditures paid or incurred in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SA 3625. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 149, line 8, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

On page 150, line 17, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

SA 3626. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 222, line 9, insert '', aviation safety engineers,'' after ''specialists''.

SA 3627. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SECURING AIRCRAFT AVIONICS SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider revising Federal Aviation Administration regulations regarding airworthiness certification—

(1) to address cybersecurity for avionics systems, including software components; and

(2) to require that aircraft avionics systems used for flight guidance or aircraft control be secured against unauthorized access via passenger in-flight entertainment systems through such means as the Administrator determines appropriate to protect the avionics systems from unauthorized external and internal access.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—The Administrator's consideration and any action taken under subsection (a) shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group under section 5029(d) of this Act.

On page 354, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(3) IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW.—As part of its review under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2), the working group shall review the cybersecurity risks of in-flight entertainment systems to consider whether such systems can and should be isolated and separate from systems required for safe flight and operations, including reviewing standards for air gaps or other means determined appropriate.

On page 354, line 17, strike ''(3)'' and insert ''(4)''.

On page 354, line 23, strike ''(4)'' and insert ''(5)''.

On page 355, line 9, strike ''(5)'' and insert ''(6)''.

SA 3628. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REDUCTION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION, EMISSIONS, AND NOISE FROM CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAM.—From amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a research program related to reducing civilian aircraft energy use, emissions, and source noise with equivalent safety through grants or other measures, which shall include cost-sharing authorized under section 106(l)(6) of such title, including reimbursable agreements with other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSORTIUM.—

(1) DESIGNATION AS CONSORTIUM.—The Administrator shall designate, using a competitive process, one or more institutions or entities described in paragraph (2), to be known as a ''Government led Consortium for Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise'' or ''CLEEN'', to perform research in accordance with this section.

(2) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator shall include educational and research institutions or private sector entities that have existing facilities and experience for developing and testing noise, emissions, and energy reduction engine and aircraft technology, and developing alternative fuels, in the research program required by subsection (a) to fulfill the performance objectives specified in subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION MECHANISMS.—In conducting the research program required by subsection (a), the consortium designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) coordinate its activities with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(B) consult on a regular basis with the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative.

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—Not later than January 1, 2021, the Administrator shall seek to ensure that the research program required subsection (a) supports the following objectives for civil subsonic airplanes:

(1) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces aircraft fuel burn 40 percent relative to year 2000 best-in-class in-service aircraft.

(2) Certifiable engine technology that reduces landing and takeoff cycle nitrogen oxide emissions by 70 percent over the International Civil Aviation Organization standard adopted in 2011.

(3) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces noise levels by 32 decibels cumulatively, relative to the Stage 4 standard, or reduces the noise contour area in absolute terms.

(4) The feasibility of use of drop-in alternative jet fuels in aircraft and engine systems, including successful demonstration and quantification of benefits, advancement of fuel testing capability, and support for fuel evaluation.

(d) CERTIFIABLE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''certifiable'' means the technology has been demonstrated to Technology Readiness Level 6 or 7, and there are no foreseen issues that would prevent certification to existing standards.

SA 3629. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REDUCTION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION, EMISSIONS, AND NOISE FROM CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAM.—From amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a research program related to reducing civilian aircraft energy use, emissions, and source noise with equivalent safety through grants or other measures, which shall include cost-sharing authorized under section 106(l)(6) of such title, including reimbursable agreements with other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSORTIUM.—

(1) DESIGNATION AS CONSORTIUM.—The Administrator shall designate, using a competitive process, one or more institutions or entities described in paragraph (2), to be known as a ''Government led Consortium for Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise'' or ''CLEEN'', to perform research in accordance with this section.

(2) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator shall include educational and research institutions or private sector entities that have existing facilities and experience for developing and testing noise, emissions, and energy reduction engine and aircraft technology, and developing alternative fuels, in the research program required by subsection (a) to fulfill the performance objectives specified in subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION MECHANISMS.—In conducting the research program required by subsection (a), the consortium designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) coordinate its activities with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(B) consult on a regular basis with the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative.

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—Not later than January 1, 2021, the Administrator shall seek to ensure that the research program required subsection (a) supports the following objectives for civil subsonic airplanes:

(1) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces aircraft fuel burn 40 percent relative to year 2000 best-in-class in-service aircraft.

(2) Certifiable engine technology that reduces landing and takeoff cycle nitrogen oxide emissions by 70 percent over the International Civil Aviation Organization standard adopted in 2011.

(3) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces noise levels by 32 decibels cumulatively, relative to the Stage 4 standard, or reduces the noise contour area in absolute terms.

(4) The feasibility of use of drop-in alternative jet fuels in aircraft and engine systems, including successful demonstration and quantification of benefits, advancement of fuel testing capability, and support for fuel evaluation.

(d) CERTIFIABLE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''certifiable'' means the technology has been demonstrated to Technology Readiness Level 6 or 7, and there are no foreseen issues that would prevent certification to existing standards.

SEC. 5033. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall—

''(A) develop a joint plan to carry out the research described in subsection (a); and

''(B) submit to Congress a report on such joint plan.''.

SA 3630. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. EXCEPTIONS TO RESTRUCTURING OF PASSENGER FEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44940(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''Fees imposed'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraph (2), fees imposed'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Fees imposed under subsection (a)(1) may not exceed $2.50 per enplanement, and the total amount of such fees may not exceed $5.00 per one-way trip, for passengers—

''(A) boarding to an eligible place under subchapter II of chapter 417 for which essential air service compensation is paid under that subchapter; or

''(B) on flights, including flight segments, between 2 or more points in Hawaii or 2 or more points in Alaska.''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF FEE EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall implement the fee exceptions under the amendments made by subsection (a)—

(1) beginning on the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) through the publication of notice of the fee exceptions in the Federal Register, notwithstanding section 9701 of title 31, United States Code, and the procedural requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

SA 3631. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle G—Arm All Pilots Act

SEC. 2701. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Arm All Pilots Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2702. FACILITATION OF AND LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) IMPROVED ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(ii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The training of'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The training of''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Arm All Pilots Act of 2016, the Secretary shall—

''(aa) designate 5 additional firearms training facilities located in various regions of the United States for Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment;

''(bb) designate firearms training facilities approved before such date of enactment for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers as facilities approved for initial training and certification of pilots seeking to be deputized as Federal flight deck officers; and

''(cc) designate additional firearms training facilities for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment.''.

(b) FIREARMS REQUALIFICATION FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(iii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Under Secretary shall'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall'';

(2) in subclause (I), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking ''the Under Secretary'' and inserting ''the Secretary, but not more frequently than once every 6 months,''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) USE OF FACILITIES FOR REQUALIFICATION.—The Secretary shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to requalify to carry a firearm under the program through training at a private or government-owned gun range certified to provide firearm requalification training.

''(III) SELF-REPORTING.—The Secretary shall determine that a Federal flight deck officer has met the requirements to requalify to carry a firearm under the program if—

''(aa) the officer reports to the Secretary that the officer has participated in a sufficient number of hours of training to requalify to carry a firearm under the program; and

''(bb) the administrator of the facility at which the officer conducted the requalification training verifies that the officer participated in that number of hours of training.''.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—Section 44921(c)(2) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—

''(i) INITIAL TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) initial training of not more than 5 days for a pilot to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for not more than 2 days of such training; and

''(III) not more than 3 days of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.

''(ii) RECURRENT TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) recurrent training of not more than 2 days, not more frequently than once every 5 years, for a pilot to maintain deputization as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for a full-day training session for not more than one day of such training; and

''(III) not more than one day of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.''.

(d) OTHER MEASURES TO FACILITATE TRAINING.—Section 44921(e) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Pilots participating'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Pilots participating''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) FACILITATION OF TRAINING.—

''(A) TIME OFF FOR TRAINING.—An air carrier shall permit a Federal flight deck officer or a pilot seeking to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer, in consultation with the air carrier, to take a reasonable amount of leave from work to participate in initial and recurrent training for the program. An air carrier shall not be obligated to provide such an officer or pilot compensation for such leave.

''(B) PRACTICE AMMUNITION.—At the request of a Federal flight deck officer, the Secretary shall provide to the officer sufficient practice ammunition to conduct at least one practice course every month.''.

SEC. 2703. CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS BY FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Section 44921(f) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall authorize a Federal flight deck officer to carry a firearm while engaged in providing intrastate air transportation. The authority provided to a Federal flight deck officer under this paragraph includes the authority to carry a firearm—

''(A) on the officer's body, loaded, and holstered;

''(B) when traveling to a flight duty assignment, throughout the duty assignment, and when traveling from a flight duty assignment to the officer's home or place where the officer is residing when traveling; and

''(C) in the passenger cabin and while traveling in a cockpit jump seat.

''(2) CONCEALED CARRY.—A Federal flight deck officer shall make reasonable efforts to keep the officer's firearm concealed when in public.

''(3) PURCHASE OF FIREARM BY OFFICER.—Notwithstanding subsection (c)(1), a Federal flight deck officer may purchase a firearm and carry that firearm aboard an aircraft of which the officer is the pilot in accordance with this section if the firearm is of a type that may be used under the program.''.

(b) CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS.—Paragraph (5) of section 44921(f), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended to read as follows:

''(5) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary may take such action as may be necessary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm in a foreign country whenever necessary to participate in the program.

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH FEDERAL AIR MARSHAL PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall work to make policies relating to the carriage of firearms on flights in foreign air transportation by Federal flight deck officers consistent with the policies of the Federal air marshal program for carrying firearms on such flights not withstanding Annex 17 (ICAO Annex 17 standard 4.7.7.)''.

(c) CARRIAGE OF FIREARM IN PASSENGER CABIN.—

(1) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Section 44921 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a Federal flight deck officer to place a firearm in a locked container, or in any other manner render the firearm unavailable, when the cockpit door is opened.''.

(2) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 44921(b)(3) is amended—

(A) by striking subparagraph (G); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (H) through (N) as subparagraphs (G) through (M), respectively.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall—

(1) prescribe regulations on the proper storage of firearms when a Federal flight deck officer is at home or where the officer is residing when traveling; and

(2) revise the procedural requirements established under section 44921(b)(1) of title 49, United States Code, to implement the amendments made by subsection (c).

SEC. 2704. PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921(d)(2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as clauses (i), (ii), and (iii), respectively, and by moving such clauses, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(2) by striking ''A pilot is'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A pilot is''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL CERTIFICATES.—In establishing standards under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary may not establish medical or physical standards for a pilot to become a Federal flight deck officer that are inconsistent with or more stringent than the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for the issuance of a first- or second-class airman medical certificate under part 67 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. 2705. TRANSFER OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.

Section 44921(d) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) TRANSFER FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.—A pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer who moves to inactive status for less than 5 years may return to active status after completing one program of recurrent training described in subsection (c).''.

SEC. 2706. FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921, as amended by section 2703(c)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—

''(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPEDITED SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to be screened through the crew member identity verification program of the Transportation Security Administration (commonly known as the 'Known Crew Member program') when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(2) PROHIBITION ON PAPERWORK.—The Secretary may not require a Federal flight deck officer to fill out any forms or paperwork when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(3) STERILE AREA DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'sterile area' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. 2707. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 44921, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Under Secretary of Transportation for Security'' and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security'';

(2) in subsection (d)(4), by striking ''may,'' and inserting ''may'';

(3) in subsection (i)(2), by striking ''the Under Secretary may'' and inserting ''may'';

(4) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(B) by striking ''APPLICABILITY'' and all that follows through ''This section'' and inserting ''APPLICABILITY.—This section'';

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(n) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) PILOT.—The term 'pilot' means an individual who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight or any other flight deck crew member.

''(2) ALL-CARGO AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term 'air transportation' includes all-cargo air transportation.''; and

(6) by striking ''Under Secretary'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary''.

SEC. 2708. REFUNDS OF CERTAIN SECURITY SERVICE FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.

Section 44940 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) REFUND OF FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.—From fees received in a fiscal year under subsection (a)(1), each air carrier that certifies to the Secretary of Homeland Security that all flights operated by the air carrier have on board a pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer under section 44921 shall receive an amount equal to 10 percent of the fees collected under subsection (a)(1) from passengers on flights operated by that air carrier in that fiscal year.''.

SEC. 2709. TREATMENT OF INFORMATION ABOUT FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS AS SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revise section 15.5(b)(11) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to classify information about pilots deputized as Federal flight deck officers under section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as sensitive security information in a manner consistent with the classification of information about Federal air marshals.

SEC. 2710. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SA 3632. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PROMOTION OF EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''exit lane breach control technology'' refers to any automated system, or series of systems, designed to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area.

(4) STERILE AREA.—The term ''sterile area'' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling)

(b) STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) INITIAL REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop standards and requirements for the use of exit lane breach control technology at airports.

(2) QUALIFIED PRODUCT LIST.—The Administrator shall establish, publically post, and maintain a qualified product list of exit land breach control technology that shall includes all previously-approved systems.

(c) BENEFITS FOR AIRPORTS USING EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.—If an airport deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) and the deployment results in the need for fewer employees of the Administration to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area, the airport's Federal security director may reallocate such employees to other transportation security missions, including passenger screening, within that airport if the Administrator certifies that the reallocation will not negatively impact the security of that airport.

(2) NO LOSS OF ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not decrease, under the Staffing Allocation Model, any successor allocation process, or any other circumstances, the number of employees of the Administration assigned to an airport that deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) on the basis that the deployment results in the need for fewer such employees to provide security for sterile areas of the airport.

(B) MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—Subject to subparagraph (C), if an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under paragraph (1), the Administrator—

(i) shall determine the minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for that airport prior to the deployment of the exit lane breach control technology; and

(ii) may not allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport for any year that is less than such minimum number.

(C) WAIVER OF MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—If the Administrator has determined a minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for an airport under subparagraph (B)(i), the Administrator may only allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport that is less than such minimum number if the total passenger count for that airport in any 6-month period declines more than 5 percent compared to the same 6-month period during the preceding calendar year.

(D) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives not less than 45 days prior to making an allocation authorized under subparagraph (C).

(d) RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING PASSENGER EXIT POINTS.—If an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under subsection (c)(1), the Administrator shall have met the responsibility of the Administration to monitor passenger exit points required by subsection (n) of section 44903 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3633. Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Beginning on page 204, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 206, line 9, and insert the following:

(a) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES ON AIRCRAFT.—

(1) ADOPTION OF ICAO INSTRUCTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall conform United States regulations on the air transport of lithium ion cells and batteries with the lithium cells and battery requirements in the 2015–2016 edition of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (referred to in this subsection as ''ICAO'') Technical Instructions (to include all addenda) including the revised standards adopted by ICAO which became effective on April 1, 2016.

(B) FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.—Beginning on the date the revised regulations under subparagraph (A) are published in the Federal Register, any lithium cell and battery rulemaking action or update commenced on or after that date shall continue to comply with the requirements under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

(2) REVIEW OF OTHER REGULATIONS.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), the Secretary of Transportation may initiate a review of other existing regulations regarding the air transportation, including passenger-carrying and cargo aircraft, of lithium batteries and cells.

(3) MEDICAL DEVICE BATTERIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For United States applicants, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider and either grant or deny, within 45 days, applications submitted in compliance with part 107 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations for special permits or approvals for air transportation of lithium ion cells or batteries specifically used by medical devices. Not later than 30 days after the date of application, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall provide a draft special permit based on the application to the Federal Aviation Administration. The Federal Aviation Administration shall conduct an on-site inspection for issuance of the special permit not later than 10 days after the date of receipt of the draft special permit from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

(B) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL DEVICE.—In this paragraph, the term ''medical device'' has the meaning given the term ''device'' in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or constricting any other authority the Secretary of Transportation has under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

SA 3634. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5013.

SA 3635. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE __—VETERANS TAX FAIRNESS

SEC. ___01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016''.

SEC. ___02. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Approximately 10,000 to 11,000 individuals are retired from service in the Armed Forces for medical reasons each year.

(2) Some of such individuals are separated from service in the Armed Forces for combat-related injuries (as defined in section 104(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

(3) Congress has recognized the tremendous personal sacrifice of veterans with combat-related injuries by, among other things, specifically excluding from taxable income severance pay received for combat-related injuries.

(4) Since 1991, the Secretary of Defense has improperly withheld taxes from severance pay for wounded veterans, thus denying them their due compensation and a significant benefit intended by Congress.

(5) Many veterans owed redress are beyond the statutory period to file an amended tax return because they were not or are not aware that taxes were improperly withheld.

SEC. ___03. RESTORATION OF AMOUNTS IMPROPERLY WITHHELD FOR TAX PURPOSES FROM SEVERANCE PAYMENTS TO VETERANS WITH COMBAT-RELATED INJURIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) identify—

(A) the severance payments—

(i) that the Secretary paid after January 17, 1991;

(ii) that the Secretary computed under section 1212 of title 10, United States Code;

(iii) that were not considered gross income pursuant to section 104(a)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(iv) from which the Secretary withheld amounts for tax purposes; and

(B) the individuals to whom such severance payments were made; and

(2) with respect to each person identified under paragraph (1)(B), provide—

(A) notice of—

(i) the amount of severance payments in paragraph (1)(A) which were improperly withheld for tax purposes; and

(ii) such other information determined to be necessary by the Secretary of Treasury to carry out the purposes of this section; and

(B) instructions for filing amended tax returns to recover the amounts improperly withheld for tax purposes.

(b) EXTENSION OF LIMITATION ON TIME FOR CREDIT OR REFUND.—

(1) PERIOD FOR FILING CLAIM.—If a claim for credit or refund under section 6511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 relates to a specified overpayment, the 3-year period of limitation prescribed by such subsection shall not expire before the date which is 1 year after the date the information return described in subsection (a)(2) is filed. The allowable amount of credit or refund of a specified overpayment shall be determined without regard to the amount of tax paid within the period provided in section 6511(b)(2).

(2) SPECIFIED OVERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term ''specified overpayment'' means an overpayment attributable to a severance payment described in subsection (a)(1).

SEC. ___04. REQUIREMENT THAT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ENSURE AMOUNTS ARE NOT WITHHELD FOR TAX PURPOSES FROM SEVERANCE PAYMENTS NOT CONSIDERED GROSS INCOME.

The Secretary of Defense shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that amounts are not withheld for tax purposes from severance payments made by the Secretary to individuals when such payments are not considered gross income pursuant to section 104(a)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

SEC. ___05. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—After completing the identification required by section ___03(a) and not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the actions taken by the Secretary to carry out this Act.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of individuals identified under section ___03(a)(1)(B).

(2) Of all the severance payments described in section ___03(a)(1)(A), the aggregate amount that the Secretary withheld for tax purposes from such payments.

(3) A description of the actions the Secretary plans to take to carry out section ___04.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the Committee on Finance of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

SA 3636. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEER PILOTS WHO FLY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(A) Many volunteer pilots fly for the public benefit for nonprofit organizations and provide valuable services to communities and individuals in need.

(B) In each calendar year volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for provide long-distance, no-cost transportation for tens of thousands of people during times of special need. Flights provide patient and medical transport, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance, and conduct other charitable missions that benefit the public.

(C) Such nonprofit organizations have supported the homeland security of the United States by providing volunteer pilot services during and following disasters and during other times of national emergency.

(D) Most other kinds of volunteers are protected from liability by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14501 et seq.), but volunteer pilots are not.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are, by amending the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997—

(A) to extend the protection of that Act to volunteer pilots;

(B) to promote the activities of volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for in providing flights for the public benefit; and

(C) to sustain and enhance the availability of the services that such pilots and nonprofit organizations provide, including—

(i) transportation at no cost to financially needy medical patients for medical treatment, evaluation, and diagnosis;

(ii) flights for humanitarian and charitable purposes; and

(iii) other flights of compassion.

(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Section 4 of the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14503) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (f) as subsections (c) through (g), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''subsections (b), (c), and (e)''; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Except as provided in subsections (c) and (e), no volunteer of a volunteer pilot nonprofit organization that arranges flights for public benefit shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization if, at the time of the act or omission, the volunteer—

''(1) was operating an aircraft in furtherance of the purpose of, and acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities on behalf of, the nonprofit organization;

''(2) was properly licensed and insured for the operation of the aircraft;

''(3) was in compliance with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for recent flight experience; and

''(4) did not cause the harm through willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer.''.

SA 3637. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF INDIAN COAL PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 45(e)(10)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''11-year period'' each place it appears and inserting ''14-year period''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to coal produced and sold after the date of the enactment of this Act, in taxable years ending after such date.

SA 3638. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle A of title II, insert the following:

SEC. _____. COLLABORATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) COLLABORATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense shall collaborate on developing ground-based sense and avoid (GBSAA) and airborne sense and avoid (ABSAA) capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The collaboration required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Assisting the Administrator in safely integrating unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft in the national airspace system.

(B) Building upon Air Force and Department of Defense experience to speed the development of civil standards, policies, and

procedures for expediting unmanned aircraft systems integration.

(C) Assisting in the development of civil unmanned aircraft airworthiness certification, development of airborne and ground-based sense and avoid capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems, and research and development on unmanned aircraft systems, especially with respect to matters involving human factors, information assurance, and security.

(b) PARTICIPATION BY FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may participate and provide assistance for participation in test and evaluation efforts of the Department of Defense, including the Air Force, relating to ground-based sense and avoid and airborne sense and avoid capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems.

(2) PARTICIPATION THROUGH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND TEST SITES.—Participation under paragraph (1) may include provision of assistance through the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Center of Excellence and Unmanned Aircraft Systems Test Sites.

SA 3639. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. OBSTRUCTION EVALUATION AERONAUTICAL STUDIES.

The Secretary of Transportation may implement the policy set forth in the notice of proposed policy entitled ''Proposal To Consider the Impact of One Engine Inoperative Procedures in Obstruction Evaluation Aeronautical 7 Studies'' published by the Department of Transportation on April 28, 2014 (79 Fed. Reg. 23300), only if the policy is adopted pursuant to a notice and comment rulemaking.

CELEBRATING THE 144TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARBOR DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 417, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 417) celebrating the 144th anniversary of Arbor Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 417) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, April 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; finally, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015—Continued

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3476, AS MODIFIED; 3492, AS MODIFIED; 3500; 3526; 3535; 3621; 3620; 3633; 3534; 3623; AND 3567 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3464

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636 and that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: Cassidy amendment No. 3476, as modified; Inhofe amendment No. 3492, as modified; Hoeven amendment No. 3500; Flake amendment No. 3526; Cotton amendment No. 3535; Nelson amendment No. 3621; Booker amendment No. 3620; Nelson amendment No. 3633; Cantwell amendment No. 3534; Whitehouse amendment No. 3623; and Cochran amendment No. 3567.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for others, proposes amendments numbered 3476, as modified; 3492, as modified; 3500; 3526; 3535; 3621; 3620; 3633; 3534; 3623; and 3567 en bloc to amendment No. 3464.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3476, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To authorize certain flights by Stage 2 airplanes)

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. AUTHORIZATION OF CERTAIN FLIGHTS BY STAGE 2 AIRPLANES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 47534 of title 49, United States Code, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a pilot program to permit the operator of a Stage 2 airplane to operate that airplane in nonrevenue service into not more than four medium hub airports or nonhub airports if—

(1) the airport—

(A) is certified under part 139 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

(B) has a runway that—

(i) is longer than 8,000 feet and not less than 200 feet wide; and

(ii) is load bearing with a pavement classification number of not less than 38; and

(C) has a maintenance facility with a maintenance certificate issued under part 145 of such title; and

(2) the operator of the Stage 2 airplane operates not more than 10 flights per month using that airplane.

(b) TERMINATION.—The regulations required by subsection (a) shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the Administrator determines that no Stage 2 airplanes remain in service.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MEDIUM HUB AIRPORT; NONHUB AIRPORT.—The terms ''medium hub airport'' and ''nonhub airport'' have the meanings given those terms in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) STAGE 2 AIRPLANE.—The term ''Stage 2 airplane'' has the meaning given that term in section 91.851 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act).

AMENDMENT NO. 3492, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: Relating to the operation of unmanned aircraft systems by owners and operators of critical infrastructure)

On page 84, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

''(f) OPERATION BY OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any application process established under subsection (a) shall allow for a covered person to apply to the Administrator to operate an unmanned aircraft system to conduct activities described in paragraph (2)—

''(A) beyond the visual line of sight of the individual operating the unmanned aircraft system; and

''(B) operation during the day or at night.

''(2) ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.—The activities described in this paragraph that a covered person may use an unmanned aircraft system to conduct are the following:

''(A) Activities for which compliance with current law or regulation can be accomplished by the use of manned aircraft, including—

''(i) conducting activities to ensure compliance with Federal or State regulatory, permit, or other requirements, including to conduct surveys associated with applications for permits for new pipeline or pipeline systems construction or maintenance or rehabilitation of existing pipelines or pipeline systems; or

''(ii) conducting activities relating to ensuring compliance with—

''(I) the requirements of part 192 or 195 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations; or

''(II) any Federal, State, or local governmental or regulatory body or industry best practice pertaining to the construction, ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of covered facilities.

''(B) Activities to inspect, repair, construct, maintain, or protect covered facilities, including to respond to a pipeline, pipeline system, or electric energy infrastructure incident, or in response to or in preparation for a natural disaster, man-made disaster, severe weather event, or other incident beyond the control of the covered person that may cause material damage to a covered facility.

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) COVERED FACILITY.—The term 'covered facility' means a pipeline, pipeline system, electric energy generation, transmission, or distribution facility (including renewable electric energy), oil or gas production, refining, or processing facility, or other critical infrastructure.

''(B) COVERED PERSON.—The term 'covered person' means a person that—

''(i) owns or operates a covered facility;

''(ii) is the sponsor of a covered facility project;

''(iii) is an association of persons described by clause (i) or (ii) and is seeking programmatic approval for an activity in accordance with this subsection; or

''(iv) is an agent of any person described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii).

''(C) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term 'critical infrastructure' has the meaning given that term in section 2339D of title 18.''.

''(4) DEADLINE.—Within 90 days from the date of enactment of the FAA Reauthorization of 2016 the Administrator must certify to the appropriate Committees of Congress that a process has been established to facilitate applications for operations provided for under this subsection. If the Administrator cannot provide this certification, the Administrator, within 180 days of from the due date of that certification, shall update the process under (a) to provide for such applications.

AMENDMENT NO. 3500

(Purpose: To provide for a 5-year extension of the unmanned aircraft system test site program)

On page 67, line 13, strike ''2017'' and insert ''2022''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3526

(Purpose: To establish an airspace management advisory committee)

At the end of subtitle E of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2506. AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish an advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

(b) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall—

(1) conduct a review of the practices and procedures of the Federal Aviation Administration for developing proposals with respect to changes in regulations, policies, or guidance of the Federal Aviation Administration relating to airspace that affect airport operations, airport capacity, the environment, or communities in the vicinity of airports, including—

(A) an assessment of the extent to which there is consultation, or a lack of consultation, with respect to such proposals—

(i) between and among the affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration, including the Air Traffic Organization, the Office of Airports, the Flight Standards Service, the Office of NextGen, and the Office of Energy and Environment; and

(ii) between the Federal Aviation Administration and affected entities, including airports, aircraft operators, communities, and State and local governments;

(2) recommend revisions to such practices and procedures to improve communications and coordination between and among affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration and with other affected entities with respect to proposals described in paragraph (1) and the potential effects of such proposals;

(3) conduct a review of the management by the Federal Aviation Administration of systems and information used to evaluate data relating to obstructions to air navigation or navigational facilities under part 77 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(4) make recommendations to ensure that the data described in paragraph (3) is publicly accessible and streamlined to ensure developers, airport operators, and other interested parties may obtain relevant information concerning potential obstructions when working to preserve and create a safe and efficient navigable airspace.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the advisory committee established under subsection (a) shall include representatives of—

(1) air carriers, including passenger and cargo air carriers;

(2) general aviation, including business aviation and fixed wing aircraft and rotocraft;

(3) airports of various sizes and types;

(4) air traffic controllers; and

(5) State aviation officials.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the establishment of the advisory committee under subsection (a), the advisory committee shall submit to Congress a report on the actions taken by the advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

AMENDMENT NO. 3535

(Purpose: To clarify the provision relating to airports that enter into certain leases with components of the Armed Forces)

On page 46, line 15, insert after ''National Guard'' the following: '', without regard to whether that component operates aircraft at the airport''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3621

(Purpose: To secure aircraft avionics systems)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SECURING AIRCRAFT AVIONICS SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider revising Federal Aviation Administration regulations regarding airworthiness certification—

(1) to address cybersecurity for avionics systems, including software components; and

(2) to require that aircraft avionics systems used for flight guidance or aircraft control be secured against unauthorized access via passenger in-flight entertainment systems through such means as the Administrator determines appropriate to protect the avionics systems from unauthorized external and internal access.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—The Administrator's consideration and any action taken under subsection (a) shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group under section 5029(d) of this Act.

On page 354, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(3) IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW.—As part of its review under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2), the working group shall review the cybersecurity risks of in-flight entertainment systems to consider whether such systems can and should be isolated and separate from systems required for safe flight and operations, including reviewing standards for air gaps or other means determined appropriate.

On page 354, line 17, strike ''(3)'' and insert ''(4)''.

On page 354, line 23, strike ''(4)'' and insert ''(5)''.

On page 355, line 9, strike ''(5)'' and insert ''(6)''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3620

(Purpose: To modify the definition of small business concern for purposes of the airport improvement program)

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1226. DEFINITION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.

Section 47113(a)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) 'small business concern'—

''(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), has the same meaning given that term in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

''(B) in the case of a concern in the construction industry, a concern shall be considered a small business concern if the concern meets the size standard for the North American Industry Classification System Code 237310, as adjusted by the Small Business Administration;''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3633

(Purpose: To improve section 2317)

Beginning on page 204, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 206, line 9, and insert the following:

(a) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES ON AIRCRAFT.—

(1) ADOPTION OF ICAO INSTRUCTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall conform United States regulations on the air transport of lithium cells and batteries with the lithium cells and battery requirements in the 2015–2016 edition of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (referred to in this subsection as ''ICAO'') Technical Instructions (to include all addenda) including the revised standards adopted by ICAO which became effective on April 1, 2016.

(B) FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.—Beginning on the date the revised regulations under subparagraph (A) are published in the Federal Register, any lithium cell and battery rulemaking action or update commenced on or after that date shall continue to comply with the requirements under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

(2) REVIEW OF OTHER REGULATIONS.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), the Secretary of Transportation may initiate a review of other existing regulations regarding the air transportation, including passenger-carrying and cargo aircraft, of lithium batteries and cells.

(3) MEDICAL DEVICE BATTERIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For United States applicants, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider and either grant or deny, within 45 days, applications submitted in compliance with part 107 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations for special permits or approvals for air transportation of lithium ion cells or batteries specifically used by medical devices. Not later than 30 days after the date of application, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall provide a draft special permit based on the application to the Federal Aviation Administration. The Federal Aviation Administration shall conduct an on-site inspection for issuance of the special permit not later than 10 days after the date of receipt of the draft special permit from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

(B) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL DEVICE.—In this paragraph, the term ''medical device'' has the meaning given the term ''device'' in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or constricting any other authority the Secretary of Transportation has under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

AMENDMENT NO. 3534

(Purpose: To establish a national multimodal freight advisory committee in the Department of Transportation)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. NATIONAL MULTIMODAL FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish a national multimodal freight advisory committee (referred to in this section as the ''Committee'') in the Department of Transportation, which shall consist of a balanced cross-section of public and private freight stakeholders representative of all freight transportation modes, including—

(1) airports, highways, ports and waterways, rail, and pipelines;

(2) shippers;

(3) carriers;

(4) freight-related associations;

(5) the freight industry workforce;

(6) State departments of transportation;

(7) local governments;

(8) metropolitan planning organizations;

(9) regional or local transportation authorities, such as port authorities;

(10) freight safety organizations; and

(11) university research centers.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Committee shall be to promote a safe, economically efficient, and environmentally sustainable national freight system.

(c) DUTIES.—The Committee, in consultation with State departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations, shall provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation on matters related to freight transportation in the United States, including—

(1) the implementation of freight transportation requirements;

(2) the establishment of a National Multimodal Freight Network under section 70103 of title 49, United States Code;

(3) the development of the national freight strategic plan under section 70102 of such title;

(4) the development of measures of conditions and performance in freight transportation;

(5) the development of freight transportation investment, data, and planning tools; and

(6) recommendations for Federal legislation.

(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each member of the Committee shall be sufficiently qualified to represent the interests of the member's specific stakeholder group, such as—

(1) general business and financial experience;

(2) experience or qualifications in the areas of freight transportation and logistics;

(3) experience in transportation planning, safety, technology, or workforce issues;

(4) experience representing employees of the freight industry;

(5) experience representing State or local governments or metropolitan planning organizations in transportation-related issues; or

(6) experience in trade economics relating to freight flows.

(e) SUPPORT STAFF, INFORMATION, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary of Transportation shall provide support staff for the Committee. Upon the request of the Committee, the Secretary shall provide such information, administrative services, and supplies as the Secretary considers necessary for the Committee to carry out its duties under this section.

AMENDMENT NO. 3623

(Purpose: To impose criminal penalties for the unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft)

At the end of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

PART IV—OPERATOR SAFETY

SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Drone Operator Safety Act''.

SEC. 2162. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that educating operators of unmanned aircraft about the laws and regulations that govern such aircraft helps to ensure their safe operation.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration should continue to prioritize the education of operators of unmanned aircraft through public outreach efforts like the ''Know Before You Fly'' campaign.

SEC. 2163. UNSAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 31—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(ii) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

''(10) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49.''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by inserting '' 'airport','' before '' 'appliance' ''; and

(2) by inserting after section 39A the following:

''§ 39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft

''(a) OFFENSE.—Any person who operates an unmanned aircraft and, in so doing, knowingly or recklessly interferes with, or disrupts the operation of, an aircraft carrying 1 or more occupants operating in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, in a manner that poses an imminent safety hazard to such occupants, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b).

''(b) PENALTY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the punishment for an offense under subsection (a) shall be a fine under this title, imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

''(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—Any person who attempts to cause, or knowingly or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or death during the commission of an offense under subsection (a) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both.

''(c) OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO AIRPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The operation of an unmanned aircraft within a runway exclusion zone shall be considered a violation of subsection (a) unless such operation is approved by the airport's air traffic control facility or is the result of a circumstance, such as a malfunction, that could not have been reasonably foreseen or prevented by the operator.

''(2) RUNWAY EXCLUSION ZONE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'runway exclusion zone' means a rectangular area—

''(A) centered on the centerline of an active runway of an airport immediately around which the airspace is designated as class B, class C, or class D airspace at the surface under part 71 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(B) the length of which extends parallel to the runway's centerline to points that are 1 statute mile from each end of the runway and the width of which is ½ statute mile.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 39A the following:

''39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3567

(Purpose: To require the Federal Aviation Administration to coordinate with the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems with respect to research relating to unmanned aircraft systems)

On page 74, strike line 19 and insert the following:

under section 44802(a) of that title, and in coordination with the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

(c) USE OF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Administrator, in carrying out research necessary to establish the consensus safety standards and certification requirements in section 44803 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2124, shall, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage the research and testing capacity and capabilities of the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the test sites (as defined in 44801 of such title, as added by section 2121).

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now vote on these amendments, as well as the Bennet amendment No. 3524, as modified with the changes at the desk, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3524), as modified, is as follows:

Strike section 3113 and insert the following:

SEC. 3113. LASTING IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY TRAVEL.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Lasting Improvements to Family Travel Act'' or the ''LIFT Act''.

(b) ACCOMPANYING MINORS FOR SECURITY SCREENING.—The Administrator of the

Transportation Security Administration shall formalize security screening procedures that allow for one adult family caregiver to accompany a minor child throughout the entirety of the security screening process.

(c) SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review and, if appropriate, prescribe regulations that direct all air carriers to include pregnant women in their policies, with respect to preboarding or advance boarding of aircraft.

(d) FAMILY SEATING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall review and, if appropriate, establish a policy directing all air carriers to ensure that, if a family is traveling on a reservation with a child under the age of 13, that child is able to sit in a seat adjacent to the seat of an accompanying family member over the age of 13, to the maximum extent practicable, at no additional cost.

VOTE ON AMENDMENTS NOS. 3476, AS MODIFIED; 3492, AS MODIFIED; 3500; 3526; 3535; 3621; 3620; 3633; 3534; 3623; 3567; AND 3524, AS MODIFIED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on these amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 3476, as modified; 3492, as modified; 3500; 3526; 3535; 3621; 3620; 3633; 3534; 3623; 3567; and 3524, as modified) were agreed to en bloc.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:18 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 12, 2016, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 11, 2016:

THE JUDICIARY

WAVERLY D. CRENSHAW, JR., OF TENNESSEE, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO BARB JORGENSEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Barb Jorgensen of Harlan, Iowa, as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

On December 28, 2015, Barb went outside to shovel snow when she noticed thick black smoke pouring from her neighbor's front window. She ran to the side of the house with the bedrooms and alerted her neighbor and occupants to leave the burning home. Because of Barb's actions and persistence, the neighbor and his son were able to escape the home safely.

Mr. Speaker, Barb is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. She has dedicated her life to doing what is right and not seeking much attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize her today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Barb for her courage. I thank her for her service and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors.

6TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SMOLENSK DISASTER

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I join in acknowledging the sixth anniversary of the Smolensk Disaster, a tragedy that claimed the lives of Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife, Maria, and 94 others aboard a government aircraft on April 10, 2010. Among the victims were high-ranking generals and government officials, clergy, anti-communist leaders and the family members of victims enroute to a ceremony for the 1940 Katyn Forest Massacre. Also on the plane was one American citizen on an official mission for the City of Chicago. The crash at Smolensk North Military Airfield in western Russia is central to the event sponsored by the Commemoration Committee for the Smolensk Disaster and held at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, April 17, 2016 prayers will be offered for the souls of the 96 crash victims and honor those who served their country.

COMMEMORATING WORLD HEALTH DAY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commemorate World Health Day.

World Health Day is celebrated every year on the founding day of the World Health Organization ("WHO"), which was established in 1950.

WHO puts together regional, local, and international events to shed light on a specific world health issue.

Under the leadership of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, this year the WHO is focusing efforts and attention to combat the rise in diabetes and improve the lives of those living with this preventable and treatable disease.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body is unable to utilize the insulin produced.

We need to focus on increasing preventative healthcare policies in America by providing the public and healthcare providers with innovative prevention strategies.

Diabetes can be controlled by increasing access to the following: diagnosis, self-management education, and affordable treatment.

In 2008, approximately 347 million people in the world had diabetes.

The number of cases have grown exponentially over the years.

Eighty percent of approximately 1.5 million deaths, attributed to this disease, occurred in low- and middle-income countries.

By 2030, the World Health Organization projects that diabetes will be the 7th leading cause of death.

We need to acknowledge this as an epidemic and increase awareness towards the staggering burdens/consequences associated with diabetes.

I support this World Health Day's 2016 goal to scale up prevention, strengthen care, and enhance surveillance through the launch of the first Global report on diabetes.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF EARL GRIGSBY

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to use this time to acknowledge one of my constituents who has demonstrated for nearly a half-century what it means to serve their neighbor. Earl Grigsby will be retiring on April 1st as Superintendent of Public Works for Loudoun County after 44 years of dedication to the community.

Mr. Grigsby began his public service 44 years ago as a laborer at the county's landfill. Over the years, his hard work and positive outlook led him on a path to retiring as Superintendent of public works. His time with the county has been marked by efficiently leading his workforce, as well as guiding the county operations in emergency situations. Mr. Grigsby leaves office not only receiving honors from the Board of Supervisors, but also a standing ovation from colleagues and kin alike.

Mr. Speaker, having already been honored by family and coworkers, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Grigsby's public work, and implore each of us to imitate his dedication to duty. I wish Mr. Grigsby the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE WEST POINT JEWISH CHAPEL CADET CHOIR

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the West Point Jewish Chapel Cadet Choir, who will soon perform at the B'nai Torah Congregation in Boca Raton, Florida.

From the over half a million Jewish Americans who have served in the armed services since World War II to Simon Levy who was one of the two original West Point Class of 1802, Jewish Americans have a rich history of service in our Armed Forces. The West Point Jewish Chapel Cadet Choir honors that history and ensures that the contributions of Jewish Americans are not overlooked.

The choir consists of members from all four classes at the academy and has both men and women participants. The choir is an extension of the active Jewish body at the Academy; there are between 70 and 80 Jewish cadets at West Point. Next year, West Point is set to graduate its 1,000th Jewish cadet.

For more than 65 years, the choir has performed at West Point community services and, by invitation, to congregations throughout the

United States. Since its inception in 1947, cadets have had the opportunity to experience other facets of Judaism through participation in other congregations and events around the country. Every year they perform at the White House during the Holiday festivities, and most recently, performed at the United Nations ceremony commemorating the Holocaust.

I join the B'nai Torah Congregation in welcoming these twenty five extraordinary men and women to the synagogue on April 8th.

TRIBUTE TO JOE HOGAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Joe Hogan of Altoona, Iowa, as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

Joe Hogan founded the non-profit organization, Train to Inspire, to improve the quality of life for individuals with mental and physical disabilities. He encourages participants to soar higher than their perceived limits while creating opportunities for them. Train to Inspire hosts free events that feature new experiences for participants including a Super Hero Obstacle Course. Participants are drawn to Joe and his huge heart. While overcoming addiction, Joe has developed a passion for helping others see what they can accomplish, not what they cannot accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, Joe is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. He has dedicated his life to quietly living with honor, doing what is right and not seeking much attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Joe for his courage. I thank him for his service and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

HONORING MR. PERCY PINKNEY

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, and Congresswoman KAREN BASS, to honor the extraordinary life of an outstanding public servant and advocate, Mr. Percy Pinkney. With his passing on Saturday, March 18th, we honor his long, extraordinary life of service and the experiences he shared.

A native of McComb, Mississippi, Mr. Pinkney began his adult life as a member of the United States Army. He later received his Bachelor's degree at San Francisco State University, and went on to receive a Master's in Social Work from Lone Mountain College in San Francisco.

Mr. Pinkney was an active part of California politics for over 30 years, serving in prestigious positions with many influential leaders. During Governor Jerry Brown's first administration, Percy led his community relations department for seven years, beginning in 1975. In 1992, he joined Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN's staff as a field representative, overseeing issues affecting Los Angeles' Black community. He faithfully served the community until his retirement in 2014.

Mr. Pinkney founded the Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC) in 1979. The organization has since become one of the largest political grassroots organizations in the state, with 60 chapters and more than 40,000 active members. Since its founding, BAPAC has continued its mission of developing, documenting, and identifying the resources necessary to achieve cultural, economic, and educational goals of underserved citizens in California. The organization has also played an effective role in increasing African Americans participation in the civic and political process.

Overall, Mr. Pinkney's commitment to community building and advancement is unrivaled and BAPAC's leadership has helped countless constituents develop their educational and economic goals. His love for his community and his neighbors will be remembered for years to come, and his achievements in public service have given many Americans the hope and prosperity they deserve.

Mr. Percy Pinkney is survived by his dutiful daughter, Delane Sims, his son in law, Jerry Sims, his brother, Salahudin Tulah, and many grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He will forever be remembered as a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

On a personal note, we remember the support, strategic advice, and friendship Percy gave and owe him a debt of gratitude for his selfless contributions to our success as elected officials.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes the life of an exemplary individual and devoted community member, Mr. Percy Pinkney. I join all of Mr. Pinkney's loved ones in celebrating his inspirational life and achievements, and offer my sincerest condolences. I am joined in these sentiments today by my colleagues, MAXINE WATERS, of California's 43rd Congressional District, and KAREN BASS, of California's 37th Congressional District, who also knew Mr. Pinkney personally and valued his service.

HONORING TIM B. WITT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true civil servant, Mr. Tim B. Witt, who after forty years with the United States Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency is retiring this year.

Initially hailing from Nebraska, Tim started with the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) in 1976, adjusting losses, conducting training and performing quality control work. From 1980 to 1985, he worked in the Kansas City Office with the United States Department of Agriculture, holding various insurance administrative positions including several assignments pertinent to the design, development and implementation of the Federal crop reinsurance delivery system. In 1985, Tim transferred to FCIC headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he assumed the responsibility for the design and implementation of FCIC regulatory and oversight program activities. From 1990 through 1992, Tim managed the Office of Insurance Services responsible for administering the delivery of crop insurance programs to America's producers through the Standard Reinsurance Agreement. In 1992, he returned to Kansas City and serves as the Deputy Administrator for Product Management responsible for the administration and management of corporate policies, underwriting standards and actuarial structures related to the various risk management programs reinsured by FCIC.

Tim has had a long and distinguished career, and his contributions to the Department of Agriculture for four decades cannot be overstated. I want to thank him for his service, and wish him nothing but the best in retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed Roll Call vote number 130 regarding "Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016" (H.R. 4314). Had I been present, I would have voted "Yea".

LIVENGRIN FOUNDATION 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the Livengrin Foundation on 50 years of providing hope and healing to those struggling with drug and alcohol addictions and for addressing the recent wave of opiate and heroin overdoses in the region. The mission-based, non-profit was one of the first Pennsylvania centers established for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction and has grown to include the original inpatient facility in Bensalem, Bucks County, and now eight outpatient locations throughout the Philadelphia region and Lehigh Valley. Livengrin has provided drug and alcohol addiction services to more than 4,000 patients and their families

and disbursed more than $1.6 million for subsidized and unreimbursed services. Livengrin's impact on the community goes beyond its treatment services to include innovative solutions that served as models for other programs throughout the country. Additionally, the Livengrin Foundation also offers specialty treatment tracks for young adults, nurses, other health care workers, first responders and veterans and numbers of support groups and seminars. Recently, Livengrin hosted Naloxone training and distributions to combat the wave of opiate and heroin overdoses in southeastern Pennsylvania. For a half-century, Livengrin has been a beacon of hope for thousands. We sincerely wish the Livengrin Foundation and all those who contribute to the mission continued success with utmost gratitude for the good work.

RECOGNIZING ART PING LEE FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHINESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Art Ping Lee, who has spent his career advocating on behalf of the overseas Chinese community.

Born in Taishan County, Guangdong Province, Mr. Lee immigrated to the United States in 1936. After the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out, only a year after Mr. Lee's arrival in his new home in the District of Columbia, Mr. Lee began national fundraising efforts to support the Chinese army to resist the invasion of Japan. After World War II, Mr. Lee worked tirelessly to assist Chinese families affected by the war. Many Chinese families were kept from being reunited with their loved ones due to U.S. immigration laws and immigration quotas. Mr. Lee was one of the founding members of the National Chinese Welfare Council, in 1957, which campaigned aggressively for lifting of immigration quotas. As a result, 40,000 Chinese immigrants were allowed to enter the U.S. every year.

Mr. Lee has also advocated to enhance and strengthen the relationship between the United States and Taiwan. Mr. Lee is a founder of several organizations, including the Chinese Youth Club of Washington, D.C., the Washington, D.C. Lodge of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, and the Lee Federal Credit Union.

Mr. Lee, who turns 102 this year, continues to contribute to his community, where he serves as an Honorary Elder of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Washington, D.C., a Senior Advisor to the Overseas Community Affairs Council of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and an Honorary Elder to The Lee Family Association in the United States.

He has received the Hua Kuang Medal, First Class, which is given by Taiwan to Chinese people who have made special contributions in overseas Chinese affairs.

Mr. Lee has an impressive record of service and leadership to overseas Chinese communities throughout the United States, particularly in the Washington metropolitan area.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Mr. Lee and his lifetime of service to the Chinese American community in the District of Columbia and for his continued contributions and care for the people he serves.

TRIBUTE TO TREY RICE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Trey Rice of Grimes, Iowa, as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

On Sunday July 12, 2015, Trey was floating down the Raccoon River with his cousin and friends. While resting on a sandbar, they heard a young boy yelling, scared and tangled in branches and floating debris. The victim seemed to be struggling to keep his head above the water and he was not wearing a life jacket. Without hesitation, Trey and his cousin jumped into the river, but the current pulled them rapidly downstream. After fighting their way back to shore, Trey again found a familiar place along the river where he knew he could reach the young boy. After jumping into the river for a second time, Trey was able to reach the young boy and pull him to safety.

I, too, grew up along this stretch of the Raccoon River and know that while still waters run deep, Iowa's rambling river can turn vicious in a moment's notice. Trey is a hero for all of us who swam the river.

Mr. Speaker, Trey is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. He has dedicated his young life to doing what is right and not seeking such attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Trey for his courage. I thank him for his service and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the importance of April as National Minority Health Month.

As a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus and co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues Task Force on Women of Color, I have always believed that access to quality health care should be a universal right of all citizens.

National Minority Health Month is a time to reflect and renew our shared dedication and responsibility to eradicating racial disparities in health.

Commemorated every year, National Minority Health Month is to heighten public awareness of the importance of minimizing health disparities and improve the health status of minority populations.

National Minority Health Month was established 14 years ago when Congress passed H. Con. Res. 388, a concurrent resolution designating April as the month to ''promote educational efforts on the health problems currently facing minorities and other health disparity populations.''

H. Con. Res. 388 encouraged ''all health organizations and Americans to conduct appropriate programs and activities to promote healthfulness in minority and other health disparity communities.''

Mr. Speaker, the differences in places where we live, work, and play frequently result in inequalities in opportunities like quality childcare and education, access to healthy foods, and safe places to be physically active.

''National Minority Cancer Awareness Week'' is observed during the third full week in April and directs attention to the fact that cancer has a disproportionately severe impact on minorities and the economically disadvantaged.

The rate of premature death (death before age 75 years) from stroke and coronary heart disease are higher among non-Hispanic blacks than among whites.

In 2009, homicide rates were 263 percent higher among males than females and 665 percent higher among non-Hispanic blacks compared with non-Hispanic whites.

The motor vehicle-related death rate for men is approximately 2.5 times that for women.

In addition, the motor vehicle-related death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives is more than twice as high as for other racial and ethnic groups.

Tuberculosis rates declined among all racial and ethnic minority groups and among both U.S. and foreign-born persons from 2006 to 2010.

Rates of tuberculosis cases, however, remained persistently higher among racial and ethnic minority groups than among whites in 2010.

Obesity rates remain higher among racial minorities than whites.

Non-Asian racial/ethnic minorities continue to experience higher rates of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) diagnoses than whites.

Diabetes prevalence is highest among males, persons aged 65 years and older, non-Hispanic blacks and those of mixed race, Hispanics, persons with less than high school education, those who were poor, and those with a disability.

During 2010, approximately 40 percent Hispanic adults and 25 percent of non-Hispanic black adults were classified as uninsured.

In my district, two outstanding organizations, African-American Breast Cancer Outreach and Gateway to Care, have dedicated themselves to advocacy efforts for minority health.

The African-American Breast Cancer Outreach program received ''models of achievement'' awards from the Center for Research on Minority Health of the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and Gateway to Care was awarded special recognition for its work to help uninsured and underinsured residents acquire health care.

Mr. Speaker, National Minority Health Month serves to remind each and every one of us of the importance of addressing the very real racial and ethnic health disparities that still plague our nation and to recognize and commend those community organizations that do yeoman work in eradicating them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Monday, March 21, 2016, and Tuesday, March 22, 2016. I was therefore unable to cast my vote on roll call vote numbers 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, and 135.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted NAY on roll call votes 131 and 132.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted YEA on roll call votes 130, 133, 134, and 135.

HONORING LEARNINGSPRING SCHOOL

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, as a father and a former school teacher I can safely say there is nothing more beautiful, or more fulfilling, than watching a child learn and grow. Schools that cultivate that growth, and allow their students to reach above and beyond their potential are an incredible asset to any community, and for 15 years the LearningSpring School in New York City has done exactly that.

The story of LearningSpring, or LSS as it is commonly known, is as special and unique as the population it serves. In the fall of 2000, a group of parents were faced with finding appropriate placements for their children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Disappointed with the options presented to them, these parents decided to create their own school, one that would address all of their children's academic, social, emotional, and therapeutic needs. Their school would also be designed to incorporate the families of the children as an important partner in the education of their child. The parents determined they needed to start a foundation, not just a school, to achieve all they had set out to achieve, and in the fall of 2001, the LearningSpring Foundation opened its first program, the LearningSpring Elementary School.

Fifteen years later, LearningSpring has flourished into one of the top schools in the city. The LSS model celebrates the fact that the children in the program are bright, but in need of an educational environment that isn't exclusively focused on academic performance. This holistic approach to education is one of the reasons LSS has been a tremendous success, helping hundreds of graduates with ASD prepare to live wonderful, happy, and independent lives.

I have personally seen all of the wonderful work LSS does, and I have always been incredibly impressed with their approach to education. This year, LSS is celebrating their 15th Anniversary at their LearningSpring Blossoms celebration, honoring their 2002 Seedling Trustees. I want to congratulate those honorees and the entire LearningSpring community on the occasion.

HONORING MR. PAUL F. WOXLAND

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Paul F. Woxland, and to recognize the nearly twenty-five years of service that he has given to our region as well as to the federal government in his work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Woxland began his service with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1991, where he assumed a position as Director of the Minneapolis Multifamily Asset Management Division and Satellite Office Coordinator. In this role, Mr. Woxland was tasked with the ultimate responsibility for physical, managerial, and financial condition of every HUD property within the region.

Mr. Woxland has also been instrumental in the development and improvement of housing in Minnesota and in our neighboring state of Wisconsin. In this capacity, he has overseen thousands of housing developments, working diligently to provide all families with access to one of our most basic yet most needed resources, a safe space to call home. To that end, Mr. Woxland has had a direct hand in over one thousand affordable housing projects in Minnesota, and over eight hundred projects in Wisconsin. This staggering number of developments has had an immeasurable impact upon the health of the region, and in partnership has provided permanent housing to over fifteen thousand households.

Mr. Woxland's work with the Interagency Stabilization Group has shown the true level of his commitment to providing housing for very low income residents. Mr. Woxland, through this collaborative organization, has succeeded in not only preserving but stabilizing affordable housing in Minneapolis for thousands of low-income residents. Some notable developments this partnership has preserved are Ebenezer Tower, Cecil Newman Plaza, and Riverside Plaza, a local landmark that is honored in the National Register of Historic Places.

To his colleagues and staff, he is regarded as the leader of one of the most effective and efficient HUD offices in the nation. Mr. Woxland leaves a legacy at HUD of tireless commitment and of service to our most underprivileged. For that he deserves our gratitude. He also leaves a legacy of touching countless lives and fostering inclusive communities throughout the region.

TRIBUTE TO DOLORES DIAZ–CARREY—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dolores Diaz-Carrey, of Pasadena, California.

Born in Los Angeles, Dolores attended Sacred Heart Elementary School and Sacred Heart High School. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Spanish Literature from Holy Names University and her Master's Degree in Education from the University of Southern California. In addition, Dolores obtained a Counseling Credential from the University of California, Los Angeles and an Administrative Credential from California State University, Los Angeles.

A consummate educator, Ms. Diaz-Carrey's long career in education began as a teacher at the elementary and junior high school levels in Northern California, after which she moved to Mexico City to teach. In 1969, Dolores joined the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) where she worked for 35 years. In LAUSD's Division of Adult and Career Education, she worked in many capacities, including as an ESL (English as a Second Language) instructor, teacher advisor, counselor, assistant principal, and principal. From 1973 to 1975, Ms. Diaz-Carrey was Executive Producer of the first bilingual ESL television series for adults, ''POCHTLAN'', for which she was awarded an Emmy from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. From 1987 to 1998, she was Principal of Garfield Community Adult School and while there, founded a family literacy program for adults and their children. In 1998, Dolores became Director of the Adult Instructional Services Unit where she was responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of all the curricula for adults, including ESL, high school diploma, basic education, parenting, and nursing programs—during this time, she was also Program Director of the Community Based English Tutoring program.

Dolores is a longtime member of the East Los Angeles Rotary Club, where she serves as the Rotarian advisor for a youth club, and is the incoming club president. In 2011, she received the Rotarian Foundation District Service Award. Dolores is a member and past President of the San Rafael Library Associates, a support group for the San Rafael Library in Pasadena, and is a generous supporter of the arts, including the Los Angeles

Music and Art School, and the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles.

A forty-year resident of Pasadena, Dolores enjoys traveling, daily walks with her dog, Dodger, long-distance cycling, and attending Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts and events at the Hollywood Bowl.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Dolores Diaz-Carrey, for her extraordinary service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO KELSEY DEVORE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kelsey Devore of Chariton, Iowa, as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

On January 16, 2015, 12-year-old Kelsey ran outside to find her mother lying with a gunshot wound. Without hesitation, Kelsey called 9-1-1 and was able to give the dispatcher accurate time-saving information while remaining calm and comforting. Kelsey became the solid rock of her family while assisting through the long hospital stay, the recovery period and difficult days. She is a hero in everyone's eyes.

Mr. Speaker, Kelsey is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. She has dedicated her life to doing what is right and not seeking much attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize her today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Kelsey for her courage. I thank her for her service and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING SAMUEL M. YOUNG, JR., PH.D.

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent and renowned neuroscientist, Dr. Samuel M. Young, Jr. of Jupiter, Florida.

Growing up in Caldwell, New Jersey, Sam ''Stump'' Young's strength on the High School football field led him to Princeton University, where he discovered a passion for scientific research that would last a lifetime. Sam chose to major in molecular biology at Princeton, an unlikely choice for the Princeton Tigers' star defensive tackle and one who challenged the assumptions of his professors and fellow students.

As a postgraduate, Dr. Young studied at some of the leading laboratories in Germany and the United States before joining the Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience in Jupiter in 2010, where he currently serves as Research Group Leader in Molecular Mechanisms of Synaptic Function. At Max Planck, Dr. Young and his team use innovative techniques to create models of how synapses function, and their path-breaking research helps shed light on the causes of brain disease.

On Sunday, April 3rd, I was honored to have Dr. Young deliver the keynote address at a ceremony I hosted to recognize 65 local students and recipients of this year's Congressional Award, the United States Congress' award for young Americans who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in four areas: volunteer public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition/exploration.

These young men and women exemplify the best values of hard work, determination, passion, and leadership, and I thank Dr. Young for sharing his story with them. I know that by following his example and pursuing their own passions—no matter what—they too will achieve incredible successes in life.

CELEBRATING CESAR CHAVEZ DAY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest appreciation for the life, legacy, and actions of the late Cesar Estrada Chavez.

The changes that Cesar Chavez fought for throughout his life have dramatically changed the way that farm workers are treated in our country.

Cesar Chavez was one of the nation's greatest civil rights activists and the tireless champion of migrant farm workers fighting for humane working conditions.

As a young man Cesar Chavez worked in the fields where he saw firsthand the dangerous conditions which farm workers were forced to endure. In 1952 he became an organizer for the Community Service Organization (CSO), a Latino civil rights group, and eventually became the national director of the organization.

In 1965, Chavez co-founded the National Farm Workers Association with Dolores Huerta which evolved into the United Farm Workers union.

The National Farm Workers Association was successful in securing fair wages and safe working conditions for farm workers.

The UFW also led a worldwide grape boycott that helped ensure farm workers had a voice in contract negotiations.

Cesar Chavez is also known for his fasts which he used as a nonviolent method of promoting his beliefs.

In 1972, Chavez fasted in response to Arizona's passage of legislation that prohibited boycotts and strikes by farm workers during the harvest season.

Cesar Chavez achieved unprecedented gains for farmworkers.

His influence also exceeded to empowering the people to strive for their own rights.

Numerous other social movements utilized his tactics in their own work.

On April 23, 1993 Cesar Chavez died, bringing great sadness to the farm workers community that he spent his life fighting for.

With his death also came a great sense of pride for all the progress that Cesar Chavez brought as a direct result of his unwavering commitment to farm workers' rights.

I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating Cesar Estrada Chavez's life and legacy.

America is a better place because of Cesar Chavez.

IN HONOR OF COLONEL FERDINAND CLARENCE ''FRED'' BIDGOOD

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my constituent, Colonel Ferdinand Clarence ''Fred'' Bidgood, a retired United States Army officer, a patriot, and a true leader.

After his birth in 1938 in Fort Benning, Georgia, Fred went on to live in London, England, where he graduated from Central High School in 1955. He matriculated into the United States Military Academy's Class of 1960 where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. Fred later earned a Master's degree in civil engineering from Texas A&M, and graduated from the Armed Forces Staff College.

Following his graduation from the United States Military Academy, Fred was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the Army and served around the world in command and staff positions in both Artillery and Engineer units. Throughout his career, he served as Associate Executive Director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America in Washington, DC and Chief of Staff for the National Victory Celebration, where his duties included welcoming home troops from the Gulf War. He also served as Director on the Board of Governors of the World United Services Organization and Chairman of their Human Resources Committee, and he was a member of the Board of Advisers of National Handicapped Sports.

Fred lived much of his life in South Run Forest community in Springfield, Virginia. On Veterans Day, Flag Day, and Memorial Day, Fred enjoyed distributing flags across his entire community to share his patriotic spirit with his neighbors in honor of our country and all those who have served it bravely with him. Fred will be remembered dearly across the

South Run Forest community by all those he touched on a daily basis. He was well known by many of his neighbors for having a witty sense of humor. One of Fred's neighbors, Norman Bayne, once told me about a time when he was mowing his lawn and wearing shorts, Fred came out and shouted, ''If I had legs like that I would wear pants.'' Fred always had a way to brighten the day of those around him.

Fred's final assignment in the military was as an Executive Assistant to the Administrator of the Veterans Administration. He passed away a decorated veteran, having earned four awards of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, two awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal. He was preceded in death by his daughter Kerri. He is survived by his wife Marilyn of 55 years, two sons Mark and Matthew, and four grandchildren, Damon, Haley, Aidan, and Brianna. I am honored to commemorate Fred today for his life of leadership, service, and selfless contributions to our great nation. We are fortunate to have citizens like Fred who are willing to put their life at risk to serve the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO MEREDITH WILHARBER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Meredith Wilharber of Urbandale, Iowa as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

Meredith knows first-hand about Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) because it took her mother's life when she was young. At 34, Meredith was diagnosed with the same incurable disease. Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension or PAH is a chronic and deadly combination heart and lung disease where the pulmonary artery causes the heart and lungs to become strained. It is less often that I meet a hero face to face but I have had the honor and privilege of visiting with Meredith and her husband, Randy who founded the Blue Lips Foundation with the goal of changing how and when PAH is diagnosed through awareness and education, as well as funding research and the development of diagnostic tools. They are warriors for a just cause.

Mr. Speaker, Meredith is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. She has dedicated her life, doing what is right and not seeking much attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize her today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Meredith for her courage. I thank her for her service and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors.

OBSERVING EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to observe Equal Pay Day, the day when women's wages finally catch up to men's.

Fifty three years after passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, women and minorities continue to experience inequitable pay differentials. In fact, women who work full time, year round in the United States were paid only 79 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts in 2014. In Florida, a woman who holds a full-time job is paid, on average, $34,768 per year while a man who holds a full-time job is paid $40,971 per year. For minorities, the gap is even larger.

This equates to a combined 17 billion dollars loss of wages annually for Florida women with full-time jobs. These lost wages mean Floridian families have fewer resources to buy goods and services. The wage gap directly hurts Florida's families and our economy.

If change continues at the same slow pace as it has during the last 50 years, it will take nearly 50 more years—until 2059—for women and men to finally reach pay parity.

I join the Enterprising and Professional Women of South Florida in observing Equal Pay Day and calling attention to the continuing wage disparity women in our nation and state face.

ON THE MURDER OF YONATAN SUHER

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I express my condolences to the family and friends of Yonatan (Yoni) Suher—one of dozens killed or wounded on March 19th in a suicide bombing in Istanbul, Turkey. This horrific attack highlights the struggle we continue to face in ending these senseless acts of terrorism.

Yoni was born in my hometown of Portland, Oregon, as was his father. He shared my love for the city, as well as for the Portland Trail Blazers, and visited his family there often.

Though no longer with us, I know Yoni will live on in the hearts and minds of those nearest and dearest to him. I wish his loved ones all the best during this difficult time.

CELEBRATING DEAN CLAUDIO GROSSMAN

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Dean Claudio Grossman and his 21-year tenure at American University's Washington College of Law (WCL). As WCL's first Latino dean, and lifelong advocate for human rights, he brought his unparalleled commitment to diversity and support for students of color.

Dean Grossman, a native of Chile, spent many years in political exile in Europe after serving in the administration of democratically-elected President Salvador Allende, before finally coming to the United States.

His legal scholarship is focused on international human rights and he has served in several roles within the United Nations, most notably in the United Nation's Committee Against Torture, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Dean Grossman has also served as the chair of the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies and board member of the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights.

He is one of the few Latino law school deans in the country, and the first to serve in that capacity at WCL. He will be succeeded by Camille Nelson, the first black dean at WCL and the first woman in that role in the last 60 years. He leaves large shoes to fill.

As dean, he has made great contributions to the legal profession through his work expanding WCL's LL.M. program, semester abroad programs, and clinical programs that advocate for immigrants and the disabled. He has also presided over WCL's new Tenley Campus expansion.

Previous honors for Dean Grossman's work on human rights and international law include the René Cassin Award from B'nai B'rith International in Chile and the Harry LeRoy Jones Award from the Washington Foreign Law Society. Since becoming dean of WLC, Dean Grossman has received a host of honors, including: Outstanding Dean of the Year by the National Association of Public Interest Law (now known as Equal Justice Works) in 2000, the Inter American Press Association's Chapultepec Grand Prize 2002 for his achievements in the field of human rights, the Charles Norberg International Lawyer of the Year Award from the Washington, D.C. chapter of the Inter-American Bar Association, the Lifetime Leadership Award from the Hispanic National Bar Foundation, and the Leadership Award from the Maryland Hispanic Bar Association.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Dean Claudio Grossman's remarkable efforts across his 21-year tenure at WCL. Dean Grossman has dedicated his life to human rights and international law, serving as an exemplary leader. His contributions to the legal profession have laid a foundation for generations.

HONORING SHIRLEY SAUNDERS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Bronx leader who has been a friend and partner to me in the Co-op City community for many years, the incomparable Shirley Saunders. I have been friends with Shirley ever since we attended Evander Childs High School together, and I have always known her to be a tremendous force for good in the neighborhood.

Shirley was born and raised in the Lincoln Projects in Harlem. She is a product of the New York City public school system, including my alma maters, Hunter and Lehman Colleges. For 30 years, Shirley has lived in Co-op City and been actively involved in the management of the largest co-operative housing development in the world. She was elected and held a seat as a member and secretary of the Riverbay Board of Directors, which governs Co-op City, and served in those roles for more than 12 years. Shirley has also been actively involved in other community and civic organizations, including the Parents Association for P.S. 153, for which she served as president; the Sister to Sister program; the local Boy and Girl Scouts chapters; the local little league programs; and is a founding mother of the Jack & Jill of America Bronx chapter. In fact, Shirley was such an integral part of the community, I had to make her a part of my Congressional Staff. She served as Senior Staff Assistant with me for over 20 years, and was extraordinary in that role.

But for all of her incredible service to the public, it was always family that was Shirley's true passion. She has been married to her husband, Rod, for more than 40 years, and together they have three wonderful children and two beautiful grandchildren.

This year, Shirley is celebrating her 69th birthday. On the occasion I want to thank her for years of friendship, and wish her nothing but the best.

TRIBUTE TO CARL BURT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Carl Burt of Des Moines, Iowa, as one of Iowa's 2016 Heroes of the Heartland, sponsored by the American Red Cross of Greater Iowa.

Each year, the American Red Cross serving greater Iowa honors individuals for their acts of great bravery, dedication and service to the community. The winners are nominated by their peers, highlighting Iowa's most compassionate and caring individuals. These extraordinary people commit actions which demonstrate the potential heroism and kindness which is in all of us. Heroes of the Heartland reflect the values and vision of the American Red Cross, leaving a positive impact on central Iowa.

In announcing the Award, Red Cross officials explained why Mr. Burt is being recognized for his heroism. Last spring, he was having an outdoor dinner with a friend and her mother when the friend noticed her mother slouched back in her chair, barely breathing. Mr. Burt immediately took action and attempted to begin cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) but her jaw was clenched. He told his friend to call 9-1-1 emergency while he continued giving rescue breaths. Mr. Burt started doing chest compressions and after only two compressions, the mother suddenly awakened. Emergency services arrived, checked her vitals and determined that she had had a seizure but would recover. As part of his daily role as a jail service aide for Polk County, Iowa, Mr. Burt is required to be certified in CPR.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Burt is an Iowan who has made central Iowa citizens very proud. He has dedicated his life to quietly doing what is right and not seeking such attention. But it is with great honor that I recognize him today. I ask that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring Mr. Burt for his courage. I thank him for his service and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

COMMEMORATING APRIL AS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the importance of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I have always believed that our children are our nation's greatest strength and resource.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month is remembered as a time to reflect and renew our shared dedication and responsibility to protect every child in our country, no matter their social or economic background.

As elected officials, we have an obligation to condemn this violence, work for stronger enforcement of the law and provide adequate funding for programs to assist children who may have experienced such abuse.

There is no crime greater that an individual can commit than the crimes of child abuse, in all of its forms.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) established the first federal child protection legislation, and was signed into law by President Nixon on January 31, 1974.

This marked the new precedent for the national response to child abuse and neglect.

Then in 1983, President Reagan proclaimed the month of April as National Child Abuse Prevention month.

In 1989, the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect awarded nine grants to assist in developing and implementing community-based prevention strategies, in furtherance of that cause.

In addition, these grants assisted in developing a coordinated multidisciplinary training program for professionals and community leaders to improve public awareness campaigns, and implement crisis intervention programs.

In 1996, under the Clinton Administration's emphasis on collaboration and integration among child and family serving systems, a new grants program called the Community-Based Family Resource and Support (CBFRS), was created.

These grants reflected the belief that public and private child abuse prevention and treatment programs must work together toward common goals.

In 2005, there was a renewed commitment to make child abuse prevention a national priority.

As a result, the Children's Bureau focused on making safe children and healthy families a new priority, a theme that was also adopted by the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Mr. Speaker, children were not forgotten during the great debate over the Patient Protection Affordability Care Act, which included key provisions that created the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

Thus far during my time in Congress, I have continually proposed amendments aimed to assist families and children across the nation.

My amendment to HR 3700, which was passed in this chamber, directed the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the Secretary of Labor to work together to produce an annual report on inter-agency strategies.

These strategies would strengthen family economic empowerment by linking housing with essential supportive services, such as employment counseling and training, financial growth, childcare, transportation, meals, youth recreational activities and other responsive services.

Once again, I thank my colleagues in the House for their efforts in protecting the children of this nation.

Mr. Speaker, this important month serves to remind each and every one of us, that as Americans we have a solemn responsibility to educate, feed, and protect our children at all costs.

HONORING ALECIA A. DeCOUDREAUX

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary career of Mrs. Alecia A. DeCoudreaux. Mrs. DeCoudreaux serves as the President of Mills College, my Alma Mater, and will be stepping down to conclude a successful tenure in academia.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Mrs. DeCoudreaux began her academic career as a student of English and Political Science at Wellesley College in 1976. After receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree, Mrs. DeCoudreaux continued her education and received a Doctor of Laws degree from the Indiana University School of Law in 1978.

While at Mills, Mrs. DeCoudreaux furthered inclusion by instituting the first women's college policy for admitting transgender students. This policy has become a model for women's colleges across the nation. She also expanded Mills' global focus and reach by participating in the U.S. Department of State's Women in Public Service Project (WPSP), hosting 25 women delegates from 22 countries in a 10-day conference focusing on women solving the climate crisis.

Mrs. DeCoudreaux led the campus community and collaborated with the school's board of trustees to find solutions to tough economic circumstances. Many educational programs have suffered similar downturns, and Mrs. DeCoudreaux's commitment to higher education succeeded in sustaining Mills College.

In January 2016, Mrs. DeCoudreaux joined 11 other Northern California colleges and universities in signing the Oakland Promise College Pathway Partnership, which offers financial aid and mentoring support to Oakland high school graduates. These graduates learned the skills necessary to continue a path in academics and further their careers.

Her many accolades portray Mrs. DeCoudreaux as a tireless advocate for access to education, including the Award for Education from the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the ABC 7 News Profiles of Excellence Award; the Madam C.J. Walker Pioneer Award; and recognition as a Leadership California Trailblazer. She was selected as one of San Francisco Business Times' Most Influential Women in Business, and she was included in Diverse Issues in Higher Education magazine's 30 Women Making a Difference feature.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Mrs. Alecia A. DeCoudreaux, I salute you. I thank you for your outstanding leadership in higher education and wish you continued success as you transition to this exciting new chapter of life.

ON THE PASSING OF LAWRENCE D. KOONCE, SR.

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to note the passing of a long-time community advocate, Lawrence D. Koonce, Sr.

Mr. Koonce was born in Donaldville, Georgia and grew up in Newark, New Jersey. He moved to Los Angeles in early adulthood to work with Van Vorse Mattress Company and later became a successful entrepreneur.

He was devoted to his family and to his community. He married the late Barbara Talley and they had three sons. He also had a daughter. He raised his family in the Vermont Knolls neighborhood of South Los Angeles, where he quickly took on positions of leadership. He served as President of the Vermont Knolls—81st Street Block Club many times over the course of nearly five decades.

He worked to build partnerships that would contribute to improving the area, including with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the city council office, and later with the Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (CoCo).

I came to know him as he took active roles in CoCo programs such as the Greater Resources through Organizing and Work (GROW) Project. Mr. Koonce helped win changes in grocery store health and safety practices, such as selling expired meat and wilted produce in South L.A. stores. He also fought to beautify the area and calm traffic, making it nicer and safer to walk in the neighborhood.

As a result of his efforts he was selected to take part in the Neighborhood Leadership Program of the prestigious Coro Southern California Leadership Center, further enhancing his skills. He was also chosen to sit on the LAPD Community Police Advisory Board and was recognized repeatedly by LAPD for his work to improve safety and solve problems.

Never afraid to put in hard work, Mr. Koonce would not settle for less than he thought his community deserved. He will be deeply missed, and my heart is with his family and friends as they gather to honor his memory.

RECOGNIZING THE GIVE CENTER

HON. JODY B. HICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the leadership and volunteer efforts of the GIVE Center on its 20th anniversary. Located in Milledgeville, Georgia, the GIVE Center connects Georgia College & State University students with volunteer opportunities to help make a difference on campus and throughout the local, state, national, and international communities. In two short decades through the GIVE Center, students have completed 650,000 volunteer hours, participated in 140,000 service projects, and contributed $15,000,000 of service to the community.

With the help of 150 student organizations, 236 community partners, 245 volunteer programs, and countless helping hands, the GIVE Center has established itself as a pillar of humble service. The servant-leadership and community engagement that are displayed by the faculty, staff, students, and volunteers at the GIVE Center are inspirational, and I am honored to have a place of such excellence and achievement in the 10th District of Georgia.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ESSROC CEMENT

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to bring to the House's attention the 150th Anniversary of ESSROC Cement, a company deeply rooted in the foundation of Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley.

In 1866, David O. Saylor, a resident of Allentown, purchased 30 acres of property in Coplay, PA. He, along with Esias Rehrig and Adam Woolever, chartered the Coplay Cement Company. Saylor, an innovator, developed a process that allowed Portland type cement to be made in the United States. Saylor patented the process, and by 1900, Coplay Cement was providing over 70 percent of the Portland Cement used in America.

Coplay Cement provided the material that became the building blocks of the massive infrastructure expansion and city-building that occurred in post-Civil War America.

Paris-based Ciments Francais ultimately acquired Coplay Cement in 1976.

The 1990s were a time of great activity for the company. It adopted the ESSROC name in 1990. In 1992, Italcementi became ESSROC's parent company.

Now, 150 years later, ESSROC has operations across four continents. In North America, the Nazareth-based company has the ability to produce over 6.5 million metric tons of cement annually. To this day, Saylor Cement remains one of their main product lines.

ESSROC has demonstrated itself as an impressive business, based not only on its corporate metrics, but more importantly on its commitment to the greater Lehigh Valley. ESSROC is a valued manufacturer in our community, a provider of good jobs with good wages, and a respected corporate citizen.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to offer my congratulations to the men and women who work at ESSROC both in the Lehigh Valley area and across the United States. May they enjoy continued prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO MSGT JAMES ROBERT HAYWORTH

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate MSgt James Robert Hayworth of Bondurant, Iowa, for his retirement on March 29, 2016 after nearly 30 years in the United States Air Force and Iowa Air National Guard, 132nd Wing, Des Moines.

MSgt Hayworth entered the United States Air Force in May 1986, receiving his basic military training at Lackland AFB, San Antonio, Texas, beginning his extensive, successful career within the United States military. His service gave him the opportunity to travel across our great nation and around the world. After completing basic military training, MSgt Hayworth was assigned to the 55th Services Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, NE. From there he came to Iowa, serving in the 132nd Combat Support Squadron at the Iowa Air National Guard Base in Des Moines. His first overseas deployment was during Operation Provide Comfort, where he was stationed at the Air Base Wing of Incirlik Air Base, Adana, Turkey. MSgt Hayworth returned to the United States where he served in various roles until his next deployment overseas in 2009, supporting the 432nd Maintenance

Group and our military efforts from the Joint Base Balad in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He later returned to Iowa, completing his career with the Iowa Air National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, MSgt Hayworth's unyielding commitment to his country is a true testament to his patriotism. I am honored to represent him in the United States Congress. We will never be able to thank him enough for the sacrifices he has made in order to keep our country safe. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in thanking him for his service, congratulating him on his retirement and wishing him nothing but continued success and happiness.

COMMEMORATING THE PASSAGE OF THE HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION RECONCILIATION ACT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the passage of the empowering ''Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act.''

Over the past three decades, the average tuition at a public, four-year college institution has more than tripled, while the typical family's income has become plateaued.

This great struggle pitting the interests of the banks and financial institutions against those of vulnerable students finally came to an end on March 30, 2010, when President Barack Obama signed this legislation into law.

This law reinvested savings back into education by upgrading community colleges facilities, increasing Pell Grants, and making it easier for responsible students to pay off their loans.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions in this nation were resultantly able to receive a needed benefit.

For new borrowers after 2014, student loans are eligible to be forgiven after 20 years to those making timely payments, down from the previous 25 year requirement.

This law also has helped parents invest in their children's education by simplifying the federal education loan borrowing process.

Specifically, in my home city of Houston, Texas, this legislation has helped many of the 9,700 students currently attending the prestigious HBCU, Texas Southern University, alongside the 42,704 students attending the University of Houston.

During my time serving our country, I have fought to make higher education accessible to all who strive to achieve it.

That is why I am proud to have stood with 220 of my colleagues in voting ''yea'' in support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this Act has spurred a movement by President Obama to help every American achieve the dream of being able to attend college no matter their financial background.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes 130 through 135 due to official travel. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on Number 130, no on Number 131, no on Number 132, yes on Number 133, yes on Number 134, and yes on Number 135.

H.R. 4891, THE ''TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 2016''

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the provisions of H.R. 4891, the ''Technical Corrections Act of 2016,'' introduced on April 11, 2016 makes tax technical and clerical corrections. Ways and Means Committee Chairman BRADY and Ranking Member LEVIN have asked the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation to make available to the public a technical explanation of the bill (JCX–16–16). The technical explanation expresses the Committee's understanding and legislative intent behind this important legislation. It is available on the Joint Committee's Web site at www.jct.gov.

HONORING JANET MAHONEY

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Janet Mahoney for her accomplishments in over twenty years of service to The American Legion Auxiliary, Montgomery Unit No. 429 in Rhinebeck, NY.

Janet is a recently retired dental hygienist, proud grandmother of eight grandchildren and also the widow of a Vietnam Veteran. She has always been passionate about Veterans, their families, and their communities.

Throughout her selfless and tireless service in the American Legion Auxiliary, Janet has served on multiple committees and in many leadership positions at the local and state levels. Some of her positions include: three terms as Unit President, three terms as County President, and two terms each as District Vice President and District President.

Janet has served at the State level since 2007 as the Education Chairman, Public Relations Chairman, Americanism Chairman, Vice-President and President. During her tenure of outstanding service at the State level, she was instrumental in the organization winning national awards for Department of New York Press Book, Best Overall Department Public Relations Program, The National Americanism Award, The National Children and Youth Award, and The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Award.

In Janet's current capacity as New York American Legion Auxiliary President, she oversees multiple programs aimed at assisting Veterans as well as the communities of New York. One of her main priorities as President is raising money to support Vietnam Veterans impacted by Agent Orange.

Janet is leading a statewide campaign, covering all 62 counties across New York, and has a goal to raise over $75,000.00. All funds raised in support of ''Changing the Legacy of Agent Orange'' will support Veterans with documented Agent Orange related medical needs. Funds will also support these Veteran's children with documented Agent Orange related medical needs.

Mr. Speaker, Janet Mahoney has distinguished herself throughout her remarkable twenty plus year career in the New York American Legion Auxiliary where she has been an unwavering advocate for our Veterans, their families, and our communities. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on her countless achievements during a remarkable career.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT JEFFREY WALTON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jeffrey Walton of Boy Scout Troop 104 in Corning, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Jeffrey's Eagle Scout project involved constructing a large sign to be placed in the yard at Country Haven, a residential care facility, making it easier for people to locate the facility. The work ethic Jeffrey has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Jeffrey and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING SARAH TURNER

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a woman who is tenderly known as ''Mama Sarah'' within her community: Mrs. Sarah Pauline Turner. Sarah turned 100 years old on April 2nd, 2016, and I am so grateful to be able to help celebrate her reaching that remarkable milestone by honoring her in the hallowed halls of Congress.

Sarah is a treasured member of her community whose love for people became self-evident early on in her life when, after completing her education, she worked for the Veteran Administration in Washington, D.C. She later moved to New York City and became a friend to everyone she has met in the Bronx. Sarah's list of community service accomplishments is long and distinguished. She has received an impressive amount of awards and recognition from her community, including for some of her most important work with RAIN Eastchester Senior Center and Eastchester Housing.

As involved as she is with her community, Sarah is just as involved with her church. She has offered spiritual guidance to the members of Burke Avenue Baptist Church for over 50 years, and has also served as part of the Pastor's Aide Ministry, Gospel Chorus, Senior Usher Board, and is currently President of Willing Workers Ministry. Sarah's unwavering dedication to her church community has not gone unnoticed. She gained a lifetime membership of the Eastern Stars Organization, where she serves as Worthy Matron.

There is no doubt that Sarah is an outstanding citizen of the Bronx Borough. She has been a pillar of her community, who has gracefully bestowed joy and happiness upon everyone she has met. I want to congratulate Sarah on reaching this remarkable milestone, and as Congressman for the northeast Bronx, thank her for all she has done in the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, on March 21 and March 22, 2016 I was not present to vote on H.R. 4314 (Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act), H.R. 4742 (Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act), H.R. 4755 (Inspiring the Next Space Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act) and H.R. 4336 (Women Airforce Service Pilot Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act). I wish to reflect my intentions had I been present to vote.

Had I been present for roll call No. 130, I would have voted ''YEA.''

Had I been present for roll call No. 133, I would have voted ''YEA.''

Had I been present for roll call No. 134, I would have voted ''YEA.''

Had I been present for roll call No. 135, I would have voted ''YEA.''

PATTY DUKE ''QUEEN OF TV MOVIES AND TIRELESS ADVOCATE FOR THOSE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES''

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Patty Duke, an American icon and advocate for those suffering in silence from various forms of mental illness, who passed away on March 29, 2016 at the age of 69.

Patty Duke was born Anna Marie Duke on December 14, 1946 in Elmhurst, New York.

Anna Duke and her siblings grew up in a difficult household, raised by an alcoholic father and a mother who suffered from what was then called ''manic depression,'' later known to be bipolar disorder.

Anna Duke was introduced to acting by her brother's managers, John and Ethel Ross, who changed her name to Patty and eventually became her guardians.

Later in Patty Duke's life, she revealed that she was a survivor of sexual assault.

In 1959, Patty Duke's first big role came when she was cast as Helen Keller in the Broadway version of The Miracle Worker, with Anne Bancroft portraying her teacher, Anne Sullivan.

Then in 1962, that play was turned into a feature film, in which she also starred.

For her performance in the film, the 16-year-old won a ''Promising Newcomer'' Golden Globe as well as an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress—making her the youngest person to win an Oscar at that time.

Sadly, following her Oscar win, Patty Duke began to privately unravel.

The abuse she endured along with her family's history of bipolar disorder began to plague her.

All the while, she continued to dazzle the outside world with a successful career.

Patty Duke then starred in her own sitcom called The Patty Duke Show, which she artfully played two cousin characters simultaneously.

In 1965, she also became a pop music contender with her top 10 hit ''Don't Just Stand There'' and headlined the acclaimed film Billie, which was the first movie ever sold to a television network.

Thus, began Patty Duke's reign as the ''Queen of TV Movies.''

Patty Duke continued her big-screen career by starring in the cult classic Valley of The Dolls in 1967 and indie films such as Me, Natalie in 1969.

Patty Duke married assistant director Harry Falk, remaining in the marriage from 1965 to 1969.

After her marriage ended, Patty Duke bore a son named Sean Patrick Duke.

In 1972, she married actor John Astin, who played Gomez in the television version of The Addams Family.

John Astin adopted her son Sean, and fathered her second son, Mackenzie Astin, born in 1973.

Then in 1976, Patty Duke won her second Emmy for the highly successful mini-series Captains and the Kings.

Other popular TV movies followed, including the 1979 small screen version of The Miracle Worker, in which she portrayed Anne Sullivan, a role that won her third Emmy.

In the mid-1980s, she became president of the Screen Actors Guild.

Her 1987 autobiography, Call Me Anna, was made into a TV movie in 1990 in which she portrayed herself and served as co-producer.

Following in 1992 her second book, A Brilliant Madness: Living With Manic Depression Illness, was published.

With the help of family and friends Patty Duke was able to quiet her personal demons, and become a vocal advocate for those suffering from mental illnesses, along with dispelling social stigmas attached to them.

Patty Duke died on March 29, 2016 in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, at the age of 69 from a sepsis infection from a ruptured intestine.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to take a moment of silence in remembrance of this strong woman who was able to stand against the suffocating struggles of depression and became a source of inspiration for hundreds of thousands of Americans struggling with mental illnesses.

HONORING SYDNEY ALDERMAN PERRY ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today marks the end of an era at the Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven as they gather to celebrate the retirement of their President and CEO, and my dear friend, Sydney Alderman Perry.

Sydney began her career with the Jewish Federation and JCC nearly 30 years ago in the Department of Jewish Education. Education was her passion and over the course of her seventeen years in that department she not only worked to improve the synagogue supplementary schools, she also developed and implemented a number of innovative education programs for both adults and teens.

In addition to ''A Taste of Honey,'' an adult learning lecture series that attracts hundreds of adults, Sydney spearheaded the Israel Experience Savings program, which helps young people travel to Israel and initiated Talmud Torah Meyuchad, an individualized Jewish education program for children with special needs. But perhaps the contribution she is most proud of is the establishment of the successful community Hebrew High School, MAKOM, which serves hundreds of teens throughout the New Haven area every year.

She was tapped as associate executive director to supervise such things as the Holocaust Education and Prejudice Reduction Project and went on to become the executive

director of the federation for six years, before taking on the title of CEO of the merged federation and the Jewish Community Center of New Haven.

Under her leadership the federation has expanded its agenda and outreach to enhance Jewish life and enrich the lives of those most in need both locally and internationally. Food4Kids sends local students who depend on the breakfast and lunch programs home with a backpack of staples for the weekends. The Jewish Coalition for Literacy has more than two hundred volunteers who read and talk with students. The federation supports the elderly housing complexes as well as educational institutions across Greater New Haven and raises funds for Yale Hillel and the University of Connecticut Hillel; the Jewish Historical Society and the JCC.

Beyond her leadership at the Jewish Federation and JCC, Sydney is an extraordinary advocate for Jewish continuity. She has served as a consultant to the community on educational endeavors, including the Anne Frank Project, Shepherd '92, Jerusalem 3000 and the celebration of Israel's 50th Anniversary. Sydney is an extraordinary scholar, often called upon nationally to give workshops and has served as scholar-in-residence for several communities.

Sydney has shown an unparalleled dedication to Jewish education in our community and throughout the nation—a commitment that is reflected in the myriad of awards she has been honored with over the years. She is an inspiration.

I am proud to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered this evening in extending my sincere thanks and appreciation to Sydney Alderman Perry for her incredible work with the Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven and her outstanding service to our community. My very best wishes to her, her children, and grandchildren for many more years of health and happiness as she enjoys her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO RYANNE MULLEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ryanne Mullen of Villisca, Iowa, for being awarded first place for her outstanding essay honoring our military veterans by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Iowa. Ryanne is a student at Enarson Elementary in Villisca, Iowa.

The theme for this essay contest was ''What Does A Veteran Mean To Me?'', and was open to all fifth graders in public, private, and home schools throughout Iowa.

Ryanne's essay reads:

I deeply thought about what a veteran means to me. I have chosen to share emotional descriptions of what a veteran means to me. The initial meaning of a veteran to me is how fear is considered, understood, and accepted but they still make the decision to face this fear for the freedom of their families and all other families they are standing strong for.

The second meaning of a veteran to me is courage. The attitude of never giving up, never backing down, and always remaining faithful. These are characteristics of semper fidelis.

The third meaning I want to express is brotherhood, which is described as equally caring for the life of your fellow soldier. The fact that no one is left behind especially the veterans that are KIA, MIA, or POW. I will carry memories of them with me forever.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Ryanne for earning this award. It is because of Iowans like her that I'm proud to represent our great state. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ryanne for writing this outstanding essay honoring our veterans. I wish her nothing but continued success in all she does.

ST. EPHREM CHURCH PARISH 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, St. Ephrem Church Parish, founded in June 1966, is celebrating 50 years of faithful service to the Bensalem, Bucks County parish—a Golden Jubilee. The heart of the parish is the Catholic faith; its mission, meeting the spiritual needs of all parishioners. Dedicated, devout pastors and priests have overseen the mission throughout its history and continue on this path, today. For a half-century, the small parish has grown to include 3,300 registered families and more than 11,000 members. St. Ephrem's also provides an excellent education in pre-K through 8th grade to approximately 450 children, including another 200 in Sunday School. St. Ephrem's is known to have a strong community outreach program that touches many families in the parish through the Boy and Girl Scouts, Catholic Daughters of America, Bereavement Support, Family Counseling and active Teen and Youth sports programs. For your 50 years of spiritual guidance, we extend our heartiest congratulations on this Golden Jubilee and sincere wishes for continued growth and service in the coming years.

HONORING DANIEL BEN-ZAKEN AND RACHEL BEAN

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor of Daniel Ben-Zaken and Rachel Bean, who were awarded in this year's C-SPAN student documentary contest. Daniel and Rachel are students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Their powerful documentary, ''Target,'' explores the issues and arguments surrounding gun safety and school shootings. The theme of this year's contest was ''Road to the White House: What's the Issue You Most Want Candidates to Discuss during the 2016 Presidential Campaign?'' Nearly three thousand video submissions from almost six thousand students across the nation were submitted to this contest, and I am thrilled that Daniel and Rachel's documentary was recognized as exceptional.

I am honored that these young filmmakers chose to interview me for their documentary. In my remarks, I expressed my deep concern regarding gun violence in America, especially in schools. Our students must be able to study and learn in a safe environment absent the threat of gun violence. With an average of nearly one school shooting every week, this documentary covers a timely and vital issue facing our nation.

Again, congratulations to Daniel and Rachel. I wish them the best of luck with their future endeavors and academic pursuits. It is with great pleasure that I honor them, and I hope they will continue to inspire young South Floridians to become involved in issues they care about.

RECOGNIZING CASILDA LUNA

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Casilda Luna, who celebrated her 90th birthday on Wednesday, April 6, 2016.

A native of Sanchez, Dominican Republic, Casilda Luna is often referred to as a pioneer in the Hispanic community. Casilda Luna moved to Washington, D.C. in 1961, and was one of the first Hispanic activists in Adams Morgan. Casilda organized weekly social gatherings that evolved into community discussions, which addressed social problems in the community. She then became involved with the Latin American Festival organizing committee and the Latino Affairs Office of the District of Columbia.

Casilda was the co-founder of the Hispanic Festival and the Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs, where she helped to promote the inclusion of Hispanics in the Metropolitan Police Department. She also founded Mujeres Unidas Latinas en Accion (MULA), which helped Hispanic women who were new to the District of Columbia by bringing them together through community activities.

I ask the House to join me in recognizing her 90th birthday and her more than 50 years of activism in the national capital region. Casilda Luna is a special woman whose service to our community is greatly appreciated.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF BILL HANEY

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to acknowledge one of my

constituents who has demonstrated day-in and day-out what living the American dream really means.

Bill Haney graduated from the College of New Jersey with a Bachelor of Science in Education. While teaching elementary school in Talbot County, Maryland, Bill worked to earn his Master's Degree in Supervision and Human Relations from George Washington University. In 1983, Mr. Haney accepted the position of Chief Executive Officer of Every Citizen Has Opportunities, Inc. (ECHO), a Leesburg, Virginia based non-profit which provides employment, training, and community integration to individuals with disabilities. Mr. Haney has decided it is time to retire from his life's work, thus ending a bright chapter in ECHO's history.

As Mr. Haney's extraordinary career comes to a close, I would like to take a moment to highlight the work he has done over the years. When Mr. Haney took over as CEO at ECHO, the organization was supporting about 75 individuals with disabilities, with an annual budget of under three hundred thousand dollars, and only two worksites. Under Mr. Haney's leadership, ECHO's budget has grown to nearly five million dollars, and has expanded services to nearly 170 individuals with disabilities. ECHO has approximately 15 work locations, ranging from Loudoun County Public Schools to Inova Hospitals.

In addition to his work at ECHO, Mr. Haney has extended his skills to the community through his work on the Board of Directors for the Loudoun County Red Cross, as Cubmaster for the Pack 11 Boy Scouts in Boyce, Virginia, and as a Sunday school teacher at St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church in Front Royal, Virginia.

Mr. Haney leaves ECHO after a storied 33 years at the helm with zero debt, positive cash flow, and outright ownership of its facility. ECHO will continue serving our community, but without a doubt, will miss Mr. Haney's leadership and dedication.

At this moment, Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in extending our sincerest thanks to Mr. Haney for all the work he has done in our community, and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

THE 48TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASSASSINATION OF REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this year, the nation observes for the 48th year, the anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Each year on this day, Americans remember the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America. Fatally shot at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, on Thursday, April 4, 1968, at the age of 39, Dr. King was rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 7:05 p.m. that evening.

He was a prominent leader of the Civil Rights Movement and Nobel laureate for Peace who was known for his creative use of nonviolence and civil disobedience. Our hearts continue beating, rejoicing his enduring legacy, and knowing that nothing is impossible when we are guided by the better angels of our nature. The incident of domestic terrorism that took the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life, reminds us of his belief, ''that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.''

Dr. King confronted the risk of death and made that recognition part of his philosophy. He taught that murder could not stop the struggle for equal rights. His inspiring words filled a great void in our nation, and answered our collective longing to become a country that truly lived by its noblest principles. Yet, Dr. King knew that it was not enough just to talk the talk; he had to walk the walk for his words to be credible.

And so we commemorate on this day a man of action, who put his life on the line for freedom and justice every day. We honor the courage of a man who endured harassment, threats and beatings, and even bombings. We commemorate the man who went to jail 29 times to achieve freedom for others, and who knew he would pay the ultimate price for his leadership, but kept on marching, protesting and organizing anyway.

Dr. King once said that we all have to decide whether we, ''will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. ''Life's most persistent and nagging question,'' he said, is ''what are you doing for others?'' Strikingly, when Dr. King discussed the end of his mortal life during one of his last sermons, ''I've Been to the Mountain Top,'' on February 4, 1968, in the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church, even then he lifted the value of service upward as the hallmark of a full life, remarking: ''I'd like somebody to mention on that day, Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I want you to say on that day, that I did try in my life . . . to love and serve humanity.''

We should also remember that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was, above all, a person who was always willing to speak the truth. There is perhaps no better example of Dr. King's moral integrity and consistency than his criticism of the Vietnam War, waged by the Johnson Administration; an administration that was otherwise a friend and champion of civil and human rights.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1929. His youth was spent in our country's Deep South, then run by Jim Crow laws and the Klu Klux Klan. For young African-Americans, it was an environment even more dangerous than the one they face today. Nonetheless, a young Martin managed to find a dream; one that he pieced together from his readings, including the Bible, classics, philosophical literature, and just about any other book he could get his hands on. Not only did those books allow him to educate himself, they also allowed him to work through the destructive and traumatic experiences of blatant discrimination, and the discriminatory abuse inflicted on him, his family, and humanity.

The life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that we honor today, could have turned out to be the life of just another African-American who would have had to learn to be happy with the limitations of his circumstances—with only what he was allowed. He learned however, to use his imagination and his dreams to see right through those ''White Only'' signs—to see the reality that all men, and women, regardless of their place of origin, their gender, or their creed, are created equal. Through his studies, Dr. King learned that training his mind and broadening his intellect effectively shielded him from the demoralizing effects of segregation and discrimination. Dr. King was a dreamer. His dreams were a tool, through which he was able to lift his mind beyond the reality of his segregated society and into a realm where it was possible that white and black, red, yellow and brown, and all others live and work alongside each other and prosper.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. however, was not an idle daydreamer. He shared his visions through speeches that motivated others to join the nonviolent effort to lift themselves from poverty and isolation and create an even better America where equal justice is a fact of life. In the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Thomas Jefferson wrote, ''We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are Created Equal.''

At that time and for centuries to come, African-Americans were historically, culturally, socially and legally excluded from inclusion in the institutional execution of that declaration. Dr. King's ''I Have a Dream'' Speech, delivered nearly 53 years ago, on August 28, 1963, was a clarion call to each citizen of this great nation that still echoes today. His request was simply and eloquently conveyed—asking America to allow its citizens to live out the words written in its Declaration of Independence and to have a place in this nation's Bill of Rights.

Provoking that clarion call, the 1960s were a time of great crisis and conflict. The nightmares of Americans were filled with troubling images that rose like lava from volcanoes of violence and the terrors that they had to face, both domestically and internationally. The decade bore the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War; and Americans were left to cradle the assassinations of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Malcolm X, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and the man we honor here today.

Dr. Martin Luther King's dream helped us turn the corner on civil rights. Set in motion with Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, enduring 381 days, ending only when the United States Supreme Court ruled that discrimination, on account of race in the field of interstate public transportation, was unconstitutional. The dream whisked forward into the hearts of those aggrieved in Alabama's Bible belt and the minds of Selma citizens organizing and peacefully marching for suffrage on March 7, 1965—a march that ended with violence at the hands of law enforcement officers, as demonstrators crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Dr. King used nonviolent tactics to protest against Jim Crow laws in the South, organizing and leading demonstrations for desegregation, labor and voting rights. When the life of Dr. Martin Luther King was stolen from us,

he was still a very young man, only 39 years old. People remember that Dr. King died in Memphis, but few remember why he was there. On that fateful day in 1968 Dr. King came to Memphis to support a strike by the city's sanitation workers. The sanitation workers there had recently formed a chapter of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees to demand better wages and working conditions for themselves.

The city, however, refused to recognize the union and when the 1,300 employees walked off of their jobs, the police broke up the rally with mace and police batons. Resultantly, union leaders summoned Dr. King to Memphis. Despite the danger he might face, entering such a volatile situation, it was an invitation he could not refuse—not because he longed for danger, but because the labor movement was deeply intertwined with the civil rights movement, for which he gave so many years of his life.

Moments before his murder, Dr. King went out onto the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis and standing near his room, he was struck at 6:01 p.m., by a single .30-06 bullet that James Earl Ray fired from a Remington Model 760 Gamemaster, completing the assassination. The killing sparked outcry and riots across the country, in addition to stimulating political support for passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968.

For some, Dr. King's assassination meant the end of the strategy of nonviolence. Others in the movement reaffirmed the need to carry on his work—as the nations' work—continuing the tradition of nonviolence. That night in Indianapolis, shortly after discovering that Dr. King had been murdered, New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy, campaigning to gain the presidential nomination to represent the Democratic Party, who himself would be murdered in Los Angles two months later, addressed an angry, heart-broken, shocked, and horrified audience in a predominantly black neighborhood of the city.

The Chief of Police in Indianapolis advised Senator Kennedy that he could not provide protection and was worried he would be at risk in talking about the death of the revered leader. Robert Kennedy saw something more powerful though and, channeling Dr. King's spirit, decided to go ahead. Standing on a flatbed truck, he spoke acknowledging that many would be filled with anger as rumors of riots palpated in listeners' hearts. He said: ''For those of you who are black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and mistrust of the injustice of such an act, against all white people, I would only say that I can also feel in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed . . . killed by a white man.'' The Senator said that the country had to make an effort to ''go beyond these rather difficult times,'' and needed and wanted unity between blacks and whites, and asked the audience members to pray for the King family and for the country.

The death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will never overshadow his life. His legacy as a dreamer and a man of action stands strong. It is a legacy of hope, tempered with peace. It is a legacy not quite yet fulfilled. I hope that Dr. King's vision of equality under the law is never lost to us who, in the present, toil in times of disparities of inequity. For without that vision—without that dream—we can never continue to improve on our collective human condition.

For those who have already forgotten, or whose vision is already clouded by the fog of complacency, I would like to recite the immortal words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

''I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former shareholders will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day, even the State of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but for the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama with its vicious racists, with its Governor having his lips dripping with words of interposition and nullification—one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.''

Positioning the nation to accept a bold call to action to address the wrongs of slavery, ''separate, but equal,'' boycotts, assassinations, and Black power—he gave a much longed for voice to the history of uprising that drove global civil rights forward. Dr. King's dream did not stop at racial equality; his ultimate dream was one of human equality and dignity. He believed that freedom and justice were the birthrights of every individual in America. His dream became the dream of a people, documenting their collective challenges and struggle toward change; a hope to achieve a more perfect Union.

The powerful words of his beloved widow Coretta Scott King remind us that, ''Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation.'' Were he alive today, I believe that Dr. King would embolden us to acknowledge that this story and struggle, that started many centuries ago, continues today—with you. His is an American story, and it is for us, the living, to continue that fight today and forever, following the great spirit that inspired the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE AND RUBY BENTLEY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 11, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Bruce and Ruby Bentley of Macedonia, Iowa on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married in 1966.

Bruce and Ruby's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. It is because of Iowans like them that I'm proud to represent our great state.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, April 12, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine the role of environmental policies on access to energy and economic opportunity.
SD–406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine America's insatiable demand for drugs.
SD–342

10 a.m.
Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine EB–5 targeted employment areas.
SD–226

10:15 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military construction, Veterans Affairs, and related agencies.
SD–124

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Missile Defense Agency.
SD–192

Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine budgeting for outcomes to maximize taxpayer value.
SD–608

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

Special Committee on Aging
Business meeting to consider proceedings relating to Mr. J. Michael Pearson's failure to appear.
SH–216

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine ending sexual abuse in United Nations peacekeeping.
SD–419

Committee on Indian Affairs
Business meeting to consider the issuance of a subpoena to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy, to testify before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, on April 22, 2016, in Phoenix, Arizona; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine to examine S. 2205, to establish a grant program to assist tribal governments in establishing tribal healing to wellness courts, S. 2421, to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska, and to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation located in Dillingham, Alaska, S. 2564, to modernize prior legislation relating to Dine College, S. 2643, to improve the implementation of the settlement agreement reached between the Pueblo de Cochiti of New Mexico and the Corps of Engineers, and S. 2717, to improve the safety and address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams to prevent flooding on Indian reservations.
SD–628

Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies—2016
Organizational business meeting to consider an original resolution authorizing expenditures for committee operations and committee's rules and procedure for the 114th Congress.
S–219

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for energy and water development.
SD–124

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 14

9 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine options for addressing the continuing lack of reliable emergency medical transportation for the isolated community of King Cove, Alaska.
SD–366

10 a.m.
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Business meeting to consider proposed legislation authorizing funds for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.
SR–328A

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.
SD–538

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the Federal perspective on the state of our nation's biodefense.
SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary
Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, S. 2613, to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, S. 2614, to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism, and the nomination of Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.
SD–226

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for energy and water development for fiscal year 2017, proposed legislation making appropriations for military construction, Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for fiscal year 2017, and 302(b) subcommittee allocations.
SD–106

2 p.m.
Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Land Management's proposed rule, entitled ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resources Conservation,'' published in the *Federal Register* on February 8, 2016.
SD–366

APRIL 19

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold an oversight hearing to examine challenges and opportunities for oil and gas development in different price environments.
SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold closed hearings to examine cybersecurity and United States Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SVC–217

APRIL 20

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the current state of research, diagnosis, and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.
SR–222

APRIL 21

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
To hold hearings to examine S. 1167, to modify the boundaries of the Pole Creek Wilderness, the Owyhee River Wilderness, and the North Fork Owyhee Wilderness and to authorize the continued use of motorized vehicles for livestock monitoring, herding, and grazing in certain wilderness areas in the State of Idaho, S. 1423, to designate certain Federal lands in California as wilderness, S. 1510, to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, S. 1699, to designate certain land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service in the State of Oregon as wilderness and national recreation areas and to make additional wild and scenic river designations in the State of Oregon, S. 1777, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain or replace certain facilities and structures for commercial recreation services at Smith Gulch in Idaho, S. 2018, to convey, without consideration, the reversionary interests of the United States in and to certain non-Federal land in Glennallen, Alaska, S. 2223, to transfer administrative jurisdiction

over certain Bureau of Land Management land from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for inclusion in the Black Hills National Cemetery, S. 2379, to provide for the unencumbering of title to non-Federal land owned by the city of Tucson, Arizona, for purposes of economic development by conveyance of the Federal reversionary interest to the City, and S. 2383, to withdraw certain Bureau of Land Management land in the State of Utah from all forms of public appropriation, to provide for the shared management of the withdrawn land by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Air Force to facilitate enhanced weapons testing and pilot training, enhance public safety, and provide for continued public access to the withdrawn land, to provide for the exchange of certain Federal land and State land.

SD–366

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''

SD–628

MAY 9

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–232A

MAY 10

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–232A

11 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SD–G50

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SD–G50

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SD–G50

5:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–232A

MAY 11

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–222

MAY 12

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–222

MAY 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–222

SENATE—*Tuesday, April 12, 2016*

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You are our rock and salvation. You are our high tower, and we shall not be moved. Forgive us when we forget to trust You to order our steps and direct our path.

Lord, thank You for our lawmakers, who seek to fulfill Your purposes in their labors. Give them the wisdom and courage they need to glorify Your Name as they strive always to live worthy of the mercies You daily bestow. May their work be a delight as they make You the only constituent they always seek to please.

Help us all to remember that You know what is best for us; so please have Your way.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have been pleased to see the progress we have made on the FAA Reauthorization Act, and I appreciate the Senators who have worked to process amendments such as those that bolster airport security. Last evening we processed another set of amendments to help make this good bill an even better one.

One such amendment, offered by Senator FLAKE, would help improve communication between the FAA and local airports in order to provide a greater say for local stakeholders in the management of the airspace near their own airports. This will benefit communities and airports across the country, including at Kentucky's own Louisville airport. I appreciate Senator FLAKE's leadership on this issue and was pleased to see this provision included in the overall bill.

I encourage Members who have ideas they think can strengthen the bill to continue working with the bill managers to move this legislation forward. Let's continue working today to take the next steps in seeing this consumer-friendly FAA reauthorization and airport security bill through to passage.

This bill contains a number of important measures to increase security in our airports and the skies. It also takes more steps to look out for airline passengers. Here is how: It will improve information about seat availability and create a standard for information on fee disclosures. It will require airlines to offer refunds to customers whose bags are lost or who have paid for services they didn't receive. It will also maintain rural access and help improve travel for passengers with disabilities.

There are some who think we should go further and reregulate the airline industry, but we know deregulation has helped make air travel more accessible and more affordable for families and business travelers to get from point A to point B. I know there are some who think Washington bureaucrats should define what constitutes a reasonable fee, but we want consumers to make that choice for themselves. That is why this bipartisan bill includes the important consumer protection provisions I mentioned earlier. We know this bipartisan legislation is a result of months of dedicated work by Chairman THUNE and his counterpart Senator NELSON. It sets new requirements for making sure customers understand what fees they could face for certain ancillary services, and then, importantly, it holds airlines accountable for delivering to consumers.

This is commonsense legislation. It is the product of Senators working across the aisle on behalf of the American people. Let's continue working together to move forward.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last Thursday the senior Senator from Iowa came to the floor to declare that he is feeling no pressure in blocking President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Merrick Garland. However, Senator GRASSLEY's actions paint a far different picture.

On Monday the chairman of the Judiciary Committee took to the Des Moines Register, the very newspaper that has pointedly and repeatedly criticized his unprecedented obstruction, but the case Senator GRASSLEY made in his op-ed only left Iowans scratching their heads. In effect, the senior Senator from Iowa said it is no big deal that we only have eight Justices on the Supreme Court. It is no big deal that our Nation's highest Court is deadlocking on important cases. With all due respect, that is the type of argument one makes knowing that logic and reason is not on your side, when you know the Constitution is not on your side.

The senior Senator from Iowa seemed to understand the Senate's responsibility to act when a Republican was in the White House. In 2006 he came to the floor and said:

A Supreme Court nomination is not a forum to fight any election. It is the time to perform one of our most important constitutional duties and decide whether a nominee is qualified to serve on the Nation's highest court.

Now he has reversed himself—and that is an understatement. From the time he allowed the Republican leader to seize control of the Judiciary Committee and dictate his actions as committee chair, Senator GRASSLEY has done everything to deflect responsibility on himself personally.

He forced his committee members to sign loyalty oaths. He tried to force the committee to do its work away from the public eye. When Democrats objected, he canceled the meeting altogether. He tried to shut down debate from the Presiding Officer's chair in the Senate, which is unprecedented. He blamed conservative Chief Justice John Roberts for politicizing the Supreme Court. These are just a few of the things.

This morning Senator GRASSLEY finally met with Judge Garland. He met in private, far away from the public eye. These are not the actions of a Senator and chairman who is confident in his decision to block the Supreme Court nominee. This is the behavior of a Senator who knows he is on the wrong side of the Constitution and wrong side of history. Wouldn't it be easier for the senior Senator from Iowa just to do his job?

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are 102 days into 2016, but because of wage discrimination, working American women are still stuck in 2015. Today is National Equal Pay Day, a date that symbolizes how far into the year women must work to earn what their male counterparts earned last year for doing the very same work. That is because, on average, women make only 79 cents for every $1 their male colleagues make doing the very same job. That means our wives, daughters, and granddaughters have to work an additional 3 months and 11 days to make the same salary their male counterparts make in a single year.

This pay disparity between men and women for doing the same work is known as the wage gap and it is to our national shame. No woman should make less money than a man for doing the exact same work.

Democrats have tried repeatedly to pass Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI's Paycheck Fairness Act, which would provide women with the tools they need to close this wage gap. The Republicans have made it clear they have no intention of fighting wage discrimination. They have stonewalled Senator MIKULSKI's legislation five times in recent years—five filibusters—and when Republicans finally got around to offering legislation they claim will address this important economic issue, it is anemic and devoid of actual reform.

The bills offered by the junior Senators from New Hampshire and Nebraska are a case in point because the legislation does nothing to close loopholes employers use to justify paying discriminatory wages, it does nothing to help victims of wage discrimination recoup lost income, and it does nothing to incentivize employers to follow the law. This legislation is only designed to look good, to say they are trying to do something about this, when in fact it does nothing. Just about the only thing the Ayotte and Fischer bills actually do is make it harder for women to discuss wage discrimination at work. Their respective bills so narrowly define what a woman can and cannot say about wage discrimination that it completely ignores the reality of the situation.

Factually, many women learn of wage disparities through casual conversation at work. In the famous Lilly Ledbetter case, that is how she learned about it. They shouldn't be punished for realizing they are being discriminated against by their own employer. In short, the Ayotte and Fischer bills will not close the wage gap. Where the Republican legislation fails, the Mikulski Paycheck Fairness Act succeeds.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would help close the wage disparity by empowering women to negotiate for equal pay. This bill would give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against employees for discussing salary information. This legislation would help secure adequate compensation for victims of gender-based pay discrimination. These are commonsense proposals that are supported by the American people—not just women.

Later today President Obama will announce the designation of the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, which is located a few hundred yards from where I stand. Formally known as the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum, this national monument will honor the work of the National Women's Party founder Alice Paul, who rewrote the Equal Rights Amendment. I think it is important that is done. President Obama says this designation is a reminder of the many women who have fought for equality.

As we recognize Equal Pay Day, I hope my Republican colleagues will come to their senses and address this injustice that hurts millions of American families. Working women deserve more than just a half measure from Republicans. They deserve our best efforts to right this egregious wrong, because American women deserve equal pay.

I apologize to my distinguished friend from Vermont for having him wait while Senator MCCONNELL and I were having conversations on the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. LEAHY. The distinguished Senator from Nevada owes me no apologies. I am delighted to hear what he had to say and I agree with him.

Mr. President, today we Vermonters and our neighbors, Americans across the country, are going to recognize Equal Pay Day, a day that shines a spotlight on the glaring pay disparity between men and women. The United States is often looked to as a leader in the global landscape, setting the gold standard for others to follow. Unfortunately, our country fails to lead when it comes to pay parity. American women continue to be treated unequally and unfairly in the workplace.

On average, women are only paid 79 cents to every $1 paid to men. It is somewhat better in Vermont, but there is still a disparity of 83 cents to a dollar. Over a career, this means a woman is compensated hundreds of thousands of dollars to millions of dollars less than a man with no other explanation for the disparity than their gender. This practice is unacceptable, and it runs contrary to American values.

The fight for equal pay for equal work has spanned generations and continues to impact nearly every corner of our country. From corporate boardrooms to locally owned small businesses, women have long fought for their right to be treated with the same respect and dignity as their male counterparts.

When I think of this fight, I think of Lilly Ledbetter, a person whom I greatly admire and consider a friend. She has changed the lives of millions of Americans with her courage to stand up for equal pay. It has been nearly 9 years since five Justices on the Supreme Court ruled, by just a one-vote majority, that her pay discrimination claim was invalid—not because of the facts. She had a good pay discrimination claim, but the narrow majority said she did not file a suit against her employer within the Federally mandated time period, even though the way the employer ran things, made it so she had no way of knowing she was being discriminated against at that time. I was proud to work with Senator MIKULSKI and others to overturn this injustice. We wrote and passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. This important legislation clarified the statute of limitations for filing an equal pay lawsuit regarding pay discrimination. I was proud to stand with President Obama when he signed this into law, the very first law he signed as President.

The progress achieved 7 years ago was important, but the fight for equal pay for equal work continues today. I am proud to cosponsor Senator MIKULSKI's Paycheck Fairness Act, an important bill to assure equal pay for equal work—a principle that people say they agree with but for too long has failed to be a reality.

Today women from all over Vermont will assemble at the Vermont State

House. They will highlight the initiative known as Change the Story, which aims to improve the economic status of women in my State. They will note that while in Vermont women fare slightly better than the average around the country, at the current pace, the wage gap will not disappear before the year 2048. That is far too long for anybody to have to wait.

I would also point out that in Vermont, women are twice as likely to live in poverty in their senior years, when their savings amount to only one-third of that of their male counterparts.

Every year, Marcelle and I present the Vermont Women's Economic Opportunity Conference. For two decades, it has helped support women-owned businesses. It encourages good-paying, nontraditional careers. But as we prepare to mark the 20th anniversary of the Women's Economic Opportunity Conference in June, I would much prefer if we could eliminate the need for such a conference. I look forward to the day when there is no gender wage gap and when career opportunities are available to all women, but until that day comes, Marcelle and I will continue to present that conference.

Pay equality has recently received considerable attention at the international level. Why? In large part, due to the leadership of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team. We can all recall the thrill last year when this team of world-class athletes won for a third time soccer's most coveted title, the FIFA World Cup.

I remember, and I remember my children and my grandchildren watched that thrilling victory. It was the most widely viewed women's soccer game in our Nation's history. Like so many other Americans, men and women, I took pride in their historic win. But then fans from across the world were shocked to learn that members of the U.S. women's team received only $2 million for winning the 2015 Women's World Cup, while the men's 2014 World Cup champions were awarded $35 million.

We were also astonished to learn that our 2015 world champion women's team received $7 million less than the U.S. men's team that lost in an early round of the men's 2014 World Cup. Even though this sports team made enormous amounts of money from the television rights, the women who earned those rights did not. They got paid less than the men who lost. They got paid less for winning than the men who lost.

So, as a result of this alarming inequity, I introduced a Senate resolution calling on FIFA to eliminate its discriminatory prize award structure and to award all athletes with equal prizes. It was disappointing that not a single Republican was willing to cosponsor this resolution. When I tried to get it passed to support fairness for our champion women's team, when I tried to get this passed to say that we should treat women fairly—we should treat the women athletes the same as men athletes—Senate Republicans blocked it from going forward.

As more Americans learn of this unfairness, I am hopeful that Senators will join me to support this passage and that Republicans will stop blocking it. Senators should not be afraid to be on record supporting equal pay for equal work for all athletes—in fact, equal pay for equal work for all women.

Opponents of an equal prize award structure in sports have pointed to revenue as the reason behind this gross disparity. This is unacceptable. Tennis icons such as Billie Jean King and Venus Williams did not accept these arguments; instead, they fought for equal prize awards in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Their impressive efforts led to equal prize awards at the U.S. Open Tennis championships and Wimbledon, which now provides all athletes, men and women, with the respect they deserve. So I am proud to stand in support of the U.S. Women's National Team in their fight for equal prize awards from FIFA and for equal treatment from the U.S. Soccer Federation.

The disparities that exist in these organizations are outrageous. They should be remedied immediately. They should be arranged so that men and women are treated fairly and equally. While every Democrat has supported that, I hope Republicans will stop blocking it.

As we reflect on the important meaning of Equal Pay Day, I would note that it is not just Republicans or Democrats—but all Americans across the country who should continue to join the growing movement to eliminate discrimination from the workplace. Hard-working women—our mothers, our sisters, our wives, our daughters, and our granddaughters—deserve no less.

We should pass this resolution recognizing the achievement of the U.S. Women's National Team as the Women's World Cup champions. We should pass Senator MIKULSKI's Paycheck Fairness Act, which I have proudly cosponsored. We should take these simple and straightforward steps to guarantee pay equity protections against workplace discrimination. The time for equality is now. Let's be honest. Let's stand up and say: Both men and women should be treated equally.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, as my friend, the top Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, is leaving the floor, I want to thank him so much. I think the example of women's soccer is so perfect. People do not understand this disparity. Some say that many more people follow the women's soccer than the men's. I want to thank him for his leadership on that.

I also want to say that when it comes to equal pay for equal work, you need to remember three numbers—just three numbers: 79 cents—that is one number. Remember that one and $11,000 and $400,000. OK. Remember 79 cents, $11,000, and $400,000. And 79 cents on the dollar is what the average woman makes compared to the average man. So the man makes $1; the woman makes 79 cents for the same work.

We are not talking about different jobs; we are talking about the same. It costs the average woman and her family $11,000 a year. When you add up that disparity, it is $11,000 a year. Think of what that could buy for a family. And $400,000-plus is what the penalty is for the average woman against the average man in a lifetime—$400,000. That could translate into a retirement that is not stressful.

We are going to be here later today talking about this. The Mikulski bill will resolve a lot of these problems. I hope we can get the Republicans to help us.

You know, this Senate has a rating of about 18-percent approval. Well, it is because people don't see us doing anything to help the average person. Most women work. We have not even raised the minimum wage. These Republicans fight for the wealthy few. That is the problem. We have given them a beautiful way to deal with it: Sign onto MIKULSKI's bill.

PILOT FATIGUE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, this morning, in addition to these comments that I just made, I want to talk about an amendment I am trying to get a vote on to the FAA bill, the Federal Aviation Administration bill, which is before us. This issue is another no-brainer.

Later this morning, I will meet with Captain ''Sully'' Sullenberger. I think you remember him. He was the ''Hero of the Hudson.'' He was the one who miraculously landed U.S. Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River on January 15, 2009. Because of his incredible skill, he saved the lives of all 155 passengers and crew.

When it comes to safety—safety, in terms of our pilots being able to think clearly and not be suffering from fatigue, who could be better than Captain Sullenberger? I am going to stand with him. I am going to explain the issue that he and I are fighting for.

I first got into this issue—which is safety standards for all pilots—in 2009 when Colgan Airlines Flight 3407 crashed into a home near Buffalo, NY, killing 50 people. After that tragic crash, Senator Snowe and I wrote legislation that updated pilot and fatigue

regulations. They had been written originally in the 1940s.

Clearly, there is a lot of scientific research on what happens when you have a lack of rest. We needed to see a new rule. So, because of the efforts of Senator Snowe and me, the Department of Transportation issued a rule in 2011 to ensure adequate rest for passenger pilots, which was great.

Shockingly, they left out cargo pilots. So I am going to show you a picture of two planes—two planes. Look at those planes. They look exactly the same. They share the same airspace, the same airports, and the same runways. But guess what? Because of the disparity in this rule from the FAA, the pilots are not treated the same. Now, passenger pilots cannot fly more than 9 hours in a day, while cargo pilots have been forced to fly up to 16 hours a day. Let me say it again. The rule that came out of the FAA said: If you are a passenger pilot, you can only fly up to 9 hours a day, but if you fly a cargo plane the same size, you can fly up to 16 hours a day. How does this make sense? It is dangerous. It is dangerous. I will show you how. But our top safety board, NTSB, the National Transportation Safety Board, has made reducing pilot fatigue a priority, mentioning it is on their top 10 list of most wanted safety requirements for years.

So follow me. In 2011, we had the rule. The rule left out cargo pilots. Since then, I have been trying, along with colleagues KLOBUCHAR, CANTWELL, and others, to change this. Now, let's look at what Captain Sullenberger has said about this issue. He said it about our bill: You wouldn't want your surgeon operating on you after only 5 hours of sleep or your passenger pilot flying the airplane after only 5 hours of sleep. And you certainly wouldn't want a cargo pilot flying a large plane over your house at 3 a.m. on 5 hours of sleep, trying to find the airport and land.

They are working up to 16 hours without adequate opportunity for rest, so what we say in our amendment is simple: We want parity. We want the same periods of flying time for both pilots.

Now you say: Well, Senator BOXER, have there been any accidents? Yes. Since 1990, there have been 14 U.S. cargo plane crashes involving fatigue, including a UPS crash in Birmingham, AL, in 2013 that killed two crew members.

In that tragedy, the NTSB cited pilot fatigue as a factor. Let's listen to the pilot conversation, which was retrieved after the crash. Let's hear what those pilots, who were exhausted, said to one another. Then, if the Senate does not want to have a vote on this, I am going to stand on my feet until we do because, for sure, one of these planes is going to crash, whether it is in California or Nebraska or Arkansas or anywhere else in this Nation.

Listen to this.

Pilot 1: I mean, I don't get it. You know, it should be one level of safety for everybody.

Pilot 2: It makes no sense at all.

Pilot 1: No, it doesn't at all.

Pilot 2: And to be honest, it should be across the board. To be honest, in my opinion, whether you are flying passengers or cargo, if you are flying this time of day, you know, fatigue is definitely——

Pilot 1: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Pilot 2: When my alarm went off, I mean, I'm thinking, I'm so tired.

Pilot 1: I know.

Well, let's look at what happened to this plane after this conversation. Just look at what happened to this plane. I think it is important that everybody look at it. It went down. It went down. Now, when that flight went down, I honestly thought: The FAA is going to change. They are going to pass a rule. They are going to make sure that all pilots get that necessary rest. But they did not. They did not. One hour after that conversation I shared with you, Mr. President, this is what happened to that plane.

This dangerous double standard risks lives in the air and on the ground, and it cannot continue. That is why our amendment and our bill, which we base the amendment on, are endorsed not only by Captain Sully but also by the Air Line Pilots Association, the Independent Pilots Association, the Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations, the Teamsters Aviation Division, and the Allied Pilots Association.

Let me just ask a rhetorical question. If we don't listen to pilots, who are in those planes, on what they need to fly safely, who on Earth are we listening to? And yet I can't get a vote on this. So far, I can't get a vote. I am hoping I will. Let people stand in the well and vote against this safety provision, and the next time there is a crash, they will answer for it. Stand up and be counted. We need a vote on this provision. One level of safety for all pilots is one level of safety for the public.

I am proud to stand with Captain Sullenberger and all the pilots in America and the organizations that represent them to say this: If this is an FAA bill, if this is the Federal aviation bill and we have all kinds of goodies and tax breaks and this and that in there—which is a whole other conversation—the least we can do is to stand up for safety. The least we can do is to stand up for safety. I will insist on a vote. I will stand on my feet until I get a vote, and I know the pilots are going to be all over this place today knocking on doors.

The American people don't think we are doing anything for them. We have the worst rating. My friends beat up on President Obama, but he has the same ratings as Ronald Reagan during his time in the same timeframe—same ratings as Ronald Reagan, their hero. We are down in the gutter with our ratings because we put special interests ahead of the people.

Now, maybe there are a few special interests that don't want to pay their pilots enough money, that don't want to give their pilots rest—too bad. They are wrong. They are jeopardizing lives on the ground. It is penny-wise and pound-foolish to have someone suffering from pilot fatigue flying over your home wherever you live in America.

All I want is a vote. I am just asking for a vote. So far, I do not have that commitment, but we are working hard. We are hoping to get it. That is why I came here today, and that is why I will be standing with Captain Sullenberger later this morning—to call for a vote to make sure that after 9 hours of flight, pilots get adequate rest—not after 16 hours—and to make sure there is parity, fairness, and equality between those flying a passenger jet and those flying a cargo jet. The fact of the matter is they share the same airspace, they fly over the same homes, and they deserve not to be exhausted as they maneuver their planes.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the issue of equal pay for equal work. Today is National Equal Pay Day, and this provides us an opportunity to talk about how we can promote policies that will make life easier and more flexible for American families. It allows us to celebrate the amazing advancements that women have made.

Women have an incredibly positive story to tell. We now hold more than half of all professional and managerial jobs, double the number since 1980. We earn over 55 percent of bachelor's degrees, run nearly 10 million small businesses, and we serve in Congress at record levels.

Some may be surprised to see a Republican speaking out to support equal pay. My friends on the other side of the aisle have made quite an effort to politicize this issue, claiming that Republicans don't care about equal pay.

I am here to state unequivocally that is ridiculous. Equal pay for equal work is a shared American value. At its core, equal pay is about basic fairness and ensuring that every woman, just like every man, has the opportunity to build the life she chooses.

For over half a century, the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act have enabled women to make significant economic strides. Any violation of these important laws are illegal, and they should be punished to the full extent of the law. But I believe we can

also go further. Congress now has the opportunity to recommit itself to this issue and ensure that these existing laws are better enforced.

Our country is stronger today because women have advanced in the workforce. There are stories of young women who start off at entry-level jobs and rise to the top of corporate ranks because someone somewhere recognized their potential. There are managers and mentors committed to their team. Men and women across the workforce are focused on cultivating strengths and providing thoughtful feedback in areas that need improvement.

Unfortunately, there are also stories of pain, discrimination, and bias. We all have friends and neighbors, sisters and mothers who were treated unfairly at some point in their careers. But silence does not foster progress. I want to help every woman and every man put a stop to unfair pay practices, and this starts by breaking the barriers to open discussion.

Few realize the extent of this problem. In 2003 the University of Pennsylvania conducted a study on how salaries are discussed in the private sector. The survey found that over one-third of private sector employers have specific rules prohibiting employees from discussing their pay with their coworkers. This was reinforced by another survey from the Institute for Women's Policy Research. Roughly half of workers reported that discussing wages and salaries is either discouraged or prohibited and/or could lead to punishment. It went on to note that pay secrecy appears to contribute to the gender gap in earnings.

These studies point to a common problem—one that is fueling anger, resentment, and fear. The American workforce is lacking protections for employees to engage in this open dialogue about their salaries. People are afraid to ask how their salary compares to their colleagues. Meanwhile, current law does not adequately protect workers against retaliation from employers who want to prevent those conversations about their compensation.

If you want to know how your salary compares to your colleagues, you should have every right to ask. This is as basic as the First Amendment. Ensuring transparency would not only make it easier for workers to recognize pay discrimination, but it would also empower them to negotiate their salaries more effectively.

Wage transparency is not a new initiative. It already enjoys support on both sides of the political spectrum. In fact, both President Obama and Hillary Clinton are in favor of it. But not all transparency is created equal. Earlier this year, the Obama administration proposed a new regulation targeting businesses with over 100 employees. The Labor Department would use this rule to require businesses to submit large amounts of data regarding race, gender, and other statistics to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The administration believes this will end discrimination.

I believe this is just another government mandate that intrudes into the operations of a private business. We can't discount the burden this will put on employers and job creators, and every—every—new regulation creates a new cost. I also have real doubts that this raw data will give the administration what it is looking for. Instead, it does risk presenting a distorted picture of pay data. Moreover, it remains unclear how this information would even identify discrimination. The data does not take into account other factors, including years of experience, education level, and productivity, and they are appropriately used to determine a person's wages.

Looking at big data alone fails to tell the whole story. I am concerned that the rigid compensation structures resulting from the President's proposal could force businesses to provide employees with less flexibility, and that would deal an even greater blow to women. The same is true with the Paycheck Fairness Act. While it is very well-intentioned, it will ultimately hurt flexibility for women to form unique work arrangements, and it will undermine merit-based pay. Instead, we should be empowering both employers and employees to negotiate flexible work arrangements that best meet their individual needs.

I agree we have more work to do on equal pay, but the way we can make meaningful and lasting progress isn't through a misguided Executive action that could hurt women. To make a difference in the lives of working families, we must focus on building bipartisan consensus. I have been working hard to do just that by collaborating with my colleagues and generating support for my bill, which is known as the Workplace Advancement Act.

I believe every American worker should have the ability to discuss compensation without fear of retribution. My legislation breaks down the barriers to open dialogue, allowing employees to ask questions and gain information. Access to this information could enable workers to be their own best advocates and let them negotiate for the salaries they feel they deserve. Knowledge is power. By freely discussing their wages, workers can negotiate effectively for the pay they want.

My proposal has received the support of almost every Senate Republican and also five Democrats. But as we know all too well, in Washington anything that receives bipartisan support stalls with five words: It doesn't go far enough.

The biggest critics of this plan say that it is too modest. They claim that transparency is only the first step and that a second step would require mandates. But the truth is, meaningful change cannot happen without action, and it cannot happen, colleagues, without compromise. By its very definition, it requires both agreement and accommodation. My bill can make a real difference for American workers, and, unlike legislation that is offered by Democrats, my bill can actually pass.

Others would argue that this change is unnecessary because the right to discuss salaries is protected under existing law. While it is true that certain employees and certain conversations are protected, there is no reason why we can't apply the same freedom to all Americans. As I discussed previously, surveys suggest that over one-third of private sector companies have specific prohibitions in place.

I am encouraged by the support we have already garnered on both sides of the aisle for this bill, the straightforward update to our equal pay laws. It is achievable. We are all here to find solutions that both Republicans and Democrats can achieve for the American people. An all-or-nothing attitude—well, that only prevents progress, and it leaves us with the false choices and stereotypes that have persisted for decades.

Last week I was encouraged to hear Senator MIKULSKI and several other Democrats hold a press conference and discuss the importance of protecting workers against retaliation for discussing their salaries. I agree. Protecting workers who seek this information is a crucial step toward ensuring that women and men are compensated fairly.

With that in mind, I call on my friend from Maryland and any other Members of this body to work together on solutions to this problem. Wage transparency is an area of common ground. Democrats praised the President's Executive order in 2014, and my bill goes further: It protects more American workers. If we are going to make real, meaningful change, we are going to have to work together. We should not let raw politics stand in the way of progress for working women.

Congress has a real opportunity to make a difference for both men and women who work hard every day to provide for their families. Above all, we can help them succeed and prosper in the workforce while being secure in the knowledge they are compensated fairly for their work.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I think Senators THUNE and NELSON have done a great job of putting together the reauthorization bill for the FAA. It is

something that should have been done some time ago. We are hoping the House will adopt what we have or something close to it because we are getting ready to do this. It is significant.

I want to mention something that people may not be aware of. This month leaders from around the world are going to meet in New York to sign the Paris climate agreement—an agreement that hinges entirely on President Obama's commitments to reduce emissions in the United States.

In Paris, he said: We commit that the United States will reduce our CO_2 emissions somewhere between 26 and 28 percent by 2025.

Of course, that is just not going to happen.

President Obama has three legacies, as his days are now numbered. One of them is to take away people's guns. We all know about Second Amendment rights. Every time something happens, they always try to restrict gun ownership. He still wants to do that. Closing Gitmo is another one. The third one we are trying to survive is his global warming program.

While the President has been working to solidify his legacy on global warming, he has chosen to ignore the reality that the United States will not keep his carbon promises. The document that will be signed on April 22—Earth Day—will soon be added to the president's stack of empty promises on global warming. This has been going on since 1997. While President Obama will undoubtedly issue a press release praising the signing as a ''historic'' event—he won't even be attending. That should be a good indication that he knows he is not going to be able to do this. He is not even going to be there.

Once again, I want to make sure the international participants are warned that the President's climate commitment lacks the support of his own government and it is going to fail. There is no question about that. I can say that because history has already repeated itself. I have been on the frontlines dating back to the failed Kyoto treaty of 1997. For over 20 years, history has been repeating itself, and I have been on the frontlines dating back to that time.

This is kind of interesting. In 1997 President Clinton and Vice President Gore went to the Kyoto convention. They signed the treaty and they thought: This is great. Everyone is going to have to do cap and trade.

They got back here, and there was a little thing called the Byrd-Hagel resolution. It passed this body 95 to 0. What did it say? It said: If you come back with the Kyoto treaty and it does one of two things, we will vote against it. That was 95 Members; there were 5 people absent that day.

They said they would not do it if two things were in it: No. 1, if it is an economic hardship on the United States of America, and No. 2, if you come back with a treaty that doesn't treat developing countries the same as developed countries. In other words, if we have to do something in the United States that China doesn't have to do, that India doesn't have to do, that Mexico doesn't have to do, then we will vote against it.

Of course, they came back with something that violated both. So there was never any possibility that it was going to pass, and it didn't. We subsequently rejected four cap-and-trade bills in the following 13 years.

This past year a bipartisan majority in both the Senate and the House spoke again when we passed two resolutions of disapproval formally rejecting President Obama's carbon regulations. There is a little thing a lot of people don't know about called the CRA, the Congressional Review Act. That means if the President tries to do something that is against the wishes of the people through their elected representatives, then you can pass a CRA—Congressional Review Act—that will reject the regulation. So we passed two resolutions formally disapproving what he was trying to do.

So I say to the 196 countries that might show up here: Don't show up anticipating that something is going to happen, because it is not. This isn't even supported by a majority of the Members of the Senate or the House. Congress has continuously shown that the American people don't want the Federal Government imposing harsh penalties like cap and trade to address the highly contested theory of man-made global warming.

The first attempt to enact cap and trade back in 2003 would have cost our economy upwards of $400 billion a year.

I say to our good friend from Alaska who is the Presiding Officer right now that every time I hear a large figure, I take the current population in my State of Oklahoma—those families who actually pay Federal income taxes—and I do the math. In this case, this would cost in the neighborhood of $3,000 per family, and of course, as I will demonstrate in just a minute, they will get nothing for that.

In 2003 the first bill that came up would have cost upwards of $400 billion. This has not been contested, and the numbers aren't much different from what the President is trying to do right now with his Clean Power Plan, which he is trying to do through regulation because he knows it won't pass as legislation.

The Clean Power Plan—the centerpiece of the President's promise to the international community that the United States will cut greenhouse gases between 26 and 28 percent by 2025—this plan, which attempts to do through regulation what the President was unable to do through legislation, stands on very shaky legal ground.

Most recently, the Supreme Court joined the chorus in signaling to the President that the President's efforts on climate change are dead on arrival. This is the U.S. Supreme Court.

I think we owe it to the 196 countries to let them know that nothing is going to happen once they get here. I think it is nice if they all want to come and tour America and spend their money, maybe take old Highway 66 down through my State of Oklahoma and see what America really looks like. I would love to have them come. But I want to make sure they know that nothing is going to happen in terms of the President's Clean Power Plan or his broader international commitments.

The Supreme Court dealt the President's legacy a major blow when it voted 5 to 4 in February to block the implementation of Obama's Clean Power Plan while it is being litigated by over 150 entities, including 27 States, including Oklahoma, which are filing a lawsuit to make sure this does not happen. So we have a majority of States in America saying: Not only do we not want it, but we are suing them to make sure it is not implemented. There are also 24 trade associations, 37 electric co-ops and 3 labor unions challenging EPA in court. They are all filing these lawsuits, so the Supreme Court comes along and says: Until these are resolved, we are going to stay the regulation.

This decision delays implementation of the rule until the next President and completely upends Obama's Paris commitments. Without the central component of his international climate agenda, achieving the promises he made in Paris is a mere pipe dream. Even with the Clean Power Plan, the United States would fail to meet 45 percent of the promised greenhouse gas emission reductions. Now, with the Supreme Court's stay on these regulations, there could be an even greater deficit. If the Clean Power Plan is overturned, the United States will miss the mark by about 60 percent. Furthermore, the litigation on the Clean Power Plan won't likely get resolved until 2018. That means the regulations will be blocked for at least the next 2 years, as the chart shows.

First, on June 2, the three-judge panel on the DC Circuit will need to hear the case. The three-judge panel will issue a decision sometime this fall, and it will almost certainly be challenged with a request for an en banc review by the entire DC Circuit. A decision from an en banc panel won't come until much later—likely by the end of the year, as we can see on the chart. This decision will almost certainly be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. If the Court decides to hear the case, a final decision is expected in late 2017 or 2018.

The DC Circuit has already decided to delay hearing the case on the Clean

Power Plan's sister rule on carbon controls for new power plants until after the November elections, signaling little appetite for allowing this to be an easy, quick legal review of Obama's carbon mandates.

Similar to the Clean Power Plan litigation, any decision on a new source rule—new sources of power plants—would likely be appealed to the Supreme Court, with a final decision expected in 2018. Critically, the new source rule is a legal prerequisite for the Clean Power Plan, so without the new source rule, there is no Clean Power Plan.

The success of Obama's carbon mandates hinges not on just one but on two Supreme Court wins that will be decided well after he leaves office. He will be long gone. And with a new administration needing to fill a vacancy next year on the Court—who knows how that will impact or delay consideration of pending cases.

We are clearly a long way off from knowing the outcome of the President's carbon regulations. You wouldn't know that when you hear the releases that came from Paris saying this has been a great success. He made the commitment as to what kind of reductions we are going to have when he in his own mind knew for a fact that was not even a possibility.

So we are a long way from knowing the outcome of the President's carbon regulations that were written to help fulfill his pledge to international communities. But, as I said, Obama will be long gone by that time.

It is important for the 196 countries involved in the Paris climate agreement to understand what I am saying. The Congress, the courts, climate experts, and industry are all pointing to the same conclusion: President Obama's climate pledge is unattainable, and it stands no chance of succeeding in the United States. For the sake of the economic well-being of America, that is a good thing. Again, we still would welcome the 196 countries to come over here and enjoy America, but don't expect any of President Obama's climate promises to happen.

A few countries have taken note. Specifically, China and India, two of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gas, are now second-guessing the legitimacy of Obama's commitments.

Navroz K. Dubash, a senior fellow at the Center for Policy Research in New Delhi told the New York Times that ''[the Supreme Court stay] could be the proverbial string which causes Paris to unravel.''

Zou Ji, the deputy director general of China's National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, also told the New York Times: ''Look, [if] the United States doesn't keep its word, why make so many demands on us?''

In another display of solidarity against Obama's climate agenda, I led 34 Senators and 171 House Members in an amicus brief filed in the DC Circuit arguing that the Clean Power Plan is illegal. The plan would cause double-digit electricity price increases in 40 States and have no impact on the environment. Further, these regulations would prevent struggling communities from accessing reliable and affordable fuel sources, which could eventually lead to poor families choosing between putting food on the table and turning the heat on in the wintertime.

Much of the focus this past year has been the Clean Power Plan and the Paris Agreement that is reliant on its success. The administration has the power generation sector in its crosshairs, but they will not stop there. We know that. We are keenly aware of Obama's war on fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural gas.

If I don't have to be someplace in conjunction with my obligations with the Senate Armed Services Committee, I go back home every weekend. They ask questions you don't hear in Washington. They ask: Now, wait a minute, if we are reliant upon fossil fuels—coal, oil, and gas—for 85 percent of the power necessary to run this machine called America and if Obama is successful in killing coal, oil, and gas, then how are we going to run this machine called America?

That is a logical question, but not here in Washington. You don't hear that here in Washington.

The Clean Power Plan is a template for unauthorized action, and if it works for one sector, future bureaucratic agencies will use it to restructure every industrial sector in this country. The immediate threat to future generations is not climate change. The climate is always changing and will continue to do so regardless of who is in the White House.

Luckily, the American people have caught on to the President's climate charade. But don't take my word for it; just look at the polls. I can remember back when the first bills were coming out. There was the McCain-Lieberman bill in 2003, and we looked at the bill. At that time, the polls showed that global warming was either the No. 1 or No. 2 concern in America. That has all changed. A FOX News poll found just the other day that 97 percent of Americans don't care about global warming when they stack it up against terrorism, immigration, health care, and the economy. Even an ABC News/Washington Post poll from last November found that the number of Americans who believe climate change is a serious problem is on the decline. According to the Gallup poll—they have a big one every March—the Gallup poll in March of 2015 had global warming coming in dead last of environmental issues that people are concerned about. George Mason University did a poll of 4,000 TV meteorologists, and it also dispelled the President's talking point that there is 97-percent consensus among scientists that humans are driving climate change. The survey found that roughly one out of three meteorologists do not believe man is the primary cause—if, in fact, it is happening.

Overall, neither the American people nor Congress supports the President's detrimental climate change agenda and his attempt to bolster his personal legacy with empty promises.

Let me wind up and say that we welcome the international community to come over here, but with regard to the Paris Climate Agreement, nothing is going to happen.

I wish to mention a couple other things. Many countries quickly jumped on the global warming bandwagon that the United Nations was trying to sell to the world and instill an obligation to impose associated restrictions. Australia was one of the first countries to join in. They did this several years ago—until they realized what it cost, and then they came back and passed legislation taking themselves off of this so that they are no longer legally obligated to do anything about their emissions.

If you stop and think about China, every 10 days China is building a new coal-fired power plant. This is the country the president is using to justify his own climate agenda while convincing the American people China is making similar contributions to reducing greenhouse gases. The problem with this is that China admits they are going to continue to build coal-fired plants and increase emissions until the year 2030 and then they will consider reducing their emissions. We know it is not going to happen.

Lastly, I remember when Lisa Jackson was appointed by President Obama. She was his first appointment as Administrator of the EPA. I remember talking to her in a public meeting live on TV, and I asked her the question: Let's assume that one of these pieces of legislation passes on cap and trade or that through regulation they are able to do it. Is that going to have the effect of reducing overall emissions worldwide?

She said: No, because this isn't where the problem is. The problem is in China; it is in India; it is in Mexico.

In fact, you can actually say this could have the effect of increasing emissions because as we chase our manufacturing base overseas, it may go to countries like China that have lower environmental standards and will ultimately increase emissions, not decrease.

So the President's international climate commitment is not going to happen. I want to make sure people are aware of that. We wouldn't want them coming over here under the impression

that something is going to happen when it is not.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 12:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I would yield the floor, but I don't see anyone else here.

I would like to comment on the FAA reauthorization bill. I had a couple of amendments to it, and I want to mention that both of my amendments have now been accepted. I feel very good about that. I think we are currently considering a bill that is very necessary to go ahead and get passed.

I again commend Senator THUNE and Senator NELSON for working yesterday to get through a number of important amendments that were approved by the Senate. Included in the group was an amendment I offered that would direct the FAA to establish rules to allow critical infrastructure owners and operators to use unmanned aircraft systems to carry out federally mandated patrols and to perform emergency response and preparation activities. This is one I feel very strongly about because there is a lot of controversy around drones, but we do know there are some things that have to be done—pipelines, for example. It is just as easy for a drone to do it, and it can be done in all kinds of weather.

This amendment would apply to energy infrastructure, such as oil and gas and renewable electric energy. It would apply to power utilities and telecommunications networks. It would apply to roads and bridges and water supply systems operators.

This amendment provides needed congressional direction to the FAA where there is a clear and articulable need, and I am glad it was accepted yesterday. I thank Senators BOOKER, HEITKAMP, WHITEHOUSE, MORAN, and KING for cosponsoring this amendment with me.

I want to turn to a provision that is in the base text of the FAA bill that is of particular importance to Oklahoma but impacts the entire aviation community—the commercial, military, and general aviators—and that is because it impacts air traffic controllers.

The FAA bill, which is the bill we are considering right now, includes a provision to encourage the hiring and retention of high-quality air traffic controller instructors. This is particularly important to me because the FAA Academy, which is where all the air traffic controllers are trained, is located in Oklahoma City. These instructors, who are required to have prior experience as air traffic controllers, are discouraged from working full time due to existing government regulations because they are former air traffic controllers. Without full-time instructors, we need four times as many part-time instructors to provide the needed instruction time to train for the next generation of controllers to manage the air traffic at our control towers, so that means the FAA must bear four times the cost of training new instructors. I am glad this bill will remove the government regulations that discourage full-time instructors. I thank my colleagues for working with me to address this problem.

Another one—and this is very significant. This is volunteer pilot protection. Last week I offered an amendment for consideration that supports volunteer pilots. This is a Good Samaritan law for pilots. Across the country, there are a lot of volunteer pilots. I myself have done this. I have been an active commercial pilot for 60 years. I can remember several times—once going down to an island just north of Caracas, Venezuela, that had been wiped out by a hurricane. I found 10 pilots to take down with me, medical supplies, food, and all of that.

During that time, if something had happened, even though he was a Good Samaritan—he was doing it at his own expense—he could have been sued for any number of exposures that are out there.

People are generous with their time and provide at no cost air transportation to someone in need of specialized medical treatment. We have done that before too. This amendment would provide those volunteer pilots limited liability protection as long as they follow appropriate procedures, as long as they have the required flight experience and maintain insurance. My amendment would not eliminate liability but would limit it in certain circumstances. Furthermore, volunteer pilots who do not meet all requirements or who are guilty of gross negligence or intentional misconduct don't have any protections. Furthermore, the pilots are required to maintain liability insurance to qualify for the protection.

In the 1997 Volunteer Protection Act, Congress recognized that the willingness of volunteers to offer their services is deterred by a potential for liability actions against them. I think that makes common sense. I think we all understand that. This amendment remains true to congressional intent and removes a disincentive that keeps pilots from volunteering to fly financially needy medical patients, humanitarian and charitable efforts, or other flights of compassion to save lives and to provide great benefit to the public.

Pilots are not going to get more reckless or choose to act more dangerously because they have liability protection. Pilots are already at risk, and they are a risk-adverse group because every time they fly, they take their own life in their hands—regardless of why they are flying. These pilots are acting out of the goodness of their hearts and willingness to help.

Fortunately, accidents are infrequent, and anecdotally I am told that in the past 10 to 15 years, there have been perhaps five or six lawsuits involving volunteer pilots and volunteer pilot organizations. So the problem isn't that that is actually going to happen, but it is the fact that there is a deterrent there to discourage people from doing what they want to do, what a Good Samaritan does. The volunteer pilot organizations that work to coordinate volunteer pilots do not need to maintain databases of lawsuits and the results of lawsuits precisely because they are so infrequent. If there were a lot of accidents and resulting law suits, I think it is fair to say the FAA, NTSB, and volunteer pilot organizations themselves would be investigating whether volunteer pilot activity was a safe activity to begin with.

The larger concern for volunteer pilot organizations is that pilots will not volunteer for fear of being involved in a lawsuit, which would then prevent a needy service from being provided. So it is more about what the lawyers say the potential could be, and that has a direct impact on recruitment for volunteer pilots. Looking ahead, if a pilot were ever successfully sued and his or her assets were at risk, it would be too late to act to prevent a mass exodus of volunteer pilots.

This amendment is about making sure there continues to be volunteers who are willing to provide much-needed assistance. The amendment is not agreed to yet, but it recognizes the value of volunteer pilots and their contribution to the public good. I urge my colleagues to be supportive of this effort.

In conclusion, I thank Senator THUNE for his leadership, as well as Senator NELSON, for bringing this bill to the floor. I look forward to a robust amendment process.

In fact, I encourage anyone who has an amendment to come down, present his amendment, and talk about it. One of the problems we had during the highway bill was not being able to get Members to bring their amendments down, and it ended up delaying the bill for several weeks, which was totally unnecessary. I also encourage the House to take up and pass this bill.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Ms. HIRONO pertaining to the introduction of S. 2784 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Ms. HIRONO. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Hawaii for her leadership on this issue, and I will be yielding the floor to the lead sponsor of today's effort.

Our Nation is built on the belief that anyone who works hard should have the opportunity to achieve the American dream. Yet there are women across this country who are doing the same job as their male colleagues and being paid less. That is why today, on National Equal Pay Day, I stand with my fellow Senators to renew our efforts to ensure equal pay for equal work.

Fifty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, women still only earn 79 cents on every dollar paid to a man. This wage gap is even worse for women of color. African-American women who work full time make only 60 cents for every dollar paid to white males. Hispanic women earn only 55 cents.

Women are paid less even when factors such as age, education, occupation, and work hours are taken into consideration. In nearly every occupation in our country, women's median earnings are less than their male competitors. It is no different for women in my State of Illinois. The median earning for Illinois women is $10,000 less than the median earning for men. While African-American women in Illinois make slightly more than the national average, Hispanic women are paid even less—48 cents on the dollar. Think about that. Hispanic women are making less than half the earnings of their male coworkers who have similar levels of education and do the same job. This isn't right, and it isn't fair.

The gender wage gap translates into nearly $11,000 less in median earnings for women each year and over $430,000 in lost wages over a lifetime. Now that women are the sole or primary breadwinners in 4 out of 10 families, this means less money for food, housing, and education. It is no wonder the poverty rate for female heads of households continues to be disproportionately high.

This disparity follows women into their retirement since retirement savings and Social Security are based on income earned. In Illinois, the average weekly Social Security benefit for female retirees is 77.3 percent of the average for Illinois males per week. While female retirees receive less, on average, compared to men under Social Security, women tend to live longer and spend more on medical care, forcing them to do more with less.

What would happen if we closed this wage gap? Amazing things. Sixty percent of women would earn more if they were paid the same wages as their male counterparts, nearly two-thirds of single working mothers would receive a pay increase, and the poverty rate for women would be cut in half. It would mean fewer families in poverty and fewer families would need safety net programs. Equal pay for equal work would also mean women and their families would have more to spend on basic goods and services, and that is good for our economy.

So what do we have to do to close this wage gap? We can pass the Paycheck Fairness Act introduced by my colleague Senator MIKULSKI and my friend and colleague Senator MURRAY. Employers still maintain policies that punish employees who voluntarily share salary information with coworkers. This makes it nearly impossible for employees to find out whether they are being paid fairly.

This bill would provide women the same remedies for pay discrimination as people who are subjected to discrimination based on race and national origin. It would also close loopholes in current law that still permit retaliation against workers who disclose their wages.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would build on the success of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which clarified the 180-day statute of limitations for filing a lawsuit on pay discrimination that resets with each affected paycheck. This was the first bill signed into law by President Obama in 2009. The Senator from Maryland remembers that day because President Obama signed the bill, took the first pen that he used to sign it, and handed it to the Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. I remember that because I stood there and thought: That is entirely appropriate that a Senator who has dedicated her life to this kind of fairness and equality for women at work would receive the first pen from the first bill signed into law by this new President.

My Republican colleagues: Why aren't you with us on this issue? Don't you agree that your daughter should be paid the same as your son for doing the same work? It is a basic issue of fairness. It shouldn't have anything to do with party labels, so we invite you to join us. This should not be a partisan issue at all. Certainly for women at work, it is not partisan. It is just a matter of fairness. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join my colleagues in calling for equal pay for equal work for women.

I just left the President of the United States. He is right up the street at the Sewall-Belmont House. This is the home of the National Woman's Party in which so much organizing and strategizing took place to get women the right to vote. The President is there to declare that building a national monument to commemorate the tremendous work that was involved in getting suffrage, under the Antiquities Act, and that is his right to create that.

It is not only the building we want to preserve. It is not only the records of the battle for suffrage that we want to preserve and be able to display. It is what it stands for: the fact that women are included fully in our society.

We had to fight every single day in every single way to be able to advance ourselves. Even when the men were in Philadelphia writing the Constitution, thinking great thoughts and doing great deeds, Abigail Adams was back in New England running the family farm, keeping the family together, and she wrote John a letter saying: Don't forget the ladies because if you do, we will ferment our own revolution.

In our country, we call revolutions social movements where ordinary people organize and mobilize to accomplish great deeds to move democracy forward. It took us over 150 years to get the right to vote in 1920. We are coming up on the anniversary of suffrage, but it is not only that we got the right to vote, it is what that right to vote means. We wanted to be able to participate fully in our society. We wanted to be able to exercise our voice in terms of choosing leaders who will choose the right policies. Along the way, we have been advocating those policies.

In 1963, working with the President, who was committed to civil rights, Lyndon Johnson, the equal pay for equal work act was passed as part of a great step forward in three major civil rights bills. We thought we had settled the issue, but, no, 50 years later we have only gained 19 cents—19 cents. At that rate, it will take us until 2058 to get equal pay for equal work. That is not the way it should be. We need to make sure we eliminate the barriers and impediments that allow this to keep happening.

When we women fight for equal pay, we are often sidelined, redlined, pink-slipped, harassed, or intimidated. We

are often confronted with: Why are you doing this? And then we are often harassed for doing it.

People may say: Senator BARB, didn't you take care of that when you passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009. The Lilly Ledbetter legislation, of which I am so proud, has kept the courthouse doors open by changing the statute of limitations, but now we need to pass legislation to end the loopholes that are often strangleholds on women getting equal pay in the first place.

I have legislation pending called the Paycheck Fairness Act. That Paycheck Fairness Act does three things. First of all, it stops retaliation for even sharing pay information in the workplace. Right now, if you ask, you are forbidden to tell, or get fired. If you ask, you are forbidden to tell, or get fired, or if you are a man working side by side with a woman and you want her to know that as a nurse, as a computer software engineer, what your pay is, and there is an opportunity, she could get fired and he could get fired. This is wrong.

We also want to stop employers from using any reason to pay women less, such as he has a better education. Use the same education for the same job. We are willing to compete. We are out there. More women are in college. More women are Phi Beta Kappas. More women are getting ahead.

Then we heard: He has to be paid more because he is the breadwinner. What are we, crumbs? If he wins the bread, we want to be winners too. Very often it is women in the marketplace who are now either the sole breadwinner or also a significant breadwinner, and the men or the partner they love says: We want you to get equal pay for equal work as well.

So we don't want to hear: He is the breadwinner. We don't want the crumbs anymore. We want to be paid equal pay for equal work. We also want punitive damages for women who are discriminated against. Backpay alone is not a strong enough deterrent.

I want my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to know they have ideas. One of my colleagues spoke on the floor earlier today. I have such admiration for her. She is a fine Senator, and she agrees with the thrust of the press conference we had. We have faced this in the past, where we share the same goal, but we differ on means. My means, I must say, are the way forward. These means are the way forward because they solve the problems.

Of course, we will sit down and talk, have conversations, and see what we can do, but at the end of the day, we face this issue: It costs more to be a woman. Women pay more for everything. Women pay more in medical costs than men, given the same age and the same health status. Women pay a significant amount of money for childcare. Guess what. Women get charged more for dry cleaning. We have to pay more for our blouses being cleaned than men to have their shirts washed and pressed.

We are tired of being taken to the cleaners. We want equal pay for equal work. Whether we are U.S. Senators, whether we are nurses or executive assistants or others, we want equal pay for equal work.

We stand with the women's soccer team. They kick the ball around, but we are tired of being kicked around. So give us equal pay for equal work. Pass the Mikulski coeffort to get equal pay for equal work. I think we can then move forward. Why should our women go to the Olympics winning the gold, when they don't get paid the gold? So it is time for a change, time for a difference, and time for something we can do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I wish to say a special thank-you to Senator MIKULSKI for her terrific leadership on all of this.

Today is Equal Pay Day. By the sound of it, one would think it is some sort of historic holiday commemorating the anniversary of a landmark day that our country guaranteed equal pay for women, but that is not what it is about—not even close—because in the year 2016, at a time when we have self-driving cars and computers that fit on our wrists, women still make only 79 cents for every $1 a man makes, and we are still standing in the U.S. Congress debating whether a woman should get fired for asking what the guy down the hall makes for doing exactly the same job.

So why do we recognize April 12 as Equal Pay Day? It took the average woman working from January 1 of last year until today to make as much as the average man made in 2015. That means she had to work an extra 3½ months in order to make what a man made last year, and that means, once again, she starts the year in a hole.

Equal Pay Day isn't a national day of celebration. It is a national day of embarrassment.

We hear a lot about how the economy is improving, and there is good news to point to. Unemployment is under 5 percent, GDP continues to rise, the stock market is up, but too many families across the country feel like the game is rigged against them. They work hard, they play by the rules, and they still struggle to make ends meet. Here is the thing: They are right. The game is rigged against working families, and pay discrimination is part of that.

For women, it has been a one-two punch in the gut. For decades, wages have flattened out for American workers, and for women the wage gap just compounds that problem. If we closed both the productivity wage gap and the gender wage gap from 1979 to 2014, women's median hourly wages would be 70 percent higher today.

Even though we have solid data, the Republicans in Washington refuse to act. Heck, they would rather spend their time trying to defund Planned Parenthood health clinics and cut women's access to birth control than do anything—anything at all—to give working women a raise.

So, yes, the game is rigged when women earn less than men for doing the same work. It is rigged when women can be fired for asking how much the guy down the hall makes for doing the same job. It is rigged when women have to choose between healthy pregnancies and getting their paychecks. It is rigged when women can get fired just for requesting a regular work schedule to go back to school or get a second job. It is rigged when women earn less their whole lives so that their Social Security checks are smaller and their student loans are bigger. The game is rigged against women and families, and it has to stop.

I am standing with my colleagues today. I am standing with women and friends of women all over the country to demand equal pay for equal work. It is 2016—not 1916—and it is long past time to eliminate gender discrimination in the workforce. This is about economics, but it is also about our values. It is about who we are as a people and what kind of country we are trying to build for both our sons and our daughters.

Today, we recognize Equal Pay Day, and we fight today because we don't want to have to recognize it year after year after year in the future.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today on Equal Pay Day to stand up and speak out about an issue that impacts women and families in every State across this great country. I rise to give voice to the fact that there is paycheck inequality for working women across this country, and it is time that we do something about it.

Working women make up over 50 percent of our workforce, and they are working harder than ever to get ahead. But far too many are barely getting by, and far too many women and children are living in poverty. In Wisconsin, the economy is lagging behind other States. Household incomes are falling and communities across our State are experiencing job loss and layoffs. In fact, recent reports have concluded that poverty in Wisconsin has reached alarming levels.

The least we can do is to level the playing field and give women a fair shot at getting ahead, because they deserve equal pay for equal work. So I am proud to join several of my colleagues

today to deliver a call for action to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I would like to share the story of Shannon. Shannon is a single mother of three from Two Rivers, WI. She is working hard to support her family. In order to help her family get ahead, Shannon has continued her education to advance her career as an interpreter in a school. But she faces the grim reality that women teachers are often paid less than their male counterparts.

It is not just teaching. When we look at men and women working equivalent jobs across different industries, women are making less than their male counterparts across the country. This paycheck inequality is holding women back, and it is holding our entire economy back. Closing the gender pay gap would give Shannon and her family more financial freedom to better deal with the daily issues that working moms face. Whether it is an unexpected car problem or children outgrowing their clothing and their shoes, whether it is help to pay off student loan debt or the ability to save a little bit of their paycheck to ensure that their kids have a chance for a higher education, working families across America need paycheck fairness to ensure they have a fair shot at getting ahead.

Millions of American women get up every day to work hard for that middle class dream—a good job that pays the bills, health care coverage you can rely on, a home that you can call your own, and a secure retirement. But instead, gender discrimination in pay is holding women and their families back.

Let's pass the Paycheck Fairness Act and strengthen families and our economy by providing working women with the tools they need to close the gender pay gap. By taking action, we will show the American people our commitment to building an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top.

Before I yield, I wish to take a moment to thank and recognize the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, for her tremendous leadership on this issue. It has been an honor to serve alongside such a champion for women and families, and I am looking forward to continuing this particular fight together and winning this fight together.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first thank Senator BALDWIN for her comments. I agree with her statement, and I am also grateful for the leadership of the senior Senator from Maryland and the leadership Senator MIKULSKI has shown on gender issues. The paycheck fairness legislation is just a recent example of her extraordinary leadership throughout her career on gender equity issues.

I particularly wanted to be here not only to say how proud I am of Senator MIKULSKI but also to state that the Paycheck Fairness Act is not about women. It is about families, about our economy, and about fairness. It is about American values. It affects everyone in America. We all should be personally engaged in making sure paycheck fairness becomes law. To this Senator, it is outrageous that a woman has to work 5 days at the same work that a man works in 4 days for the same pay. That is inherently unfair and needs to be corrected. The Paycheck Fairness Act would do that.

I note that today is Equal Pay Day, which basically reflects how long a woman has to work—basically without getting a paycheck—in order to get paid for the same amount of work as a man does in a year.

As the Presiding Officer knows, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this Senator has the privilege of being the ranking member on the committee. One thing we look at is how other countries deal with basic rights. One of those rights is how they treat their women. One of the barometers for determining how well a country does is how well they are treating women. If they treat women well, they are generally doing much better.

The truth of the matter is, in many cases women do better in investments than men. They invest in children, families, and economic growth, whereas men are more likely to invest in war. We see much more economic growth where women are treated fairly in other countries.

It is an important value for America. We have promoted gender equity issues in our foreign policy, our development assistance, and in our diplomacy. But for us to be effective globally, we first need to take care of our issues at home.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would do exactly that. It would deal with the issue of fairness in the workplace in America. We are not where we need to be. Everybody talks about the fact that women aren't paid as much; and that is true. But if you happen to be a minority, it is even worse. We need to take care of this for the sake of the American economy, for our values, et cetera.

This Senator has introduced legislation that would allow us to pick up the ratification of the equal rights amendment so that we could have in the Constitution of the United States fairness with no gender discrimination. This would be a lot easier. We only need three States in order to ratify it and to become a part of our Constitution. The late Justice Scalia noted accurately that there is nothing in the Constitution that requires discrimination against women; but there is nothing in the Constitution that protects discrimination based upon gender. We can do a better job with fundamental changes.

What we can do in this Congress now is to take on paycheck fairness. That can get done in this Congress and can be effective this year and can be the legacy of this Congress. I would urge my colleagues: Let's do this. We all talk about gender equity issues. With the bill that is pending on paycheck fairness, we can act and we can act now. We can make a major change in American policy that will not only be fair to women but will be fair to all Americans and allow our economy to grow.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my esteemed colleague from Maryland, who is here with a number of other people to talk about the need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to make sure that we end once and for all paycheck discrimination against women.

I think the American people believe very strongly in fairness, equal treatment, and a level playing field for everyone, because these are core American values. I think that is why people find it shocking and unacceptable that women in the United States continue to be denied equal pay for equal work.

More than half a century ago, President Kennedy signed into law the Equal Pay Act, yet today wage discrimination continues as an ugly reality across our Nation. Women earn only about 79 cents for every $1 men earn. It is a disparity that exists at all levels of education, in nearly every industry, across hundreds of occupations, from elite professionals to everyday blue-collar workers. There are complex factors that contribute to the gender pay gap, but according to a new study by the Joint Economic Committee, as much as 40 percent of the pay gap can be attributed to outright discrimination.

Probably, most people who have watched TV in the last couple of weeks have seen one particularly egregious example that has been cited, and that is the U.S. women's soccer team, whose members make only about one-quarter of what their male counterparts make. Both the women's and men's soccer teams work for the same employer, the U.S. Soccer Federation. The women's soccer team generates significantly more revenue than the men's team. It has won the Women's World Cup three times, including last year. It has been the Olympic champion four times and has been the world's top-ranked team for nearly two decades. Yet they are paid a quarter of what men make. It is hard to understand that under any circumstances except outright discrimination.

As outrageous as that case is, the wage gap is even more damaging to the

40 percent of American women who are sole or primary breadwinners in households with children, to the women who are waitresses and certified nursing assistants, and to secretaries who work at jobs where equal pay is not only about fairness but it is also about providing adequately for their families. It is about being able to afford Internet access so their kids can do their homework. It is about paying for their child's inhaler. There is a lot that women breadwinners can do with that extra $10,800 that women would earn on average if it were not for pay discrimination.

I also serve as the ranking member on the Senate's Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, and I have seen how similar gender gaps confront women-owned small businesses. Just as women on average are paid 21 percent less than men, a recent Commerce Department study found that the odds of businesses owned by women winning a Federal contract are about 21 percent lower than for otherwise similar companies—for male-owned enterprises.

In workplaces across America, women are speaking out more and more and are demanding equal pay. It is time for Congress to do our job as well. I know from experience that legislation can make a difference. As Governor, I signed a law to prohibit gender-based pay discrimination in New Hampshire and to require equal pay for equal work. We haven't made as much progress as I would like at this point, but at the time we signed that law, women in New Hampshire were making 69 percent of their male colleagues' wages. Today, they are making 76 percent or a little less than the national average.

Back in the early 1980s, I served on New Hampshire's Commission on the Status of Women. I chaired a report on employment in New Hampshire. At that time, women were only making 59 cents for every dollar a man earned. The conclusion of that report was that this has an impact not just on women, but it is an impact on, of course, their whole family. It is something that their children, their husbands, and their entire family is affected by. If we can close this pay gap for women, it helps not only the women who make up two-thirds of minimum wage workers, but it helps their families. It helps pull their kids out of poverty.

We need to do more at the Federal level, and that is why I strongly support the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation would empower women to negotiate for equal pay, it would close loopholes that courts created in the laws that are already in place, and it would create strong incentives for employers to obey these laws.

This legislation is about basic fairness. It is about equal treatment. It is about creating a level playing field in the workplace for our daughters and our granddaughters and for every American. It also is about making sure that their spouses, their children, and their relatives benefit from making sure that they have the same access to equal pay as the men in the workplace do.

So I urge my colleagues to support the Paycheck Fairness Act. Sixteen years into the 20th century is way past time to make good on our promise of equal pay for equal work in the United States.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are 103 days into 2016, and on Equal Pay Day, that number takes on significant, unfortunate meaning. Women have to work 103 extra days to match what men earned last year. That is unacceptable. Workers should be paid fairly for the work they do, regardless of their gender. Closing the wage gap would help grow our economy from the middle out, not from the top down.

I am glad to be here today with my colleagues to recognize Equal Pay Day, to stand up on behalf of women across the country, and to renew our call to put an end to the wage gap. Last year, I heard from a woman named Sandy from Seattle. Right out of college, Sandy got a job at a local nonprofit. After a couple of months of work, she was just chatting with a male colleague and found out he was offered 20 percent more in salary for doing the exact same job. She thought there had been some mistake. But when she asked about it, her boss told her they could not offer her a pay raise because of budget constraints.

Sandy's story is so common. On average, women today make 79 cents for every dollar a man makes. The pay gap is even wider for women of color. That is not just unfair to women; it hurts our families, and it hurts our economy. Today, 60 percent of working families rely on wages from two earners—60 percent.

More than ever, women are likely to be the primary breadwinner for their family. Women's success in today's economy is critical to families' economic security and to our Nation's economy as a whole. We need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to help close the wage gap. I so appreciate Senator MIKULSKI's tremendous leadership and passion on this issue. Her Paycheck Fairness Act would make it unlawful for employers to retaliate against workers for discussing pay. It does so in a commonsense way that reflects today's reality in the workplace.

It would empower women to negotiate for equal pay. It would close significant loopholes in the Equal Pay Act. It would create strong incentives for employers to provide equal pay. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act is a critical stop on the long list of things we can do to build our economy from the middle out and make sure our country works for all families, not just the wealthiest few.

No matter where they live, no matter their background, no matter what career they choose, on average, women earn less than their male colleagues, even women soccer players on the U.S. Women's National Team. The Women's National Team has won three World Cup titles. They have won four Olympic Gold Medals. But despite all of their success, they are not immune from the pervasive wage gap. In fact, on average as players, they earn four times less than their male counterparts. It is not just about the men. Think about the message the wage gap sends to young girls who see women valued less than men for doing the same work and, in the case of the women's soccer team, doing it so much better.

I am glad members of the women's national soccer team are taking a stand to gain equal pay for the work they do. In the Senate, we are going to keep championing the Paycheck Fairness Act to make equal pay a reality for women across the country. I look forward to an Equal Pay Day in the future that we can actually celebrate, once we finally achieve pay equity regardless of gender.

Until then, my colleagues and I are going to keep fighting on behalf of all women and families until they get the equal pay they have earned.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be here with both of the Senators from Washington, one of the few States that have two Senators who are women. It is great to be here with both of them. I would also like to thank Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI for leading the effort for the Paycheck Fairness Act. She is the longest serving woman in congressional history. She has opened many doors for all of us.

When she first wrote her book about women in the Senate, it was called ''Nine and Counting.'' Well, today, our count is even higher, as there are 20 women in the Senate. She was the first woman—BARBARA MIKULSKI was—to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee. Because of her groundbreaking work in this Congress, 10 committees have either a chair or a ranking member who is a woman.

Today, as the presiding officer knows, President Obama formally dedicated a new national monument to

honor women's suffrage and equal rights. I am a cosponsor of the bill to have the Sewall-Belmont House named as a national historical site. The Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument is named after Alice Paul and Alva Belmont, two leaders of the National Woman's Party. It will house an extensive collection that documents the history of the movement for women's equality.

What has happened in the last decade or so? Well, in 2009, we passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to make sure that workers who face pay discrimination based on gender, race, age, religion, disability, or national origin have access to the courts. In doing so, we restored the original intent of the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Pay Act.

Now it is time to prevent that pay discrimination from happening in the first place. We all know women have made big strides in our country and in our economy over the last few decades. Women are getting advanced degrees. They are starting new businesses. The Fortune 500 now has 20 women CEOs. That does not sound like much, but when you look back just a few decades, there were not any.

Yet, despite all of the progress we have made and all of the gaps that we are starting to close, women in this country still earn only around 80 cents for every dollar a man makes. When two-thirds of today's families rely all or in part on the mother's income—and in about 40 percent of families the mother is, in fact, the main bread winner—this pay gap has real consequences for American families and our entire economy.

I wanted to focus on one issue at the end here, and that is retirement savings, which is maybe not the first thing you would think about when you think about a pay gap. It is probably not what our young pages think about. They don't think: Well, what about the retirement gap? But, in fact, it is something everyone should be thinking about.

When I was the Senate chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I released a report showing how equal pay affects women's financial security. The report showed that lower wages impact women all throughout their working lives, and these lower lifetime earnings translate to less security in retirement.

According to the JEC report, the average annual income for women age 65 and older, including pensions, private savings, and Social Security, is $11,000 less than it is for men. Social Security retirement benefits are based on a person's lifetime earnings. The average monthly benefit for female retirees is 77 percent less. The same thing goes for pensions. A woman's pension income is 53 percent that of men. Women also receive smaller pension checks from Federal, State, and local government pension plans.

Finally, a recent study showed that the average woman was able to save less than half of what the average man was able to save in an IRA. So what we have here is, first of all, women are making less to begin with. That is what we are talking about today. That means they save less and have less money in Social Security. Secondly, they live longer. That is great, but it means they are going to have less money. Then, finally, we have the fact that they are often a single breadwinner in 40 percent of households. The fact that they take time off often to have children—that is the third factor that leads to less savings.

What we should be doing is looking at how we can address the savings gap. There are ways we can address it by making it easier to save and making it easier to set up 401(k)s and IRAs and looking at the millennials and how we can respond to what is an increasingly different economy for young people. But we also can simply make sure women make the same amount as men when they do the same job.

It was the late Paul Wellstone of my State who famously said: ''We all do better when we all do better.'' I still believe that is true today and so do my colleagues who join me. We need to be focused on how we can help more women share in our economic growth and share in the American dream. I ask my colleagues to support and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor with my colleague from Minnesota and my colleague Senator MURRAY from Washington, along with our other colleagues who have already been here to speak about the important issue of paycheck fairness.

It is truly shameful this kind of discrimination still exists. We have heard the statistics about what the pay gap means, but literally over someone's career—over a 40-year career—a woman in my state could lose as much as $500,000 in income. An Asian American woman could lose $700,000 over a 40-year career and a Native American woman could lose as much as $900,000 over the same time period. So, yes, when women are discriminated against, it costs them and their families.

The gender pay gap issue is a family issue. Women are breadwinners too. Women today still earn only 79 cents for every $1 paid to a man. This means less food on the table, less money to buy clothing for their children, or less money for insurance premiums. What we need to do is make sure we are listening to these stories and taking action.

Here is a story from one of my constituents, Adrianna, from Olympia. She said:

> In 1993, when I was in college, I was working at a restaurant. . . . This job enabled me to pay my way through school with no student loans. A young man several years younger than me with less experience was making a larger wage and I found out about it. I politely confronted the owner as to why this fellow was making more money than me. The owner was caught off guard and could give me no reason whatsoever. . . . The thing that really stuck in my craw was that the young man told me he only worked there so he could get money to gamble. . . . Of course, I had no other choice and worked 7 days a week for 5 years to get a Bachelor's degree.

Unfortunately, this story isn't unique. Wage discrimination affects a wide range of professional fields, including realtors, educators, administrators, and even CEOs. For example, male surgeons earn 37 percent more per week than their female counterparts. In real terms, that female surgeon earns $756 less per week than her male colleagues, and this adds up. And this does not apply only to high-paying, male-dominated careers: Women are 94.6 percent of all secretaries and administrative assistants. Yet they still earn only 84 percent of what their male counterparts earn per week.

My colleague Senator MURRAY brought up the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team that helped bring this issue to the forefront. Despite being more successful and attracting more viewers than the men's team, the U.S. women's soccer team still is paid 25 percent less than the men's team.

In fact, one of my constituents last week—an 11-year-old girl soccer player from Washington—asked: If I keep playing sports, am I going to get fair pay?

Young women are asking us to do our job and make sure we pass legislation that helps. That is why we commend Senator MIKULSKI for introducing the Paycheck Fairness Act and for her tireless efforts on this legislation. I am proud to be one of its cosponsors.

The Paycheck Fairness Act requires that pay be job related and not discriminate based on gender. It would strengthen the penalties for discrimination and give women the tools they need to identify and confront unfair treatment. It would make sure we recognize women are breadwinners, too, and that they get the equal pay they deserve.

That is why my colleagues are coming to the floor today to say we should pass this bill this year. We don't need to commemorate another day of what women have done for our country; women need to receive equal pay for the equal work they are doing. I thank my colleagues for helping to bring attention to this issue, and I encourage the passage of this legislation.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Thune/Nelson amendment No. 3464, in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Gardner) amendment No. 3460 (to amendment No. 3464), to require the FAA Administrator to consider the operational history of a person before authorizing the person to operate certain unmanned aircraft systems.

Cantwell amendment No. 3490 (to amendment No. 3464), to extend protections against physical assault to air carrier customer service representatives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, after another whole year, a very unfortunate milestone has once again arrived. Today is Equal Pay Day. This is the day in 2016 when the average working woman, after all last year and the first 3 months of this year, finally earns as much money as the average man did only during last year. So if we started the clock in 2015, the average woman had to work an extra 103 days to earn the same amount of money as a man.

Imagine two people were both hired at a company. They both work hard. They have the same amount of experience and the same qualifications, but they have one very important difference: One of those workers is a man, and the other is a woman. As a result, they will not be paid the same.

Right now, on average, for every dollar a man makes, a woman makes only 79 cents. That is the average for all women. Many other groups of women have it even worse. Working mothers earn only 75 cents for every dollar working fathers make. African-American women earn just 60 cents for every dollar a white male makes. And our Latina women have it the worst. They earn just 55 cents for every dollar a white male makes. The United States of America still doesn't pay its men and women equally for the same exact work, and it is unacceptable that in the year 2016 we are still fighting to fix this basic problem.

Think about how this pay gap affects our families. More women than ever are earning their family's paycheck. Four out of every ten mothers are either the primary breadwinner of the family or the only breadwinner in their family. Because of this pay gap, their children are getting shortchanged.

We need equal pay for equal work. It shouldn't matter if you are a nurse or a lawyer or even one of the best female athletes in the world. Just a couple weeks ago, the women's national soccer team filed a Federal lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation over wage discrimination. I strongly support these women, and they are doing the right thing. They are raising their voices about a serious injustice, and I urge all of my colleagues in this Chamber to listen to these women—listen to the women in their States, and listen to the women in this country that deserve equal pay for equal work. The women on our national soccer team are some of the most successful American athletes alive, and even they have to deal with this pay gap.

It is shameful and inexcusable that women are still paid less than men for the exact same work in this country. I urge everyone here to support the Paycheck Fairness Act. Let's get with the times. Let's finally make it illegal to pay our women less than our men for the very same work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to address the Senate's ongoing effort to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. The bill before us today was described in the Washington Post as ''one of the most passenger-friendly FAA reauthorization bills in a generation'' thanks to its robust new consumer protections. But even more importantly, this bill includes strong new security measures that address the threat ISIS and other terrorist groups pose to airline passengers.

In the wake of the Brussels attacks, travelers are understandably nervous about the threats they face when flying, especially given terrorists' preference for targeting transportation. Here in the Senate, we are doing everything we can to address that threat. I am proud that this bill includes new protections to prevent an attack like the one in Brussels from happening at a U.S. airport.

The FAA Reauthorization Act includes the most comprehensive set of aviation security reforms since President Obama first took office. To prevent airport insiders from helping terrorists, we have included measures to improve scrutiny of individuals applying to work in secure airport areas. This is especially critical as many experts believe the bombing of a Russian passenger jet leaving Egypt had help from an aviation insider.

We have also included provisions to better safeguard public areas outside security in airports and to help reduce passenger backups. These reforms could help prevent a future attack like the one in the Brussels terminal last month, which targeted a crowd of passengers in an area where the attackers didn't even need tickets.

Because staying ahead of threats needs to be a priority, we also included additional cyber security provisions and added anti-terrorism security features for new aircraft.

The security reforms in this legislation were actually developed months ago as followups to congressional oversight, independent evaluations of agencies, and the study of existing problems. But these reforms have gained new urgency in the wake of recent attacks by ISIS. We need to constantly monitor and stay ahead of threats so that we can continue to ensure that our air transportation system is the safest in the world.

More than any other reason, I support the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 because it will make the traveling public safer. For all of the many ways it improves our air transportation system, the provisions to keep Americans safe stand out as especially deserving of our support and as heightening the need to send this legislation on to the House.

I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today is Equal Pay Day. I am proud of the fact that one of our Members on this side of the aisle, Senator DEB FISCHER, is taking the lead and pointing out that this is not a partisan issue. I know people find that hard to believe here in Washington, where everything seems like a partisan issue, but the fact is, both Republicans and Democrats and the unaffiliated believe that people who perform the same work ought to be compensated in the same way. So I am proud of the work Senator FISCHER is doing.

I just wanted to make note of the fact that this is Equal Pay Day. I know some of our colleagues across the aisle maybe have a different view and think they have a better way to deal with this, but it is purely a difference in tactics, not in terms of goals, which is equal pay for equal work.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

Mr. President, yesterday I spoke about the fact that this is also Crime Victims' Week, and that is what I want to talk about now a little bit more.

There are a lot of people who come to Washington—big companies, people can hire lobbyists, lawyers, accountants, other experts—to try to make their case to Congress, but we don't have a crime victims' lobby per se. We have organizations—volunteer organizations, by and large—that try and provide a voice to the voiceless and people who need to be represented here, but the fact is, by listening to those victims of crime and to those who volunteer to help them here in the Nation's Capital, we can make a big difference in the lives of crime victims in this country.

I highlighted the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act as an example of what we can accomplish when we get past the partisan talking points and instead focus on a common goal. I pointed out that legislation, which is the most—I think the major—the most significant human trafficking legislation passed in the last 25 years, actually broke important ground. It uses the penalties and the fines paid by people on the purchasing side of the sex slave trade to be able to fund the resources to help heal the victims, typically a girl the age of 12 to 14, somebody who has maybe run away from home, who thinks maybe they have fallen in love with somebody new, only to find themselves trapped in modern-day human slavery. We were able to pass that legislation by a vote of 99 to 0 in the Senate, and now it is the law of the land.

I mentioned yesterday that some of the provisions, including the hero program, which was designed to provide incentives for returning veterans of the gulf war, Iraq, and Afghanistan—some of them bearing the wounds of those wars—to be able to use the skills they have acquired in the military to help go after child predators and other people who would take advantage of the most vulnerable in our society. But I wish to talk about another opportunity where I believe Congress can come together to rally behind victims and move legislation that could help save lives.

On the first day of December 2013, Kari Hunt Dunn brought her three young children to a hotel in Marshall, TX, a city east of Dallas near the border with Louisiana, to visit with her estranged husband. Sadly, this visit turned into tragedy. According to reports, Kari's estranged husband started to attack her and while he did, one of Kari's daughters did what her parents and family taught her to do in an emergency, which is to dial 9-1-1. She called for help repeatedly, but she didn't realize that, as in many hotels, first you need to dial 9 before you can dial out. So she kept dialing 9-1-1 to no avail, not recognizing that she needed to dial 9 to get an outside line. By the time help finally arrived, Kari was unresponsive and later died, leaving her three young children behind.

Obviously this is a terrible, heartwrenching story, and I wish I could say it was an isolated event, but it is made that much more tragic because the family will never know what the outcome might have been had that first 9-1-1 call actually made its way to the proper authorities.

Following her death, Kari's father Hank decided he had to do something to correct the problem so tragedies like this could hopefully become a thing of the past. This is where we have a role to play. I know some people might say: Well, there are a lot more important things for Congress to be doing than dealing with this issue, but this is something we can do. It is not partisan, and we should do it on an expedited basis.

So earlier this year, I joined with several of my colleagues, including the senior Senators from Nebraska and Minnesota, to introduce legislation called Kari's Law, a bipartisan bill that already has a companion in the House. This legislation builds on a law passed last year by the Texas legislature, and several other States have followed suit as well.

Before us we have a clearer, albeit a discrete, problem, and we have an obvious solution. This bill would ensure that people have the ability to directly call 9-1-1, even in hotels and office buildings, without having to dial an extra number. By making this simple change, we can ensure that children, like Kari's daughter, can make the call for help, to call for the assistance of law enforcement and emergency personnel to save valuable time that can make the difference between life and death and the prevention of another tragedy.

We should follow the example of States like Texas that have already done this. We could do this on a national basis. We know there are lives at stake, like Kari's, and I believe we have an obligation to act to keep tragedies like Kari's from happening again.

So as we continue to look for ways to better support victims of crime this week, I hope we will take another small step to help victims by advancing this legislation. In so many instances, they are what seem like small steps that can have tremendous ramifications.

I mentioned yesterday the reforms we have been able to do in terms of testing the rape kit backlog. It had been reported that as many as 400,000 untested rape kits are sitting in evidence lockers in police stations or perhaps in labs untested, and I talked a little bit about the fact that in Houston alone, thanks to the leadership of the then mayor and the city council, working with State and Federal authorities, they were able to eliminate the rape kit backlog testing and come up with 850 hits on the database that showed there were individuals whose DNA was tested and located on this forensic evidence that was already in this FBI background database known as CODIS. There are things we can do that may seem small but can have a dramatic impact on the lives of our constituents.

So I suggest that we don't give up and we continue to do what we can, where we can, when we can, and passing Kari's Law would be another important step in that direction.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY CLEARY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today Beverly Cleary, a storied and award-winning author, is going to be celebrating her 100th birthday. Throughout her 66-year career, Beverly Cleary has written more than 40 children's books, selling over 90 million copies by enchanting readers of all ages with the escapades of Ramona, Henry, Ralph S. Mouse, and so many wonderful characters. With enduring and relatable themes of adventure, adolescence, and friendship, Ms. Cleary's novels have withstood the test of time and have established their place in the pages of Oregon's cultural heritage.

Beverly Cleary was born on April 12, 1916, in McMinnville, OR. At an early age, she moved to Portland, where she developed a passion for Oregon that shines throughout the pages of her stories. For years, Beverly Cleary's characters have called Portland home, and

for the countless children who grew up with her writing, Ms. Cleary's stories have been their haven. Her book series ''Ramona'' and ''Henry Huggins'' are both set in Portland and continue to serve as important threads throughout Oregon's literary fabric.

Ms. Cleary's impact on the State of Oregon and the city of Portland have not gone unnoticed. Her honors include a public K–8 school in Portland, the Beverly Cleary School, which some of my staff actually attended, and a public art installation at the Hollywood branch of the Multnomah County Library which features many of her books' neighborhood landmarks. Portland's Grant Park is home to a public sculpture garden with bronze statues of Ramona Quimby, Henry Huggins, and Ribsy.

It is Beverly Cleary's unbound passion and dedication to children's literature that have earned her numerous literary awards, including a National Book Award, a Newberry Medal, and a National Medal of Art. In 2000 the Library of Congress even named her a ''Living Legend.''

Just as original Beverly Cleary fans enjoyed reading about the lives and adventures of her characters, each new generation of young Beverly Cleary readers finds a similar connection with those same characters. Ms. Cleary's books have sparked the imagination of so many children across America, helping instill literary skills that last a lifetime.

When it comes to literacy, the importance of reading at an early age simply cannot be overstated. An early introduction to reading is one of the most significant factors influencing a child's success in school. It is linked to better speech and communication skills, improved logical thinking, and increased academic excellence. It is clear that young children who develop a love for reading have an upper hand both in the classroom and later in life.

Thanks to Ms. Cleary, generations of kids across the world can experience Oregon from a literary perspective. One would be hard-pressed to find another author who has made such a lasting impact on children's literature. So it is an enormous honor and a great personal pleasure for me to come to the Senate floor this afternoon to honor Beverly Cleary's contribution to literary history, to Oregon, and to children everywhere, and to wish her a very happy 100th birthday.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOLD KING MINE SPILL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last August several Western States and Indian tribes suffered an enormous environmental disaster. It was called the Gold King Mine spill. In this disaster, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency caused a spill of 3 million gallons of toxic waste water into a tributary of the Animas River in Colorado.

This photograph shows the before and after. People all across the country remember this picture and the poisoning of this river by the EPA. This plume of toxic waste threatened people in Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. It stretched to the land of the Navajo Nation and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

When the Indian Affairs Committee held a hearing on the Gold King Mine spill last September, we heard testimony from Russell Begaye. He is the President of the Navajo Nation, which has lands roughly the size of the State of West Virginia, a very large piece of land. President Begaye told our committee that for the Navajo people, water is sacred, and the river is life for all of us.

He said: Today, we are afraid to use the river—with an emphasis on the word ''afraid.'' The EPA caused that spill more than 8 months ago because it made crucial mistakes, critical mistakes. It failed to take basic precautions.

Well, we still have not gotten answers to some very important questions. Now that the snow in the Rocky Mountains is beginning to melt, people in this very area, in the course of this river, are worried that they are being victimized once again by the failures of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. They want to know if melting snow is going to stir up the lead and the mercury and the other poisons that have settled to the bottom after this poisonous spill.

They want to know if this blue river is going to turn bright yellow again. Well, next week I am chairing a hearing in Phoenix, AZ, and it is a field hearing of the Indian Affairs Committee. We are going to be looking at the Environmental Protection Agency's unacceptable response to Indian tribes. This includes inadequate handling of the Gold King Mine disaster. It includes the Agency dragging its feet on cleaning up the cold-water uranium mines across the Navajo and the Hopi reservations.

The members of these tribes deserve to hear directly from the EPA. They want answers about what is being done to fix this blunder. From what I have seen lately, I expect the Environmental Protection Agency will be doing its best to avoid giving any answer at all. When we, the Indian Affairs Committee, first invited the Agency to send a representative to this hearing to update us, they refused. It is astonishing; they refused. They said they would send written testimony instead.

I don't think the EPA understands how this works. We are holding this field hearing to do oversight on this catastrophe that the EPA caused. This is not optional for them. This is not supposed to be just another chance for the EPA to show how uncooperative and unhelpful they can be. So tomorrow the Indian Affairs Committee plans to issue a formal subpoena for the EPA Administrator, Gina McCarthy, to appear at the field hearing.

Ms. McCarthy testified last year. When she testified before our committee in Washington last September, she said that the Agency was taking—her words—''full responsibility'' for the spill. Today, the Agency will not even come and look these people in the eye. Does that sound as though it is taking ''full responsibility''?

When this disaster first happened, the EPA did not notify the Navajo Nation until a full day after the spill. After 4 days, the EPA still had not reported to the Navajo leaders that there was arsenic in the water. This disaster happened more than 8 months ago. No one—no one at the Agency has been fired. No one has even been reprimanded for their failure.

What has the EPA done? Well, here is a headline from the Wall Street Journal on Friday, April 8: ''Toxic-Spill Fears Haunt Southwest.'' In the southwestern part of the country, according to this article, it has been months since the Agency has been back to test the safety of the well water for the families near the river. Officials in New Mexico and in Utah say the EPA has failed to spearhead a comprehensive plan to manage the spring runoff or even to conduct long-term monitoring.

The States and the tribes are having to monitor the water quality themselves. Why, you ask? Well, it is because the EPA was not planning to test enough sites or provide real-time data. That is what people need. What good is the data if it is not telling people that the water they are drinking right now is safe? Why tell people that the water they drank a week ago or a month ago was contaminated? They need to know about the water today.

There are 200,000 people who drink from the river system that the EPA poisoned last summer. Why has the Environmental Protection Agency walked away from these families? Why is this Agency not taking full responsibility for making sure this mess has been cleaned up? I am not alone in asking that. This article about the ''Toxic-Spill Fears Haunt Southwest'' in the Wall Street Journal on Friday goes further.

They actually quote the State environment secretary from New Mexico, who lives there, lives on the land, and knows the situation. This is the State environment secretary. He says: The

fundamental problem is, there is no engagement from the EPA. None.

This is a specific, definite, concrete, environmental disaster. It was caused by specific people at the Environmental Protection Agency. This is about a government agency failing to do its job. They took their eye off the ball. They caused this toxic spill. They still have not focused on cleaning up the mess that they caused.

Like so much in Washington, DC, the EPA has grown too big, too arrogant, too irresponsible, and too unaccountable. People in America deserve accountability. We all want a clean environment. That is not in dispute. We all know the original mission of the Environmental Protection Agency was a noble one. Somewhere along the line, this Agency lost its way. It got preoccupied with other things, and it lost sight of its real job, which is to protect the environment.

Instead, we get this. When President Begaye of the Navajo Nation testified before the Indian Affairs Committee last fall, he was very clear. This is what he said: The Navajo Nation does not trust the U.S. EPA, and we expect it to be held fully accountable. Let me repeat. The Navajo Nation does not trust the U.S. EPA. We expect it to be held fully accountable.

I think the Navajo Nation and other tribes in the West are right to not trust the EPA. They are right to expect it to be held fully accountable. That is exactly what we intend to do with this field hearing next week. Indian Country and all of America need to know if the EPA can do its job. From what they see here, they have serious, serious doubts. These people do not need a written statement. They need to hear straight from the people in charge and that means from Gina McCarthy, who is the head of the EPA.

Next Friday, April 22, is Earth Day. According to press reports, Administrator McCarthy is planning to go to New York that day for a big media event around the Paris climate change treaty. That is what she is planning for next Friday, the day of this important hearing—a day when the EPA just wants to send written testimony.

It is her preference to be in New York talking about what happened in Paris instead of going to Arizona to face the people her Agency has abandoned. That is what she thinks is more important. That is the way this administration prioritizes its activity—a photo op in New York, not meeting with the people whose lives her Agency has devastated. The director of the EPA still does not have her priorities straight. It should not have to come down to a subpoena. The Environmental Protection Agency should have done the right thing from the very beginning.

It is up to the EPA to do the right thing now. On Earth Day, of all days, we need to hear from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DOMESTIC STEEL INDUSTRY CRISIS

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the severity of the crisis facing our domestic steel industry. Workers are losing their jobs, families are losing their homes, and communities are suffering.

For several years our domestic industry has been under constant attack. Our steel industry is in the midst of a crisis more severe than the one experienced nearly two decades ago. Global demand for steel has not kept pace with global production. As a result, many of the global producers have come here to the United States to try to dump their steel. As a result of that, domestic producers continue to lose ground, surrendering a record-high 29 percent market share to foreign-made steel last year. The industry currently has about a 65-percent capacity utilization rate, and in Indiana we saw an 8-percent downturn in production last year.

As a Senator from Indiana—a State that accounts for one-quarter of all domestic steel capacity—I visit with steelworkers and their families to listen to their concerns about the impact of illegally traded steel flooding our market. Hoosier families are worried. Steel plants are idling, and more than 1,000 Hoosier workers have been laid off as a direct result of the illegally dumped steel that flooded our market last year. These are workers who come up to me at church on Sundays or stop by my office. They look me in the eye and ask me to explain how other nations get to produce and sell steel under a different set of rules. These workers have never asked me or anyone else for a handout; they simply ask that all parties compete on a level playing field because these Hoosier steelworkers know how valued their steel products are here and abroad.

Congress and the Obama administration must work together to not only prevent further job losses but to allow the steel industry to grow. When families face the uncertainty of a plant idling, they must prepare for the worst. All the while, small businesses that reside in communities relying on the steel industry's success suffer because families are no longer able to purchase goods and services, such as groceries and clothes and things for their home, because they are just trying to survive.

The current situation only reinforces my long-held belief that strong trade policies strengthen communities and ensure good employment for our workers, and they maintain a level playing field to foster the kind of fair competition that leads to robust markets. However, as we know all too well, such policies only work when everyone plays by the same rules.

I appreciate the work of my colleagues here in the Senate and across the Capitol in the House who have come together and worked in a bipartisan fashion to provide the administration with the significant tools they need to combat this historic influx of foreign-made steel.

As my colleagues may recall, Congress recently passed the Leveling the Playing Field Act and also the ENFORCE Act to help our steel industry investigate and better fight unfair trade practices. While there is more to be done, the administration should use these important tools we have provided to vigorously defend our domestic industry from those who willingly do not play by the rules. Strict enforcement of the law is necessary to protect our domestic industry now and to deter bad actors from abusing the system in the future.

Good, strong communities and good, strong cities like Portage and Gary and Crawfordsville and Rockport are relying on the Senate to do the right thing. We must double down on our efforts to combat the illegally traded steel coming into our market. We must do so together not only for the businesses and workers impacted by the onslaught of illegally traded steel but for the communities of children and families who have been linked for generations to the success of our Nation's steel industry. They are counting on us, and we cannot let them down.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAXES AND THE NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, it is springtime in Missouri. Whether it is in our State that joins the Presiding Officer's State of Oklahoma or in Iowa, we are seeing trees begin to bloom. It was great to be home the 2 weeks we were home and again last weekend and see the flowering trees sort of move from north to south and, I guess, south to north. It is one of my favorite times of the year, as it is for a lot of people. Particularly during the 2 weeks we were home, we would not see the blooms of the Dogwoods, and then a couple of days later we would see them farther north in the State than we had seen them before.

People like the spring. They like the great weather, they like to get out and do things with their family—only to be reminded sometimes just how fickle the spring weather is. One thing a lot of people—including most of us—dread at this time of year, however, is that spring comes at about the same time that they have to file their taxes. That date comes this week, and if the weather is not predictable, the increasing reach of the Tax Code should be predictable and is predictable.

Ronald Reagan said that Republicans believe every day is the Fourth of July, and our friends on the other side believe every day is April the 15th. We are having the income come in now and seeing what happens with it. It is the time of year we ought to look at what is happening with the hard-earned dollars American families work for.

It is estimated that Americans will pay about $3.3 trillion in Federal taxes and about half that in State and local taxes. A total of almost $5 trillion—or 31 percent of all the national income in the country—goes to taxes. If, at various levels of government as a country, we are taking 31 percent of the money every family earns, we ought to be thinking about what happens with that and justify every penny of it. Another way of looking at it is that Missourians, and people across the country, will spend more on taxes this year than they spend on food, clothing, and housing combined.

A lot of people might ask where the taxes are coming from. After all, in 2001 and 2003 Congress cut taxes. But that doesn't seem to be the case when we pay the tax bill. While we did cut taxes as a country in 2001 and 2003, in 2009 we put a lot of taxes in place. One prime example of what happened in 2009 is the $1 trillion tax hike in the President's health care bill. Now, $1 trillion over 10 years is a lot of money. It is $100 billion a year that the government hadn't been collecting in taxes but now is.

A few years ago the Ways and Means Committee asked the Congressional Budget Office, along with the Joint Committee on Taxation, to look at what the ObamaCare taxes really meant, and they revised that estimate up. They listed 21 tax increases, including 12 tax increases on the middle class, and those 21 tax increases amounted to a $1 trillion tax hike. A few of those taxes have been delayed for a little bit. We were able to slow down the silly tax on medical devices. Whom they thought that would help when people who voted for that bill and that tax, I don't know, but an extra tax on medical devices seems unreasonable to me. I don't know a single person who ever bought a medical device because they thought they were going to have a good time with it. They bought a medical device because they thought it was necessary for their health.

Then, not only do we collect this money, not only do we collect 31 percent of all the money people work for in taxes, we see the national debt continuing to increase. The national debt held by the public stands at about $13.5 trillion, but the national debt is really closer to $19 trillion because we owe a lot of money as a country and people to the places it has been borrowed from—the Social Security trust fund—and all $19 trillion has to be paid back.

It is hard for most of us to even begin to think how much money that is, $19 trillion, but the gross domestic product—the total value of all the goods and services produced in the country—is less than that. GDP is estimated to be about $17.9 trillion.

Another way to look at the national debt is that we have managed to accumulate a national debt that is more than equal to everything the country produces in a given year. Everything Americans work to make, everything we produce—the value of not just the products we make but the goods and services we make—is now exceeded by the national debt. There is no credible economic measure that would indicate that a country is stronger if the debt is bigger than the value of what it produced as a country.

We have the debt, and then we have the deficit spending. Deficits occur when the government spends more money than it generates in revenue.

Balancing the budget two decades ago wasn't all that easy to do. It required hard choices. But we as a country were able to reach a bipartisan consensus that surpluses are preferable to deficits and that a country is far better off as a result; that a growing economy is better than a stagnant economy; and that the economy is more likely to grow if the government isn't constantly sapping, for no defensible reason, the economic opportunity of people spending their own money to advance themselves and their families forward.

One thing that every model shows is that it is easier to pay off the debt and it is easier to pay the bills of the country if you have an economy that is growing. But regulators who are out of control, and deficit spending hurts economic growth.

If we look at the first year of the Obama administration, adjusted for inflation to today's dollars, that deficit ran about $1.6 trillion. Following that, during the first term it was $1.6 trillion, then $1.4 trillion, then $1.3 trillion, and then $1.1 trillion. That sounds as if the deficit is going down, but it is $1.1 trillion over a budget that just 20 years ago was balanced. It is $1.1 trillion over a budget that a little more than a decade earlier had been a balanced budget.

If we accept this year's number, the average deficit over the last 8 years is $963 billion—right at $1 trillion—and we are borrowing that money and the $19 trillion that came before it at almost the lowest interest rate imaginable. What happens if the borrowing rate goes from where it is to, say, 5 percent? We already see that the interest on the debt is quickly becoming the third biggest government payment—Social Security, Medicare, paying the debt. Things like defending the country, a transportation system that works, health care research—all of those things are way below just the interest we would have on the debt, and that is at the lowest rate ever.

Federal borrowing is really nothing more than a tax on the future. Federal borrowing is nothing more than saying: We want to have what we want to have right now, and we are willing for somebody else to pay the bill for what we want to have right now.

As people sit down and file their taxes over the next 48 hours or so and make final calculations and look at what they made and look at what they are paying—as they have done over the last few weeks and will do over the next couple of days—it is an important time for them to talk to the people they elect to public office: What do you think you are gaining by not making the tough choices? What do you think you are gaining by not doing the things we have already agreed we need the government to do and doing those really well rather than coming up with yet another program that may or may not produce results?

The health care plan is one of those. I had a hospital group in this morning. They had done a calculation of what part of the bill people were paying with their personal money as opposed to insurance that they had to try to protect themselves against health care costs before the Affordable Care Act and what they are paying now. What they found is that before the Affordable Care Act, they were paying 10 percent of the bill with personal money. After the Affordable Care Act, the average person with insurance was paying 20 percent of the bill. So the highest, fastest growing level of debt that hospital had was people with insurance who weren't able to pay the bill because their deductible was so high.

So we managed to raise $1 trillion in taxes, insure almost no one in terms of total numbers—we still have about 30 million people who are uninsured—and in many cases, the people who are insured don't have the coverage they had before.

People need to be asking what we are doing to mortgage the future and what are we getting out of that. Just as Missourians have a responsibility to ensure that their taxes are paid by April 15, we have a responsibility to ensure that their tax dollars are wisely used or not taken from them at all.

I think the fiscal policy of the Obama administration over the last 8 years

has been an irresponsible way to spend people's money. The cost-benefit analysis we asked for comes back with silly things, like we evaluate how much people worry about something or we evaluate how much people's feelings are hurt. What we ought to evaluate is what we get out of these excessive rules and regulations and regulators and inspectors that truly is a benefit as opposed to what do we get that is just one more additional burden that people are asked to pay for and, even worse than that, that then their children and grandchildren are asked to pay for by seeing this accumulated debt.

We hear from our friends on the other side that it was necessary to engage in excessive spending to keep the economy afloat following the recession—the only way to do that is for the Government to play a bigger role in the economy. And what do we have to show for that? The economy is still struggling, the recovery has been unbelievably sluggish at best, and wages are stagnant for middle-class families. Why? One of the reasons is high taxes, combined with the onslaught of red-tape, and regulators that are out of control. The policies coming out of this administration have really made any possible stimulated growth in the economy hard to find.

The challenges of getting healthy economic growth and getting our fiscal house back in order will only become more daunting as the direct and indirect costs of things like the President's health care plan accumulate. I think we ought to all commit ourselves here, as people are coming to the end of this tax-paying season, to work together, to work on both sides of the Capitol and at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue to find solutions for an overtaxed middle class, for out-of-control spending, unsustained long-term debt and interest payments. We need a flatter, fairer, less complicated, and more competitive tax structure.

If we are going to ask the American people to send in 31 cents out of every dollar they make at all levels—some people send in a lot more and some people send in a little less, but 31 cents out of every dollar of income in the country goes to government—the government has a real obligation to see that every one of those 31 cents is spent for a good purpose or not taken from people at all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS CHOICE ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, just a month ago, I was on the Senate floor talking about the struggles of a number of Kansas veterans as they attempted to utilize the Veterans Choice Program that Congress passed nearly 2 years ago. That program is being implemented by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. We looked for many opportunities to try to provide better service, more efficient service, more timely service to our veterans, and Congress ultimately came together and passed the Veterans Choice Act.

As I indicated a month ago and numerous times on the Senate floor, that legislation, that law says if you are a veteran who can't receive the medical services you are entitled to, you have the opportunity to receive those services at a medical facility, a clinic, a physician, or a hospital at home. As an individual Senator who comes from a State as rural as most and more rural than many—and certainly as rural as the Presiding Officer's home State and the home State of the Senator from Missouri—we have a real interest in trying to make certain our veterans who live long distances from a VA hospital can access that medical care.

I thought we took great satisfaction in the passage of that legislation. I certainly did. What we have discovered since then in its implementation has been one handicap, one hurdle, one bureaucratic difficulty, and one challenge after another. While maybe it is difficult for the Department of Veterans Affairs to implement this legislation, they are the ones who ought to suffer the challenges of doing so, not the men and women who served our country.

During my conversation on the Senate floor a month ago, I talked about a number of veterans in Kansas and called them by name. One of those veterans was Michael Dabney, a Kansas veteran from Hill City, KS, in northwest Kansas, in the part of the State that I grew up in.

A piece of good news is that Mr. Dabney is eligible for the Veterans Choice Program because he lives more than 40 miles from a VA facility. So Mr. Dabney qualifies under that Veterans Choice Program, and Mr. Dabney needed surgery and elected to use the Veterans Choice Program. There is a community-based outpatient clinic hosted by the VA in Hays, which is about an hour away from his hometown. He was receiving care and treatment there. The indication was he needed the surgery, and they suggested that he travel to Wichita—another couple hundred miles—for that surgery. But Mr. Dabney suffers from PTSD and indicated that he didn't feel comfortable and capable of traveling that extra 200 miles to receive the surgery.

His primary care provider at the outpatient clinic in Hays indicated to him this: Well, you live more than 40 miles from a facility. You qualify for the Veterans Choice Act. You can have these services provided and this surgery provided at home.

Mr. Dabney elected to do that. Rather than driving another 200 miles for surgery in a city far away, he had the surgery performed at home. That seems like the way this is supposed to work. But the end result was that, according to the VA, he didn't receive preauthorization. So despite his primary care provider telling him that he qualified for the Veterans Choice Act, after getting the service at home, he then started receiving the bills for that service.

In frustration, he then contacted our office, and the folks in my office went to work. Here was an example that I thought we could be successful in solving. The record clearly indicates that his primary care provider, his VA primary care provider indicated he should utilize the Choice Act and have the services, the surgery provided at home. He did so. The VA then declined to pay for those services, and he began receiving the bills.

So we went to bat for Mr. Dabney. Despite our efforts and despite his efforts, he has been told that those bills are due to be paid by him because he didn't get preauthorization. My point today is that the Department of Veterans Affairs ought to be the Federal agency that bends over backwards to help our veterans.

I remember when the current Secretary testified before our Veterans' Affairs Committee in his confirmation hearing, and he indicated that he was going to run the Department in a way that was all focused on meeting the needs of veterans. Yet, just a few weeks ago, Mr. Dabney was told this by the VA. I don't know if they said they are sorry. They simply said: You didn't get preauthorization. You don't qualify. Those bills are your responsibility.

I am here once again trying to highlight what happened. We went to the intermediary TriWest. They thought they could help us accomplish this and get the information that Mr. Dabney acted on and that this ought to be sufficient for the VA to pay the bill. And even with their help, the results from the Department of Veterans Affairs, through their Wichita hospital, said that Mr. Dabney obviously didn't understand the rules, and, therefore, they were not going to see that his bills were paid by the VA.

This seems outrageous to me. The VA, through its employees, indicated he qualified. He relied upon that information, their assurance that he qualified, to have the surgery done at home. He is a veteran who needed surgery. He suffers from PTSD. He would be deserving of all the care, the treatment, and the consideration that could be given a man who served our country so well and suffered the consequences. Yet, despite the assurance that he should use the program, this decision was made: I am sorry, but you didn't dot the i's and cross the t's.

I ask my colleagues to help me as we work our way through the implementation of the Veterans Choice Act. It is

discouraging to me—the number of veterans who tell me how disappointed they are with the Veterans Choice Act—when I thought it was such a great opportunity for their care and well-being. The end result is that many are discouraged, giving up on the Veterans Choice Act and not receiving the care and attention they need from the VA, deciding that the VA should not be their provider. The point is that we are failing them once again. We are failing them veteran by veteran, one at a time.

The consequence is that the program is still not working. You cannot not meet the needs of a veteran and then have an expectation that we have done something useful and beneficial for that veteran.

There is a discussion going on in the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and there are bills led by Senators ISAKSON and BLUMENTHAL that address many of the issues plaguing the VA, ranging from their appeals system to accountability, to remedying the problems associated with the Veterans Choice Act. I urge my colleagues not to allow this opportunity to bypass, to go away. We must take these actions. In my view, this is an example of this problem that the VA should solve on its own. They should find a way to make this work. In their absence to do so, as Members of the Senate—certainly, I, as a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs—we have the obligation to continue to do battle for those who battled for our freedoms and liberties.

I apologized to Mr. Dabney that he has been treated the way he has been by the Department of Veterans Affairs, by his government, and I will continue to fight on a case-by-case basis. But we do have a real opportunity as Republican and Democratic Senators to come together and agree upon a legislative solution to these and many other problems that plague us and plague our veterans.

I simply am here to make the case, hopefully to the Department of Veterans Affairs, that they should find a way to care for this man who served his country and also to ask my colleagues to work together to make certain—in whatever ways legislatively we need act to meet the needs of those who served our country—that we do so.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the opportunity to address this issue and the cause of this veteran and many others.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, before I turn to my prepared remarks, I wish to note that the minority leader came to the floor this morning to complain, again, that the Senate is following the Biden rules on the Supreme Court vacancy.

As I have said before, there is not much that makes the minority leader more mad than when his side is forced to play by its own rules.

So, I won't dwell on his daily missives. Most us around here have grown used to it and don't pay him much mind, especially given his record of leading a Senate where even some Members of his own party were never allowed to offer a single amendment. He voted 25 times to filibuster judicial nominees—including a Supreme Court Justice, and at the time argued there is nothing in the Constitution requiring the Senate to vote on nominees.

And, of course, he will be remembered as the leader who did more damage to the Senate than any other leader in history when he invoked the so-called nuclear option in November of 2013.

''I think just from reading the cases you'll acknowledge that there's politics in legal rulings.'' That is what President Obama said last week when he visited the University of Chicago.

The President met with law students and answered their questions. They asked him about judicial nominations, including his decision to make a nomination to fill Justice Scalia's seat on the Supreme Court. His responses were revealing. I agree with President Obama that too often politics seep into legal rulings. He is right as a factual matter. In fact, I said the same thing on the Senate floor a few days before the President did.

Oddly, those on the left who were up in arms over my remarks were silent on the President's. I suppose that is because, unlike the President, I think it is a bad thing that there is politics in judicial decisionmaking these days. Politics in judicial rulings means that something other than law forms the basis of those decisions. It means the judge is reading his or her own views into the Constitution.

Unlike the President, I believe the biggest threat to public confidence in the Court is the Justices' willingness to permit their own personal politics to influence their decisions. This isn't the first time the President has talked about how he believes Justices should decide cases. He has repeatedly said they should decide cases based on something other than the Constitution and the law. His views on this subject are clear.

When Chief Justice Roberts was confirmed, then-Senator Obama said that in the really hard cases, ''the critical ingredient is supplied by what is in the judge's heart.'' In 2009, President Obama said he views ''empathy'' as an essential ingredient for Justices to possess in order to reach just outcomes. And before he made his most recent Supreme Court nomination, the President said that where ''the law is not clear,'' his nominee's decisions ''will be shaped by his or her own perspective, ethics, and judgment.'' But what is in a judge's ''heart,'' or their personal ''perspective [and] ethics'' have no place in judicial decisionmaking.

The President's idea of what is appropriate for Justices to consider is totally at odds with our constitutional system. We are a government of laws and not a government of judges. I have said before that we should have a serious public discussion about what the Constitution means and how our judges should interpret it. President Obama and I have very different views on those questions. Politics belongs to us—it is between the people and their elected representatives. It is important that judges don't get involved in politics. That is because, unlike Senators, lifetime-appointed Federal judges aren't accountable to the people in elections. It is also because when nine unelected Justices make decisions based on their own policy preferences, rather than constitutional text, they rob from the American people the ability to govern themselves. And when that happens, individual liberty pays the price.

To preserve the representative nature of our government and our constitutional system, our judges need to return to their limited role, and decide cases based on the text of the Constitution and laws that the people's representatives have passed.

President Obama last week described the justices' power as an ''enormous'' one. That is true in a sense. But the Constitution limits the Justices' power to deciding controversies in specific cases that come before them. President Reagan talked about this on the day that Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justice Scalia were sworn in. He recounted how the Founding Fathers debated the role of the judiciary during the summer of 1787. As President Reagan said, the Founders ultimately settled on ''a judiciary that would be independent and strong, but one whose power would . . . be confined within the boundaries of a written Constitution and laws.''

For decades now, the Supreme Court has been issuing opinions purportedly based on the Constitution where the Constitution itself is silent. This kind of judicial decisionmaking usurps the right of Americans to govern themselves on some of the most important issues in their lives. That is what happens, for example, when the Court ''discovers'' rights in the Constitution that aren't mentioned in its text and weren't observed when the Constitution was adopted. The same thing happens with ordinary statutes that Congress passes. If the Justices limited

themselves to saying what the Constitution or statute says about the case before them, their power wouldn't be so ''enormous.'' President Obama says it is not so simple. He says the cases that really matter are the ones where there is some ambiguity in the law. In those cases, President Obama thinks a justice needs to apply ''judgment grounded in how we actually live.''

Again, I disagree. When judges ask what a law should mean, the meaning of a law will change, depending on the judge's ''life experiences'' or what judge happens to hear the case. The people lose control of what their laws say. It is not consistent with our system of self-government.

James Madison—the ''Father of the Constitution''—explained the same thing in a letter to Richard Henry Lee. He said that ''the sense,'' or meaning, ''in which the Constitution was accepted and ratified by the nation'' defines the Constitution. He said that is the only way the Constitution is legitimate. That is because, in Madison's words, ''if the meaning of the text be sought in the changeable meaning of the words composing it,'' the ''shape and attributes'' of government would change over time. And importantly, that change would occur without the people's consent. It wouldn't be consistent with the way we govern ourselves through our representatives.

That is a very different view than the President suggested in Chicago last week when he said that ambiguous cases ask a judge to consider ''how we actually live.'' In President Obama's view, the judge isn't asking what a law meant when it was passed, but what it should mean today. President Obama described this as his ''Progressive view of how the courts should operate.'' With respect to the President, it is my view that the courts shouldn't operate in a political way at all. Not a progressive one, not a moderate one, not a conservative one. Instead, in my view, the courts should operate in a constitutional way that ensures government by the people.

Again, when Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justice Scalia were sworn in, President Reagan touched on this very subject. He said that for the Founding Fathers, the question about the courts was not whether they would be liberal or conservative. The question, President Reagan said, was ''will we have government by the people?'' Judges have a role in ensuring that we have government by the people. They fulfill that role when they try to understand what a law meant—either a statute or the Constitution—when the people's representatives enacted it. If the Justices decided cases that way, there would be a lot less politics in legal rulings. Unlike the President, I think that would be healthy for our democracy. But more important, it was the understanding of those who wrote and adopted our Constitution.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator TESTER and I be allowed to engage in a colloquy for the next approximately 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise to encourage support for the Hoeven-Tester air ambulance relief amendment, which is legislation of importance to people living in both rural and urban communities who need urgent and timely medical care. The need for this amendment arises from the fact that Federal law preempts States from regulating air ambulance services pursuant to the Airline Deregulation Act, which was passed in 1979.

While some air ambulance providers enter into agreements with insurers, a growing number have decided to operate as out-of-network providers and practice what is known as balance billing. That means consumers, not the insurance companies, are responsible for the majority of the medical bill.

In recent years, State insurance departments have been fielding consumer complaints related to large balances left to them from charges not covered by insurance providers for air ambulance services. Patients in need of lifesaving air medical services have been left with balances of more than $25,000 when an air medical provider opts out of agreements with insurance providers.

Let me share a couple of examples of what I am talking about with my colleagues. In one case, a young couple had a premature child who was in need of intensive care at another hospital. The couple was insured and assumed that the 1-hour helicopter flight to the other hospital was covered by their insurance. The air ambulance company presented them with a bill for almost $40,000, but because the company had not entered into an agreement with the couples' insurance company, they were reimbursed only about $15,000 of that bill, leaving them $24,000 that they needed to pay when they thought they had insurance coverage for the bill.

In another case, a woman suffered a snowmobiling accident and was airlifted off a mountain. The charge was $40,000. Her insurance paid about $15,000, and so she was responsible for the $25,000 balance to the company. Now, in that case she negotiated with the company and got it down to a balance of $13,000, but that $13,000 she then had to pay.

In a third case, a father and his daughter were airlifted from the hospital where they were to another hospital because they needed additional care. The young person's condition was deteriorating and she needed specialized care so they had to airlift her to another hospital. They had a single pilot who took them on the flight. After they returned home by car, they got a check from the insurance company for $6,800, so the insurance company paid $6,800. That left them with the balance of a bill that was almost $70,000. Again, they thought they were covered under their insurance. So my colleagues can see that this is a real concern and a real issue.

Many consumers with health insurance coverage assume these medical bills will be taken care of and don't think to ask if the air transportation company is a participating provider because obviously they are in an emergency situation. Unfortunately, as a result, after the patient has stabilized and is in recovery, they learn they will be faced with an expensive medical bill they hadn't anticipated.

In the last session of our State legislature in our State, the State legislature made an effort to address this problem in State law. What essentially the State law said was that the hospitals would have a list of providers that accept insurance as payment in full and insurance companies that do this balance billing, so then the hospital and the patient can be informed and make their decision as to the air ambulance provider. The problem is the State law was struck down in Federal court because the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 took precedence, meaning it is a Federal issue, which we understand. Obviously, airplanes cross State lines, so we understand there is a Federal aspect to it.

Our amendment would allow hospitals to provide information so patients could determine which air ambulance providers accept the insurance payment as payment in full and which ones don't. Then hospitals could have that information available and patients could make their decisions accordingly.

It is a very simple, straightforward amendment that would allow State legislatures to make sure that information is available for patients in their State.

There are a number of organizations that are supporting this commonsense amendment, including the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, the American Health Insurance Plans, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, Consumers Union, and Families USA.

That is the legislation in a nutshell, and I have taken a minute to explain it.

Now I wish to turn to my colleague from the State of Montana and ask

him—as a cosponsor of this legislation I know he has run into this problem with his constituents. So I would ask him to comment both in terms of the situations he has run into in Montana and his thoughts on how we can best address it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I wish to thank the Senator from North Dakota for working on this important issue that in fact speaks across this country but especially in rural America.

Senator HOEVEN and I are on the floor working this afternoon to provide a voice to those who feel the well-being of ordinary Americans is being taken advantage of. These are folks who are honest and work hard and play by the rules, but they find themselves victims of an unchecked industry with too many bad actors. That is right. They are not all bad actors, but some are. The folks who survive the fight of a lifetime are waking up the next morning only to find themselves in a new fight—a fight to keep their home and their financial well-being.

In rural America, we are seeing more and more troubling reports of families losing nearly everything to rising air ambulance bills. In my home State of Montana, over the past 10 years, we have seen more out-of-State independent and for-profit air ambulance companies in operation. These companies are moving into my State, and they are not affiliated with local hospitals. They do not always have contracts with insurance companies, and they are taking financial advantage of families who are in crisis—families who may be forced to cash out their retirement accounts, drain their life savings, and even sell their homes to cover air ambulance bills that can climb up to $100,000. This has been well-documented in the State of Montana. Occurrences of people getting billed enormous sums of money after an air ambulance trip have been well-documented.

So what is the upshot of all this? The upshot is we are a rural State. Oftentimes you can't get to a hospital in time by road, so you have to call an air ambulance. If you call the wrong one, you end up with a bill you can't pay. So people have to make literally life-and-death choices at a time when they shouldn't have to. Oftentimes, because of this experience they are saying: You know what. We are between a rock and a hard place. We will take a chance. The wife or the spouse may be purple because they can't breathe, but they say: We will take a chance. They will pile in the car and drive an hour to the hospital and hopefully they will survive. A child may come in from an accident, having potentially lost a limb, who may be bleeding profusely, but they say: We will take a chance and not call the air ambulance.

This system is broken, and it needs to be fixed. It is broken for the patients, it is broken for the providers, and right now in this country there is no tool to address it.

We have a solution. Senator HOEVEN and I have an amendment to tackle this issue and put it on the FAA bill and get it done. Our amendment would provide States the ability to decide whether they want to create rules regarding air ambulance rates and services. Right now, States are prohibited from regulating air ambulances, but families have made it clear that something must be done to prevent these companies from raking families over and collecting exorbitant bills. A one-size-fits-all solution from Washington, DC, is not the answer, and that is why the good Senator from North Dakota and I believe each State should have the opportunity to address this growing problem in their own way.

Our amendment will provide incentives for these air ambulance companies to be better neighbors, as we like to say in Montana. It will encourage them to work with local hospitals and insurance providers to ensure that the lifesaving services they provide will not cause that family to lose their home.

This amendment is supported by State officials across the Nation and by folks on both sides of the aisle.

With that, I ask Senator HOEVEN to yield for a question.

Mr. HOEVEN. Certainly.

Mr. TESTER. Why is this legislation so important to Senator HOEVEN and his constituents in North Dakota?

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I would respond to the good Senator from Montana that I think we have both described the importance in terms of the costs that people may face, particularly in a time when they are in an emergency or crisis situation. It is very difficult for them already. So, look, we need to do everything we can to make sure they can get quality medical care and that they are as informed as possible in making those decisions and trying to make those decisions easier for them, particularly at a time when they are faced with a life-threatening situation or crisis situation.

The good Senator from Montana really put his finger on it when he said that we are not asking for a Federal one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, we are saying: Let's empower the States to do what they can in terms of helping people when they are faced with this kind of emergency situation.

So if one really looks at this amendment—and we have done a fair amount of work on it with health care providers, talking to the ambulance association and others, and we will continue to work on it. But essentially we are saying: Make sure people have that information readily available so that when they are in an emergency or crisis situation, they can make a quick and good decision that fits their needs, and let the providers compete for the business.

This goes to empowering people in terms of choice and deciding what kind of care they want, and then they can make an informed decision about what they want. If they are in a situation where health insurance has to cover it, then they make that decision accordingly. If they want some other service in a particular circumstance and they are willing to pay out of pocket, then they can make that choice too.

This really is about making sure that people have the information, particularly at a critical time when they really need it, so they get the health care they need and they also have some of those—what costs they are going to face. That is what it is all about. That is true in our States, which are more rural States, but it is true in the urban States as well.

Mr. TESTER. It certainly is, and I can say that what we have heard in Montana is that there is a problem out there. We need some help.

Last summer, I had a woman by the name of Christina from Missoula, MT, who called me. She and her husband both work full time. She pays $1,000 a month for her health insurance. She was being responsible, doing everything she was supposed to do, but an emergency struck, which could happen to anybody, and her daughter needed to be airlifted to Seattle, WA.

The cost of the flight was the last thing on Christina's mind. She cared only about the health of her daughter. In the back of her mind, she knew she had health insurance, so she knew she would be OK. When Christina and her daughter returned from Seattle, they found a bill waiting for them for $85,000, a little bit less than twice the average that an American earns every year. Think about this—getting a bill from a service that you had no choice but to take and then finding out that it cost you twice as much as you make in 1 calendar year.

Unfortunately, the story of Christina is not unique. Each year, more and more Montanans have a story exactly like Christina's. That is why it is critical that we get this problem addressed through this bipartisan amendment that will provide certainty and justice for families like hers. These folks really have nowhere else to turn.

If we can get this amendment on the FAA bill—and I know we are working with the committee right now, tweaking it, trying to make it work so that people are more at ease with it—we can begin to address this issue that has haunted too many families.

I would just tell you this. I had an accident when I was young, and it wasn't the kind of accident that was life threatening. My folks had only a 15-minute drive to get to the hospital. I

could tell you that if I had been a little bit more unlucky and we had put it into the 21st century and my folks would have had to get an air ambulance—which is absolutely necessary in rural America sometimes; it is necessary depending on what problem has happened—it would have put the family in a position where they literally could have lost the farm. This isn't right. This isn't what this country is about. All it takes is just a little bit of tweaking, a little bit of knowledge, a little bit of transparency, and that is what this amendment does. I think we can get this problem fixed, and it is simply the right thing to do.

I want to thank Senator HOEVEN for his leadership and his hard work on this issue.

I yield back to Senator HOEVEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Again, I would like to thank the Senator from Montana for joining in this bipartisan legislation and just ask that our colleagues work with us to get a good commonsense solution to solve this very urgent need.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I would like to speak in support of several amendments that I am offering to the FAA reauthorization bill.

You may recall that in 2011 some of my colleagues and I offered a bipartisan amendment to a section of the bill that called for the FAA to develop a process to integrate unmanned aerial systems, UAVs or unmanned aerial vehicles, into the NAS, the National Airspace System.

That legislation included drafting a plan to develop air traffic requirements for all unmanned aerial systems at test sites; certification and flight standards at nonmilitary UAS test sites, as well as the National Airspace System; and making sure that the U.S. integration plan is incorporated in NextGen, the administration's project to modernize the American air traffic control system.

Importantly, it also called for the agency to designate six test sites to help accelerate the NAS integration plan.

These test sites were established in December of 2013, following a competitive process that encouraged some of the very best in the fledgling field of unmanned aerial systems to apply and compete for the test sites.

I am proud to say that Grand Forks in my home State of North Dakota made the cut and is one of the premier test sites and hubs for UAS research and development in America. The work they have done there and at the other five sites across the Nation has been nothing less than remarkable, which is why I am here today to make the case for some additional amendments to help them maintain their momentum.

The first is Hoeven amendment No. 3500, which extends authorization for the six test sites for another 5 years. The previous FAA bill from 2012 authorized the test sites for 5 years, and the legislation before us extends that just an additional few months, through September 30, 2017. Our amendment would extend this authorization by an additional 5 years, through September 30, 2022.

The Northern Plains UAS Test Site in North Dakota has some important achievements to point to: supporting NASA's UAS-related research; research and testing at up to 1,200 feet across the entire State of North Dakota, far above the limits for commercial small unmanned aerial systems; nighttime UAS operations; and approval to fly multiple types of UAS in the same airspace. Nevertheless, there is plenty of work left to do in support of integrating UAS into the national airspace, and that will require investment and support from industry partners. They will be much more likely to use the FAA test sites if they can be sure those test sites will be operational beyond the end of next year.

My second amendment is Hoeven amendment No. 3538, the private aircraft exemption, which will help to expedite testing of private industry aircraft by not requiring them to lease their aircraft to the test site in order to fly.

The six UAS test sites are intended to work with the UAS industry to perform research necessary to integrate the UAS, unmanned aircraft, into the national airspace. What are we trying to achieve here? We are trying to achieve concurrent use of the NAS, national airspace. Right now we obviously have manned aircraft flying all over the United States, but where we are going is we will have manned and unmanned aircraft flying at the same time, concurrently in the national airspace. We have to make sure that is done safely. We have to make sure that we address the privacy issues.

There is a whole gamut of issues that have to be addressed to do this safely and well. That is what the test sites are developing so that we can move to that new paradigm. It is vitally important.

We fly unmanned aircraft all over the world through our military, but we have to figure out how to do that safely and well in our airspace with civilian aircraft. That involves a lot of things—commercial aviation, general aviation, and unmanned aircraft for a whole myriad of uses. This is not an easy proposition, so we have to figure it out.

If we don't do this, we will pay a huge price because right now the United States is the aviation technology leader in the world. The United States leads aviation technology globally, but if we don't figure out how to do this, somebody else will, and we can't afford to forfeit our leadership in aviation technology. We can't afford it from a military standpoint, and we can't afford it from a civilian standpoint if we are going to continue to lead in technology, job growth, the jobs of the future, and the strongest, most innovative, dynamic economy both now and in the future.

We are working on the test sites to make this happen, but currently you have to lease your aircraft to the test site. You can't just come to the test site and get approval to fly. That is what we need to change.

Currently, as I say, any private industry partner seeking to fly at a test site must first lease their unmanned aerial system—their plane or drone or whatever you want to call it, RPA, remotely piloted aircraft—they have to lease that to the test site. As a public entity, it can then clear the aircraft to operate as a public aircraft while at that test site.

The problem is that the UAS industry is understandably reluctant to release their UAS aircraft to the test site for research work and has particular concerns about losing proprietary information through the leasing process. Remember, this is the latest, greatest new technology. Companies are investing hundreds of millions and billions of dollars in this new technology. They want to keep it proprietary. They don't want to disclose it to all of their competitors. At our test site right now, we have not only Northrup Grumman but General Atomics—manufacturers of Global Hawk, Predator, and Reaper—doing this kind of research and development. They need to protect those proprietary technology developments.

Obviously this is an important issue for them as they are working to develop the aircraft of the future. My amendment would provide an exemption for the test sites to fly civil aircraft subject to whatever terms and conditions the FAA Administrator deems appropriate for public safety and subject to the terms of the certificate of authorization already granted to the test sites.

Remember, the test sites have to get approval from the FAA to fly all of these different aircraft at the test site, so the FAA has already provided that prior authority. We don't need to have the additional work of in essence making these test aircraft public aircraft. These terms govern the airspace and conditions under which the test sites can operate with unmanned aerial systems.

This amendment is common sense. Current procedures block the test sites from assisting industry in developing technology that integrates into the national airspace. This amendment would enable the test sites to perform as originally intended; that is, as a bridge between industry and the FAA to develop concurrent airspace use for unmanned aircraft, which is a key part of the future of aviation.

Test sites will have the same responsibilities for safely managing the operation of UAS under their certificate of authorization as they do today. So this is about doing things in a more efficient way without any effect on public safety.

In addition, the FAA already grants numerous exemptions on a case-by-case basis to industry partners, known as section 333 exemptions. This amendment effectively serves as a test site 333 exemption, which should help decrease demand for the FAA to press the other exemption requests, again streamlining the process, making it work.

Finally, I filed Hoeven 3543, which leverages test site and center of excellence participation in the unmanned traffic management pilot program. The underlying FAA legislation establishes an FAA-led pilot program to develop an unmanned traffic management system, which will be essential to the final goal of integrating the UAS into the national airspace. This is how we manage traffic—manned and unmanned aircraft—in the same airspace. How do we manage that safely and well?

The amendment would require the FAA Administrator to leverage to the maximum extent possible the capabilities of the FAA's UAS center of excellence and the six UAS test sites when developing and carrying out the pilot program. So we are saying to the FAA: Work with the test sites and the national center of excellence, which we have developed for unmanned aerial systems to move this technology forward.

Right now, the FAA is behind the curve. The technology is racing forward, and we have to maximize our use of these resources to make sure that we are developing UAS the right way, in a way that the public feels is safe, that respects privacy rights, and that addresses all of the different potential concerns. Again, it is about doing things right and well with this new technology.

Again, this is a commonsense amendment. The FAA should use the capabilities Congress has put at its disposal, along with its interagency and industry partners, to advance development of unmanned traffic management systems. My amendments give our UAS test sites the tools they need to stay up front, which will ultimately yield research benefits on behalf of our country.

We have all seen and read in the media about how these remarkable new aircraft are playing a big military role in the security of our Nation. They achieve military objectives without putting our men and women in uniform in harm's way. We are also seeing how they play an important role in border protection and other security operations. Less well known is their use in precision agriculture, disaster mitigation, traffic safety, building inspections, energy infrastructure monitoring, and many uses that have yet to be imagined.

The UAS industry is anxiously awaiting the approval of rules to begin operating small UAS at low altitudes. This is an important step, but it is just one step. It is limited, which is why we need the test sites for the research and development necessary to move forward. The UAS test sites and the center of excellence are in a position to stay ahead of the curve. Doing the research will enable the next phase in UAS integration from flying at night and beyond line of sight to flying higher and farther using larger aircraft.

These amendments are important for the success of an exciting and rapidly growing segment of aviation in our country. The goal is to make UAS a fully working component of not only America's larger aviation system but also of our economy. As I said, we are the world's leader in aviation technology. We must continue to forge ahead to maintain that leadership.

I will close by saying that almost all of us now have an iPhone or Android—some type of phone in our pocket. It is so much more, isn't it? It is a full-blown computer. Think back 10 years. We had no idea that we would all have these cell phones or that they would have all of these amazing capabilities. But look at how much we use it every day in our lives. Well, I make that analogy with unmanned aircraft. What is it going to look like 10 years from now? What is it going to be like? Well, we don't know yet. We don't know what all these applications and what all these uses are going to be. But what we do know is that the United States needs to be the leader in aviation technology development. That is what we are talking about with these test sites—making sure that we can do it safely and well and that we can maintain that global leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I would like to speak on an amendment I have submitted that will ensure the implementation of what is already required by statute: a biometric exit system for the United States. The law has required a biometric—that means a fingerprint, as opposed to biographic, which is name and birth date—system that allows us to know who is coming into this country on a visa and whether they left when they were supposed to leave. It is absolutely critical to the safety of the United States. It is something the 9/11 Commission recommended as a high priority. Ten years later, when they did their Review Commission report to see how their recommendations had been carried out, they noted that one of their top concerns was the failure of Congress to complete the system.

Right now when you come into the United States, you put your hand on a screen and they clock you in biometrically, and then when you leave, there is no system that clocks you out.

It is just like going to work every day. You take one of these iPhones. It has got this place on the bottom where you put your finger. I put my thumb on it. I don't have to put in my pass code; it simply reads my fingerprint. This is done all over America. These screens are not expensive. They don't require a lot of space. It is something that should be done. It has not been done.

The first requirement for this was in 1996 through the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. The requirements were largely ignored, and eventually modified until the terrorist attacks on September 11 caused us to focus again on the issue.

Congress responded by once again demanding that government implement an exit system with the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, which stated that an entry and exit data system should be fully implemented for airports, seaports, and land border ports of entry ''with all deliberate speed and as expeditiously as practical.'' Fifteen years ago, that occurred. Congress then reiterated its demand for a biometric entry-exit system in 2002 when it passed the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act. This bill required the government to install biometric readers and scanners ''at all ports of entry of the United States.'' Subsequently and consistent with the recommendations of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, which mandated that the entry-exit system be biometrically based. That was 12 years ago.

Despite the relative successful implementation of a biometric entry system, the Department of Homeland Security has largely failed to implement this required biometric exit system. To date, Homeland Security has only implemented a handful of pilot programs. They have had one excuse after another, and failed to do so.

There have been some promising developments in recent months, I would note.

Of primary importance is the fact that Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016. This created a dedicated source of funds for the

implementation of a biometric exit system. It has been estimated that this fund will result in approximately $1 billion that will be available solely for the implementation of the biometric exit system required by law. Yet, even with this significant source of funding, the administration continues to dawdle. My amendment will end that delay and bring this matter to a close. It will complete the system that the 9/11 Commission said was essential for our national safety and security.

My amendment simply states that no funds from the FAA bill that we pass can be obligated or expended for the physical modification of existing air navigation facilities—that is, a port of entry—or of the construction of a new air navigation facility intended to be a port of entry, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security certifies that the owner or sponsor of the facility has entered into an agreement that guarantees the installation and implementation of such a facility not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the act. In other words, they have to complete the contract to make this system work, and then we give them 2 full years to accomplish it. That is more than enough time.

The amendment allows Customs and Border Protection officers at each airport that serves as a port of entry to create a solution that works specifically for the needs of CPB and the airport. It gives them some flexibility to work these things out. It does, however, require—finally and I hope fully—an agreement that guarantees that the system will be installed and implemented at the airport in 2 years.

These airports drag their feet. Airlines drag their feet. They do not like to be bothered about this. It is not in their priorities, but it is not going to cause them great problems. It is not going to cause the airplanes great problems.

Somebody needs to be representing the national interest around here, what is in the public interest. They don't get to undo a law passed by Congress 20 years ago that should have already been implemented years ago. It is that simple.

This deal could be done in 6 months if we had an administration that was determined to get it done. The equipment is already available all over the country. Many police officers have these screens in their cars. They arrest someone for DUI, and they make them put their hand on the screen, and it runs a check throughout the United States. They find out that someone arrested in Alabama has a warrant for murder in New York City. That is the way the system is working today all over the country. We can't make this work at an international airport to ensure people who have a limited-time visa in the United States actually leave when they are supposed to? And when we find out someone may be a terrorist or connected with some illegal enterprise or terroristic plan, we want to know if they actually left the country or are still in the country. This is something law enforcement—the FBI and Homeland Security—needs to know about.

I was told by one company that there are many competitors who would bid for this work. There are all kinds of systems out there. One manufacturer suggested we should host in the Capitol a products day and let all these companies bring in their systems so staffers and Members of Congress can go out and see what the possibilities are and erase forever this idea that this is somehow impractical, not feasible, and can't be done.

If Apple and Samsung and others can implement technology on your cell phone, on your mobile phones to access them, you can be sure the U.S. Government could work with the airports to complete a biometric exit system, as the law has long required. Such a system will not have large space requirements. U.S. Customs and Border Protection can work with the larger airports with international terminals and install physical equipment at their departure gates. CBP can work with smaller airports to deploy handheld systems at gates handling international flights.

Ultimately, all a passenger exiting the United States needs to do is place his or her hand on a simple screen or, with some devices, even just wave their hand in front of it. We had an expert tell us they have a system you don't even have to touch the screen. You can wave your hand in front of it, it reads the fingerprints, and the device will biometrically identify the passenger as the person exits.

Somebody can take your name, go to the airport, and exit the country with some sort of ID and claim they exited as you were supposed to exit, without this biometric check, because you can use any name. If they clear this screening area, they move into the boarding area. They will be allowed into the boarding area. If there is a hit because the boarder is on some no-fly list because of some danger, the passenger can be denied boarding or removed from the plane before it takes off, and their baggage can be removed from the plane. Importantly, the United States would then have a unified, automatically produced list of those who have departed on time and those who have overstayed their visas.

Colleagues, I would note we are having a huge surge in the number of people who come to this country on a visa and don't go home. It now amounts to over 40 percent of the people illegally in the country who came on a visa, promising to go home at a certain time, yet who are not going home.

We had a Democratic debate a few weeks ago when former Secretary Clinton said: Well, if you are found in the United States unlawfully you should only be deported if you have been indicted or charged with a violent felony. How did this become the law? You are not allowed to stay in the country. You can't stay in the country if you overstay your visa. That is the law. You are deportable right there, whether you are a good person or not, and even if you never committed a traffic offense. Now we have leadership in this country so detached from law, so detached from the will of the American people, they are saying you can come in and stay for years after overstaying your visa and only be deported if you commit a violent felony.

This has to be brought to a conclusion. The American people want a lawful system of immigration—are they wrong to ask for that?—one that serves the interests of the American people, one that is worthy of a nation that validates the rule of law, or do we just give in? Do we capitulate to lawlessness, and anybody who comes and can get into our country—even for a month, presumably—and who commits a $50,000 bank fraud is not going to be deported because it is not a violent crime, even though the law says otherwise?

Let me just note that for a host of reasons the system should be based on the fingerprint system where we maintain our extensive database. There are eye systems that will read your eyes, we have systems that will read your face, but, colleagues, do not be led into that. We are not ready to do that. There is no data system that supports a face system. Let's stay with the fingerprints, as experts have told us.

Let me also note that numerous countries around the world, including New Zealand, Singapore, and Hong Kong, use a biometric system now. This is proven. There are approximately 17 countries.

Ending this failure has bipartisan support. My subcommittee—the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest—held a hearing on January 20 entitled ''Why is the biometric exit traffic system still not in place?'' During the hearing, we got promises from the administration but no commitment regarding when such a system would actually be deployed.

Just a few weeks later, Secretary Johnson of Homeland Security made statements directing the Department of Homeland Security to begin implementation of the system at our airports by 2018—begin the implementation by 2018. So this is another mere promise—the kind of promises that have never resulted in the production of a system, and that uncertainty must end. The obvious missing piece is an actual completion date. This bill would create that. It is these kinds of lulling comments we have heard for all these years that have kept us from actually following through on the system.

If Congress would like to know why the American people are not happy with their leaders in Washington, this is a good example of it, a very good example. Congress promises to fix a problem, we even vote for a bill to fix it, and in this case we voted for bills to fix it, they passed and became law and require the problem to be fixed, but it doesn't happen. As decades go by, we sit by and nothing ever happens. A special interest group speaks up here and a special interest group speaks up there and somehow it never happens.

It is time to fulfill the promise and commitment to the American people. We promised the American people a system that would demonstrably improve our national security. As noted by former Commissioners on the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States in a report issued in 2014, ''Without exit-tracking, our government does not know when a foreign visitor admitted to the United States on a temporary basis has overstayed his or her admission. Had the system been in place before 9/11, we would have had a better chance of detecting the plotters before they struck.''

We have long known that visa overstays pose serious national security risks. A number of the hijackers on September 11 overstayed their visas. The number of visa overstays implicated in terrorism since then is certainly a significant number. A new poll came out earlier this year that indicates that three out of four Americans not only want the Obama administration to find these aliens who overstay their visas—not just the ones who have committed violent felonies—but also deport them. The same poll indicates 68 percent of Americans consider visa overstays as a ''serious national security risk,'' and 31 percent consider visa overstays as a ''very serious'' national security risk. And there is little doubt about why.

The risks to our national security are too high for us to maintain the status quo. We are having more and more people traveling by air to the United States from around the world. We simply allow them to come on a very generous basis. They commit to leaving after a given period of time. Whether it is for a vacation or a job, they then plan to return to their home country, and we need a system to know if they are complying with that. We must fulfill the promise we made to the American people and do all we can to complete this system. My amendment would do so. It would finally bring this to a conclusion because it would say to the Air Force: We have money to help you do your runways, expand your airports, and do the kinds of things you would like to, but we want this agreement in place first.

Mr. President, I understand that some on the Democratic side intend to object to calling up this amendment. It was my intention at this time to call up this amendment. I don't see any Democrat here, but I have been told that is what they want to do, and they passed that word along. So in an act of courtesy, I will not call up the amendment at this time, but we need to bring it up. Every Democratic member of my subcommittee who attended the hearing—Senators SCHUMER, FEINSTEIN, and FRANKEN—all said they favored fixing this. I think we have a bipartisan agreement if we can get a vote, but, once again, we may not be having a vote. That would be very distressing because I don't see how anybody could oppose the final completion of this much needed product.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from New Hampshire.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise because it is Equal Pay Day, and I would like to talk about the importance of finally ending gender-based discrimination in wages. It is unfortunate that in the year 2016, this is still an issue we need to address in this country, but it is.

I had the privilege of serving as our State's first female attorney general. I think it is the right thing to do and the obvious thing to do, and under our laws this already exists—that equal pay for equal work should be the standard. All of us should be judged in the workplace by our experience, our qualifications, and our capability of doing our job and nothing else.

Women face many challenges in balancing work and family life. I know that firsthand, being the working mom of two young kids. On top of those challenges, no woman, whether she is a mother or not, should ever face gender-based pay discrimination in the workplace. Today, more than half of New Hampshire's women serve as the primary or coearner in their household. That just underscores the serious need to address this problem.

Men and women should receive equal pay for equal work. It is that simple. Your salary should be based on how you do your job. Because of that, I introduced the Gender Advancement in Pay Act, or GAP Act, along with Senators CAPITO, PORTMAN, BURR, and HELLER, and I thank my cosponsors for supporting this effort.

What we did is we built on a highly successful bipartisan pay equity law that was signed into law in my home State of New Hampshire in 2014. The GAP Act makes it clear that employers must pay men and women equal wages for equal work, without reducing the ability of employers to provide merit pay and reward merit, which all of us want. Having been the first woman attorney general, I want to give women the opportunity to outperform their male counterparts as well because I know we can.

Today, there is a patchwork of laws that govern equal pay and an employee's ability to discuss their pay without fear of retaliation, and differing court opinions have led to a situation where some employees receive protections not available to others simply based on where they live. As such, the GAP Act is a sensible approach to updating, clarifying, and strengthening these laws.

For 20 years the Paycheck Fairness Act has been around in the Congress. It has never passed. One of the reasons, I think, was described very well in 2010 by the Boston Globe. It said that the Paycheck Fairness Act, as a whole, was too broad a solution to a complex, nuanced problem, but that a narrower bill that would stiffen some penalties and ban retaliation would be helpful. That is exactly what the GAP Act is—a bill that stiffens penalties, bans retaliation, and clarifies the law so that we can ensure we have equal pay for equal work.

In short, my bill updates the Equal Pay Act's ''factor other than sex'' clause. Currently, employers can explain away pay differentials by pointing to a number of factors. One of those was ambiguously written to be a ''factor other than sex.'' Our bill closes this loophole and clarifies that any factor other than sex must be a business-related factor, such as education, training, or experience. It makes sense; doesn't it? Why would you allow a defense of a ''factor other than sex'' that has nothing to do with your job? To me, that seems to be inviting discrimination. That is why we should clarify the law to make clear that it has to be a factor related to your job—such as education, training, or experience. This would clarify the law for employees and protect the rights of employees, and, also, employers would clearly have this provision defined.

The GAP Act also creates a penalty for willful violations. This is actually one step further than New Hampshire's bipartisan pay equity law. So it would put teeth into it, and I think that is important. Employers that knowingly act with the intent to discriminate should have to pay a penalty. What we do with the funds from this penalty is to take the funds and, rather than putting them back in the General Treasury, we are going to study the wage gap issue, make sure we have the best research on what is causing it and what is happening, and find more ways to expand opportunities for women in the workforce with better paying jobs.

The GAP Act would also promote salary transparency. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, about half of workers were discouraged or outright prohibited from discussing their pay with coworkers. When employees are allowed to discuss their

pay, they are more likely to uncover incidents of discrimination. Yet, if I am not allowed to discuss my pay and I find a coworker who is the same situated as me yet making more money—a male counterpart—and I am not allowed to raise this because I can't discuss pay comparisons, then how am I going to raise a claim of discrimination? So we need to make it more transparent. We need to ensure that employees are allowed to discuss their pay. This will make it more likely to uncover incidents of gender-based pay discrimination.

So our bill prohibits retaliation against employees who discuss their pay, and tells employers they can't institute secret pay policies and they can't ask an employee to bargain away their right to be able to talk about their pay if they choose to.

Importantly, after getting feedback from stakeholders in our States, we made sure that provision is strong. The cosponsors of this bill reintroduced an updated version of this bill this week to ensure that there are stronger provisions for salary transparency and to make it clear that employers cannot sidestep provisions that ban retaliation against employees who discuss their pay. It prohibits pay secrecy policies that could encourage this kind of behavior.

On Equal Pay Day, today, it is very important that we all work together to do anything we can to end the gender wage gap. One of the things we should do is to stop the political posturing. Let's stop using this incredibly important issue as a political football, because legislation like the Paycheck Fairness Act has been around 20 years.

I am glad to introduce the GAP Act, because I believe this is a commonsense piece of legislation that gets at the issue by clarifying our laws in a way that benefits employees. It makes sure it is clear that if you willfully violate our laws, you are going to have to pay a penalty. We are going to take that money, and we are going to put it back into research to further help us address the pay gap. We are also going to make clear for plaintiffs that, if you want to file an EEOC claim and you also want to file an equal pay claim, we will make sure you can do both, and your rights will be protected to do both by staying the statute of limitations while the EEOC claim is going forward. This will help plaintiffs not have to litigate in two forums. This will also allow the EEOC to do their job and, if they find discrimination, to be used in an equal pay act claim. This is another important step for plaintiffs and also to clarify that those who are victims of discrimination are able to bring their rights forward.

On Equal Pay Day today, I hope we can stop making this a partisan issue and start actually passing legislation that will make a difference. In 2014 New Hampshire passed an important law. I was glad New Hampshire did that. I was glad that I could introduce what New Hampshire did here in the Senate on a bipartisan basis and build on that to introduce the GAP Act with some of my colleagues.

I hope today, on Equal Pay Day, we will take up legislation like the GAP Act and address gender-based pay discrimination. We are in 2016. I have an 11-year-old daughter. I don't want to be discussing this 20 years from now. I would like us to work on this in a serious, bipartisan manner, to address this, and to end gender-based pay discrimination once and for all, because equal pay for equal work just makes sense. It is the right thing to do, and it should be how our laws work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of Flake amendment No. 3556.

The amendment is simple. It simply strikes the newly added prohibition in the Visa Waiver Program on citizens of Visa Waiver Program countries who are also dual nationals of certain other countries, such as Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and Syria.

To be clear, this amendment keeps in place all other provisions added to the Visa Waiver Program to improve the security of the program, such as requiring greater information sharing. However, the dual national provision does not provide any meaningful security benefit and, instead, is a detriment to the country and the vast majority of dual nationals who provide a great benefit to the United States.

The problem with the dual national prohibition is twofold. It is both imprecise in its application, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to administer. One reason the prohibition is imprecise is because it prevents travel under the program regardless of travel history. For example, a dual national of Iran who is prohibited from using the Visa Waiver Program need not have ever been to Iran to be prohibited. In fact, there is no clear definition of who qualifies as a dual national, and it demonstrates how this prohibition is impossible to administer.

Many groups have pointed out that there is no international agreement on the rules of nationality, and that many people are dual nationals even if they do not wish to be. For example, there is no automatic way to relinquish one's Iranian nationality. It can only be accomplished if the individual is allowed to do so by the Iranian Council of Ministers and fulfills a number of requirements, including the completion of national military service. Does this sound likely or possible for an individual who has never resided in Iran?

Now, the administration has recently stated that they will determine each potential visitor's nationality on a case-by-case basis. According to them, ''the U.S. government need not recognize another country's conferral of nationality if it determines that nationality to be 'nominal.' ''

They also said ''DHS assesses whether an individual is a national of a country based on an individual's relationship to that country, such as if an individual maintains allegiance to that country.'' However, the administration would not specify what counts as ''maintains allegiance.''

These examples show that the Visa Waiver Program is gaining nothing when it comes to actual security, and, instead, unfairly prohibits individuals' participation based on meaningless standards.

Furthermore, of greatest concern is the potential for reciprocal treatment of U.S. citizens. Just today, the European Commission asked European Union governments and European lawmakers to suggest what actions the Commission might take due to the lack of visa waivers for some EU citizens. Now, while there are a number of concerns when it comes to reciprocity, this dual nationality provision has not gone unnoticed. Specifically, the Commission stated: ''In parallel to discussing full visa reciprocity, the Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of the changes in the Visa Waiver Program.''

After expressing concerns about the negative consequences of these changes on ''bona fide EU travelers,'' the Commission invited the United States to consider the Equal Protection in Travel Act of 2016 in order to mitigate restrictions imposed on dual nationals. This amendment is that act.

I agree that we should mitigate these restrictions on dual nationals and mitigate the chances of reciprocal treatment for U.S. citizens. The U.S. passport is the most powerful in the world, and we need to ensure it remains that way. We should not threaten that status for a provision that is both imprecise and impossible to administer.

I hope we can have a vote on this amendment, and I hope my colleagues can support it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill which is before the Senate and which we have been debating over the last week. Ensuring that our great Nation—States such as Colorado and Alaska that have important aviation industries—has a healthy and safe general aviation community and comprehensive aviation infrastructure is exactly the type of issue this Congress needs to be working on and the type that has been a top priority in previous Congresses.

In my State, aviation has a very rich history and is an incredibly important driver of our economy but also an important element of connecting the entire State. Many aspects of our lives in Alaska rely on commercial and general aviation. Living in a State of such enormous scale with numerous remote communities gives Alaskans a very deep appreciation for air travel, which in many cases provides the only means for transportation for many residents.

One of the things that is very much an honor being in the U.S. Senate is how different Senators come and describe life in their States so all Americans have a better understanding of how the entire country is knitted together, how we work together, but what unique challenges different States have.

For more than 100 communities in Alaska—including regional centers such as Bethel, Nome, Barrow, and Kotzebue—aviation is the only means of getting in or out of those communities since there are no roads. Most States don't understand that. There are no roads, no ferry service, so aviation is critical. Alaska is unique in its dependence on aviation, and we have a very busy, what we call highway of the skies. There are more pilots per capita in my State than any other State in the country. So that means everything from mail, to groceries, to baby diapers has to be flown in by plane to many communities. If someone gets sick and needs to see a doctor, oftentimes that can only be done by air. There are over 400 general aviation airports across Alaska, 250 of which are owned and operated by the State of Alaska, and that doesn't include hundreds of heliports that support mining, timber, the oil and gas industry, and others.

General aviation and aviation infrastructure are critical components of our economy and our quality of life in our State, in Alaska. It is fundamental in terms of connecting people and communities and promoting and sustaining economic development. Indeed, estimates show that the general aviation community contributes over $1 billion a year in economic activity to the State of Alaska's economy and supports over 47,000 jobs; that is 1 in 10 jobs in the entire State.

This is a very important bill. It is an important bill for the State of Alaska, but it is also an important bill for the United States of America. The FAA reauthorization bill will expire in July, and it is important to avoid the uncertainty of more short-term extensions by passing the authorization bill we have had on the floor of the Senate over the last week.

I thank Chairman THUNE and Ranking Member NELSON for all the work they have been doing night and day, really for months on this important bipartisan bill. So far the process has been a model of how the Senate should work.

Our friends in the media love to write the stories about nothing working in the U.S. Senate. I don't think so. There are a lot of important bills moving—the highway bill, the Education bill, human trafficking. Now we are looking at a bipartisan way to address a very important bill for the country; that is aviation, that is aviation infrastructure, and that is aviation security.

Let me talk about some of the substance more broadly for the country and why this bill is so important.

One aspect of the bill is the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2. Building off the success of the initial Pilot's Bill of Rights, this provision continues to make essential reforms for pilots—mostly general aviation pilots who are so important to my State—streamlining an overly burdensome medical certification process, increasing transparency and access to additional information for pilots in all the different aspects of their requirements as to being pilots in the general aviation community. There are provisions that also balance and make essential inroads toward rebalancing the relationship between the FAA and general aviation pilots.

One thing this Senate bill does not do—there has been a discussion over in the House—is it does not transfer the air traffic control services that are so important to many of our States—particularly rural States—to a private corporation.

This bill also, very importantly, strengthens safety for pilots and passengers across the country. You can't pick up the news and not see how important this issue is. From the terror attacks in Brussels, at the airport there, to the Russian flight out of Egypt that went down because of a suspected ISIS attack, to instances of criminal behavior even among U.S. airport employees, events around the world have underscored how important the need for stronger security measures for our Nation's air travel is.

What is really important is this is the Senate taking proactive action. This is not a bill on aviation security where we are reacting to some horrible tragedy, God forbid, in terms of aviation security, whether an accident or a terrorist attack at one of our airports. What we have been doing is looking at the challenges in these areas and taking proactive measures so we don't have to react when there is a terrorist attack or an accident.

So these are comprehensive airline security reforms that are some of the most important that have occurred and that we have debated in this body for over a decade. Let me list just a few of them.

The bill includes several measures for the security of passengers by improving airport employee vetting to ensure that potentially dangerous individuals don't have access to secure areas in our airports, expanding the enrollment in the TSA PreCheck Program so passengers move through security lines into more secure areas more quickly—we saw how important that was in Brussels—and enhancing security for international flights bound for the United States.

Overall, this legislation addresses a growing concern in terms of security, including the cyber security threats facing aviation and air navigation systems for our commercial airlines. The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act does more for passengers and more for security than any bill, at least in the last decade. It is an important bill, it is a good bill for America, and it is a good bill for Alaska. It will advance measures to keep us safer. That is why I am supporting this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, as we have heard all day, today is Equal Pay Day. What does that mean? That means that today is the first day women in the workforce—if we separated male and female workers—would actually get a paycheck in the year. That is pretty remarkable, and it is a disparity we have been working on for decades in this country but still have not achieved the parity that we believe is absolutely essential if we are going to be a family-friendly and forward-looking country with a growing and prosperous middle class.

I think way too often the issue of pay equity—the issue of equal pay—is characterized as a woman's issue. It is characterized as something that only elite women care about, and it is characterized as something that is not something for the government to address. Well, I am here to dispel all of those myths. I think we can only fairly say that by shortchanging women, employers are also shortchanging working families. Families need a full salary so they can put food on their table and make sure children have the medical care they deserve.

We have all heard the stark statistic that nationally women only earn 79 percent of what White, non-Hispanic males are paid. In North Dakota, the numbers are even more dramatic. The

pay equity there is 71 percent. Women earn just 71 percent of what men make in my State. It is unacceptable. It is unacceptable at a time when—according to a recent study from the Pew Research Center—women are now the leading solo breadwinners in 40 percent of households. That compares to just 11 percent in 1960. It does not make sense that we are still struggling to make the same amount as men for equal work.

Additionally, in North Dakota, 74 percent of children live in households where both parents work. Both parents need to work in order to support their families. When women don't make as much as men, it doesn't just hurt them, but it hurts their children and families across the country.

What is Congress to do about this disparity? We need to pass a paycheck fairness bill. We need to make sure we have this critical piece of legislation, which responds to this concern, in our laws and in the statutes of the United States of America.

What does paycheck fairness do? It would help close the pay gap by taking critical steps to empower women to negotiate for equal pay. I can't tell you the number of times I have heard women in my State say: Well, I just didn't know I wasn't getting paid what a man was getting paid. And employers saying: Well, she didn't ask and he did. I think we need to be able to give the tools to women so they know when there is disparate treatment. We need to close the loopholes the courts have created in the law, we need to create strong incentives for employers to obey the laws that are in place, and we need to strengthen Federal outreach and enforcement efforts.

Looking at pay is only one part of the equation. We also need to pass other family-friendly policies, such as the FAMILY Act, which would establish a Federal paid leave policy.

I can only imagine what the debate was in this body when somebody came up with the idea to introduce employment insurance. I am sure there were a lot of discussions about yet another program and yet another system that would actually add to the payroll tax and add to burdens put on families.

Who today in this body would propose that we eliminate unemployment insurance? It has been a valuable transition opportunity so our workers can look for that next job without disrupting their family payment. As a person whose father was a seasonal construction worker, I know how critical that benefit was to my family when I was growing up. I know unemployment insurance frequently gave our family the ability to put food on the table in my household.

Let's talk about what happens when someone has a baby. Let's talk about what happens when someone's mom gets sick. Let's talk about what happens when we have a catastrophic illness of our own. Many people in my State—in fact, the majority of people in my State—do not have 1 day of paid leave. So their choice is to take care of their family's health conditions or to take care of their newborn child and just quit their job or go on unpaid leave and actually not receive a salary.

How many people can go on unpaid leave and not receive salary? Not a lot. What it means is that frequently when people have to transition away from work, all of a sudden that person qualifies for food stamps, qualifies for Medicaid, and qualifies for other government assistance programs. The cost to the employer for those government programs is equal to the price of a cup of coffee a week. For $1.50 a week per employee, we can provide this benefit. How do we know we can provide this benefit? Because we have States that have done it. California, which restricted their payment, I believe, to 50 percent to families who used this insurance benefit, recently upped that amount to 70 percent. This bill would put it at 66 percent.

The FAMILY Act is also a critical piece of legislation that moves our employment economy into the 21st century. It actually recognizes that women are in the workplace, and they are in the workplace for real and permanently. It recognizes that when we have family-friendly policies, we have a better workforce, we have a more economical workforce, and we have an opportunity for employers to keep their businesses.

Recently, in North Dakota, Senator GILLIBRAND and I traveled around the State talking about our paid leave policy in the FAMILY Act. We were in a small business with less than 10 employees. The owner said he would love to provide this benefit, but there was no way he could economically afford it. If anything happened to one of his employees, there would be no way he could give this benefit and also hire a temporary worker. If he had the opportunity to share that risk broadly with all small employers in the country, that shared risk would then make this benefit available to him, and he could keep his employees. He could keep those employees whom he trained, and he could make sure they were better employees when they came back because they have that benefit.

We need to understand this isn't just about the girls. This isn't just about the women of the Senate standing up. It is about a shared experience we have all had. It is a shared experience of having to choose between going home and taking care of your mother or actually feeding your family. That is not much of a choice. When we look at why people are angry in America today and why they feel like they are not getting ahead, it is because they are falling further and further behind because we aren't adopting 21st century policies, such as the FAMILY Act, equal pay for equal work, and recognizing the value of what women do.

I will close with a true story. When I was in college, between my freshman and sophomore year, I was a nanny. It was very rewarding. I loved the kids, but it was hard work and it was 24/7. After working as a nanny, I was a construction worker. Do you know why I worked construction? I was paid better and the work was not as difficult. I worked in a factory cleaning pipes, I worked on road construction, and I worked on rural water construction. Yes, that is hard work, and I was a laborer in all of those jobs. It is hard work, but none of it is as hard as taking care of children, sick people, or the elderly. Yet in America those jobs pay less.

It is time we evaluate what is happening in the workplace and what is happening to America's families so we can adopt these family-friendly policies. In fact, we need to listen to our constituents so we can have empathy for the challenges of American families. When that empathy finds its way to public policy in the halls of Congress, people will once again feel reconnected to their government.

I encourage everyone who hasn't taken a look at pay equity and hasn't yet taken a look at the FAMILY Act to understand and appreciate what this can do for their constituents, what this can do for the American workplace, and how we can help small businesses provide the services and benefits they need to provide so they can compete in this very competitive workforce environment.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 3464, AS AMENDED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to table the Thune amendment No. 3464.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3679

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I call up substitute amendment No. 3679.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL], for Mr. THUNE, proposes an amendment numbered 3679.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion for the substitute amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3679.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Roger F. Wicker, Roy Blunt, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, James Lankford, John Thune, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, James M. Inhofe, Jerry Moran, Kelly Ayotte.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion for the bill to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 55, H.R. 636, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Lamar Alexander, Bob Corker, Roger F. Wicker, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, Kelly Ayotte, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, James M. Inhofe.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3680 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3679

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3680.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] proposes an amendment numbered 3680 to amendment No. 3679.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike and replace section 4105)

Strike section 4105 and insert the following:

SEC. 4105. ADS-B MANDATE ASSESSMENT.

(a) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall assess—

(1) Administration and industry readiness to meet the ADS–B mandate by 2020;

(2) changes to ADS–B program since May 2010; and

(3) additional options to comply with the mandate and consequences, both for individual system users and for the overall safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, for noncompliance.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a. report on the progress made toward meeting the ADS–B mandate by 2020, including any recommendations of the Inspector General to carry out such mandate.

MORNING BUSINESS

THREAT TO INDONESIA'S ORANGUTANS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, a December 16, 1997, New York Times article entitled ''Asia's Forest Fires, Scant Mercy for Orangutans'' described the widespread illegal logging and slash and burn agriculture that posed an existential threat to the orangutan, one of the world's only four species of great apes. It was after reading that article and speaking to scientists who had devoted their lives to saving the orangutan from extinction that I started a program in the foreign aid budget to help protect their rapidly shrinking habitat.

Orangutans live in only two places on Earth, Borneo and Sumatra, and since I first learned of the threats they are facing, the U.S. Agency for International Development has provided millions of dollars to nongovernmental organizations in Indonesia to try to ensure their survival in the wild.

Important progress has been made. Back when the program started, it was feared that the orangutan would be extinct in the wild within 15 years if nothing was done. That has not happened, but their survival is far from assured, as an article in the April 6, 2016, edition of the New York Times entitled ''Adapting to Life as Orphans, Fires and Corporate Expansion Threaten Indonesia's Orangutans,'' describes. It reminded me of what had sparked my attention 20 years ago and how much more there is yet to do.

Orangutans and humans share 97 percent of the same DNA. They are extraordinarily intelligent animals and physically far stronger than humans, but today, like all species, their survival depends on humans.

The Indonesian Government has taken steps to change people's attitudes toward orangutans, so they are recognized as deserving of protection, not as pests to be killed or captured and kept as pets. In many ways, the orangutan is or could be Indonesia's equivalent of China's Giant Pandas which are protected and admired around the world.

Among the biggest threat to orangutans today is the palm oil industry, which is responsible for the destruction of huge areas of tropical forest where orangutans live. The fires used to clear the forest for the planting of palm oil trees has caused havoc on the environment and public health, contributing not only to the destruction of species but widespread drought.

The New York Times describes this increasingly precarious situation. I want to quote a few passages from that article:

''The blazes destroyed more than 10,000 square miles of forests, blanketing large parts of Southeast Asia in a toxic haze for weeks, sickening hundreds of thousands of people and, according to the World Bank, causing $16 billion in economic losses.''

''They also killed at least nine orangutans, the endangered apes native to the rain forests of Borneo and Sumatra. More than 100, trapped by the loss of habitat, had to be relocated. Seven orphans, including five infants, were rescued and taken to rehabilitation centers here.''

''Indonesia has approved palm oil concessions on nearly 15 million acres of peatlands over the last decade; burning peat emits high levels of carbon dioxide and is devilishly hard to extinguish.''

''Multinational palm oil companies, pulp and paper businesses, the plantations that sell to them, farmers and even day laborers all contribute to the problem.''

''While it is against Indonesian law to clear plantations by burning, enforcement is lax. The authorities have opened criminal investigations against at least eight companies in connection with last year's fires, but there has yet to be a single high-profile case to get to court.''

''The government in Jakarta, the capital, has recently banned the draining and clearing of all peatland for agricultural use, and it has ordered provincial governments to adopt better fire suppression methods. But it has not publicly responded to calls for better prevention, such as cracking down on slash-and-burn operations by large palm oil companies.''

It would be an unforgiveable tragedy if any species of great apes were to become extinct in the wild. They are all endangered—gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans. We need to do whatever is necessary to build international support for protecting these animals, and to help countries like Indonesia enforce its laws to stop the destruction of tropical forests on which these and so many other species depend.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today is Equal Pay Day, and I wish to

speak about the importance of ensuring women in this country are paid fairly.

April 12—102 days into the year—marks the day that women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year. That is unacceptable. We can do better.

Last week, the national women's soccer team filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The complaint states that women are paid just 40 percent of what men are paid—despite the fact that our women's soccer team has long been one of the best in the world. The team has won four of the last five Olympic Gold Medals and three of the last seven World Cups. Women soccer players are even given smaller per-diems when they travel. Women receive $50 per day while men receive $62.50 per day. This shows the pervasiveness of wage discrimination in this country. The most successful women's soccer team in the world still earns just 40 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Next, I would like to turn to my home State. Women in California are paid just 84 cents for every dollar earned by men. While better than the national average of 79 cents, California's wage gap totals nearly $40 billion each year in lost wages. That is $8,053 for every woman who works full time.

This gap has a significant effect on the economic security of working families—40 percent of women are the primary or sole breadwinners in their families. That means 40 percent of families depend on women's wages to pay the bills. Every dollar women lose to the wage gap makes a difference.

Here are just a few examples of what the wage gap costs families: $8,000 is about 1 year's worth of groceries for a family of four, 4 months of mortgage and utility payments, or 6 months of rent.

And the wage gap is even bigger for African-American and Latino women. African-American women are paid just 63 cents. Hispanic women are paid just 43 cents. We can't allow this discrimination to continue.

Next, I would like to address a longstanding myth about the wage gap. Some say it exists only because women choose lower-paying professions than men. For example, women are the vast majority of child care and home health care workers. This is a myth.

Even when women perform the same job as men, with the same level of education, the wage gap persists. For example, men who are nurses are paid $5,000 more than women, even though only 10 percent of nurses are men.

We need to do more to close the wage gap, and I am very proud that California is leading the way. A landmark bill signed by Governor Jerry Brown last year protects women from retaliation if they ask how their pay compares to their colleagues. This is important because secrecy contributes to the wage gap. Women often don't know they are being paid substantially less than men.

The bill also requires employers to justify higher wages for men who perform the same jobs as women.

This law is a big step to improve the economic security of California families.

While it is good news that States are addressing this issue, the wage gap is a national problem. It affects all American women, and the Senate must take action. The Paycheck Fairness Act is a good place to start. I have long supported this bill, which is sponsored by Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is similar to the new California law. It would protect women from retaliation and require employers to justify paying women less than men for the same job.

The bill would also make it easier for women to take legal action under the Equal Pay Act, including class action lawsuits.

Under current law, it is significantly easier to recoup lost wages if they were denied through other discriminatory practices—like failure to pay overtime.

Lastly, the bill would create a training program to help women learn how to negotiate their salaries.

This is a commonsense bill, and one that is long overdue.

In closing, President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963. At the time, women made 59 cents for every dollar earned by men. In 53 years, we have only closed the gap by 16 cents. At this rate, it won't be eliminated until 2059.

Women and their families deserve better, and they can't afford to wait that long.

I strongly urge the Senate to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CALIFORNIA CASUALTIES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to four servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Freedom's Sentinel and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the RECORD.

TSgt Anthony E. Salazar, 40, of Hermosa Beach, CA, died April 13, 2015, at an air base in southwest Asia in a noncombat related incident. Technical Sergeant Salazar was assigned to the 577th Expeditionary Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force Squadron, 1st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group, U.S. Air Forces Central Command.

CAPT Jonathan J. Golden, 33, of Camarillo, CA, died October 2, 2015, in the crash of a C–130J Super Hercules aircraft at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan. Captain Golden was assigned to the 39th Airlift Squadron, Dyess Air Force Base, TX.

SGT Joseph F. Stifter, 30, of Glendale, CA, died January 28, 2016, at Al Asad Airbase, Al Anbar Province, Iraq, from wounds suffered when his armored HMMWV was involved in a roll-over accident. Sergeant Stifter was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS.

SSgt Louis F. Cardin, of Temecula, CA, died March 19, 2016, in northern Iraq, from wounds suffered when the enemy attacked his unit with rocket fire. Staff Sergeant Cardin was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Camp Lejeune, NC.

37TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 37th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, TRA. Since the TRA was signed into law in 1979, the U.S.-Taiwan bilateral relationship has continued to expand, growing into an important friendship as trading partners and allies. In 2015, Taiwan became the United States' ninth largest trading partner and our seventh largest destination for agricultural exports. My home State of Arkansas has seen firsthand the benefit of these close commercial partnerships with Taiwan.

As a member of the Senate Taiwan Caucus, I support efforts to further strengthen and deepen the bonds between the people of the United States and Taiwan, and I am not alone in these efforts. During the past 8 years, 40 State legislative chambers have passed resolutions in support of U.S.-Taiwan trade and a close cultural relationship. As Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou recently pointed out, U.S.-Taiwan relations have never been better, and I look forward to working with President-elect Tsai Ing-wen to ensure this continues to be the case.

In celebrating the 37 years since the Taiwan Relations Act was signed into law, I want to thank the Taiwanese people for their continued friendship and support. It is my hope that the United States and Taiwan will continue to work together to promote enduring peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING AIRBUS EMPLOYEES IN MOBILE, ALABAMA

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Airbus workers at their new facility in Mobile, AL, for completing their first jet, the first Airbus A321 in the United States.

Airbus and its Alabama employees have worked tirelessly for several

years toward this achievement. The Airbus A321 is an advanced airplane and constructing it is no easy task. There is no doubt that building the A321 required immense dedication from the workers in the plant to the suppliers across Alabama and the entire southeast.

I am pleased that Airbus continues to be a leading participant in the manufacturing resurgence in Alabama. The company joins hundreds of others that have recently located their operations in our State, which is a testament to the quality of Alabama products. It is great news indeed for America that one of the finest aircraft manufacturing companies is producing popular, fast-selling models in the United States, and specifically in Mobile, AL.

While this accomplishment is only the beginning, let us join together and enjoy the celebration of this important milestone for Airbus, Alabama, and the people of our community.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–5077. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Trichloroethylene; Significant New Use Rule'' ((RIN2070–AK05) (FRL No. 9943–83)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5078. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fluazinam; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9942–99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5079. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''1,2-Propanediol, 3-[3-[1,3,3,3-tetramethyl-1-[(trimethylsilyl)oxy]-1-disiloxanyl] propoxy]-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9944–11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5080. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5081. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5082. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act that involved fiscal years 2012 and 2013 Operations and Maintenance, Department of Defense Office of Inspector General funds, and was assigned case number 15–01; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–5083. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2016 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5084. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Spokane, Washington: Second 10-Year PM10 Limited Maintenance Plan'' (FRL No. 9944–83–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5085. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Colorado; Revisions to Common Provisions and Regulation Number 3; Corrections'' (FRL No. 9942–84–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5086. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Performance Report to the President and Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5087. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a financial report for fiscal year 2015 relative to the Biosimilar User Fee Act of 2012; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5088. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Definition of the Term 'Fiduciary'; Conflict of Interest Rule—Retirement Investment Advice'' (RIN1210–AB32) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5089. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food'' ((RIN0910–AG98) (Docket No. FDA–2013–N–0013)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5090. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Administrative Actions for Noncompliance; Lesser Administrative Actions'' (Docket No. FDA–2015–N–5052) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5091. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5092. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2015 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5093. A communication from the Director, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5094. A communication from the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5095. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5096. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5097. A communication from the Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5098. A communication from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5099. A communication from the Chairman, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the memorial construction; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–5100. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Permit Unlicensed National Information Infrastructure

(U–NII) Devices in the 5 GHz Band'' ((FCC 16–24) (ET Docket No. 13–49)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2778. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the rapid acquisition of directed energy weapons systems by the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2779. A bill to reauthorize the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2780. A bill to amend section 1034 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 to strengthen the certification requirements relating to the transfer or release of detainees at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2781. A bill to improve homeland security, including domestic preparedness and response to terrorism, by reforming Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers to provide training to first responders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. REED):

S. 2782. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pediatric subspecialists in the National Health Service Corps program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2783. A bill to provide rental assistance to low-income tenants of certain multifamily rural housing projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 2784. A bill to ensure that Federal science agencies and institutions of higher education receiving Federal research and development funding are fully engaging the entire national talent pool, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2785. A bill to protect Native children and promote public safety in Indian country; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 418. A resolution recognizing Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sanchez, and Akanksha Hazari for their selflessness and dedication to their respective causes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 1421

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1421, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize a 6-month extension of certain exclusivity periods in the case of approved drugs that are subsequently approved for a new indication to prevent, diagnose, or treat a rare disease or condition, and for other purposes.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 1808

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1808, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a Northern Border threat analysis, and for other purposes.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2226

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2226, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women and to establish a pilot program to provide grants to State substance abuse agencies to promote innovative service delivery models for such women.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2471

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2471, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve and expand Coverdell education savings accounts.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2506

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2506, a bill to restore

statutory rights to the people of the United States from forced arbitration.

S. 2597

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2597, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 2613

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2613, a bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

S. 2646

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2646, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Choice Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve health care provided to veterans by the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2659

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2659, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency cannot regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 2668

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2668, a bill to provide housing opportunities for individuals living with HIV or AIDS.

S. 2741

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2741, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to permit the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and the Secretary of Labor to elect not to recoup benefits overpayments.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 2758

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2758, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove consideration of certain pain-related issues from calculations under the Medicare hospital value-based purchasing program, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3557

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3557 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3566

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3566 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3591

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3591 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. REED):

S. 2782. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pediatric subspecialists in the National Health Service Corps program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joining Senator BLUNT in introducing the Ensuring Children's Access to Specialty Care Act.

According to the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, there are currently only 8,300 child and adolescent psychiatrists, CAPs, in the United States—many of whom are not practicing full time—far short of the estimated need of over 30,000 CAPs. On average, patients wait almost 2 months to see a CAP, a startling concern given that the incidence rates of mental illness and behavioral disorders among children in the United States continue to grow. Fifty percent of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin at age 14; 75 percent by age 24.

The National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program, NHSCLRP, was created by Congress 40 years ago to help recruit and place trained individuals in underserved communities to provide needed health care services. Licensed health care providers may earn up to $50,000 toward student loans in exchange for a 2-year commitment at an NHSC-approved site, within 2 years of completing their residency. Accepted participants may serve as primary care medical, dental, or mental-behavioral health clinicians.

NHSCLRP provides critical relief to physicians who have completed pediatrics or psychiatry residency training programs; however, pediatric subspecialists, such as child and adolescent psychiatrists are effectively barred from participating due to the extra training these physicians are required to take after completing their residency. This extra training, which often results in increased student debt, typically consisting of a fellowship, takes place in the 2-year window of eligibility for NHSCLRP. The creation of NHSCLRP preceded the expansion of many pediatric subspecialties, not taking into account the extra years of training required for these physicians.

The Ensuring Children's Access to Specialty Care Act would correct this loophole and allow pediatric subspecialists practicing in underserved areas to benefit from the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program. This bill would increase access to specialty care for children and improve mental health parity for children served by NHSCLRP. Every child with a physical, mental, or behavioral health condition should have access to pediatric health services.

Providers across the spectrum of care support this bipartisan legislation including the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Arthritis Foundation, Children's Hospital Association, March of Dimes, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. I look forward to working with these and other stakeholders as well as Senator BLUNT and our colleagues to pass the Ensuring Children's Access to Specialty Care Act in order to help ensure children have access to the health care they need.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 2784. A bill to ensure that Federal science agencies and institutions of higher education receiving Federal research and development funding are fully engaging the entire national talent pool, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, today April 12, is Equal Pay Day. Equal Pay Day means women have to work more than 4 months longer to catch up to what, on average, men made in 2015. This significant pay disparity has been

going on for decades—generations—even though it is against the law and has been against the law since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963.

The gender pay gap persists across all States and nearly all occupations. As we seek to build a 21st-century workforce, more than 73 million working women are at a disadvantage because of pay inequity and other barriers based on gender. While we have come a ways from the days of overt pay discrimination—such as in the 1930s, when the Federal Government, no less, required women to be paid 25 percent less than their male counterparts—the pay gap persists.

It is bad enough that women with equal education and experience get paid less, but it gets worse. A recent New York University study found that when women begin to enter predominately male occupations, pay in those fields decrease overall. For example, when women began to pursue careers in design, wages dropped more than 30 percent. When they entered careers in biology, wages dropped 18 percent. The study also showed the converse. When men entered fields previously dominated by women, such as computer programming, wages increased.

The bottom line is that these studies show that women's work is less valued than men's work. This discrimination won't change because we don't like it or because we hope it will. It will only begin to change if we take action. That is why I joined Senator MIKULSKI in continuing our call to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation would allow women to compare their salaries without fearing retaliation. How can a woman find out if there is pay discrimination going on in her workplace if she can't even find out what others are being paid? The bill would also require employers to prove that differences in pay for men and women doing the same work are not related to gender.

While the gender pay gap affects all women, this morning I want to focus on inequity in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math—also known as STEM. Nationally, we need to promote STEM to remain competitive in the global economy. STEM careers are among the highest paid positions and are some of the most sought after by employers. In order to keep our country's historical leadership in STEM over the next decade, economists say we need to create a million more STEM careers than we are currently creating. We will lose our competitive edge unless the number of women earning STEM degrees keeps pace with their growing share of the population. But, of course, women in the STEM fields earn less than men. For example, on average, women engineers earn just 82 percent of what their male counterparts earn. Female doctors' starting salaries are almost $20,000 less than their male counterparts, even after accounting for factors such as specialty and location.

In addition to facing lower wages, women in STEM must often overcome institutional barriers, cultural stereotypes, and sexual harassment. These barriers permeate every level of the STEM career pipeline. They start as early as middle school and continue throughout one's career and lead to women and minorities disproportionately giving up interest in STEM careers.

At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, men earned more than five times the number of computer science bachelor's degrees as women, and in the College of Engineering, men earned three times as many bachelor's degrees. These kinds of numbers in STEM education are not unique to Hawaii. Even when women overcome the odds and pursue careers in STEM fields, they continue to face gender biases that can affect the hiring, promotion, and career advancement for women in STEM. For instance, researchers found that women in STEM encountered bias judgments of their competence and the ability to be hired. They also received less faculty encouragement and financial rewards than identical male counterparts when negotiating salary packages.

Studies show that when women in STEM decide to become mothers, they are perceived as less competent and less committed to hard work and are offered fewer jobs and lower salaries. In comparison, men are not penalized for being fathers. If that wasn't enough, women in STEM often experience workplace harassment.

Recently, in the New York Times, University of Hawaii geobiology professor Hope Jahren shared an email that was sent to a former student from a male colleague who works in the same lab as the student. This email read in part this:

All I know is that from the first day I talked to you, there hadn't been a single day or hour when you weren't on my mind. That's just the way things are and you're gonna have to deal with me until one of us leaves.

In the age of social media, these kinds of totally inappropriate emails are all too common. According to Professor Jahren, this former student feels that she cannot rely on human resources because she heard stories from female colleagues about how sexual harassment happens ''all the time'' in their organization and that no action is taken.

These stories are all too common. Again, merely condemning this kind of environment is not enough. Merely hoping that change will occur is not enough. We can and must do more to even the playing field for women in STEM, and that is why I am introducing the STEM Opportunities Act today, so we can combat the systemic issues that can lead to women losing interest in STEM and leaving STEM careers basically in droves.

The STEM Opportunities Act helps Federal science agencies and institutions of higher education identify and share best practices to overcome barriers that can affect the inclusion of women and other underrepresented groups in STEM. The STEM Opportunities Act also allows universities and nonprofits to receive competitive grants and recognition for mentoring women and minorities in STEM fields. Mentoring programs such as the Maui Economic Development Board's Women in Technology Program and the Native Hawaiian Science and Engineering Mentorship Program at the University of Hawaii have seen tremendous success.

The Women in Technology Program supports those like Deanna Garcia, who was first introduced to STEM through Women in Technology and is now a mentor to girls who want to follow in her footsteps.

Deanna said:

Women in Technology gave me the skills, confidence, and support I needed. Because of their networking and strong ties within the community, I was not only able to find an internship, but a career in IT. Because of the Women in Technology program, I can also pay it forward to current students and show them during career days or tours I am a product of the program and hope to inspire them to pursue a path in STEM just like I did.

Deanna's story is just one of many successes that programs like Women in Technology have.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the testimonials on the success of existing STEM programs printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATOR MAZIE K. HIRONO—APRIL 12, 2016

EXTENSION OF REMARKS: TESTIMONIALS FROM HAWAII STEM MENTORING PROGRAMS

MAUI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Deanna Garcia, TMDS-MSAT Analysis Team Manager, Akimeka LLC, A Subsidiary of VSE Corporation

''Technology and Engineering are known to be male dominated fields, however, the Women in Technology program empowered me to succeed in an IT Career. I got my start almost fifteen years ago because of the WIT program. They gave me the skills, confidence, and support I needed and because of their networking and strong ties within the community, I was not only able to find an internship, then job, but a career in IT. They also lead by example and have strong, driven, impactful women leading the way. Because of the WIT program, I can also pay it forward to current students and show them during career days or tours I'm a product of the program and hope to inspire them to pursue a path in STEM, just like I did.''

Kawai Hall, Integrity Applications Incorporated

''Since there are fewer women with technology-related degrees, it is harder for work

industries to recruit women in these fields. I think Women In Technology is an amazing project to help bring awareness of STEM-related work opportunities to girls and women, especially here in Hawaii where it is prime. Our company is made of mostly men but I haven't felt the effect of gender in my workplace. Everyone works greatly as a team and helps each other advance in learning. But it would be great to have more females added to our workplace.''

Audrey Cabrera, Brown & Caldwell

''After having my second child I've had a hard time finding my balance and feeling like I am fulfilling my roles as employee, mother, and wife. Although we have come so far in terms of women in the professional workforce and specifically STEM careers, the statistics remain that a large portion of women migrate out of their STEM career in their 30's, when they are growing their families. My company is great, with fair pay and good benefits, but I feel that there are some double standards/expectations that probably aren't specific to my company, but in our society in general.''

Kimberly Vaituulala, Maui Electric Company (MECO) mentor for Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day (IGED)

''Society has taught young girls to care for their baby dolls or encouraged to play ''house'' with their Barbie dolls. Meanwhile boys are building structures with Legos and playing outside, messing around with their bikes to see what they can do to make it go faster or make it look and sound cooler as they ride by. This beginning transitions into college where the number of boys dominate science and math courses. For me, the significance of IGED is to show these young ladies that engineering/technology IS cool and it's not just for boys. IGED gives these ladies an opportunity to see real people working in STEM careers, and broadens the horizon for these up and coming females. Igniting a spark of interest in just one of the 15 girls in the group makes this effort completely worth it. . . .

''Women are physiologically and psychologically different from men. In order to solve the engineering problems of this world, the men cannot do it alone. It is vitally important for women (of all ages) to be exposed to and consider a career in engineering. The different perspective that women can bring to forth might be the key to making cold fusion a reality one day.

''In college I was one of three girls in my electrical engineering classes. But I know more girls are getting involved in STEM related fields and careers, and it can be attributed to programs like IGED. Sometimes girls need that extra push. Someone to tell them, ''Go! You can do it too!'' And as long as we can sustain STEM programs like IGED, this trend for girls will continue on upward.''

Native Hawaiian Science & Engineering Mentorship Program (NHSEMP), University of Hawaii at Manoa Kaiho'olulu Rickard, mentee

''[NHSEMP] helped me focus on my studies and set goals. They got me started with a mentor who's been helping me out with choosing good projects to work on . . . I was introduced to [researcher] Lloyd French, and after that I really began to get involved in projects like MMIC, or Monolithic Microwave Integrated Circuit, and JPL, which is the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. . . .

''I've really gotten involved in what I'm doing here. My freshman year, my grades weren't so good. I had about a 2.0 GPA then. So, after I joined the program, I was given my own small office, and working with a mentor, basically helped me pull my GPA up to a 3.0 in two semesters.''

Ms. HIRONO. I thank Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Her legislation laid the groundwork for the STEM Opportunities Act. I also wish to thank Senators PETERS, MURRAY, GILLIBRAND, BLUMENTHAL, MARKEY, CANTWELL, BOOKER, SCHATZ, and MERKLEY for supporting this effort. Working together, I know we can do better, and I know we will ensure that women who want to pursue STEM careers can do so in a supportive environment without fear of harassment.

On Equal Pay Day, we are reminded of how far we have to go to achieve equality, and I urge my colleagues to support the Paycheck Fairness Act, the STEM Opportunities Act, and other legislation that will help close the gender gap in our workforce.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 418—RECOGNIZING HAFSAT ABIOLA, KHANIM LATIF, YOANI SÁNCHEZ, AND AKANKSHA HAZARI FOR THEIR SELFLESSNESS AND DEDICATION TO THEIR RESPECTIVE CAUSES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 418

Whereas women's leadership in the world is critical to shaping and addressing world events and decreasing global instability;

Whereas women leaders play an integral role in fighting against transnational organized crime, human trafficking, and violence against women, including honor killings, and female genital mutilation;

Whereas changing the trajectory of these dynamics requires empowering women leaders to advance economic opportunity and increase political and public leadership;

Whereas women leaders have selflessly sacrificed, and in some cases placed their lives at risk, to advance causes that will better their communities, their nations, and the world;

Whereas Hafsat Abiola of Nigeria, founder of the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy, campaigns to end violence against women, trains young female leaders, and works to increase civic participation;

Whereas Khanim Latif of Iraq, the Director of Asuda, places her life at risk to provide safe haven to victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and fights threats of honor killings and female genital cutting;

Whereas Yoani Sánchez of Cuba, founder of ''Generación Y'', created a blog that captures daily life in Cuba as an effort to encourage political change and increase public awareness and engagement;

Whereas Akanksha Hazari of India fights to deliver basic necessities such as clean water and electricity to impoverished communities and to empower the underserved in India; and

Whereas each of these leaders serves as a role model and an inspiration to help change the lives of others: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sánchez, and Akanksha Hazari for their selflessness and dedication to their respective causes; and

(2) commends their efforts to advance economic opportunity, increase political and public leadership, combat violence against women, and empower women to address global instability.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to honor and congratulate the Vital Voices Global Partnership and the 2016 Vital Voices Award recipients: Hafsat Abiola, Khanim Latif, Yoani Sánchez, and Akanksha Hazari.

The Vital Voices Global Partnership identifies, invests in, and brings visibility to extraordinary women around the world by unleashing their leadership potential to transform lives and accelerate peace and prosperity. Vital Voices equips such leaders with the management, business development, marketing, and communications skills required to expand their enterprises, to provide for their families, and create jobs in their communities. Vital Voices seeks to empower these women leaders to create a better world for us all.

The Vital Voices Global Partnership has trained and mentored over 14,000 women in 144 countries over the last 15 years, in addition to this year's award recipients Hafsat Abiola of Nigeria, founder of the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy, campaigns to end violence against women, trains young female leaders, and works to increase civic participation. Khanim Latif of Iraq, the Director of Asuda, places her life at risk to provide safe haven to victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and fights threats of honor killings and female genital cutting. Yoani Sánchez of Cuba, founder of ''Generación Y'', created a blog that captures daily life in Cuba in an effort to encourage political change and increase public awareness and engagement; and Akanksha Hazari of India fights to deliver basic necessities such as clean water and electricity to impoverished communities and to empower the underserved in India.

Such leaders, supported by the Vital Voices Global Partnership Fund, and through their selfless efforts and advocacy, continue to advance social justice, support democracy, and strengthen the rule of law across the globe.

With this in mind, I am pleased to offer this resolution with Senator FEINSTEIN.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of a resolution, submitted by Senator COLLINS, to honor four women recently recognized by the Vital Voices Global Partnership.

This is a global organization that identifies, supports, and highlights women around the world who exhibit leadership to transform their communities.

I am pleased to sponsor this resolution with Senator COLLINS.

The four women honored by this resolution are leaders who have made a true difference in their countries in the face of adversity.

Hafsat Abiola of Nigeria founded the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy to end violence against women in Nigeria and remove barriers for the civic participation of women. She has been actively working on gender equality and women's leadership in Nigeria since she was a teenager, and continues to advance women's rights.

Khanim Latif of Iraq is the Director of Asuda, which works to combat sexual and gender-based violence in Iraq. She has worked on gender-based violence issues in Iraq for over 15 years, and has helped provide refuge to women subjected to horrific violence in her country, including to those who have been subjected to ISIL's violent campaign against the region's Yazidi population.

Yoani Sánchez of Cuba founded ''Generacion Y,'' a platform to capture daily life in Cuba as an effort to encourage political change. It stemmed from her personal experiences growing up in Cuba, and the experiences of her family.

Akanksha Hazari of India works to empower impoverished, rural communities in India. She has done this by pioneering a loyalty program—through mobile phones—to provide social goods such as clean water to rural customers in India.

These women were recognized by Vital Voices because they have made significant strides to better the communities in which they live, and they continue to do so.

The resolution, submitted by Senator COLLINS and myself, further recognizes their contributions, and I hope that we can all draw inspiration from their leadership.

I congratulate these women, and look forward to hearing about their continued success.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3640. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3641. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3642. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3643. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3644. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3645. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COATS, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. ENZI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3646. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3647. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3648. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3649. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3650. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3651. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3652. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3653. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3654. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3655. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3656. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3657. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3658. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3659. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3660. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3661. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3662. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3663. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3664. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3665. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3666. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3667. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3668. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3669. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3670. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3671. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3672. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464

submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3673. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3674. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3675. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3676. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3677. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3678. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. WARREN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3679. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3680. Mr. THUNE proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra.

SA 3681. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3682. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3683. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3684. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. TILLIS)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2133, to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3640. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 2125, insert the following:

SEC. 2126. PILOT PROGRAM TO INTEGRATE UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS INTO THE NATIONAL AIRSPACE.

(a) ADDITIONAL TEST RANGES.—Paragraph (1) of section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Not later than'' and inserting the following;

''(A) INITIAL TEST RANGES.—Not later than''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) ADDITIONAL TEST RANGES.—

''(i) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall establish 4 additional test ranges under the program established under subparagraph (A).

''(ii) APPLICATION.—The Administrator shall—

''(I) permit a State that submitted an application to be a test range prior to such date of enactment to use that prior submission, or a modified version of that submission, as an application to be a test range under clause (i); and

''(II) permit States that did not submit an application to be a test range prior to such date of enactment to apply to be a test range under clause (i).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (3) of section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking ''6''.

SA 3641. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. JURISDICTION OVER OFFENSES COMMITTED BY CERTAIN UNITED STATES PERSONNEL STATIONED IN CANADA.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 212A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the chapter heading, by striking ''**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**''; and

(2) by adding after section 3272 the following:

''§ 3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever, while employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice and stationed or deployed in Canada pursuant to a treaty, executive agreement, or bilateral memorandum in furtherance of a border security initiative, engages in conduct (or conspires or attempts to engage in conduct) in Canada that would constitute an offense for which a person may be prosecuted in a court of the United States had the conduct been engaged in within the United States or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States shall be fined or imprisoned, or both, as provided for that offense.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The term 'employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice' means—

''(A) being employed as a civilian employee, a contractor (including a subcontractor at any tier), an employee of a contractor (or a subcontractor at any tier), a grantee (including a contractor of a grantee or a subgrantee or subcontractor at any tier), or an employee of a grantee (or a contractor of a grantee or a subgrantee or subcontractor at any tier) of the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice;

''(B) being present or residing in Canada in connection with such employment; and

''(C) not being a national of or ordinarily resident in Canada.

''(2) GRANT AGREEMENT.—The term 'grant agreement' means a legal instrument described in section 6304 or 6305 of title 31, other than an agreement between the United States and a State, local, or foreign government or an international organization.

''(3) GRANTEE.—The term 'grantee' means a party, other than the United States, to a grant agreement.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Part II of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the table of chapters, by striking the item relating to chapter 212A and inserting the following:

''212A. Extraterritorial jurisdiction over certain offenses ..... 3271'';

and

(2) in the table of sections for chapter 212A, by inserting after the item relating to section 3272 the following:

''3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.''.

SA 3642. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF TRANSFERRING FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATIONS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study on barriers to individuals transferring certifications provided by the Federal Aviation Administration into postsecondary programs at institutions of higher education for academic credit; and

(2) not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to Congress a report on the results of the study.

SA 3643. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2320. AVIATION RULEMAKING COMMITTEE FOR PILOT REST AND DUTY REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall convene an aviation rulemaking committee to review pilot rest and duty regulations under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The aviation rulemaking committee convened under subsection (a) shall consist of members appointed by the Administrator, including—

(1) applicable representatives of industry;

(2) a pilot labor organization exclusively representing a minimum of 1,000 pilots who are covered by—

(A) part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) subpart K of part 91 of such title; and

(3) aviation safety experts with specific knowledge of flight crewmember education and training requirements relating to part 135 of such title.

(c) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESS.—In reviewing the pilot rest and duty regulations under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, the aviation rulemaking committee shall consider the following:

(1) Recommendations of aviation rulemaking committees convened before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) Accommodations necessary for small businesses.

(3) Scientific data derived from aviation-related fatigue and sleep research.

(4) Data gathered from aviation safety reporting programs.

(5) The need to accommodate diversity of operations conducted under part 135 of such title.

(6) Such other matters as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(d) REPORT AND NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—The Administrator shall—

(1) not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report based on the findings of the aviation rulemaking committee convened under subsection (a); and

(2) not later than 12 months after submitting the report required under paragraph (1), issue a notice of proposed rulemaking consistent with any consensus recommendations reached by the aviation rulemaking committee.

SA 3644. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3109 and insert the following:

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid by the passenger if the air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage and, except as provided in subsection (b), the air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger within 24 hours of the time of arrival of the passenger at the passenger's destination.

(2) CHOICE OF COMPARABLE COMPENSATION.—In the final regulations issued under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall not prescribe specific compensation, but shall permit a covered air carrier to provide the passenger with a choice of comparable compensation so long as a full refund of the ancillary fee is one of the choices simultaneously offered by the covered air carrier.

(b) EXCEPTION.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to checked baggage if the air carrier is prevented from delivering checked baggage by the time specified in subsection (a) by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

SA 3645. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COATS, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. ENZI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF ENHANCED CARBON DIOXIDE SEQUESTRATION CREDIT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Carbon Capture Act''.

(b) IN GENERAL.—

(1) INCREASE IN CREDIT RATE FOR CERTAIN CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT.—Section 45Q(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) captured by the taxpayer using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, and'', and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end,

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) captured by the taxpayer using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act,'', and

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a comma, and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(3) the applicable dollar amount (as determined under subsection (b)(1)) per metric ton of qualified carbon dioxide which is—

''(A) captured by the taxpayer using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility on or after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, during the 10-year period beginning on the date the equipment was originally placed in service, and

''(B) disposed of by the taxpayer in secure geological storage and not used by the taxpayer as described in paragraph (4)(B), and

''(4) the applicable dollar amount (as determined under subsection (b)(1)) per metric ton of qualified carbon dioxide which is—

''(A) captured by the taxpayer using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility on or after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, during the 10-year period beginning on the date the equipment was originally placed in service,

''(B) used by the taxpayer as a tertiary injectant in a qualified enhanced oil or natural gas recovery project, and

''(C) disposed of by the taxpayer in secure geological storage.''.

(2) APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT; ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT; ELECTION.—Section 45Q of such Code is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (b) through (e) as subsections (c) through (f), respectively, and

(B) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection:

''(b) APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT; ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT; ELECTION.—

''(1) APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The applicable dollar amount shall be an amount equal to—

''(i) for any taxable year beginning in a calendar year after 2015 and ending before 2026—

''(I) for purposes of paragraph (3) of subsection (a), the dollar amount established by linear interpolation between $22.66 and $30 for each calendar year during such period, and

''(II) for purposes of paragraph (4) of such subsection, the dollar amount established by linear interpolation between $12.83 and $30 for each calendar year during such period, and

''(ii) for any taxable year beginning in a calendar year after 2025, an amount equal to the product of $30 and the inflation adjustment factor for such calendar year determined under section 43(b)(3)(B) for such calendar year, determined by substituting '2024' for '1990'.

''(B) ROUNDING.—The applicable dollar amount determined under subparagraph (A) shall be rounded to the nearest cent.

''(2) INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT ON EXISTING QUALIFIED FACILITY.—In the case of a qualified facility placed in service before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, for which additional qualified carbon capture equipment is placed in service on or after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, the amount of qualified carbon dioxide which is captured by the taxpayer shall be equal to—

''(A) for purposes of paragraph (1)(A) and (2)(A) of subsection (a), the lesser of—

''(i) the total amount of qualified carbon dioxide captured at such facility for the taxable year, or

''(ii) the total amount of the carbon dioxide capture capacity of the qualified carbon capture equipment in service at such facility on the day before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, and

''(B) for purposes of paragraph (3)(A) and (4)(A) of such subsection, an amount (not less than zero) equal to the excess of—

''(i) the amount described in clause (i) of subparagraph (A), over

''(ii) the amount described in clause (ii) of such subparagraph.

''(3) ELECTION.—For purposes of determining the carbon dioxide sequestration credit under this section, a taxpayer may elect to have the dollar amounts applicable under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a)

apply in lieu of the dollar amounts applicable under paragraph (3) or (4) of such subsection for each metric ton of qualified carbon dioxide which is captured by the taxpayer using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility on or after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act.''.

(3) ELECTION TO ALLOW CREDIT TO PERSON THAT DISPOSES OF OR USES THE CARBON DIOXIDE.—Paragraph (5) of section 45Q(e) of such Code, as redesignated by paragraph (2)(A), is amended to read as follows:

''(5) CREDIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO TAXPAYER.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided subparagraph (B) or in any regulations prescribed by the Secretary, any credit under this section shall be attributable to—

''(i) in the case of qualified carbon dioxide captured using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, the person that captures and physically or contractually ensures the disposal of or the use as a tertiary injectant of such qualified carbon dioxide, and

''(ii) in the case of qualified carbon dioxide captured using qualified carbon capture equipment which is originally placed in service at a qualified facility on or after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, the person that owns the qualified carbon capture equipment and physically or contractually ensures the capture and disposal of or the use as a tertiary injectant of such qualified carbon dioxide.

''(B) ELECTION.—If the person described in subparagraph (A) makes an election under this subparagraph in such time and manner as the Secretary may prescribe by regulations, the credit under this section—

''(i) shall be allowable to the person that disposes of the qualified carbon dioxide or uses the qualified carbon dioxide as a tertiary injectant, and

''(ii) shall not be allowable to the person described in subparagraph (A).''.

(4) DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED FACILITY AND QUALIFIED CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT.—Subsection (d) of section 45Q of such Code, as redesignated by paragraph (2)(A), is amended to read as follows:

''(d) QUALIFIED FACILITY AND QUALIFIED CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT.—

''(1) QUALIFIED FACILITY.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified facility' means any industrial facility—

''(A)(i) the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022, and—

''(I) the original planning and design for such facility includes installation of qualified carbon capture equipment, or

''(II) construction of qualified carbon capture equipment begins before such date, or

''(ii) which is placed in service before January 1, 2022, and includes installation of qualified carbon capture equipment, provided that construction of such carbon capture equipment begins before such date, and

''(B) which captures—

''(i) in the case of an electricity generating facility, not less than 500,000 metric tons of qualified carbon dioxide during the taxable year, or

''(ii) in the case of facility not described in clause (i), not less than 100,000 metric tons of qualified carbon dioxide during the taxable year.

''(2) QUALIFIED CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified carbon capture equipment' means—

''(A) carbon capture equipment placed in service before January 1, 2022, and

''(B) carbon capture equipment the construction of which begins before such date.''.

(5) APPLICATION OF SECTION.—Subsection (f) of section 45Q of such Code, as redesignated by paragraph (2)(A), is amended to read as follows:

''(f) APPLICATION OF SECTION FOR CERTAIN CARBON CAPTURE EQUIPMENT.—In the case of any qualified carbon capture equipment placed in service before the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, the credit under this section shall apply with respect to qualified carbon dioxide captured using such equipment before the end of the calendar year in which the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, certifies that 75,000,000 metric tons of qualified carbon dioxide have been taken into account in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).''.

(6) REGULATIONS.—Section 45Q of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may prescribe such regulations and other guidance as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out this section, including regulations or other guidance to—

''(1) ensure proper allocation under subsection (a) for qualified carbon dioxide captured by a taxpayer during the taxable year ending after the date of the enactment of the Carbon Capture Act, and

''(2) determine whether a facility satisfies the requirements under subsection (d)(1) during such taxable year.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3646. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 215, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(b) HELICOPTER CRASH-RESISTANT FUEL SYSTEMS.—Not later 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with the safety recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board, dated July 23, 2015 (A–15–12), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulations to ensure that the requirements of sections 27.952 and 29.952 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, are met by requiring that all newly manufactured helicopters, regardless of the original certification dates of the designs for such helicopters, have fuel systems that meet the crash-worthiness requirements of such sections.

SA 3647. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2405. FRANGIBILITY STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) develop standards and requirements for the frangibility of new civilian aviation facilities and structures, in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular 150/5220-23;

(2) develop standard test protocols and certification processes for frangible civilian aviation facilities and structures; and

(3) notify Congress of the viability of establishing a frangibility test center in the United States that is capable of performing test protocols approved by the Federal Aviation Administration.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining the viability of establishing a frangibility test center in the United States under subsection (a)(3), the Administrator shall consider facilities of centers of excellence, partnerships, industry stakeholders, and other Federal agencies.

SA 3648. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. ALLOCATIONS OF CREDITS TO INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) ALLOCATIONS TO INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—Paragraph (4) of section 179D(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or local'' and inserting ''local, or Indian tribal''.

(b) ALLOCATIONS TO CERTAIN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 179D(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended by subsection (a), is amended by inserting '', or by an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) and exempt from tax under section 501(a)'' after ''political subdivision thereof''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The heading of paragraph (4) of section 179D(d) of such Code is amended by inserting ''AND PROPERTY HELD BY CERTAIN NON-PROFITS'' after ''PUBLIC PROPERTY''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2015.

SA 3649. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. COMPENSATION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY A LAPSE IN APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 1341 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''An officer'' and inserting ''Except as specified in this subchapter or any other provision of law, an officer''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c)(1) In this subsection—

''(A) the term 'covered lapse in appropriations' means a lapse in appropriations that begins on or after October 1, 2015; and

''(B) the term 'excepted employee' means an excepted employee or an employee performing emergency work, as such terms are defined by the Office of Personnel Management.

''(2) Each Federal employee furloughed as a result of a covered lapse in appropriations shall be paid for the period of the lapse in appropriations, and each excepted employee who is required to perform work during a covered lapse in appropriations shall be paid for such work, at the employee's standard rate of pay at the earliest date possible after the lapse in appropriations ends, regardless of scheduled pay dates.

''(3) During a covered lapse in appropriations, each excepted employee who is required to perform work shall be entitled to use leave under chapter 63 of title 5, or any other applicable law or equivalent formal leave system governing the use of leave by the excepted employee, for which compensation shall be paid at the earliest date possible after the lapse in appropriations ends, regardless of scheduled pay dates.''.

SA 3650. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2152.

SA 3651. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 316, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 318, line 17, and insert the following:

''(B) CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL APPLICANTS.—The Administrator shall consider additional applicants for the position of air traffic controller by referring an approximately equal number of employees for appointment among the the applicant pools described in subparagraph (C). If the number of referrals from one of the pools is insufficient to provide an approximately equal number of candidates as the other pools in order to meet the need of the Federal Aviation Administration for new employees, the Administrator shall draw from the other pools to meet the need. The number of employees referred for consideration from pool one and pool two shall not differ by more than 10 percent.

''(C) APPLICANT POOLS.—The the applicant pools referred to in subparagraph (B) are the following:

''(i) POOL ONE.—Applicants who have successfully completed air traffic controller training and graduated from an institution participating in the Collegiate Training Initiative program maintained under subsection (c)(1) who have received from the institution—

''(I) an appropriate recommendation; or

''(II) an endorsement certifying that the individual would have met the requirements in effect as of December 31, 2013, for an appropriate recommendation.

''(ii) POOL TWO.—Applicants who apply under a vacancy announcement recruiting from all United States citizens.

''(iii) POOL THREE.—Applicants who—

''(I) are eligible for a veterans recruitment appointment pursuant to section 4214 of title 38, United States Code, and provide a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty within 120 days of the announcement closing;

''(II) are eligible veterans (as defined in section 4211 of title 38, United States Code) maintaining aviation experience obtained in the course of the individual's military experience; or

''(III) are preference eligible veterans (as defined in section 2108 of title 5, United States Code).

''(D) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph limits the applicability to the three pools of applicants described in subparagraph (C) of any provision of title 5 relating to veterans.

''(2) USE OF BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—

''(A) BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—The Administration shall not use any biographical assessment when hiring under subparagraph (A) or clause (i) or (iii) of subparagraph (C) of paragraph (1).

SA 3652. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. NORTHERN BORDER SECURITY REVIEW.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Northern Border Security Review Act''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(H) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

(2) NORTHERN BORDER.—The term ''Northern Border'' means the land and maritime borders between the United States and Canada.

(c) NORTHERN BORDER THREAT ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a Northern Border threat analysis that includes—

(A) current and potential terrorism and criminal threats posed by individuals and organized groups seeking—

(i) to enter the United States through the Northern Border; or

(ii) to exploit border vulnerabilities on the Northern Border;

(B) improvements needed at and between ports of entry along the Northern Border—

(i) to prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States; and

(ii) to reduce criminal activity, as measured by the total flow of illegal goods, illicit drugs, and smuggled and trafficked persons moved in either direction across to the Northern Border;

(C) gaps in law, policy, cooperation between State, tribal, and local law enforcement, international agreements, or tribal agreements that hinder effective and efficient border security, counter-terrorism, anti-human smuggling and trafficking efforts, and the flow of legitimate trade along the Northern Border; and

(D) whether additional U.S. Customs and Border Protection preclearance and preinspection operations at ports of entry along the Northern Border could help prevent terrorists and instruments of terror from entering the United States.

(2) ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS.—For the threat analysis required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider and examine—

(A) technology needs and challenges;

(B) personnel needs and challenges;

(C) the role of State, tribal, and local law enforcement in general border security activities;

(D) the need for cooperation among Federal, State, tribal, local, and Canadian law enforcement entities relating to border security;

(E) the terrain, population density, and climate along the Northern Border; and

(F) the needs and challenges of Department facilities, including the physical approaches to such facilities.

(3) CLASSIFIED THREAT ANALYSIS.—To the extent possible, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit the threat analysis required under paragraph (1) in unclassified form. The Secretary may submit a portion of the threat analysis in classified form if the Secretary determines that such form is appropriate for that portion.

SA 3653. Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. SCALABLE AEROSPACE ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING DEMONSTRATION INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop a scalable aerospace additive manufacturing demonstration initiative which shall

focus on developing research and training on a certification framework for a range of aircraft components, including safety-critical applications, to address barriers to the scalable adoption of additive manufacturing in United States civil aerospace.

(b) INITIATIVE COMPONENTS.—The demonstration initiative required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) promote and facilitate collaboration among academia, the commercial aircraft industry, including manufacturers, suppliers and commercial air carriers, Centers for Manufacturing Innovation in the Network for Manufacturing Innovation Program administered by the Department of Commerce, and national manufacturing innovation institutes administered by the Federal Aviation Administration;

(2) identify and promote opportunities for collaboration and technical exchange among agencies involved in research related to the safety and certification of scalable additive manufacturing, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Energy;

(3) develop a research and training program for basic and applied technical advances in technologies related to the safety and certification of additively manufactured aerospace components, including safety critical applications; and

(4) develop and undertake research on technologies related to improving the certification of additive manufactured components with academia, industry, non-profit research institutes, and manufacturing innovation institutes.

SA 3654. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REPORT ON AIRPORTS USED BY MAHAN AIR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2020, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a list of all airports at which aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air have landed during the 2 years preceding the submission of the report; and

(2) for each such airport—

(A) an assessment of whether aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air continue to conduct operations at that airport;

(B) an assessment of whether any of the landings of aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air were necessitated by an emergency situation;

(C) a determination regarding whether additional security measures should be imposed on flights to the United States that originate from that airport; and

(D) an explanation of the rationale for that determination.

(b) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(c) PUBLICATION OF LIST.—The list required by subsection (a)(1) shall be publicly and prominently posted on the website of the Department of Homeland Security on the date on which the report required by subsection (a) is submitted to Congress.

SA 3655. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REFORM OF BIODIESEL TAX INCENTIVES.

(a) INCOME TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—So much of section 40A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as precedes subsection (c) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 40A. BIODIESEL FUELS CREDIT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 38, the biodiesel fuels credit determined under this section for the taxable year is $1.00 for each gallon of biodiesel produced by the taxpayer which during the taxable year—

''(1) is sold by the taxpayer to another person—

''(A) for use by such other person's trade or business as a fuel or in the production of a qualified biodiesel mixture (other than casual off-farm production), or

''(B) who sells such biodiesel at retail to another person and places such biodiesel in the fuel tank of such other person, or

''(2) is used by such taxpayer for any purpose described in paragraph (1).

''(b) INCREASED CREDIT FOR SMALL PRODUCERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any eligible small biodiesel producer, subsection (a) shall be applied by increasing the dollar amount contained therein by 10 cents.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Paragraph (1) shall only apply with respect to the first 15,000,000 gallons of biodiesel produced by any eligible small biodiesel producer during any taxable year.''.

(2) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—Section 40A(d) of such Code is amended by striking all that follows paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(2) QUALIFIED BIODIESEL MIXTURE; BIODIESEL MIXTURE.—

''(A) QUALIFIED BIODIESEL MIXTURE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified biodiesel mixture' means a biodiesel mixture which is—

''(I) sold by the producer of such mixture to any person for use as a fuel, or

''(II) used by the producer of such mixture as a fuel.

''(ii) SALE OR USE MUST BE IN TRADE OR BUSINESS, ETC.—A biodiesel mixture shall not be treated as a qualified biodiesel mixture unless the sale or use described in clause (i) is in a trade or business of the person producing the biodiesel mixture.

''(B) BIODIESEL MIXTURE.—The term 'biodiesel mixture' means a mixture which consists of biodiesel and diesel fuel (as defined in section 4083(a)(3)), determined without regard to any use of kerosene.

''(3) BIODIESEL NOT USED FOR A QUALIFIED PURPOSE.—If—

''(A) any credit was determined with respect to any biodiesel under this section, and

''(B) any person uses such biodiesel for a purpose not described in subsection (a),

then there is hereby imposed on such person a tax equal to the product of the rate applicable under subsection (a) and the number of gallons of such biodiesel.

''(4) PASS-THRU IN THE CASE OF ESTATES AND TRUSTS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, rules similar to the rules of subsection (d) of section 52 shall apply.

''(5) LIMITATION TO BIODIESEL WITH CONNECTION TO THE UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No credit shall be determined under subsection (a) with respect to biodiesel unless such biodiesel is produced in the United States from qualified feedstocks. For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'United States' includes any possession of the United States.

''(B) QUALIFIED FEEDSTOCKS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'qualified feedstock' means any feedstock which is allowable for a fuel that is assigned a D–Code of 4 under table 1 of section 80.1426(f) of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations.''.

(3) RULES FOR SMALL BIODIESEL PRODUCERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 40A(e) of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking ''agri-biodiesel'' each place it appears in paragraphs (1) and (5)(A) and inserting ''biodiesel'',

(ii) by striking ''subsection (b)(4)(C)'' each place it appears in paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting ''subsection (b)(2)'', and

(iii) by striking ''subsection (a)(3)'' each place it appears in paragraphs (5)(A), (6)(A)(i), and (6)(B)(i) and inserting ''subsection (b)''.

(B) The heading for subsection (e) of section 40A of such Code is amended by striking ''AGRI-BIODIESEL'' and inserting ''BIODIESEL''.

(C) The headings for paragraphs (1) and (6) of section 40A(e) of such Code are each amended by striking ''AGRI-BIODIESEL'' and inserting ''BIODIESEL''.

(4) RENEWABLE DIESEL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section 40A(f) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

''(3) RENEWABLE DIESEL DEFINED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'renewable diesel' means liquid fuel derived from biomass which—

''(i) is not a mono-alkyl ester,

''(ii) can be used in engines designed to operate on conventional diesel fuel, and

''(iii) meets the requirements for any Grade No. 1–D fuel or Grade No. 2–D fuel covered under the American Society for Testing and Materials specification D–975–13a.

''(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Such term shall not include—

''(i) any liquid with respect to which a credit may be determined under section 40,

''(ii) any fuel derived from coprocessing biomass with a feedstock which is not biomass, or

''(iii) any fuel that is not chemically equivalent to petroleum diesel fuels that can meet fuel quality specifications applicable to diesel fuel, gasoline, or aviation fuel.

''(C) BIOMASS.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'biomass' has the meaning given such term by section 45K(c)(3).''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 40A(f) of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking ''Subsection (b)(4)'' in paragraph (2) and inserting ''Subsection (b)'', and

(ii) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) CERTAIN AVIATION FUEL.—Except as provided paragraph (3)(B), the term 'renewable diesel' shall include fuel derived from biomass which meets the requirements of a Department of Defense specification for military jet fuel or an American Society of Testing and Materials specification for aviation turbine fuel.''.

(5) EXTENSION.—Subsection (g) of section 40A of such Code is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(6) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by striking the item relating to section 40A and inserting the following new item:

''Sec. 40A. Biodiesel fuels credit.''.

(b) REFORM OF EXCISE TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 6426 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(c) BIODIESEL PRODUCTION CREDIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the biodiesel production credit is $1.00 for each gallon of biodiesel produced by the taxpayer and which—

''(A) is sold by such taxpayer to another person—

''(i) for use by such other person's trade or business as a fuel or in the production of a qualified biodiesel mixture (other than casual off-farm production), or

''(ii) who sells such biodiesel at retail to another person and places such biodiesel in the fuel tank of such other person, or

''(B) is used by such taxpayer for any purpose described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) DEFINITIONS.—Any term used in this subsection which is also used in section 40A shall have the meaning given such term by section 40A.

''(3) TERMINATION.—This subsection shall not apply to any sale, use, or removal after December 31, 2019.''.

(2) PRODUCER REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT.—Subsection (a) of section 6426 of such Code is amended by striking ''subsections (d) and (e)'' in the flush sentence at the end and inserting ''subsections (c), (d), and (e)''.

(3) RECAPTURE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (f) of section 6426 of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking ''or biodiesel'' each place it appears in subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of paragraph (1),

(ii) by striking ''or biodiesel mixture'' in paragraph (1)(A), and

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3) and by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(2) BIODIESEL.—If any credit was determined under this section or paid pursuant to section 6427(e) with respect to the production of any biodiesel and any person uses such biodiesel for a purpose not described in subsection (c)(1), then there is hereby imposed on such person a tax equal to $1 for each gallon of such biodiesel.''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(i) Paragraph (3) of section 6426(f) of such Code, as redesignated by subparagraph (A)(iii), is amended by inserting ''or (2)'' after ''paragraph (1)''.

(ii) The heading for paragraph (1) of section 6426(f) of such Code is amended by striking ''IMPOSITION OF TAX'' and inserting ''IN GENERAL''.

(4) LIMITATION.—Section 6426(i) of such Code is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking ''biodiesel or'', and

(ii) by striking ''BIODIESEL AND'' in the heading, and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) BIODIESEL.—No credit shall be determined under subsection (a) with respect to biodiesel unless such biodiesel is produced in the United States from qualified feedstocks (as defined in section 40A(d)(5)(B)).''.

(5) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(A) The heading of section 6426 of such Code is amended by striking ''**ALCOHOL FUEL, BIODIESEL, AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL MIXTURES**'' and inserting ''**ALCOHOL FUEL MIXTURES, BIODIESEL PRODUCTION, AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL MIXTURES**''.

(B) The item relating to section 6426 in the table of sections for subchapter B of chapter 65 of such Code is amended by striking ''alcohol fuel, biodiesel, and alternative fuel mixtures'' and inserting ''alcohol fuel mixtures, biodiesel production, and alternative fuel mixtures''.

(c) REFORM OF EXCISE PAYMENTS.—Subsection (e) of section 6427 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''or the biodiesel mixture credit'' in paragraph (1),

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (4) through (7), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) BIODIESEL PRODUCTION CREDIT.—If any person produces biodiesel and sells or uses such biodiesel as provided in section 6426(c)(1), the Secretary shall pay (without interest) to such person an amount equal to the biodiesel production credit with respect to such biodiesel.'',

(3) by striking ''paragraph (1) or (2)'' each place it appears in paragraphs (4) and (6), as redesignated by paragraph (2), and inserting ''paragraph (1), (2), or (3)'',

(4) by striking ''alternative fuel'' each place it appears in paragraphs (4) and (6), as redesignated by paragraph (2), and inserting ''fuel'', and

(5) in paragraph (7)(B), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''biodiesel mixture (as defined in section 6426(c)(3))'' and inserting ''biodiesel (within the meaning of section 40A)'', and

(B) by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(d) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Secretary's delegate, shall issue preliminary guidance with respect to the amendments made by this subsection.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to fuel sold or used after December 31, 2016.

SA 3656. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2124 through 2138 and insert the following:

SEC. 2124. SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44802 the following:

''SEC. 44803. SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.

''(a) CONSENSUS SAFETY STANDARDS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with government and industry stakeholders and appropriate standards-setting organizations, shall initiate a collaborative process to develop risk-based, consensus industry safety standards related to the safe integration of small unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

''(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the consensus safety standards under subsection (a), the Director and Administrator shall consider the following:

''(1) Technologies or standards related to geographic limitations, altitude limitations, and sense and avoid capabilities.

''(2) Using performance-based standards.

''(3) Predetermined action to maintain safety in the event that a communications link between a small unmanned aircraft and its operator is lost or compromised.

''(4) Detectability and identifiability to pilots, the Federal Aviation Administration, and air traffic controllers, as appropriate.

''(5) Means to prevent tampering with or modification of any system, limitation, or other safety mechanism or standard under this section or any other provision of law, including a means to identify any tampering or modification that has been made.

''(6) Consensus identification standards under section 2105.

''(7) Cost benefit and risk analysis to update or modify a small unmanned aircraft system that was commercially distributed prior to the development of the consensus aircraft safety standards so that, to the greatest extent practicable, such systems meet the consensus aircraft safety standards.

''(8) Any technology or standard related to small unmanned aircraft systems that promotes aviation safety.

''(9) Whether any category of unmanned aircraft systems, based on verified low risk factors, should be exempt from such standards.

''(c) CONSULTATION.—In developing the consensus safety standards under subsection (a), the Director and Administrator shall consult with—

''(1) the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

''(2) the President of RTCA, Inc.;

''(3) the Secretary of Defense;

''(4) each operator of a test site under section 44802;

''(5) the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems;

''(6) unmanned aircraft systems stakeholders, including manufacturers of varying sizes of such aircraft; and

''(7) community-based aviation organizations.

''(d) FAA PROCESS AND CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a process for—

''(1) the adoption by the Federal Aviation Administration of consensus safety standards for small unmanned aircraft systems developed under subsection (a);

''(2) the certification of small unmanned aircraft systems based upon the consensus safety standards developed under subsection

(a), which shall allow the Administrator to approve small unmanned aircraft systems for operation within the national airspace system without requiring the type certification process in parts 21 and 23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(3) the certification of a manufacturer of small unmanned aircraft systems, or an employee of such manufacturer, that has demonstrated compliance with the consensus safety standards developed under subsection (a) and met any other qualifying criteria, as determined by the Administrator, to alternatively satisfy the requirements of paragraph (2), which certification—

''(A) shall allow small unmanned aircraft systems to operate within the national airspace system without requiring the type certification process in parts 21 and 23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(B) may be revoked if the Administrator determines that the manufacturer is not in compliance with requirements set forth by the Administrator.

''(e) REVIEW.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may require manufacturers to provide the FAA with the following:

''(1) The aircraft's operating instructions.

''(2) The manufacturer's statement of compliance as described in subsection (f).

''(3) A sample aircraft, to be inspected, upon request, by the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure compliance with the consensus safety standards required by the Administrator under subsection (d).

''(f) MANUFACTURER'S STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR SMALL UAS.—A manufacturer's statement of compliance shall—

''(1) identify the aircraft make and model, and consensus safety standards used;

''(2) state that the aircraft make and model meets the provisions of the standards identified in paragraph (1);

''(3) state that the aircraft make and model conforms to the manufacturer's design data and is manufactured in way that ensures consistency in production across units in the production process in order to meet the applicable consensus safety standards;

''(4) state that the manufacturer will make available to any interested person—

''(A) the aircraft's operating instructions, that meet the standards identified in paragraph (1); and

''(B) the aircraft's maintenance and inspection procedures, that meet the standards identified in paragraph (1);

''(5) state that the manufacturer will monitor safety-of-flight issues to ensure it meets the standards identified in paragraph (1);

''(6) state that at the request of the Administrator, the manufacturer will provide access for the Administrator to its facilities; and

''(7) state that the manufacturer, in accordance with testing requirements identified by the Federal Aviation Administration, has—

''(A) ground and flight tested random samples of the aircraft;

''(B) found the sample aircraft performance acceptable; and

''(C) determined that the make and model of aircraft is suitable for safe operation.

''(g) PROHIBITION.—It shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft system manufactured after the date that the Administrator adopts consensus safety standards under this section, unless the manufacturer has received approval under subsection (d) for that make and model of unmanned aircraft system.

''(h) EXCLUSIONS.—This section shall not apply to unmanned aircraft systems that are not capable of navigating beyond the visual line of sight of the operator through advanced flight systems and technology, unless the Administrator determines that is necessary to ensure safety of the airspace.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44802 the following:

''44803. Small unmanned aircraft safety standards.''.

SEC. 2125. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN THE ARCTIC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44803 the following:

''§ 44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall develop a plan and initiate a process to work with relevant Federal agencies and national and international communities to designate permanent areas in the Arctic where small unmanned aircraft may operate 24 hours per day for research and commercial purposes.

''(b) PLAN CONTENTS.—The plan under subsection (a) shall include the development of processes to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft beyond line of sight.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each permanent area designated under subsection (a) shall enable over-water flights from the surface to at least 2,000 feet in altitude, with ingress and egress routes from selected coastal launch sites.

''(d) AGREEMENTS.—To implement the plan under subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into an agreement with relevant national and international communities.

''(e) AIRCRAFT APPROVAL.—Not later than 1 year after the entry into force of an agreement necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section, the Secretary shall work with relevant national and international communities to establish and implement a process, or may apply an applicable process already established, for approving the use of unmanned aircraft in the designated permanent areas in the Arctic without regard to whether an unmanned aircraft is used as a public aircraft, a civil aircraft, or a model aircraft.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44803 the following:

''44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic.''.

(2) EXPANDING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN ARCTIC.—Section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 2126. SPECIAL AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44804 the following:

''§ 44805. Special authority for certain unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other requirement of this chapter, the Secretary of Transportation shall use a risk-based approach to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system notwithstanding completion of the comprehensive plan and rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807.

''(b) ASSESSMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—In making the determination under subsection (a), the Secretary shall determine, at a minimum—

''(1) which types of unmanned aircraft systems, if any, as a result of their size, weight, speed, operational capability, proximity to airports and populated areas, and operation within or beyond visual line of sight, or operation during the day or night, do not create a hazard to users of the national airspace system or the public; and

''(2) whether a certificate under section 44703 or section 44704 of this title, or a certificate of waiver or certificate of authorization, is required for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems identified under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE OPERATION.—If the Secretary determines under this section that certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system, the Secretary shall establish requirements for the safe operation of such aircraft systems in the national airspace system, including operation related to research, development, and testing of proprietary systems.

''(d) PILOT CERTIFICATION EXEMPTION.—If the Secretary proposes, under this section, to require an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to hold an airman certificate, a medical certificate, or to have a minimum number of hours operating a manned aircraft, the Secretary shall set forth the reasoning for such proposal and seek public notice and comment before imposing any such requirements.

''(e) SUNSET.—The authority under this section for the Secretary to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system terminates effective September 30, 2017.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44804 the following:

''44805. Special rules for certain unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2127. ADDITIONAL RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations of unmanned aircraft systems have tremendous potential—

(A) to enhance research and development both commercially and in academics;

(B) to spur economic growth and development through innovative applications of this emerging technology; and

(C) to improve emergency response efforts as it relates to assessing damage to critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and utilities, including water and power, ultimately speeding response time;

(2) advancements in miniaturization of safety technologies, including for aircraft weighing under 4.4 pounds, have increased economic opportunities for using unmanned aircraft systems while reducing kinetic energy and risk compared to unmanned aircraft that may weigh as much as 55 pounds;

(3) advancements in unmanned technology will have the capacity to ultimately improve manned aircraft safety; and

(4) integrating unmanned aircraft systems safely into the national airspace, including beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations on a routine basis should remain a top priority for the Federal Aviation Administration as it pursues additional rulemakings under the amendments made by this section.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44805 the following:

''§ 44806. Additional rulemaking authority

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807 of this title and subject to subsection (b)(2) of this section and section 44808, the Administrator may issue regulations under which a person may operate certain unmanned aircraft systems (as determined by the Administrator) in the United States—

''(1) without an airman certificate;

''(2) without an airworthiness certificate for the associated unmanned aircraft; or

''(3) that are not registered with the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(b) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPERATIONAL RULES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), the Administrator shall issue regulations not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 under which any person may operate a micro unmanned aircraft system classification of unmanned aircraft systems, the aircraft component of which weighs 4.4 pounds or less, including payload, without the person operating the system being required to pass any airman certification requirement, including any requirements under section 44703 of this title, part 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other rule or regulation relating to airman certification.

''(2) OPERATIONAL RULES.—The rulemaking required by paragraph (1) relating to micro unmanned aircraft systems shall consider the following rules, or any appropriate modifications thereof concerning altitude, airspeed, geographic location, and time of day as the Administrator considers appropriate, for operation of such systems:

''(A) Operation an altitude of less than 400 feet above ground level.

''(B) Operation with an airspeed of not greater than 40 knots.

''(C) Operation within the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(D) Operation during the hours between sunrise and sunset.

''(E) Operation not less than 5 statute miles from the geographic center of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower or an airport denoted on a current aeronautical chart published by the Federal Aviation Administration, except that a micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated within 5 statute miles of such an airport if the operator of the system—

''(i) provides notice to the airport operator; and

''(ii) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

''(c) SCOPE OF REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether a person may operate an unmanned aircraft system under 1 or more of the circumstances described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a), the Administrator shall use a risk-based approach and consider, at a minimum, the physical and functional characteristics of the unmanned aircraft system.

''(2) LIMITATION.—The Administrator may only issue regulations under this section for unmanned aircraft systems that the Administrator determines may be operated safely in the national airspace system.

''(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

''(1) to prohibit a person from operating an unmanned aircraft system under a circumstance described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a) if—

''(A) the circumstance is allowed by regulations issued under this section; and

''(B) the person operates the unmanned aircraft system in a manner prescribed by the regulations; and

''(2) to limit or affect in any way the Administrator's authority to conduct a rulemaking, make a determination, or carry out any activity related to unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft systems under any other provision of law.''.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44805 the following:

''44806. Additional rulemaking authority.''.

SEC. 2128. GOVERNMENTAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44806 the following:

''§ 44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary of Transportation shall issue guidance regarding the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system—

''(1) to streamline the process for the issuance of a certificate of authorization or a certificate of waiver;

''(2) to provide for a collaborative process with public agencies to allow for an incremental expansion of access to the national airspace system as technology matures and the necessary safety analyses and data become available, and until standards are completed and technology issues are resolved;

''(3) to facilitate the capability of public agencies to develop and use test ranges, subject to operating restrictions required by the Federal Aviation Administration, to test and operate public unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(4) to provide guidance on a public agency's responsibilities when operating an unmanned aircraft without a civil airworthiness certificate issued by the Administration.

''(b) STANDARDS FOR OPERATION AND CERTIFICATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop and implement operational and certification requirements for the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(c) AGREEMENTS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each appropriate public agency to simplify the process for issuing a certificate of waiver or a certificate of authorization with respect to an application for authorization to operate a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(2) CONTENTS.—An agreement under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) with respect to an application described in paragraph (1)—

''(i) provide for an expedited review of the application;

''(ii) require a decision by the Administrator on approval or disapproval not later than 60 business days after the date of submission of the application;

''(iii) allow for an expedited appeal if the application is disapproved; and

''(iv) if applicable, include verification of the data minimization policy required under subsection (d);

''(B) allow for a one-time approval of similar operations carried out during a fixed period of time; and

''(C) allow a government public safety agency to operate an unmanned aircraft weighing 25 pounds or less if that unmanned aircraft is operated—

''(i) within or beyond the line of sight of the operator;

''(ii) less than 400 feet above the ground;

''(iii) during daylight conditions;

''(iv) within Class G airspace; and

''(v) outside of 5 statute miles from any airport, heliport, seaplane base, spaceport, or other location with aviation activities.

''(d) DATA MINIMIZATION FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM OPERATORS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 each Federal agency authorized by the Secretary to operate an unmanned aircraft system shall develop and update a data minimization policy that requires, at a minimum, that—

''(1) prior to the deployment of any new unmanned aircraft system technology, and at least every 3 years, existing policies and procedures relating to the collection, use, retention, and dissemination of information obtained by an unmanned aircraft system must be examined to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected;

''(2) if the unmanned aircraft system is the platform for information collection, information must be collected, used, retained, and disseminated consistent with the Constitution, Federal law, and other applicable regulations and policies, such as the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a);

''(3) the Federal agency or person operating on its behalf, only collect information using the unmanned aircraft system, or use unmanned aircraft system-collected information, to the extent that the collection or use is consistent with and relevant to an authorized purpose as determined by the head of a Federal agency and consistent with the law;

''(4) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or an unmanned aircraft system, that may contain personal information will not be retained by any Federal agency for more than 180 days after the date of collection unless—

''(A) the head of the Federal agency determines that retention of the information is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specific purpose for which the Federal agency used the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) that Federal agency maintains the information in a system of records under section 552a of title 5; or

''(C) the information is required to be retained for a longer period under other applicable law, including regulations;

''(5) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system, that is not maintained in a system of records under section 552a of title 5, will not be disseminated outside of that Federal agency unless—

''(A) dissemination is required by law; or

''(B) dissemination satisfies an authorized purpose and complies with that Federal agency's disclosure requirements;

''(6) to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security a Federal agency shall—

''(A) provide notice to the public regarding where in the national airspace system the Federal agency is authorized to operate the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) keep the public informed about the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system program, including any changes to that program that would significantly affect privacy, civil rights, or civil liberties;

''(C) make available to the public, on an annual basis, a general summary of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system operations during the previous fiscal year, including—

''(i) a brief description of types or categories of missions flown; and

''(ii) the number of times the Federal agency provided assistance to other agencies or to State, local, tribal, or territorial governments; and

''(D) make available on a public and searchable Internet website the data minimization policy of the Federal agency;

''(7) ensures oversight of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system use, including—

''(A) the use of audits or assessments that comply with existing Federal agency policies and regulations;

''(B) the verification of the existence of rules of conduct and training for Federal Government personnel and contractors who work on programs, and procedures for reporting suspected cases of misuse or abuse of unmanned aircraft system technologies;

''(C) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, that provide meaningful oversight of individuals who have access to sensitive information, including personal information, collected using an unmanned aircraft system;

''(D) ensuring that any data-sharing agreements or policies, data use policies, and record management policies applicable to an unmanned aircraft system conform to applicable laws, regulations, and policies;

''(E) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, to authorize the use of an unmanned aircraft system in response to a request for unmanned aircraft system assistance in support of Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial government operations; and

''(F) a requirement that State, local, tribal, and territorial government recipients of Federal grant funding for the purchase or use of unmanned aircraft systems for their own operations have in place policies and procedures to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties prior to expending such funds; and

''(8) ensures the protection of civil rights and civil liberties, including—

''(A) ensuring that policies are in place to prohibit the collection, use, retention, or dissemination of data in any manner that would violate the First Amendment or in any manner that would discriminate against persons based upon their ethnicity, race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity, in violation of law;

''(B) ensuring that unmanned aircraft system activities are performed in a manner consistent with the Constitution and applicable laws, Executive Orders, and other Presidential directives; and

''(C) ensuring that adequate procedures are in place to receive, investigate, and address, as appropriate, privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties complaints.

''(e) LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY.—Each Federal agency shall effectuate a requirement under subsection (d) only to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security.

''(f) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL AGENCY.—In subsections (d) and (e), the term 'Federal agency' has the meaning given the term 'agency' in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44806 the following:

''44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 334 of the FAA Modernization and reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2129. SPECIAL RULES FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44807 the following:

''§ 44808. Special rules for model aircraft

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law relating to the incorporation of unmanned aircraft systems into Federal Aviation Administration plans and policies, including this chapter, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not promulgate any new rule or regulation regarding an unmanned aircraft operating as a model aircraft, or an unmanned aircraft being developed as a model aircraft, if—

''(1) the aircraft is flown strictly for hobby or recreational use;

''(2) the aircraft is operated in accordance with a community-based set of safety guidelines and within the programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(3) not flown beyond visual line of sight of persons co-located with the operator or in direct communication with the operator;

''(4) the aircraft is operated in a manner that does not interfere with and gives way to any manned aircraft;

''(5) when flown within 5 miles of an airport, the operator of the aircraft provides the airport operator, where applicable, and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport) with prior notice of the operation (model aircraft operators flying from a permanent location within 5 miles of an airport should establish a mutually agreed upon operating procedure with the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport)), unless the Administrator determines approval should be required;

''(6) the aircraft is flown from the surface to not more than 400 feet in altitude, except under special conditions and programs established by a community-based organization; and

''(7) the operator has passed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test administered by the Federal Aviation Administration online for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems subject to the requirements of section 44809 or developed and administered by the community-based organization and maintains proof of test passage to be made available to the Administrator or law enforcement upon request.

''(b) UPDATES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in collaboration with government and industry stakeholders, including nationwide community-based organizations, shall initiate a process to update the operational parameters under subsection (a), as appropriate.

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In updating an operational parameter under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

''(A) appropriate operational limitations to mitigate aviation safety risk and risk to the uninvolved public;

''(B) operations outside the membership, guidelines, and programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(C) physical characteristics, technical standards, and classes of aircraft operating under this section;

''(D) trends in use, enforcement, or incidents involving unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(E) ensuring, to the greatest extent practicable, that updates to the operational parameters correspond to, and leverage, advances in technology.

''(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as expanding the authority of the Administrator to require operators of model aircraft under the exemption of this subsection to be required to seek permissive authority of the Administrator prior to operation in the national airspace system.

''(c) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue enforcement action against persons operating model aircraft.

''(d) MODEL AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'model aircraft' means an unmanned aircraft that—

''(1) is capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere; and

''(2) is limited to weighing not more than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached to or carried by the aircraft, unless otherwise approved through a design, construction, inspection, flight test, and operational safety program administered by a community-based organization.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44807 the following:

''44808. Special rules for model aircraft.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.—Section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2130. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44808 the following:

''§ 44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual may not operate an unmanned aircraft system unless—

''(1) the individual has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test under subsection (c);

''(2) the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft under other Federal law;

''(3) the individual is a holder of an airmen certificate issued under section 44703; or

''(4) the individual is operating a model aircraft under section 44808 and has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test in accordance with the community-based organizations safety program described in that section.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system that has been authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration under section 44802, 44805, 44806, or 44807. The Administrator may waive the requirements of this section for operators of aircraft weighing less than 0.55 pounds or for operators under the age of 13 operating the unmanned aircraft system under the supervision of an adult as determined by the Administrator.

''(c) AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY TEST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with manufacturers of unmanned aircraft systems, other industry stakeholders, and community-based aviation organizations, shall develop an aeronautical knowledge and safety test that can be administered electronically.

''(d) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator shall ensure that the aeronautical knowledge and safety test is designed to adequately demonstrate an operator's—

''(1) understanding of aeronautical safety knowledge, as applicable; and

''(2) knowledge of Federal Aviation Administration regulations and requirements pertaining to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(e) RECORD OF COMPLIANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each operator of an unmanned aircraft system described under subsection (a) shall maintain and make available for inspection, upon request by the Administrator or a Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer, a record of compliance with this section through—

''(A) an identification number, issued by the Federal Aviation Administration certifying passage of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test;

''(B) if the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft system under other Federal law, the requisite proof of authority under that law; or

''(C) an airmen certificate issued under section 44703.

''(2) COORDINATION.—The Administrator may coordinate the identification number under paragraph (1)(A) with an operator's registration number to the extent practicable.

''(3) LIMITATION.—No fine or penalty may be imposed for the initial failure of an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to comply with paragraph (1) unless the Administrator finds that the conduct of the operator actually posed a risk to the national airspace system.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44808 the following:

''44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test.''.

SEC. 2131. SAFETY STATEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44809 the following:

''§ 44810. Safety statements

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date of publication of the guidance under subsection (b)(1), it shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for initial retail sale or introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured unless a safety statement is attached to the unmanned aircraft or accompanying the unmanned aircraft in its packaging.

''(b) SAFETY STATEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance for implementing this section.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A safety statement described in subsection (a) shall include—

''(A) information about laws and regulations applicable to unmanned aircraft systems;

''(B) recommendations for using unmanned aircraft in a manner that promotes the safety of persons and property;

''(C) the date that the safety statement was created or last modified; and

''(D) language approved by the Administrator regarding the following:

''(i) A person may operate the unmanned aircraft as a model aircraft (as defined in section 44808) or otherwise in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration authorization or regulation, including requirements for the completion of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test under section 44809.

''(ii) The definition of a model aircraft under section 44808.

''(iii) The requirements regarding a model aircraft under paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 44808(a).

''(iv) The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may pursue enforcement action against a person operating model aircraft who endangers the safety of the national airspace system.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person who violates subsection (a) shall be liable for each violation to the United States Government for a civil penalty described in section 46301(a).''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44809 the following:

''44810. Safety statements.''.

SEC. 2132. TREATMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OPERATING UNDERGROUND.

An unmanned aircraft system that is operated underground for mining purposes shall not be subject to regulation or enforcement by the Federal Aviation Administration under chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2133. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) UAS SAFETY ENFORCEMENT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a program to utilize available remote detection and identification technologies for safety oversight, including enforcement actions against operators of unmanned aircraft systems that are not in compliance with applicable Federal aviation laws, including regulations.

(b) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 46301 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(A), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),'';

(B) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717–44723),'';

(C) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),''; and

(D) in subsection (f), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except 44717 and 44719–44723),''.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue an enforcement action for a violation of this Act, a regulation prescribed or order or authority issued under this Act, or any other applicable provision of aviation safety law or regulation.

(c) REPORTING.—As part of the program, the Administrator shall establish and publicize a mechanism for the public and Federal, State, and local law enforcement to report a suspected abuse or a violation of chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code, for enforcement action.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2017.

SEC. 2134. AVIATION EMERGENCY SAFETY PUBLIC SERVICES DISRUPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 is amended—

(1) in section 46301(d)(2), by inserting ''section 46320,'' after ''section 46319,''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities

''(a) PROHIBITION.—No person may operate an aircraft so as to interfere with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.

''(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, an aircraft interferes with the activities specified in subsection (a) when its operation prevents the initiation of, interrupts, or endangers a person or property engaged in those activities.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person violating subsection (a) shall be liable for a civil penalty of not more than $20,000.

''(d) COMPROMISE AND SETOFF.—The United States Government may deduct the amount of a civil penalty imposed or compromised under this section from the amounts the Government owes the person liable for the penalty.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 463 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.''.

SEC. 2135. PILOT PROJECT FOR AIRPORT SAFETY AND AIRSPACE HAZARD MITIGATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall carry out a pilot program for airspace hazard mitigation at airports and other critical infrastructure.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall work with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the heads of relevant Federal agencies for the purpose of ensuring technologies that are developed, tested, or deployed by those departments and agencies to mitigate threats posed by errant or hostile unmanned aircraft system operations do not adversely impact or interfere with safe airport operations, navigation, and air traffic services.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund to carry out this section $6,000,000, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 2136. CONTRIBUTION TO FINANCING OF REGULATORY FUNCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44810 the following:

''§ 44811. Regulatory and administrative fees

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Administrator may assess and collect regulatory and administrative fees to recover the costs of regulatory and administrative activities under this chapter related to authorization to operate unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise.

''(b) LIMITATIONS.—Fees authorized under subsection (a) shall be reasonable, cost-based relative to the regulatory or administrative activity, and may not be discriminatory or a deterrent to compliance.

''(c) RECEIPTS CREDITED TO ACCOUNT.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, all fees and amounts collected under this section shall be credited to the separate account established under section 45303(c). Section 41742 shall not apply to fees and amounts collected under this section.

''(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall issue regulations to carry out this section.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44810 the following:

''44811. Regulatory and administrative fees.''.

SEC. 2137. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SMALL UAS RULEMAKING.

It is the sense of the Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Secretary of Transportation should take every necessary action to expedite final action on the notice of proposed rulemaking dated February 23, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 9544), entitled ''Operation and Certification of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems''.

SEC. 2138. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN FOR UTM DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop a research plan for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management (referred to in this section as ''UTM'') development.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the research plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify research goals related to:

(i) operational parameters related to altitude, geographic coverage, classes of airspace, and critical infrastructure;

(ii) avionics capability requirements or standards;

(iii) operator identification and authentication requirements and capabilities;

(iv) communication protocols with air traffic control facilities that will not interfere with existing responsibility to deconflict manned aircraft in the national airspace system;

(v) collision avoidance requirements;

(vi) separation standards for manned and unmanned aircraft; and

(vii) spectrum needs;

(B) evaluate options for the administration and management structure for the traffic management of low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(C) ensure the plan is consistent with the broader Federal Aviation Administration regulatory and operational framework encompassing all unmanned aircraft systems operations expected to be authorized in the national airspace system.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—The research plan under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of—

(A) the ability to allow near-term small unmanned aircraft system operations without need of an automated UTM system;

(B) the full range of operational capability any automated UTM system should possess;

(C) the operational characteristics and metrics that would drive incremental adoption of automated capability and procedures consistent with a rising aggregate community demand for service for low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(D) the integration points for small unmanned aircraft system traffic management with the existing national airspace system planning and traffic management systems.

(4) DEADLINES.—The Administrator shall—

(A) initiate development of the research plan not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) complete the research plan;

(ii) submit the research plan to the appropriate committees of Congress; and

(iii) publish the research plan on the Federal Aviation Administration's Web site.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 120 days after the date the research plan under subsection (a) is submitted under paragraph (4)(B) of that subsection, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) coordinate with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the small unmanned aircraft systems industry to develop operational concepts and top-level system requirements for a UTM system pilot program, consistent with subsection (a);

(2) designate areas encompassing airspace over rural, suburban, and urban areas for operation of the pilot program, as determined necessary;

(3) issue a solicitation for operational prototype systems that meet the necessary objectives for use in a pilot program to demonstrate, validate, or modify, as appropriate, the requirements developed under paragraph (1);

(4) give due consideration to the use of the facilities at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the test sites under section 44802 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2122, the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and the Pathfinder Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, in designating areas under paragraph (2) and in selecting service providers pursuant to the solicitation in paragraph (3); and

(5) complete the pilot program not later than two years after the date the solicitation under paragraph (3) has been issued.

(c) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date the pilot program under subsection (b) is complete, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and in consultation with the head of each relevant Federal agency, shall develop a comprehensive plan for the deployment of UTM systems in the national airspace.

(2) SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive plan under paragraph (1) shall include requirements or standards consistent with established or planned rulemaking for, at a minimum—

(A) the flight of small unmanned aircraft systems in controlled and uncontrolled airspace;

(B) communications, as applicable—

(i) among small unmanned aircraft systems;

(ii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft operating in the same airspace; and

(iii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and air traffic control as considered necessary; and

(C) air traffic management for small unmanned aircraft systems operations.

(d) SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.—Based on the comprehensive plan under subsection (c), including the requirements under paragraph (2) of that subsection, and the pilot program under subsection (b), the Administrator shall—

(1) determine and implement a schedule for initiation and evolutionary use of a UTM in the national airspace to safely separate and deconflict manned and unmanned aircraft systems;

(2) designate UTM system airspace; and

(3) select service providers to support the UTM system, if deemed appropriate.

SA 3657. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—PROTECTING INDIVIDUALS FROM MASS AERIAL SURVEILLANCE ACT OF 2016

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Protecting Individuals From Mass Aerial Surveillance Act of 2016''.

SEC. __02. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) FEDERAL ENTITY.—The term ''Federal entity'' means any person or entity acting under the authority of, or funded in whole or in part by, the Government of the United States, including a Federal law enforcement party, but excluding State, tribal, or local government agencies or departments.

(2) LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTY.—The term ''law enforcement party'' means a person or entity authorized by law, or funded by the

Government of the United States, to investigate or prosecute offenses against the United States.

(3) MOBILE AERIAL-VIEW DEVICE; MAVD.—The terms ''mobile aerial-view device'' and ''MAVD'' mean any device that through flight or aerial lift obtains a dynamic, aerial view of property, persons or their effects, including an unmanned aircraft (as defined in section 331 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note)).

(4) NATIONAL BORDERS.—The term ''national borders'' refers to any region no more than 25 miles of an external land boundary of the United States.

(5) NON-FEDERAL ENTITY.—The term ''non-Federal entity'' means any person or entity that is not a Federal entity.

(6) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term ''public lands'' means lands owned by the Government of the United States.

(7) SENSING DEVICE.—The term ''sensing device''—

(A) means a device capable of remotely acquiring personal information from its surroundings using any frequency of the electromagnetic spectrum, or a sound detecting system, or a system that detects chemicals in the atmosphere; and

(B) does not include equipment whose sole function is to provide information directly necessary for safe air navigation or operation of a MAVD.

(8) SURVEIL.—The term ''surveil'' means to photograph, record, or observe using a sensing device, regardless of whether the photographs, observations, or recordings are stored, and excludes using a sensing device for the purposes of testing or training operations of MAVDs.

SEC. __03. PROHIBITED USE OF MAVDS.

A Federal entity shall not use a MAVD to surveil property, persons or their effects, or gather evidence or other information pertaining to known or suspected criminal conduct, or conduct that is in violation of a statute or regulation.

SEC. __04. EXCEPTIONS.

This title does not prohibit any of the following:

(1) PATROL OF BORDERS.—The use of a MAVD by a Federal entity to surveil national borders to prevent or deter illegal entry of any persons or illegal substances at the borders.

(2) EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The use of a MAVD by a Federal entity when exigent circumstances exist. For the purposes of this paragraph, exigent circumstances exist when the Federal entity possesses reasonable suspicion that under particular circumstances, swift action is necessary—

(i) to prevent imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm to a specific individual;

(ii) to counter an imminent risk of a terrorist attack by a specific individual or organization;

(iii) to prevent imminent destruction of evidence; or

(iv) to counter an imminent or actual escape of a criminal or terrorist suspect.

(B) REQUIREMENT FOR RECORD OF FACTS.—A Federal entity using a MAVD pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i) must maintain a retrievable record of the facts giving rise to the reasonable suspicion that an exigent circumstance existed.

(3) PUBLIC SAFETY AND RESEARCH.—The use of a MAVD by a Federal entity—

(A) to discover, locate, observe, gather evidence in connection to, or prevent forest fires;

(B) to monitor environmental, geologic, or weather-related catastrophe or damage from such an event;

(C) to research or survey for wildlife management, habitat preservation, or geologic, atmospheric, or environmental damage or conditions;

(D) to survey for the assessment and evaluation of environmental, geologic or weather-related damage, erosion, flood, or contamination; and

(E) to survey public lands for illegal vegetation.

(4) CONSENT.—The use of a MAVD by a Federal entity for the purpose of acquiring information about an individual, or about an individual's property or effects, if such individual has given written consent to the use of a MAVD for such purposes.

(5) WARRANT.—A law enforcement party using a MAVD, pursuant to, and in accordance with, a Rule 41 warrant, to surveil specific property, persons or their effects.

SEC. __05. PROHIBITION ON IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No Federal entity may make any intentional effort to identify an individual from, or associate an individual with, the information collected by operations authorized by paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a) of section __04, nor shall the collected information be disclosed to any entity except another Federal entity or State, tribal, or local government agency or department, or political subdivision thereof, that agrees to be bound by the restrictions in this title.

(b) LIMITATION ON PROHIBITION.—The restrictions described in subsection (a) shall not apply if there is probable cause that the information collected is evidence of specific criminal activity.

SEC. __06. PROHIBITION ON USE OF EVIDENCE.

No evidence obtained or collected in violation of this title may be received as evidence against an individual in any trial, hearing, or other proceeding in or before any court, grand jury, department, officer, agency, regulatory body, legislative committee, or other authority of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision thereof.

SEC. __07. PROHIBITION ON SOLICITATION AND PURCHASE.

(a) PROHIBITION ON SOLICITATION TO SURVEIL.—A Federal entity shall not solicit to or award contracts to any entity for such entity to surveil by MAVD for the Federal entity, unless the Federal entity has existing authority to surveil the particular property, persons or their effects, of interest.

(b) PROHIBITION ON PURCHASE OF SURVEILLANCE INFORMATION.—A Federal entity shall not purchase any information obtained from MAVD surveillance by a non-Federal entity if such information contains personal information, except pursuant to the express consent of all persons whose personal information is to be sold.

SEC. __08. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title shall be construed to preempt any State law regarding the use of MAVDs exclusively within the borders of that State.

SA 3658. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PERIODIC AUDITS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OF BUY AMERICAN ACT CONTRACTING COMPLIANCE.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC AUDITS OF CONTRACTING COMPLIANCE.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall conduct periodic audits of Federal Aviation Administration contracting practices and policies related to procurement requirements under chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall ensure that findings and other information resulting from audits conducted pursuant to subsection (a) are included in the semiannual report transmitted to congressional committees under section 8(f) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App).

SA 3659. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—MOVE AMERICA

SEC. _____1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Move America Act of 2015''.

SEC. _____2. MOVE AMERICA BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) MOVE AMERICA BONDS.—Subpart A of part IV of subchapter B of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 142 the following new section:

''SEC. 142A. MOVE AMERICA BONDS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) TREATMENT AS EXEMPT FACILITY BOND.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, a Move America bond shall be treated for purposes of this part as an exempt facility bond.

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

''(A) NO GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENT.—Paragraph (1) of section 142(b) shall not apply to any Move America bond.

''(B) SPECIAL RULES FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL BONDS.—Paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 142(i) shall not apply to any Move America bond described in subsection (b)(4).

''(C) SPECIAL RULES FOR HIGHWAY AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES.—Paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of section 142(m) shall not apply to any Move America bond described in subsection (b)(5).

''(b) MOVE AMERICA BOND.—For purposes of this part, the term 'Move America bond' means any bond issued as part of an issue 95 percent or more of the net proceeds of which are used to provide—

''(1) airports,

''(2) docks and wharves, including—

''(A) waterborne mooring infrastructure,

''(B) dredging in connection with a dock or wharf, and

''(C) any associated rail and road infrastructure for the purpose of integrating modes of transportation,

''(3) mass commuting facilities,

''(4) railroads (as defined in section 20102 of title 49, United States Code) and any associated rail and road infrastructure for the purpose of integrating modes of transportation,

''(5) any—

''(A) surface transportation project which is eligible for Federal assistance under title 23, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section),

''(B) project for an international bridge or tunnel for which an international entity authorized under Federal or State law is responsible and which is eligible Federal assistance under title 23, United States Code (as so in effect), or

''(C) facility for the transfer of freight from truck to rail or rail to truck (including any temporary storage facilities directly related to such transfers) which is eligible for Federal assistance under either title 23 or title 49, United States Code (as so in effect),

''(6) flood diversions, or

''(7) inland waterways, including construction and rehabilitation expenditures for navigation on any inland or intracoastal waterways of the United States (within the meaning of section 4042(d)(2)).

''(c) FLOOD DIVERSIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term 'flood diversion' means any flood damage risk reduction project authorized under any Act for authorizing water resources development projects.

''(d) MOVE AMERICA VOLUME CAP.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The aggregate face amount of Move America bonds issued pursuant to an issue, when added to the aggregate face amount of Move America bonds previously issued by the issuing authority during the calendar year, shall not exceed such issuing authority's Move America volume cap for such year.

''(2) MOVE AMERICA VOLUME CAP.—For purposes of this subsection—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Move America volume cap shall be 50 percent of the State ceiling under section 146(d) for such State for such year.

''(B) ALLOCATION OF VOLUME CAP.—Each State may allocate the Move America volume cap of such State among governmental units (or other authorities) in such State having authority to issue private activity bonds.

''(3) CARRYFORWARDS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If—

''(i) an issuing authority's Move America volume cap, exceeds

''(ii) the aggregate amount of Move America bonds issued during such calendar year by such authority,

any Move America bond issued by such authority during the 3-calendar-year period following such calendar year shall not be taken into account under paragraph (1) to the extent the amount of such bonds does not exceed the amount of such excess. Any excesses arising under this paragraph shall be used under this paragraph in the order of calendar years in which the excesses arose.

''(B) REALLOCATION OF UNUSED CARRYFORWARDS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Move America volume cap under paragraph (2)(A) for any State for any calendar year shall be increased by any amount allocated to such State by the Secretary under clause (ii).

''(ii) REALLOCATION.—The Secretary shall allocate to each qualified State for any calendar year an amount which bears the same ratio to the aggregate unused carryforward amounts of all issuing authorities in all States for such calendar year as the qualified State's population for the calendar year bears to the population of all qualified States for the calendar year. For purposes of the preceding sentence, population shall be determined in accordance with section 146(j).

''(iii) QUALIFIED STATE.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'qualified State' means, with respect to a calendar year, any State—

''(I) which allocated its entire Move America volume cap for the preceding calendar year, and

''(II) for which a request is made (not later than May 1 of the calendar year) to receive an allocation under clause (ii).

''(iv) UNUSED CARRYFORWARD AMOUNT.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'unused carryforward amount' means, with respect to any issuing authority for any calendar year, the excess of—

''(I) the amount of the excess described in subparagraph (A) for the fourth preceding calendar year, over

''(II) the amount of bonds issued by such issuing authority to which subparagraph (A) applied during the 3 preceding calendar years.

''(e) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAWS.—An issue shall not be treated as an issue under subsection (b) unless the facility for which the proceeds of such issue are used would be subject to the requirements of any Federal law (including titles 23, 40, and 49 of the United States Code) which would otherwise apply to similar projects.

''(f) SPECIAL RULE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION COSTS FOR DOCKS AND WHARVES.—For purposes of this section, amounts used for working capital expenditures relating to environmental remediation required under State or Federal law at or near a facility described in subsection (b)(2) (including environmental remediation in the riverbed and land within or adjacent to the Federal navigation channel used to access such facility) shall be treated as an amount used to provide for such a facility.

''(g) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, including regulations requiring States to report the amount of Move America volume cap of the State carried forward for any calendar year under subsection (d)(3).''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart A of part IV of subchapter B of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 142 the following new item:

''Sec. 142A. Move America bonds.''.

(b) APPLICATION OF OTHER PRIVATE ACTIVITY BOND RULES.—

(1) TREATMENT UNDER PRIVATE ACTIVITY BOND VOLUME CAP.—Subsection (g) of section 146 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (4) and inserting '', and'', and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) any Move America bond.''.

(2) RULE FOR FACILITIES LOCATED OUTSIDE THE STATE.—Paragraph (2) of section 146(k) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting ''or to any Move America bond'' after ''section 142(a)''.

(3) SPECIAL RULE ON USE FOR LAND ACQUISITION.—Subparagraph (A) of section 147(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting ''(50 percent in the case of any issue of Move America bonds)'' after ''25 percent''.

(4) SPECIAL RULES FOR REHABILITATION EXPENDITURES.—

(A) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN EXPENDITURES.—Subparagraph (B) of section 147(d)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting '', except that, in the case of any Move America bond, such term shall include any expenditure described in clause (iii) or (v) thereof'' before the period at the end.

(B) PERIOD FOR EXPENDITURES.—Subparagraph (C) of section 147(d)(3) of such Code is amended by inserting ''(5 years, in the case of any Move America bond)'' after ''2 years''.

(c) TREATMENT UNDER THE ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX.—Subparagraph (C) of section 57(a)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(vii) EXCEPTION FOR MOVE AMERICA BONDS.—For purposes of clause (i), the term 'private activity bond' shall not include any Move America bond (as defined in section 142A).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to obligations issued in calendar years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. _____3. MOVE AMERICA TAX CREDITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart B of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 30E. MOVE AMERICA CREDIT.

''(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—In the case of a Move America credit certificate purchased by the taxpayer, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for any taxable year in the credit period an amount equal to 10 percent of the value of such certificate.

''(b) CREDIT PERIOD.—For purposes of this section, the term 'credit period' means, with respect to any Move America credit certificate, the period of 10 taxable years beginning with the first taxable year that begins in the calendar year in which the qualified project to which such certificate relates is placed in service.

''(c) MOVE AMERICA CREDIT CERTIFICATE.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) MOVE AMERICA CREDIT CERTIFICATE.—The term 'Move America credit certificate' means any certificate that—

''(A) is sold to the taxpayer under a qualified Move America credit program by a State or by a project sponsor to whom the State has allocated such certificate for sale under paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(I),

''(B) is designated by the State as relating to a qualified project,

''(C) the proceeds of the sale of which are used to finance the qualified project designated under subparagraph (B),

''(D) specifies—

''(i) the value of the certificate and the purchase price, and

''(ii) the qualified project to which it relates,

''(E) is sold no later than the end of the calendar year in which the project is placed in service, and

''(F) is in such form as the Secretary may prescribe.

''(2) QUALIFIED MOVE AMERICA CREDIT PROGRAM.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified Move America credit program' means any program—

''(i) which is established by a State for any calendar year for which it is authorized to issue Move America bonds (as defined in section 145A),

''(ii) under which the State exchanges (in such manner as the Secretary may prescribe) an amount of the Move America bonds (as so defined) which it may otherwise issue during such calendar year for the ability to sell Move America credit certificates, and

''(iii) under which the State is obligated to repay to the Secretary an amount equal to the recapture amount, if applicable, with respect to any Move America credit certificate.

''(B) ALLOCATION OF CERTIFICATES TO PROJECT SPONSORS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A State that has established a qualified Move America credit program under subparagraph (A) may allocate any Move America credit certificate that is eligible to be sold by such State to the project sponsor of the qualified project to which such certificate relates.

''(ii) SALE OR USE.—A project sponsor to whom any Move America certificate is allocated under clause (i) may—

''(I) sell such certificate, or

''(II) claim the credit under this section with respect to such certificate as if the project sponsor had purchased the certificate from the State.

''(3) VALUE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The aggregate value of the Move America credit certificates sold or allocated by a State in a calendar year shall equal 25 percent of the value of Move America bonds exchanged by the State under paragraph (2)(A)(ii).

''(B) LIMITATION RELATING TO QUALIFIED PROJECT COST.—The aggregate value of the Move America credit certificates sold or allocated by a State and designated by the State as relating to any qualified project shall not exceed the lesser of—

''(i) 20 percent of the estimated cost of the project, or

''(ii) 50 percent of the total amount of private equity invested in the project.

''(4) CERTIFICATE NONTRANSFERABLE.—A Move America credit certificate, once purchased from a State or a project sponsor to whom the State has allocated such certificate for sale under paragraph (2)(B)(ii)(I), may not be sold or transferred to any other person.

''(d) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) QUALIFIED PROJECT.—The term 'qualified project' means a project which—

''(A) would be subject to the same requirements of any Federal law (including titles 23, 40, and 49 of the United States Code) which would otherwise apply to similar projects, and

''(B) is for the construction of a facility described in section 142A(b), but only if such project, upon completion, will be generally available for public use.

''(2) RECAPTURE AMOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any Move America credit certificate, if the project to which the certificate is designated under subsection (c)(1)(B) as relating—

''(i) is never placed in service, or

''(ii) ceases to be a qualified project at any time during the credit period,

the recapture amount is the amount determined under subparagraph (B).

''(B) AMOUNT DETERMINED.—The amount determined under this subparagraph is—

''(i) in the case of a project to which subparagraph (A)(i) applies, the value of the Move America credit certificate, and

''(ii) in the case of a project to which subparagraph (A)(ii) applies, the product of—

''(I) an amount equal to 10 percent of the value of the Move America credit certificate, and

''(II) the number of calendar years in the credit period beginning with the calendar year in which the project ceases to be a qualified project.

''(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR PROJECTS NOT PLACED IN SERVICE.—For purposes of subsection (a), if the project to which a Move America credit certificate is designated under subsection (c)(1)(B) as relating is never placed in service, the first taxable year that begins in the calendar year in which the State certifies (at such time and in such manner as may be prescribed by the Secretary) that the project will not be placed in service shall be treated as the year in which the project was placed in service.

''(e) APPLICATION WITH OTHER CREDITS.—

''(1) BUSINESS CREDIT TREATED AS PART OF GENERAL BUSINESS CREDIT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the credit which would be allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year (determined without regard to this subsection) shall be treated as a credit listed in section 38(b) for such taxable year (and not allowed under subsection (a)).

''(2) PERSONAL CREDIT.—For purposes of this title, in the case of an individual, the credit allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year shall be treated as a credit allowable under subpart A for such taxable year.''.

(b) CREDIT MADE PART OF GENERAL BUSINESS CREDIT.—Subsection (b) of section 38 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''plus'' at the end of paragraph (35),

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (36) and inserting '', plus'', and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(37) the portion of the Move America credit to which section 30E(e)(1) applies.''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart B of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 30E. Move America credit.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) REPORTING.—A State that sells any Move America credit certificate shall report, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury shall require—

(1) to the Secretary of the Treasury—

(A) the value of the Move America bonds otherwise allowed to be issued by the State which are exchanged under section 30E(c)(2)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the ability to sell such Move America credit certificates, and

(B) the number of Move America credit certificates sold by the State or allocated to project sponsors, the value of each such certificate, and to whom it was sold (including the name of the purchaser and any other identifying information as the Secretary of the Treasury shall require), and

(2) to the Secretary of the Treasury and the purchaser of any Move America credit certificate—

(A) the placed in service date of the qualified project to which the certificate is designated under section 30E(c)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as relating, or

(B) that the State has made a certification under section 30E(d)(3) of such Code that such project will not be placed in service.

For purposes of this subsection, any term used in this subsection that is also used in section 30E or 142A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 has the same meaning as when used in such section.

SA 3660. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 149, line 8, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

On page 150, line 17, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

On page 337, strike section 5013

SA 3661. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. JURISDICTION OVER OFFENSES COMMITTED BY CERTAIN UNITED STATES PERSONNEL STATIONED IN CANADA.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 212A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the chapter heading, by striking ''**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**''; and

(2) by adding after section 3272 the following:

''§ 3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever, while employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice and stationed or deployed in Canada pursuant to a treaty, executive agreement, or bilateral memorandum in furtherance of a border security initiative, engages in conduct (or conspires or attempts to engage in conduct) in Canada that would constitute an offense for which a person may be prosecuted in a court of the United States had the conduct been engaged in within the United States or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States shall be fined or imprisoned, or both, as provided for that offense.

''(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice' means—

''(1) being employed as a civilian employee, a contractor (including a subcontractor at any tier), or an employee of a contractor (or a subcontractor at any tier), of the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice;

''(2) being present or residing in Canada in connection with such employment; and

''(3) not being a national of or ordinarily resident in Canada.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Part II of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the table of chapters, by striking the item relating to chapter 212A and inserting the following:

''212A. Extraterritorial jurisdiction over certain offenses ..... 3271'';

and

(2) in the table of sections for chapter 212A, by inserting after the item relating to section 3272 the following:

''3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.''.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION. Nothing in this section shall be construed to infringe upon or otherwise affect the exercise of the prosecutorial discretion by the Department of Justice in implementing this provision.

SA 3662. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. PLACEMENT AND STORAGE OF WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING ASSETS.

When considering placement and storage of aerial wildland firefighting assets, the Chief of the Forest Service shall, before other considerations, take into consideration the geographic location of other federally owned aerial wildland firefighting assets and the rate, intensity, and size of all State and federally managed wildland fires in those locations.

SA 3663. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF EXCISE TAX EXEMPTION FOR SMALL AIRCRAFT ON ESTABLISHED LINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4281 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''6,000 pounds or less'' and inserting ''12,500 pounds or less'', and

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) ESTABLISHED LINE.—For purposes of this section, an aircraft shall not be considered as operated on an established line if operated under an authorization to conduct on-demand operations in common carriage pursuant to section 119.21(a)(5) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable transportation provided after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3664. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 81, between lines 24 and 25, insert the following:

''(f) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS IN THE ARCTIC.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, and not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Secretary shall determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the Arctic beyond the limitations of the notice of proposed rulemaking relating to operation and certification of small unmanned aircraft systems (80 Fed. Reg. 9544), including operation of such systems beyond the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(2) ASSESSMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—In making the determination required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall determine, at a minimum—

''(A) which types of unmanned aircraft systems, if any, as a result of their size, weight, speed, operational capability, proximity to airports and populated areas, and operation beyond visual line of sight do not create a hazard to users of the airspace over the Arctic or the public or pose a threat to national security;

''(B) which beyond-line-of-sight operations provide extraordinary public benefit justifying safe accommodation of the operations while minimizing restrictions on manned aircraft operations; and

''(C) whether a certificate of waiver, certificate of authorization, or airworthiness certification under section 44704 is required for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems identified under subparagraph (A).

''(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE OPERATION.—If the Secretary determines under this subsection that certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the Arctic beyond the visual line of sight of the operator, the Secretary shall establish requirements for the safe equipage and operation of such aircraft systems while minimizing the effect on manned aircraft operations.''.

SA 3665. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 125, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

SEC. 2143. MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Micro Drone Safety and Innovation Act of 2016''.

(b) OPERATION OF MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title III of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note), as amended by sections 2122(b)(2), 2128(b)(2), and 2129(b)(2), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 337. SPECIAL RULE FOR MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

''(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATION OF MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A micro unmanned aircraft system and the operator of that system shall qualify for the exemptions described under subsections (b), (c), and (d) if the system is operated—

''(A) at an altitude of less than 400 feet above ground level;

''(B) at an airspeed of not greater than 40 knots;

''(C) within the visual line of sight of the operator;

''(D) during the hours between sunrise and sunset; and

''(E) except as provided in paragraph (2), not less than 5 statute miles from the geographic center of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower or an airport denoted on a current aeronautical chart published by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(2) OPERATION WITHIN 5 STATUTE MILES OF AN AIRPORT.—A micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated within 5 statute miles of an airport described in paragraph (1)(E) if, before the micro unmanned aircraft system is operated within 5 statute miles of the airport, the operator of the micro unmanned aircraft system—

''(A) provides notice to the airport operator; and

''(B) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

''(b) EXEMPTIONS FOR OPERATORS OF MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Notwithstanding sections 44703 and 44711 of title 49, United States Code, part 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other provision of a statute, rule, or regulation relating to airman certification, any person may operate a micro unmanned aircraft system in accordance with subsection (a) without being required—

''(1) to pass any aeronautical knowledge test;

''(2) to meet any age or experience requirement; or

''(3) to obtain an airman certificate or medical certificate.

''(c) EXEMPTION FROM AIRWORTHINESS STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code, or any other provision of a statute, rule, or regulation relating to certification of aircraft or aircraft parts or equipment, a micro unmanned aircraft system operated in accordance with subsection (a) and component parts and equipment for that system shall not be required to meet airworthiness certification standards or to obtain an airworthiness certificate.

''(d) EXEMPTIONS FROM OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS.—

''(1) PART 91 REGULATIONS.—Sections 91.7(a), 91.119(c), 91.121, 91.151(a)(1), 91.405(a), and 91.407(a)(1), paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 91.409(a), and subsections (a) and (b) of section 91.417 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, shall not apply with respect to the operation of a micro unmanned aircraft system in accordance with subsection (a).

''(2) CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZATION.—A micro unmanned aircraft system operated in accordance with subsection (a) may be operated by any person without a certificate of authorization or waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(3) FUTURE REGULATIONS.—A micro unmanned aircraft system operated in accordance with subsection (a), and the operator of such a system, shall be exempt from any additional requirements that may be prescribed pursuant to this subtitle after the date of the enactment of the Micro Drone Safety and Innovation Act of 2016.

''(e) ALTERNATIVE REGULATIONS.—Instead of being operated in accordance with subsection (a), a micro unmanned aircraft may be operated pursuant to any form of authorization, operational rules, or exemptions pertaining to unmanned aircraft systems prescribed by the Administrator, except that a micro unmanned aircraft and its operator shall be exempt from any requirement for an airman certificate or medical certificate.

''(f) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'micro unmanned aircraft system' means an unmanned aircraft system the aircraft component of which weighs not more than 4.4 pounds, including payload.''.

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 335 the following:

''337. Special rule for micro unmanned aircraft systems.''.

SA 3666. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 86, strike line 22 and all that follows through page 88, line 19, insert the following:

''(b) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPERATIONAL RULES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law relating to the incorporation of unmanned aircraft systems into Federal Aviation Administration plans and policies, other than sections 44803 and 44809, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not promulgate any rule or regulation regarding the operation of a micro unmanned aircraft system, the aircraft component of which weighs 4.4 pounds or less, including payload, including any requirement that requires the operator of any such system to meet any airman certification requirement, including any requirements under section 44703 of this title, part 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other rule or regulation relating to airman certification.

''(2) OPERATIONAL RULES.—A micro unmanned aircraft system and the operator of that system shall qualify for the exemptions under this subsection if the following rules for operations of such systems are observed:

''(A) Operation at an altitude of less than 400 feet above ground level.

''(B) Operation with an airspeed of not greater than 40 knots.

''(C) Operation within the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(D) Operation during the hours between sunrise and sunset.

''(E) Operation not less than 5 statute miles from the geographic center of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower or an airport denoted on a current aeronautical chart published by the Federal Aviation Administration, except that a micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated within 5 statute miles of such an airport if the operator of the system—

''(i) provides notice to the airport operator; and

''(ii) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

''(3) EXEMPTIONS FROM OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS.—

''(A) PART 91 REGULATIONS.—Sections 91.7(a), 91.119(c), 91.121, 91.151(a)(1), 91.405(a), and 91.407(a)(1), paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 91.409(a), and subsections (a) and (b) of section 91.417 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, shall not apply with respect to the operation of a micro unmanned aircraft system in accordance with this subsection.

''(B) CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZATION.—A micro unmanned aircraft system operated in accordance with this subsection may be operated by any person without a certificate of authorization or waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(C) FUTURE REGULATIONS.—A micro unmanned aircraft system operated in accordance with this subsection, and the operator of such a system, shall be exempt from any additional requirements that may be prescribed pursuant to this subtitle after the date of the enactment of this Act, except for any additional requirements prescribed pursuant to sections 44803 and 44809.

''(4) ALTERNATIVE REGULATIONS.—Instead of being operated in accordance with this subsection, a micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated pursuant to any form of authorization, operational rules, or exemptions pertaining to unmanned aircraft systems prescribed by the Administrator, except that a micro unmanned aircraft system and its operator shall be exempt from any requirement for an airman certificate or medical certificate.

SA 3667. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 120, line 1, insert '', or commercial operators operating under contract with a public entity,'' after ''systems''.

SA 3668. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1305. AIRPORT VEHICLE EMISSIONS.

Section 40117(a)(3)(G) is amended to read as follows:

''(G) A project to reduce emissions under subchapter I of chapter 471 or to use cleaner burning conventional fuels, or for acquiring for use at a commercial service airport vehicles or ground support equipment that include low-emission technology or use cleaner burning fuels, or, if the airport is located in an air quality nonattainment area (as defined in section 171(2) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501(2))) or a maintenance area referred to in section 175A of such Act (42 U.S.C. 7505a), a project to retrofit any such vehicles or equipment that are powered by a diesel or gasoline engine with emission control technologies certified or verified by the Environmental Protection Agency to reduce emissions, if such project would be able to receive emission credits for the project from the governing State or Federal environmental agency as described in section 47139.''.

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. REDUCTION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION, EMISSIONS, AND NOISE FROM CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAM.—From amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a research program related to reducing civilian aircraft energy use, emissions, and source noise with equivalent safety through grants or other measures, which shall include cost-sharing authorized under section 106(l)(6) of such title, including reimbursable agreements with other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSORTIUM.—

(1) DESIGNATION AS CONSORTIUM.—The Administrator shall designate, using a competitive process, one or more institutions or entities described in paragraph (2), to be known as a ''Government led Consortium for Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise'' or ''CLEEN'', to perform research in accordance with this section.

(2) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator shall include educational and research institutions or private sector entities that have existing facilities and experience for developing and testing noise, emissions, and energy reduction engine and aircraft technology, and developing alternative fuels, in the research program required by subsection (a) to fulfill the performance objectives specified in subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION MECHANISMS.—In conducting the research program required by subsection (a), the consortium designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) coordinate its activities with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(B) consult on a regular basis with the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative.

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—Not later than January 1, 2021, the Administrator shall seek to ensure that the research program required subsection (a) supports the following objectives for civil subsonic airplanes:

(1) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces aircraft fuel burn 40 percent relative to year 2000 best-in-class in-service aircraft.

(2) Certifiable engine technology that reduces landing and takeoff cycle nitrogen oxide emissions by 70 percent over the International Civil Aviation Organization standard adopted in 2011.

(3) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces noise levels by 32 decibels cumulatively, relative to the Stage 4 standard, or reduces the noise contour area in absolute terms.

(4) The feasibility of use of drop-in alternative jet fuels in aircraft and engine systems, including successful demonstration and quantification of benefits, advancement of fuel testing capability, and support for fuel evaluation.

(d) CERTIFIABLE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''certifiable'' means the technology has been demonstrated to Technology Readiness Level 6 or 7, and there are no foreseen issues that would prevent certification to existing standards.

SEC. 5033. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall—

''(A) develop a joint plan to carry out the research described in subsection (a); and

''(B) submit to Congress a report on such joint plan.''.

SA 3669. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 270, strike lines 2 through 11 and insert the following:

(a) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund or other compensation to a passenger if the covered air carrier—

(A) has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage; and

(B) fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

(2) CHOICE OF EQUIVALENT COMPENSATION.—The regulations under paragraph (1) may allow an air carrier to offer a passenger the opportunity to select an alternate form of compensation of equivalent or greater value in lieu of a refund if the passenger is concurrently notified that he or she is entitled to a full refund of paid baggage fees, among the options for compensation. If the passenger fails to respond to the offer of equivalent compensation, the air carrier shall automatically refund the baggage fee paid by the passenger.

(3) REFUND DEADLINE.—Any refund under paragraph (1) or alternate equivalent compensation under paragraph (2) shall be provided to the passenger promptly and shall be provided not later than 10 days after an air carrier's failure to deliver checked baggage within the period prescribed under paragraph (1)(B).

SA 3670. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXCLUSION FOR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS IN CERTAIN VETERINARY STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT OR FORGIVENESS PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 108(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''or'' after ''such Act,'',

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting '', under section 1415A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3151a), or under any other State loan repayment or loan forgiveness program that is intended to provide for increased access to veterinary services in such State.'', and

(3) by striking ''STATE'' in the heading and inserting ''OTHER''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to amounts received by an individual in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SA 3671. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. CARRYING OF FIREARMS BY FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS.

Paragraph (3) of section 44921(f) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall take such action as may be necessary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm—

''(A) on any international flight on which a Federal air marshal may be deployed under section 44917; and

''(B) in foreign country as is necessary to allow the Federal flight deck officer to carry a firearm as authorized by subparagraph (A).''.

SA 3672. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. LIMITATIONS ON OPERATING CERTAIN AIRCRAFT NOT COMPLYING WITH STAGE 4 NOISE LEVELS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 475 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47535. Limitations on operating certain aircraft not complying with stage 4 noise levels

''(a) REGULATIONS.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the International Civil Aviation Organization, shall issue regulations to establish minimum standards for civil turbojets to comply with stage 4 noise levels.

''(b) GENERAL RULE.—The Secretary shall issue regulations to, except as provided in section 47529—

''(1) establish a timeline by which increasing percentages of the total number of civil turbojets with a maximum weight of more than 75,000 pounds operating to or from airports in the United States comply with the stage 4 noise levels established under subsection (a), beginning not later than December 31, 2022; and

''(2) require that 100 percent of such turbojets operating after December 31, 2037, to or from airports in the United States comply with the stage 4 noise levels.

''(c) FOREIGN-FLAG AIRCRAFT.—

''(1) INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall request the International Civil Aviation Organization to add to its Work Programme the consideration of international standards for the phase-out of aircraft that do not comply with stage 4 noise levels.

''(2) ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary shall enforce the requirements of this section with respect to foreign-flag aircraft only to the extent that such enforcement is consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

''(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning with calendar year 2020—

''(1) each air carrier shall submit to the Secretary an annual report on the progress the carrier is making toward complying with the requirements of this section and regulations issued to carry out this section; and

''(2) the Secretary shall submit to Congress an annual report on the progress being made toward that compliance.

''(e) NOISE RECERTIFICATION TESTING NOT REQUIRED.—

''(1) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require the noise certification testing of a civil turbojet that has been retrofitted to comply with or otherwise already meets the stage 4 noise levels established under subsection (a).

''(2) MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING COMPLIANCE WITH STAGE 4 NOISE LEVELS.—The Secretary shall specify means for demonstrating that an aircraft complies with stage 4 noise levels without requiring noise certification testing.

''(f) NONADDITION RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and section 47530, a person may operate a civil jet aircraft with a maximum weight of more than 75,000 pounds that is imported into the United States after December 31, 2020, only if the aircraft—

''(A) complies with the stage 4 noise levels; or

''(B) was purchased by the person importing the aircraft into the United States under a legally binding contract entered into before January 1, 2021.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Transportation may provide for an exception from

paragraph (1) to permit a person to obtain modifications to an aircraft to meet the stage 4 noise levels.

''(3) AIRCRAFT DEEMED NOT IMPORTED.—For purposes of this subsection, an aircraft shall be deemed not to have been imported into the United States if the aircraft—

''(A) was owned on January 1, 2021, by—

''(i) a corporation, trust, or partnership organized under the laws of the United States, a State, or the District of Columbia;

''(ii) an individual who is a citizen of the United States; or

''(iii) an entity that is owned or controlled by a corporation, trust, or partnership described in clause (i) or an individual described in clause (ii); and

''(B) enters the United States not later than 6 months after the expiration of a lease agreement (including any extension of such an agreement) between an owner described in subparagraph (A) and a foreign air carrier.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 475 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47534 the following:

''47535. Limitations on operating certain aircraft not complying with stage 4 noise levels.''.

SEC. 5033. STANDARDS FOR ISSUANCE OF NEW TYPE CERTIFICATES.

(a) APPLICABILITY OF STAGE 5 NOISE STANDARDS TO CIVIL JETS WITH A MAXIMUM WEIGHT OF MORE THAN 121,254 POUNDS.—On and after December 31, 2017, the Secretary of Transportation may not issue a new type certificate for a civil jet with a maximum weight of more than 121,254 pounds for which an application was received after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless the person applying for the type certificate demonstrates that the civil jet complies with stage 5 noise levels.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF STAGE 5 NOISE STANDARDS TO ALL CIVIL JETS.—On and after December 31, 2020, the Secretary may not issue a new type certificate for any civil jet for which an application was received after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless the person applying for the type certificate demonstrates that the civil jet complies with stage 5 noise levels.

SA 3673. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2143. PROHIBITION ON OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT CARRYING A WEAPON.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a weapon

''(a) IN GENERAL.—A person shall not operate an unmanned aircraft with a weapon attached to, installed on, or otherwise carried by the aircraft.

''(b) PENALTIES.—A person who violates subsection (a)—

''(1) shall be liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $27,500; and

''(2) may be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

''(c) NONAPPLICATION TO PUBLIC AIRCRAFT.—This section does not apply to public aircraft.

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of the Administrator with respect to manned or unmanned aircraft.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given that term in section 44801.

''(2) WEAPON.—The term 'weapon'—

''(A) means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury; and

''(B) includes a firearm or destructive device (as those terms are defined in section 921 of title 18).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46301(d)(2) of such title is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting ''section 46320,'' before ''or section 47107(b)''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 463 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a weapon.''.

SA 3674. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REIMBURSEMENT FOR AIRPORT SECURITY PROJECTS.

Paragraph (3) of section 44923(h) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount made available under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, up to $ 50,000,000 shall be used to make discretionary grants, including other transaction agreements for airport security improvement projects, with priority given to small hub airports and nonhub airports.

''(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—For each fiscal year, of the amount available under paragraph (1), up to $20,000,000 shall be made available for reimbursement to airports that have incurred eligible costs under section 1604(b)(2) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 121 Stat. 481).''.

SA 3675. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 91, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

''(b) ASSISTANCE BY FEDERAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Secretary shall include, in the guidance regarding the operation of public unmanned aircraft systems required by subsection (a), guidance with respect to allowing unmanned aircraft systems owned or operated by a Federal agency to assist Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement organizations in conducting law enforcement activities in the national airspace system.

SA 3676. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 86, line 19, insert after ''unmanned aircraft'' the following: '', including in circumstances in which there has been significant experience operating the associated unmanned aircraft within a country with which the United States maintains a trusted aviation relationship''.

SA 3677. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 61, line 14, insert '', except those operated for news gathering activities protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States'' after ''system''.

SA 3678. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. WARREN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2306, strike subsections (b) and (c) and insert the following:

(b) CONTENTS.—In revising the rule under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that—

(1) a flight attendant scheduled to a duty period of 14 hours or less is given a scheduled rest period of at least 10 consecutive hours; and

(2) the rest period required under paragraph (1) is not reduced under any circumstances.

SA 3679. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.

In this Act, unless expressly provided otherwise, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

TITLE I—AUTHORIZATIONS

Subtitle A—Funding of FAA Programs

SEC. 1001. AIRPORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND NOISE COMPATIBILITY PLANNING AND PROGRAMS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Section 48103(a) is amended by striking ''section 47505(a)(2), and carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c) $3,350,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 and $2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''section 47505(a)(2), carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c), for an airport cooperative research program under section 44511, for Airports Technology-Safety research, and Airports Technology-Efficiency research, $3,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2016 and $3,750,000,000 for fiscal year 2017''.

(b) OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

SEC. 1002. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) through (5) and inserting the following:

''(1) $2,855,241,025 for fiscal year 2016.

''(2) $2,862,020,524 for fiscal year 2017.''.

SEC. 1003. FAA OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106(k)(1) is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (E) and inserting the following:

''(A) $9,910,009,314 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(B) $10,025,361,111 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(b) AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES.—Section 106(k)(2) is amended by striking ''for fiscal years 2012 through 2015'' each place it appears and inserting ''for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

(c) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER FUNDS.—Section 106(k)(3) is amended by striking ''2012 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 1004. FAA RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''44511-44513'' and inserting ''44512-44513''; and

(ii) by striking ''and, for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015, under subsection (g)'';

(B) in paragraph (8), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following:

''(9) $166,000,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

''(10) $169,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (3).

SEC. 1005. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

(a) AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND GUARANTEE.—Section 48114(a)(1)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The total budget resources made available from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund each fiscal year under sections 48101, 48102, 48103, and 106(k)—

''(i) shall in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017, be equal to the sum of—

''(I) 90 percent of the estimated level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for that fiscal year; and

''(II) the actual level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year minus the total amount made available for obligation from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year; and

''(ii) may be used only for the aviation investment programs listed in subsection (b)(1).''.

(b) ENFORCEMENT OF GUARANTEES.—Section 48114(c)(2) is amended by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2017''.

SEC. 1006. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) MARSHALL ISLANDS, MICRONESIA, AND PALAU.—Section 47115(j) is amended by striking ''2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' and inserting ''2017''.

(b) EXTENSION OF COMPATIBLE LAND USE PLANNING AND PROJECTS BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 47141(f) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT ON PARTICIPATION IN FAA PROGRAMS BY DISADVANTAGED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to Congress a report on the number of new small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including those owned by veterans, that participated in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act.

(2) NEW SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a new small business concern is a small business concern that did not participate in the programs and activities described in paragraph (1) in a previous fiscal year.

(3) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(A) a list of the top 25 and bottom 25 large and medium hub airports in terms of providing opportunities for small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals to participate in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act;

(B) the results of an assessment, to be conducted by the Inspector General, on the reasons why the top airports have been successful in providing such opportunities; and

(C) recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Congress on methods for other airports to achieve results similar to those of the top airports.

(d) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORT PROPERTIES.—Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

Subtitle B—Airport Improvement Program Modifications

SEC. 1201. SMALL AIRPORT REGULATION RELIEF.

Section 47114(c)(1)(F) is amended to read as follows:

''(F) SPECIAL RULE FOR FISCAL YEARS 2016 THROUGH 2017.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall apportion to a sponsor of an airport under that subparagraph for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017 an amount based on the number of passenger boardings at the airport during calendar year 2012 if the airport—

''(i) had 10,000 or more passenger boardings during calendar year 2012;

''(ii) had fewer than 10,000 passenger boardings during the calendar year used to calculate the apportionment for fiscal year 2016 or 2017 under subparagraph (A); and

''(iii) had scheduled air service in the calendar year used to calculate the apportionment.''.

SEC. 1202. PRIORITY REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN COLD WEATHER STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, to the extent practicable, shall schedule the Administrator's review of construction projects so that projects to be carried out in the States in which the weather during a typical calendar year prevents major construction projects from being carried out before May 1 are reviewed as early as possible.

(b) REPORT.—The Administrator shall update the appropriate committees of Congress annually on the effectiveness of the review and prioritization.

SEC. 1203. STATE BLOCK GRANTS UPDATES.

Section 47128(a) is amended by striking ''9 qualified States for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 and 10 qualified States for each fiscal year thereafter'' and inserting ''15 qualified States for fiscal year 2016 and each fiscal year thereafter''.

SEC. 1204. CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM UPDATES.

(a) SPECIAL RULE.—Section 47124(b)(1)(B) is amended by striking ''after such determination is made'' and inserting ''after the end of the period described in subsection (d)(6)(C)''.

(b) CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER COST-SHARE PROGRAM; FUNDING.—Section 47124(b)(3)(E) is amended to read as follows:

''(E) FUNDING.—Of the amounts appropriated under section 106(k)(1), such sums as may be necessary may be used to carry out this paragraph.''.

(c) CAP ON FEDERAL SHARE OF COST OF CONSTRUCTION.—Section 47124(b)(4)(C) is amended by striking ''$2,000,000'' and inserting ''$4,000,000''.

(d) COST BENEFIT RATIO REVISION.—Section 47124 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) COST BENEFIT RATIOS.—

''(1) CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER PROGRAM AT COST-SHARE AIRPORTS.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, if an air traffic control tower is operating under the Cost-share Program, the Secretary shall annually calculate a new benefit-to-cost ratio for the tower.

''(2) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM AT NON-COST-SHARE AIRPORTS.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, if a tower is operating under the Contract Tower Program and continued under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall not calculate a new benefit-to-cost ratio for the tower unless the annual aircraft traffic at the airport where the tower is located decreases by more than 25 percent from the previous year or by more than 60 percent over a 3-year period.

''(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing a benefit-to-cost ratio under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2), the Secretary may consider only the following costs:

''(A) The Federal Aviation Administration's actual cost of wages and benefits of personnel working at the tower.

''(B) The Federal Aviation Administration's actual telecommunications costs of the tower.

''(C) Relocation and replacement costs of equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration associated with the tower, if paid for by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(D) Logistics, such as direct costs associated with establishing or updating the tower's interface with other systems and equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration, if paid for by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(4) EXCLUSIONS.—In establishing a benefit-to-cost ratio under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2), the Secretary may not consider the following costs:

''(A) Airway facilities costs, including labor and other costs associated with maintaining and repairing the systems and equipment of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(B) Costs for depreciating the building and equipment owned by the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(C) Indirect overhead costs of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(D) Costs for utilities, janitorial, and other services paid for or provided by the airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is located.

''(E) The cost of new or replacement equipment, or construction of a new or replacement tower, if the costs incurred were incurred by the airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is or will be located.

''(F) Other expenses of the Federal Aviation Administration not directly associated with the actual operation of the tower.

''(5) MARGIN OF ERROR.—The Secretary shall add a 5 percent margin of error to a benefit-to-cost ratio determination to acknowledge and account for any direct or indirect factors that are not included in the criteria the Secretary used in calculating the benefit-to-cost ratio.

''(6) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish procedures—

''(A) to allow an airport or the State or political subdivision of a State having jurisdiction over the airport where the tower is located not less than 90 days following the receipt of an initial benefit-to-cost ratio determination from the Secretary—

''(i) to request the Secretary reconsider that determination; and

''(ii) to submit updated or additional data to the Secretary in support of the reconsideration;

''(B) to allow the Secretary not more than 90 days to review the data submitted under subparagraph (A)(ii) and respond to the request under subparagraph (A)(i);

''(C) to allow the airport, State, or political subdivision of a State, as applicable, 30 days following the date of the response under subparagraph (B) to review the response before any action is taken based on a benefit-to-cost determination; and

''(D) to provide, after the end of the period described in subparagraph (C), an 18-month grace period before cost-share payments are due from the airport, State, or political subdivision of a State if as a result of the benefit-to-cost ratio determination the airport, State, or political subdivision, as applicable, is required to transition to the Cost-share Program.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—The term 'Contract Tower Program' means the level I air traffic control tower contract program established under subsection (a) and continued under subsection (b)(1).

''(2) COST-SHARE PROGRAM.—The term 'Cost-share Program' means the cost-share program established under subsection (b)(3).''.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 47124(b) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking ''the program established under paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''the Cost-share Program'';

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''CONTRACT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER PROGRAM'' and inserting ''COST-SHARE PROGRAM'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''contract tower program established under subsection (a) and continued under paragraph (1) (in this paragraph referred to as the 'Contract Tower Program')'' and inserting ''Contract Tower Program'';

(C) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''In carrying out the program'' and inserting ''In carrying out the Cost-share Program'';

(D) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''participate in the program'' and inserting ''participate in the Cost-share Program'';

(E) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''under the program'' and inserting ''under the Cost-share Program''; and

(F) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''the program continued under paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''the Contract Tower Program''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)(B)(i)(I), by striking ''contract tower program established under subsection (a) and continued under paragraph (1) or the pilot program established under paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''Contract Tower Program or the Cost-share Program''.

(f) EXEMPTION.—Section 47124(b)(3)(D) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''Airports with both Part 121 air service and more than 25,000 passenger enplanements in calendar year 2014 shall be exempt from any cost share requirement under the Cost-share Program.''.

(g) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Notwithstanding the amendments made by this section, the towers for which assistance is being provided under section 41724 of title 49, United States Code, on the day before the date of enactment of this Act may continue to be provided such assistance under the terms of that section as in effect on that day.

SEC. 1205. APPROVAL OF CERTAIN APPLICATIONS FOR THE CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration has not implemented a revised cost-benefit methodology for purposes of determining eligibility for the Contract Tower Program before the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, any air traffic control tower with an application for participation in the Contract Tower Program pending as of January 1, 2016, shall be approved for participation in the Contract Tower Program if the Administrator determines the tower is eligible under the criteria set forth in the Federal Aviation Administration report, Establishment and Discontinuance Criteria for Airport Traffic Control Towers, dated August 1990 (FAA–APO–90–7).

(b) REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The Administrator shall respond not later than 30 days after the date the Administrator receives a formal request from an airport and air traffic control contractor for additional authority to expand contract tower operational hours and staff to accommodate flight traffic outside of current tower operational hours.

(c) DEFINITION OF CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—In this section, the term ''Contract Tower Program'' has the meaning given the term in section 47124(e) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 1206. REMOTE TOWERS.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish—

(A) in consultation with airport operators and general aviation users, a pilot program at public-use airports to construct and operate remote towers; and

(B) a selection process for participation in the pilot program.

(2) SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the pilot program, the Administrator shall consult with operators of remote towers in foreign countries to design the pilot program in a manner that leverages as many safety and airspace efficiency benefits as possible.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In selecting the airports for participation in the pilot program, the Administrator shall—

(A) to the extent practicable, ensure that at least 2 different vendors of remote tower systems participate;

(B) include at least 1 airport currently in the Contract Tower Program and at least 1 airport that does not have an air traffic control tower; and

(C) clearly identify the research questions that will be addressed at each airport.

(4) RESEARCH.—In selecting an airport for participation in the pilot program, the Administrator shall consider—

(A) how inclusion of that airport will add research value to assist the Administrator in evaluating the feasibility, safety, and cost-benefits of remote towers;

(B) the amount and variety of air traffic at an airport; and

(C) the costs and benefits of including that airport.

(5) DATA.—The Administrator shall clearly identify and collect air traffic control information and data from participating airports that will assist the Administrator in evaluating the feasibility, safety, and cost-benefits of remote towers.

(6) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date the first remote tower is operational, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report—

(A) detailing any benefits, costs, or safety improvements associated with the use of the remote towers; and

(B) evaluating the feasibility of using remote towers, particularly in the Contract

Tower Program and for airports without any air traffic control tower, or to improve safety at airports with towers.

(7) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall select airports for participation in the pilot program.

(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM.—The term ''Contract Tower Program'' has the meaning given the term in section 47124(e) of title 49, United States Code.

(B) REMOTE TOWER.—The term ''remote tower'' means a system whereby air traffic services are provided to operators at an airport from a location that may not be on or near the airport.

(b) AIP FUNDING ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of the pilot program under subsection (a), and after certificated systems are available, constructing a remote tower or acquiring and installing air traffic control, communications, or related equipment for a remote tower shall be considered airport development (as defined in section 47102 of title 49, United States Code) for purposes of subchapter I of chapter 471 of that title if components are installed and used at the airport, except for off-airport sensors installed on leased towers, as needed.

SEC. 1207. MIDWAY ISLAND AIRPORT.

Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking ''and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' and inserting ''and for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 1208. AIRPORT ROAD FUNDING.

(a) AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT GRANT ASSURANCES.—Section 47107(b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) This subsection does not prevent the use of airport revenue for the maintenance and improvement of the on-airport portion of a surface transportation facility providing access to an airport and non-airport locations if the surface transportation facility is owned or operated by the airport owner or operator and the use of airport revenue is prorated to airport use and limited to portions of the facility located on the airport. The Secretary shall determine the maximum percentage contribution of airport revenue toward surface transportation facility maintenance or improvement, taking into consideration the current and projected use of the surface transportation facility located on the airport for airport and non-airport purposes. The de minimus use, as determined by the Secretary, of a surface transportation facility for non-airport purposes shall not require prorating.''.

(b) RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF AIRPORT REVENUE.—Section 47133(c) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''Nothing'' and indenting appropriately; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) Nothing in this section may be construed to prevent the use of airport revenue for the prorated maintenance and improvement costs of the on-airport portion of the surface transportation facility, subject to the provisions of section 47107(b)(4).''.

SEC. 1209. REPEAL OF INHERENTLY LOW-EMISSION AIRPORT VEHICLE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 47136 is repealed.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by striking the item relating to section 47136 and inserting the following:

''47136. [Reserved].''.

SEC. 1210. MODIFICATION OF ZERO-EMISSION AIRPORT VEHICLES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 47136a is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking '', including'' and inserting ''used exclusively for transporting passengers on-airport or for employee shuttle buses within the airport, including''; and

(2) in subsection (f), by inserting '', as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016,'' after ''section 47136''.

SEC. 1211. REPEAL OF AIRPORT GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT EMISSIONS RETROFIT PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 47140 is repealed.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by striking the item relating to section 47140 and inserting the following:

''47140. [Reserved].''.

SEC. 1212. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY FOR AIRPORT ENERGY EFFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS.

(a) COST REIMBURSEMENTS.—Section 47140a(a) is amended by striking ''airport.'' and inserting ''airport, and to reimburse the airport sponsor for the costs incurred in conducting the assessment.''.

(b) SAFETY PRIORITY.—Section 47140a(b)(2) is amended by inserting '', including a certification that no safety projects would be deferred by prioritizing a grant under this section,'' after ''an application''.

SEC. 1213. RECYCLING PLANS; SAFETY PROJECTS AT UNCLASSIFIED AIRPORTS.

Section 47106(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (6)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''for an airport that has an airport master plan, the master plan addresses'' and inserting ''a master plan project, it will address''; and

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) if the project is at an unclassified airport, the project will be funded with an amount apportioned under subsection 47114(d)(3)(B) and is—

''(A) for maintenance of the pavement of the primary runway;

''(B) for obstruction removal for the primary runway;

''(C) for the rehabilitation of the primary runway; or

''(D) a project that the Secretary considers necessary for the safe operation of the airport.''.

SEC. 1214. TRANSFERS OF INSTRUMENT LANDING SYSTEMS.

Section 44502(e) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting ''An airport may transfer, without consideration, to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration an instrument landing system consisting of a glide slope and localizer that conforms to performance specifications of the Administrator if an airport improvement project grant was used to assist in purchasing the system, and if the Federal Aviation Administration has determined that a satellite navigation system cannot provide a suitable approach.''.

SEC. 1215. NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47143. Non-movement area surveillance surface display systems pilot program

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may carry out a pilot program to support non-Federal acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors if—

''(1) the Administrator determines that acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors improve safety or capacity in the National Airspace System; and

''(2) the non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors are supplemental to existing movement area systems and sensors at the selected airports established under other programs administered by the Administrator.

''(b) PROJECT GRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out the pilot program, the Administrator may make a project grant out of funds apportioned under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2) of section 47114(c) to not more than 5 eligible sponsors to acquire and install qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors. The Administrator may distribute not more than $2,000,000 per sponsor from the discretionary fund. The airports selected to participate in the pilot program shall have existing Federal Aviation Administration movement area systems and airlines that are participants in Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Collaborative Decision Making process.

''(2) PROCEDURES.—In accordance with the authority under section 106, the Administrator may establish procurement procedures applicable to grants issued under this subsection. The procedures may permit the sponsor to carry out the project with vendors that have been accepted in the procurement procedure or using Federal Aviation Administration contracts. The procedures may provide for the direct reimbursement (including administrative costs) of the Administrator by the sponsor using grant funds under this subsection, for the ordering of system-related equipment and its installation, or for the direct ordering of system-related equipment and its installation by the sponsor, using such grant funds, from the suppliers with which the Administrator has contracted.

''(3) DATA EXCHANGE PROCESSES.—The Administrator may establish data exchange processes to allow airport participation in the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Collaborative Decision Making process and fusion of the non-movement surveillance data with the Administration's movement area systems.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) NON-MOVEMENT AREA.—The term 'non-movement area' is the portion of the airfield surface that is not under the control of air traffic control.

''(2) NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term 'non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors' is a non-Federal surveillance system that uses on-airport sensors that track vehicles or aircraft that are equipped with transponders in the non-movement area.

''(3) QUALIFYING NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term 'qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors' is a non-movement area surveillance surface display system that—

''(A) provides the required transmit and receive data formats consistent with the National Airspace System architecture at the appropriate service delivery point;

''(B) is on-airport; and

''(C) is airport operated.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of chapter 471 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47142 the following:

''47143. Non-movement area surveillance surface display systems pilot program.''.

SEC. 1216. AMENDMENTS TO DEFINITIONS.

Section 47102 is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (28) as paragraphs (12) through (30), respectively;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by redesignating clauses (iii) through (x) as clauses (iv) through (xi), respectively; and

(ii) by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

''(II) security equipment owned and operated by the airport, including explosive detection devices, universal access control systems, perimeter fencing, and emergency call boxes, which the Secretary may require by regulation for, or approve as contributing significantly to, the security of individuals and property at the airport;

''(III) safety apparatus owned and operated by the airport, which the Secretary may require by regulation for, or approve as contributing significantly to, the safety of individuals and property at the airport, and integrated in-pavement lighting systems for runways and taxiways and other runway and taxiway incursion prevention devices;'';

(B) in subparagraph (K), by striking ''such project will result in an airport receiving appropriate'' and inserting ''the airport would be able to receive''; and

(C) in subparagraph (L)—

(i) by striking ''or conversion of vehicles and'' and inserting ''of vehicles used exclusively for transporting passengers on-airport, employee shuttle buses within the airport, or'';

(ii) by striking ''airport, to'' and inserting ''airport and equipped with''; and

(iii) by striking ''7505a) and if such project will result in an airport receiving appropriate'' and inserting ''7505a)) and if the airport would be able to receive'';

(4) in paragraph (5), by striking ''regulations'' and inserting ''requirements'';

(5) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following:

''(7) 'categorized airport' means a nonprimary airport that has an identified role in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.'';

(6) in paragraph (9), as redesignated, by striking ''public'' and inserting ''public-use'';

(7) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated, the following:

''(11) 'joint use airport' means an airport owned by the Department of Defense, at which both military and civilian aircraft make shared use of the airfield.'';

(8) in paragraph (24), as redesignated, by amending subparagraph (B)(i) to read as follows:

''(i) determined by the Secretary to have at least—

''(I) 100 based aircraft that are currently registered with the Federal Aviation Administration under chapter 445 of this title; and

''(II) 1 based jet aircraft that is currently registered with the Federal Aviation Administration where, for the purposes of this clause, 'based' means the aircraft or jet aircraft overnights at the airport for the greater part of the year; or''; and

(9) by adding at the end the following:

''(31) 'unclassified airport' means a nonprimary airport that is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems that is not categorized by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration in the most current report entitled General Aviation Airports: A National Asset.''.

SEC. 1217. CLARIFICATION OF NOISE EXPOSURE MAP UPDATES.

Section 47503(b) is amended—

(1) by striking ''a change in the operation of the airport would establish'' and inserting ''there is a change in the operation of the airport that would establish''; and

(2) by inserting after ''reduction'' the following: ''if the change has occurred during the longer of—

''(1) the noise exposure map period forecast by the airport operator under subsection (a); or

''(2) the implementation timeframe of the operator's noise compatibility program''.

SEC. 1218. PROVISION OF FACILITIES.

Section 44502 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) AIRPORT SPACE.—

''(1) RESTRICTION.—The Administrator may not require an airport owner or sponsor (as defined in section 47102) to provide to the Federal Aviation Administration without cost any of the following:

''(A) Building construction, maintenance, utilities, or expenses for services relating to air traffic control, air navigation, or weather reporting.

''(B) Space in a facility owned by the airport owner or sponsor for services relating to air traffic control, air navigation, or weather reporting.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect—

''(A) any agreement the Secretary may have or make with an airport owner or sponsor for the airport owner or sponsor to provide any of the items described in subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) at below-market rates; or

''(B) any grant assurance that requires an airport owner or sponsor to provide land to the Administration without cost for an air traffic control facility.''.

SEC. 1219. CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report—

(1) which includes public and stakeholder input, and examines all safety risks, hazard effects, efficiency and operational effects on airports, airlines, and other stakeholders that could result from loss of contract weather observer service at the 57 airports targeted for the loss of this service;

(2) detailing how the Federal Aviation Administration will accurately report rapidly changing severe weather conditions at these airports, including thunderstorms, lightning, fog, visibility, smoke, dust, haze, cloud layers and ceilings, ice pellets, and freezing rain or drizzle without contract weather observers;

(3) indicating how airports can comply with applicable Federal Aviation Administration orders governing weather observations given the current documented limitations of automated surface observing systems; and

(4) identifying the process through which the Federal Aviation Administration analyzed the safety hazards associated with the elimination of the contract weather observer program.

(b) CONTINUED USE OF CONTRACT WEATHER OBSERVERS.—The Administrator may not discontinue the contract weather observer program at any airport until October 1, 2017.

(c) REPORT ON GOLDEN TRIANGLE INITIATIVE OF NOAA.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall jointly submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Golden Triangle Initiative of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the impacts of enhanced aviation forecast services provided as part of the Golden Triangle Initiative on weather-related air traffic delays.

(B) A description of the costs of providing such enhanced aviation forecast services.

(C) A description of potential alternative mechanisms to provide enhanced aviation forecast services comparable to such enhanced aviation forecast services for airports in rural or low population density areas.

SEC. 1220. FEDERAL SHARE ADJUSTMENT.

Section 47109(a)(5) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) 95 percent for a project at an airport for which the United States Government's share would otherwise be capped at 90 percent under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3) if the Administrator determines that the project is a successive phase of a multiphased construction project for which the sponsor received a grant in fiscal year 2011 or earlier.''.

SEC. 1221. MISCELLANEOUS TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) AIRPORT SECURITY PROGRAM.—Section 47137 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Transportation'' and inserting ''Homeland Security'';

(2) in subsection (e), by striking ''Homeland Security'' and inserting ''Transportation''; and

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting ''of Transportation'' after ''Secretary'' the first place it appears.

(b) SECTION 516 PROPERTY CONVEYANCE RELEASES.—Section 817(a) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47125 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''or section 23'' and inserting '', section 23''; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', or section 47125 of title 49, United States Code''.

SEC. 1222. MOTHERS' ROOMS AT AIRPORTS.

(a) LACTATION AREA DEFINED.—Section 47102, as amended by section 1216 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (12) through (31) as paragraphs (13) through (32), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

''(12) 'lactation area' means a room or other location in a commercial service airport that—

''(A) provides a location for members of the public to express breast milk that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from the public;

''(B) has a door that can be locked;

''(C) includes a place to sit, a table or other flat surface, and an electrical outlet;

''(D) is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs; and

''(E) is not located in a restroom.''.

(b) PROJECT GRANTS WRITTEN ASSURANCES FOR LARGE AND MEDIUM HUB AIRPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 47107(a) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (20), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (21), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(22) with respect to a medium or large hub airport, the airport owner or operator will maintain a lactation area in each passenger terminal building of the airport in the sterile area (as defined in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations) of the building.''.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to a project grant application submitted for a fiscal year beginning on or after the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) SPECIAL RULE.—The requirement in the amendments made by paragraph (1) that a lactation area be located in the sterile area of a passenger terminal building shall not apply with respect to a project grant application for a period of time, determined by the Secretary of Transportation, if the Secretary determines that construction or maintenance activities make it impracticable or unsafe for the lactation area to be located in the sterile area of the building.

(c) TERMINAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS.—Section 47119(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) LACTATION AREAS.—In addition to the projects described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may approve a project for terminal development for the construction or installation of a lactation area at a commercial service airport.''.

(d) PRE-EXISTING FACILITIES.—On application by an airport sponsor, the Secretary of Transportation may determine that a lactation area in existence on the date of enactment of this Act complies with the requirement of paragraph (22) of section 47107(a) of title 49, United States Code, as added by subsection (b), notwithstanding the absence of one of the facilities or characteristics referred to in the definition of the term ''lactation area'' in paragraph (12) of section 47102 of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 1223. ELIGIBILITY FOR AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AT AIRPORTS THAT ENTER INTO CERTAIN LEASES WITH COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 47107, as amended by section 1208 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(t) AIRPORTS THAT ENTER INTO CERTAIN LEASES WITH THE ARMED FORCES.—The Secretary of Transportation may not disapprove a project grant application under this subchapter for an airport development project at an airport solely because the airport renews a lease for the use, at a nominal rate, of airport property by a regular or reserve component of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard, without regard to whether that component operates aircraft at the airport.''.

SEC. 1224. CLARIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF AVIATION-RELATED ACTIVITY FOR HANGAR USE.

Section 47107, as amended by section 1223 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(u) CONSTRUCTION OF RECREATIONAL AIRCRAFT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The construction of a covered aircraft shall be treated as an aeronautical activity for purposes of—

''(A) determining an airport's compliance with a grant assurance made under this section or any other provision of law; and

''(B) the receipt of Federal financial assistance for airport development.

''(2) COVERED AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'covered aircraft' means an aircraft—

''(A) used or intended to be used exclusively for recreational purposes; and

''(B) constructed or under construction, repair, or restoration by a private individual at a general aviation airport.''.

SEC. 1225. USE OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS FOR RUNWAY SAFETY REPAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47144. Use of funds for repairs for runway safety repairs

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may make project grants under this subchapter to an airport described in subsection (b) from funds under section 47114 apportioned to that airport or funds available for discretionary grants to that airport under section 47115 to conduct airport development to repair the runway safety area of the airport damaged as a result of a natural disaster in order to maintain compliance with the regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration relating to runway safety areas, without regard to whether construction of the runway safety area damaged was carried out using amounts the airport received under this subchapter.

''(b) AIRPORTS DESCRIBED.—An airport is described in this subsection if—

''(1) the airport is a public-use airport;

''(2) the airport is listed in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems of the Federal Aviation Administration;

''(3) the runway safety area of the airport was damaged as a result of a natural disaster;

''(4) the airport was denied funding under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 4121 et seq.) with respect to the disaster;

''(5) the operator of the airport has exhausted all legal remedies, including legal action against any parties (or insurers thereof) whose action or inaction may have contributed to the need for the repair of the runway safety area;

''(6) there is still a demonstrated need for the runway safety area to accommodate current or imminent aeronautical demand; and

''(7) the cost of repairing or replacing the runway safety area is reasonable in relation to the anticipated operational benefit of repairing the runway safety area, as determined by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 471, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47143 the following:

''47144. Use of funds for repairs for runway safety repairs.''.

SEC. 1226. DEFINITION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.

Section 47113(a)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) 'small business concern'—

''(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), has the same meaning given that term in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

''(B) in the case of a concern in the construction industry, a concern shall be considered a small business concern if the concern meets the size standard for the North American Industry Classification System Code 237310, as adjusted by the Small Business Administration;''.

Subtitle C—Passenger Facility Charges

SEC. 1301. PFC STREAMLINING.

(a) PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGES; GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Section 40117(b)(4) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking '', if the Secretary finds—'' and inserting a period; and

(2) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B).

(b) PILOT PROGRAM FOR PASSENGER FACILITY CHARGE AUTHORIZATIONS AT NONHUB AIRPORTS.—Section 40117(l) is amended—

(1) in the heading by striking ''NONHUB'' and inserting ''CERTAIN''; and

(2) in paragraph (1), by striking ''nonhub'' and inserting ''nonhub, small hub, medium hub, and large hub''.

SEC. 1302. INTERMODAL ACCESS PROJECTS.

Section 40117 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) PFC ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMODAL GROUND ACCESS PROJECTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may authorize a passenger facility charge imposed under subsection (b)(1) to be used to finance the eligible capital costs of an intermodal ground access project.

''(2) DEFINITION OF INTERMODAL GROUND ACCESS PROJECT.—In this subsection, the term 'intermodal ground access project' means a project for constructing a local facility owned or operated by an eligible agency that—

''(A) is located on airport property; and

''(B) is directly and substantially related to the movement of passengers or property traveling in air transportation.

''(3) ELIGIBLE CAPITAL COSTS.—The eligible capital costs of an intermodal ground access project shall be the lesser of—

''(A) the total capital cost of the project multiplied by the ratio that the number of individuals projected to use the project to gain access to or depart from the airport bears to the total number of individuals projected to use the local facility; or

''(B) the total cost of the capital improvements that are located on airport property.

''(4) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall determine the projected use and cost of a project for purposes of paragraph (3) at the time the project is approved under this subsection, except that, in the case of a project to be financed in part using funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration, the Secretary shall use the travel forecasting model for the project at the time the project is approved by the Federal Transit Administration to enter preliminary engineering to determine the projected use and cost of the project for purposes of paragraph (3).

''(5) NONATTAINMENT AREAS.—For airport property, any area of which is located in a nonattainment area (as defined under section 171 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501)) for 1 or more criteria pollutant, the airport emissions reductions from less airport surface transportation and parking as a direct

result of the development of an intermodal project on the airport property would be eligible for air quality emissions credits.''.

SEC. 1303. USE OF REVENUE AT A PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED AIRPORT.

Section 40117, as amended by section 1302 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(o) USE OF REVENUES AT A PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED AIRPORT.—Notwithstanding the requirements relating to airport control under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may authorize use of a passenger facility charge under subsection (b) to finance an eligible airport-related project if—

''(1) the eligible agency seeking to impose the new charge controls an airport where a $2.00 passenger facility charge became effective on January 1, 2013; and

''(2) the location of the project to be financed by the new charge is at an airport that was under the control of the same eligible agency that had controlled the airport described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 1304. FUTURE AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCING STUDY.

(a) FUTURE AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCING STUDY.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall enter into an agreement with the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies to conduct a study and make recommendations on the actions needed to upgrade and restore the national aviation infrastructure system to its role as a premier system that meets the growing and shifting demands of the 21st century, including airport infrastructure needs and existing financial resources for commercial service airports.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the study, the Transportation Research Board shall convene and consult with a panel of national experts, including—

(1) nonhub airports;

(2) small hub airports;

(3) medium hub airports;

(4) large hub airports;

(5) airports with international service;

(6) non-primary airports;

(7) local elected officials;

(8) relevant labor organizations;

(9) passengers;

(10) air carriers; and

(11) representatives of the tourism industry.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the study, the Transportation Research Board shall consider—

(1) the ability of airport infrastructure to meet current and projected passenger volumes;

(2) the available financial tools and resources for airports of different sizes;

(3) the current debt held by airports, and its impact on future construction and capacity needs;

(4) the impact of capacity constraints on passengers and ticket prices;

(5) the purchasing power of the passenger facility charge from the last increase in 2000 to the year of enactment of this Act;

(6) the impact to passengers and airports of indexing the passenger facility charge for inflation;

(7) how long airports are constrained with current passenger facility charge collections;

(8) the impact of passenger facility charges to promote competition;

(9) the additional resources or options to fund terminal construction projects;

(10) the resources eligible for use toward noise reduction and emission reduction projects;

(11) the gap between AIP-eligible projects and the annual Federal funding provided;

(12) the impact of regulatory requirements on airport infrastructure financing needs;

(13) airline competition;

(14) airline ancillary fees and their impact on ticket pricing and taxable revenue; and

(15) the ability of airports to finance necessary safety, security, capacity, and environmental projects identified in capital improvement plans.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Transportation Research Board shall submit to the Secretary and the appropriate committees of Congress a report on its findings and recommendations.

(e) FUNDING.—The Secretary is authorized to use such sums as are necessary to carry out the requirements of this section.

TITLE II—SAFETY

Subtitle A—Unmanned Aircraft Systems Reform

SEC. 2001. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Unless expressly provided otherwise, the terms used in this subtitle have the meanings given the terms in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

(b) DEFINITION OF CIVIL AIRCRAFT.—The term ''civil aircraft'' has the meaning given the term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

PART I—PRIVACY AND TRANSPARENCY

SEC. 2101. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS PRIVACY POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that the operation of any unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system shall be carried out in a manner that respects and protects personal privacy consistent with the United States Constitution and Federal, State, and local law.

SEC. 2102. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) each person that uses an unmanned aircraft system for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise, except for news gathering, should have a written privacy policy consistent with section 2101 that is appropriate to the nature and scope of the activities regarding the collection, use, retention, dissemination, and deletion of any data collected during the operation of an unmanned aircraft system;

(2) each privacy policy described in paragraph (1) should be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary; and

(3) each privacy policy described in paragraph (1) should be publicly available.

SEC. 2103. FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION AUTHORITY.

A violation of a privacy policy by a person that uses an unmanned aircraft system for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise, in the national airspace system shall be an unfair and deceptive practice in violation of section 5(a) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)).

SEC. 2104. NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESS.

Not later than July 31, 2016, the Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the industry privacy best practices developed through the multi-stakeholder engagement process (established under Presidential Memorandum of February 15, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 9355)) on unmanned aircraft systems transparency and accountability. In addition to the agreed upon best practices, this report shall include relevant stakeholder recommendations for legislative or regulatory action regarding privacy, accountability, and transparency, including ways to encourage the adoption of privacy policies by companies that use unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise. The report shall take into account existing rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution in public spaces and the First Amendment rights of journalists to control their archives.

SEC. 2105. IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, and in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the President of RTCA, Inc., and the Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, shall convene industry stakeholders to facilitate the development of consensus standards for remotely identifying operators and owners of unmanned aircraft systems and associated unmanned aircraft.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—As part of the standards developed under subsection (a), the Director shall consider—

(1) requirements for remote identification of unmanned aircraft systems;

(2) appropriate requirements for different classifications of unmanned aircraft systems operations, including public and civil;

(3) the role of manufacturers, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the owners of the systems described in paragraphs (1) and (2) in reporting and verifying identification data; and

(4) the feasibility of the development and operation of a publicly searchable online database to further enable the immediate remote identification of any unmanned aircraft and its operator by the general public and potential exceptions to inclusion in the online database.

(c) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the consensus identification standards.

(d) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after the date that the Director submits the report on the consensus identification standards under subsection (c), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulatory guidance based on the consensus identification standards.

SEC. 2106. COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except for model aircraft under section 44808 of title 49, United States Code, in authorizing the operation of any public unmanned aircraft system or the operation of any unmanned aircraft system by a person conducting civil aircraft operations, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, to the extent practicable and consistent with applicable law and without compromising national security, homeland defense, or law enforcement, shall make the identifying information in subsection (b) available to the public via an easily searchable online database. The Administrator shall place a clear and conspicuous link to the database on the home page of the Federal Aviation Administration's website.

(b) CONTENTS.—The database described in subsection (a) shall contain the following:

(1) The name of each individual, or agency, as applicable, authorized to conduct civil or

public unmanned aircraft systems operations described in subsection (a).

(2) The name of each owner of an unmanned aircraft system described in paragraph (1).

(3) The expiration date of any authorization related to a person identified in paragraph (1) or paragraph (2).

(4) The contact information for each person identified in paragraphs (1) and (2), including a telephone number and an electronic mail address, in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

(5) The tail number or specific identification number of all unmanned aircraft authorized for use that links each unmanned aircraft to the owner of that aircraft.

(6) For any unmanned aircraft system that will collect personally identifiable information about individuals, including the use of facial recognition—

(A) the circumstance under which the system will be used;

(B) the specific kinds of personally identifiable information that the system will collect about individuals; and

(C) how the information referred to in subparagraph (B), and the conclusions drawn from such information, will be used, disclosed, and otherwise handled, including—

(i) how the collection or retention of such information that is unrelated to the specific use will be minimized;

(ii) under what circumstances such information might be sold, leased, or otherwise provided to third parties;

(iii) the period during which such information will be retained;

(iv) when and how such information, including information no longer relevant to the specified use, will be destroyed; and

(v) steps that will be used to protect against the unauthorized disclosure of any information or data, such as the use of encryption methods and other security features.

(7) With respect to public unmanned aircraft systems—

(A) the locations where the unmanned aircraft system will operate;

(B) the time during which the unmanned aircraft system will operate;

(C) the general purpose of the flight; and

(D) the technical capabilities that the unmanned aircraft system possesses.

(c) RECORDS.—Each person described in subsection (b)(1), to the extent practicable without compromising national security, homeland defense, or law enforcement shall maintain and make available to the Administrator for not less than 1 year a record of the name and contact information of each person on whose behalf the unmanned aircraft system has been operated.

(d) DEADLINE.—The Administrator shall make the database available not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) TERMINATION.—The Administrator may cease the operation of such database on September 30, 2017.

SEC. 2107. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT REMEDIES UNDER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL JURISDICTIONS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a review of the privacy issues and concerns associated with the operation of unmanned aircraft systems in the national airspace system that—

(1) examines and identifies the existing Federal, State, or local laws, including constitutional law, that address an individual's personal privacy;

(2) identifies specific issues and concerns that may limit the availability of existing civil or criminal legal remedies regarding inappropriate operation of unmanned aircraft systems in the national airspace system;

(3) identifies any deficiencies in current Federal, State, or local privacy protections; and

(4) recommends legislative or other actions to address the limitations and deficiencies identified in paragraphs (2) and (3).

PART II—UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

SEC. 2121. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part A of subtitle VII is amended by inserting after chapter 447 the following:

"CHAPTER 448—UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

''Sec.
''44801. Definitions.

"§ 44801. Definitions

''In this chapter—

''(1) 'appropriate committees of Congress' means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

''(2) 'Arctic' means the United States zone of the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and Bering Sea north of the Aleutian chain.

''(3) 'certificate of waiver' and 'certificate of authorization' mean a Federal Aviation Administration grant of approval for a specific flight operation.

''(4) 'permanent areas' means areas on land or water that provide for launch, recovery, and operation of small unmanned aircraft.

''(5) 'public unmanned aircraft system' means an unmanned aircraft system that meets the qualifications and conditions required for operation of a public aircraft (as defined in section 40102(a)).

''(6) 'sense and avoid capability' means the capability of an unmanned aircraft to remain a safe distance from and to avoid collisions with other airborne aircraft.

''(7) 'small unmanned aircraft' means an unmanned aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached to or carried by the aircraft.

''(8) 'test range' means a defined geographic area where research and development are conducted as authorized by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(9) 'test site' means any of the 6 test ranges established by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, and any public entity authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration as an unmanned aircraft system flight test center before January 1, 2009.

''(10) 'unmanned aircraft' means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

''(11) 'unmanned aircraft system' means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft) that are required for the operator to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.''.

(b) TABLE OF CHAPTERS.—The table of chapters for subtitle VII is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 447 the following:

''448. Unmanned Aircraft Systems .... 44801''.

SEC. 2122. UTILIZATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM TEST SITES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as designated by section 2121 of this Act, is amended by inserting after section 44801 the following:

"§ 44802. Unmanned aircraft system test sites

''(a)(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish and update, as appropriate, a program for the use of the 6 test sites established under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), and any public entity authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration as an unmanned aircraft system flight test center before January 1, 2009, to facilitate the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

''(2) TERMINATION.—The program shall terminate on September 30, 2022.

''(b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In establishing the program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

''(1) designate airspace for safely testing the integration of unmanned flight operations in the national airspace system;

''(2) develop operational standards and air traffic requirements for unmanned flight operations at test sites, including test ranges;

''(3) coordinate with and leverage the resources of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Defense;

''(4) address both civil and public unmanned aircraft systems;

''(5) ensure that the program is coordinated with relevant aspects of the Next Generation Air Transportation System;

''(6) provide for verification of the safety of unmanned aircraft systems and related navigation procedures as it relates to continued development of standards for integration into the national airspace system;

''(7) engage each test site operator in projects for research, development, testing, and evaluation of unmanned aircraft systems to facilitate the Federal Aviation Administration's development of standards for the safe integration of unmanned aircraft into the national airspace system, which may include solutions for—

''(A) developing and enforcing geographic and altitude limitations;

''(B) classifications of airspace where manufacturers must prevent flight of an unmanned aircraft system;

''(C) classifications of airspace where manufacturers of unmanned aircraft systems must alert the operator to hazards or limitations on flight;

''(D) sense and avoid capabilities;

''(E) beyond-line-of-sight, nighttime operations and unmanned traffic management, or other critical research priorities; and

''(F) improving privacy protections through the use of advances in unmanned aircraft systems technology;

''(8) coordinate periodically with all test site operators to ensure test site operators know which data should be collected, what procedures should be followed, and what research would advance efforts to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system;

''(9) allow a test site to develop multiple test ranges within the test site;

''(10) streamline the approval process for test sites when processing unmanned aircraft certificates of waiver or authorization for operations at the test sites;

''(11) require each test site operator to protect proprietary technology, sensitive data, or sensitive research of any civil or private entity when using that test site without the

need to obtain an experimental or special airworthiness certificate;

''(12) evaluate options for the operation of 1 or more small unmanned aircraft systems beyond the visual line of sight of the operator for testing under controlled conditions that ensure the safety of persons and property, including on the ground; and

''(13) allow test site operators to receive Federal funding, other than from the Federal Aviation Administration, including in-kind contributions, from test site participants in the furtherance of research, development, and testing objectives.

''(c) TEST SITE LOCATIONS.—In determining the location of a test site under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

''(1) take into consideration geographic and climatic diversity;

''(2) take into consideration the location of ground infrastructure and research needs; and

''(3) consult with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Secretary of Defense.

''(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the establishment and implementation of the program under subsection (a).

''(2) BRIEFINGS.—Beginning 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, and every 180 days thereafter until September 30, 2017, the Administrator shall provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing that includes—

''(A) a current summary of unmanned aircraft systems operations at the test sites since the last briefing to Congress;

''(B) a description of all of the data generated from the operations described in subparagraph (A), and shared with the Federal Aviation Administration through a cooperative research and development agreement authorized in section 2123 of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, that relate to unmanned aircraft systems research priorities, including beyond-line-of-sight, unmanned traffic management, nighttime operations, and sense and avoid technology;

''(C) a description of how the data described in subparagraph (B) will be or is used—

''(i) to advance Federal Aviation Administration priorities;

''(ii) to validate the safety of unmanned aircraft systems and related technology; and

''(iii) to inform future rulemaking related to the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace;

''(D) an evaluation of the activities and specific outcomes from activities at the test sites that support the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems under this chapter; and

''(E) recommendations for future Federal Aviation Administration test site operations that would generate data necessary to inform future rulemaking related to unmanned aircraft systems.

''(e) REVIEW OF OPERATIONS BY TEST SITE OPERATORS.—The operator of each test site under subsection (a) shall—

''(1) review the operations of unmanned aircraft systems conducted at the test site, including—

''(A) ongoing or completed research; and

''(B) data regarding operations by private and public operators; and

''(2) submit to the Administrator, in such form and manner as specified by the Administrator, the results of the review, including recommendations to further enable private research and development operations at the test sites that contribute to the Federal Aviation Administration's safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system, on a quarterly basis until the program terminates.

''(f) TESTING.—The Secretary may authorize an operator of a test site described in subsection (a) to administer testing requirements established by the Administrator for unmanned aircraft systems operations.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as added by section 2121 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44801 the following:

''44802. Unmanned aircraft system test sites.''.

(2) PILOT PROJECTS.—Section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking subsection (c).

SEC. 2123. ADDITIONAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND TESTING.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the United States Unmanned Aircraft System Executive Committee, jointly, and in coordination with industry, users, the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and test site operators, shall develop a research plan to identify ongoing research into the broad range of technical, procedural, and policy concerns arising from the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system, and research needs regarding those concerns. In developing the plan, the Administrator shall determine and engage the appropriate entities to meet the research needs identified in the plan.

(b) COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator may use the other transaction authority under section 106(l)(6) of title 49, United States Code, and enter into collaborative research and development agreements, to direct research related to unmanned aircraft systems, including at any test site under section 44802(a) of that title, and in coordination with the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

(c) USE OF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Administrator, in carrying out research necessary to establish the consensus safety standards and certification requirements in section 44803 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2124, shall, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage the research and testing capacity and capabilities of the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the test sites (as defined in 44801 of such title, as added by section 2121).

SEC. 2124. SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44802 the following:

''SEC. 44803. AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.

''(a) CONSENSUS AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with government and industry stakeholders and appropriate standards-setting organizations, shall initiate a collaborative process to develop risk-based, consensus industry airworthiness standards related to the safe integration of small unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

''(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the consensus aircraft safety standards, the Director and Administrator shall consider the following:

''(1) Technologies or standards related to geographic limitations, altitude limitations, and sense and avoid capabilities.

''(2) Using performance-based standards.

''(3) Predetermined action to maintain safety in the event that a communications link between a small unmanned aircraft and its operator is lost or compromised.

''(4) Detectability and identifiability to pilots, the Federal Aviation Administration, and air traffic controllers, as appropriate.

''(5) Means to prevent tampering with or modification of any system, limitation, or other safety mechanism or standard under this section or any other provision of law, including a means to identify any tampering or modification that has been made.

''(6) Consensus identification standards under section 2105.

''(7) How to update or modify a small unmanned aircraft system that was commercially distributed prior to the development of the consensus aircraft safety standards so that, to the greatest extent practicable, such systems meet the consensus aircraft safety standards.

''(8) Any technology or standard related to small unmanned aircraft systems that promotes aviation safety.

''(c) CONSULTATION.—In developing the consensus aircraft safety standards under subsection (a), the Director and Administrator shall consult with—

''(1) the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

''(2) the President of RTCA, Inc.;

''(3) the Secretary of Defense;

''(4) each operator of a test site under section 44802;

''(5) the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems;

''(6) unmanned aircraft systems stakeholders; and

''(7) community-based aviation organizations.

''(d) FAA APPROVAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a process for the approval of small unmanned aircraft systems make and models based upon the consensus aircraft safety standards developed under subsection (a). The consensus aircraft safety standards developed under subsection (a) shall allow the Administrator to approve small unmanned aircraft systems for operation within the national airspace system without requiring the type certification process in parts 21 and 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

''(e) ELIGIBILITY.—The consensus aircraft safety standards for approval of small unmanned aircraft systems developed under this section shall set eligibility requirements for an airworthiness approval of a small unmanned aircraft system which shall include the following:

''(1) An applicant must provide the Federal Aviation Administration with—

''(A) the aircraft's operating instructions; and

''(B) the manufacturer's statement of compliance as described in subsection (f) of this section.

''(2) A sample aircraft must be inspected by the Federal Aviation Administration and found to be in a condition for safe operation and in compliance with the consensus aircraft safety standards required by the Administrator in subsection (d).

''(f) MANUFACTURER'S STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR SMALL UAS.—The manufacturer's statement of compliance shall—

''(1) identify the aircraft make and model, and consensus aircraft safety standard used;

''(2) state that the aircraft make and model meets the provisions of the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(3) state that the aircraft make and model conforms to the manufacturer's design data, using the manufacturer's quality assurance system that meets the identified consensus standard adopted by the Administrator in subsection (d), and is manufactured in way that ensures consistency in the production process so that every unit produced meets the applicable consensus aircraft safety standards;

''(4) state that the manufacturer will make available to any interested person—

''(A) the aircraft's operating instructions, that meet the standard identified in paragraph (1); and

''(B) the aircraft's maintenance and inspection procedures, that meet the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(5) state that the manufacturer will monitor and correct safety-of-flight issues through a continued airworthiness system that meets the standard identified in paragraph (1);

''(6) state that at the request of the Administration, the manufacturer will provide access by the Administration to its facilities; and

''(7) state that the manufacturer, in accordance with a production acceptance test procedure that meets an applicable consensus aircraft safety standard has—

''(A) ground and flight tested random samples of the aircraft;

''(B) found the sample aircraft performance acceptable; and

''(C) determined that the make and model of aircraft is suitable for safe operation.

''(g) PROHIBITION.—It shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured after the date that the Administrator adopts consensus aircraft safety standards under this section, unless the manufacturer has received approval under subsection (d) for each make and model.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2122 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44802 the following:

''44803. Aircraft safety standards.''.

SEC. 2125. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN THE ARCTIC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44803 the following:

''§ 44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall develop a plan and initiate a process to work with relevant Federal agencies and national and international communities to designate permanent areas in the Arctic where small unmanned aircraft may operate 24 hours per day for research and commercial purposes.

''(b) PLAN CONTENTS.—The plan under subsection (a) shall include the development of processes to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft beyond line of sight.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each permanent area designated under subsection (a) shall enable over-water flights from the surface to at least 2,000 feet in altitude, with ingress and egress routes from selected coastal launch sites.

''(d) AGREEMENTS.—To implement the plan under subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into an agreement with relevant national and international communities.

''(e) AIRCRAFT APPROVAL.—Not later than 1 year after the entry into force of an agreement necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section, the Secretary shall work with relevant national and international communities to establish and implement a process, or may apply an applicable process already established, for approving the use of unmanned aircraft in the designated permanent areas in the Arctic without regard to whether an unmanned aircraft is used as a public aircraft, a civil aircraft, or a model aircraft.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2124 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44803 the following:

''44804. Unmanned aircraft systems in the Arctic.''.

(2) EXPANDING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN ARCTIC.—Section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 2126. SPECIAL AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44804 the following:

''§ 44805. Special authority for certain unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other requirement of this chapter, the Secretary of Transportation shall use a risk-based approach to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system notwithstanding completion of the comprehensive plan and rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807.

''(b) ASSESSMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—In making the determination under subsection (a), the Secretary shall determine, at a minimum—

''(1) which types of unmanned aircraft systems, if any, as a result of their size, weight, speed, operational capability, proximity to airports and populated areas, and operation within or beyond visual line of sight, or operation during the day or night, do not create a hazard to users of the national airspace system or the public; and

''(2) whether a certificate under section 44703 or section 44704 of this title, or a certificate of waiver or certificate of authorization, is required for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems identified under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE OPERATION.—If the Secretary determines under this section that certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system, the Secretary shall establish requirements for the safe operation of such aircraft systems in the national airspace system, including operation related to research, development, and testing of proprietary systems.

''(d) PILOT CERTIFICATION EXEMPTION.—If the Secretary proposes, under this section, to require an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to hold an airman certificate, a medical certificate, or to have a minimum number of hours operating a manned aircraft, the Secretary shall set forth the reasoning for such proposal and seek public notice and comment before imposing any such requirements.

''(e) SUNSET.—The authority under this section for the Secretary to determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the national airspace system terminates effective September 30, 2017.

''(f) OPERATION BY OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any application process established under subsection (a) shall allow for a covered person to apply to the Administrator to operate an unmanned aircraft system to conduct activities described in paragraph (2)—

''(A) beyond the visual line of sight of the individual operating the unmanned aircraft system; and

''(B) operation during the day or at night.

''(2) ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.—The activities described in this paragraph that a covered person may use an unmanned aircraft system to conduct are the following:

''(A) Activities for which compliance with current law or regulation can be accomplished by the use of manned aircraft, including—

''(i) conducting activities to ensure compliance with Federal or State regulatory, permit, or other requirements, including to conduct surveys associated with applications for permits for new pipeline or pipeline systems construction or maintenance or rehabilitation of existing pipelines or pipeline systems; or

''(ii) conducting activities relating to ensuring compliance with—

''(I) the requirements of part 192 or 195 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations; or

''(II) any Federal, State, or local governmental or regulatory body or industry best practice pertaining to the construction, ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of covered facilities.

''(B) Activities to inspect, repair, construct, maintain, or protect covered facilities, including to respond to a pipeline, pipeline system, or electric energy infrastructure incident, or in response to or in preparation for a natural disaster, man-made disaster, severe weather event, or other incident beyond the control of the covered person that may cause material damage to a covered facility.

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) COVERED FACILITY.—The term 'covered facility' means a pipeline, pipeline system, electric energy generation, transmission, or distribution facility (including renewable electric energy), oil or gas production, refining, or processing facility, or other critical infrastructure.

''(B) COVERED PERSON.—The term 'covered person' means a person that—

''(i) owns or operates a covered facility;

''(ii) is the sponsor of a covered facility project;

''(iii) is an association of persons described by clause (i) or (ii) and is seeking programmatic approval for an activity in accordance with this subsection; or

''(iv) is an agent of any person described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii).

''(C) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term 'critical infrastructure' has the meaning given that term in section 2339D of title 18.

''(4) DEADLINE.—Within 90 days from the date of enactment of the FAA Reauthorization of 2016 the Administrator must certify to the appropriate committees of Congress that a process has been established to facilitate applications for operations provided for under this subsection. If the Administrator cannot provide this certification, the Administrator, within 180 days of from the due date of that certification, shall update the process under (a) to provide for such applications.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2125 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44804 the following:

''44805. Special rules for certain unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2127. ADDITIONAL RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations of unmanned aircraft systems have tremendous potential—

(A) to enhance research and development both commercially and in academics;

(B) to spur economic growth and development through innovative applications of this emerging technology; and

(C) to improve emergency response efforts as it relates to assessing damage to critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and utilities, including water and power, ultimately speeding response time;

(2) advancements in miniaturization of safety technologies, including for aircraft weighing under 4.4 pounds, have increased economic opportunities for using unmanned aircraft systems while reducing kinetic energy and risk compared to unmanned aircraft that may weigh as much as 55 pounds;

(3) advancements in unmanned technology will have the capacity to ultimately improve manned aircraft safety; and

(4) integrating unmanned aircraft systems safely into the national airspace, including beyond visual line of sight and nighttime operations on a routine basis should remain a top priority for the Federal Aviation Administration as it pursues additional rulemakings under the amendments made by this section.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44805 the following:

''§ 44806. Additional rulemaking authority

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) or the guidance required by section 44807 of this title and subject to subsection (b)(2) of this section and section 44808, the Administrator may issue regulations under which a person may operate certain unmanned aircraft systems (as determined by the Administrator) in the United States—

''(1) without an airman certificate;

''(2) without an airworthiness certificate for the associated unmanned aircraft; or

''(3) that are not registered with the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(b) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPERATIONAL RULES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the rulemaking required by section 332 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note), the Administrator shall issue regulations not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 under which any person may operate a micro unmanned aircraft system classification of unmanned aircraft systems, the aircraft component of which weighs 4.4 pounds or less, including payload, without the person operating the system being required to pass any airman certification requirement, including any requirements under section 44703 of this title, part 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other rule or regulation relating to airman certification.

''(2) OPERATIONAL RULES.—The rulemaking required by paragraph (1) relating to micro unmanned aircraft systems shall consider the following rules, or any appropriate modifications thereof concerning altitude, airspeed, geographic location, and time of day as the Administrator considers appropriate, for operation of such systems:

''(A) Operation an altitude of less than 400 feet above ground level.

''(B) Operation with an airspeed of not greater than 40 knots.

''(C) Operation within the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(D) Operation during the hours between sunrise and sunset.

''(E) Operation not less than 5 statute miles from the geographic center of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower or an airport denoted on a current aeronautical chart published by the Federal Aviation Administration, except that a micro unmanned aircraft system may be operated within 5 statute miles of such an airport if the operator of the system—

''(i) provides notice to the airport operator; and

''(ii) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

''(c) SCOPE OF REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In determining whether a person may operate an unmanned aircraft system under 1 or more of the circumstances described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a), the Administrator shall use a risk-based approach and consider, at a minimum, the physical and functional characteristics of the unmanned aircraft system.

''(2) LIMITATION.—The Administrator may only issue regulations under this section for unmanned aircraft systems that the Administrator determines may be operated safely in the national airspace system.

''(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

''(1) to prohibit a person from operating an unmanned aircraft system under a circumstance described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a) if—

''(A) the circumstance is allowed by regulations issued under this section; and

''(B) the person operates the unmanned aircraft system in a manner prescribed by the regulations; and

''(2) to limit or affect in any way the Administrator's authority to conduct a rulemaking, make a determination, or carry out any activity related to unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft systems under any other provision of law.''.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2126 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44805 the following:

''44806. Additional rulemaking authority.''.

SEC. 2128. GOVERNMENTAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44806 the following:

''§ 44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems

''(a) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary of Transportation shall issue guidance regarding the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system—

''(1) to streamline the process for the issuance of a certificate of authorization or a certificate of waiver;

''(2) to provide for a collaborative process with public agencies to allow for an incremental expansion of access to the national airspace system as technology matures and the necessary safety analyses and data become available, and until standards are completed and technology issues are resolved;

''(3) to facilitate the capability of public agencies to develop and use test ranges, subject to operating restrictions required by the Federal Aviation Administration, to test and operate public unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(4) to provide guidance on a public agency's responsibilities when operating an unmanned aircraft without a civil airworthiness certificate issued by the Administration.

''(b) STANDARDS FOR OPERATION AND CERTIFICATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop and implement operational and certification requirements for the operation of a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(c) AGREEMENTS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each appropriate public agency to simplify the process for issuing a certificate of waiver or a certificate of authorization with respect to an application for authorization to operate a public unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(2) CONTENTS.—An agreement under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) with respect to an application described in paragraph (1)—

''(i) provide for an expedited review of the application;

''(ii) require a decision by the Administrator on approval or disapproval not later than 60 business days after the date of submission of the application;

''(iii) allow for an expedited appeal if the application is disapproved; and

''(iv) if applicable, include verification of the data minimization policy required under subsection (d);

''(B) allow for a one-time approval of similar operations carried out during a fixed period of time; and

''(C) allow a government public safety agency to operate an unmanned aircraft weighing 25 pounds or less if that unmanned aircraft is operated—

''(i) within or beyond the line of sight of the operator;

''(ii) less than 400 feet above the ground;

''(iii) during daylight conditions;

''(iv) within Class G airspace; and

''(v) outside of 5 statute miles from any airport, heliport, seaplane base, spaceport, or other location with aviation activities.

''(d) DATA MINIMIZATION FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM OPERATORS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 each Federal agency authorized by the Secretary to operate an unmanned aircraft system shall develop and update a data minimization policy that requires, at a minimum, that—

''(1) prior to the deployment of any new unmanned aircraft system technology, and at least every 3 years, existing policies and procedures relating to the collection, use, retention, and dissemination of information obtained by an unmanned aircraft system must be examined to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected;

''(2) if the unmanned aircraft system is the platform for information collection, information must be collected, used, retained, and disseminated consistent with the Constitution, Federal law, and other applicable regulations and policies, such as the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a);

''(3) the Federal agency or person operating on its behalf, only collect information using the unmanned aircraft system, or use unmanned aircraft system-collected information, to the extent that the collection or use is consistent with and relevant to an authorized purpose as determined by the head of a Federal agency and consistent with the law;

''(4) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or an unmanned aircraft system, that may contain personal information will not be retained by any Federal agency for more than 180 days after the date of collection unless—

''(A) the head of the Federal agency determines that retention of the information is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specific purpose for which the Federal agency used the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) that Federal agency maintains the information in a system of records under section 552a of title 5; or

''(C) the information is required to be retained for a longer period under other applicable law, including regulations;

''(5) any information collected, using an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system, that is not maintained in a system of records under section 552a of title 5, will not be disseminated outside of that Federal agency unless—

''(A) dissemination is required by law; or

''(B) dissemination satisfies an authorized purpose and complies with that Federal agency's disclosure requirements;

''(6) to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security a Federal agency shall—

''(A) provide notice to the public regarding where in the national airspace system the Federal agency is authorized to operate the unmanned aircraft system;

''(B) keep the public informed about the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system program, including any changes to that program that would significantly affect privacy, civil rights, or civil liberties;

''(C) make available to the public, on an annual basis, a general summary of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system operations during the previous fiscal year, including—

''(i) a brief description of types or categories of missions flown; and

''(ii) the number of times the Federal agency provided assistance to other agencies or to State, local, tribal, or territorial governments; and

''(D) make available on a public and searchable Internet website the data minimization policy of the Federal agency;

''(7) ensures oversight of the Federal agency's unmanned aircraft system use, including—

''(A) the use of audits or assessments that comply with existing Federal agency policies and regulations;

''(B) the verification of the existence of rules of conduct and training for Federal Government personnel and contractors who work on programs, and procedures for reporting suspected cases of misuse or abuse of unmanned aircraft system technologies;

''(C) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, that provide meaningful oversight of individuals who have access to sensitive information, including personal information, collected using an unmanned aircraft system;

''(D) ensuring that any data-sharing agreements or policies, data use policies, and record management policies applicable to an unmanned aircraft system conform to applicable laws, regulations, and policies;

''(E) the establishment of policies and procedures, or confirmation that policies and procedures are in place, to authorize the use of an unmanned aircraft system in response to a request for unmanned aircraft system assistance in support of Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial government operations; and

''(F) a requirement that State, local, tribal, and territorial government recipients of Federal grant funding for the purchase or use of unmanned aircraft systems for their own operations have in place policies and procedures to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties prior to expending such funds; and

''(8) ensures the protection of civil rights and civil liberties, including—

''(A) ensuring that policies are in place to prohibit the collection, use, retention, or dissemination of data in any manner that would violate the First Amendment or in any manner that would discriminate against persons based upon their ethnicity, race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity, in violation of law;

''(B) ensuring that unmanned aircraft system activities are performed in a manner consistent with the Constitution and applicable laws, Executive Orders, and other Presidential directives; and

''(C) ensuring that adequate procedures are in place to receive, investigate, and address, as appropriate, privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties complaints.

''(e) LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY.—Each Federal agency shall effectuate a requirement under subsection (d) only to the extent it does not compromise law enforcement or national security.

''(f) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL AGENCY.—In subsections (d) and (e), the term 'Federal agency' has the meaning given the term 'agency' in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2127 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44806 the following:

''44807. Public unmanned aircraft systems.''.

(2) PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Section 334 of the FAA Modernization and reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2129. SPECIAL RULES FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44807 the following:

''§ 44808. Special rules for model aircraft

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law relating to the incorporation of unmanned aircraft systems into Federal Aviation Administration plans and policies, including this chapter, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not promulgate any new rule or regulation specific only to an unmanned aircraft operating as a model aircraft if—

''(1) the aircraft is flown strictly for hobby or recreational use;

''(2) the aircraft is operated in accordance with a community-based set of safety guidelines and within the programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(3) not flown beyond visual line of sight of persons co-located with the operator or in direct communication with the operator;

''(4) the aircraft is operated in a manner that does not interfere with and gives way to any manned aircraft;

''(5) when flown within 5 miles of an airport, the operator of the aircraft provides the airport operator, where applicable, and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport) with prior notice and receives approval from the tower, to the extent practicable, for the operation from each (model aircraft operators flying from a permanent location within 5 miles of an airport should establish a mutually agreed upon operating procedure with the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport));

''(6) the aircraft is flown from the surface to not more than 400 feet in altitude, except under special conditions and programs established by a community-based organization; and

''(7) the operator has passed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test administered by the Federal Aviation Administration online for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems subject to the requirements of section 44809 and maintains proof of test passage to be made available to the Administrator or law enforcement upon request.

''(b) UPDATES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in collaboration with government and industry stakeholders, including nationwide community-based organizations, shall initiate a process to update the operational parameters under subsection (a), as appropriate.

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In updating an operational parameter under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

''(A) appropriate operational limitations to mitigate aviation safety risk and risk to the uninvolved public;

''(B) operations outside the membership, guidelines, and programming of a nationwide community-based organization;

''(C) physical characteristics, technical standards, and classes of aircraft operating under this section;

''(D) trends in use, enforcement, or incidents involving unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(E) ensuring, to the greatest extent practicable, that updates to the operational parameters correspond to, and leverage, advances in technology.

''(3) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as expanding the authority of the Administrator to require operators of model aircraft under the exemption of this subsection to be required to seek permissive authority of the Administrator prior to operation in the national airspace system.

''(c) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue enforcement action against persons operating model aircraft.

''(d) MODEL AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'model aircraft' means an unmanned aircraft that—

''(1) is capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere; and

''(2) is limited to weighing not more than 55 pounds, including the weight of anything attached to or carried by the aircraft, unless otherwise approved through a design, construction, inspection, flight test, and operational safety program administered by a community-based organization.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2128 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44807 the following:

''44808. Special rules for model aircraft.''.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT.—Section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (126 Stat. 13) are repealed.

SEC. 2130. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44808 the following:

''§ 44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual may not operate an unmanned aircraft system unless—

''(1) the individual has successfully completed an aeronautical knowledge and safety test under subsection (c);

''(2) the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft under other Federal law; or

''(3) the individual is a holder of an airmen certificate issued under section 44703.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system that has been authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration under section 44802, 44805, 44806, or 44807. The Administrator may waive the requirements of this section for operators of aircraft weighing less than 0.55 pounds or for operators under the age of 13 operating the unmanned aircraft system under the supervision of an adult as determined by the Administrator.

''(c) AERONAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY TEST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with manufacturers of unmanned aircraft systems, other industry stakeholders, and community-based aviation organizations, shall develop an aeronautical knowledge and safety test that can be administered electronically.

''(d) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator shall ensure that the aeronautical knowledge and safety test is designed to adequately demonstrate an operator's—

''(1) understanding of aeronautical safety knowledge, as applicable; and

''(2) knowledge of Federal Aviation Administration regulations and requirements pertaining to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system in the national airspace system.

''(e) RECORD OF COMPLIANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each operator of an unmanned aircraft system described under subsection (a) shall maintain and make available for inspection, upon request by the Administrator or a Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer, a record of compliance with this section through—

''(A) an identification number, issued by the Federal Aviation Administration certifying passage of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test;

''(B) if the individual has authority to operate an unmanned aircraft system under other Federal law, the requisite proof of authority under that law; or

''(C) an airmen certificate issued under section 44703.

''(2) COORDINATION.—The Administrator may coordinate the identification number under paragraph (1)(A) with an operator's registration number to the extent practicable.

''(3) LIMITATION.—No fine or penalty may be imposed for the initial failure of an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to comply with paragraph (1) unless the Administrator finds that the conduct of the operator actually posed a risk to the national airspace system.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2129 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44808 the following:

''44809. Aeronautical knowledge and safety test.''.

SEC. 2131. SAFETY STATEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44809 the following:

''§ 44810. Safety statements

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date of publication of the guidance under subsection (b)(1), it shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured unless a safety statement is attached to the unmanned aircraft or accompanying the unmanned aircraft in its packaging.

''(b) SAFETY STATEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance for implementing this section.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A safety statement described in subsection (a) shall include—

''(A) information about laws and regulations applicable to unmanned aircraft systems;

''(B) recommendations for using unmanned aircraft in a manner that promotes the safety of persons and property;

''(C) the date that the safety statement was created or last modified; and

''(D) language approved by the Administrator regarding the following:

''(i) A person may operate the unmanned aircraft as a model aircraft (as defined in section 44808) or otherwise in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration authorization or regulation, including requirements for the completion of the aeronautical knowledge and safety test under section 44809.

''(ii) The definition of a model aircraft under section 44808.

''(iii) The requirements regarding a model aircraft under paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 44808(a).

''(iv) The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may pursue enforcement action against a person operating model aircraft who endangers the safety of the national airspace system.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person who violates subsection (a) shall be liable for each violation to the United States Government for a civil penalty described in section 46301(a).''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2130 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44809 the following:

''44810. Safety statements.''.

SEC. 2132. TREATMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OPERATING UNDERGROUND.

An unmanned aircraft system that is operated underground for mining purposes shall not be subject to regulation or enforcement by the Federal Aviation Administration under chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2133. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) UAS SAFETY ENFORCEMENT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a program to utilize available remote detection and identification technologies for safety oversight, including enforcement actions against operators of unmanned aircraft systems that are not in compliance with applicable Federal aviation laws, including regulations.

(b) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 46301 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(A), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),'';

(B) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717–44723),'';

(C) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except sections 44717 and 44719–44723),''; and

(D) in subsection (f), by inserting ''chapter 448,'' after ''chapter 447 (except 44717 and 44719–44723),''.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue an enforcement action for a violation of this Act, a regulation prescribed or order or authority issued under this Act, or any other applicable provision of aviation safety law or regulation.

(c) REPORTING.—As part of the program, the Administrator shall establish and publicize a mechanism for the public and Federal, State, and local law enforcement to report a suspected abuse or a violation of chapter 448 of title 49, United States Code, for enforcement action.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2017.

SEC. 2134. AVIATION EMERGENCY SAFETY PUBLIC SERVICES DISRUPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 is amended—

(1) in section 46301(d)(2), by inserting ''section 46320,'' after ''section 46319,''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities

''(a) PROHIBITION.—No person may operate an aircraft so as to interfere with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.

''(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, an aircraft interferes with the activities specified in subsection (a) when its operation prevents the initiation of, interrupts, or endangers a person or property engaged in those activities.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person violating subsection (a) shall be liable for a civil penalty of not more than $20,000.

''(d) COMPROMISE AND SETOFF.—The United States Government may deduct the amount of a civil penalty imposed or compromised under this section from the amounts the Government owes the person liable for the penalty.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 463 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Interference with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities.''.

SEC. 2135. PILOT PROJECT FOR AIRPORT SAFETY AND AIRSPACE HAZARD MITIGATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall carry out a pilot program for airspace hazard mitigation at airports and other critical infrastructure.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the pilot program under subsection (a), the Administrator shall work with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the heads of relevant Federal agencies for the purpose of ensuring technologies that are developed, tested, or deployed by those departments and agencies to mitigate threats posed by errant or hostile unmanned aircraft system operations do not adversely impact or interfere with safe airport operations, navigation, and air traffic services.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund to carry out this section $6,000,000, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 2136. CONTRIBUTION TO FINANCING OF REGULATORY FUNCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 44810 the following:

''§ 44811. Regulatory and administrative fees

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Administrator may assess and collect regulatory and administrative fees to recover the costs of regulatory and administrative activities under this chapter related to authorization to operate unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire, or in the furtherance of a business enterprise.

''(b) LIMITATIONS.—Fees authorized under subsection (a) shall be reasonable, cost-based relative to the regulatory or administrative activity, and may not be discriminatory or a deterrent to compliance.

''(c) RECEIPTS CREDITED TO ACCOUNT.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, all fees and amounts collected under this section shall be credited to the separate account established under section 45303(c). Section 41742 shall not apply to fees and amounts collected under this section.

''(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall issue regulations to carry out this section.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2131 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44810 the following:

''44811. Regulatory and administrative fees.''.

SEC. 2137. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SMALL UAS RULEMAKING.

It is the sense of the Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Secretary of Transportation should take every necessary action to expedite final action on the notice of proposed rulemaking dated February 23, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 9544), entitled ''Operation and Certification of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems''.

SEC. 2138. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN FOR UTM DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop a research plan for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management (referred to in this section as ''UTM'') development.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the research plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify research goals related to:

(i) operational parameters related to altitude, geographic coverage, classes of airspace, and critical infrastructure;

(ii) avionics capability requirements or standards;

(iii) operator identification and authentication requirements and capabilities;

(iv) communication protocols with air traffic control facilities that will not interfere with existing responsibility to deconflict manned aircraft in the national airspace system;

(v) collision avoidance requirements;

(vi) separation standards for manned and unmanned aircraft; and

(vii) spectrum needs;

(B) evaluate options for the administration and management structure for the traffic management of low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(C) ensure the plan is consistent with the broader Federal Aviation Administration regulatory and operational framework encompassing all unmanned aircraft systems operations expected to be authorized in the national airspace system.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—The research plan under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of—

(A) the ability to allow near-term small unmanned aircraft system operations without need of an automated UTM system;

(B) the full range of operational capability any automated UTM system should possess;

(C) the operational characteristics and metrics that would drive incremental adoption of automated capability and procedures consistent with a rising aggregate community demand for service for low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems; and

(D) the integration points for small unmanned aircraft system traffic management with the existing national airspace system planning and traffic management systems.

(4) DEADLINES.—The Administrator shall—

(A) initiate development of the research plan not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) complete the research plan;

(ii) submit the research plan to the appropriate committees of Congress; and

(iii) publish the research plan on the Federal Aviation Administration's Web site.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the research plan under subsection (a) is submitted under paragraph (4)(B) of that subsection, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the small unmanned aircraft systems industry to develop operational concepts and top-level system requirements for a UTM system pilot program, consistent with subsection (a).

(2) SOLICITATION.—The Administrator shall issue a solicitation for operational prototype systems that meet the necessary objectives for use in a pilot program to demonstrate, validate, or modify, as appropriate, the requirements developed under paragraph (1).

(c) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date the pilot program under subsection (b) is complete, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and in consultation with the head of each relevant Federal agency, shall develop a comprehensive plan for the deployment of UTM systems in the national airspace.

(2) SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive plan under paragraph (1) shall include requirements or standards consistent with established or planned rulemaking for, at a minimum—

(A) the flight of small unmanned aircraft systems in controlled and uncontrolled airspace;

(B) communications, as applicable—

(i) among small unmanned aircraft systems;

(ii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft operating in the same airspace; and

(iii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and air traffic control as considered necessary; and

(C) air traffic management for small unmanned aircraft systems operations.

(d) SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.—Based on the comprehensive plan under subsection (c), including the requirements under paragraph (2) of that subsection, and the pilot program under subsection (b), the Administrator shall determine the operational need and implementation schedule for evolutionary use of automation support systems to separate and deconflict manned and unmanned aircraft systems.

SEC. 2139. EMERGENCY EXEMPTION PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall publish guidance for applications for, and procedures for the processing of, on an emergency basis, exemptions or certificates of authorization or waiver for the use of unmanned aircraft systems by civil or public operators in response to a catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency to facilitate emergency response operations, such as firefighting, search and rescue, and utility and infrastructure restoration efforts. This guidance shall outline procedures for operations under both sections 44805 and 44807, of title 49, United States Code, with

priority given to applications for public unmanned aircraft systems engaged in emergency response activities.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In providing guidance under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) make explicit any safety requirements that must be met for the consideration of applications that include requests for beyond visual line of sight, nighttime operations, or the suspension of otherwise applicable operating restrictions, consistent with public interest and safety; and

(2) explicitly state the procedures for coordinating with an incident commander, if any, to ensure operations granted under procedures developed under subsection (a) do not interfere with manned catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency response operations or otherwise impact response efforts.

(c) REVIEW.—In processing applications on an emergency basis for exemptions or certificates of authorization or waiver for unmanned aircraft systems operations in response to a catastrophe, disaster, or other emergency, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall act on such applications as expeditiously as practicable and without requiring public notice and comment.

SEC. 2140. PUBLIC UAS OPERATIONS BY TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.

(a) PUBLIC UAS OPERATIONS BY TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 40102(a)(41) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) An unmanned aircraft that is owned and operated by or exclusively leased for at least 90 consecutive days by an Indian tribal government (as defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)), except as provided in section 40125(b).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 40125(b) is amended by striking ''or (D)'' and inserting ''(D), or (F)''.

SEC. 2141. CARRIAGE OF PROPERTY BY SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS FOR COMPENSATION OR HIRE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 448, as amended by section 2136 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 44811 the following:

''§ 44812. Carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a final rule authorizing the carriage of property by operators of small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire within the United States.

''(b) CONTENTS.—The final rule required under subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

''(1) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CERTIFICATE.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, at the direction of the Secretary, shall establish a certificate (to be known as a 'small UAS air carrier certificate') for persons that undertake directly, by lease, or other arrangement the operation of small unmanned aircraft systems to carry property in air transportation, including commercial fleet operations with highly automated unmanned aircraft systems. The requirements to operate under a small UAS air carrier certificate shall—

''(A) consider the unique characteristics of highly automated, small unmanned aircraft systems; and

''(B) include requirements for the safe operation of small unmanned aircraft systems that, at a minimum, address—

''(i) airworthiness of small unmanned aircraft systems;

''(ii) qualifications for operators and the type and nature of the operations; and

''(iii) operating specifications governing the type and nature of the unmanned aircraft system air carrier operations.

''(2) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Administrator, at the direction of the Secretary, shall establish a process for the issuance of small UAS air carrier certificates established pursuant to paragraph (1) that is performance-based and ensures required safety levels are met. Such certification process shall consider—

''(A) safety risks and the mitigation of those risks associated with the operation of highly automated, small unmanned aircraft around other manned and unmanned aircraft, and over persons and property on the ground;

''(B) the competencies and compliance programs of manufacturers, operators, and companies that manufacture, operate, or both small unmanned aircraft systems and components; and

''(C) compliance with the requirements established pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(3) SMALL UAS AIR CARRIER CLASSIFICATION.—The Secretary shall develop a classification system for persons issued small UAS air carrier certificates pursuant to this subsection to establish economic authority for the carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire. Such classification shall only require—

''(A) registration with the Department of Transportation; and

''(B) a valid small UAS air carrier certificate issued pursuant to this subsection.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 448, as amended by section 2136 of this Act, is further amended by adding after the item relating to section 44811 the following:

''44812. Carriage of property by small unmanned aircraft systems for compensation or hire.''.

SEC. 2142. COLLEGIATE TRAINING INITIATIVE PROGRAM FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a Collegiate Training Initiative program relating to unmanned aircraft systems by making new agreements or continuing existing agreements with institutions of higher education (as defined by the Administrator) under which the institutions prepare students for careers involving unmanned aircraft systems. The Administrator may establish standards for the entry of such institutions into the program and for their continued participation in the program.

(b) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given that term by section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

SEC. 2143. INCORPORATION OF FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OCCUPATIONS RELATING TO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT INTO VETERANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Labor, shall determine whether occupations of the Administration relating to unmanned aircraft systems technology and regulations can be incorporated into the Veterans Employment Program of the Administration, particularly in the interaction between such program and the New Sights Work Experience Program and the Vet-Link Cooperative Education Program.

PART III—TRANSITION AND SAVINGS PROVISIONS

SEC. 2151. SENIOR ADVISOR FOR UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS INTEGRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Federal Aviation Administration a Senior Advisor for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Senior Advisor for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration shall have a demonstrated ability in management and knowledge of or experience in aviation.

(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Unless otherwise determined by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) the Senior Advisor shall report directly to the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(2) the responsibilities of the Senior Advisor shall include the following:

(A) Providing advice to the Administrator and Deputy Administrator related to the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace system.

(B) Reviewing and evaluating Federal Aviation Administration policies, activities, and operations related to unmanned aircraft systems.

(C) Facilitating coordination and collaboration among components of the Federal Aviation Administration with respect to activities related to unmanned aircraft systems integration.

(D) Interacting with Congress, and Federal, State, or local agencies, and stakeholder organizations whose operations and interests are affected by the activities of the Federal Aviation Administration on matters related to unmanned aircraft systems integration.

SEC. 2152. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

(a) FEDERAL PREEMPTION.—No State or political subdivision of a State may enact or enforce any law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law relating to the design, manufacture, testing, licensing, registration, certification, operation, or maintenance of an unmanned aircraft system, including airspace, altitude, flight paths, equipment or technology requirements, purpose of operations, and pilot, operator, and observer qualifications, training, and certification.

(b) PRESERVATION OF STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to limit a State or local government's authority to enforce Federal, State, or local laws relating to nuisance, voyeurism, privacy, data security, harassment, reckless endangerment, wrongful death, personal injury, property damage, or other illegal acts arising from the use of unmanned aircraft systems if such laws are not specifically related to the use of an unmanned aircraft system.

(c) NO PREEMPTION OF COMMON LAW OR STATUTORY CAUSES OF ACTION.—Nothing in this subtitle, nor any standard, rule, requirement, standard of performance, safety determination, or certification implemented pursuant to this subtitle, shall be construed to preempt, displace, or supplant any State or Federal common law rights or any State or Federal statute creating a remedy for civil relief, including those for civil damage, or a penalty for a criminal conduct. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle,

nothing in this subtitle, nor any amendments made by this subtitle, shall preempt or preclude any cause of action for personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, or other injury based on negligence, strict liability, products liability, failure to warn, or any other legal theory of liability under any State law, maritime law, or Federal common law or statutory theory.

SEC. 2153. SPECTRUM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Small unmanned aircraft systems may operate wireless control link, tracking, diagnostics, payload communication, and collaborative-collision avoidance, such as vehicle-to-vehicle communication, and other uses, if permitted by and consistent with the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), Federal Communications Commission rules, and the safety-of-life determination made by the Federal Aviation Administration, and with carrier consent, whether they are operating within the UTM system under section 2138 of this Act or outside such a system.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Federal Communications Commission, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report—

(1) on whether small unmanned aircraft systems operations should be permitted to operate on spectrum designated for aviation use, on an unlicensed, shared, or exclusive basis, for operations within the UTM system or outside of such a system;

(2) that addresses any technological, statutory, regulatory, and operational barriers to the use of such spectrum; and

(3) that, if it is determined that spectrum designated for aviation use is not suitable for operations by small unmanned aircraft systems, includes recommendations of other spectrum frequencies that may be appropriate for such operations.

SEC. 2154. APPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNATION.

(a) APPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall establish a process to allow applicants to petition the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit or otherwise limit the operation of an aircraft, including an unmanned aircraft, over, under, or within a specified distance from a fixed site facility.

(b) REVIEW PROCESS.—

(1) APPLICATION PROCEDURES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish the procedures for the application for designation under subsection (a).

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The procedures shall—

(i) allow individual fixed site facility applications; and

(ii) allow for a group of similar facilities to apply for a collective designation.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the procedures, the Administrator shall consider how the process will apply to—

(i) critical infrastructure, such as energy production, transmission, and distribution facilities and equipment;

(ii) oil refineries and chemical facilities;

(iii) amusement parks; and

(iv) other locations that may benefit from such restrictions.

(2) DETERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for a determination under the review process established under subsection (a) not later than 90 days from the date of application, unless the applicant is provided with written notice describing the reason for the delay.

(B) AFFIRMATIVE DESIGNATIONS.—An affirmative designation shall outline—

(i) the boundaries for unmanned aircraft operation near the fixed site facility; and

(ii) such other limitations that the Administrator determines may be appropriate.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination whether to grant or deny an application for a designation, the Administrator may consider—

(i) aviation safety;

(ii) personal safety of the uninvolved public;

(iii) national security; or

(iv) homeland security.

(D) OPPORTUNITY FOR RESUBMISSION.—If an application is denied and the applicant can reasonably address the reason for the denial, the Administrator may allow the applicant to reapply for designation.

(c) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—Designations under subsection (a) shall be published by the Federal Aviation Administration on a publicly accessible website.

SEC. 2155. USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish procedures and standards, as applicable, to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft systems by institutions of higher education, including faculty, students, and staff.

(b) STANDARDS.—The procedures and standards required under subsection (a) shall outline risk-based operational parameters to ensure the safety of the national airspace system and the uninvolved public that facilitates the use of unmanned aircraft systems for educational or research purposes.

(c) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM APPROVAL.—The procedures required under subsection (a) shall allow unmanned aircraft systems operated under this section to be modified for research purposes without iterative approval from the Administrator.

(d) ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES.—The Administrator shall establish a procedure to provide for streamlined, risk-based operational approval for unmanned aircraft systems operated by institutions of higher education, including faculty, students, and staff, outside of the parameters or purposes set forth in subsection (b).

(e) DEADLINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If, by the date that is 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator has not set forth standards and procedures required under subsections (a), (b), and (c), an institution of higher education may—

(A) without specific approval from the Federal Aviation Administration, operate small unmanned aircraft at model aircraft fields approved by the Academy of Model Aeronautics and with the permission of the local club of the Academy of Model Aeronautics; and

(B) submit to the Federal Aviation Administration applications for approval of the institution's designation of 1 or more outdoor flight fields.

(2) CONSEQUENCE OF FAILURE TO APPROVE.—If the Administrator does not take action with respect to an application submitted under paragraph (1)(B) within 30 days of the submission of the application, the failure to do so shall be treated as approval of the application.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given that term by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The term ''unmanned aircraft system'' has the meaning given the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121 of this Act.

(3) EDUCATIONAL OR RESEARCH PURPOSES.—The term ''educational or research purposes'', with respect to the operation of an unmanned aircraft system by an institution of higher education, includes—

(A) instruction of students at the institution;

(B) academic or research related use of unmanned aircraft systems by student organizations recognized by the institution, if such use has been approved by the institution;

(C) activities undertaken by the institution as part of research projects, including research projects sponsored by the Federal Government; and

(D) other academic activities at the institution, including general research, engineering, and robotics.

SEC. 2156. TRANSITION LANGUAGE.

(a) REGULATIONS.—Notwithstanding the repeals under sections 2122(b)(2), 2125(b)(2), 2126(b)(2), 2128(b)(2), and 2129(b)(2) of this Act, all orders, determinations, rules, regulations, permits, grants, and contracts, which have been issued under any law described under subsection (b) of this section on or before the effective date of this Act shall continue in effect until modified or revoked by the Secretary of Transportation, acting through the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, as applicable, by a court of competent jurisdiction, or by operation of law other than this Act.

(b) LAWS DESCRIBED.—The laws described under this subsection are as follows:

(1) Section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(2) Section 332(d) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(3) Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(4) Section 334 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(5) Section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(c) EFFECT ON PENDING PROCEEDINGS.—This Act shall not affect administrative or judicial proceedings pending on the effective date of this Act.

PART IV—OPERATOR SAFETY

SEC. 2161. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Drone Operator Safety Act''.

SEC. 2162. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that educating operators of unmanned aircraft about the laws and regulations that govern such aircraft helps to ensure their safe operation.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration should continue to prioritize the education of operators of unmanned aircraft through public outreach efforts like the ''Know Before You Fly'' campaign.

SEC. 2163. UNSAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 31—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(ii) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

''(10) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49.''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by inserting '' 'airport','' before '' 'appliance' ''; and

(2) by inserting after section 39A the following:

''§ 39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft

''(a) OFFENSE.—Any person who operates an unmanned aircraft and, in so doing, knowingly or recklessly interferes with, or disrupts the operation of, an aircraft carrying 1 or more occupants operating in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, in a manner that poses an imminent safety hazard to such occupants, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b).

''(b) PENALTY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the punishment for an offense under subsection (a) shall be a fine under this title, imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

''(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—Any person who attempts to cause, or knowingly or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or death during the commission of an offense under subsection (a) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both.

''(c) OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO AIRPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The operation of an unmanned aircraft within a runway exclusion zone shall be considered a violation of subsection (a) unless such operation is approved by the airport's air traffic control facility or is the result of a circumstance, such as a malfunction, that could not have been reasonably foreseen or prevented by the operator.

''(2) RUNWAY EXCLUSION ZONE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'runway exclusion zone' means a rectangular area—

''(A) centered on the centerline of an active runway of an airport immediately around which the airspace is designated as class B, class C, or class D airspace at the surface under part 71 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

''(B) the length of which extends parallel to the runway's centerline to points that are 1 statute mile from each end of the runway and the width of which is ½ statute mile.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 39A the following:

''39B. Unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft.''.

Subtitle B—FAA Safety Certification Reform

PART I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 2211. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The term ''Advisory Committee'' means the Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee established under section 2212.

(3) FAA.—The term ''FAA'' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Transportation.

(5) SYSTEMS SAFETY APPROACH.—The term ''systems safety approach'' means the application of specialized technical and managerial skills to the systematic, forward-looking identification and control of hazards throughout the lifecycle of a project, program, or activity.

SEC. 2212. SAFETY OVERSIGHT AND CERTIFICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee in accordance with this section.

(b) DUTIES.—The Advisory Committee shall provide advice to the Secretary on policy-level issues facing the aviation community that are related to FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities, including the following:

(1) Aircraft and flight standards certification processes, including efforts to streamline those processes.

(2) Implementation and oversight of safety management systems.

(3) Risk-based oversight efforts.

(4) Utilization of delegation and designation authorities, including organization designation authorization.

(5) Regulatory interpretation standardization efforts.

(6) Training programs.

(7) Expediting the rulemaking process and prioritizing safety-related rules.

(8) Enhancing global competitiveness of U.S. manufactured and FAA type-certificate aircraft products and services throughout the world.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—In carrying out its duties under subsection (b) related to FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities, the Advisory Committee shall—

(1) foster aviation stakeholder collaboration in an open and transparent manner;

(2) consult with, and ensure participation by—

(A) the private sector, including representatives of—

(i) general aviation;

(ii) commercial aviation;

(iii) aviation labor;

(iv) aviation, aerospace, and avionics manufacturing; and

(v) unmanned aircraft systems industry; and

(B) the public;

(3) recommend consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities for the most efficient, streamlined, and cost-effective safety oversight and certification processes in order to maintain the safety of the aviation system while allowing the FAA to meet future needs and ensure that aviation stakeholders remain competitive in the global marketplace;

(4) provide policy recommendations for the FAA's safety oversight and certification efforts;

(5) periodically review and provide recommendations regarding the FAA's safety oversight and certification efforts;

(6) periodically review and evaluate registration, certification, and related fees;

(7) provide appropriate legislative, regulatory, and guidance recommendations for the air transportation system and the aviation safety regulatory environment;

(8) recommend performance objectives for the FAA and aviation industry;

(9) recommend performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry to be tracked and reviewed as streamlining certification reform, flight standards reform, and regulation standardization efforts progress;

(10) provide a venue for tracking progress toward national goals and sustaining joint commitments;

(11) recommend recruiting, hiring, staffing levels, training, and continuing education objectives for FAA aviation safety engineers and aviation safety inspectors;

(12) provide advice and recommendations to the FAA on how to prioritize safety rulemaking projects;

(13) improve the development of FAA regulations by providing information, advice, and recommendations related to aviation issues;

(14) encourage the validation of U.S. manufactured and FAA type-certificate aircraft products and services throughout the world; and

(15) any other functions as determined appropriate by the chairperson of the Advisory Committee and the Administrator.

(d) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following voting members:

(A) The Administrator, or the Administrator's designee.

(B) At least 1 representative, appointed by the Secretary, of each of the following:

(i) Aircraft and engine manufacturers.

(ii) Avionics and equipment manufacturers.

(iii) Aviation labor organizations, including collective bargaining representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers.

(iv) General aviation operators.

(v) Air carriers.

(vi) Business aviation operators.

(vii) Unmanned aircraft systems manufacturers and operators.

(viii) Aviation safety management experts.

(2) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the members appointed under paragraph (1), the Advisory Committee shall be composed of nonvoting members appointed by the Secretary from among individuals representing FAA safety oversight program offices.

(B) DUTIES.—A nonvoting member may—

(i) take part in deliberations of the Advisory Committee; and

(ii) provide input with respect to any report or recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

(C) LIMITATION.—A nonvoting member may not represent any stakeholder interest other than that of an FAA safety oversight program office.

(3) TERMS.—Each voting member and nonvoting member of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Public Law 104–65 (2 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) may not be construed to prohibit or otherwise limit the appointment of any individual as a member of the Advisory Committee.

(e) COMMITTEE CHARACTERISTICS.—The Advisory Committee shall have the following characteristics:

(1) Each voting member under subsection (d)(1)(B) shall be an executive that has decision authority within the member's organization and can represent and enter into commitments on behalf of that organization in a way that serves the entire group of organizations that member represents under that subsection.

(2) The ability to obtain necessary information from experts in the aviation and aerospace communities.

(3) A membership size that enables the Advisory Committee to have substantive discussions and reach consensus on issues in an expeditious manner.

(4) Appropriate expertise, including expertise in certification and risk-based safety oversight processes, operations, policy, technology, labor relations, training, and finance.

(f) CHAIRPERSON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Secretary from among the voting members under subsection (d)(1)(B).

(2) TERM.—Each member appointed under paragraph (1) shall serve a term of 2 years as chairperson.

(g) MEETINGS.—

(1) FREQUENCY.—The Advisory Committee shall convene at least 2 meetings a year at the call of the chairperson.

(2) PUBLIC ATTENDANCE.—Each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be open and accessible to the public.

(h) SPECIAL COMMITTEES.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Advisory Committee may establish 1 or more special committees composed of private sector representatives, members of the public, labor representatives, and other relevant parties in complying with consultation and participation requirements under subsection (c)(2).

(2) RULEMAKING ADVICE.—A special committee established by the Advisory Committee may—

(A) provide rulemaking advice and recommendations to the Advisory Committee;

(B) provide the FAA additional opportunities to obtain firsthand information and insight from those persons that are most affected by existing and proposed regulations; and

(C) assist in expediting the development, revision, or elimination of rules in accordance with, and without circumventing, established public rulemaking processes and procedures.

(3) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to a special committee under this subsection.

(i) SUNSET.—The Advisory Committee shall cease to exist on September 30, 2017.

PART II—AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION REFORM

SEC. 2221. AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the Advisory Committee is established under section 2212, the Administrator shall establish performance objectives and apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry relating to aircraft certification in accordance with this section.

(b) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator shall carry out this section in collaboration with the Advisory Committee and update agency performance objectives and metrics after considering the proposals recommended by the Advisory Committee under paragraphs (8) and (9) of section 2212(c).

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—In establishing performance objectives under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure progress is made toward, at a minimum—

(1) eliminating certification delays and improving cycle times;

(2) increasing accountability for both FAA and the aviation industry;

(3) achieving full utilization of FAA delegation and designation authorities, including organizational designation authorization;

(4) fully implementing risk management principles and a systems safety approach;

(5) reducing duplication of effort;

(6) increasing transparency;

(7) developing and providing training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to certification oversight;

(8) improving the process for approving or accepting the certification actions between the FAA and bilateral partners;

(9) maintaining and improving safety;

(10) streamlining the hiring process for—

(A) qualified systems safety engineers at staffing levels to support the FAA's efforts to implement a systems safety approach; and

(B) qualified systems safety engineers to guide the engineering of complex systems within the FAA; and

(11) maintaining the leadership of the United States in international aviation and aerospace.

(d) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry; and

(2) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report on tracking the progress toward full implementation of the recommendations under section 2212.

(e) DATA.—

(1) BASELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date the Advisory Committee recommends initial performance metrics under section 2212(c)(9), the Administrator shall generate initial data with respect to each of the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section.

(2) BENCHMARKS.—The Administrator shall use the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section to generate data on an ongoing basis and to measure progress toward the consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities recommended under section 2212(c)(3).

(f) PUBLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Administrator shall make data generated using the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section available in a searchable, sortable, and downloadable format through the Internet Web site of the FAA or other appropriate methods.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator shall make the data under paragraph (1) available in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

SEC. 2222. ORGANIZATION DESIGNATION AUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 447 is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 44736. Organization designation authorizations

''(a) DELEGATIONS OF FUNCTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), in the oversight of an ODA holder, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration standards, shall—

''(A) require, based on an application submitted by the ODA holder and approved by the Administrator (or the Administrator's designee), a procedures manual that addresses all procedures and limitations regarding the specified functions to be performed by the ODA holder subject to regulations prescribed by the Administrator;

''(B) delegate fully to the ODA holder each of the functions specified in the procedures manual, unless the Administrator determines, after the date of the delegation and as a result of an inspection or other investigation, that the public interest and safety of air commerce requires a limitation with respect to 1 or more of the functions; and

''(C) conduct oversight activities, including by inspecting the ODA holder's delegated functions and taking action based on validated inspection findings.

''(2) DUTIES OF ODA HOLDERS.—An ODA holder shall—

''(A) perform each specified function delegated to the ODA holder in accordance with the approved procedures manual for the delegation;

''(B) make the procedures manual available to each member of the appropriate ODA unit; and

''(C) cooperate fully with oversight activities conducted by the Administrator in connection with the delegation.

''(3) EXISTING ODA HOLDERS.—With regard to an ODA holder operating under a procedures manual approved by the Administrator before the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall—

''(A) at the request of the ODA holder, and in an expeditious manner, consider revisions to the ODA holder's procedures manual;

''(B) delegate fully to the ODA holder each of the functions specified in the procedures manual, unless the Administrator determines, after the date of the delegation and as a result of an inspection or other investigation, that the public interest and safety of air commerce requires a limitation with respect to 1 or more of the functions; and

''(C) conduct oversight activities, including by inspecting the ODA holder's delegated functions and taking action based on validated inspection findings.

''(b) ODA OFFICE.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall identify, within the Office of Aviation Safety, a centralized policy office to be responsible for the organization designation authorization (referred to in this subsection as the ODA Office). The Director of the ODA Office shall report to the Director of the Aircraft Certification Service.

''(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the ODA Office shall be to provide oversight and ensure consistency of the Federal Aviation Administration audit functions under the ODA program across the agency.

''(3) FUNCTIONS.—The ODA Office shall—

''(A)(i) at the request of an ODA holder, eliminate all limitations specified in a procedures manual in place on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 that are low and medium risk as determined by a risk analysis using criteria established by the ODA Office and disclosed to the ODA holder, except where an ODA holder's performance warrants the retention of a specific limitation due to documented concerns about inadequate current performance in carrying out that authorized function;

''(ii) require an ODA holder to establish a corrective action plan to regain authority for any retained limitations;

''(iii) require an ODA holder to notify the ODA Office when all corrective actions have been accomplished;

''(iv) make a reassessment to determine if subsequent performance in carrying out any retained limitation warrants continued retention and, if such reassessment determines performance meets objectives, lift such limitation immediately;

''(B) improve the Administration and the ODA holder performance and ensure full use of the authorities delegated under the ODA program;

''(C) develop a more consistent approach to audit priorities, procedures, and training under the ODA program;

''(D) expeditiously review a random sample of limitations on delegated authorities under the ODA program to determine if the limitations are appropriate;

''(E) review and approve new limitations to ODA functions; and

''(F) ensure national consistency in the interpretation and application of the requirements of the ODA program, including any limitations, and in the performance of the ODA program.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ODA OR ORGANIZATION DESIGNATION AUTHORIZATION.—The term 'ODA' or 'organization designation authorization' means an authorization under section 44702(d) to perform approved functions on behalf of the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration under subpart D of part 183 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

''(2) ODA HOLDER.—The term 'ODA holder' means an entity authorized under section 44702(d)—

''(A) to which the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration issues an ODA letter of designation under subpart D of part 183 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling); and

''(B) that is responsible for administering 1 or more ODA units.

''(3) ODA PROGRAM.—The term 'ODA program' means the program to standardize Federal Aviation Administration management and oversight of the organizations that are approved to perform certain functions on behalf of the Administration under section 44702(d).

''(4) ODA UNIT.—The term 'ODA unit' means a group of 2 or more individuals under the supervision of an ODA holder who perform the specified functions under an ODA.

''(5) ORGANIZATION.—The term 'organization' means a firm, a partnership, a corporation, a company, an association, a joint-stock association, or a governmental entity.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of chapter 447 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 44735 the following:

''44736. Organization designation authorizations.''.

SEC. 2223. ODA REVIEW.

(a) EXPERT REVIEW PANEL.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall convene a multidisciplinary expert review panel (referred to in this section as the ''Panel'').

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Panel shall be composed of not more than 20 members appointed by the Administrator.

(B) QUALIFICATIONS.—The members appointed to the Panel shall—

(i) each have a minimum of 5 years of experience in processes and procedures under the ODA program; and

(ii) include representatives of ODA holders, aviation manufacturers, safety experts, and FAA labor organizations, including labor representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers.

(b) SURVEY.—The Panel shall survey ODA holders and ODA program applicants to document FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities, including the FAA's use of the ODA program and the speed and efficiency of the certification process. In carrying out this subsection, the Administrator shall consult with the appropriate survey experts and the Panel to best design and conduct the survey.

(c) ASSESSMENT.—The Panel shall—

(1) conduct an assessment of—

(A) the FAA's processes and procedures under the ODA program and whether the processes and procedures function as intended;

(B) the best practices of and lessons learned by ODA holders and the FAA personnel who provide oversight of ODA holders;

(C) the performance incentive policies, related to the ODA program for FAA personnel, that do not conflict with the public interest;

(D) the training activities related to the ODA program for FAA personnel and ODA holders; and

(E) the impact, if any, that oversight of the ODA program has on FAA resources and the FAA's ability to process applications for certifications outside of the ODA program; and

(2) make recommendations for improving FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities based on the results of the survey under subsection (b) and each element of the assessment under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date the Panel is convened under subsection (a), the Panel shall submit to the Administrator, the Advisory Committee established under section 2212, and the appropriate committees of Congress a report on results of the survey under subsection (b) and the assessment and recommendations under subsection (c).

(e) DEFINITIONS.—The terms used in this section have the meanings given the terms in section 44736 of title 49, United States Code.

(f) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Panel.

(g) SUNSET.—The Panel shall terminate on the date the report is submitted under subsection (d).

SEC. 2224. TYPE CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44704(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(6) TYPE CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION PROCESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall establish an effective, expeditious, and milestone-based issue resolution process for type certification activities under this subsection.

''(B) PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.—The resolution process shall provide for—

''(i) the resolution of technical issues at preestablished stages of the certification process, as agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant;

''(ii) the automatic escalation to appropriate management personnel of the Federal Aviation Administration and the type certificate applicant of any major certification process milestone that is not completed or resolved within a specific period of time agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant; and

''(iii) the resolution of a major certification process milestone escalated under clause (ii) within a specific period of time agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant.

''(C) DEFINITION OF MAJOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS MILESTONE.—In this paragraph, the term 'major certification process milestone' means a milestone related to a type certification basis, type certification plan, type inspection authorization, issue paper, or other major type certification activity agreed to by the Administrator and the type certificate applicant.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 44704 is amended in the heading by striking ''**airworthiness certificates,,**'' and inserting ''**airworthiness certificates,**''.

SEC. 2225. SAFETY ENHANCING TECHNOLOGIES FOR SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANES.

(a) POLICY.—In a manner consistent with the Small Airplane Revitalization Act of 2013 (49 U.S.C. 44704 note), not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish and begin implementing a risk-based policy that streamlines the installation of safety enhancing technologies for small general aviation airplanes in a manner that reduces regulatory delays and significantly improves safety.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The safety enhancing technologies for small general aviation airplanes described in subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the replacement or retrofit of primary flight displays, auto pilots, engine monitors, and navigation equipment.

(c) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall collaborate with general aviation operators, general aviation manufacturers, and appropriate FAA labor organizations, including representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers, certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code.

(d) DEFINITION OF SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANE.—In this section, the term ''small general aviation airplane'' means an airplane that—

(1) is certified to the standards of part 23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) has a seating capacity of not more than 9 passengers; and

(3) is not used in scheduled passenger-carrying operations under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 2226. STREAMLINING CERTIFICATION OF SMALL GENERAL AVIATION AIRPLANES.

(a) FINAL RULEMAKING.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Administrator shall issue a final rulemaking to comply with section 3 of the Small Airplane Revitalization Act of 2013 (49 U.S.C. 44704 note).

(b) GOVERNMENT REVIEW.—The Federal Government's review process shall be streamlined to meet the deadline in subsection (a).

PART III—FLIGHT STANDARDS REFORM

SEC. 2231. FLIGHT STANDARDS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the Advisory Committee is established under section 2212, the Administrator shall establish performance objectives and apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry relating to flight standards activities in accordance with this section.

(b) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator shall carry out this section in collaboration with the Advisory Committee and update agency performance objectives and metrics after considering the recommendations of the Advisory Committee under paragraphs (8) and (9) of section 2212(c).

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall

ensure that progress is made toward, at a minimum—

(1) eliminating delays with respect to such activities;

(2) increasing accountability for both FAA and the aviation industry;

(3) fully implementing risk management principles and a systems safety approach;

(4) reducing duplication of effort;

(5) promoting appropriate compliance activities and eliminating inconsistent regulatory interpretations and inconsistent enforcement activities;

(6) improving and providing greater opportunities for training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to oversight;

(7) developing and allowing the use of a single master source for guidance;

(8) providing and using a streamlined appeal process for the resolution of regulatory interpretation questions;

(9) maintaining and improving safety; and

(10) increasing transparency.

(d) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) apply and track performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry; and

(2) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report tracking the progress toward full implementation of the performance metrics under section 2212.

(e) DATA.—

(1) BASELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date the Advisory Committee recommends initial performance metrics under section 2212(c)(9), the Administrator shall generate initial data with respect to each of the performance metrics applied and tracked that are approved based on the recommendations required under this section.

(2) BENCHMARKS.—The Administrator shall use the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section to generate data on an ongoing basis and to measure progress toward the consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities recommended under section 2212(c)(3).

(f) PUBLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Administrator shall make data generated using the performance metrics applied and tracked under this section available in a searchable, sortable, and downloadable format through the Internet Web site of the FAA or other appropriate methods.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator shall make the data under paragraph (1) available in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

SEC. 2232. FAA TASK FORCE ON FLIGHT STANDARDS REFORM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish the FAA Task Force on Flight Standards Reform (referred to in this section as the ''Task Force'').

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The membership of the Task Force shall be appointed by the Administrator.

(2) NUMBER.—The Task Force shall be composed of not more than 20 members.

(3) REPRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS.—The membership of the Task Force shall include representatives, with knowledge of flight standards regulatory processes and requirements, of—

(A) air carriers;

(B) general aviation;

(C) business aviation;

(D) repair stations;

(E) unmanned aircraft systems operators;

(F) flight schools;

(G) labor unions, including those representing FAA aviation safety inspectors and those representing FAA aviation safety engineers; and

(H) aviation safety experts.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the Task Force shall include, at a minimum, identifying cost-effective best practices and providing recommendations with respect to—

(1) simplifying and streamlining flight standards regulatory processes;

(2) reorganizing the Flight Standards Service to establish an entity organized by function rather than geographic region, if appropriate;

(3) FAA aviation safety inspector training opportunities;

(4) FAA aviation safety inspector standards and performance; and

(5) achieving, across the FAA, consistent—

(A) regulatory interpretations; and

(B) application of oversight activities.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force shall submit to the Administrator, Advisory Committee established under section 2212, and appropriate committees of Congress a report detailing—

(1) the best practices identified and recommendations provided by the Task Force under subsection (c); and

(2) any recommendations of the Task Force for additional regulatory action or cost-effective legislative action.

(e) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Task Force.

(f) SUNSET.—The Task Force shall cease to exist on the date that the Task Force submits the report required under subsection (d).

SEC. 2233. CENTRALIZED SAFETY GUIDANCE DATABASE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall establish a centralized safety guidance database for all of the regulatory guidance issued by the FAA Office of Aviation Safety regarding compliance with 1 or more aviation safety-related provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The database under subsection (a) shall—

(1) for each guidance, include a link to the specific provision of the Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) subject to paragraph (3), be accessible to the public; and

(3) be provided in a manner that—

(A) protects from disclosure identifying information regarding an individual or entity; and

(B) protects from inappropriate disclosure proprietary information.

(c) DATA ENTRY TIMING.—

(1) EXISTING DOCUMENTS.—Not later than 14 months after the date the database is established, the Administrator shall have completed entering into the database any applicable regulatory guidance that are in effect and were issued before that date.

(2) NEW REGULATORY GUIDANCE AND UPDATES.—Beginning on the date the database is established, the Administrator shall ensure that any applicable regulatory guidance that are issued on or after that date are entered into the database as they are issued.

(d) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In establishing the database under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consult and collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, including labor organizations (including those representing aviation workers, FAA aviation safety engineers, and FAA aviation safety inspectors) and aviation industry stakeholders.

(e) DEFINITION OF REGULATORY GUIDANCE.—In this section, the term ''regulatory guidance'' means all forms of written information issued by the FAA that an individual or entity may use to interpret or apply FAA regulations and requirements, including information an individual or entity may use to determine acceptable means of compliance with such regulations and requirements, such as an order, manual, circular, policy statement, legal interpretation memorandum, and rulemaking documents.

SEC. 2234. REGULATORY CONSISTENCY COMMUNICATIONS BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall establish a Regulatory Consistency Communications Board (referred to in this section as the ''Board'').

(b) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In establishing the Board, the Administrator shall consult and collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, including FAA labor organizations (including labor organizations representing FAA aviation safety inspectors and labor organizations representing FAA aviation safety engineers) and aviation industry stakeholders.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Board shall be composed of FAA representatives, appointed by the Administrator, from—

(1) the Flight Standards Service;

(2) the Aircraft Certification Service; and

(3) the Office of the Chief Counsel.

(d) FUNCTIONS.—The Board shall carry out the following functions:

(1) Recommend, at a minimum, processes by which—

(A) FAA personnel and persons regulated by the FAA may submit regulatory interpretation questions without fear of retaliation;

(B) FAA personnel may submit written questions as to whether a previous approval or regulatory interpretation issued by FAA personnel in another office or region is correct or incorrect; and

(C) any other person may submit anonymous regulatory interpretation questions.

(2) Meet on a regular basis to discuss and resolve questions submitted under paragraph (1) and the appropriate application of regulations and policy with respect to each question.

(3) Provide to a person that submitted a question under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) an expeditious written response to the question.

(4) Recommend a process to make the resolution of common regulatory interpretation questions publicly available to FAA personnel and the public in a manner that—

(A) does not reveal any identifying data of the person that submitted a question; and

(B) protects any proprietary information.

(5) Ensure that responses to questions under this subsection are incorporated into regulatory guidance (as defined in section 2233(e)).

(e) PERFORMANCE METRICS, TIMELINES, AND GOALS.—Not later than 180 days after the date that the Advisory Committee recommends performance objectives and performance metrics for the FAA and the aviation industry under paragraphs (8) and (9) of

section 2212(c), the Administrator, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee, shall—

(1) establish performance metrics, timelines, and goals to measure the progress of the Board in resolving regulatory interpretation questions submitted under subsection (d)(1); and

(2) implement a process for tracking the progress of the Board in meeting the performance metrics, timelines, and goals under paragraph (1).

SEC. 2235. FLIGHT STANDARDS SERVICE REALIGNMENT FEASIBILITY REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with relevant industry stakeholders, shall—

(1) determine the feasibility of realigning flight standards service regional field offices to specialized areas of aviation safety oversight and technical expertise; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the findings under paragraph (1).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider a flight standards service regional field office providing support in the area of its technical expertise to flight standards district offices and certificate management offices.

SEC. 2236. ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION RESOURCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and subject to the requirements of subsection (b), the Administrator may enter into a reimbursable agreement with an applicant or certificate holder for the reasonable travel and per diem expenses of the FAA associated with official travel to expedite the acceptance or validation by a foreign authority of an FAA certificate or design approval.

(b) CONDITIONS.—The Administrator may enter into an agreement under subsection (a) only if—

(1) the travel covered under the agreement is determined to be necessary, by both the Administrator and the applicant or certificate holder, to expedite the acceptance or validation of the relevant certificate or approval;

(2) the travel is conducted at the request of the applicant or certificate holder;

(3) the travel plans and expenses are approved by the applicant or certificate holder prior to travel; and

(4) the agreement requires payment in advance of FAA services and is consistent with the processes under section 106(l)(6) of title 49, United States Code.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the number of occasions on which the Administrator entered into reimbursable agreements under this section;

(2) the number of occasions on which the Administrator declined a request by an applicant or certificate holder to enter into a reimbursable agreement under this section;

(3) the amount of reimbursements collected in accordance with agreements under this section; and

(4) the extent to which reimbursable agreements under this section assisted in reducing the amount of time necessary for foreign authorities' validations of FAA certificates and design approvals.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICANT.—The term ''applicant'' means a person that has applied to a foreign authority for the acceptance or validation of an FAA certificate or design approval.

(2) CERTIFICATE HOLDER.—The term ''certificate holder'' means a person that holds a certificate issued by the Administrator under part 21 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

PART IV—SAFETY WORKFORCE

SEC. 2241. SAFETY WORKFORCE TRAINING STRATEGY.

(a) SAFETY WORKFORCE TRAINING STRATEGY.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the FAA shall review and revise its safety workforce training strategy to ensure that it—

(1) aligns with an effective risk-based approach to safety oversight;

(2) best utilizes available resources;

(3) allows FAA employees participating in organization management teams or conducting ODA program audits to complete, expeditiously, appropriate training, including recurrent training, in auditing and a systems safety approach to oversight;

(4) seeks knowledge-sharing opportunities between the FAA and the aviation industry in new technologies, best practices, and other areas of interest related to safety oversight;

(5) fosters an inspector and engineer workforce that has the skills and training necessary to improve risk-based approaches that focus on requirements management and auditing skills; and

(6) includes, as appropriate, milestones and metrics for meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (5).

(b) REPORT.—Not later that 270 days after the date the strategy is established under subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation of the strategy and progress in meeting any milestones or metrics included in the strategy.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ODA HOLDER.—The term ''ODA holder'' has the meaning given the term in section 44736 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) ODA PROGRAM.—The term ''ODA program'' has the meaning given the term in section 44736(c)(3) of title 49, United States Code, as added by this Act.

(3) ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT TEAM.—The term ''organization management team'' means a group of FAA employees consisting of FAA aviation safety engineers, flight test pilots, and aviation safety inspectors overseeing an ODA holder and its specified function delegated under section 44702 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2242. WORKFORCE STUDY.

(a) WORKFORCE STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to assess the workforce and training needs of the Office of Aviation Safety of the Federal Aviation Administration and take into consideration how those needs could be met.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a review of the current staffing levels and requirements for hiring and training, including recurrent training, of aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers;

(2) an analysis of the skills and qualifications required of aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers for successful performance in the current and future projected aviation safety regulatory environment, including an analysis of the need for a systems engineering discipline within the Federal Aviation Administration to guide the engineering of complex systems, with an emphasis on auditing an ODA holder (as defined in section 44736(c) of title 49, United States Code);

(3) a review of current performance incentive policies of the Federal Aviation Administration, as applied to the Office of Aviation Safety, including awards for performance;

(4) an analysis of ways the Federal Aviation Administration can work with the aviation industry and FAA labor force to establish knowledge-sharing opportunities between the Federal Aviation Administration and the aviation industry in new technologies, best practices, and other areas that could improve the aviation safety regulatory system; and

(5) recommendations on the best and most cost-effective approaches to address the needs of the current and future projected aviation safety regulatory system, including qualifications, training programs, and performance incentives for relevant agency personnel.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the study required under subsection (a).

PART V—INTERNATIONAL AVIATION

SEC. 2251. PROMOTION OF UNITED STATES AEROSPACE STANDARDS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES ABROAD.

Section 40104 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PROMOTION OF UNITED STATES AEROSPACE STANDARDS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES ABROAD.—The Secretary shall take appropriate actions—

''(1) to promote United States aerospace-related safety standards abroad;

''(2) to facilitate and vigorously defend approvals of United States aerospace products and services abroad;

''(3) with respect to bilateral partners, to use bilateral safety agreements and other mechanisms to improve validation of United States type certificated aeronautical products and services and enhance mutual acceptance in order to eliminate redundancies and unnecessary costs; and

''(4) with respect to the aeronautical safety authorities of a foreign country, to streamline that country's validation of United States aerospace standards, products, and services.''.

SEC. 2252. BILATERAL EXCHANGES OF SAFETY OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 44701(e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) FOREIGN AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES.—

''(A) ACCEPTANCE.—The Administrator shall accept an airworthiness directive (as defined in section 39.3 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations) issued by an aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country, and leverage that aeronautical safety authority's regulatory process, if—

''(i) the country is the state of design for the product that is the subject of the airworthiness directive;

''(ii) the United States has a bilateral safety agreement relating to aircraft certification with the country;

''(iii) as part of the bilateral safety agreement with the country, the Administrator has determined that the aeronautical safety authority has an aircraft certification system relating to safety that produces a level of safety equivalent to the level produced by the system of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

''(iv) the aeronautical safety authority utilizes an open and transparent public notice

and comment process in the issuance of airworthiness directives.

''(B) ALTERNATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Administrator may issue a Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive instead of accepting the airworthiness directive issued by the aeronautical safety authority of a foreign country if the Administrator determines that such issuance is necessary for safety or operational reasons due to the complexity or unique features of the Federal Aviation Administration airworthiness directive or the United States aviation system.

''(C) ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF COMPLIANCE.—The Administrator may—

''(i) accept an alternative means of compliance, with respect to an airworthiness directive under subparagraph (A), that was approved by the aeronautical safety authority of the foreign country that issued the airworthiness directive; or

''(ii) notwithstanding subparagraph (A), and at the request of any person affected by an airworthiness directive under that subparagraph, the Administrator may approve an alternative means of compliance with respect to the airworthiness directive.''.

SEC. 2253. FAA LEADERSHIP ABROAD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To promote United States aerospace safety standards, reduce redundant regulatory activity, and facilitate acceptance of FAA design and production approvals abroad, the Administrator shall—

(1) attain greater expertise in issues related to dispute resolution, intellectual property, and export control laws to better support FAA certification and other aerospace regulatory activities abroad;

(2) work with United States companies to more accurately track the amount of time it takes foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to validate United States type certificated aeronautical products;

(3) provide assistance to United States companies who have experienced significantly long foreign validation wait times;

(4) work with foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to collect and analyze data to determine the timeliness of the acceptance and validation of FAA design and production approvals by foreign authorities and the acceptance and validation of foreign-certified products by the FAA;

(5) establish appropriate benchmarks and metrics to measure the success of bilateral aviation safety agreements and to reduce the validation time for United States type certificated aeronautical products abroad; and

(6) work with foreign authorities, including bilateral partners, to improve the timeliness of the acceptance and validation of FAA design and production approvals by foreign authorities and the acceptance and validation of foreign-certified products by the FAA.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) describes the Administrator's strategic plan for international engagement;

(2) describes the structure and responsibilities of all FAA offices that have international responsibilities, including the Aircraft Certification Office, and all the activities conducted by those offices related to certification and production;

(3) describes current and forecasted staffing and travel needs for the FAA's international engagement activities, including the needs of the Aircraft Certification Office in the current and forecasted budgetary environment;

(4) provides recommendations, if appropriate, to improve the existing structure and personnel and travel policies supporting the FAA's international engagement activities, including the activities of the Aviation Certification Office, to better support the growth of United States aerospace exports; and

(5) identifies policy initiatives, regulatory initiatives, or cost-effective legislative initiatives needed to improve and enhance the timely acceptance of United States aerospace products abroad.

(c) INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.—The Administrator of the FAA, or the Administrator's designee, may authorize international travel for any FAA employee, without the approval of any other person or entity, if the Administrator determines that the travel is necessary—

(1) to promote United States aerospace safety standards; or

(2) to support expedited acceptance of FAA design and production approvals.

SEC. 2254. REGISTRATION, CERTIFICATION, AND RELATED FEES.

Section 45305 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking ''Subject to subsection (b)'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (c)'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) CERTIFICATION SERVICES.—Subject to subsection (c), and notwithstanding section 45301(a), the Administrator may establish and collect a fee from a foreign government or entity for services related to certification, regardless of where the services are provided, if the fee—

''(1) is established and collected in a manner consistent with aviation safety agreements; and

''(2) does not exceed the estimated costs of the services.''.

Subtitle C—Airline Passenger Safety and Protections

SEC. 2301. PILOT RECORDS DATABASE DEADLINE.

Section 44703(i)(2) is amended by striking ''The Administrator shall establish'' and inserting ''Not later than April 30, 2017, the Administrator shall establish and make available for use''.

SEC. 2302. ACCESS TO AIR CARRIER FLIGHT DECKS.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall collaborate with other aviation authorities to advance a global standard for access to air carrier flight decks and redundancy requirements consistent with the flight deck access and redundancy requirements in the United States.

SEC. 2303. AIRCRAFT TRACKING AND FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall assess current performance standards, and as appropriate, conduct a rulemaking to revise the standards to improve near-term and long-term aircraft tracking and flight data recovery, including retrieval, access, and protection of such data after an incident or accident.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In revising the performance standards under subsection (a), the Administrator may consider—

(1) various methods for improving detection and retrieval of flight data, including—

(A) low frequency underwater locating devices; and

(B) extended battery life for underwater locating devices;

(2) automatic deployable flight recorders;

(3) triggered transmission of flight data, and other satellite-based solutions;

(4) distress-mode tracking; and

(5) protections against disabling flight recorder systems.

(c) COORDINATION.—If the performance standards under subsection (a) are revised, the Administrator shall coordinate with international regulatory authorities and the International Civil Aviation Organization to ensure that any new international standard for aircraft tracking and flight data recovery is consistent with a performance-based approach and is implemented in a globally harmonized manner.

SEC. 2304. AUTOMATION RELIANCE IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) MODERNIZATION OF TRAINING.—Not later than October 1, 2017, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall review, and update as necessary, recent guidance regarding pilot flight deck monitoring that an air carrier can use to train and evaluate its pilots to ensure that air carrier pilots are trained to use and monitor automation systems while also maintaining proficiency in manual flight operations consistent with the final rule entitled, ''Qualification, Service, and Use of Crewmembers and Aircraft Dispatchers'', published on November 12, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 67799).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing and updating the guidance, the Administrator shall—

(1) consider casualty driven scenarios during initial and recurrent simulator instruction that focus on automation complacency during system failure, including flight segments when automation is typically engaged and should result in hand flying the aircraft into a safe position while employing crew resource management principles;

(2) consider the development of metrics or measurable tasks an air carrier may use to evaluate the ability of pilots to appropriately monitor flight deck systems;

(3) consider the development of metrics an air carrier may use to evaluate manual flying skills and improve related training;

(4) convene an expert panel, including members with expertise in human factors, training, and flight operations—

(A) to evaluate and develop methods for training flight crews to understand the functionality of automated systems for flight path management;

(B) to identify and recommend to the Administrator the most effective training methods that ensure that pilots can apply manual flying skills in the event of flight deck automation failure or an unexpected event; and

(C) to identify and recommend to the Administrator revision in the training guidance for flight crews to address the needs identified in subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

(5) develop any additional standards to be used for guidance the Administrator considers necessary to determine whether air carrier pilots receive sufficient training opportunities to develop, maintain, and demonstrate manual flying skills.

(c) DOT IG REVIEW.—Not later than 2 years after the date the Administrator reviews the guidance under subsection (a), the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall review the air carriers implementation of the guidance and the ongoing work of the expert panel.

SEC. 2305. ENHANCED MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING FOR PILOTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of

the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider the recommendations of the Pilot Fitness Aviation Rulemaking Committee in determining whether to implement, as part of a comprehensive medical certification process for pilots with a first- or second-class airman medical certificate, additional screening for mental health conditions, including depression and suicidal thoughts or tendencies, and assess treatments that would address any risk associated with such conditions.

SEC. 2306. FLIGHT ATTENDANT DUTY PERIOD LIMITATIONS AND REST REQUIREMENTS.

(a) MODIFICATION OF FINAL RULE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise the flight attendant duty period limitations and rest requirements under section 121.467 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) CONTENTS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), in revising the rule under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that a flight attendant scheduled to a duty period of 14 hours or less is given a scheduled rest period of at least 10 consecutive hours.

(c) EXCEPTION.—The rest period required under subsection (b) may be scheduled or reduced to 9 consecutive hours if the flight attendant is provided a subsequent rest period of at least 11 consecutive hours.

(d) FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) SUBMISSION OF PLAN BY PART 121 AIR CARRIERS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, each air carrier operating under part 121 of title 13, Code of Federal Regulations (referred to in this subsection as a ''part 121 air carrier''), shall submit a fatigue risk management plan for the carrier's flight attendants to the Administrator for review and acceptance.

(2) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—Each fatigue risk management plan submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) current flight time and duty period limitations;

(B) a rest scheme that is consistent with such limitations and enables the management of flight attendant fatigue, including annual training to increase awareness of—

(i) fatigue;

(ii) the effects of fatigue on flight attendants; and

(iii) fatigue countermeasures; and

(C) the development and use of methodology that continually assesses the effectiveness of implementation of the plan, including the ability of the plan—

(i) to improve alertness; and

(ii) to mitigate performance errors.

(3) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) review each fatigue risk management plan submitted under this subsection; and

(B)(i) accept the plan; or

(ii) reject the plan and provide the part 121 air carrier with suggested modifications to be included when the plan is resubmitted.

(4) PLAN UPDATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 2 years, each part 121 air carrier shall—

(i) update the fatigue risk management plan submitted under paragraph (1); and

(ii) submit the updated plan to the Administrator for review and acceptance.

(B) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which an updated plan is submitted under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Administrator shall—

(i) review the updated plan; and

(ii)(I) accept the updated plan; or

(II) reject the updated plan and provide the part 121 air carrier with suggested modifications to be included when the updated plan is resubmitted.

(5) COMPLIANCE.—Each part 121 air carrier shall comply with its fatigue risk management plan after the plan is accepted by the Administrator under this subsection.

(6) CIVIL PENALTIES.—A violation of this subsection by a part 121 air carrier shall be treated as a violation of chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code, for the purpose of applying civil penalties under chapter 463 of such title.

SEC. 2307. TRAINING TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR CERTAIN AIR CARRIER EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 417 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 41725. Training to combat human trafficking

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each air carrier providing passenger air transportation shall provide flight attendants who are employees or contractors of the air carrier with training to combat human trafficking in the course of carrying out their duties as employees or contractors of the air carrier.

''(b) ELEMENTS OF TRAINING.—The training an air carrier is required to provide under subsection (a) to flight attendants shall include training with respect to—

''(1) common indicators of human trafficking; and

''(2) best practices for reporting suspected human trafficking to law enforcement officers.

''(c) MATERIALS.—An air carrier may provide the training required by subsection (a) using modules and materials developed by the Department of Transportation and the Department of Homeland Security, including the training module and associated materials of the Blue Lightning Initiative and modules and materials subsequently developed and recommended by such Departments with respect to combating human trafficking.

''(d) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that appropriate training modules and materials are available for air carriers to conduct the training required by subsection (a).

''(e) HUMAN TRAFFICKING DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'human trafficking' means 1 or more severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 417 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 41724 the following:

''41725. Training to combat human trafficking.''.

(c) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes—

(1) an assessment of the status of compliance of air carriers with section 41725 of title 49, United States Code, as added by subsection (a); and

(2) in collaboration with the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, recommendations for improving the identification and reporting of human trafficking by air carrier personnel while protecting the civil liberties of passengers.

(d) IMMUNITY FOR REPORTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING.—Section 44941(a) is amended by striking ''or terrorism, as defined by section 3077 of title 18, United States Code,'' and inserting ''human trafficking (as defined by section 41725), or terrorism (as defined by section 3077 of title 18)''.

SEC. 2308. REPORT ON OBSOLETE TEST EQUIPMENT.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the National Test Equipment Program (referred to in this section as the ''Program'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(1) a list of all known outstanding requests for test equipment, cataloged by type and location, under the Program;

(2) a description of the current method under the Program of ensuring calibrated equipment is in place for utilization;

(3) a plan by the Administrator for appropriate inventory of such equipment; and

(4) the Administrator's recommendations for increasing multifunctionality in future test equipment to be developed and all known and foreseeable manufacturer technological advances.

SEC. 2309. PLAN FOR SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE DIRECT WARNINGS OF POTENTIAL RUNWAY INCURSIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 30, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) assess available technologies to determine whether it is feasible, cost-effective, and appropriate to install and deploy, at any airport, systems to provide a direct warning capability to flight crews and air traffic controllers of potential runway incursions; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the assessment under subsection (a), the Administration shall consider National Transportation Safety Board findings and relevant aviation stakeholder views relating to runway incursions.

SEC. 2310. LASER POINTER INCIDENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall provide quarterly updates to the appropriate committees of Congress regarding—

(1) the number of incidents involving the beam from a laser pointer (as defined in section 39A of title 18, United States Code) being aimed at, or in the flight path of, an aircraft in the airspace jurisdiction of the United States;

(2) the number of civil or criminal enforcement actions taken by the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, or Department of Justice with regard to the incidents described in paragraph (1), including the amount of the civil or criminal penalties imposed on violators;

(3) the resolution of any incidents that did not result in a civil or criminal enforcement action; and

(4) any actions the Department of Transportation or Department of Justice has taken on its own, or in conjunction with other Federal agencies or local law enforcement agencies, to deter the type of activity described in paragraph (1).

(b) CIVIL PENALTIES.—The Administrator shall revise the maximum civil penalty that may be imposed on an individual who aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the airspace jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, to be $25,000.

SEC. 2311. HELICOPTER AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS DATA AND REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in collaboration with helicopter air ambulance industry stakeholders, shall assess the availability of information to the general public related to the location of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services, including helipads and helipads outside of those listed as part of any existing databases of Airport Master Record (5010) forms.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Based on the assessment under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) update, as necessary, any existing guidance on what information is included in the current databases of Airport Master Record (5010) forms to include information related to heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services; or

(2) develop, as appropriate and in collaboration with helicopter air ambulance industry stakeholders, a new database of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment, including any recommendations on how to make information related to the location of heliports and helipads used by helicopters providing air ambulance services available to the general public.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 30 days after completing action under paragraph (1) or paragraph (2) of subsection (b), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation of that action.

(d) INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT DATA.—Section 44731 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter'' and inserting ''annually'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''flights and hours flown, by registration number, during which helicopters operated by the certificate holder were providing helicopter air ambulance services'' and inserting ''hours flown by the helicopters operated by the certificate holder'';

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''of flight'' and inserting ''of patients transported and the number of patient transport'';

(ii) by inserting ''or'' after ''interfacility transport,''; and

(iii) by striking '', or ferry or repositioning flight'';

(D) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by striking ''flights and''; and

(ii) by striking ''while providing air ambulance services''; and

(E) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:

''(6) The number of hours flown at night by helicopters operated by the certificate holder.'';

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking ''Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit'' and inserting ''The Administrator shall submit annually''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''The report shall include the number of accidents experienced by helicopter air ambulance operations, the number of fatal accidents experienced by helicopter air ambulance operations, and the rate, per 100,000 flight hours, of accidents and fatal accidents experienced by operators providing helicopter air ambulance services.'';

(3) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(4) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator, in collaboration with part 135 certificate holders providing helicopter air ambulance services, shall—

''(1) propose and develop a method to collect and store the data submitted under subsection (a), including a method to protect the confidentiality of any trade secret or proprietary information submitted; and

''(2) ensure that the database under subsection (c) and the report under subsection (d) include data and analysis that will best inform efforts to improve the safety of helicopter air ambulance operations.''.

SEC. 2312. PART 135 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT DATA.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) determine, in collaboration with the National Transportation Safety Board and Part 135 industry stakeholders, what, if any, additional data should be reported as part of an accident or incident notice to more accurately measure the safety of on-demand Part 135 aircraft activity, to pinpoint safety problems, and to form the basis for critical research and analysis of general aviation issues; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the findings under paragraph (1), including a description of the additional data to be collected, a timeframe for implementing the additional data collection, and any potential obstacles to implementation.

SEC. 2313. DEFINITION OF HUMAN FACTORS.

Section 40102(a), as amended by section 2140 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (24) through (47) as paragraphs (25) through (48), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (23) the following:

''(24) 'human factors' means a multidisciplinary field that generates and compiles information about human capabilities and limitations and applies it to design, development, and evaluation of equipment, systems, facilities, procedures, jobs, environments, staffing, organizations, and personnel management for safe, efficient, and effective human performance, including people's use of technology.''.

SEC. 2314. SENSE OF CONGRESS; PILOT IN COMMAND AUTHORITY.

It is the sense of Congress that the pilot in command of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to, the operation of that aircraft, as set forth in section 91.3(a) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation thereto).

SEC. 2315. ENHANCING ASIAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with relevant aviation industry stakeholders, shall assess what, if any, improvements are needed to develop the predictive capability of the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing program (referred to in this section as ''ASIAS'') with regard to identifying precursors to accidents.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the assessment under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) determine what actions are necessary—

(A) to improve data quality and standardization; and

(B) to increase the data received from additional segments of the aviation industry, such as small airplane, helicopter, and business jet operations;

(2) consider how to prioritize the actions described in paragraph (1); and

(3) review available methods for disseminating safety trend data from ASIAS to the aviation safety community, including the inspector workforce, to inform in their risk-based decision making efforts.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the assessment, including recommendations regarding paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (b).

SEC. 2316. IMPROVING RUNWAY SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall expedite the development of metrics—

(1) to allow the Federal Aviation Administration to determine whether runway incursions are increasing; and

(2) to assess the effectiveness of implemented runway safety initiatives.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress in developing the metrics described in subsection (a).

SEC. 2317. SAFE AIR TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM CELLS AND BATTERIES.

(a) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES ON AIRCRAFT.—

(1) ADOPTION OF ICAO INSTRUCTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall conform United States regulations on the air transport of lithium cells and batteries with the lithium cells and battery requirements in the 2015–2016 edition of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (referred to in this subsection as ''ICAO'') Technical Instructions (to include all addenda) including the revised standards adopted by ICAO which became effective on April 1, 2016.

(B) FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.—Beginning on the date the revised regulations under subparagraph (A) are published in the Federal Register, any lithium cell and battery rulemaking action or update commenced on or after that date shall continue to comply with the requirements under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

(2) REVIEW OF OTHER REGULATIONS.—Pursuant to section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note), the Secretary of Transportation may initiate a review of other existing regulations regarding the air transportation, including passenger-carrying and cargo aircraft, of lithium batteries and cells.

(3) MEDICAL DEVICE BATTERIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For United States applicants, the Secretary of Transportation shall consider and either grant or deny, within 45 days, applications submitted in compliance with part 107 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations for special permits or approvals for air transportation of lithium ion cells or batteries specifically used by medical devices. Not later than 30 days after the date of application, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall provide a draft special permit based on the application to the Federal Aviation Administration. The Federal Aviation Administration shall conduct an on-site inspection for issuance of the special permit not later than 10 days after the date of receipt of the draft special permit from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

(B) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL DEVICE.—In this paragraph, the term ''medical device'' has the meaning given the term ''device'' in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or constricting any other authority the Secretary of Transportation has under section 828 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 44701 note).

(b) LITHIUM BATTERY SAFETY WORKING GROUP.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall establish a lithium battery safety working group to promote and coordinate efforts related to the promotion of the safe manufacture, use, and transportation of lithium batteries and cells.

(1) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be composed of at least 1 representative from each of the following:

(i) Consumer Product Safety Commission.

(ii) Department of Transportation.

(iii) National Institute on Standards and Technology.

(iv) Food and Drug Administration.

(B) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The working group may include not more than 4 additional members with expertise in the safe manufacture, use, or transportation of lithium batteries and cells.

(C) SUBCOMMITTEES.—The President, or members of the working group, may—

(i) establish working group subcommittees to focus on specific issues related to the safe manufacture, use, or transportation of lithium batteries and cells; and

(ii) include in a subcommittee the participation of nonmember stakeholders with expertise in areas that the President or members consider necessary.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date it is established under subsection (b), the working group shall—

(A) research—

(i) additional ways to decrease the risk of fires and explosions from lithium batteries and cells;

(ii) additional ways to ensure uniform transportation requirements for both bulk and individual batteries; and

(iii) new or existing technologies that could reduce the fire and explosion risk of lithium batteries and cells; and

(B) transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the research under subparagraph (A), including any legislative recommendations to effectuate the safety improvements described in clauses (i) through (iii) of that subparagraph.

(3) EXEMPTION FROM FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group.

(4) TERMINATION.—The working group, and any working group subcommittees, shall terminate 90 days after the date the report is transmitted under paragraph (2).

SEC. 2318. PROHIBITION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY CHANGE TO PERMIT SMALL, NON-LOCKING KNIVES ON AIRCRAFT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, on and after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security may not implement any change to the prohibited items list of the Transportation Security Administration that would permit passengers to carry small, non-locking knives through passenger screening checkpoints at airports, into sterile areas at airports, or on board passenger aircraft.

(b) PROHIBITED ITEMS LIST DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''prohibited items list'' means the list of items passengers are prohibited from carrying as accessible property or on their persons through passenger screening checkpoints at airports, into sterile areas at airports, and on board passenger aircraft pursuant to section 1540.111 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 2319. AIRCRAFT CABIN EVACUATION PROCEDURES.

(a) REVIEW.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall review—

(1) evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft used in air transportation, with regard to—

(A) emergency conditions, including impacts into water;

(B) crew procedures used for evacuations under actual emergency conditions;

(C) any relevant changes to passenger demographics and legal requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), that affect emergency evacuations; and

(D) any relevant changes to passenger seating configurations, including changes to seat width, padding, reclining, size, pitch, leg room, and aisle width; and

(2) recent accidents and incidents in which passengers evacuated such aircraft.

(b) CONSULTATION; REVIEW OF DATA.—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) consult with the National Transportation Safety Board, transport-category aircraft manufacturers, air carriers, and other relevant experts and Federal agencies, including groups representing passengers, airline crew members, maintenance employees, and emergency responders; and

(2) review relevant data with respect to evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the review under subsection (a) and related recommendations, if any, including recommendations for revisions to the assumptions and methods used for assessing evacuation certification of transport-category aircraft.

SEC. 2320. GAO STUDY OF UNIVERSAL DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to redesign airport security areas to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all commercial airports at which security screening operations are conducted by the Transportation Security Administration or through the Screening Partnership Program; and

(2) to fully deploy advanced imaging technologies at all airports not described in paragraph (1).

(b) COST ANALYSIS.—As a part of the study conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall identify the costs that would be incurred—

(1) to purchase the equipment and other assets necessary to deploy advanced imaging technologies at each airport;

(2) to install such equipment and assets in each airport; and

(3) to maintain such equipment and assets.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit the results of the study conducted under subsection (a) to the appropriate committees of Congress.

Subtitle D—General Aviation Safety

SEC. 2401. AUTOMATED WEATHER OBSERVING SYSTEMS POLICY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) update automated weather observing systems standards to maximize the use of new technologies that promote the reduction of equipment or maintenance cost for non-Federal automated weather observing systems, including the use of remote monitoring and maintenance, unless demonstrated to be ineffective;

(2) review, and if necessary update, existing policies in accordance with the standards developed under paragraph (1); and

(3) establish a process under which appropriate on site airport personnel or an aviation official may, with appropriate manufacturer training or alternative training as determined by the Administrator, be permitted to conduct the minimum tri-annual preventative maintenance checks under the advisory circular for non-Federal automated weather observing systems (AC 150/5220-16D).

(b) PERMISSION.—Permission to conduct the minimum tri-annual preventative maintenance checks described under subsection (a)(3) shall not be withheld but for specific cause.

(c) STANDARDS.—In updating the standards under subsection (a)(1), the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure the standards are performance-based;

(2) use risk analysis to determine the accuracy of the automated weather observing systems outputs required for pilots to perform safe aircraft operations; and

(3) provide a cost benefit analysis to determine whether the benefits outweigh the cost for any requirement not directly related to safety.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2017, the Administrator shall provide a report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the implementation of requirements under this section.

SEC. 2402. TOWER MARKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulations to require the marking of covered towers.

(b) MARKING REQUIRED.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that a covered tower be clearly marked in a manner that is consistent with applicable guidance under the Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular issued December 4, 2015 (AC 70/7460–1L) or other relevant safety guidance, as determined by the Administrator.

(c) APPLICATION.—The regulations issued under subsection (a) shall ensure that—

(1) all covered towers constructed on or after the date on which such regulations take effect are marked in accordance with subsection (b); and

(2) a covered tower constructed before the date on which such regulations take effect is marked in accordance with subsection (b) not later than 1 year after such effective date.

(d) DEFINITION OF COVERED TOWER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term ''covered tower'' means a structure that—

(A) is self-standing or supported by guy wires and ground anchors;

(B) is 10 feet or less in diameter at the above-ground base, excluding concrete footing;

(C) at the highest point of the structure is at least 50 feet above ground level;

(D) at the highest point of the structure is not more than 200 feet above ground level;

(E) has accessory facilities on which an antenna, sensor, camera, meteorological instrument, or other equipment is mounted; and

(F) is located—

(i) outside the boundaries of an incorporated city or town; or

(ii) on land that is—

(I) undeveloped; or

(II) used for agricultural purposes.

(2) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''covered tower'' does not include any structure that—

(A) is adjacent to a house, barn, electric utility station, or other building;

(B) is within the curtilage of a farmstead;

(C) supports electric utility transmission or distribution lines;

(D) is a wind powered electrical generator with a rotor blade radius that exceeds 6 feet; or

(E) is a street light erected or maintained by a Federal, State, local, or tribal entity.

(e) DATABASE.—The Administrator shall—

(1) develop a database that contains the location and height of each covered tower;

(2) keep the database current to the extent practicable;

(3) ensure that any proprietary information in the database is protected from disclosure in accordance with law; and

(4) ensure access to the database is limited to individuals, such as airmen, who require the information for aviation safety purposes only.

SEC. 2403. CRASH-RESISTANT FUEL SYSTEMS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall evaluate and update, as necessary, standards for crash-resistant fuel systems for civilian rotorcraft.

SEC. 2404. REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN DEFINING SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FUTURE FLIGHT SERVICE PROGRAM.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consult with general aviation stakeholders in defining the scope and requirements for any new Future Flight Service Program of the Administration to be used in a competitive source selection for the next flight service contract with the Administration.

SEC. 2405. HEADS-UP GUIDANCE SYSTEM TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a review of heads-up guidance system displays (in this section referred to as ''HGS'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) evaluate the impacts of single- and dual-installed HGS technology on the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations within the national airspace system;

(2) review a sufficient quantity of commercial aviation accidents or incidents in order to evaluate if HGS technology would have produced a better outcome in that accident or incident; and

(3) update previous HGS studies performed by the Flight Safety Foundation in 1991 and 2009.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing the results of the review required by subsection (a).

Subtitle E—General Provisions

SEC. 2501. DESIGNATED AGENCY SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(u) DESIGNATED AGENCY SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICER.—

''(1) APPOINTMENT.—There shall be a Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer appointed by the Administrator who shall exclusively fulfill the duties prescribed in this subsection.

''(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall have responsibility and accountability for—

''(A) auditing occupational safety and health issues across the Administration;

''(B) overseeing Administration-wide compliance with relevant Federal occupational safety and health statutes and regulations, national industry and consensus standards, and Administration policies; and

''(C) encouraging a culture of occupational safety and health to complement the Administration's existing safety culture.

''(3) REPORTING STRUCTURE.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall occupy a full-time, senior executive position and shall report directly to the Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management.

''(4) QUALIFICATIONS AND REMOVAL.—

''(A) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall have demonstrated ability and experience in the establishment and administration of comprehensive occupational safety and health programs and knowledge of relevant Federal occupational safety and health statutes and regulations, national industry and consensus standards, and Administration policies.

''(B) REMOVAL.—The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer shall serve at the pleasure of the Administrator.''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall appoint an individual to serve as the Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer under section 106(u) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2502. REPAIR STATIONS LOCATED OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.

(a) RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT.—Section 44733 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g);

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator shall take measures to ensure that the safety assessment system established under subsection (a)—

''(A) places particular consideration on inspections of part 145 repair stations located outside the United States that conduct scheduled heavy maintenance work on part 121 air carrier aircraft; and

''(B) accounts for the frequency and seriousness of any corrective actions that part 121 air carriers must implement to aircraft following such work at such repair stations.

''(2) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator shall take the measures required under paragraph (1)—

''(A) in accordance with the United States obligations under applicable international agreements; and

''(B) in a manner consistent with the applicable laws of the country in which a repair station is located.

''(3) ACCESS TO DATA.—The Administrator may access and review such information or data in the possession of a part 121 air carrier as the Administrator may require in carrying out paragraph (1)(B).''; and

(3) in subsection (g), as redesignated—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), as redesignated, the following:

''(1) HEAVY MAINTENANCE WORK.—The term 'heavy maintenance work' means a C-check, a D-check, or equivalent maintenance operation with respect to the airframe of a transport-category aircraft.''.

(b) ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TESTING.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure that—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, a notice of proposed rulemaking required pursuant to section 44733(d)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is published in the Federal Register; and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date on which the notice of proposed rulemaking is published in the Federal Register, the rulemaking is finalized.

(c) BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure that each employee of a repair station certificated under part 145 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, who performs a safety-sensitive function on an air carrier aircraft has undergone a preemployment background investigation sufficient to determine whether the individual presents a threat to aviation safety, in a manner that is—

(1) determined acceptable by the Administrator;

(2) consistent with the applicable laws of the country in which the repair station is located; and

(3) consistent with the United States obligations under international agreements.

SEC. 2503. FAA TECHNICAL TRAINING.

(a) E-LEARNING TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in collaboration with the exclusive bargaining representatives of covered FAA personnel, shall establish an e-learning training pilot program in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) CURRICULUM.—The pilot program shall—

(1) include a recurrent training curriculum for covered FAA personnel to ensure that the covered FAA personnel receive instruction on the latest aviation technologies, processes, and procedures;

(2) focus on providing specialized technical training for covered FAA personnel, as determined necessary by the Administrator;

(3) include training courses on applicable regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(4) consider the efficacy of instructor-led online training.

(c) PILOT PROGRAM TERMINATION.—The pilot program shall terminate 1 year after the date of establishment of the pilot program.

(d) E-LEARNING TRAINING PROGRAM.—Upon termination of the pilot program, the Administrator shall assess and establish or update an e-learning training program that incorporates lessons learned for covered FAA personnel as a result of the pilot program.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FAA PERSONNEL.—The term ''covered FAA personnel'' means airway transportation systems specialists and aviation safety inspectors of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) E-LEARNING TRAINING.—The term ''e-learning training'' means learning utilizing electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom.

SEC. 2504. SAFETY CRITICAL STAFFING.

(a) AUDIT BY DOT INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall conduct and complete an audit of the staffing model used by the Federal Aviation Administration to determine the number of aviation safety inspectors that are needed to fulfill the mission of the Federal Aviation Administration and adequately ensure aviation safety.

(b) CONTENTS.—The audit shall include, at a minimum—

(1) a review of the staffing model and an analysis of how consistently the staffing model is applied throughout the Federal Aviation Administration's aviation safety lines of business;

(2) a review of the assumptions and methods used in devising and implementing the staffing model to assess the adequacy of the staffing model to predict the number of aviation safety inspectors needed to properly fulfill the mission of the Federal Aviation Administration and meet the future growth of the aviation industry; and

(3) a determination on whether the current staffing model takes into account the Federal Aviation Administration's authority to fully utilize designees.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of completion of the audit, the Inspector General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the audit.

SEC. 2505. APPROACH CONTROL RADAR IN ALL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWERS.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) identify airports that are currently served by Federal Aviation Administration towers with non-radar approach and departure control (Type 4 tower); and

(2) develop an implementation plan, including budgetary considerations, to provide the facilities identified under paragraph (1) with approach control radar.

SEC. 2506. AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish an advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

(b) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall—

(1) conduct a review of the practices and procedures of the Federal Aviation Administration for developing proposals with respect to changes in regulations, policies, or guidance of the Federal Aviation Administration relating to airspace that affect airport operations, airport capacity, the environment, or communities in the vicinity of airports, including—

(A) an assessment of the extent to which there is consultation, or a lack of consultation, with respect to such proposals—

(i) between and among the affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration, including the Air Traffic Organization, the Office of Airports, the Flight Standards Service, the Office of NextGen, and the Office of Energy and Environment; and

(ii) between the Federal Aviation Administration and affected entities, including airports, aircraft operators, communities, and State and local governments;

(2) recommend revisions to such practices and procedures to improve communications and coordination between and among affected elements of the Federal Aviation Administration and with other affected entities with respect to proposals described in paragraph (1) and the potential effects of such proposals;

(3) conduct a review of the management by the Federal Aviation Administration of systems and information used to evaluate data relating to obstructions to air navigation or navigational facilities under part 77 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(4) make recommendations to ensure that the data described in paragraph (3) is publicly accessible and streamlined to ensure developers, airport operators, and other interested parties may obtain relevant information concerning potential obstructions when working to preserve and create a safe and efficient navigable airspace.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the advisory committee established under subsection (a) shall include representatives of—

(1) air carriers, including passenger and cargo air carriers;

(2) general aviation, including business aviation and fixed wing aircraft and rotocraft;

(3) airports of various sizes and types;

(4) air traffic controllers; and

(5) State aviation officials.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the establishment of the advisory committee under subsection (a), the advisory committee shall submit to Congress a report on the actions taken by the advisory committee to carry out the duties described in subsection (b).

Subtitle F—Third Class Medical Reform and General Aviation Pilot Protections

SEC. 2601. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Pilot's Bill of Rights 2''.

SEC. 2602. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION OF CERTAIN SMALL AIRCRAFT PILOTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue or revise regulations to ensure that an individual may operate as pilot in command of a covered aircraft if—

(1) the individual possesses a valid driver's license issued by a State, territory, or possession of the United States and complies with all medical requirements or restrictions associated with that license;

(2) the individual holds a medical certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act, held such a certificate at any point during the 10-year period preceding such date of enactment, or obtains such a certificate after such date of enactment;

(3) the most recent medical certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration to the individual—

(A) indicates whether the certificate is first, second, or third class;

(B) may include authorization for special issuance;

(C) may be expired;

(D) cannot have been revoked or suspended; and

(E) cannot have been withdrawn;

(4) the most recent application for airman medical certification submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration by the individual cannot have been completed and denied;

(5) the individual has completed a medical education course described in subsection (c) during the 24 calendar months before acting as pilot in command of a covered aircraft and demonstrates proof of completion of the course;

(6) the individual, when serving as a pilot in command, is under the care and treatment of a physician if the individual has been diagnosed with any medical condition that may impact the ability of the individual to fly;

(7) the individual has received a comprehensive medical examination from a State-licensed physician during the previous 48 months and—

(A) prior to the examination, the individual—

(i) completed the individual's section of the checklist described in subsection (b); and

(ii) provided the completed checklist to the physician performing the examination; and

(B) the physician conducted the comprehensive medical examination in accordance with the checklist described in subsection (b), checking each item specified during the examination and addressing, as medically appropriate, every medical condition listed, and any medications the individual is taking; and

(8) the individual is operating in accordance with the following conditions:

(A) The covered aircraft is carrying not more than 5 passengers.

(B) The individual is operating the covered aircraft under visual flight rules or instrument flight rules.

(C) The flight, including each portion of that flight, is not carried out—

(i) for compensation or hire, including that no passenger or property on the flight is being carried for compensation or hire;

(ii) at an altitude that is more than 18,000 feet above mean sea level;

(iii) outside the United States, unless authorized by the country in which the flight is conducted; or

(iv) at an indicated air speed exceeding 250 knots.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL EXAMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop a checklist for an individual to complete and provide to the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The checklist shall contain—

(A) a section, for the individual to complete that contains—

(i) boxes 3 through 13 and boxes 16 through 19 of the Federal Aviation Administration Form 8500–8 (3–99);

(ii) a signature line for the individual to affirm that—

(I) the answers provided by the individual on that checklist, including the individual's answers regarding medical history, are true and complete;

(II) the individual understands that he or she is prohibited under Federal Aviation Administration regulations from acting as pilot in command, or any other capacity as a required flight crew member, if he or she knows or has reason to know of any medical deficiency or medically disqualifying condition that would make the individual unable to operate the aircraft in a safe manner; and

(III) the individual is aware of the regulations pertaining to the prohibition on operations during medical deficiency and has no medically disqualifying conditions in accordance with applicable law;

(B) a section with instructions for the individual to provide the completed checklist to the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(C) a section, for the physician to complete, that instructs the physician—

(i) to perform a clinical examination of—

(I) head, face, neck, and scalp;

(II) nose, sinuses, mouth, and throat;

(III) ears, general (internal and external canals), and eardrums (perforation);

(IV) eyes (general), ophthalmoscopic, pupils (equality and reaction), and ocular motility (associated parallel movement, nystagmus);

(V) lungs and chest (not including breast examination);

(VI) heart (precordial activity, rhythm, sounds, and murmurs);

(VII) vascular system (pulse, amplitude, and character, and arms, legs, and others);

(VIII) abdomen and viscera (including hernia);

(IX) anus (not including digital examination);

(X) skin;

(XI) G–U system (not including pelvic examination);

(XII) upper and lower extremities (strength and range of motion);

(XIII) spine and other musculoskeletal;

(XIV) identifying body marks, scars, and tattoos (size and location);

(XV) lymphatics;

(XVI) neurologic (tendon reflexes, equilibrium, senses, cranial nerves, and coordination, etc.);

(XVII) psychiatric (appearance, behavior, mood, communication, and memory);

(XVIII) general systemic;

(XIX) hearing;

(XX) vision (distant, near, and intermediate vision, field of vision, color vision, and ocular alignment);

(XXI) blood pressure and pulse; and

(XXII) anything else the physician, in his or her medical judgment, considers necessary;

(ii) to exercise medical discretion to address, as medically appropriate, any medical conditions identified, and to exercise medical discretion in determining whether any medical tests are warranted as part of the comprehensive medical examination;

(iii) to discuss all drugs the individual reports taking (prescription and nonprescription) and their potential to interfere with the safe operation of an aircraft or motor vehicle;

(iv) to sign the checklist, stating: ''I certify that I discussed all items on this checklist with the individual during my examination, discussed any medications the individual is taking that could interfere with their ability to safely operate an aircraft or motor vehicle, and performed an examination that included all of the items on this checklist. I certify that I am not aware of any medical condition that, as presently treated, could interfere with the individual's ability to safely operate an aircraft.''; and

(v) to provide the date the comprehensive medical examination was completed, and the physician's full name, address, telephone number, and State medical license number.

(3) LOGBOOK.—The completed checklist shall be retained in the individual's logbook and made available on request.

(c) MEDICAL EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS.—The medical education course described in this subsection shall—

(1) be available on the Internet free of charge;

(2) be developed and periodically updated in coordination with representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for-profit general aviation stakeholder groups;

(3) educate pilots on conducting medical self-assessments;

(4) advise pilots on identifying warning signs of potential serious medical conditions;

(5) identify risk mitigation strategies for medical conditions;

(6) increase awareness of the impacts of potentially impairing over-the-counter and prescription drug medications;

(7) encourage regular medical examinations and consultations with primary care physicians;

(8) inform pilots of the regulations pertaining to the prohibition on operations during medical deficiency and medically disqualifying conditions;

(9) provide the checklist developed by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with subsection (b); and

(10) upon successful completion of the course, electronically provide to the individual and transmit to the Federal Aviation Administration—

(A) a certification of completion of the medical education course, which shall be printed and retained in the individual's logbook and made available upon request, and shall contain the individual's name, address, and airman certificate number;

(B) subject to subsection (d), a release authorizing the National Driver Register through a designated State Department of Motor Vehicles to furnish to the Federal Aviation Administration information pertaining to the individual's driving record;

(C) a certification by the individual that the individual is under the care and treatment of a physician if the individual has been diagnosed with any medical condition that may impact the ability of the individual to fly, as required under (a)(6);

(D) a form that includes—

(i) the name, address, telephone number, and airman certificate number of the individual;

(ii) the name, address, telephone number, and State medical license number of the physician performing the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7);

(iii) the date of the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(iv) a certification by the individual that the checklist described in subsection (b) was followed and signed by the physician in the comprehensive medical examination required in subsection (a)(7); and

(E) a statement, which shall be printed, and signed by the individual certifying that the individual understands the existing prohibition on operations during medical deficiency by stating: ''I understand that I cannot act as pilot in command, or any other capacity as a required flight crew member, if I know or have reason to know of any medical condition that would make me unable to operate the aircraft in a safe manner.''.

(d) NATIONAL DRIVER REGISTER.—The authorization under subsection (c)(10)(B) shall be an authorization for a single access to the information contained in the National Driver Register.

(e) SPECIAL ISSUANCE PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual who has qualified for the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) and is seeking to serve as a pilot in command of a covered aircraft shall be required to have completed the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate for each of the following:

(A) A mental health disorder, limited to an established medical history or clinical diagnosis of—

(i) personality disorder that is severe enough to have repeatedly manifested itself by overt acts;

(ii) psychosis, defined as a case in which an individual—

(I) has manifested delusions, hallucinations, grossly bizarre or disorganized behavior, or other commonly accepted symptoms of psychosis; or

(II) may reasonably be expected to manifest delusions, hallucinations, grossly bizarre or disorganized behavior, or other commonly accepted symptoms of psychosis;

(iii) bipolar disorder; or

(iv) substance dependence within the previous 2 years, as defined in section 67.307(a)(4) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(B) A neurological disorder, limited to an established medical history or clinical diagnosis of any of the following:

(i) Epilepsy.

(ii) Disturbance of consciousness without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause.

(iii) A transient loss of control of nervous system functions without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause.

(C) A cardiovascular condition, limited to a one-time special issuance for each diagnosis of the following:

(i) Myocardial infraction.

(ii) Coronary heart disease that has required treatment.

(iii) Cardiac valve replacement.

(iv) Heart replacement.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONS.—In the case of an individual with a cardiovascular condition, the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate shall be satisfied with the successful completion of an appropriate clinical evaluation without a mandatory wait period.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.—

(A) In the case of an individual with a clinically diagnosed mental health condition, the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) shall not apply if—

(i) in the judgment of the individual's State-licensed medical specialist, the condition—

(I) renders the individual unable to safely perform the duties or exercise the airman privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(II) may reasonably be expected to make the individual unable to perform the duties or exercise the privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(ii) the individual's driver's license is revoked by the issuing agency as a result of a clinically diagnosed mental health condition.

(B) Subject to subparagraph (A), an individual clinically diagnosed with a mental health condition shall certify every 2 years, in conjunction with the certification under subsection (c)(10)(C), that the individual is under the care of a State-licensed medical specialist for that mental health condition.

(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS.—

(A) In the case of an individual with a clinically diagnosed neurological condition, the third-class medical certificate exemption under subsection (a) shall not apply if—

(i) in the judgment of the individual's State-licensed medical specialist, the condition—

(I) renders the individual unable to safely perform the duties or exercise the airman privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(II) may reasonably be expected to make the individual unable to perform the duties or exercise the privileges described in subsection (a)(8); or

(ii) the individual's driver's license is revoked by the issuing agency as a result of a clinically diagnosed neurological condition.

(B) Subject to subparagraph (A), an individual clinically diagnosed with a neurological condition shall certify every 2 years, in conjunction with the certification under subsection (c)(10)(C), that the individual is under the care of a State-licensed medical specialist for that neurological condition.

(f) IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS FOR THE CACI PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall review and identify additional medical conditions that could be added to the program known as the Conditions AMEs Can Issue (CACI) program.

(2) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consult with aviation, medical, and union stakeholders.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report listing the medical conditions that have been added to the CACI program under paragraph (1).

(g) EXPEDITED AUTHORIZATION FOR SPECIAL ISSUANCE OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall implement procedures to expedite the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate under section 67.401 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consult with aviation, medical, and union stakeholders.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report describing how the procedures implemented under paragraph (1) will streamline the process for obtaining an Authorization for Special Issuance of a Medical Certificate and reduce the amount of time needed to review and decide special issuance cases.

(h) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the National Transportation Safety Board, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that describes the effect of the regulations issued or revised under subsection (a) and includes statistics with respect to changes in small aircraft activity and safety incidents.

(i) PROHIBITION ON ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not take an enforcement action for not holding a valid third-class medical certificate against a pilot of a covered aircraft for a flight, through a good faith effort, if the pilot and the flight meet the applicable requirements under subsection (a), except paragraph (5) of that subsection, unless the Administrator has published final regulations in the Federal Register under that subsection.

(j) COVERED AIRCRAFT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered aircraft'' means an aircraft that—

(1) is authorized under Federal law to carry not more than 6 occupants; and

(2) has a maximum certificated takeoff weight of not more than 6,000 pounds.

(k) OPERATIONS COVERED.—The provisions and requirements covered in this section do not apply to pilots who elect to operate under the medical requirements under subsection (b) or subsection (c) of section 61.23 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(l) AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator receives credible or urgent information, including from the National Driver Register or the Administrator's Safety Hotline, that reflects on an individual's ability to safely operate a covered aircraft under the third-class medical certificate exemption in subsection (a), the Administrator may require the individual to provide additional information or history so that the Administrator may determine whether the individual is safe to continue operating a covered aircraft.

(2) USE OF INFORMATION.—The Administrator may use credible or urgent information received under paragraph (1) to request an individual to provide additional information or to take actions under section 44709(b) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2603. EXPANSION OF PILOT'S BILL OF RIGHTS.

(a) APPEALS OF SUSPENDED AND REVOKED AIRMAN CERTIFICATES.—Section 2(d)(1) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended by striking ''or imposing a punitive civil action or an emergency order of revocation under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709 of such title'' and inserting ''suspending or revoking an airman certificate under section 44709(d) of such title, or imposing an emergency order of revocation under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709 of such title''.

(b) DE NOVO REVIEW BY DISTRICT COURT; BURDEN OF PROOF.—Section 2(e) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In an appeal filed under subsection (d) in a United States district court with respect to a denial, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate by the Administrator—

''(A) the district court shall review the denial, suspension, or revocation de novo, including by—

''(i) conducting a full independent review of the complete administrative record of the denial, suspension, or revocation;

''(ii) permitting additional discovery and the taking of additional evidence; and

''(iii) making the findings of fact and conclusions of law required by Rule 52 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure without being bound to any findings of fact of the Administrator or the National Transportation Safety Board.'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) BURDEN OF PROOF.—In an appeal filed under subsection (d) in a United States district court after an exhaustion of administrative remedies, the burden of proof shall be as follows:

''(A) In an appeal of the denial of an application for the issuance or renewal of an airman certificate under section 44703 of title 49, United States Code, the burden of proof shall be upon the applicant denied an airman certificate by the Administrator.

''(B) In an appeal of an order issued by the Administrator under section 44709 of title 49, United States Code, the burden of proof shall be upon the Administrator.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) APPLICABILITY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection or subsection (a)(1) of section 554 of title 5, United States Code, section 554 of such title shall apply to adjudications of the Administrator and the National Transportation Safety Board to the same extent as that section applied to such adjudications before the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2.''.

(c) NOTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATION.—Subsection (b) of section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting ''and the specific activity on which the investigation is based'' after ''nature of the investigation'';

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''timely''; and

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking ''section 44709(c)(2)'' and inserting ''section 44709(e)(2)''.

(d) RELEASE OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS.—Section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1159; 49 U.S.C. 44703 note) is further amended by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) RELEASE OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) EMERGENCY ORDERS.—In any proceeding conducted under part 821 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, relating to the amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate, in which the Administrator issues an emergency order under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709, section 44710, or section 46105(c) of title 49, United States Code, or another order that takes effect immediately, the Administrator shall provide to the individual holding the airman certificate the releasable portion of the investigative report at the time the Administrator issues the order. If the complete Report of Investigation is not available at the time the Emergency Order is issued, the Administrator shall issue all portions of the

report that are available at the time and shall provide the full report within 5 days of its completion.

''(B) OTHER ORDERS.—In any non-emergency proceeding conducted under part 821 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, relating to the amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate, in which the Administrator notifies the certificate holder of a proposed certificate action under subsections (b) and (c) of section 44709 or section 44710 of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator shall, upon the written request of the covered certificate holder and at any time after that notification, provide to the covered certificate holder the releasable portion of the investigative report.

''(2) MOTION FOR DISMISSAL.—If the Administrator does not provide the releasable portions of the investigative report to the individual holding the airman certificate subject to the proceeding referred to in paragraph (1) by the time required by that paragraph, the individual may move to dismiss the complaint of the Administrator or for other relief and, unless the Administrator establishes good cause for the failure to provide the investigative report or for a lack of timeliness, the administrative law judge shall order such relief as the judge considers appropriate.

''(3) RELEASABLE PORTION OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the releasable portion of an investigative report is all information in the report, except for the following:

''(A) Information that is privileged.

''(B) Information that constitutes work product or reflects internal deliberative process.

''(C) Information that would disclose the identity of a confidential source.

''(D) Information the disclosure of which is prohibited by any other provision of law.

''(E) Information that is not relevant to the subject matter of the proceeding.

''(F) Information the Administrator can demonstrate is withheld for good cause.

''(G) Sensitive security information, as defined in section 15.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar ruling or regulation).

''(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the Administrator from releasing to an individual subject to an investigation described in subsection (b)(1)—

''(A) information in addition to the information included in the releasable portion of the investigative report; or

''(B) a copy of the investigative report before the Administrator issues a complaint.''.

SEC. 2604. LIMITATIONS ON REEXAMINATION OF CERTIFICATE HOLDERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44709(a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Administrator'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator'';

(2) by striking ''reexamine'' and inserting '', except as provided in paragraph (2), reexamine''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) LIMITATION ON THE REEXAMINATION OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not reexamine an airman holding a student, sport, recreational, or private pilot certificate issued under section 44703 of this title if the reexamination is ordered as a result of an event involving the fault of the Federal Aviation Administration or its designee, unless the Administrator has reasonable grounds—

''(i) to establish that the airman may not be qualified to exercise the privileges of a particular certificate or rating, based upon an act or omission committed by the airman while exercising those privileges, after the certificate or rating was issued by the Federal Aviation Administration or its designee; or

''(ii) to demonstrate that the airman obtained the certificate or the rating through fraudulent means or through an examination that was substantially and demonstrably inadequate to establish the airman's qualifications.

''(B) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Before taking any action to reexamine an airman under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall provide to the airman—

''(i) a reasonable basis, described in detail, for requesting the reexamination; and

''(ii) any information gathered by the Federal Aviation Administration, that the Administrator determines is appropriate to provide, such as the scope and nature of the requested reexamination, that formed the basis for that justification.''.

(b) AMENDMENT, MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION, OR REVOCATION OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES AFTER REEXAMINATION.—Section 44709(b) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(3) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), as redesignated, by striking ''The Administrator'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Administrator''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) AMENDMENTS, MODIFICATIONS, SUSPENSIONS, AND REVOCATIONS OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES AFTER REEXAMINATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not issue an order to amend, modify, suspend, or revoke an airman certificate held by a student, sport, recreational, or private pilot and issued under section 44703 of this title after a reexamination of the airman holding the certificate unless the Administrator determines that the airman—

''(i) lacks the technical skills and competency, or care, judgment, and responsibility, necessary to hold and safely exercise the privileges of the certificate; or

''(ii) materially contributed to the issuance of the certificate by fraudulent means.

''(B) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—Any order of the Administrator under this paragraph shall be subject to the standard of review provided for under section 2 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44703 note).''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 44709(d)(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''subsection (b)(1)(A)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(1)(A)(i)''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''subsection (b)(1)(B)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(1)(A)(ii)''.

SEC. 2605. EXPEDITING UPDATES TO NOTAM PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) Beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not take any enforcement action against any individual for a violation of a NOTAM (as defined in section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44701 note)) until the Administrator certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Administrator has complied with the requirements of section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights, as amended by this section.

(2) In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Section 3 of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112–153; 126 Stat. 1162; 49 U.S.C. 44701 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking ''this Act'' and inserting ''the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2''; and

(ii) by striking ''begin'' and inserting ''complete the implementation of'';

(B) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) to continue developing and modernizing the NOTAM repository, in a public central location, to maintain and archive all NOTAMs, including the original content and form of the notices, the original date of publication, and any amendments to such notices with the date of each amendment, in a manner that is Internet-accessible, machine-readable, and searchable;'';

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) to specify the times during which temporary flight restrictions are in effect and the duration of a designation of special use airspace in a specific area.''; and

(2) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) DESIGNATION OF REPOSITORY AS SOLE SOURCE FOR NOTAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator—

''(A) shall consider the repository for NOTAMs under subsection (a)(2)(B) to be the sole location for airmen to check for NOTAMs; and

''(B) may not consider a NOTAM to be announced or published until the NOTAM is included in the repository for NOTAMs under subsection (a)(2)(B).

''(2) PROHIBITION ON TAKING ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF NOTAMS NOT IN REPOSITORY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), beginning on the date that the repository under subsection (a)(2)(B) is final and published, the Administrator may not take any enforcement action against an airman for a violation of a NOTAM during a flight if—

''(i) that NOTAM is not available through the repository before the commencement of the flight; and

''(ii) that NOTAM is not reasonably accessible and identifiable to the airman.

''(B) EXCEPTION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply in the case of an enforcement action for a violation of a NOTAM that directly relates to national security.''.

SEC. 2606. ACCESSIBILITY OF CERTAIN FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 471 is amended by inserting after section 47124 the following:

''§ 47124a. Accessibility of certain flight data

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term 'Administration' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(3) APPLICABLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'applicable individual' means an individual who is the subject of an investigation initiated by the Administrator related to a covered flight record.

''(4) CONTRACT TOWER.—The term 'contract tower' means an air traffic control tower providing air traffic control services pursuant to a contract with the Administration under the contract air traffic control tower program under section 47124(b)(3).

''(5) COVERED FLIGHT RECORD.—The term 'covered flight record' means any air traffic data (as defined in section 2(b)(4)(B) of the Pilot's Bill of Rights (49 U.S.C. 44703 note)), created, maintained, or controlled by any program of the Administration, including any program of the Administration carried out by employees or contractors of the Administration, such as contract towers, flight service stations, and controller training programs.

''(b) PROVISION OF COVERED FLIGHT RECORD TO ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) REQUESTS.—Whenever the Administration receives a written request for a covered flight record from an applicable individual and the covered flight record is not in the possession of the Administration, the Administrator shall request the covered flight record from the contract tower or other contractor of the Administration in possession of the covered flight record.

''(2) PROVISION OF RECORDS.—Any covered flight record created, maintained, or controlled by a contract tower or another contractor of the Administration that maintains covered flight records shall be provided to the Administration if the Administration requests the record pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(3) NOTICE OF PROPOSED CERTIFICATE ACTION.—If the Administrator has issued, or subsequently issues, a Notice of Proposed Certificate Action relying on evidence contained in the covered flight record and the individual who is the subject of an investigation has requested the record, the Administrator shall promptly produce the record and extend the time the individual has to respond to the Notice of Proposed Certificate Action until the covered flight record is provided.

''(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2, the Administrator shall promulgate regulations or guidance to ensure compliance with this section.

''(2) COMPLIANCE BY CONTRACTORS.—

''(A) Compliance with this section by a contract tower or other contractor of the Administration that maintains covered flight records shall be included as a material term in any contract between the Administration and the contract tower or contractor entered into or renewed on or after the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2.

''(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any contract or agreement in effect on the date of enactment of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2 unless the contract or agreement is renegotiated, renewed, or modified after that date.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 471 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47124 the following:

''47124a. Accessibility of certain flight data.''.

SEC. 2607. AUTHORITY FOR LEGAL COUNSEL TO ISSUE CERTAIN NOTICES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall revise section 13.11 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to authorize legal counsel of the Federal Aviation Administration to close enforcement actions covered by that section with a warning notice, letter of correction, or other administrative action.

TITLE III—AIR SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 3001. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COVERED AIR CARRIER.—The term ''covered air carrier'' means an air carrier or a foreign air carrier as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) ONLINE SERVICE.—The term ''online service'' means any service available over the Internet, or that connects to the Internet or a wide-area network.

(3) TICKET AGENT.—The term ''ticket agent'' has the meaning given the term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

Subtitle A—Passenger Air Service Improvements

SEC. 3101. CAUSES OF AIRLINE DELAYS OR CANCELLATIONS.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review the categorization of delays and cancellations with respect to air carriers that are required to report such data.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the review under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider, at a minimum—

(A) whether delays and cancellations attributed by an air carrier to weather were unavoidable due to an operational or air traffic control issue, or due to the air carrier's preference in determining which flights to delay or cancel during a weather event;

(B) whether and to what extent delays and cancellations attributed by an air carrier to weather disproportionately impact service to smaller airports and communities; and

(C) whether it is an unfair or deceptive practice in violation of section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, for an air carrier to inform a passenger that a flight is delayed or cancelled due to weather, without any other context or explanation for the delay or cancellation, when the air carrier has discretion as to which flights to delay or cancel.

(3) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Secretary may use the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection, established under section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note), to assist in conducting the review and providing recommendations.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date the review under subsection (a) is complete, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review under subsection (a), including any recommendations.

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting the decision of an air carrier to maximize its system capacity during weather-related events to accommodate the greatest number of passengers.

SEC. 3102. INVOLUNTARY CHANGES TO ITINERARIES.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review whether it is an unfair or deceptive practice in violation of section 41712 of title 49, United States Code, for an air carrier to change the itinerary of a passenger, more than 24 hours before departure, if the new itinerary involves additional stops or departs 3 hours earlier or later and compensation or other more suitable air transportation is not offered.

(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Secretary may use the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection, established under section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note), to assist in conducting the review and providing recommendations.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date the review under subsection (a) is complete, the Secretary shall submit to appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review under subsection (a), including any recommendations.

SEC. 3103. ADDITIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date that the reviews under sections 3101 and 3102 of this Act are complete, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking to its notice of proposed rulemaking published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2014 (DOT–OST–2014–0056) (relating to the transparency of airline ancillary fees and other consumer protection issues) to consider the following:

(1) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by delays or cancellations when an air carrier has a choice as to which flights to cancel or delay during a weather-related event.

(2) Requiring an air carrier to provide notification and refunds or other consideration to a consumer who is impacted by involuntary changes to the consumer's itinerary.

SEC. 3104. ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES OF PASSENGERS INVOLVED IN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS.

(a) AIR CARRIERS HOLDING CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY.—Section 41113 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''a major'' and inserting ''any'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (9), by striking ''(and any other victim of the accident)'' and inserting ''(and any other victim of the accident, including any victim on the ground)'';

(B) in paragraph (16), by striking ''major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(C) in paragraph (17)(A), by striking ''significant'' and inserting ''any''; and

(3) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) 'Aircraft accident' means any aviation disaster, regardless of its cause or suspected cause, for which the National Transportation Safety Board is the lead investigative agency.

''(2) 'Passenger' has the meaning given the term in section 1136.''.

(b) FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS PROVIDING FOREIGN AIR TRANSPORTATION.—Section 41313 is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''a major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''a significant'' and inserting ''any'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''a significant'' and inserting ''any'';

(C) in paragraph (16), by striking ''major'' and inserting ''any''; and

(D) in paragraph (17)(A), by striking ''significant'' and inserting ''any''.

(c) NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD.—Section 1136(a) is amended by striking ''aircraft accident within the United States involving an air carrier or foreign air carrier and resulting in a major loss of life'' and inserting ''aircraft accident involving an air carrier or foreign air carrier, resulting in any loss of life, and for which the National Transportation Safety Board will serve as the lead investigative agency''.

SEC. 3105. EMERGENCY MEDICAL KITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall evaluate and revise, as appropriate, the regulations under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, regarding the emergency medical equipment requirements, including the contents of the first-aid kit, applicable to all certificate holders operating passenger-carrying airplanes under that part.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider whether the minimum contents of approved emergency medical kits, including approved first-aid kits, include appropriate medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children, including consideration of an epinephrine auto-injector, as appropriate.

SEC. 3106. TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study of airport accessibility best practices for individuals with disabilities; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include accessibility best practices beyond those recommended under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4151 et seq.), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 1080; Public Law 99–435), or Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), that improve infrastructure and communications, such as with regard to wayfinding, amenities, and passenger care.

SEC. 3107. EXTENSION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION.

(a) TERMINATION.—Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(b) FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE.—Section 411 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i); and

(2) by inserting before subsection (i), the following:

''(h) CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, each member of the advisory committee who is not a government employee shall disclose, on an annual basis, any potential conflicts of interest, including financial conflicts of interest, to the Secretary in such form and manner as prescribed by the Secretary.''.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Section 411(g) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''of the first 2 calendar years beginning after the date of enactment of this Act'' and inserting ''calendar year''; and

(2) by inserting ''and post on the Department of Transportation Web site'' after ''Congress''.

SEC. 3108. EXTENSION OF COMPETITIVE ACCESS REPORTS.

Section 47107(r)(3) is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund to a passenger in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid if the covered air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage but the covered air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

(b) EXCEPTION.—If as part of the rulemaking the Secretary makes a determination on the record that a requirement under subsection (a) is unfeasible and will negatively affect consumers in certain cases, the Secretary may modify 1 or both of the deadlines in that subsection for such cases, except that—

(1) the deadline relating to a domestic flight may not exceed 12 hours after the arrival of the domestic flight; and

(2) the deadline relating to an international flight may not exceed 24 hours after the arrival of the international flight.

SEC. 3110. REFUNDS FOR OTHER FEES THAT ARE NOT HONORED BY A COVERED AIR CARRIER.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations that require each covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund to a passenger of any ancillary fees paid for services that the passenger does not receive, including on the passenger's scheduled flight, on a subsequent replacement itinerary if there has been a rescheduling, or for a flight not taken by the passenger.

SEC. 3111. DISCLOSURE OF FEES TO CONSUMERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations requiring—

(1) each covered air carrier to disclose to a consumer the baggage fee, cancellation fee, change fee, ticketing fee, and seat selection fee of that covered air carrier in a standardized format; and

(2) notwithstanding the manner in which information regarding the fees described in paragraph (1) is collected, each ticket agent to disclose to a consumer such fees of a covered air carrier in the standardized format described in paragraph (1).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that each disclosure—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service—

(A) be prominently displayed to the consumer prior to the point of purchase; and

(B) set forth the fees described in subsection (a)(1) in clear and plain language and a font of easily readable size; and

(2) if ticketing is done on the telephone, be expressly stated to the consumer during the telephone call and prior to the point of purchase.

SEC. 3112. SEAT ASSIGNMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall complete such actions as may be necessary to require each covered air carrier and ticket agent to disclose to a consumer that seat selection for which a fee is charged is an optional service, and that if a consumer does not pay for a seat assignment, a seat will be assigned to the consumer from available inventory at the time the consumer checks in for the flight or prior to departure.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The disclosure under subsection (a) shall—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service, be prominently displayed to the consumer on that Internet Web site or online service during the selection of seating or prior to the point of purchase; and

(2) if ticketing is done on the telephone, be expressly stated to the consumer during the telephone call and prior to the point of purchase.

SEC. 3113. LASTING IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY TRAVEL.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Lasting Improvements to Family Travel Act'' or the ''LIFT Act''.

(b) ACCOMPANYING MINORS FOR SECURITY SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall formalize security screening procedures that allow for one adult family caregiver to accompany a minor child throughout the entirety of the security screening process.

(c) SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall review and, if appropriate, prescribe regulations that direct all air carriers to include pregnant women in their policies with respect to preboarding or advance boarding of aircraft.

(d) FAMILY SEATING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall review and, if appropriate, establish a policy directing all air carriers to ensure that, if a family is traveling on a reservation with a child under the age of 13, that child is able to sit in a seat adjacent to the seat of an accompanying family member over the age of 13, to the maximum extent practicable, at no additional cost.

SEC. 3114. CONSUMER COMPLAINT PROCESS IMPROVEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 42302 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (a), the following:

''(b) POINT OF SALE.—Each air carrier, foreign air carrier, and ticket agent shall inform each consumer of a carrier service, at the point of sale, that the consumer can file a complaint about that service with the carrier and with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation.'';

(3) by amending subsection (c), as redesignated, to read as follows:

''(c) INTERNET WEB SITE OR OTHER ONLINE SERVICE NOTICE.—Each air carrier and foreign air carrier shall include on its Internet Web site, any related mobile device application, and online service—

''(1) the hotline telephone number established under subsection (a) or for the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

''(2) an active link and the email address, telephone number, and mailing address of

the air carrier or foreign air carrier, as applicable, for a consumer to submit a complaint to the carrier about the quality of service;

''(3) notice that the consumer can file a complaint with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

''(4) an active link to the Internet Web site of the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation for a consumer to file a complaint; and

''(5) the active link described in paragraph (2) on the same Internet Web site page as the active link described in paragraph (4).''; and

(4) in subsection (d), as redesignated—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''An air carrier or foreign air carrier providing scheduled air transportation using any aircraft that as originally designed has a passenger capacity of 30 or more passenger seats'' and inserting ''Each air carrier and foreign air carrier'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking ''air carrier'' and inserting ''carrier''; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking ''air carrier'' and inserting ''carrier''.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations to implement the requirements of section 42302 of title 49, United States Code, as amended.

SEC. 3115. ONLINE ACCESS TO AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION INFORMATION.

(a) INTERNET WEB SITE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall—

(1) complete an evaluation of the aviation consumer protection portion of the Department of Transportation's public Internet Web site to identify any changes to the user interface that will improve usability, accessibility, consumer satisfaction, and Web site performance;

(2) in completing the evaluation under paragraph (1)—

(A) consider the best practices of other Federal agencies with effective Web sites; and

(B) consult with the Federal Web Managers Council;

(3) develop a plan, including an implementation timeline, for—

(A) making the changes identified under paragraph (1); and

(B) making any necessary changes to that portion of the Web site that will enable a consumer—

(i) to access information regarding each complaint filed with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation;

(ii) to search the complaints described in clause (i) by the name of the air carrier, the dates of departure and arrival, the airports of origin and departure, and the type of complaint; and

(iii) to determine the date a complaint was filed and the date a complaint was resolved; and

(4) submit the evaluation and plan to appropriate committees of Congress.

(b) MOBILE APPLICATION SOFTWARE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall—

(1) implement a program to develop application software for wireless devices that will enable a user to access information and perform activities related to aviation consumer protection, such as—

(A) information regarding airline passenger protections, including protections related to lost baggage and baggage fees, disclosure of additional fees, bumping, cancelled or delayed flights, damaged or lost baggage, and tarmac delays; and

(B) file an aviation consumer complaint, including a safety and security, airline service, disability and discrimination, or privacy complaint, with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation; and

(2) make the application software available to the public at no cost.

SEC. 3116. STUDY ON IN CABIN WHEELCHAIR RESTRAINT SYSTEMS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, shall conduct a study to determine the ways in which particular individuals with significant disabilities who use wheelchairs, including power wheelchairs, can be accommodated through in cabin wheelchair restraint systems.

SEC. 3117. TRAINING POLICIES REGARDING ASSISTANCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) each air carrier's training policy for its personnel and contractors regarding assistance for persons with disabilities, as required by Department of Transportation regulations;

(2) any variations among the air carriers in the policies described in paragraph (1);

(3) how the training policies are implemented to meet the Department of Transportation regulations;

(4) how frequently an air carrier must train new employees and contractors due to turnover in positions that require such training;

(5) how frequently, in the prior 10 years, the Department of Transportation has requested, after reviewing a training policy, that an air carrier take corrective action; and

(6) the action taken by an air carrier under paragraph (5).

(b) BEST PRACTICES.—After the date the report is submitted under subsection (a), the Secretary of Transportation, based on the findings of the report, shall develop and disseminate to air carriers such best practices as the Secretary considers necessary to improve the training policies.

SEC. 3118. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE AIR TRAVEL NEEDS OF PASSENGERS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish an advisory committee for the air travel needs of passengers with disabilities (referred to in this section as the ''Advisory Committee'').

(b) DUTIES.—The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretary with regard to the implementation of the Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–435; 100 Stat. 1080), including—

(1) assessing the disability-related access barriers encountered by passengers with disabilities;

(2) determining the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department of Transportation are addressing the barriers described in paragraph (1);

(3) recommending improvements to the air travel experience of passengers with disabilities; and

(4) such activities as the Secretary considers necessary to carry out this section.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall be comprised of at least 1 representative of each of the following groups:

(A) Passengers with disabilities.

(B) National disability organizations.

(C) Air carriers.

(D) Airport operators.

(E) Contractor service providers.

(2) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall appoint each member of the Advisory Committee.

(3) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(d) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of Transportation shall designate, from among the members appointed under subsection (c), an individual to serve as chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

(e) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members of the advisory committee shall serve without pay, but shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 1 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Transportation a report on the needs of passengers with disabilities in air travel, including—

(A) an assessment of disability-related access barriers, both those that were evident in the preceding year and those that will likely be an issue in the next 5 years;

(B) an evaluation of the extent to which the Department of Transportation's programs and activities are eliminating disability-related access barriers;

(C) a description of the Advisory Committee's actions during the prior calendar year;

(D) a description of activities that the Advisory Committee proposed to undertake in the succeeding calendar year; and

(E) any recommendations for legislation, administrative action, or other action that the Advisory Committee considers appropriate.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date the Secretary receives the report under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a copy of the report, including any additional findings or recommendations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(g) TERMINATION.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3119. REPORT ON COVERED AIR CARRIER CHANGE, CANCELLATION, AND BAGGAGE FEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of existing airline industry change, cancellation, and bag fees and the current industry practice for handling changes to or cancellation of ticketed travel on covered air carriers.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall consider, at a minimum—

(1) whether and how each covered air carrier calculates its change fees, cancellation fees, and bag fees; and

(2) the relationship between the cost of the ticket and the date of change or cancellation as compared to the date of travel.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

SEC. 3120. ENFORCEMENT OF AVIATION CONSUMER PROTECTION RULES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to consider and evaluate Department of Transportation enforcement of aviation consumer protection rules.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include an evaluation of—

(1) available enforcement mechanisms;

(2) any obstacles to enforcement; and

(3) trends in Department of Transportation enforcement actions.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the study, including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

SEC. 3121. DIMENSIONS FOR PASSENGER SEATS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall initiate a proceeding to study the minimum seat pitch for passenger seats on aircraft operated by air carriers (as defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code).

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing any minimum seat pitch under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider the safety of passengers, including passengers with disabilities.

SEC. 3122. CELL PHONE VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 417, as amended by section 2307 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 41726. Cell phone voice communications

''(a) PROHIBITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Transportation may issue regulations—

''(1) to prohibit an individual on an aircraft from engaging in voice communications using a mobile communications device during a flight of that aircraft in scheduled passenger interstate or intrastate air transportation; and

''(2) that exempt from the prohibition described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) any member of the flight crew on duty on an aircraft;

''(B) any flight attendant on duty on an aircraft; and

''(C) any Federal law enforcement officer acting in an official capacity.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) FLIGHT.—The term 'flight' means, with respect to an aircraft, the period beginning when the aircraft takes off and ending when the aircraft lands.

''(2) MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'mobile communications device' means any portable wireless telecommunications equipment utilized for the transmission or reception of voice data.

''(B) LIMITATION.—The term 'mobile communications device' does not include a phone installed on an aircraft.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents at the beginning of chapter 417, as amended by section 2307 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 41725 the following:

''41726. Cell phone voice communications.''.

SEC. 3123. AVAILABILITY OF SLOTS FOR NEW ENTRANT AIR CARRIERS AT NEWARK LIBERTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—The terms ''new entrant air carrier'' and ''slot'' have the meanings given those terms in section 41714(h) of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SLOTS FOR NEW ENTRANT AIR CARRIERS.—The Secretary shall, annually, by granting exemptions from the requirements under part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or by other means, make not less than 8 slots at Newark Liberty International Airport available to enable new entrant air carriers to provide air transportation.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply in any year—

(1) new entrant air carriers operate 5 percent or more of the total number of slots at Newark Liberty International Airport; or

(2) the Secretary makes a determination that making slots available to enable new entrant air carriers to provide air transportation at that airport is not in the public interest and doing so would significantly increase operational delays.

(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives not later than 14 calendar days after the date a determination is made under subsection (c)(2), including the reasons for that determination.

Subtitle B—Essential Air Service

SEC. 3201. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION EXTENSION.—Section 41742(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''$150,000,000'' and all that follows though ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''$155,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 41731(a)(1)(A) is amended by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

''(ii) was determined, on or after October 1, 1988, and before December 1, 2012, under this subchapter by the Secretary of Transportation to be eligible to receive subsidized small community air service under section 41736(a);''.

(c) SEASONAL SERVICE.—The Secretary of Transportation may consider the flexibility of current operational dates and airport accessibility to meet local community needs when issuing requests for proposal of essential air service at seasonal airports.

SEC. 3202. SMALL COMMUNITY AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION.—Section 41743(e)(2) is amended to read as follows:

''(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2017 to carry out this section. Such sums shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 41743(c)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) SIZE.—On the date of the most recent notice of order soliciting community proposals issued by the Secretary under this section, the airport serving the community or consortium—

''(A) was not larger than a small hub airport, as determined using the Department of Transportation's most recent published classification; and

''(B)(i) had insufficient air carrier service; or

''(ii) had unreasonably high air fares.''.

SEC. 3203. SMALL COMMUNITY PROGRAM AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 41743(c)(4) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(B) SAME PROJECTS.—'' before the second sentence and indenting appropriately;

(2) by inserting ''(A) IN GENERAL.—'' before the first sentence and indenting appropriately;

(3) in subparagraph (B), as designated by this subsection, by striking ''No community'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subparagraph (C)''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may waive the limitation under subparagraph (B) related to projects that are the same if the Secretary determines that the community or consortium spent little or no money on its previous project or encountered industry or environmental challenges, due to circumstances that were reasonably beyond the control of the community or consortium.''.

(b) AUTHORITY TO MAKE AGREEMENTS.—Section 41743(e)(1) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''The Secretary may amend the scope of a grant agreement at the request of the community or consortium and any participating air carrier, and may limit the scope of a grant agreement to only the elements using grant assistance or to only the elements achieved, if the Secretary determines that the amendment is reasonably consistent with the original purpose of the project.''.

SEC. 3204. WAIVERS.

Section 41732 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) WAIVERS.—Notwithstanding section 41733(e), upon request by an eligible place, the Secretary may waive, in whole or in part, subsections (a) and (b) of this section or subsections (a) through (c) of section 41734. A waiver issued under this subsection shall remain in effect for a limited period of time, as determined by the Secretary.''.

SEC. 3205. WORKING GROUP ON IMPROVING AIR SERVICE TO SMALL COMMUNITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a working group—

(1) to identify obstacles to attracting and maintaining air transportation service to and from small communities; and

(2) to develop recommendations for maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

(b) OUTREACH.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall consult with—

(1) interested Governors;

(2) representatives of State and local agencies, and other officials and groups, representing rural States and other rural areas;

(3) other representatives of relevant State and local agencies; and

(4) members of the public with experience in aviation safety, pilot training, economic development, and related issues.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), the working group shall—

(1) consider whether funding for, and terms of, current or potential new programs is sufficient to help ensure continuation of or improvement to air transportation service to small communities, including the Essential Air Service Program and the Small Community Air Service Development Program;

(2) identify initiatives to help support pilot training to provide air transportation service to small communities;

(3) consider whether Federal funding for airports serving small communities, including airports that have lost air transportation services or had decreased enplanements in recent years, is adequate to ensure that

small communities have access to quality, affordable air transportation service;

(4) consider potential improvements in pilot training and any constraints affecting pilot career pathways that, if addressed, would increase both aviation safety and pilot supply;

(5) identify innovative State or local efforts that have established public-private partnerships that are successful in attracting and retaining air transportation service in small communities; and

(6) consider such other issues as the Secretary and Administrator consider appropriate.

(d) COMPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The working group shall be facilitated through the Administrator or the Administrator's designee.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the working group shall be appointed by the Administrator and shall include representatives of—

(A) State and local government, including State and local aviation officials;

(B) State Governors;

(C) aviation safety experts;

(D) economic development officials; and

(E) the traveling public from small communities.

(e) REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report, including—

(1) a summary of the views expressed by the participants in the outreach under subsection (b);

(2) a description of the working group's findings, including the identification of any areas of general consensus among the non-Federal participants in the outreach under subsection (b); and

(3) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would assist in maintaining and improving air transportation service to and from small communities.

TITLE IV—NEXTGEN AND FAA ORGANIZATION

SEC. 4001. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(3) ADS–B.—The term ''ADS–B'' means automatic dependent surveillance–broadcast.

(4) ADS–B OUT.—The term ''ADS–B Out'' means automatic dependent surveillance–broadcast with the ability to transmit information from the aircraft to ground stations and to other equipped aircraft.

(5) NEXTGEN.—The term ''NextGen'' means the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

Subtitle A—Next Generation Air Transportation System

SEC. 4101. RETURN ON INVESTMENT ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Administrator's assessment of each NextGen program.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an estimate of the date that each NextGen program will have a positive return on investment;

(2) an assessment of the impacts of each such program for—

(A) the Federal Government; and

(B) the users of the national airspace system;

(3) a description of how each such program directly contributes to a more safe and efficient air traffic control system; and

(4) the status of NextGen programs and of the projected return on investment for each such program.

(c) NEXTGEN PRIORITY LIST.—Based on the assessment under subsection (a) the Administrator shall—

(1) develop, in coordination with the NextGen Advisory Committee and considering the need for a balance between long-term and near-term user benefits, a prioritization of each NextGen program;

(2) include the priority list in the report under subsection (b); and

(3) prepare budget submissions to reflect the current status of NextGen programs and projected returns on investment for each program.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) KEY MILESTONES.—The term ''key milestones'' includes cost and deployment schedule, and benefits anticipated in the most recent baseline.

(2) RETURN ON INVESTMENT.—The term ''return on investment'' means the cost associated with technologies that are required by law or policy as compared to the benefits derived from such technologies by a government or a user of airspace.

(e) REPEAL OF NEXTGEN PRIORITIES.—Section 202 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act are repealed.

SEC. 4102. ENSURING FAA READINESS TO USE NEW TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure the capability of the Administration to receive space-based ADS-B data; and

(2) use the data described under paragraph (1) to provide positive air traffic control, including separation of aircraft over the oceans and other specific regions not covered by radar.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and biannually thereafter until the date that the Administrator certifies that the Administration has the capability to receive space-based ADS–B data, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(1) details the actions the Administrator has taken to ensure 2018 readiness and usage;

(2) details the actions that remain to be taken to implement such capability;

(3) includes a schedule for expected completion of each outstanding action described in paragraph (2); and

(4) includes a detailed description of the investment decisions and requests for funding made by the Administrator that are consistent with the terrestrial ADS–B implementation to ensure a sustained program beyond 2018.

SEC. 4103. NEXTGEN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.

(a) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.—Section 214 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS.—The Administrator shall establish annual NextGen performance goals for each of the performance metrics set forth in subsection (a) to meet the performance metric baselines identified under subsection (b). Such goals shall be consistent with the annual performance objectives established by the senior policy committee (commonly known as the 'NextGen Advisory Committee') established under section 710 of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

(b) NEXTGEN METRICS REPORT.—Section 710(e)(2) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) a description of the progress made in meeting the annual NextGen performance goals relative to the performance metrics established under section 214 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

(c) CHIEF NEXTGEN OFFICER.—Section 106(s)(3) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(B), by adding at the end the following: ''In evaluating the performance of the Chief NextGen Officer for the purpose of awarding a bonus under this subparagraph, the Administrator shall consider the progress toward meeting the NextGen performance goals established pursuant to section 214(d) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following: ''The annual performance goals set forth in the agreement shall include quantifiable NextGen airspace performance objectives regarding efficiency, productivity, capacity, and safety, which shall be established by the senior policy committee (commonly known as the 'NextGen Advisory Committee') established under section 710 of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108–176; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).''.

SEC. 4104. FACILITY OUTAGE CONTINGENCY PLANS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On September 26, 2014, an Administration contract employee deliberately started a fire that destroyed critical equipment at the Administration's Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center (referred to in this section as the ''Chicago Center'') in Aurora, Illinois.

(2) As a result of the damage, Chicago Center was unable to control air traffic for more than 2 weeks, thousands of flights were delayed or cancelled into and out of O'Hare International Airport and Midway Airport in Chicago, and aviation stakeholders and airlines reportedly lost over $350,000,000.

(3) According to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, the fire at Chicago Center demonstrated that the Administration's contingency plans for the Chicago Center and the airspace it controls do not ensure redundancy and resiliency for sustained operations.

(4) Further, the Inspector General found that Chicago Center incident highlighted the limited flexibility and lack of resiliency in critical elements of the Administration's current air traffic control infrastructure, including limited communication capacity and the inability to easily transfer control of airspace and flight plans.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE CONTINGENCY PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall update the Administration's comprehensive contingency plan to address potential air traffic facility outages that could have a major impact on operation of the national airspace system.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the plan is updated under subsection (b), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the update, including any recommendations for ensuring air traffic facility outages do not have a major impact on operation of the national airspace system.

SEC. 4105. ADS–B MANDATE ASSESSMENT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Administration's ADS–B program is expected to be the centerpiece of the NextGen effort at the Administration, but the satellite-based system faces uncertainty and controversy.

(2) In May 2010, the Administration published a final rule that mandated airspace users be equipped with ADS–B Out avionics by January 1, 2020.

(3) Subsequently, in April 2015, the Administration announced completion of the ADS–B ground-based radio infrastructure. However, the ADS–B program faces considerable uncertainty and unanswered questions about whether or not the 2020 mandate is still meaningful.

(4) In 2014, the Office of the Inspector General found that while ADS–B is providing benefits where radar is limited or nonexistent in places such as the Gulf of Mexico, the system is providing only limited initial services to pilots and air traffic controllers in domestic airspace.

(5) The Office of the Inspector General also found, in 2014, that all elements of the system, such as avionics, the ground infrastructure, and controller automation systems, had not yet been tested in combination to determine if the overall system can be used in congested airspace and perform as well as existing radar, much less allow aircraft to fly closer together. This is referred to as ''end-to-end testing.''

(6) When this report was issued, commercial and general aviation stakeholders voiced serious concerns that equipping with new avionics for the 2020 mandate will be difficult due to the cost and limited availability of avionics, and capacity of certified repair stations to install avionics.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall assess—

(1) Administration and industry readiness to meet the ADS–B mandate by 2020;

(2) changes to ADS–B program since May 2010; and

(3) additional options to comply with the mandate and consequences, both for individual system users and for the overall safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, for noncompliance.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (b) is complete, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward meeting the ADS–B mandate by 2020, including any recommendations of the Inspector General to carry out such mandate.

SEC. 4106. NEXTGEN INTEROPERABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To implement a more effective international strategy for achieving NextGen interoperability with foreign countries, the Administrator shall take the following actions:

(1) Conduct a gap analysis to identify potential risks to NextGen interoperability with other Air Navigation Service Providers and establish a schedule for periodically reevaluating such risks.

(2) Develop a plan that identifies and documents actions the Administrator will undertake to mitigate such risks, using information from the gap analysis as a basis for making management decisions about how to allocate resources for such actions.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the analysis conducted under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) and on the actions the Administrator has taken under paragraph (2) of such subsection.

SEC. 4107. NEXTGEN TRANSITION MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(1) identify and analyze technical and operational maturity gaps in NextGen transition and implementation plans; and

(2) develop a plan to mitigate the gaps identified in paragraph (1).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the actions taken to carry out the plan required by subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 4108. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEXTGEN OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To help ensure that NextGen operational improvements are fully implemented in the midterm, the Administrator shall—

(1) work with airlines and other users of the national airspace system (referred to in this section as ''NAS'') to develop and implement a system to systematically track the use of existing performance based navigation (referred to in this section as ''PBN'') procedures;

(2) require consideration of other key operational improvements in planning for NextGen improvements, including identifying additional metroplexes for PBN projects, non-metroplex PBN procedures, as well as the identification of unused flight routes for decommissioning;

(3) develop and implement guidelines for ensuring timely inclusion of appropriate stakeholders, including airport representatives, in the planning and implementation of NextGen improvement efforts; and

(4) assure that NextGen planning documents provide stakeholders information on how and when operational improvements are expected to achieve NextGen goals and targets.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements of subsection (a), and on the schedule and process that will be used to implement PBN at additional airports, including information on how the Administration will partner and coordinate with private industry to ensure expeditious implementation of performance based navigation.

SEC. 4109. CYBERSECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(1) identify and implement ways to better incorporate cybersecurity measures as a systems characteristic at all levels and phases of the architecture and design of air traffic control programs, including NextGen programs;

(2) develop a threat model that will identify vulnerabilities to better focus resources to mitigate cybersecurity risks;

(3) develop an appropriate plan to mitigate cybersecurity risk, to respond to an attack, intrusion, or otherwise unauthorized access and to adapt to evolving cybersecurity threats; and

(4) foster a cybersecurity culture throughout the Administration, including air traffic control programs and relevant contractors.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4110. SECURING AIRCRAFT AVIONICS SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall consider revising Federal Aviation Administration regulations regarding airworthiness certification—

(1) to address cybersecurity for avionics systems, including software components; and

(2) to require that aircraft avionics systems used for flight guidance or aircraft control be secured against unauthorized access via passenger in-flight entertainment systems through such means as the Administrator determines appropriate to protect the avionics systems from unauthorized external and internal access.

(b) CONSIDERATION.—The Administrator's consideration and any action taken under subsection (a) shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group under section 5029(d) of this Act.

SEC. 4111. DEFINING NEXTGEN.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) assess how the line items included in the Administration's NextGen budget request relate to the goals and expected outcomes of NextGen, including how NextGen programs directly contribute to a measurably safer and more efficient air traffic control system; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations for the removal of line items that do not pertain to the overall vision for NextGen.

SEC. 4112. HUMAN FACTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to avoid having to subsequently modify products and services developed as a part of NextGen, the Administrator shall—

(1) recognize and incorporate, in early design phases of all relevant NextGen programs, the human factors and procedural and airspace implications of stated goals and associated technical changes; and

(2) ensure that a human factors specialist, separate from the research and certification groups, is directly involved with the NextGen approval process.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4113. MAJOR ACQUISITION REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate the current acquisition practices of the Administration to ensure that such practices—

(1) identify the current estimated costs for each acquisition system, including all segments;

(2) separately identify cumulative amounts for acquisition costs, technical refresh, and other enhancements in order to identify the total baselined and re-baselined costs for each system; and

(3) account for the way funds are being used when reporting to managers, Congress, and other stakeholders.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4114. EQUIPAGE MANDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Before NextGen-related equipage mandates are imposed on users of the national airspace system, the Administrator, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, shall—

(1) provide a statement of estimated cost and benefits that is based upon mature and stable technical specifications; and

(2) create a schedule for Administration deliverables and investments by both users and the Administration, including for procedure and airspace design, infrastructure deployment, and training.

SEC. 4115. WORKFORCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) identify and assess barriers to attracting, developing, training, and retaining a talented workforce in the areas of systems engineering, architecture, systems integration, digital communications, and cybersecurity;

(2) develop a comprehensive plan to attract, develop, train, and retain talented individuals; and

(3) identify the resources needed to attract, develop, and retain this talent.

(b) REPORT.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4116. ARCHITECTURAL LEADERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to provide an adequate technical foundation for steering NextGen's technical governance and managing inevitable changes in technology and operations, the Administrator shall—

(1) develop a plan that—

(A) uses an architecture leadership community and an effective governance approach to assure a proper balance between documents and artifacts and to provide high-level guidance;

(B) enables effective management and communication of dependencies;

(C) provides flexibility and the ability to evolve to ensure accommodation of future needs; and

(D) communicates changing circumstances in order to align agency and airspace user expectations;

(2) determine the feasibility of conducting a small number of experiments among the Administration's system integration partners to prototype candidate solutions for establishing and managing a vibrant architectural community; and

(3) develop a method to initiate, grow, and engage a capable architecture community, from both within and outside of the Administration, who will expand the breadth and depth of expertise that is steering architectural changes.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4117. PROGRAMMATIC RISK MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To better inform the Administration's decisions regarding the prioritization of efforts and allocation of resources for NextGen, the Administrator shall—

(1) solicit input from specialists in probability and statistics to identify and prioritize the programmatic and implementation risks to NextGen; and

(2) develop a method to manage and mitigate the risks identified in paragraph (1).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4118. NEXTGEN PRIORITIZATION.

The Administrator shall consider expediting NextGen modernization implementation projects at public use airports that share airspace with active military training ranges and do not have radar coverage where such implementation would improve the safety of aviation operations.

Subtitle B—Administration Organization and Employees

SEC. 4201. COST-SAVING INITIATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To ensure that Administration initiatives are being implemented in a timely and fiscally responsible manner, the Administrator shall—

(1) identify and implement agencywide cost-saving initiatives; and

(2) develop appropriate schedules and metrics to measure whether the initiatives are successful in reducing costs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward implementing the requirements under subsection (a).

SEC. 4202. TREATMENT OF ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES DURING FURLOUGHS.

(a) DEFINITION OF ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEE.—In this section, the term ''essential employee'' means an employee of the Administration who performs work involving the safety of human life or the protection of property, as determined by the Administrator.

(b) IN GENERAL.—In implementing spending reductions under Federal law, the Administrator may furlough 1 or more employees of the Administration, except an essential employee, if the Administrator determines the furlough is necessary to achieve the required spending reductions.

(c) TRANSFER OF BUDGETARY RESOURCES.—The Administrator may transfer budgetary resources within the Administration to carry out subsection (b), except that the transfer may only be made to maintain essential employees.

SEC. 4203. CONTROLLER CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall require that an in-person interview be conducted with each individual applying for an air traffic control specialist position before that individual may be hired to fill that position.

(b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish guidelines regarding the in-person interview process described in subsection (a).

SEC. 4204. HIRING OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44506 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) HIRING OF CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SPECIALISTS.—

''(1) CONSIDERATION OF APPLICANTS.—

''(A) ENSURING SELECTION OF MOST QUALIFIED APPLICANTS.—In appointing individuals to the position of air traffic controllers, the Administrator shall give preferential consideration to qualified individuals maintaining 52 consecutive weeks of air traffic control experience involving the full-time active separation of air traffic after receipt of an air traffic certification or air traffic control facility rating within 5 years of application while serving at—

''(i) a Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control facility;

''(ii) a civilian or military air traffic control facility of the Department of Defense; or

''(iii) a tower operating under contract with the Federal Aviation Administration under section 47124 of this title.

''(B) CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL APPLICANTS.—The Administrator shall consider additional applicants for the position of air traffic controller by referring an approximately equal number of employees for appointment among the 2 applicant pools. The number of employees referred for consideration from each group shall not differ by more than 10 percent.

''(i) POOL ONE.—Applicants who:

''(I) have successfully completed air traffic controller training and graduated from an institution participating in the Collegiate Training Initiative program maintained under subsection (c)(1) who have received from the institution—

''(aa) an appropriate recommendation; or

''(bb) an endorsement certifying that the individual would have met the requirements in effect as of December 31, 2013, for an appropriate recommendation;

''(II) are eligible for a veterans recruitment appointment pursuant to section 4214 of title 38, United States Code, and provide a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty within 120 days of the announcement closing;

''(III) are eligible veterans (as defined in section 4211 of title 38, United States Code) maintaining aviation experience obtained in the course of the individual's military experience; or

''(IV) are preference eligible veterans (as defined in section 2108 of title 5, United States Code).

''(ii) POOL TWO.—Applicants who apply under a vacancy announcement recruiting from all United States citizens.

''(2) USE OF BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—

''(A) BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—The Administration shall not use any biographical assessment when hiring under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B)(i) of paragraph (1).

''(B) RECONSIDERATION OF APPLICANTS DISQUALIFIED ON THE BASIS OF BIOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—If an individual described in subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B)(i) of paragraph (1) who applied for the position of air traffic controller with the Administration in response to Vacancy Announcement FAA–AMC–14–ALLSRCE–33537 (issued on February 10, 2014) and was disqualified from the position as the result of a biographical assessment, the Administrator shall provide the applicant an opportunity to reapply as soon as practicable for the position under the revised hiring practices.

''(ii) WAIVER OF AGE RESTRICTION.—The Administrator shall waive any maximum age

restriction for the position of air traffic controller with the Administration that would otherwise disqualify an individual from the position if the individual—

''(I) is reapplying for the position pursuant to clause (i) on or before December 31, 2017; and

''(II) met the maximum age requirement on the date of the individual's previous application for the position during the interim hiring process.

''(3) MAXIMUM ENTRY AGE FOR EXPERIENCED CONTROLLERS.—Notwithstanding section 3307 of title 5, United States Code, the maximum limit of age for an original appointment to a position as an air traffic controller shall be 35 years of age for those maintaining 52 weeks of air traffic control experience involving the full-time active separation of air traffic after receipt of an air traffic certification or air traffic control facility rating in a civilian or military air traffic control facility.''.

(b) NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES.—The Administrator shall consider directly notifying secondary schools and institutes of higher learning, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Minority Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities, of the vacancy announcement under section 44506(f)(1)(B)(ii) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 4205. COMPUTATION OF BASIC ANNUITY FOR CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8415(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(f) The annuity of an air traffic controller or former air traffic controller retiring under section 8412(a) is computed under subsection (a), except that if the individual has at least 5 years of service in any combination as:

''(1) an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i);

''(2) a first level supervisor of an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i); or

''(3) a second level supervisor of an air traffic controller as defined by section 2109(1)(A)(i);

so much of the annuity as is computed with respect to such type of service shall be computed by multiplying 1 7/10 percent of the individual's average pay by the years of such service.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall be deemed to be effective on December 12, 2003.

(c) PROCEDURES REQUIRED.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall establish such procedures as are necessary to provide for—

(1) notification to each annuitant affected by the amendments made by this section;

(2) recalculation of the benefits of affected annuitants;

(3) an adjustment to applicable monthly benefit amounts pursuant to such recalculation, to begin as soon as is practicable; and

(4) a lump sum payment to each affected annuitant equal to the additional total benefit amount that such annuitant would have received had the amendment made by subsection (a) been in effect on December 12, 2003.

SEC. 4206. AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES AT AVIATION EVENTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND RELATED SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall provide air traffic services and aviation safety support for aviation events, including airshows and fly-ins, without the imposition or collection of any fee, tax, or other charge for that purpose. Amounts for the provision of such services and support shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise available for the Federal Aviation Administration.

(b) DETERMINATION OF SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO BE PROVIDED.—In determining the services and support to be provided for an aviation event for purposes of subsection (a), the Administrator shall take into account the following:

(1) The services and support required to meet levels of activity at prior events, if any, similar to the event.

(2) The anticipated need for services and support at the event.

SEC. 4207. FULL ANNUITY SUPPLEMENT FOR CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS.

Section 8421a of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''The amount'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subsection (c), the amount'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) This section shall not apply to an individual described in section 8412(e) during any period in which the individual, after separating from the service as described in that section, is employed full-time as an air traffic control instructor under contract with the Federal Aviation Administration, including an instructor working at an on-site facility (such as an airport).''.

SEC. 4208. INCLUSION OF DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE IN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 40122(g)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (I)(iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(J) subject to paragraph (4), section 6329, relating to disabled veteran leave.''.

(b) CERTIFICATION OF LEAVE.—Section 40122(g) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) CERTIFICATION OF DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE.—In order to verify that leave credited to an employee pursuant to paragraph (2)(J) is used for treating a service-connected disability, that employee shall, notwithstanding section 6329(c) of title 5, submit to the Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management of the Federal Aviation Administration certification, in such form and manner as the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may prescribe, that the employee used that leave for purposes of being furnished treatment for that disability by a health care provider.''.

(c) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any employee of the Federal Aviation Administration hired on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall prescribe policies and procedures to carry out the amendments made by this section that are comparable, to the maximum extent practicable, to the regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management under section 6329 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter until the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish on a publicly accessible Internet Web site a report on—

(1) the effect carrying out this section and the amendments made by this section has had on the workforce; and

(2) the number of veterans benefitting from carrying out this section and the amendments made by this section.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 5001. NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD INVESTIGATIVE OFFICERS.

Section 1113 is amended by striking subsection (h).

SEC. 5002. PERFORMANCE-BASED NAVIGATION.

Section 213(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) NOTIFICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS.—Not later than 90 days before applying a categorical exclusion under this subsection to a new procedure at an OEP airport, the Administrator shall—

''(A) notify and consult with the operator of the airport at which the procedure would be implemented; and

''(B) consider consultations or other engagement with the community in the which the airport is located to inform the public of the procedure.

''(4) REVIEW OF CERTAIN CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall review any decision of the Administrator made on or after February 14, 2012, and before the date of enactment of this paragraph to grant a categorical exclusion under this subsection with respect to a procedure to be implemented at an OEP airport that was a material change from procedures previously in effect at the airport to determine if the implementation of the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located if the operator of that airport—

''(i) requests such a review; and

''(ii) demonstrates that there is good cause to believe that the implementation of the procedure had such an effect.

''(B) CONTENT OF REVIEW.—If, in conducting a review under subparagraph (A) with respect to a procedure implemented at an OEP airport, the Administrator, in consultation with the operator of the airport, determines that implementing the procedure had a significant effect on the human environment in the community in which the airport is located, the Administrator shall—

''(i) consult with the operator of the airport to identify measures to mitigate the effect of the procedure on the human environment; and

''(ii) in conducting such consultations, consider the use of alternative flight paths that do not substantially degrade the efficiencies achieved by the implementation of the procedure being reviewed.

''(C) HUMAN ENVIRONMENT DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term 'human environment' has the meaning given such term in section 1508.14 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this paragraph).''.

SEC. 5003. OVERFLIGHTS OF NATIONAL PARKS.

Section 40128 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking ''the'' before ''title 14''; and

(2) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

''(f) TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—This section shall not apply to any air tour operator while flying over or near any Federal land managed by the Director of the National Park Service, including Lake Mead National Recreation Area, solely as a transportation route, to conduct an air tour over the Grand Canyon National Park.

''(2) EN ROUTE.—For purposes of this subsection, an air tour operator flying over the Hoover Dam in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area en route to the Grand Canyon National Park shall be deemed to be flying solely as a transportation route.''.

SEC. 5004. NAVIGABLE AIRSPACE ANALYSIS FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH SITE RUNWAYS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44718(b)(1) is amended–

(1) by striking ''air navigation facilities and equipment'' and inserting ''air or space navigation facilities and equipment'';

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) the impact on launch and reentry for launch and reentry vehicles arriving or departing from a launch site or reentry site licensed by the Secretary.''.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to implement the amendments made by subsection (a).

SEC. 5005. SURVEY AND REPORT ON SPACEPORT DEVELOPMENT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the existing system of spaceports licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration that includes recommendations regarding—

(1) the extent to which, and the manner in which, the Federal Government could participate in the construction, improvement, development, or maintenance of such spaceports; and

(2) potential funding sources.

SEC. 5006. AVIATION FUEL.

(a) USE OF UNLEADED AVIATION GASOLINE.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall allow the use of an unleaded aviation gasoline in an aircraft as a replacement for a leaded gasoline if the Administrator—

(1) determines that the unleaded aviation gasoline qualifies as a replacement for an approved leaded gasoline;

(2) identifies the aircraft and engines that are eligible to use the qualified replacement unleaded gasoline; and

(3) adopts a process (other than the traditional means of certification) to allow eligible aircraft and engines to operate using qualified replacement unleaded gasoline in a manner that ensures safety.

(b) TIMING.—The Administrator shall adopt the process described in subsection (a)(3) not later than 180 days after the later of—

(1) the date on which the Administration completes the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative; or

(2) the date on which the American Society for Testing and Materials publishes a production specification for an unleaded aviation gasoline.

SEC. 5007. COMPREHENSIVE AVIATION PREPAREDNESS PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and representatives of other Federal departments and agencies, as necessary, shall develop a comprehensive national aviation communicable disease preparedness plan.

(b) MINIMUM COMPONENTS.—The plan developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be developed in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, including State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, air carriers, first responders, and the general public;

(2) provide for the development of a communications system or protocols for providing comprehensive, appropriate, and up-to-date information regarding communicable disease threats and preparedness between all relevant stakeholders;

(3) document the roles and responsibilities of relevant Federal department and agencies, including coordination requirements;

(4) provide guidance to air carriers, airports, and other appropriate aviation stakeholders on how to develop comprehensive communicable disease preparedness plans for their respective organizations, in accordance with the plan to be developed under subsection (a);

(5) be scalable and adaptable so that the plan can be used to address the full range of communicable disease threats and incidents;

(6) provide information on communicable threats and response training resources for all relevant stakeholders, including Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial government employees, airport officials, aviation industry employees and contractors, first responders, and health officials;

(7) develop protocols for the dissemination of comprehensive, up-to-date, and appropriate information to the traveling public concerning communicable disease threats and preparedness;

(8) be updated periodically to incorporate lessons learned with supplemental information; and

(9) be provided in writing, electronically, and accessible via the Internet.

(c) INTERAGENCY FRAMEWORK.—The plan developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be conducted under the existing interagency framework for national level all hazards emergency preparedness planning or another appropriate framework; and

(2) be consistent with the obligations of the United States under international agreements.

SEC. 5008. ADVANCED MATERIALS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 445 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 44518. Advanced Materials Center of Excellence

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall continue operation of the Advanced Materials Center of Excellence (referred to in this section as the 'Center') under its structure as in effect on March 1, 2016, which shall focus on applied research and training on the durability and maintainability of advanced materials in transport airframe structures.

''(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Center shall—

''(1) promote and facilitate collaboration among academia, the Transportation Division of the Federal Aviation Administration, and the commercial aircraft industry, including manufacturers, commercial air carriers, and suppliers; and

''(2) establish goals set to advance technology, improve engineering practices, and facilitate continuing education in relevant areas of study.

''(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator $500,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to carry out this section.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for chapter 445 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''44518. Advanced Materials Center of Excellence.''.

SEC. 5009. INTERFERENCE WITH AIRLINE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) complete a study of crimes of violence (as defined in section 16 of title 18, United States Code) committed against airline customer service representatives while they are performing their duties and on airport property; and

(2) submit the findings of the study, including any recommendations, to Congress.

(b) GAP ANALYSIS.—The study shall include a gap analysis to determine if State and local laws and resources are adequate to deter or otherwise address the crimes of violence described in subsection (a) and recommendations on how to address any identified gaps.

SEC. 5010. SECONDARY COCKPIT BARRIERS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Saracini Aviation Safety Act of 2016''.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue an order requiring installation of a secondary cockpit barrier on each new aircraft that is manufactured for delivery to a passenger air carrier in the United States operating under the provisions of part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 5011. GAO EVALUATION AND AUDIT.

Section 15(a)(1) of the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 165(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''2 years'' and inserting ''4 years''.

SEC. 5012. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS.

(a) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall establish performance measures relating to the administration of the Federal Aviation Administration, which shall, at a minimum, include measures to assess—

(1) the reduction of delays in the completion of projects; and

(2) the effectiveness of the Administration in achieving the goals described in section 47171 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary establishes performance measures in accordance with subsection (a), the Secretary shall establish performance targets relating to each of the measures described in that subsection.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to Congress a report describing the progress of the Secretary in meeting the performance targets established under subsection (b).

SEC. 5013. STAFFING OF CERTAIN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure appropriate staffing at the Core 30 air traffic control towers and associated terminal radar approach control facilities and air route traffic control centers and ensure, as appropriate, staffing levels at those control towers, facilities, and centers are not below the average number of air traffic controllers between the ''high'' and ''low'' staffing ranges, as specified in the document of the Federal Aviation Administration entitled, ''A Plan for the Future: 10-Year Strategy for Air Traffic Control Workforce 2015–2024''.

(b) RETENTION.—The Administrator shall review strategies to improve retention of experienced certified professional controllers at the control towers, facilities, and centers described in subsection (a)(1).

SEC. 5014. CRITICAL AIRFIELD MARKINGS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue a request for proposal for a study that includes—

(1) an independent, third-party study to assess the durability of Type III and Type I glass beads applied to critical markings over a 12-month period at no fewer than 2 primary airports in varying weather conditions to measure the retroflectivity levels of such markings on a quarterly basis; and

(2) a study at 2 other airports carried out by applying Type III beads on one half of the centerline and Type I beads to the other half and providing for assessments from pilots through surveys administered by a third party as to the visibility and performance of the Type III glass beads as compared to the Type I glass beads over a 6-month period.

SEC. 5015. RESEARCH AND DEPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN AIRFIELD PAVEMENT TECHNOLOGIES.

Using amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall carry out a program for the research and deployment of aircraft pavement technologies under which the Administrator makes grants to, and enters into cooperative agreements with, institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations that—

(1) research concrete and asphalt airfield pavement technologies that extend the life of airfield pavements;

(2) develop and conduct training;

(3) provide for demonstration projects; and

(4) promote the latest airfield pavement technologies to aid in the development of safer, more cost effective, and more durable airfield pavements.

SEC. 5016. REPORT ON GENERAL AVIATION FLIGHT SHARING.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report assessing the feasibility of flight sharing for general aviation. The report shall include an assessment of any regulations that may need to be updated to allow for safe and efficient flight sharing, including regulations imposing limitations on the forms of communication persons who hold private pilot certificates may use.

SEC. 5017. INCREASE IN DURATION OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to increase the duration of aircraft registrations for noncommercial general aviation aircraft to 5 years.

SEC. 5018. MODIFICATION OF LIMITATION OF LIABILITY RELATING TO AIRCRAFT.

Section 44112(b) is amended—

(1) by striking ''on land or water''; and

(2) by inserting ''operational'' before ''control''.

SEC. 5019. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF ILLEGAL DRUGS SEIZED AT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of illegal drugs, including heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine, seized by Federal authorities at international airports in the United States.

(b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall address, at a minimum—

(1) the types and quantities of drugs seized;

(2) the origin of the drugs seized;

(3) the airport at which the drugs were seized;

(4) the manner in which the drugs were seized; and

(5) the manner in which the drugs were transported.

(c) USE OF DATA; RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTION.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall use all available data. If the Comptroller General determines that additional data is needed to fully understand the extent to which illegal drugs enter the United States through international airports in the United States, the Comptroller General shall develop recommendations for the collection of that data.

(d) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subsection (a) that includes any recommendations developed under subsection (c).

SEC. 5020. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PREVENTING THE TRANSPORTATION OF DISEASE-CARRYING MOSQUITOES AND OTHER INSECTS ON COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Agriculture should, in coordination and consultation with the World Health Organization, develop a framework and guidance for the use of safe, effective, and nontoxic means of preventing the transportation of disease-carrying mosquitoes and other insects on commercial aircraft.

SEC. 5021. WORK PLAN FOR THE NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY/PHILADELPHIA METROPLEX PROGRAM.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall develop and publish in the Federal Register a work plan for the New York/New Jersey/Philadelphia metroplex program.

SEC. 5022. REPORT ON PLANS FOR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES IN THE NEW YORK CITY AND NEWARK REGION.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the Federal Aviation Administration's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark region for the 1-year period beginning on such date of enactment.

SEC. 5023. GAO STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE ALLIANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of certain cooperative agreements between United States air carriers and non-United States air carriers (referred to in this section as ''alliances''), which—

(1) have been created pursuant to section 41309 of title 49, United States Code; and

(2) have been exempted from antitrust laws (as defined in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12)) pursuant to section 41308 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—The study conducted under subsection (a) shall assess—

(1) the consequences of alliances, including reduced competition, stifling new entrants into markets, increasing prices in markets, and other adverse consequences;

(2) the representations made by air carriers to the Secretary of Transportation for the necessity of an antitrust exemption;

(3) the Department of Transportation's expectations of public benefits resulting from alliances, including whether such expected benefits were actually achieved;

(4) the adequacy of the Department of Transportation's efforts in the approval and monitoring of alliances, including possessing relevant experience and expertise in the fields of antitrust and consumer protection;

(5) whether there has been sufficient transparency in the approval of alliances, including opportunities for public review and feedback;

(6) the role of the Department of Justice in the oversight of alliances;

(7) whether there are alternatives to antitrust immunity that could be conferred that would also produce public benefits;

(8) whether alliances should be required to expire;

(9) the level of competition between air carriers who are members of the same alliance;

(10) the level of competition between alliances;

(11) whether the Department of Transportation should amend, modify, or revoke any exemption from the antitrust laws granted by the Secretary of Transportation in connection with an alliance; and

(12) the effect of alliances on the number and quality of jobs for United States air carrier flight crew employees, including the share of alliance flying done by such employees.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations on the reforms needed to improve competition and enhance choices for consumers, including—

(1) whether oversight of alliances should be exercised by the Department of Justice rather than by the Department of Transportation; and

(2) whether antitrust immunity for alliances should expire.

SEC. 5024. TREATMENT OF MULTI-YEAR LESSEES OF LARGE AND TURBINE-POWERED MULTIENGINE AIRCRAFT.

The Secretary of Transportation shall revise such regulations as may be necessary to ensure that multi-year lessees and owners of large and turbine-powered multiengine aircraft are treated equally for purposes of joint ownership policies of the Federal Aviation Administration.

SEC. 5025. EVALUATION OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) STUDY.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with representatives of the aviation community and institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1964 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))), shall conduct a study to evaluate the potential impact of emerging technologies, such as electric propulsion and autonomous control, on the current state of aircraft design, operations, maintenance, and licensing.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that summarizes the results of the study conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 5026. STUDENT OUTREACH REPORT.

Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress that describes the Administration's existing outreach efforts, such as the STEM Aviation and Space Education Outreach Program, to elementary and secondary students who are interested in careers in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics—

(1) to prepare and inspire such students for aeronautical careers; and

(2) to mitigate an anticipated shortage of pilots and other aviation professionals.

SEC. 5027. RIGHT TO PRIVACY WHEN USING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Aviation Administration, as appropriate, shall upon request of a private aircraft owner or operator, block the registration number of the aircraft of the owner or operator from any public dissemination or display, except in data made available to a Government agency, for the noncommercial flights of the owner or operator.

SEC. 5028. CONDUCT OF SECURITY SCREENING BY THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AT CERTAIN AIRPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide for security screening to be conducted by the Transportation Security Administration at, and provide all necessary staff and equipment to, any airport—

(1) that lost commercial air service on or after January 1, 2013; and

(2) the operator of which, following the loss described in paragraph (1), submits to the Administrator—

(A) a request for security screening to be conducted at the airport by the Transportation Security Administration; and

(B) written confirmation of a commitment from a commercial air carrier—

(i) that the air carrier wants to provide commercial air service at the airport; and

(ii) that such service will commence not later than 1 year after the date of the submission of the request under subparagraph (A).

(b) DEADLINE.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall ensure that the process of implementing security screening by the Transportation Security Administration at an airport described in subsection (a) is complete not later than the later of—

(1) the date that is 90 days after the date on which the operator of the airport submits to the Administrator a request for such screening under paragraph (2)(A) of that subsection; or

(2) the date on which the air carrier intends to provide commercial air service at the airport.

(c) EFFECT ON OTHER AIRPORTS.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall carry out this section in a manner that does not negatively affect operations at airports that are provided security screening by the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. 5029. AVIATION CYBERSECURITY.

(a) COMPREHENSIVE AVIATION FRAMEWORK.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall facilitate and support the development of a comprehensive framework of principles and policies to reduce cybersecurity risks to the national airspace system, civil aviation, and agency information systems.

(2) SCOPE.—As part of the principles and policies under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) clarify cybersecurity roles and responsibilities of offices and employees, including governance structures of any advisory committees addressing cybersecurity at the Federal Aviation Administration;

(B) recognize the interactions of different components of the national airspace system and the interdependent and interconnected nature of aircraft and air traffic control systems;

(C) identify and implement objectives and actions to reduce cybersecurity risks to the air traffic control information systems, including actions to improve implementation of information security standards and best practices of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and policies and guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget for agency systems;

(D) support voluntary efforts by industry, RTCA, Inc., or standards-setting organizations to develop and identify consensus standards, best practices, and guidance on aviation systems information security protection, consistent with the activities described in section 2(e) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act (15 U.S.C. 272(e)); and

(E) establish guidelines for the voluntary sharing of information between and among aviation stakeholders pertaining to aviation-related cybersecurity incidents, threats, and vulnerabilities.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—In carrying out the activities under this section, the Administrator shall—

(A) coordinate with aviation stakeholders, including industry, airlines, manufacturers, airports, RTCA, Inc., and unions;

(B) consult with the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Homeland Security, Director of National Institute of Standards and Technology, the heads of other relevant agencies, and international regulatory authorities; and

(C) evaluate on a periodic basis, but not less than once every 2 years, the effectiveness of the principles established under this subsection.

(b) THREAT MODEL.—The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, shall implement the open recommendation issued in 2015 by the Government Accountability Office to assess the potential cost and timetable of developing and maintaining an agency-wide threat model to strengthen cybersecurity across the Federal Aviation Administration.

(c) SECURE ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND SYSTEMS.—

(1) IDENTITY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall implement open recommendations issued in 2014 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation—

(A) to work with the Federal Aviation Administration to revise its plan to effectively transition remaining users to require personal identity verification, including create a plan of actions and milestones with a planned completion date to monitor and track progress; and

(B) to work with the Director of the Office of Security of the Department of Transportation to develop or revise plans to effectively transition remaining facilities to require personal identity verification cards at the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) IDENTITY MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prepare a plan to implement the use of identity management, including personal identity verification, at the Federal Aviation Administration, consistent with section 504 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–274; 15 U.S.C. 7464) and section 225 of title II of division N of the Cybersecurity Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–113; 129 Stat. 2242).

(B) CONTENTS.—The plan shall include—

(i) an assessment of the current implementation and use of identity management, including personal identity verification, at the Federal Aviation Administration for secure access to government facilities and information systems, including a breakdown of requirements for use and identification of which systems and facilities are enabled to use personal identity verification; and

(ii) the actions to be taken, including specified deadlines, by the Chief Information Officers of the Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration to increase the implementation and use of such measures, with the goal of 100 percent implementation across the agency.

(3) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit the plan to the appropriate committees of Congress.

(4) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—The report submitted under paragraph (3) shall be in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) AIRCRAFT SECURITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Aircraft Systems Information Security Protection Working Group shall periodically review rulemaking, policy, and guidance for certification of avionics software and hardware (including any system on board an aircraft) and continued airworthiness in order to reduce cybersecurity risks to aircraft systems.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In conducting the reviews, the working group—

(A) shall assess the cybersecurity risks to aircraft systems, including recognizing the interactions of different components of the national airspace system and the interdependent and interconnected nature of aircraft and air traffic control systems;

(B) shall assess the extent to which existing rulemaking, policy, and guidance to promote safety also promote aircraft systems information security protection; and

(C) based on the results of subparagraphs (A) and (B), may make recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration if separate or additional rulemaking, policy, or guidance is needed to

address aircraft systems information security protection.

(3) IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW.—As part of its review under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2), the working group shall review the cybersecurity risks of in-flight entertainment systems to consider whether such systems can and should be isolated and separate from systems required for safe flight and operations, including reviewing standards for air gaps or other means determined appropriate.

(4) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In any recommendation under paragraph (2)(C), the working group shall identify a cost-effective and technology-neutral approach and incorporate voluntary consensus standards and best practices and international practices to the fullest extent possible.

(5) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the working group shall provide a report to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the findings of the review and any recommendations.

(B) CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a copy of each report provided by the working group.

(6) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—Each report submitted under this subsection shall be in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(e) CYBERSECURITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter until the completion date, provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing on the actions the Administrator has taken to improve information security management, including the steps taken to implement subsections (a), (b) and (c) and all of the issues and open recommendations identified in cybersecurity audit reports issued in 2014 and 2015 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation and the Government Accountability Office; and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, issue a final report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the steps taken to improve information security management, including implementation of subsections (a), (b) and (c) and all of the issues and open recommendations identified in the cybersecurity audit reports issued in 2014 and 2015 by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation and the Government Accountability Office.

SEC. 5030. PROHIBITIONS AGAINST SMOKING ON PASSENGER FLIGHTS.

Section 41706 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES.—

''(1) INCLUSION.—The use of an electronic cigarette shall be treated as smoking for purposes of this section.

''(2) ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'electronic cigarette' means a device that delivers nicotine or other substances to a user of the device in the form of a vapor that is inhaled to simulate the experience of smoking.''.

SEC. 5031. NATIONAL MULTIMODAL FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish a national multimodal freight advisory committee (referred to in this section as the ''Committee'') in the Department of Transportation, which shall consist of a balanced cross-section of public and private freight stakeholders representative of all freight transportation modes, including—

(1) airports, highways, ports and waterways, rail, and pipelines;

(2) shippers;

(3) carriers;

(4) freight-related associations;

(5) the freight industry workforce;

(6) State departments of transportation;

(7) local governments;

(8) metropolitan planning organizations;

(9) regional or local transportation authorities, such as port authorities;

(10) freight safety organizations; and

(11) university research centers.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Committee shall be to promote a safe, economically efficient, and environmentally sustainable national freight system.

(c) DUTIES.—The Committee, in consultation with State departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations, shall provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation on matters related to freight transportation in the United States, including—

(1) the implementation of freight transportation requirements;

(2) the establishment of a National Multimodal Freight Network under section 70103 of title 49, United States Code;

(3) the development of the national freight strategic plan under section 70102 of such title;

(4) the development of measures of conditions and performance in freight transportation;

(5) the development of freight transportation investment, data, and planning tools; and

(6) recommendations for Federal legislation.

(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each member of the Committee shall be sufficiently qualified to represent the interests of the member's specific stakeholder group, such as—

(1) general business and financial experience;

(2) experience or qualifications in the areas of freight transportation and logistics;

(3) experience in transportation planning, safety, technology, or workforce issues;

(4) experience representing employees of the freight industry;

(5) experience representing State or local governments or metropolitan planning organizations in transportation-related issues; or

(6) experience in trade economics relating to freight flows.

(e) SUPPORT STAFF, INFORMATION, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary of Transportation shall provide support staff for the Committee. Upon the request of the Committee, the Secretary shall provide such information, administrative services, and supplies as the Secretary considers necessary for the Committee to carry out its duties under this section.

SEC. 5032. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) AIRPORT CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS AT CONGESTED AIRPORTS.—Section 40104(c) is amended by striking ''47176'' and inserting ''47175''.

(b) CONSULTATION ON CARRIER RESPONSE NOT COVERED BY PLAN.—Section 41313(c)(16), as amended by section 3104 of this Act, is further amended by striking ''the foreign air carrier will consult'' and inserting ''will consult''.

(c) WEIGHING MAIL.—Section 41907 is amended by striking ''and –administrative'' and inserting ''and administrative''.

(d) FLIGHT ATTENDANT CERTIFICATION.—Section 44728 is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking ''chapter'' and inserting ''title''; and

(2) in subsection (d)(3), by striking ''is'' and inserting ''be''.

(e) SCHEDULE OF FEES.—Section 45301(a)(1) is amended by striking ''United States government'' and inserting ''United States Government''.

(f) CLASSIFIED EVIDENCE.—Section 46111(g)(2)(A) is amended by striking ''(18 U.S.C. App.)'' and inserting ''(18 U.S.C. App.))''.

(g) ALLOWABLE COST STANDARDS.—Section 47110(b)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''compatability'' and inserting ''compatibility''; and

(2) in subparagraph (D)(i), by striking ''climactic'' and inserting ''climatic''.

(h) DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED HUBZONE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—Section 47113(a)(3) is amended by striking ''(15 U.S.C. 632(o))'' and inserting ''(15 U.S.C. 632(p))''.

(i) DISCRETIONARY FUND.—Section 47115, as amended by section 1006 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by striking subsection (i); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (i).

(j) SPECIAL APPORTIONMENT CATEGORIES.—Section 47117(e)(1)(B) is amended by striking ''at least'' and inserting ''At least''.

(k) SOLICITATION AND CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS.—Section 47171(l) is amended by striking ''4371'' and inserting ''4321''.

(l) OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE.—Section 48104 is amended by striking ''(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—the'' and inserting ''The''.

(m) EXPENDITURES FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.—Section 9502(d)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''farms'' and inserting ''farms)''.

SEC. 5033. VISIBLE DETERRENT.

Section 1303 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1112) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) if the VIPR team is deployed to an airport, shall require, as appropriate based on risk, that the VIPR team conduct operations—

''(A) in the sterile area and any other areas to which only individuals issued security credentials have unescorted access; and

''(B) in non-sterile areas.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2007 through 2011'' and inserting ''such sums as necessary, including funds to develop not more than 60 VIPR teams, for fiscal years 2016 through 2017''.

SEC. 5034. LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FOR MASS CASUALTY AND ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENTS.

Section 2006(a)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 607(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (I) as subparagraphs (F) through (J), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

''(E) training exercises to enhance preparedness for and response to mass casualty

and active shooter incidents and security events at public locations, including airports and mass transit systems;''.

SEC. 5035. ASSISTANCE TO AIRPORTS AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS.

Section 2008(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesigning paragraphs (9) through (13) as paragraphs (10) through (14), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

''(9) enhancing the security and preparedness of secure and non-secure areas of eligible airports and surface transportation systems.''.

SEC. 5036. AUTHORIZATION OF CERTAIN FLIGHTS BY STAGE 2 AIRPLANES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 47534 of title 49, United States Code, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a pilot program to permit the operator of a Stage 2 airplane to operate that airplane in nonrevenue service into not more than four medium hub airports or nonhub airports if—

(1) the airport—

(A) is certified under part 139 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations;

(B) has a runway that—

(i) is longer than 8,000 feet and not less than 200 feet wide; and

(ii) is load bearing with a pavement classification number of not less than 38; and

(C) has a maintenance facility with a maintenance certificate issued under part 145 of such title; and

(2) the operator of the Stage 2 airplane operates not more than 10 flights per month using that airplane.

(b) TERMINATION.—The regulations required by subsection (a) shall terminate on the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date on which the Administrator determines that no Stage 2 airplanes remain in service.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MEDIUM HUB AIRPORT; NONHUB AIRPORT.—The terms ''medium hub airport'' and ''nonhub airport'' have the meanings given those terms in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) STAGE 2 AIRPLANE.—The term ''Stage 2 airplane'' has the meaning given that term in section 91.851 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act).

TITLE VI—TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND TERRORISM PREVENTION

Subtitle A—Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act

SEC. 6101. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act''.

SEC. 6102. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) A number of recent airport security breaches in the United States have involved the use of Secure Identification Display Area (referred to in this section as ''SIDA'') badges, the credentials used by airport and airline workers to access the secure areas of an airport.

(2) In December 2014, a Delta ramp agent at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was charged with using his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and facilitate an interstate gun smuggling operation over a number of months via commercial aircraft.

(3) In January 2015, an Atlanta-based Aviation Safety Inspector of the Federal Aviation Administration used his SIDA badge to bypass airport security checkpoints and transport a firearm in his carry-on luggage.

(4) In February 2015, a local news investigation found that over 1,000 SIDA badges at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport were lost or missing.

(5) In March 2015, and again in May 2015, Transportation Security Administration contractors were indicted for participating in a drug smuggling ring using luggage passed through the secure area of the San Francisco International Airport.

(6) The Administration has indicated that it does not maintain a list of lost or missing SIDA badges, and instead relies on airport operators to track airport worker credentials.

(7) The Administration rarely uses its enforcement authority to fine airport operators that reach a certain threshold of missing SIDA badges.

(8) In April 2015, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee issued 28 recommendations for improvements to airport access control.

(9) In June 2015, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security reported that the Administration did not have all relevant information regarding 73 airport workers who had records in United States intelligence-related databases because the Administration was not authorized to receive all terrorism-related information under current interagency watchlisting policy.

(10) The Inspector General also found that the Administration did not have appropriate checks in place to reject incomplete or inaccurate airport worker employment investigations, including criminal history record checks and work authorization verifications, and had limited oversight over the airport operators that the Administration relies on to perform criminal history and work authorization checks for airport workers.

(11) There is growing concern about the potential insider threat at airports in light of recent terrorist activities.

SEC. 6103. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(C) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

(4) ASAC.—The term ''ASAC'' means the Aviation Security Advisory Committee established under section 44946 of title 49, United States Code.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(6) SIDA.—The term ''SIDA'' means Secure Identification Display Area as defined in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation to such section.

SEC. 6104. THREAT ASSESSMENT.

(a) INSIDER THREATS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall conduct or update an assessment to determine the level of risk posed to the domestic air transportation system by individuals with unescorted access to a secure area of an airport (as defined in section 44903(j)(2)(H)) in light of recent international terrorist activity.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting or updating the assessment under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) domestic intelligence;

(B) international intelligence;

(C) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to domestic airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(D) the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access authority granted to foreign airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(E) the processes and practices designed to mitigate the vulnerabilities associated with unescorted access privileges granted to airport operators and air carriers, and their employees;

(F) the recent security breaches at domestic and foreign airports; and

(G) the recent security improvements at domestic airports, including the implementation of recommendations made by relevant advisory committees.

(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) a report on the results of the assessment under subsection (a), including any recommendations for improving aviation security;

(2) a report on the implementation status of any recommendations made by the ASAC; and

(3) regular updates about the insider threat environment as new information becomes available and as needed.

SEC. 6105. OVERSIGHT.

(a) ENHANCED REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to public notice and comment, and in consultation with airport operators, the Administrator shall update the rules on access controls issued by the Secretary under chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—As part of the update under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider—

(A) increased fines and advanced oversight for airport operators that report missing more than 5 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(B) best practices for Category X airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(C) additional audits and status checks for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(D) review and analysis of the prior 5 years of audits for airport operators that report missing more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport;

(E) increased fines and direct enforcement requirements for both airport workers and their employers that fail to report within 24 hours an employment termination or a missing credential for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(F) a method for termination by the employer of any airport worker that fails to report in a timely manner missing credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(b) TEMPORARY CREDENTIALS.—The Administrator may encourage the issuance by airport and aircraft operators of free one-time,

24-hour temporary credentials for workers who have reported their credentials missing, but not permanently lost, stolen, or destroyed, in a timely manner, until replacement of credentials under section 1542.211 of title 49 Code of Federal Regulations is necessary.

(c) NOTIFICATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall—

(1) notify the appropriate committees of Congress each time an airport operator reports that more than 3 percent of credentials for unescorted access to any SIDA at a Category X airport are missing or more than 5 percent of credentials to access any SIDA at any other airport are missing; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report on the number of violations and fines related to unescorted access to the SIDA of an airport collected in the preceding fiscal year.

SEC. 6106. CREDENTIALS.

(a) LAWFUL STATUS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidance to airport operators regarding placement of an expiration date on each airport credential issued to a non-United States citizen no longer than the period of time during which that non-United States citizen is lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

(b) REVIEW OF PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) issue guidance for transportation security inspectors to annually review the procedures of airport operators and air carriers for applicants seeking unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport; and

(B) make available to airport operators and air carriers information on identifying suspicious or fraudulent identification materials.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The guidance shall require a comprehensive review of background checks and employment authorization documents issued by the Citizenship and Immigration Services during the course of a review of procedures under paragraph (1).

SEC. 6107. VETTING.

(a) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and subject to public notice and comment, the Administrator shall revise the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section and current knowledge of insider threats and intelligence, to enhance the eligibility requirements and disqualifying criminal offenses for individuals seeking or having unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(2) DISQUALIFYING CRIMINAL OFFENSES.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider adding to the list of disqualifying criminal offenses and criteria the offenses and criteria listed in section 122.183(a)(4) of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations and section 1572.103 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) WAIVER PROCESS FOR DENIED CREDENTIALS.—Notwithstanding section 44936(b) of title 49, United States Code, in revising the regulations under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Administrator shall—

(A) ensure there exists or is developed a waiver process for approving the issuance of credentials for unescorted access to the SIDA, for an individual found to be otherwise ineligible for such credentials; and

(B) consider, as appropriate and practicable—

(i) the circumstances of any disqualifying act or offense, restitution made by the individual, Federal and State mitigation remedies, and other factors from which it may be concluded that the individual does not pose a terrorism risk or a risk to aviation security warranting denial of the credential; and

(ii) the elements of the appeals and waiver process established under section 70105(c) of title 46, United States Code.

(4) LOOK BACK.—In revising the regulations under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall propose that an individual be disqualified if the individual was convicted, or found not guilty by reason of insanity, of a disqualifying criminal offense within 15 years before the date of an individual's application, or if the individual was incarcerated for that crime and released from incarceration within 5 years before the date of the individual's application.

(5) CERTIFICATIONS.—The Administrator shall require an airport or aircraft operator, as applicable, to certify for each individual who receives unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport that—

(A) a specific need exists for providing that individual with unescorted access authority; and

(B) the individual has certified to the airport or aircraft operator that the individual understands the requirements for possessing a SIDA badge.

(6) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of the revision to the regulations issued under section 44936 of title 49, United States Code, in accordance with this section.

(7) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to affect existing aviation worker vetting fees imposed by the Administration.

(b) RECURRENT VETTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall fully implement the Rap Back service for recurrent vetting of eligible Administration-regulated populations of individuals with unescorted access to any SIDA of an airport.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—As part of the requirement in paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that—

(A) any status notifications the Administration receives through the Rap Back service about criminal offenses be limited to only disqualifying criminal offenses in accordance with the regulations promulgated by the Administration under section 44903 of title 49, United States Code, or other Federal law; and

(B) any information received by the Administration through the Rap Back service is provided directly and immediately to the relevant airport and aircraft operators.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the implementation status of the Rap Back service.

(c) ACCESS TO TERRORISM-RELATED DATA.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of National Intelligence shall coordinate to ensure that the Administrator is authorized to receive automated, real-time access to additional Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) data and any other terrorism related category codes to improve the effectiveness of the Administration's credential vetting program for individuals that are seeking or have unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

(d) ACCESS TO E-VERIFY AND SAVE PROGRAMS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall authorize each airport operator to have direct access to the E-Verify program and the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) automated system to determine the eligibility of individuals seeking unescorted access to a SIDA of an airport.

SEC. 6108. METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop and implement performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of security for the SIDAs of airports.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the performance metrics under subsection (a), the Administrator may consider—

(1) adherence to access point procedures;

(2) proper use of credentials;

(3) differences in access point requirements between airport workers performing functions on the airside of an airport and airport workers performing functions in other areas of an airport;

(4) differences in access point characteristics and requirements at airports; and

(5) any additional factors the Administrator considers necessary to measure performance.

SEC. 6109. INSPECTIONS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(a) MODEL AND BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the ASAC, shall develop a model and best practices for unescorted access security that—

(1) use intelligence, scientific algorithms, and risk-based factors;

(2) ensure integrity, accountability, and control;

(3) subject airport workers to random physical security inspections conducted by Administration representatives in accordance with this section;

(4) appropriately manage the number of SIDA access points to improve supervision of and reduce unauthorized access to these areas; and

(5) include validation of identification materials, such as with biometrics.

(b) INSPECTIONS.—Consistent with a risk-based security approach, the Administrator shall expand the use of transportation security officers and inspectors to conduct enhanced, random and unpredictable, data-driven, and operationally dynamic physical inspections of airport workers in each SIDA of an airport and at each SIDA access point—

(1) to verify the credentials of airport workers;

(2) to determine whether airport workers possess prohibited items, except for those that may be necessary for the performance of their duties, as appropriate, in any SIDA of an airport; and

(3) to verify whether airport workers are following appropriate procedures to access a SIDA of an airport.

(c) SCREENING REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall conduct a review of airports that have implemented additional airport worker screening or perimeter security to improve airport security, including—

(A) comprehensive airport worker screening at access points to secure areas;

(B) comprehensive perimeter screening, including vehicles;

(C) enhanced fencing or perimeter sensors; and

(D) any additional airport worker screening or perimeter security measures the Administrator identifies.

(2) BEST PRACTICES.—After completing the review under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify best practices for additional access control and airport worker security at airports; and

(B) disseminate the best practices identified under subparagraph (A) to airport operators.

(3) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Administrator may conduct a pilot program at 1 or more airports to test and validate best practices for comprehensive airport worker screening or perimeter security under paragraph (2).

SEC. 6110. COVERT TESTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall increase the use of red-team, covert testing of access controls to any secure areas of an airport.

(b) ADDITIONAL COVERT TESTING.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall conduct red-team, covert testing of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports.

(c) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) ADMINISTRATOR REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the progress to expand the use of inspections and of red-team, covert testing under subsection (a).

(2) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate committee of Congress a report on the effectiveness of airport access controls to the SIDA of airports based on red-team, covert testing under subsection (b).

SEC. 6111. SECURITY DIRECTIVES.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Administrator, in consultation with the appropriate regulated entities, shall conduct a comprehensive review of every current security directive addressed to any regulated entity—

(1) to determine whether the security directive continues to be relevant;

(2) to determine whether the security directives should be streamlined or consolidated to most efficiently maximize risk reduction; and

(3) to update, consolidate, or revoke any security directive as necessary.

(b) NOTICE.—For each security directive that the Administrator issues, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress notice of—

(1) the extent to which the security directive responds to a specific threat, security threat assessment, or emergency situation against civil aviation; and

(2) when it is anticipated that the security directive will expire.

SEC. 6112. IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) assess the progress made by the Administration and the effect on aviation security of implementing the requirements under sections 6104 through 6111 of this Act; and

(2) report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the results of the assessment under paragraph (1), including any recommendations.

SEC. 6113. MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS.

(a) ASAC TERMS OF OFFICE.—Section 44946(c)(2)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) TERMS.—The term of each member of the Advisory Committee shall be 2 years, but a member may continue to serve until the Assistant Secretary appoints a successor. A member of the Advisory Committee may be reappointed.''.

(b) FEEDBACK.—Section 44946(b)(5) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) FEEDBACK.—Not later than 90 days after receiving recommendations transmitted by the Advisory Committee under paragraph (2) or paragraph (4), the Assistant Secretary shall respond in writing to the Advisory Committee with feedback on each of the recommendations, an action plan to implement any of the recommendations with which the Assistant Secretary concurs, and a justification for why any of the recommendations have been rejected.''.

Subtitle B—TSA PreCheck Expansion Act

SEC. 6201. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''TSA PreCheck Expansion Act''.

SEC. 6202. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(3) PRECHECK PROGRAM.—The term ''PreCheck Program'' means the trusted traveler program implemented by the Transportation Security Administration under section 109(a)(3) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114).

(4) TSA.—The term ''TSA'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

SEC. 6203. PRECHECK PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator shall continue to administer the PreCheck Program established under the authority of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107–71; 115 Stat. 597).

SEC. 6204. PRECHECK PROGRAM ENROLLMENT EXPANSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall publish PreCheck Program enrollment standards that add multiple private sector application capabilities for the PreCheck Program to increase the public's enrollment access to the program, including standards that allow the use of secure technologies, including online enrollment, kiosks, tablets, or staffed laptop stations at which individuals can apply for entry into the program.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Upon publication of the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with interested parties—

(A) to deploy TSA-approved ready-to-market private sector solutions that meet the PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a);

(B) to make available additional PreCheck Program enrollment capabilities; and

(C) to offer secure online and mobile enrollment opportunities;

(2) partner with the private sector to collect biographic and biometric identification information via kiosks, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms to increase enrollment flexibility and minimize the amount of travel to enrollment centers for applicants;

(3) ensure that any information, including biographic information, is collected in a manner that—

(A) is comparable with the appropriate and applicable standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(B) protects privacy and data security, including that any personally identifiable information is collected, retained, used, and shared in a manner consistent with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as ''Privacy Act of 1974''), and with agency regulations;

(4) ensure that the enrollment process is streamlined and flexible to allow an individual to provide additional information to complete enrollment and verify identity;

(5) ensure that any enrollment expansion using a private sector risk assessment instead of a fingerprint-based criminal history records check is evaluated and certified by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and verified by the Government Accountability Office or a federally funded research and development center after award to be equivalent to a fingerprint-based criminal history records check conducted through the Federal Bureau of Investigation with respect to the effectiveness in identifying individuals who are not qualified to participate in the PreCheck program due to disqualifying criminal history; and

(6) ensure that the Secretary has certified that reasonable procedures are in place with regard to the accuracy, relevancy, and proper utilization of information employed in private sector risk assessments.

(c) MARKETING OF PRECHECK PROGRAM.—Upon publication of PreCheck Program enrollment standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) in accordance with those standards, develop and implement—

(A) a continual process, including an associated timeframe, for approving private sector marketing of the PreCheck Program; and

(B) a long-term strategy for partnering with the private sector to encourage enrollment in such program;

(2) submit to Congress, at the end of each fiscal year, a report on any PreCheck Program application fees collected in excess of the costs of administering the program, including to access the feasibility of the program, for the preceding fiscal year; and

(3) include in the report under paragraph (2) recommendations for using such amounts to support marketing of the program under this subsection.

(d) IDENTITY VERIFICATION ENHANCEMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) coordinate with the heads of appropriate components of the Department to leverage department-held data and technologies to verify the citizenship of individuals enrolling in the PreCheck Program;

(2) partner with the private sector to use biometrics and authentication standards, such as relevant standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, to facilitate enrollment in the program; and

(3) consider leveraging the existing resources and abilities of airports to conduct fingerprint and background checks to expedite identity verification.

(e) PRECHECK PROGRAM LANES OPERATION.—The Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that PreCheck Program screening lanes are open and available during peak and high-volume travel times at appropriate airports to individuals enrolled in the PreCheck Program; and

(2) make every practicable effort to provide expedited screening at standard screening lanes during times when PreCheck Program screening lanes are closed to individuals enrolled in the program in order to maintain operational efficiency.

(f) VETTING FOR PRECHECK PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall initiate an assessment to identify any security vulnerabilities in the vetting process for the PreCheck Program, including determining whether subjecting PreCheck Program participants to recurrent fingerprint-based criminal history records checks, in addition to recurrent checks against the terrorist watchlist, could be done in a cost-effective manner to strengthen the security of the PreCheck Program.

Subtitle C—Securing Aviation From Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016

SEC. 6301. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Securing Aviation from Foreign Entry Points and Guarding Airports Through Enhanced Security Act of 2016''.

SEC. 6302. LAST POINT OF DEPARTURE AIRPORT SECURITY ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall conduct a comprehensive security risk assessment of all last point of departure airports with nonstop flights to the United States.

(b) CONTENTS.—The security risk assessment required under subsection (a) shall include consideration of the following:

(1) The level of coordination and cooperation between the Transportation Security Administration and the foreign government of the country in which the last point of departure airport with nonstop flights to the United States is located.

(2) The intelligence and threat mitigation capabilities of the country in which such airport is located.

(3) The number of known or suspected terrorists annually transiting through such airport.

(4) The degree to which the foreign government of the country in which such airport is located mandates, encourages, or prohibits the collection, analysis, and sharing of passenger name records.

(5) The passenger security screening practices, capabilities, and capacity of such airport.

(6) The security vetting undergone by aviation workers at such airport.

(7) The access controls utilized by such airport to limit to authorized personnel access to secure and sterile areas of such airports.

SEC. 6303. SECURITY COORDINATION ENHANCEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress and the Government Accountability Office a plan—

(1) to enhance and bolster security collaboration, coordination, and information sharing relating to securing international-inbound aviation between the United States and domestic and foreign partners, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, foreign government entities, passenger air carriers, cargo air carriers, and United States Government entities, in order to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports, including airports that may not have nonstop flights to the United States but are nonetheless determined by the Administrator to be high risk; and

(2) that includes an assessment of the ability of the Administration to enter into a mutual agreement with a foreign government entity that permits Administration representatives to conduct without prior notice inspections of foreign airports.

(b) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the submission of the plan required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the efforts, capabilities, and effectiveness of the Transportation Security Administration to enhance security capabilities at foreign airports and determine if the implementation of such efforts and capabilities effectively secures international-inbound aviation.

SEC. 6304. WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress a comprehensive workforce assessment of all Administration personnel within the Office of Global Strategies of the Administration or whose primary professional duties contribute to the Administration's global efforts to secure transportation security, including a review of whether such personnel are assigned in a risk-based, intelligence-driven manner.

SEC. 6305. DONATION OF SCREENING EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration is authorized to donate security screening equipment to a foreign last point of departure airport operator if such equipment can be reasonably expected to mitigate a specific vulnerability to the security of the United States or United States citizens.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days before any donation of security screening equipment pursuant to subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a detailed written explanation of the following:

(1) The specific vulnerability to the United States or United States citizens that will be mitigated by such donation.

(2) An explanation as to why the recipient of such donation is unable or unwilling to purchase security screening equipment to mitigate such vulnerability.

(3) An evacuation plan for sensitive technologies in case of emergency or instability in the country to which such donation is being made.

(4) How the Administrator will ensure the security screening equipment that is being donated is used and maintained over the course of its life by the recipient.

(5) The total dollar value of such donation.

SEC. 6306. NATIONAL CARGO SECURITY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration may evaluate foreign countries' air cargo security programs to determine whether such programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs.

(b) APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines that a foreign country's air cargo security program evaluated under subsection (a) provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator shall approve and officially recognize such foreign country's air cargo security program.

(2) EFFECT OF APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration approves and officially recognizes pursuant to paragraph (1) a foreign country's air cargo security program, cargo aircraft of such foreign country shall not be required to adhere to United States air cargo security programs that would otherwise be applicable.

(c) REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines at any time that a foreign country's air cargo security program approved and officially recognized under subsection (b) no longer provides a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by United States air cargo security programs, the Administrator may revoke or temporarily suspend such approval and official recognition until such time as the Administrator determines that such foreign country's cargo security programs provide a level of security commensurate with the level of security required by such United States air cargo security programs.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration revokes or suspends pursuant to paragraph (1) a foreign country's air cargo security program, the Administrator shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate not later than 30 days after such revocation or suspension.

Subtitle D—Miscellaneous

SEC. 6401. INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 114 of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish an international training and capacity development program to train the appropriate authorities of foreign governments in air transportation security.

(b) CONTENTS OF TRAINING.—If the Administrator determines that a foreign government would benefit from training and capacity development assistance, the Administrator may provide to the appropriate authorities of that foreign government technical assistance and training programs to strengthen aviation security in managerial, operational, and technical areas, including—

(1) active shooter scenarios;

(2) incident response;

(3) use of canines;

(4) mitigation of insider threats;

(5) perimeter security;

(6) operation and maintenance of security screening technology; and

(7) recurrent related training and exercises.

SEC. 6402. CHECKPOINTS OF THE FUTURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, in accordance with chapter 449 of title 49, United States Code, shall request the Aviation Security Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for more efficient and effective passenger screening processes.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making recommendations to improve existing passenger screening processes, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee shall consider—

(1) the configuration of a checkpoint;

(2) technology innovation;

(3) ways to address any vulnerabilities identified in audits of checkpoint operations;

(4) ways to prevent security breaches at airports where Federal security screening is provided;

(5) best practices in aviation security;

(6) recommendations from airport and aircraft operators, and any relevant advisory committees; and

(7) ''curb to curb'' processes and procedures.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee review, including any recommendations for improving screening processes.

TITLE VII—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND PROVISIONS AND RELATED TAXES

SEC. 7101. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting ''or the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016;''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

SEC. 7102. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2017''.

SA 3680. Mr. THUNE proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike section 4105 and insert the following:

SEC. 4105. ADS–B MANDATE ASSESSMENT.

(a) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall assess—

(1) Administration and industry readiness to meet the ADS–B mandate by 2020;

(2) changes to ADS–B program since May 2010; and

(3) additional options to comply with the mandate and consequences, both for individual system users and for the overall safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, for noncompliance.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date the assessment under subsection (a) is complete, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the progress made toward meeting the ADS–B mandate by 2020, including any recommendations of the Inspector General to carry out such mandate.

SA 3681. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, insert the following:

TITLE VI—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND PROVISIONS AND RELATED TAXES

SEC. 6001. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting ''or the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016;''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

SEC. 6002. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2019''.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2019''.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2019''.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 16, 2016'' and inserting ''October 1, 2019''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2019''.

SA 3682. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5023 and insert the following:

SEC. 5023. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL AIR CARRIER ALLIANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of certain cooperative agreements between United States air carriers and non-United States air carriers (referred to in this section as ''alliances'') that—

(1) have been created pursuant to section 41309 of title 49, United States Code; and

(2) have been exempted from antitrust laws (as defined in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12)) pursuant to section 41308 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess—

(1) the public benefits to consumers of alliances and the consequences of alliances, if any, to competition, pricing, and new entry into markets served by alliances;

(2) the representations made by air carriers to the Secretary of Transportation for the necessity of an antitrust exemption;

(3) the Department of Transportation's expectations of public benefits resulting from alliances, including whether such expected benefits were actually achieved;

(4) the Department of Transportation's role in the approval and monitoring of alliances;

(5) whether there has been sufficient transparency in the approval of alliances, including opportunities for public review and feedback;

(6) the role of the Department of Justice in the oversight of alliances;

(7) whether there are alternatives to antitrust immunity that could be conferred that would also produce public benefits; and

(8) the level of competition between alliances.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress the results of the study conducted under subsection (a).

SA 3683. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title IV, insert the following:

SEC. 4118. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE NEXT GENERATION AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Next Generation Air Transportation System (known as ''NextGen'') could, if properly implemented, provide much needed modernization of air traffic technologies to meet the future needs of the national airspace;

(2) once fully implemented, advancements from implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System could result in billions of dollars of economic benefits to air carriers and the travel industry;

(3) the Next Generation Air Transportation System has the potential to improve air traffic management by—

(A) improving weather forecasting;

(B) enhancing safety;

(C) creating more flexible spacing and sequencing of aircraft;

(D) reducing air traffic separation; and

(E) reducing congestion;

(4) improvements to air traffic management through the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System will provide benefits—

(A) to the flying public, such as reduced delays, reduced wait times, more direct flights, and an overall enhanced flying experience; and

(B) to commercial air carriers, such as fuel cost savings, lower operational costs, and improved customer satisfaction; and

(5) fully and swiftly implementing the Next Generation Air Transportation System should remain a top priority for the United States to maximize the efficiency of the airspace system of the United States, maintain a competitive advantage, and remain a global leader in aviation.

SA 3684. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. TILLIS)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 2133, to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments; as follows:

On page 5, line 24, strike ''and'' at the end.

On page 5, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

On page 5, after line 25, add the following:

(3) any other party determined to be appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, which may include the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Procurement Officer, or the Chief Operating Officer of each agency.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President. I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Cybersecurity and Protecting Taxpayer Information.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Spread of ISIS and Transitional Terrorism.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on April 12, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''ESSA Implementation in States and School Districts: Perspectives from the U.S. Secretary of Education.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL SPENDING OVERSIGHT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''FEMA: Assessing Progress, Performance, and Preparedness.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 9 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Improving the USAJOBS Website.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SUPERFUND, WASTE MANAGEMENT, AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight of the Committee on Environmental and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 12, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''American Small Businesses Perspective on Environmental Protection Agency Regulatory Actions.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FRAUD REDUCTION AND DATA ANALYTICS ACT of 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 391, S. 2133.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2133) to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Carper-Tillis amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3684) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 5, line 24, strike ''and'' at the end.

On page 5, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

On page 5, after line 25, add the following:

(3) any other party determined to be appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, which may include the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Procurement Officer, or the Chief Operating Officer of each agency.

The bill (S. 2133), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2133

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) the term ''improper payment'' has the meaning given the term in section 2(g) of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note).

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS RELATING TO FRAUD AND IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

(a) GUIDELINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Comptroller General of the United States, shall establish guidelines for agencies to establish financial and administrative controls to identify and assess fraud risks and design and implement control activities in order to prevent, detect, and respond to fraud, including improper payments.

(2) CONTENTS.—The guidelines described in paragraph (1) shall incorporate the leading practices identified in the report published by the Government Accountability Office on July 28, 2015, entitled ''Framework for Managing Fraud Risks in Federal Programs''.

(3) MODIFICATION.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Comptroller General of the United States, may periodically modify the guidelines described in paragraph (1) as the Director and Comptroller General may determine necessary.

(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTROLS.—The financial and administrative controls required to be established by agencies under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) conducting an evaluation of fraud risks and using a risk-based approach to design and implement financial and administrative control activities to mitigate identified fraud risks;

(2) collecting and analyzing data from reporting mechanisms on detected fraud to monitor fraud trends and using that data and information to continuously improve fraud prevention controls; and

(3) using the results of monitoring, evaluation, audits, and investigations to improve fraud prevention, detection, and response.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), for each of the first 3 fiscal years beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, each agency shall submit to Congress, as part of the annual financial report of the agency, a report on the progress of the agency in—

(A) implementing—

(i) the financial and administrative controls required to be established under subsection (a);

(ii) the fraud risk principle in the Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government; and

(iii) Office of Management and Budget Circular A–123 with respect to the leading practices for managing fraud risk;

(B) identifying risks and vulnerabilities to fraud, including with respect to payroll, beneficiary payments, grants, large contracts, and purchase and travel cards; and

(C) establishing strategies, procedures, and other steps to curb fraud.

(2) FIRST REPORT.—If the date of enactment of this Act is less than 180 days before the date on which an agency is required to submit the annual financial report of the agency, the agency may submit the report required under paragraph (1) as part of the following annual financial report of the agency.

SEC. 4. WORKING GROUP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Office of Management and Budget shall establish a working group to improve—

(1) the sharing of financial and administrative controls established under section 3(a) and other best practices and techniques for detecting, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments; and

(2) the sharing and development of data analytics techniques.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The working group established under subsection (a) shall be composed of—

(1) the Controller of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Chairperson;

(2) the Chief Financial Officer of each agency; and

(3) any other party determined to be appropriate by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, which may include the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Procurement Officer, or the Chief Operating Officer of each agency.

(c) CONSULTATION.—The working group established under subsection (a) shall consult with Offices of Inspectors General and Federal and non-Federal experts on fraud risk assessments, financial controls, and other relevant matters.

(d) MEETINGS.—The working group established under subsection (a) shall hold not fewer than 4 meetings per year.

(e) PLAN.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the working group established under subsection (a) shall submit to Congress a plan for the establishment and use of a Federal interagency library of data analytics and data sets, which can incorporate or improve upon existing Federal resources and capacities, for use by agencies and Offices of Inspectors General to facilitate the detection, prevention, and recovery of fraud, including improper payments.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 13; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; finally, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:30 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 13, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Tuesday, April 12, 2016*

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 12, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BLAKE FARENTHOLD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a new work week, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence, and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

We ask that You send Your Holy Spirit upon them, giving them the gifts of patience and diligence. With all the pressures, concerns, and worries that accompany their responsibilities, we pray that they might know Your peace, which surpasses all human understanding.

May Your voice speak to them in the depths of their hearts, illuminating their minds and spirits, thus enabling them to view the tasks of this day with confidence and hope. All this day, and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to the pressing issues facing our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COFFMAN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

KEVIN ALTICE'S STORY

(Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal is a reality in West Virginia.

Let me introduce to you Kevin Altice of Mount Hope. He describes himself as a former coal miner. Why? Because he lost his job just a few months ago. He is now going back to school, but he worries about his fellow miners trying to find jobs.

Kevin is a West Virginia coal voice. Here is what he wrote to me:

''A lot of coworkers have had to move out of State for employment, a sad trend that needs to stop.

''Luckily, my wife is a schoolteacher, which helps on our income, but we have seen how the downturn in the coal industry has even impacted our education system.

''We, as West Virginians, are in dire times, and something needs done to protect our futures.''

That is Kevin's story.

As we work to diversify our State's economy, we cannot forget about providing education and retraining for these miners. My bill, the Assisting America's Dislocated Miners Act, will help provide retraining opportunities for more miners like Kevin. Our coal miners are hardworking, determined, and proud to provide for their families. All they need is a chance.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, more than five decades have passed since we signed the Equal Pay Act into law, but in 2016, women still make 79 cents to the dollar that their male counterparts make. And it is worse for women of color. African American women earn 60 cents and Latinas earn 55 for every dollar earned by men.

The Joint Economic Committee, which I am proud to serve on, found that women lose out on more than $500,000 throughout their career. And this wage gap continues to hurt women when they retire. The median income for women 65 and older is 44 percent less than that of men in the same age group.

Every Congress, for nearly 20 years, Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO has introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act. I am thankful for her leadership, and I am proud to join her as a cosponsor of the bill, because I am not going to stand by while North Carolina women make just 82 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Today on Equal Pay Day, I call on my colleagues to stop shortchanging women and our families. Let's pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

HONORING THE THUNDERRIDGE GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. COFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the ThunderRidge High School girls varsity basketball team on their stunning 5A State championship win over Highlands Ranch High School. ThunderRidge came out strong to clinch their fourth State championship in a dominating 47–32 victory.

It was a game of defensive tenacity. The score held strong at 6–4 in the sixth minute of the game, something that Head Coach Matthew Asik ingrained in his team's game plan, saying that, ''If we play good defense, we can always be in a game.''

Senior Jaz'myne Snipes put 16 points on the board and hustled for 8 rebounds in the final game, which earned her the well-deserved title of tournament MVP.

This was a thrilling game between two Highlands Ranch powerhouses. I am so proud of these two teams for representing the Sixth Congressional District of Colorado in the title game. Congratulations to both teams on a stellar season.

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Library Week and to celebrate how local libraries continue to be a vital resource in communities across the Nation.

Libraries have evolved beyond buildings of quiet study into engaging community centers where people can gather to collaborate on projects, children

can come to participate in educational activities, and job-seekers can use as a resource for help in finding connections with employers.

National Library Week is a perfect opportunity to highlight the services being provided in libraries by librarians and staff focused on creating environments where people can not only find the information they need, but use that information to better themselves and their communities.

Counting both public and private, there are nearly 120,000 libraries across the United States, which together employ more than 350,000 people and provide services to millions of Americans each year. In my district, I have seen this transformation taking place, where access to the latest technologies, like 3–D printers, laser cutters, and video editing centers, can often be found at the local library.

Libraries across the country continue to serve as centers of education, research, and community development, and I extend my thanks to the librarians and their staff.

RECOGNIZING O.C. WELCH

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. O.C. Welch for his success in business and his dedication to making the Savannah community a better place to live.

Mr. Welch is the definition of a self-made man, whose hard work and natural business sense launched a career in the car business that grew into a large and prominent enterprise.

Throughout his life, Mr. Welch has been committed to giving back. He is a devout Catholic who supports many projects in the Diocese of Savannah, not the least of which is his alma mater, Benedictine.

In 2012, Mr. Welch used a Super Bowl commercial to offer a reward for information regarding the unsolved murder of a volunteer firefighter. The commercial led to the arrest and conviction of the killer. In the years since, Mr. Welch has not wavered in his crusade against crime in our community.

More recently, Mr. Welch took up the cause of his beloved Bacon Park Golf Course, where he got his first job. After seeing the once pristine course fall into disrepair, he invested millions in restoring its historic Donald Ross design and rightful place in the community.

These are only a few examples of the incredible impact Mr. Welch has had. I rise today to thank him for his continued commitment to our community.

RECOGNIZING DR. ANTHONY ATALA

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Dr. Anthony Atala, director of the Wake Forest Institute of Regenerative Medicine.

Dr. Atala is the leader of a team of scientists at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center who have proved the feasibility of using a sophisticated, custom-designed 3–D printer to create living tissue structures to replace injured or diseased tissue in patients.

The team has been able to print ear, bone, and muscle structures that, when implanted in animals, were able to mature into functional tissue and develop a system of blood vessels. Early results indicate that the structures have the right size, strength, and function for use in humans, and the team aims to implant bio-printed muscle, cartilage, and bone in patients in the future.

We are fortunate to have Dr. Atala and his team conducting this pioneering research that may change the face of modern medicine in North Carolina's Fifth District.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

ADDING ZIKA VIRUS TO THE FDA PRIORITY REVIEW VOUCHER PROGRAM ACT

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2512) to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2512

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Adding Zika Virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program Act''.

SEC. 2. EXPANDING TROPICAL DISEASE PRODUCT PRIORITY REVIEW VOUCHER PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE TREATMENTS FOR ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE.

Section 524(a)(3) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360n(a)(3)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (R) as subparagraph (S);

(2) in subparagraph (Q), by striking ''Filoviruses'' and inserting ''Filovirus Diseases''; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (Q) the following:

''(R) Zika Virus Disease.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2512, which would add the Zika virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher program.

S. 2512 is companion legislation to H.R. 4400, authored by Representative BUTTERFIELD and myself.

Under the FDA Priority Review Voucher program, once a vaccine or therapy for a disease on the FDA Priority Review Voucher program has been developed, the manufacturer of that product receives a voucher that can be used to fast-track review by the FDA of another product in the development pipeline. At zero cost to the taxpayer, this is a significant incentive for private industry to invest the hundreds of millions of dollars and the many man-hours it takes to produce a vaccine or treatment.

In a world where we can travel across oceans in a matter of hours, an outbreak that begins on a different continent can arrive in the United States in a very short period of time. As Americans travel to and from Central and South America, we are beginning to see more Zika cases here at home.

This doesn't just affect citizens in tropical areas, but in places as far north as Indiana as well. In my district, a nurse educator at Indiana Wesleyan University contracted the disease in January when she traveled to Haiti to teach a seminar in transcultural nursing.

Most people don't experience symptoms if they contract the Zika virus, but women who become pregnant or trying to become pregnant and their babies are at risk. For babies, that can include serious birth defects that may lead to mental and physical disabilities. The threat is multi-generational, and we still don't know a lot about this disease. We can't treat it right now and we can't prevent it right now. That is a huge problem.

The Zika virus is not the only biological threat we face to our public health and national security. Right now, despite the steps taken during and after the Ebola epidemic, we remain largely reactionary in our response to pandemics and biological threats. We need to be more proactive in our response to all pathogens, like the Zika virus, that are a threat to our national security and the health of our citizens.

A more proactive approach would be to incentivize the development of vaccines and treatments through the FDA Priority Review Voucher program, known as PRV, before they reach the advanced stage of contagion.

This past October, a bipartisan Blue Ribbon Panel on Biodefense released a report on America's vulnerabilities to a biological event. The panel found that the underlying problem isn't a specific disease, but our country's inability to mobilize quickly and effectively to identify, contain, treat, and eliminate any kind of biological threat to people in the United States.

Incentivizing the research into a neglected tropical disease like Zika is a necessary, but not final, step. Our work is not done. As we move forward, we need to expand the PRV program to other items on the Department of Homeland Security's Material Threat list. Doing so will put us on offense and better prepare us for the next outbreak, whatever it might be.

Today we have an opportunity to take meaningful action in a fight against this deadly disease. I applaud Speaker RYAN and Leader MCCARTHY for recognizing the severity of the threat and allowing for this bill's timely consideration.

I have welcomed the opportunity to have worked with Representative BUTTERFIELD on this important issue, and Chairman GREEN and others on the Energy and Commerce Committee who recognize that the Zika virus is of significant threat not only to people in other parts of the world, but actually the people in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on S. 2512, the Adding Zika Virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program Act.

Representatives G. K. BUTTERFIELD and SUSAN BROOKS led this legislation in the House and members of our Energy and Commerce Committee. I want to thank them for their commitment to mitigating the Zika virus outbreak.

S. 2512 will add Zika virus to the list of qualified tropical diseases under the Tropical Disease Priority Review Voucher program, PRV.

Zika virus is among several recent and emerging global health threats that remind us of the need for effective incentives for research and development of neglected tropical diseases, and for infectious diseases at large. Neglected tropical diseases, or NTDs, represent more than 10 percent of the global disease burden. However, only 4 percent of all new drugs and vaccines approved across the globe in the next decade were for NTDs.

The NTD Priority Review Voucher program was created by Congress in 2007 to be a much-needed incentive for products that diagnose and treat such diseases for which market forces fall short.

The Adding Ebola to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program, which was signed into law in 2014 and was led by myself and Representative MARSHA BLACKBURN, gave the FDA the authority to add diseases to the program by issuing an order. The agency has already used this authority to add Chagas to the program. While the program is successful, it could be more so.

Currently, there is no requirement for a product to be novel or that it be made available and affordable for the patients whom awarded products are designed to help. It should be amended to strengthen its effectiveness. This can be done by adding a novelty requirement and an access strategy requirement, like what is mandated under the Rare Pediatric Disease Priority Review Voucher program.

This legislation did not go through the House Energy and Commerce Committee, so the opportunity to discuss the NTD PRV program was not taken. I hope to work with my colleagues to incorporate amendments on future legislation that will improve the functioning of the program. Doing so will allow it to incentivize novel programs and ensure they are widely accessible to patients in need.

Improvements to the PRV program would be one important step toward ensuring we have effective strategies to incentivize both research and development for NTDs. Broader changes are urgently needed to ensure the R&D system delivers new vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments to patients presenting and exposed to NTDs and resistant infections.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on additional mechanisms to ensure R&D for these emerging threats is successfully and properly incentivized. Doing so is necessary for the flourishment of biomedical innovation in this space.

I fully agree with the bill sponsors that we need to do all we can to respond to the Zika virus by facilitating the development of and access to medical products as quickly as possible.

The administration has asked Congress for $1.9 billion in emergency funding to enhance our efforts to prepare and respond to the outbreak, both around the world and here at home.

This legislation is arguably a step in the right direction, and I again thank the sponsors for their commitment and leadership. However, this bill far from renders the emergency supplemental funding request unnecessary. Dedicated funds, some of which will go towards medical product development to respond to the Zika virus, are essential to sustaining Health and Human Services' response efforts.

I urge my colleagues to ask swiftly to approve emergency funding for a robust Zika virus outbreak response.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD), the cosponsor of the legislation, but also a member of our Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GREEN for yielding time, and thank him for his extraordinary leadership not only on this bill, but on our committee as well. To my colleague SUSAN BROOKS from Indiana, I thank the Congresswoman for all of her work.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of adding the Zika virus to the FDA Tropical Disease Product Priority Review Voucher program. The bill we are considering today is the Senate companion to my bill, H.R. 4400, which I introduced on February 1 of this year.

Yesterday the White House and the CDC announced the dangers of the Zika virus are ''scarier than we initially thought.'' The CDC estimates that there are already hundreds of thousands of cases in the United States and that the number is expected to grow as the summer nears.

The health consequences of the Zika virus infection are staggering. Zika infections in pregnant women can result in serious birth defects, including microcephaly and neurological disorders in newborns. The virus also has serious impacts on adults. This is a global public health emergency. We must act now to combat the spread of this deadly virus.

My bipartisan legislation, cosponsored by 31 of our House colleagues, and the Senate companion cosponsored by 11 Senators, provides a pathway for expediting treatments for Zika.

Supporting research and development in the U.S. to fight this will not only

benefit us here at home, but will also help hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues today to support this legislation and other efforts, including authorizing additional emergency funding to combat this virus.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for his leadership on this issue and for certainly bringing this to our attention as soon as it was brought to his attention that this needed to be resolved.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2512 to add the Zika virus to the list of tropical diseases under the FDA Priority Review Voucher program for tropical diseases.

While evidence of human infection by the Zika virus has been reported for over 60 years, there has been little progress in the development of treatment or vaccines. Existing incentives have been insufficient to encourage development of new and innovative treatments for the virus.

However, with the recent spread of the virus from South America to the Caribbean and North America, the level of infection has reached pandemic levels. Although the Zika virus may be rare in the United States, the increase of airline transportation, immigration, and tourism only creates an environment for the Zika virus to be easily transmitted.

S. 2512 would allow the FDA Priority Review Voucher program to work exactly as intended. It would add the Zika virus to the list of tropical diseases that are available under the voucher program.

This bill would ultimately accomplish two goals. First, it would provide an incentive for drug developers in the form of fast-track approval of therapies to treat the Zika virus.

Second, it would create an avenue where treatments for the virus would get to patients quicker and ultimately end this pandemic outbreak.

This legislation is vital to ensuring the health and safety of our Nation. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have no other speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to point out that as recently as yesterday, Federal officials have indicated that the mosquito that carries the Zika virus is actually anticipated to be in over 30 States at this point. Originally, it was in 12 States, and now it is believed to be found in 30 States in the United States.

This is an extremely serious problem, one in which I am pleased that this House and this Chamber is paying attention to. I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia and his remarks.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of S. 2512, the Adding Zika Virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program Act.

This bill amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to add the Zika virus to the list of tropical diseases under the priority review voucher program, which awards a voucher to the sponsor of a new drug or biological product that is approved to prevent or treat a tropical disease.

A voucher entitles the holder to have a future new drug or biological product application acted upon by the Food and Drug Administration within six months.

My support has been steadfast, since I signed a letter at the virus' onset, urging the FDA to quickly exercise the authority provided by Congress to add the Zika virus to the Neglected Tropical Disease list.

I thank local, state and national health care professionals, public servants and others who have instituted preventative measures to combat the public health and safety threat that the Zika virus poses to our nation and our Western Hemisphere neighbors.

The Zika virus, spread primarily through mosquitos and first detected decades ago in Uganda, has now begun to spread rapidly in South America.

The recent outbreak has been linked with serious neurological disorders and life-threatening birth defects.

As the Member of Congress representing the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas, centered in Houston, along the mainland United States' Gulf Coast, I know first hand that Texans in particular are among the nation's most at-risk.

On March 10, 2015, I held a summit in Houston for the leading state and local experts in health, environmental control, and mosquito eradicating fields who are challenged with protecting communities from the Zika Virus to strategize and develop an action plan for the City and Harris County, Texas to reduce and control virus transmissions.

Houston and other cities in the Gulf Coast region, during the late spring and summer months, have tropical climates that support the breeding habitats of Zika Virus carrying-mosquitoes.

In early March of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 153 laboratory-confirmed cases of the Zika virus infection, among U.S. travelers between December 2015 and March 9, 2016—today, the number of reported cases has grown to 346, many of which are in areas further north than the 12 originally expected vulnerable states.

The first confirmed cases of the Zika virus hit Houston in November of 2015, after the Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (HCPHES) received confirmation from the CDC that the Zika virus was confirmed in a traveler recently returning from Latin America.

Not long after, on January 15, 2016, the Centers for Disease Control issued a health advisory.

On January 26, 2016, President Obama called for the rapid development of tests, vaccines and treatments to fight the mosquito-transmitted virus and insisted upon the need to develop vaccines and therapeutics.

We have known of the potential enormity of the Zika threat since January 28, 2016, when the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that it was ''spreading explosively'' throughout the Americas and was likely to reach North America soon.

As of January 28, 2016, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) promulgated Practice Advisory guidance regarding the Zika virus and pregnant women.

On February 1, 2016, the WHO announced an international public health emergency due to the recent cluster of neurological disorders and neonatal malformations reported throughout the Americas.

On February 3, 2016, the first local transmission of a Zika virus infection was reported in the Caribbean, meaning that mosquitoes in the area were infected and began spreading the disease to people.

Additionally, the Pan American Health Organization reported 26 countries and territories in the Americas exhibiting local transmission.

On February 4, 2016, the CDC reported a case in Texas, my home state, of Zika's spread by sexual transmission.

The Zika virus is primarily transmitted via three types of mosquitoes—two of which are rampant in the Houston area.

The poor are an especially vulnerable population, living in a hot environment.

The Gulf Coast presents unique vulnerabilities impacting the spread of the Zika virus in Houston that are of the utmost concern, and a key motivation for supporting today's legislation.

My foremost priority is to protect the health and safety of Americans, especially those in Houston.

My city's people and their surrounding neighbors are living daily in extreme poverty—and now have to contend with this devastating disease.

We saw in Brazil that the poorest communities of their nation experienced the worse Zika-plagued outcomes.

Environmental issues, such as discarded tires, furniture, and debris are part of the landscape of the Americans' lives we ought to be safeguarding—and are creating the perfect breeding conditions for Zika mosquitoes.

Amplifying the impact, the CDC reports that the virus is spread through sexual contact and advises special precautions for pregnant women.

The Zika virus can be spread from a pregnant woman to her fetus and has been linked to a serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly in the babies of mothers who were exposed to the Zika virus while pregnant.

Exacerbating measures, expectant mothers may not know that Zika virus mosquitoes inhabit the areas in which they live, until they see the terrible birth defects associated with the disease, plaguing the late-term-30-week

ultrasound images of their unborn child's sonogram.

Other problems have been detected among fetuses and infants infected with Zika virus before birth, such as absent or poorly developed brain structures, eye defects, hearing deficits, and impaired growth.

About one in five people infected with the Zika virus become symptomatic.

Characteristic clinical findings include acute onset of fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis.

Today we are witnessing the spread of yet another tropical disease, threatening the health of U.S. citizens, much like Ebola did during the past few years.

The WHO confirmed that as many as four million people could be infected by the end of the year.

There is no treatment or cure for those infected by the Zika virus.

The WHO is concerned about this rapidly spreading disease due to the lack of immunity in newly affected areas, the wide geographical distribution of infected mosquitos, and the absence of any vaccines, treatments, or rapid diagnostic tests.

Given the lack of treatment available for the Zika virus, many supported the critical need for the FDA to use its Congressionally granted authority to add Zika to the list of Neglected Tropical Diseases eligible for the Priority Review Voucher program.

On February 22, 2016, President Obama asked Congress to consider an FY 2016 emergency supplemental appropriations request of approximately $1.9 billion to respond to the Zika virus, both domestically and internationally.

In conjunction with today's bill's efforts, this funding would build upon ongoing preparation efforts and provide resources for the Departments of Health and Human Services and State, as well as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The collective goal of these efforts, as I see them, is to provide immediate responsiveness to prepare for and prevent the spread of Zika virus transmission;

Speed research, development, and procurement of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; and

Enhance the ability of Zika-affected countries to better combat mosquitoes, control transmission, and support affected populations.

The necessity presents itself to fortify our domestic health system, detect and respond to any potential Zika outbreaks at home, and to limit the spread in other countries.

S. 2512 encourages the Federal Government to take a needed step, addressing the changing circumstances and emerging needs of populations exposed to the Zika virus.

The CDC and NIH said that the previously endemic Ebola Virus created a template for Federal and State agencies that are currently attempting to address the Zika virus threat.

If nothing else, the Ebola crisis demonstrated the critical need to develop effective vaccines and treatments before an endemic outbreak begins.

This simple action by the FDA, I hope, will spur the development of an effective vaccine or treatment combating the Zika virus, and as a result save countless American lives.

This bill is a step toward providing the protections that should be guaranteed to every American.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 2512, the Adding Zika Virus to the FDA Priority Review Voucher Program Act.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to S. 2512, which would add Zika to the list of qualified tropical diseases under the Food and Drug Administration's Tropical Disease Priority Review Voucher Program. While I know that we would all agree that there is desperate need for a treatment for Zika, I do not believe that this legislation offers the solution that will help us to achieve that goal. Further, I am disappointed that this legislation has not had the benefit of any legislative action in our Committee where Members could discuss in greater detail the need for reforms to the currently flawed priority review voucher program.

In 2007, Congress established the Tropical Disease Priority Review Voucher Program at FDA to incentivize treatments for neglected tropical diseases for which there was no market incentives to develop. Sponsors that develop a treatment for a qualified tropical disease are awarded a priority review voucher and have the option of retaining this voucher for a shortened review of another product in their development pipeline, or can sell the voucher to another company to use. Since enactment, three vouchers have been awarded under this program, two of which sold for $67 million and $125 million respectively. The value of the vouchers to sponsors has led to the development of the priority review voucher as a financial incentive in other areas, such as rare pediatric diseases.

However, this program is not without flaws. Use of priority review vouchers is not limited to additional tropical disease products, meaning that companies can use this voucher for a review in six months of any product of its choosing. This can result in new drug applications receiving priority review that would not otherwise qualify if they do not treat a serious disease or condition, or offer a significant improvement in safety or effectiveness. In practice, this allows companies to ''purchase'' services from the agency at the expense of other important public health work, undermining FDA's mission and the morale of the agency's review staff. It also creates additional workload for the FDA by requiring a shortened review of applications for treatments that will be used in millions of patients and diverting review staff from other work. Finally, the additional priority review voucher fee associated with use of the voucher has not been effective in covering the full cost of the expedited review.

In addition to effects on FDA, the current tropical disease priority review voucher program contains two additional flaws—eligibility for this program is not limited to novel therapies, nor are sponsors required to make the qualifying therapy available or accessible for those who are most in need. Two of the three priority review vouchers awarded under this program were awarded to therapies that were already in use in other countries prior to the program's establishment. Thus a voucher was awarded to sponsors without any new investment in tropical disease treatments. Similarly, patients and other organizations still struggle to access two of the three therapies awarded a priority review voucher either due to affordability or lack of availability. An award such as a priority review voucher should only be given to companies who are committed to making their therapy available to patients in disease-endemic countries for which the program is intended to help.

As we consider the bill before us today, it is important to note that FDA has the authority to add Zika to the tropical diseases program administratively if there is no significant market in developed nations for that disease and the disease disproportionately affects poor and marginalized populations. I will submit a letter from FDA noting that it is ''extremely unlikely that the Zika virus meets the criteria set out in the statute'' as there is a significant market for medical products for Zika virus currently. According to the agency, expanding the program to include Zika, which would be ineligible, would weaken the effectiveness of the priority review program and would create an undue burden on FDA.

Mr. Speaker, it is for all of these reasons that I am opposing S. 2512 today. It is clear there are significant issues with the tropical disease priority review voucher program that should have been discussed and considered as a part of the Committee process. Unfortunately, we were not afforded that opportunity. If the goal of the House is to address the Zika crisis, we should not be expanding a flawed program that will provide incentives for which there is no need. Instead Congress should be working together, including with the Administration, to fully fund a comprehensive response to Zika. I submit the following letter:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,

Silver Spring, MD, February 29, 2016.

DEAR MEMBER: Thank you for your letter of February 05, 2016, urging the Food and Drug Administration (FDA or the Agency) to add Zika virus to the list of qualified tropical diseases under the Tropical Disease Priority Review Voucher (PRV) Program by issuing an order, as authorized by the Adding Ebola to the FDA Priority Review Program Act [PL 113–233].

FDA is actively working on many fronts to help mitigate the Zika virus outbreak. The Agency's primary areas of activity include:

(1) protecting the safety of the nation's blood supply and ensuring the safety of cell and tissue products;

(2) facilitating the development and availability of blood donor screening and medical diagnostic tests for identification of the presence of, or prior exposure to, Zika virus;

(3) supporting the development of investigational vaccines and therapeutics;

(4) reviewing proposals for the use of innovative strategies to help suppress the population of virus-carrying mosquitoes;

(5) protecting the public from fraudulent products that claim to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure Zika virus disease.

Specific activities include issuing guidance to blood collection centers on safeguards to prevent transfusion transmission of Zika virus in areas of the U.S. and its territories with active mosquito borne transmission (currently Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa and Marshall Islands), and in unaffected areas where the virus might be introduced by persons returning from affected areas. FDA is also developing guidance that will address appropriate donor

screening for human cells, tissues, and cellular and tissue-based products: concerns in this area have been highlighted by reported possible sexual transmission of the Zika virus. FDA is reaching out to potential commercial product manufacturers to encourage them to develop and submit applications for emergency use of diagnostic tests for the Zika virus. In addition, FDA is actively engaged with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to advance the development of diagnostic tests, vaccines, therapeutics, and donor screening and pathogen-reduction technologies for blood products to help mitigate this outbreak. These efforts have already realized a major success. On February 26, 2016, under its Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) authority, FDA authorized the use of a Zika virus diagnostic test—developed by CDC—for the qualitative detection of Zika virus-specific immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibodies by qualified laboratories. This diagnostic test can help expand domestic readiness for Zika virus by enabling the identification of patients recently infected with Zika virus in support of response efforts.

As you are aware, under section 524 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services is authorized to add infectious diseases to the list of tropical diseases that would qualify the developer of a licensed or approved product to prevent or treat an identified tropical disease to receive a PRV under FDA's Tropical Disease PRV Program, if: (1) there is no significant market in developed nations for that disease; and (2) the disease disproportionately affects poor and marginalized populations. This authority is delegated to FDA.

FDA has provided a process for requesting that additional diseases be added to the PRV list through the submission of a request to a special docket set up to facilitate the consideration of such requests, accompanied by information to document that the disease meets the statutory criteria required to be added to the PRV list. While FDA has not received a request to add the Zika virus to the PRV list via the docket, the Agency does not want to foreclose anyone from following that process and will evaluate any submissions that are made with respect to the Zika virus. FDA wants to make it clear, however, that—based on the information currently available to FDA—it is extremely unlikely that the Zika virus meets the criteria set out in the statute. While it appears likely that the Zika virus disproportionately affects poor and marginalized populations, it also appears that there is a significant market for the Zika virus medical products in developed nations, which would render the Zika virus ineligible for addition to the PRV list under the statute at this time.

FDA agrees that we need to do all that we can to facilitate the development of and access to medical products as quickly as possible to respond to the Zika virus outbreak. We fully believe that the incentives currently available for the Zika product development—such as funding for research and development, and clinical trial costs from government and non-governmental organizations—as well as extensive HHS technical assistance for product developers, are sufficient to help bring Zika products to market. FDA is fully prepared to use its authorities to the fullest extent appropriate—including proven mechanisms to speed the availability of medical products for serious diseases—to help facilitate the development and availability of products with the potential to mitigate this outbreak as quickly as the science will allow. However, expanding the PRV program by adding diseases or conditions that do not meet the criteria for inclusion is unnecessary, weakens the effectiveness of the PRV program, and creates an undue burden on FDA that can ultimately harm public health.

As you are aware, the Administration has asked Congress for approximately $1.9 billion in emergency funding to enhance our ongoing efforts to prepare for and respond to the Zika virus, both domestically and internationally. Approving this funding request, which includes support for medical product development and procurement, is essential for sustaining HHS's effort to effectively incentivize the development and availability of medical products for the Zika virus.

Thank you, again, for contacting us concerning this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. The same letter has been sent to your cosigners.

Sincerely,

DAYLE CRISTINZIO,
Acting Associate Commissioner for Legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2512.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1645

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION BANKRUPTCY ACT OF 2016

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2947) to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2947

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATIONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 101 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting the following after paragraph (9):

''(9A) The term 'covered financial corporation' means any corporation incorporated or organized under any Federal or State law, other than a stockbroker, a commodity broker, or an entity of the kind specified in paragraph (2) or (3) of section 109(b), that is—

''(A) a bank holding company, as defined in section 2(a) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956; or

''(B) a corporation that exists for the primary purpose of owning, controlling and financing its subsidiaries, that has total consolidated assets of $50,000,000,000 or greater, and for which, in its most recently completed fiscal year—

''(i) annual gross revenues derived by the corporation and all of its subsidiaries from activities that are financial in nature (as defined in section 4(k) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956) and, if applicable, from the ownership or control of one or more insured depository institutions, represents 85 percent or more of the consolidated annual gross revenues of the corporation; or

''(ii) the consolidated assets of the corporation and all of its subsidiaries related to activities that are financial in nature (as defined in section 4(k) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956) and, if applicable, related to the ownership or control of one or more insured depository institutions, represents 85 percent or more of the consolidated assets of the corporation.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTERS.—Section 103 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) Subchapter V of chapter 11 of this title applies only in a case under chapter 11 concerning a covered financial corporation.''.

(c) WHO MAY BE A DEBTOR.—Section 109 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) a covered financial corporation.''; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking ''and'' before ''an uninsured State member bank'';

(B) by striking ''or'' before ''a corporation''; and

(C) by inserting '', or a covered financial corporation'' after ''Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991''.

(d) CONVERSION TO CHAPTER 7.—Section 1112 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) Notwithstanding section 109(b), the court may convert a case under subchapter V to a case under chapter 7 if—

''(1) a transfer approved under section 1185 has been consummated;

''(2) the court has ordered the appointment of a special trustee under section 1186; and

''(3) the court finds, after notice and a hearing, that conversion is in the best interest of the creditors and the estate.''.

(e)(1) Section 726(a)(1) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after ''first,'' the following: ''in payment of any unpaid fees, costs, and expenses of a special trustee appointed under section 1186, and then''.

(2) Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after paragraph (16) the following:

''(17) In a case under subchapter V, all payable fees, costs, and expenses of the special trustee have been paid or the plan provides for the payment of all such fees, costs, and expenses on the effective date of the plan.

''(18) In a case under subchapter V, confirmation of the plan is not likely to cause serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States.''.

(f) Section 322(b)(2) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking ''The'' and inserting ''In cases under subchapter V, the United States trustee shall recommend to the court, and in all other cases, the''.

SEC. 3. LIQUIDATION, REORGANIZATION, OR RECAPITALIZATION OF A COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATION.

Chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER V—LIQUIDATION, REORGANIZATION, OR RECAPITALIZATION OF A COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATION

''§ 1181. Inapplicability of other sections

''Sections 303 and 321(c) do not apply in a case under this subchapter concerning a covered financial corporation. Section 365 does not apply to a transfer under section 1185, 1187, or 1188.

''§ 1182. Definitions for this subchapter

''In this subchapter, the following definitions shall apply:

''(1) The term 'Board' means the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

''(2) The term 'bridge company' means a newly formed corporation to which property of the estate may be transferred under section 1185(a) and the equity securities of which may be transferred to a special trustee under section 1186(a).

''(3) The term 'capital structure debt' means all unsecured debt of the debtor for borrowed money for which the debtor is the primary obligor, other than a qualified financial contract and other than debt secured by a lien on property of the estate that is to be transferred to a bridge company pursuant to an order of the court under section 1185(a).

''(4) The term 'contractual right' means a contractual right of a kind defined in section 555, 556, 559, 560, or 561.

''(5) The term 'qualified financial contract' means any contract of a kind defined in paragraph (25), (38A), (47), or (53B) of section 101, section 741(7), or paragraph (4), (5), (11), or (13) of section 761.

''(6) The term 'special trustee' means the trustee of a trust formed under section 1186(a)(1).

''§ 1183. Commencement of a case concerning a covered financial corporation

''(a) A case under this subchapter concerning a covered financial corporation may be commenced by the filing of a petition with the court by the debtor under section 301 only if the debtor states to the best of its knowledge under penalty of perjury in the petition that it is a covered financial corporation.

''(b) The commencement of a case under subsection (a) constitutes an order for relief under this subchapter.

''(c) The members of the board of directors (or body performing similar functions) of a covered financial company shall have no liability to shareholders, creditors, or other parties in interest for a good faith filing of a petition to commence a case under this subchapter, or for any reasonable action taken in good faith in contemplation of or in connection with such a petition or a transfer under section 1185 or section 1186, whether prior to or after commencement of the case.

''(d) Counsel to the debtor shall provide, to the greatest extent practicable without disclosing the identity of the potential debtor, sufficient confidential notice to the chief judge of the court of appeals for the circuit embracing the district in which such counsel intends to file a petition to commence a case under this subchapter regarding the potential commencement of such case. The chief judge of such court shall randomly assign to preside over such case a bankruptcy judge selected from among the bankruptcy judges designated by the Chief Justice of the United States under section 298 of title 28.

''§ 1184. Regulators

''The Board, the Securities Exchange Commission, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency of the Department of the Treasury, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation may raise and may appear and be heard on any issue in any case or proceeding under this subchapter.

''§ 1185. Special transfer of property of the estate

''(a) On request of the trustee, and after notice and a hearing that shall occur not less than 24 hours after the order for relief, the court may order a transfer under this section of property of the estate, and the assignment of executory contracts, unexpired leases, and qualified financial contracts of the debtor, to a bridge company. Upon the entry of an order approving such transfer, any property transferred, and any executory contracts, unexpired leases, and qualified financial contracts assigned under such order shall no longer be property of the estate. Except as provided under this section, the provisions of section 363 shall apply to a transfer and assignment under this section.

''(b) Unless the court orders otherwise, notice of a request for an order under subsection (a) shall consist of electronic or telephonic notice of not less than 24 hours to—

''(1) the debtor;

''(2) the holders of the 20 largest secured claims against the debtor;

''(3) the holders of the 20 largest unsecured claims against the debtor;

''(4) counterparties to any debt, executory contract, unexpired lease, and qualified financial contract requested to be transferred under this section;

''(5) the Board;

''(6) the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

''(7) the Secretary of the Treasury and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency of the Treasury;

''(8) the Commodity Futures Trading Commission;

''(9) the Securities and Exchange Commission;

''(10) the United States trustee or bankruptcy administrator; and

''(11) each primary financial regulatory agency, as defined in section 2(12) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, with respect to any affiliate the equity securities of which are proposed to be transferred under this section.

''(c) The court may not order a transfer under this section unless the court determines, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that—

''(1) the transfer under this section is necessary to prevent serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States;

''(2) the transfer does not provide for the assumption of any capital structure debt by the bridge company;

''(3) the transfer does not provide for the transfer to the bridge company of any property of the estate that is subject to a lien securing a debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) of the debtor unless—

''(A)(i) the bridge company assumes such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract), including any claims arising in respect thereof that would not be allowed secured claims under section 506(a)(1) and after giving effect to such transfer, such property remains subject to the lien securing such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract); and

''(ii) the court has determined that assumption of such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) by the bridge company is in the best interests of the estate; or

''(B) such property is being transferred to the bridge company in accordance with the provisions of section 363;

''(4) the transfer does not provide for the assumption by the bridge company of any debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) of the debtor secured by a lien on property of the estate unless the transfer provides for such property to be transferred to the bridge company in accordance with paragraph (3)(A) of this subsection;

''(5) the transfer does not provide for the transfer of the equity of the debtor;

''(6) the trustee has demonstrated that the bridge company is not likely to fail to meet the obligations of any debt, executory contract, qualified financial contract, or unexpired lease assumed and assigned to the bridge company;

''(7) the transfer provides for the transfer to a special trustee all of the equity securities in the bridge company and appointment of a special trustee in accordance with section 1186;

''(8) after giving effect to the transfer, adequate provision has been made for the fees, costs, and expenses of the estate and special trustee; and

''(9) the bridge company will have governing documents, and initial directors and senior officers, that are in the best interest of creditors and the estate.

''(d) Immediately before a transfer under this section, the bridge company that is the recipient of the transfer shall—

''(1) not have any property, executory contracts, unexpired leases, qualified financial contracts, or debts, other than any property acquired or executory contracts, unexpired leases, or debts assumed when acting as a transferee of a transfer under this section; and

''(2) have equity securities that are property of the estate, which may be sold or distributed in accordance with this title.

''§ 1186. Special trustee

''(a)(1) An order approving a transfer under section 1185 shall require the trustee to transfer to a qualified and independent special trustee, who is appointed by the court, all of the equity securities in the bridge company that is the recipient of a transfer under section 1185 to hold in trust for the sole benefit of the estate, subject to satisfaction of the special trustee's fees, costs, and expenses. The trust of which the special trustee is the trustee shall be a newly formed trust governed by a trust agreement approved by the court as in the best interests of the estate, and shall exist for the sole purpose of holding and administering, and shall be permitted to dispose of, the equity securities of the bridge company in accordance with the trust agreement.

''(2) In connection with the hearing to approve a transfer under section 1185, the trustee shall confirm to the court that the Board has been consulted regarding the identity of the proposed special trustee and advise the court of the results of such consultation.

''(b) The trust agreement governing the trust shall provide—

''(1) for the payment of the fees, costs, expenses, and indemnities of the special trustee from the assets of the debtor's estate;

''(2) that the special trustee provide—

''(A) quarterly reporting to the estate, which shall be filed with the court; and

''(B) information about the bridge company reasonably requested by a party in interest to prepare a disclosure statement for a plan providing for distribution of any securities of the bridge company if such information is necessary to prepare such disclosure statement;

''(3) that for as long as the equity securities of the bridge company are held by the trust, the special trustee shall file a notice with the court in connection with—

''(A) any change in a director or senior officer of the bridge company;

''(B) any modification to the governing documents of the bridge company; and

''(C) any material corporate action of the bridge company, including—

''(i) recapitalization;

''(ii) a material borrowing;

''(iii) termination of an intercompany debt or guarantee;

''(iv) a transfer of a substantial portion of the assets of the bridge company; or

''(v) the issuance or sale of any securities of the bridge company;

''(4) that any sale of any equity securities of the bridge company shall not be consummated until the special trustee consults with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Board regarding such sale and discloses the results of such consultation with the court;

''(5) that, subject to reserves for payments permitted under paragraph (1) provided for in the trust agreement, the proceeds of the sale of any equity securities of the bridge company by the special trustee be held in trust for the benefit of or transferred to the estate;

''(6) the process and guidelines for the replacement of the special trustee; and

''(7) that the property held in trust by the special trustee is subject to distribution in accordance with subsection (c).

''(c)(1) The special trustee shall distribute the assets held in trust—

''(A) if the court confirms a plan in the case, in accordance with the plan on the effective date of the plan; or

''(B) if the case is converted to a case under chapter 7, as ordered by the court.

''(2) As soon as practicable after a final distribution under paragraph (1), the office of the special trustee shall terminate, except as may be necessary to wind up and conclude the business and financial affairs of the trust.

''(d) After a transfer to the special trustee under this section, the special trustee shall be subject only to applicable nonbankruptcy law, and the actions and conduct of the special trustee shall no longer be subject to approval by the court in the case under this subchapter.

''§ 1187. Temporary and supplemental automatic stay; assumed debt

''(a)(1) A petition filed under section 1183 operates as a stay, applicable to all entities, of the termination, acceleration, or modification of any debt, contract, lease, or agreement of the kind described in paragraph (2), or of any right or obligation under any such debt, contract, lease, or agreement, solely because of—

''(A) a default by the debtor under any such debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(B) a provision in such debt, contract, lease, or agreement, or in applicable nonbankruptcy law, that is conditioned on—

''(i) the insolvency or financial condition of the debtor at any time before the closing of the case;

''(ii) the commencement of a case under this title concerning the debtor;

''(iii) the appointment of or taking possession by a trustee in a case under this title concerning the debtor or by a custodian before the commencement of the case; or

''(iv) a credit rating agency rating, or absence or withdrawal of a credit rating agency rating—

''(I) of the debtor at any time after the commencement of the case;

''(II) of an affiliate during the period from the commencement of the case until 48 hours after such order is entered;

''(III) of the bridge company while the trustee or the special trustee is a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of—

''(aa) the bridge company; or

''(bb) the affiliate, if all of the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185; or

''(IV) of an affiliate while the trustee or the special trustee is a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of—

''(aa) the bridge company; or

''(bb) the affiliate, if all of the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185.

''(2) A debt, contract, lease, or agreement described in this paragraph is—

''(A) any debt (other than capital structure debt), executory contract, or unexpired lease of the debtor (other than a qualified financial contract);

''(B) any agreement under which the debtor issued or is obligated for debt (other than capital structure debt);

''(C) any debt, executory contract, or unexpired lease of an affiliate (other than a qualified financial contract); or

''(D) any agreement under which an affiliate issued or is obligated for debt.

''(3) The stay under this subsection terminates—

''(A) for the benefit of the debtor, upon the earliest of—

''(i) 48 hours after the commencement of the case;

''(ii) assumption of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement by the bridge company under an order authorizing a transfer under section 1185;

''(iii) a final order of the court denying the request for a transfer under section 1185; or

''(iv) the time the case is dismissed; and

''(B) for the benefit of an affiliate, upon the earliest of—

''(i) the entry of an order authorizing a transfer under section 1185 in which the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are not transferred under section 1185;

''(ii) a final order by the court denying the request for a transfer under section 1185;

''(iii) 48 hours after the commencement of the case if the court has not ordered a transfer under section 1185; or

''(iv) the time the case is dismissed.

''(4) Subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g) of section 362 apply to a stay under this subsection.

''(b) A debt, executory contract (other than a qualified financial contract), or unexpired lease of the debtor, or an agreement under which the debtor has issued or is obligated for any debt, may be assumed by a bridge company in a transfer under section 1185 notwithstanding any provision in an agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law that—

''(1) prohibits, restricts, or conditions the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(2) accelerates, terminates, or modifies, or permits a party other than the debtor to terminate or modify, the debt, contract, lease, or agreement on account of—

''(A) the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(B) a change in control of any party to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement.

''(c)(1) A debt, contract, lease, or agreement of the kind described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (a)(2) may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, and any right or obligation under such debt, contract, lease, or agreement may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, as to the bridge company solely because of a provision in the debt, contract, lease, or agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law—

''(A) of the kind described in subsection (a)(1)(B) as applied to the debtor;

''(B) that prohibits, restricts, or conditions the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(C) that accelerates, terminates, or modifies, or permits a party other than the debtor to terminate or modify, the debt, contract, lease or agreement on account of—

''(i) the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(ii) a change in control of any party to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement.

''(2) If there is a default by the debtor under a provision other than the kind described in paragraph (1) in a debt, contract, lease or agreement of the kind described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (a)(2), the bridge company may assume such debt, contract, lease, or agreement only if the bridge company—

''(A) shall cure the default;

''(B) compensates, or provides adequate assurance in connection with a transfer under section 1185 that the bridge company will promptly compensate, a party other than the debtor to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement, for any actual pecuniary loss to the party resulting from the default; and

''(C) provides adequate assurance in connection with a transfer under section 1185 of future performance under the debt, contract, lease, or agreement, as determined by the court under section 1185(c)(4).

''§ 1188. Treatment of qualified financial contracts and affiliate contracts

''(a) Notwithstanding sections 362(b)(6), 362(b)(7), 362(b)(17), 362(b)(27), 362(o), 555, 556, 559, 560, and 561, a petition filed under section 1183 operates as a stay, during the period specified in section 1187(a)(3)(A), applicable to all entities, of the exercise of a contractual right—

''(1) to cause the modification, liquidation, termination, or acceleration of a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate;

''(2) to offset or net out any termination value, payment amount, or other transfer obligation arising under or in connection with a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate; or

''(3) under any security agreement or arrangement or other credit enhancement forming a part of or related to a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate.

''(b)(1) During the period specified in section 1187(a)(3)(A), the trustee or the affiliate shall perform all payment and delivery obligations under such qualified financial contract of the debtor or the affiliate, as the case may be, that become due after the commencement of the case. The stay provided under subsection (a) terminates as to a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate immediately upon the failure of the trustee or the affiliate, as the case may be, to perform any such obligation during such period.

''(2) Any failure by a counterparty to any qualified financial contract of the debtor or any affiliate to perform any payment or delivery obligation under such qualified financial contract, including during the pendency of the stay provided under subsection (a), shall constitute a breach of such qualified financial contract by the counterparty.

''(c) Subject to the court's approval, a qualified financial contract between an entity and the debtor may be assigned to or assumed by the bridge company in a transfer under, and in accordance with, section 1185 if and only if—

''(1) all qualified financial contracts between the entity and the debtor are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company in the transfer under section 1185;

''(2) all claims of the entity against the debtor in respect of any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor (other than any claim that, under the terms of the qualified financial contract, is subordinated to the claims of general unsecured creditors) are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company;

''(3) all claims of the debtor against the entity under any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company; and

''(4) all property securing or any other credit enhancement furnished by the debtor for any qualified financial contract described in paragraph (1) or any claim described in paragraph (2) or (3) under any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor is assigned to and assumed by the bridge company.

''(d) Notwithstanding any provision of a qualified financial contract or of applicable nonbankruptcy law, a qualified financial contract of the debtor that is assumed or assigned in a transfer under section 1185 may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, after the entry of the order approving a transfer under section 1185, and any right or obligation under the qualified financial contract may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, after the entry of the order approving a transfer under section 1185 solely because of a condition described in section 1187(c)(1), other than a condition of the kind specified in section 1187(b) that occurs after property of the estate no longer includes a direct beneficial interest or an indirect beneficial interest through the special trustee, in more than 50 percent of the equity securities of the bridge company.

''(e) Notwithstanding any provision of any agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law, an agreement of an affiliate (including an executory contract, an unexpired lease, qualified financial contract, or an agreement under which the affiliate issued or is obligated for debt) and any right or obligation under such agreement may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, solely because of a condition described in section 1187(c)(1), other than a condition of the kind specified in section 1187(b) that occurs after the bridge company is no longer a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of the affiliate, at any time after the commencement of the case if—

''(1) all direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185 to the bridge company within the period specified in subsection (a);

''(2) the bridge company assumes—

''(A) any guarantee or other credit enhancement issued by the debtor relating to the agreement of the affiliate; and

''(B) any obligations in respect of rights of setoff, netting arrangement, or debt of the debtor that directly arises out of or directly relates to the guarantee or credit enhancement; and

''(3) any property of the estate that directly serves as collateral for the guarantee or credit enhancement is transferred to the bridge company.

''§ 1189. Licenses, permits, and registrations

''(a) Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable nonbankruptcy law, if a request is made under section 1185 for a transfer of property of the estate, any Federal, State, or local license, permit, or registration that the debtor or an affiliate had immediately before the commencement of the case and that is proposed to be transferred under section 1185 may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified at any time after the request solely on account of—

''(1) the insolvency or financial condition of the debtor at any time before the closing of the case;

''(2) the commencement of a case under this title concerning the debtor;

''(3) the appointment of or taking possession by a trustee in a case under this title concerning the debtor or by a custodian before the commencement of the case; or

''(4) a transfer under section 1185.

''(b) Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable nonbankruptcy law, any Federal, State, or local license, permit, or registration that the debtor had immediately before the commencement of the case that is included in a transfer under section 1185 shall be valid and all rights and obligations thereunder shall vest in the bridge company.

''§ 1190. Exemption from securities laws

''For purposes of section 1145, a security of the bridge company shall be deemed to be a security of a successor to the debtor under a plan if the court approves the disclosure statement for the plan as providing adequate information (as defined in section 1125(a)) about the bridge company and the security.

''§ 1191. Inapplicability of certain avoiding powers

''A transfer made or an obligation incurred by the debtor to an affiliate prior to or after the commencement of the case, including any obligation released by the debtor or the estate to or for the benefit of an affiliate, in contemplation of or in connection with a transfer under section 1185 is not avoidable under section 544, 547, 548(a)(1)(B), or 549, or under any similar nonbankruptcy law.

''§ 1192. Consideration of financial stability

''The court may consider the effect that any decision in connection with this subchapter may have on financial stability in the United States.''.

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE.

(a) AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 13.—Chapter 13 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 298. Judge for a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11

''(a)(1) Notwithstanding section 295, the Chief Justice of the United States shall designate not fewer than 10 bankruptcy judges to be available to hear a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11. Bankruptcy judges may request to be considered by the Chief Justice of the United States for such designation.

''(2) Notwithstanding section 155, a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11 shall be heard under section 157 by a bankruptcy judge designated under paragraph (1), who shall be randomly assigned to hear such case by the chief judge of the court of appeals for the circuit embracing the district in which the case is pending. To the greatest extent practicable, the approvals required under section 155 should be obtained.

''(3) If the bankruptcy judge assigned to hear a case under paragraph (2) is not assigned to the district in which the case is pending, the bankruptcy judge shall be temporarily assigned to the district.

''(b) A case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11, and all proceedings in the case, shall take place in the district in which the case is pending.

''(c) In this section, the term 'covered financial corporation' has the meaning given that term in section 101(9A) of title 11.''.

(b) AMENDMENT TO SECTION 1334 OF TITLE 28.—Section 1334 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) This section does not grant jurisdiction to the district court after a transfer pursuant to an order under section 1185 of title 11 of any proceeding related to a special trustee appointed, or to a bridge company formed, in connection with a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 13 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''298. Judge for a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 2947, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In 2008, our economy suffered one of the most significant financial crises in history. In the midst of the crisis and in response to a fear that some financial firms' failures could cause severe harm to the overall economy, the Federal Government provided extraordinary taxpayer-funded assistance in order to prevent certain financial firms' failures. In the ensuing years, experts from the financial, regulatory, legal, and academic communities examined how best to prevent another similar crisis from occurring and how to eliminate the possibility of using taxpayer moneys to bail out failing firms.

The Judiciary Committee has advanced the review of this issue with the aim of crafting a solution that will better equip our bankruptcy laws to resolve failing firms while also encouraging greater private counterparty diligence in order to reduce the likelihood of another financial crisis. Among other things, this responded to provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which called for an examination of how to improve the Bankruptcy Code in this area.

Last Congress, after three hearings, the Judiciary Committee favorably reported the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act, which is legislation that improved the Bankruptcy Code to better facilitate the resolution of a financial firm. That legislation was the culmination of a bipartisan process that solicited and incorporated the views of a wide range of leading experts and relevant regulators. The bill ultimately passed the House by a voice vote under a suspension of the rules.

This Congress, Representative TROTT reintroduced the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act as H.R. 2947. Following its introduction, the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law conducted a hearing on the bill. The hearing witnesses all supported the legislation while providing recommendations for further refinements to the bill. Those recommendations were incorporated, and the Judiciary Committee approved the legislation by a unanimous vote of 25–0.

The bill under consideration today is the product of a careful, deliberate, and thorough process, and it reflects a diverse range of views from a variety of interested parties. The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act makes several improvements to the Bankruptcy Code in order to enhance the prospect of the efficient resolution of a financial firm through the bankruptcy process.

The bill allows for the speedy transfer of a financial firm's operating assets over the course of a weekend. This quick transfer allows the financial firm to continue to operate in the normal course, which preserves the value of the enterprise for the creditors of the bankruptcy without there being any significant impact on the firm's employees, suppliers, and customers.

The bill also requires expedited judicial review by a bankruptcy judge who has been randomly chosen from a pool of judges, who has been designated in advance, and who has been selected by the chief justice for his experience, expertise, and willingness to preside over these complex cases. Furthermore, the legislation provides for key regulatory input throughout the process.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a bipartisan, balanced approach that increases transparency and predictability in the resolution of a financial firm. Furthermore, it ensures that shareholders and creditors, not taxpayers, bear the losses related to the failure of a financial company.

I am pleased that Ranking Member CONYERS is a lead sponsor of this important legislation, and I thank him and his staff for their efforts in developing this bill. I thank Representative TROTT for introducing this important legislation, and I thank Chairman MARINO of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, who is one of the original sponsors of the bill and who helped to usher the bill through the Judiciary Committee. I also commend my colleague from Georgia, who is also involved in this work and who is the ranking member of that same subcommittee.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2947, the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2016, amends the Bankruptcy Code to establish a process for the expedited judicial resolution of large financial institutions in order to soften the disruptive effects of their collapse.

As we all know, the Great Recession was triggered by the widespread issuance and limited regulation of high-risk and, possibly, fraudulent mortgage-backed securities. Fueled by adjustable rate and predatory subprime mortgages, these securities were issued without regard to careful underwriting standards, caused a housing bubble that trapped countless homeowners in unaffordable mortgages, and led to a massive wave of foreclosures that resulted in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. In the wake of this crisis, the President signed the Dodd-Frank Act into law so as to provide comprehensive measures to reduce systemic risk through heightened financial stability requirements for large financial institutions.

Among many other requirements, title I of Dodd-Frank requires that certain large financial institutions have living wills to ensure a rapid and orderly resolution in the event of material distress or failure. Title II of the law provides for an administrative process to wind down these institutions so as to avoid adverse effects on the entire financial system; but there is no such process under the current bankruptcy law.

I applaud Congressman TROTT and the chairman of the full committee, Chairman GOODLATTE, for addressing this concern by offering this legislation to revise the Bankruptcy Code in order to establish a specialized form of bankruptcy relief that would facilitate the expeditious resolution of large financial institutions and would minimize the disruptive impact of a company's collapse on the financial system. The legislation largely accomplishes this goal by establishing a resolution process that authorizes a court to provide relief by transferring a debtor's assets to a bridge company, under an expedited timeline, while minimizing the adverse effects of the bankruptcy on the financial system.

While these aspects of the bill are commendable, I remain concerned, however, that this legislation lacks a funding mechanism that would allow the Federal Government to provide liquidity to the company, which is a key difference between an orderly resolution under Dodd-Frank and the resolution contemplated by H.R. 2947.

In a typical bankruptcy case, the debtor's reorganization may be funded by private parties or by the Federal Government, as illustrated by the General Motors bankruptcy. In many instances, liquidity provided by the U.S. Government to prevent the collapse of a financial institution has either returned a profit to the taxpayers or is likely to be repaid.

Leading bankruptcy experts have found that providing liquidity to distressed financial institutions ''is essential to successfully resolving the firm without creating undue systemic risk.'' This critical mechanism has prevented the collapses of several major financial institutions without cost to the taxpayer.

Lastly, I would caution against efforts to combine H.R. 2947 with legislation that would strike title II of the Dodd-Frank Act. As the National Bankruptcy Conference has observed, laws that are currently in place, such as title II of the Dodd-Frank Act, should remain in effect because the ability of U.S. regulators to assume full control of the resolution process to elicit the cooperation from non-U.S. regulators is an essential insurance policy against systemic risk and potential conflict and dysfunction among the multinational components of these institutions. I would also note that title II of the Dodd-Frank Act will serve as a valuable backstop to the bankruptcy process should this bill become law.

Notwithstanding these concerns, I thank, once again, the gentleman from Virginia, the gentleman from Michigan, and also my friend and chair of the relevant subcommittee, TOM MARINO from Pennsylvania, for their leadership on this issue and for the bipartisan process in developing this legislation. I also thank the Democratic and Republican counsel of the Judiciary Committee, Susan Jensen and Anthony Grossi, for their tireless work and substantive expertise in developing this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT), the chief sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. TROTT. I thank my colleagues Chairman GOODLATTE, Ranking Member CONYERS, and my friend from Georgia for their support of this important legislation. I also thank the other Members and the staff who have helped shape this bipartisan bill.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are frustrated with their government. While families are working hard, are paying their taxes, and are doing their best to keep the American Dream alive, Washington decides to spend money it doesn't have on problems it shouldn't solve. Suffice it to say, both parties have proven to be bad stewards of our Nation's finances.

Many of us were disappointed to see $700 billion in taxpayer money spent on bailing out failed financial institutions in 2008. The American people should not be on the hook for the failures of bad business practices. The American people entrusted us with their tax dollars, and Washington used the money to bail out banks. We cannot let this happen again. The legislation we are considering today is aimed at protecting American taxpayers and at reducing the risk of another taxpayer-funded bailout.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act protects taxpayers by reforming the process of how failing banks go through bankruptcy proceedings. We have incorporated the recommendations of hearing witnesses, regulators, and experts from four Judiciary Committee hearings over the

past 2 years. This effort is, truly, the product of bipartisan work and compromise.

Under this bill, the process will be handled by an experienced judge—a judge who knows how to handle the complex reorganizations of financial institutions. It will also result in a transparent judicial process instead of there being a group of bank CEOs and regulators that meets in a back room in order to decide how to save a failing bank. It will ensure that shareholders and creditors are at risk when a financial institution fails, not the American taxpayer. Further, decades of case law and precedent will ensure a fair result.

This bill is the kind of commonsense legislation that, I believe, offers important solutions, that protects the American people, and that is deserving of strong bipartisan support. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this effort. Let's pass this bill and move it to the Senate for consideration.

□ 1700

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I only have one speaker remaining, myself, to close. So I am prepared to do that once the gentleman from Georgia yields back.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues pass this measure.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a necessary reform to ensure that taxpayers will not be called on to rescue the next failing financial firm. The legislation relies on longstanding bankruptcy principles that will be applied in a predictable and transparent manner.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a bipartisan measure that enjoys broad support from outside experts. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important reform. I thank my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee for their bipartisan effort to produce this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2947, the ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2016.'' for several reasons.

To begin with, the bill addresses a real need—recognized by regulatory agencies, bankruptcy experts, and the private sector—that the bankruptcy law must be amended so that it can expeditiously restore trust in the financial marketplace as soon as possible after the collapse of a major financial institution.

As many of you may recall, the failure of Lehman Brothers in 2008 caused a worldwide freeze on the availability of credit, which not only affected Wall Street, but Main Street as well.

Even after Lehman sought bankruptcy relief, the filing did not prevent the near collapse of our Nation's economy. The Lehman case revealed that current bankruptcy law is ill-equipped to deal with complex financial institutions in economic distress.

H.R. 2947 addresses these shortcomings by establishing a specialized form of bankruptcy relief whereby the holding company of a large financial institution could expeditiously obtain such relief, while allowing its operating subsidiaries to function outside of bankruptcy.

Through this mechanism, the debtor's principal assets, such as its secured property, financial contracts, and the stock of its subsidiaries, would be transferred to a temporary ''bridge company,'' that, in turn, would liquidate these assets for the benefit of creditors under the supervision of a trustee.

This process should reduce the likelihood of disruption to the financial marketplace and avoid any worldwide freeze on the availability of credit.

Another reason why I support this bill is that it appropriately recognizes the important role the Dodd-Frank Act has in the regulation of large financial institutions.

Without doubt, the Great Recession was a direct result of the regulatory equivalent of the Wild West.

In the absence of any meaningful regulation of the mortgage industry, lenders developed high risk subprime mortgages and used predatory marketing tactics targeting the most vulnerable.

These doomed-to-fail mortgages were then securitized and sold to unsuspecting investors, including pension funds and school districts.

Millions of Americans were trapped in mortgages they could no longer afford. This resulted in causing vast waves of foreclosures, massive unemployment, and international economic upheaval.

The Dodd-Frank Act goes a long way toward reinvigorating a regulatory system that makes the financial marketplace more accountable, more transparent, and more resilient.

And, H.R. 2947 will make the Dodd-Frank Act even more effective by ensuring the bankruptcy law is better equipped to resolve these companies.

Finally, I am pleased that H.R. 2947 is the product of a very collaborative, inclusive, and deliberative process.

A collaborative process—particularly with respect to complex legislation with wide-ranging consequences—is essential. It should be the norm, not the exception.

Accordingly, I commend Judiciary Committee Chairman GOODLATTE for his leadership in ensuring this collaborative process for H.R. 2947.

Nevertheless, while the bill is an excellent measure, it unfortunately does not include any provision allowing the federal government to be a lender of last resort, a critical element that nearly every expert recognizes is necessary to ensure financial stability. This is a matter that at some point must be addressed.

Again, I want to acknowledge the excellent level of cooperation on both sides of the aisle in producing the legislation that is pending before us today.

In closing, I appreciate that my Judiciary Committee colleagues on both sides of the aisle have come together to support H.R. 2947.

Nevertheless, I strongly encourage Chairman GOODLATTE to consider other bankruptcy-related measures that my colleagues and I have introduced this Congress dealing with equally important matters.

These measures include H.R. 97, the ''Protecting Employees and Retirees in Business Bankruptcies Act,'' which I introduced to help level the playing field for employees and pensioners in corporate bankruptcy cases.

I also would urge consideration of legislation, such as H.R. 1674, the ''Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act,'' a bill sponsored by my colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee STEVE COHEN, that would help relieve those who—through no fault of their own—become entrapped in unaffordable, predatory student loan obligations.

These measures also deserve to be considered prior to the close of this Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2947, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT OF 2016

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4676) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4676

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL TOOL TO PREVENT CERTAIN FRAUDS AGAINST VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 1041. Fraud regarding veterans' benefits

''(a) Whoever knowingly engages in any scheme or artifice to defraud an individual of veterans' benefits, or in connection with obtaining veteran's benefits for that individual, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

''(b) In this section—

''(1) the term 'veteran' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38; and

''(2) the term 'veterans' benefits' means any benefit provided by Federal law for a veteran or a dependent or survivor of a veteran.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''1041. Fraud regarding veterans' benefits.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4676, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4676, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2016, was introduced by Congressman TOM ROONEY of Florida, a former member of the Judiciary Committee, and Congressman TED DEUTCH of Florida, a current member of the Judiciary Committee.

This legislation fixes a loophole in Federal law and provides Federal prosecutors with an additional tool to go after criminals who seek to defraud veterans.

In recent years, financial predators have increasingly targeted veterans, particularly elderly veterans in low-income housing, in an effort to defraud the veterans out of their Veterans Affairs benefits.

These criminals offer to help veterans with their cases, claim to get their benefits approved in record time, charge fees that are often in the thousands of dollars, and then provide them with little or no assistance.

Under current law, many of these fraudsters would be vulnerable to prosecution under the mail or wire fraud statutes if they engage in this sort of fraudulent scheme by calling a veteran on the phone, sending them an email, mailing them a letter, or otherwise using the instrumentalities of interstate commerce to commit fraud.

However, increasingly these criminals are taking advantage of a loophole in Federal law by conducting in-person seminars or meeting in person at a veteran's home or assisted living facility.

In at least one recent example, a fraudster visited an assisted living facility in Florida and asked the staff to round up all the veterans for a seminar. This sort of conduct—swindling an elderly veteran out of his or her benefits—is truly reprehensible and worthy of Congress' attention.

H.R. 4676, which has the support of the veterans service community, addresses this conduct. This vulnerable population has done its duty to protect us from harm.

It is our duty to help protect them. To paraphrase Ronald Reagan, some people wonder all their lives if they have made a difference. Veterans don't have that problem.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation and protect our Nation's veterans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to support H.R. 4676, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2016, as amended. This legislation provides an important tool for Federal prosecutors to combat veterans' benefits fraud, a very despicable practice.

Because we honor their service and the sacrifices that they have made, it is particularly important that we go above and beyond the call of duty to protect America's veterans from fraud and to ensure the integrity of the system of benefits we provide to them.

Currently, there are about 21 million veterans of the United States military, men and women who selflessly served our Nation in various theaters of war, from the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, many of our veterans, as a result of their service, have physical and mental scars.

There are well over 1 million American veterans with service-connected disabilities. The suicide rate among veterans is 300 percent above the national average, and it is estimated that about 30 percent of all Vietnam veterans and 20 percent of veterans of the recent Middle East conflicts suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder in a given year.

In addition, veterans are more likely than nonveterans to become homeless. They comprise 17 percent of our homeless population. On any given night, an estimated 50,000 veterans are sleeping on America's streets.

In recognition of the extreme sacrifice by our veterans and the hardships many of them continue to face after completion of their military service, it is our solemn duty and our obligation to provide to the best of our ability an appropriate measure of compensation for them.

For instance, we provide disability payments to those with service-connected disabilities. We provide pensions for veterans with limited incomes. We provide them with opportunities for education and training under the GI Bill. And we also provide various life insurance benefits. This is the least that we can do, and it is still not enough.

Unfortunately, there continues to be issues with the medical care we provide our veterans and problems with some benefits never being processed and paid because of the loss of claims by the Veterans Benefits Administration.

H.R. 4676 would make it a crime to knowingly engage in any scheme to defraud a veteran of his or her veteran's benefits or to knowingly engage in fraud in connection with obtaining veteran's benefits. Anyone convicted of such crime could and should be fined, imprisoned, or subjected to both penalties.

I note that the amended version of the bill we are considering today reflects an amendment offered in the Judiciary Committee markup by Ranking Member JOHN CONYERS. The amendment, which was approved by voice vote, extends the bill's protections to fraud involving the benefits owed to the survivors and dependents due to the service of a veteran.

Those who defraud veterans or their surviving spouses or dependents endanger our system of veterans' benefits not only by harming the victims, but also by diminishing the resources required to pay these claims and fund the programs that are needed to help those who have served their country.

Accordingly, I support H.R. 4676. I commend the bill's sponsors, Representative TOM ROONEY and Representative TED DEUTCH, both of Florida, for their work on this important issue.

I thank the chairman for hastening the consideration of this very important piece of legislation by the full committee.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROONEY), the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I serve nearly 75,000 veterans in Congress, making Florida's 17th District one of the highest concentrations of veterans in the whole Nation.

From helping veterans solve problems and process claims with the VA to working to fund veterans' benefits programs at levels deserving of their sacrifice, my duties to these 75,000 veterans is something that I take very seriously. But my constituents are quick to let me know that I still have a lot more work to do to fix the system.

One particularly disturbing problem was brought to my attention by a number of veterans service organizations in my district.

Last year I started to hear stories about individuals advertising themselves to veterans in my district, claiming that, for a hefty fee, which is illegal, they could expedite veterans' claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The problem with that is they can't expedite these claims.

One local Veteran Services Division explained to me at length how these criminals are systematically targeting senior veterans in low-income housing communities almost as a rule because those vets are most likely to fall victim to their schemes.

Disturbingly, these guys will go into assisted living facilities and ''round up all the veterans'' and coerce veterans to apply for veterans' benefits they don't qualify for and to sign contracts agreeing to pay them for services that they can never provide.

We all know that the claims process at the VA is far too slow and takes far too long. My office works with veterans on a daily basis, as do the other Members here, to try to assist them with their claims and expedite the process when possible.

But when I hear that people are singling out veterans, targeting some of them based on their low income, and then earning a significant profit off them, that just makes me sick.

As the law stands now, even though it is illegal for anyone who is not an approved agent with the VA to charge a fee for helping a veteran with a claim or an appeal, there is no criminal or financial penalty associated with breaking this law.

Without a Federal criminal penalty, there is little deterring these despicable people from defrauding a veteran for financial gain. The reality is this: It is happening in all of our districts and people are getting away with it every day.

I refuse to let this continue unabated in my own backyard in this country, especially not to our veterans for whom I have so much respect, as do we all.

So along with my neighbor and friend, Democratic Congressman TED DEUTCH of south Florida, we introduced a bill to penalize people and companies making a living off of stealing from our veterans.

Our bill would give law enforcement and prosecutors the tools to penalize predators that are blatantly engaging in a scheme to defraud veterans, or their families, of his or her benefits by imposing a fine, imprisonment of up to 5 years, or both.

These criminals have to pay the price for their appalling actions. It is our duty in Congress to ensure that our Nation's heroes are protected under every circumstance and aspect of the law. I am proud that this bipartisan bill is on the floor today.

I urge my colleagues to join me, Congressman DEUTCH, and the chairman and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee in support of this bill.

Each and every one of us owes our Nation's veterans the utmost respect. Today we have the chance to bring justice to those veterans who have fallen victim to the immoral schemes committed by some of the lowest forms of criminals in our country.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it warms my heart today to be a part of this body and to be a part of the movement of such important legislation as this, which is to protect people who are very vulnerable to abuse. Without our action, it will just simply continue.

I want to once again applaud the efforts of Representative TOM ROONEY and Representative TED DEUTCH for bringing this legislation to us.

I look forward to its passage. I would recommend to all of my colleagues that they join us and support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee and Subcommittee on Crime Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, which reported this legislation, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4676 ''Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2016'', a bill that provides an important additional tool for federal prosecutors to combat veterans' benefits fraud.

I support this legislation, because of the honorable sacrifices our veterans have made for us, it is particularly important that we protect them from fraud and ensure the integrity of the system of benefits we provide for them.

H.R. 4676 amends the federal criminal code to declare that any person who knowingly engages in any scheme or artifice to defraud a veteran of veterans' benefits, or in connection with obtaining veteran's benefits for that veteran, shall be fined, imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

Currently, there are approximately 21 million veterans of the United States military living all across our country.

It is estimated that about 30 percent of all Vietnam veterans have had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and up to 20 percent of veterans serving in more recent conflicts in the Middle East are estimated to suffer from PTSD in a given year.

Given the extreme sacrifice by our veterans and the hardships many of them continue to face after their military service, it is our duty to provide, to the best of our ability, an appropriate measure of compensation for them-particularly for those in need.

For instance, we provide disability payments to those with service-connected disabilities, pensions for veterans with limited incomes, education and training under the GI Bill, and also various life insurance benefits.

Over 24,000 veterans reside in my 18th Congressional District and one of my top priorities is to fight for their benefits and to fight for the rights of our most patriotic Americans.

Amending title 18, United States Code of H.R. 4676, provides an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans.

H.R. 4676 will ensure that prosecutors may bring criminal charges against those who knowingly defraud a veteran of their benefits or engage in fraud in connection with obtaining veterans' benefits.

476,515 veterans are living with PTSD, and need their benefits to provide the top care for their disorder; it is criminal that some are left untreated.

H.R. 4676 will bring justice to our veterans and shine a light on those who are abusing the benefits given to veterans for defending our country.

Those who defraud veterans and the system of veterans' benefits harm the victims and diminish resources required to pay the claims and fund the programs that are needed to help those who have served their country.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 4676.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4676, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1715

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1567) to authorize a comprehensive, strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1567

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Global Food Security Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY OBJECTIVES; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY OBJECTIVES.—It is in the national security interest of the United States to promote global food security, resilience, and nutrition, consistent with national food security investment plans, which is reinforced through programs, activities, and initiatives that—

(1) accelerate inclusive, agricultural-led economic growth that reduces global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition, particularly among women and children;

(2) increase the productivity, incomes, and livelihoods of small-scale producers, especially women, by working across agricultural value chains, enhancing local capacity to manage agricultural resources effectively, and expanding producer access to local and international markets;

(3) build resilience to food shocks among vulnerable populations and households while reducing reliance upon emergency food assistance;

(4) create an enabling environment for agricultural growth and investment, including through the promotion of secure and transparent property rights;

(5) improve the nutritional status of women and children, with a focus on reducing child stunting, including through the promotion of highly nutritious foods, diet diversification, and nutritional behaviors that improve maternal and child health;

(6) align with and leverage broader United States strategies and investments in trade,

economic growth, science and technology, agricultural research and extension, maternal and child health, nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene;

(7) continue to strengthen partnerships between United States-based universities, including land-grant colleges and universities, and institutions in target countries and communities that build agricultural capacity; and

(8) ensure the effective use of United States taxpayer dollars to further these objectives.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that the President, in providing assistance to implement the Global Food Security Strategy, should—

(1) coordinate, through a whole-of-government approach, the efforts of relevant Federal departments and agencies to implement the Global Food Security Strategy;

(2) seek to fully utilize the unique capabilities of each relevant Federal department and agency while collaborating with and leveraging the contributions of other key stakeholders; and

(3) utilize open and streamlined solicitations to allow for the participation of a wide range of implementing partners through the most appropriate procurement mechanisms, which may include grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, and other instruments as necessary and appropriate.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AGRICULTURE.—The term ''agriculture'' means crops, livestock, fisheries, and forestries.

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(3) FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LABS.—The term ''Feed the Future Innovation Labs'' means research partnerships led by United States universities that advance solutions to reduce global hunger, poverty, and malnutrition.

(4) FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY.—The term ''food and nutrition security'' means access to, and availability, utilization, and stability of, sufficient food to meet caloric and nutritional needs for an active and healthy life.

(5) GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY.—The term ''Global Food Security Strategy'' means the strategy developed and implemented pursuant to section 4(a).

(6) KEY STAKEHOLDERS.—The term ''key stakeholders'' means actors engaged in efforts to advance global food security programs and objectives, including—

(A) relevant Federal departments and agencies;

(B) national and local governments in target countries;

(C) other bilateral donors;

(D) international and regional organizations;

(E) international, regional, and local financial institutions;

(F) international, regional, and local private voluntary, nongovernmental, faith-based, and civil society organizations;

(G) the private sector, including agribusinesses and relevant commodities groups;

(H) agricultural producers, including farmer organizations, cooperatives, small-scale producers, and women; and

(I) agricultural research and academic institutions, including land-grant colleges and universities and extension services.

(7) LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.—The term ''land-grant colleges and universities'' has the meaning given such term in section 1404(13) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(13)).

(8) MALNUTRITION.—The term ''malnutrition'' means poor nutritional status caused by nutritional deficiency or excess.

(9) RELEVANT FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—The term ''relevant Federal departments and agencies'' means the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of State, the Department of the Treasury, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Peace Corps, the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the United States African Development Foundation, the United States Geological Survey, and any other department or agency specified by the President for purposes of this section.

(10) RESILIENCE.—The term ''resilience'' means the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses to food security in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

(11) SMALL-SCALE PRODUCER.—The term ''small-scale producer'' means farmers, pastoralists, foresters, and fishers that have a low-asset base and limited resources, including land, capital, skills and labor, and, in the case of farmers, typically farm on fewer than 5 hectares of land.

(12) SUSTAINABLE.—The term ''sustainable'' means the ability of a target country, community, implementing partner, or intended beneficiary to maintain, over time, the programs authorized and outcomes achieved pursuant to this Act.

(13) TARGET COUNTRY.—The term ''target country'' means a developing country that is selected to participate in agriculture and nutrition security programs under the Global Food Security Strategy pursuant to the selection criteria described in section 4(a)(2), including criteria such as the potential for agriculture-led economic growth, government commitment to agricultural investment and policy reform, opportunities for partnerships and regional synergies, the level of need, and resource availability.

SEC. 4. COMPREHENSIVE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY.—The President shall coordinate the development and implementation of a United States whole-of-government strategy to accomplish the policy objectives described in section 2(a), which shall—

(1) set specific and measurable goals, benchmarks, timetables, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans that reflect international best practices relating to transparency, accountability, food and nutrition security, and agriculture-led economic growth, consistent with the policy objectives described in section 2(a);

(2) establish clear and transparent selection criteria for target countries and communities;

(3) support and be aligned with country-owned agriculture, nutrition, and food security policy and investment plans developed with input from key stakeholders, as appropriate;

(4) support inclusive agricultural value chain development, with small-scale producers, especially women, gaining greater access to the inputs, skills, resource management capacity, networking, bargaining power, financing, and market linkages needed to sustain their long-term economic prosperity;

(5) support improvement of the nutritional status of women and children, particularly during the critical first 1,000-day window until a child reaches 2 years of age and with a focus on reducing child stunting, through nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programs, including related water, sanitation, and hygiene programs;

(6) facilitate communication and collaboration, as appropriate, among local stakeholders in support of a multi-sectoral approach to food and nutrition security, to include analysis of the multiple underlying causes of malnutrition, including lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene;

(7) support the long-term success of programs by building the capacity of local organizations and institutions in target countries and communities;

(8) integrate resilience and nutrition strategies into food security programs, such that chronically vulnerable populations are better able to build safety nets, secure livelihoods, access markets, and access opportunities for longer-term economic growth;

(9) develop community and producer resilience to natural disasters, emergencies, and natural occurrences that adversely impact agricultural yield;

(10) harness science, technology, and innovation, including the research and extension activities supported by relevant Federal departments and agencies, including State partners, and Feed the Future Innovation Labs;

(11) integrate agricultural development activities among food insecure populations living in proximity to designated national parks or wildlife areas into wildlife conservation efforts, as necessary and appropriate;

(12) leverage resources and expertise through partnerships with the private sector, farm organizations, cooperatives, civil society, faith-based organizations, and agricultural research and academic institutions;

(13) support collaboration, as appropriate, between United States universities, including land-grant colleges and universities, and public and private institutions in target countries and communities to promote agricultural development and innovation;

(14) seek to ensure that target countries and communities respect and promote land tenure rights of local communities, particularly those of women and small-scale producers; and

(15) include criteria and methodologies for graduating target countries and communities from assistance provided to implement the Global Food Security Strategy as such countries and communities meet the progress benchmarks identified pursuant to section 6(b)(4).

(b) COORDINATION.—The President shall coordinate, through a whole-of-government approach, the efforts of relevant Federal departments and agencies in the implementation of the Global Food Security Strategy by—

(1) establishing monitoring and evaluation systems, coherence, and coordination across

relevant Federal departments and agencies; and

(2) establishing platforms for regular consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders and the appropriate congressional committees.

(c) STRATEGY SUBMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1, 2016, the President, in consultation with the head of each relevant Federal department and agency, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees the Global Food Security Strategy required under this section that provides a detailed description of how the United States intends to advance the objectives set forth in section 2(a) and the agency-specific plans described in paragraph (2).

(2) AGENCY-SPECIFIC PLANS.—The Global Food Security Strategy shall include specific implementation plans from each relevant Federal department and agency that describes—

(A) the anticipated contributions of the department or agency, including technical, financial, and in-kind contributions, to implement the Global Food Security Strategy; and

(B) the efforts of the department or agency to ensure that the activities and programs carried out pursuant to the strategy are designed to achieve maximum impact and long-term sustainability.

SEC. 5. ASSISTANCE TO IMPLEMENT THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY.

(a) FOOD SHORTAGES.—The President is authorized to carry out activities pursuant to section 103, section 103A, title XII of chapter 2 of part I, and chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151a, 2151a–1, 2220a et seq., and 2346 et seq.) to prevent or address food shortages notwithstanding any other provision of law.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development $1,000,600,000 for fiscal year 2017 to carry out those portions of the Global Food Security Strategy that relate to the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, respectively.

(c) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—The President shall seek to ensure that assistance to implement the Global Food Security Strategy is provided under established parameters for a rigorous accountability system to monitor and evaluate progress and impact of the strategy, including by reporting to the appropriate congressional committees and the public on an annual basis.

SEC. 6. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the submission of the Global Food Security Strategy, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes the status of the implementation of the Global Food Security Strategy.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) contain a summary of the Global Food Security Strategy as an appendix;

(2) identify any substantial changes made in the Global Food Security Strategy during the preceding calendar year;

(3) describe the progress made in implementing the Global Food Security Strategy;

(4) identify the indicators used to establish benchmarks and measure results over time, as well as the mechanisms for reporting such results in an open and transparent manner;

(5) describe related strategies and benchmarks for graduating target countries and communities from assistance provided under the Global Food Security Strategy over time, including by building resilience, reducing risk, and enhancing the sustainability of outcomes from United States investments in agriculture and nutrition security;

(6) contain a transparent, open, and detailed accounting of expenditures by relevant Federal departments and agencies to implement the Global Food Security Strategy, including, for each Federal department and agency, the statutory source of expenditures, amounts expended, implementing partners, targeted beneficiaries, and activities supported;

(7) describe how the Global Food Security Strategy leverages other United States food security and development assistance programs on the continuum from emergency food aid through sustainable, agriculture-led economic growth;

(8) describe the contributions of the Global Food Security Strategy to, and assess the impact of, broader international food and nutrition security assistance programs, including progress in the promotion of land tenure rights, creating economic opportunities for women and small-scale producers, and stimulating agriculture-led economic growth in target countries and communities;

(9) assess efforts to coordinate United States international food security and nutrition programs, activities, and initiatives with key stakeholders;

(10) identify any United States legal or regulatory impediments that could obstruct the effective implementation of the programming referred to in paragraphs (7) and (8);

(11) assess United States Government-facilitated private investment in related sectors and the impact of private sector investment in target countries and communities;

(12) contain a clear gender analysis of programming, to inform project-level activities, that includes established disaggregated gender indicators to better analyze outcomes for food productivity, income growth, control of assets, equity in access to inputs, jobs and markets, and nutrition; and

(13) incorporate a plan for regularly reviewing and updating strategies, partnerships, and programs and sharing lessons learned with a wide range of stakeholders, including key stakeholders, in an open, transparent manner.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—The information referred to in subsection (b) shall be made available on the public website of the United States Agency for International Development in an open, machine readable format, in a timely manner.

SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING EFFECT OF GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AND EMERGENCY AND NONEMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the Global Food Security Strategy or this Act shall be construed to supersede or otherwise affect the authority of the relevant Federal departments and agencies to carry out the programs specified in subsection (b) in the manner provided in, and subject to the terms and conditions of, those programs.

(b) COVERED PROGRAMS.—The programs referred to in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) The Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1691 et seq.).

(2) The Food for Progress Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1736o).

(3) Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1431(b)).

(4) Section 3206 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Program; 7 U.S.C. 1726c).

(5) The Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust Act (7 U.S.C. 1736f–1).

(6) Section 3107 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program; 7 U.S.C. 1736o–1).

(7) Any other food and nutrition security and emergency and nonemergency food assistance programs administered by the Department of Agriculture.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Global Food Security Act, H.R. 1567, authorizes a comprehensive, strategic approach for U.S. foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, and build resilience among vulnerable populations.

At its core, H.R. 1567 establishes a comprehensive global food security strategy that includes eight mutually reinforcing policy objectives and 15 specific goals and actions designed to develop and implement a whole-of-government strategy.

Essential elements of the strategy include: benchmarks, timetables, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans; clear and transparent selection criteria for target countries; support of inclusive value-chain development with small-scale producers, especially women; leverage of resources and expertise through partnerships with the private sector, farm organizations, cooperatives, civil society, faith-based organizations, and agricultural research and academic institutions; harnessing science, technology, and innovation from a myriad of sources, including the 24 Feed the Future innovation labs; and support for improved nutrition for women and children, particularly during the critical first thousand-day window until a child reaches 2 years of age, and with a focus on reducing child stunting through nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programs, including related water, sanitation, and hygiene programs.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there is perhaps no wiser and radically transformative investment that we could make in the human person than to concentrate on ensuring that sufficient nutrition and health assistance is given during the first thousand days of life, a thousand days that begins with conception, continues throughout pregnancy, includes that milestone event called birth, and then finishes at roughly the second birthday of the child.

Children who do not receive adequate nutrition in utero are far more likely to experience immune system deficiencies, making opportunistic infections more debilitating, even fatal, and a large number of lifelong cognitive and physical deficiencies, such as stunting. UNICEF estimates that one in four children worldwide is stunted due to lack of adequate nutrition. By maximizing nutrition during the first thousand days of life, we help ensure that the next 25,000 days or more in a person's life are far more likely to be healthier and disease free.

One objective of H.R. 1567 is to graduate individuals and families and communities and nations from food aid dependency to self-sufficiency, leading to a likely reduction in emergency food assistance over time. That is both humane and a responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds.

By statutorily authorizing this program, which had its roots in the Bush administration and was formalized by the Obama administration, we are also statutorily enhancing congressional oversight by requiring the administration to report to Congress. Thus, the bill requires rigorous monitoring, evaluation, and congressional oversight of the global food security strategy, and it mandates a comprehensive report to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

The approach we have taken in the Global Food Security Act is fiscally disciplined. There is no additional cost to the U.S. taxpayer. This would authorize a straight-lining from 2015 and 2016. USAID will be authorized, however, to do more by more effectively leveraging our aid with that of other countries, the private sector, NGOs, and faith-based organizations, whose great work on the ground in so many different countries impacts so many lives.

As the prime sponsor of H.R. 1567, let me convey my very special thanks to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), the prime Democratic cosponsor, for her leadership, for her friendship, and for her support.

I am deeply grateful to the majority leader, KEVIN MCCARTHY, and his extraordinary floor director, Kelly Dixon, for their pivotal support in the last Congress and this one for the Global Food Security Act.

I would note parenthetically, if it passes today, this will be the second time in 2 years. The clock ran out on the bill in the Senate during the last Congress.

I am grateful as well for the strong and abiding support of the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, ED ROYCE, and ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL. They have been tremendous. The Committee on Agriculture chairman, MIKE CONAWAY, made several important policy revisions and has been personally involved in the drafting of this bill, so I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), my good friend and very distinguished colleague, for his work on this bill and his work on Agriculture in general. I thank him for that leadership. And, of course, a heartfelt thanks to all the other original cosponsors: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. BASS, Mr. CRENSHAW, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. PAULSEN.

Finally, a great big thanks to our professional staff members, who worked hard to bring this bill to the floor: Joan Condon and Doug Anderson at the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Scott Graves, Bart Fischer, and Jackie Barber at the Committee on Agriculture; legislative counsel Mark Synnes; Jenn Holcomb in BETTY MCCOLLUM's office; Piero Tozzi from my subcommittee; and my chief of staff, Mary Noonan. This is truly a team effort. This will save lives and enhance everyone's life around the world who benefits from the program.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, Mr. Speaker, let me thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, and his staff for their hard work on the bill and for bringing it forward. I am a big supporter of this bill, and I think this again shows our committee bipartisanship at its best.

I also want to thank Congressman CHRIS SMITH and Congresswoman BETTY MCCOLLUM for authorizing this legislation, the Global Food Security Act, H.R. 1567.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 800 million people around the world go to bed hungry on a day-to-day basis. Malnutrition is responsible for nearly half of all deaths of children under 5 years old. This is just unconscionable. We cannot allow it to continue. Plain and simple, we need to do more to help people feed themselves.

Beyond that, we need to get to the root causes that perpetuate cycles of poverty, hunger, and instability. This bill lays out clear priorities for American foreign assistance programs that reduce global poverty and hunger. We want to prioritize efforts that accelerate agriculture-led economic growth, enhance food and nutrition security, build resilience, create an environment for robust investment and trade, and advance the range of economic, diplomatic, global health, and national security interests that are tied to food security.

This bill also authorizes funding for State Department and USAID initiatives, including the administration's signature effort of Feed the Future. This program has already delivered real results in fighting world hunger, poverty, and malnutrition. Since 2010, Feed the Future has worked with smallholder farmers in 19 countries to increase incomes and reduce hunger, poverty, and undernutrition.

Feed the Future has helped rural Cambodians start profitable fish farming businesses, taught Guatemalan sharecroppers to grow more profitable crops, and provided educational and national support to Tanzanian mothers. There has been real progress in places like Ghana, which has reduced childhood stunting by 33 percent in just 6 years between 2008 and 2014. Incomes in Honduras increased 55 percent between 2012 and 2014.

This isn't a pie-in-the-sky notion, Mr. Speaker. This is an initiative that we are a part of that is getting real results for real people. So let's continue to support it.

This bill is a real step toward our vision of a world without global hunger and malnutrition, and it supports critical U.S. foreign policy and national security interests. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, who worked very closely with our committee and with me and with my staff on the bill and helped to ensure that it did not have any unintended negative consequences for the domestic programs within his committee's jurisdiction. I want to thank him again for his great leadership.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. SMITH for yielding and the other colleagues for the work they have done on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1567, the Global Food Security Act of 2016. With the world population rapidly increasing, particularly in some of the most impoverished and food-insecure regions, it is of critical importance that the United States maintain its position as the world leader in the effort to alleviate global hunger and enhance food security.

The agricultural community is proud to have long played a crucial role in this effort. We are eager to continue doing our part. As chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, I vow to ensure that the expertise of the

agriculture community is fully leveraged in the global food security efforts that are moving forward.

To fulfill that promise, I have worked closely with the Committee on Foreign Affairs to ensure that the bill before us today capitalizes on the wealth of knowledge and expertise within the U.S. Department of Agriculture and amongst agricultural businesses, commodity groups, agricultural producers, agricultural research institutions, land grant colleges and universities, and the agricultural extension system.

Beyond requiring collaboration with key agricultural stakeholders, the bill will also improve the monitoring and reporting of the various programs and funds counted toward the success of the current Feed the Future initiative. USAID has been very vocal in its efforts to reduce and/or eliminate in-kind food assistance, yet it lauds the use of these very programs in selling the success of Feed the Future. It is my hope that the enhanced reporting accountability within the global food security strategy will ensure that all food aid programs and means of delivery are appropriately recognized for the role that they play in the strategy's success.

Further, to ensure that this legislation does not provide USAID with unintended opportunity to overhaul time-tested food aid programs, the bill contains carefully crafted language protecting the funds and the authorities of these existing programs. As I have pointed out time and again, any changes should be explored in the context of future farm bill discussions.

I greatly appreciate Congressman SMITH's open-minded approach to achieving common ground on this legislation as well as the cooperation and support from the various agricultural organizations, commodity groups, and nongovernmental organizations, such as the ONE Campaign, who have been engaged in this process. I look forward to maintaining and building upon these positive relations as we move forward and carefully monitor the implementation of this strategy. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), one of the authors of this bill and someone who has worked so long on issues like these for so many, many years. A lot of this is really a result of her hard work through the years.

□ 1730

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support for the Global Food Security Act, H.R. 1567. I want to especially thank Congressman CHRIS SMITH for being a real, true partner on this bill and for his work to advance global food security, which we both care about so very deeply.

This bill is an important bill with a goal everyone should support: helping hardworking farmers grow the food they need to feed and support their families. As we have already heard, in the world's poorest countries, nearly 800 million people are chronically hungry or malnourished, and more than 150 million children under the age of 5 are stunted.

No parent should have to watch their child suffer or even die because they don't have access to the nutritious food they need to survive. For children who somehow do survive, the lasting damage of not having access to healthy food means that a child will not grow physically and mentally the way that they should, especially during the first thousand days, and any damage that is done is permanent.

According to the World Bank, stunting ''means a child has failed to develop in full, and it is essentially irreversible, which means that the child will have little hope of achieving [their] full potential.''

As a global community, we know that chronic malnutrition severely limits a child's ability to grow, to learn, and to thrive. But it is not just harmful for that child or the family, it undermines the development of an entire community and perpetuates the cycle of poverty. And all of this is completely preventable.

Working with small holder farmers, especially women, Feed the Future is helping to provide the tools, resources, education, and training these farmers need to grow their way out of poverty and to improve nutrition and create new economic opportunities.

I have been fortunate enough to see the work USAID is doing around the globe and to hear directly from women farmers about the difference it has made for themselves and their families. A mother can now feed her family better food, pay her children's school fees, invest in her community, and become an entrepreneur herself.

These are success stories that happen when the United States makes smart investments in global food security. These are the successes that we must continue if we want to strengthen families, communities, and, yes, even our own national security.

Feed the Future does not work alone. It is partnering with private sector businesses, civil society, and universities. Bringing these sectors together with their specialized knowledge and expertise is not only good for that farmer or local processor, but it builds new, stable markets in these communities.

Minnesota-based businesses Land O'Lakes, General Mills, and Cargill are already working with Feed the Future. General Mills CEO Ken Powell said, ''And we are hungry to help the farmer in Malawi who, by selling her crop, will generate the money needed to support her family and pay for her children to go to school.''

Well, that truly sums it up. This is what this legislation is all about: empowering women farmers to support and care for their families.

Once again, I want to thank Congressman CHRIS SMITH for being a great partner on this journey. I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for helping to move this legislation forward, along with Congresswoman BASS.

I also want to thank the staff—Piero, Jenn, Janice, and Joan—for all the work that they did to help get this bill to the floor today.

In December 2014, this House passed a similar version of this bill by a voice vote, but the Senate failed to act. So today, once again, I urge my colleagues to support the Global Food Security Act.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, for bringing this bill up today.

I rise in support of the Global Food Security Act, H.R. 1567. This bill reflects almost 2 years of work between the Agriculture Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee, both of which I serve on.

This legislation is an important step in getting back to regular order and properly authorizing a program—which has essentially been on autopilot for the last 7 years—before funds are appropriated.

An important program such as this needs to be reexamined by Congress and duly authorized so that changes that need to be made can be made and to stop the terrible pattern of just appropriating money for programs because the reauthorization is too difficult to work out.

The legislation demonstrates that this body is doing what we were sent up here to do: make the tough decisions and stop the cycle of throwing good money after bad.

H.R. 1567 authorizes previously unauthorized money that is no higher than what has been appropriated in the last 2 fiscal years.

Furthermore, through the hard work of both the Agriculture and Foreign Affairs Committees, we have been able to eliminate duplicative spending and waste, strengthen congressional oversight while instituting no new spending, and most importantly, begin weaning these nations off of U.S. foreign aid by including the private sector, promoting economic growth, and opening markets for U.S. trade and investment instead of just aid.

I think it is time to change our paradigm of giving aid to foreign governments and move from aid to trade.

That way, we wean off the structure we have done in the past.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1567 and show the rest of the world that Congress is doing what it was meant to: making the hard choices through negotiating and crafting legislation and programs that will not irresponsibly waste taxpayer money and will encourage the best results that will wean countries off of U.S. aid and onto U.S. trade.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as you have heard from all our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, this is a good bill that deserves to be supported by everyone in the House.

Ending global hunger and malnutrition is an enormous challenge. There are nearly 800 million people facing chronic hunger and 3.1 million child malnutrition deaths each year. Let me just say that again because it is shocking. There are 3.1 million child malnutrition deaths each year. These are deaths of innocent children that we can save. They are dying if we do nothing.

So we must do more to achieve food and nutrition security. This bill is a step in the right direction, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

I once again thank Chairman ROYCE, Mr. SMITH, and Ms. MCCOLLUM for their hard work on this issue, and I urge, again, my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Mr. ENGEL for his very kind remarks and for his strong support for this legislation. This has been a great partnership with BETTY MCCOLLUM, and I know it will continue. Both of us—and others, of course—are totally committed to ending chronic hunger and providing self-sufficiency in countries where it is a matter of just conveying best practices and increasing the capabilities of people and their roads and bridges. It's all very much integrated. So I want to thank her for her leadership on this very important piece of legislation.

Again, it bears saying over and over again that half of all deaths in children under 5 are attributable to undernutrition. Of course, for the others who die, very often, malnutrition is a complicating factor and it allows, as I said earlier, opportunistic diseases to take hold and to cause havoc, if not death, to that child.

There are 161 million children stunted worldwide. I was actually in the Central American country of Guatemala when they signed up for the First Thousand Days of Life. The new President has indicated when he was here that it is a very, very important part of his program.

We see it all over Africa and Asia. If nutrition is provided, it does mitigate disease. It does, for many, mean that they have a chance at life and that their immune systems are bolstered to the point where they can resist multiple attacks of various diseases and then get into adolescence and, of course, into adulthood.

This is transformative. It is bipartisan. I also think it bears repeating for my colleagues that this bill has been a long time in the making. As BETTY MCCOLLUM said earlier, we passed it last Congress. And I guess, as I said earlier, the clock did run out. We did not get it up for a vote in the Senate. God willing, this time it will be different.

We have had a dozen committee hearings. I have held many of them myself in my Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights. It has been a multi-year effort and a great deal of due diligence and vetting has gone into the language. We worked, as I said earlier, very closely with Chairman MIKE CONAWAY, and he had very, very important contributions to make. So this has been a great collaborative effort of our staff and members of the Foreign Affairs, Appropriations, and the Agriculture Committees.

I urge Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1567, the Global Food Security Act of 2015. As the world's population has increased the demand for food has grown with it. Amidst a volatile oil market and impacts from extreme weather on major food-exporting industries due to climate change, food prices have risen with the burden falling heavily on underdeveloped nations and their citizens. The pressure is on our chamber to ensure that we live in a world where food availability, regardless of droughts and transportation costs, is not an option but a right.

Feed the Future, a U.S. Government Initiative, works hand-in-hand with partner countries to develop agriculture sectors that help domestic economies as well as the individuals in these places suffering from food shortages. The advanced approach by Feed the Future works to solve the issue by addressing many of the concerns that face these countries. Empowering women, embracing innovation between private sector and civil society, supporting food security, and creating cost-effective results that lead to sustainability for these partner countries are just some of the goals of the Feed the Future program.

The Global Food Security Act of 2015 builds off this initiative by making it permanent and committing the United States to a solution regarding the growing food shortage epidemic. The Act improves upon existing practices to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are effectively apportioned while not adding to the debt. It also requires the Administration to develop a comprehensive strategy to combat food insecurity, malnutrition, and hunger and report it to Congress on a yearly basis.

I would like to close by saying that I am proud of our chamber for coming together to ensure that the United States plays a key role in combatting one of the largest developmental issues in the 21st century. I also want to thank my colleagues for understanding the importance of a comprehensive approach that recognizes and promotes the involvement of women in agriculture while also promoting a sustainable future for our partner countries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1567, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1831

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY) at 6 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1567, by the yeas and nays; and

H.R. 4676, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1567) to authorize a comprehensive, strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 370, nays 33, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 139]

YEAS—370

Abraham	DeSantis	Jolly
Adams	DeSaulnier	Jordan
Aderholt	DesJarlais	Joyce
Aguilar	Diaz-Balart	Kaptur
Amodei	Dingell	Keating
Ashford	Doggett	Kelly (IL)
Babin	Donovan	Kelly (MS)
Barletta	Doyle, Michael F.	Kelly (PA)
Barr	Duckworth	Kennedy
Barton	Duffy	Kildee
Bass	Duncan (SC)	Kilmer
Beatty	Ellison	Kind
Becerra	Ellmers (NC)	King (IA)
Benishek	Emmer (MN)	King (NY)
Bera	Engel	Kinzinger (IL)
Beyer	Eshoo	Kirkpatrick
Bilirakis	Esty	Kline
Bishop (GA)	Farr	Knight
Bishop (MI)	Fitzpatrick	Kuster
Bishop (UT)	Fleischmann	LaHood
Black	Flores	LaMalfa
Blackburn	Forbes	Lance
Blum	Fortenberry	Langevin
Blumenauer	Foster	Larsen (WA)
Bonamici	Foxx	Larson (CT)
Bost	Franks (AZ)	Latta
Boustany	Frelinghuysen	Lawrence
Boyle, Brendan F.	Fudge	Lee
Brady (PA)	Gabbard	Levin
Brady (TX)	Gallego	Lewis
Brooks (IN)	Garamendi	Lipinski
Brownley (CA)	Garrett	LoBiondo
Buchanan	Gibbs	Loebsack
Bucshon	Gibson	Lofgren
Bustos	Goodlatte	Long
Butterfield	Gowdy	Love
Byrne	Graham	Lowenthal
Calvert	Granger	Lowey
Capuano	Graves (LA)	Lucas
Cárdenas	Graves (MO)	Luetkemeyer
Carney	Green, Al	Lujan Grisham (NM)
Carson (IN)	Green, Gene	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Carter (TX)	Guinta	Lynch
Cartwright	Guthrie	MacArthur
Castor (FL)	Hahn	Maloney, Carolyn
Chabot	Hanna	Maloney, Sean
Chaffetz	Hardy	Marchant
Chu, Judy	Harper	Marino
Cicilline	Harris	Matsui
Clark (MA)	Hartzler	McCarthy
Clarke (NY)	Hastings	McCaul
Clawson (FL)	Heck (NV)	McCollum
Clay	Heck (WA)	McDermott
Clyburn	Hensarling	McGovern
Coffman	Herrera Beutler	McHenry
Cohen	Higgins	McKinley
Cole	Hill	McMorris Rodgers
Collins (NY)	Himes	McNerney
Comstock	Hinojosa	McSally
Conaway	Holding	Meadows
Connolly	Honda	Meehan
Conyers	Hoyer	Meeks
Cook	Hudson	Messer
Cooper	Huelskamp	Mica
Costello (PA)	Huffman	Miller (FL)
Courtney	Huizenga (MI)	Miller (MI)
Cramer	Hultgren	Moolenaar
Crawford	Hunter	Mooney (WV)
Crenshaw	Hurd (TX)	Moore
Cuellar	Hurt (VA)	Moulton
Cummings	Israel	Mulvaney
Curbelo (FL)	Issa	Murphy (FL)
Davis (CA)	Jackson Lee	Murphy (PA)
Davis, Danny	Jeffries	Nadler
Davis, Rodney	Jenkins (KS)	Napolitano
Delaney	Jenkins (WV)	Neal
DeLauro	Johnson (GA)	Neugebauer
DelBene	Johnson (OH)	Newhouse
Denham	Johnson, E. B.	Noem
Dent	Johnson, Sam	Nolan
		Norcross
		Nugent
		Nunes
		O'Rourke
		Olson
		Palazzo
		Pallone
		Pascrell
		Paulsen
		Payne
		Pelosi
		Perry
		Peters
		Peterson
		Pingree
		Pittenger
		Pitts
		Pocan
		Poe (TX)
		Poliquin
		Polis
		Pompeo
		Posey
		Price (NC)
		Quigley
		Rangel
		Reed
		Reichert
		Renacci
		Ribble
		Rice (NY)
		Rice (SC)
		Richmond
		Rigell
		Roby
		Roe (TN)
		Rogers (AL)
		Rogers (KY)
		Rohrabacher
		Rokita
		Rooney (FL)
		Ros-Lehtinen
		Ross
		Rothfus
		Rouzer
		Roybal-Allard
		Royce
		Ruiz
		Ruppersberger
		Rush
		Russell
		Ryan (OH)
		Salmon
		Sánchez, Linda T.
		Sanchez, Loretta
		Sarbanes
		Scalise
		Schakowsky
		Schiff
		Schrader
		Schweikert
		Scott (VA)
		Scott, David
		Serrano
		Sessions
		Sewell (AL)
		Sherman
		Shimkus
		Shuster
		Simpson
		Sinema
		Sires
		Slaughter
		Smith (MO)
		Smith (NE)
		Smith (NJ)
		Smith (TX)
		Speier
		Stefanik
		Stewart
		Stivers
		Swalwell (CA)
		Takai
		Takano
		Thompson (CA)
		Thompson (MS)
		Thompson (PA)
		Thornberry
		Tipton
		Titus
		Tonko
		Torres
		Trott
		Tsongas
		Turner
		Upton
		Valadao
		Van Hollen
		Vargas
		Veasey
		Vela
		Velázquez
		Visclosky
		Wagner
		Walberg
		Walden
		Walker
		Walorski
		Walters, Mimi
		Walz
		Wasserman Schultz
		Waters, Maxine
		Watson Coleman
		Webster (FL)
		Welch
		Wenstrup
		Westerman
		Williams
		Wilson (FL)
		Wilson (SC)
		Wittman
		Womack
		Yarmuth
		Yoder
		Yoho
		Young (AK)
		Young (IA)
		Young (IN)
		Zeldin
		Zinke

NAYS—33

Allen	Gohmert	Mullin
Amash	Graves (GA)	Palmer
Brat	Griffith	Price, Tom
Brooks (AL)	Grothman	Ratcliffe
Burgess	Hice, Jody B.	Sanford
Carter (GA)	Jones	Scott, Austin
Collins (GA)	Labrador	Sensenbrenner
Culberson	Lamborn	Stutzman
Duncan (TN)	Loudermilk	Weber (TX)
Farenthold	Massie	Westmoreland
Fleming	McClintock	Woodall

NOT VOTING—30

Bridenstine	Deutch	Katko
Brown (FL)	Dold	Lieu, Ted
Buck	Edwards	Lummis
Capps	Fattah	Meng
Castro (TX)	Fincher	Pearce
Cleaver	Frankel (FL)	Perlmutter
Costa	Gosar	Roskam
Crowley	Grayson	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	Grijalva	Tiberi
DeGette	Gutiérrez	Whitfield

□ 1851

Messrs. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, GROTHMAN, CARTER of Georgia, CULBERSON, AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, WEBER of Texas, and FARENTHOLD changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 139, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes."

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4676) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 0, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 140]

YEAS—411

Abraham	Cohen	Gibbs
Adams	Cole	Gibson
Aderholt	Collins (GA)	Gohmert
Aguilar	Collins (NY)	Goodlatte
Allen	Comstock	Gowdy
Amash	Conaway	Graham
Amodei	Connolly	Granger
Ashford	Conyers	Graves (GA)
Babin	Cook	Graves (LA)
Barletta	Cooper	Graves (MO)
Barr	Costello (PA)	Green, Al
Barton	Courtney	Green, Gene
Bass	Cramer	Griffith
Beatty	Crawford	Grothman
Becerra	Crenshaw	Guinta
Benishek	Cuellar	Guthrie
Bera	Culberson	Hahn
Beyer	Cummings	Hanna
Bilirakis	Curbelo (FL)	Hardy
Bishop (GA)	Davis (CA)	Harper
Bishop (MI)	Davis, Danny	Harris
Bishop (UT)	Davis, Rodney	Hartzler
Black	DeGette	Hastings
Blackburn	Delaney	Heck (NV)
Blum	DeLauro	Heck (WA)
Blumenauer	DelBene	Hensarling
Bonamici	Denham	Herrera Beutler
Bost	Dent	Hice, Jody B.
Boustany	DeSantis	Higgins
Boyle, Brendan F.	DeSaulnier	Hill
Brady (PA)	DesJarlais	Himes
Brady (TX)	Diaz-Balart	Hinojosa
Brat	Dingell	Holding
Brooks (AL)	Doggett	Honda
Brooks (IN)	Dold	Hoyer
Brown (FL)	Donovan	Hudson
Brownley (CA)	Doyle, Michael F.	Huelskamp
Buchanan	Duckworth	Huffman
Bucshon	Duffy	Huizenga (MI)
Burgess	Duncan (SC)	Hultgren
Bustos	Duncan (TN)	Hunter
Butterfield	Ellison	Hurd (TX)
Byrne	Ellmers (NC)	Hurt (VA)
Calvert	Emmer (MN)	Israel
Capps	Engel	Issa
Capuano	Eshoo	Jackson Lee
Cárdenas	Esty	Jeffries
Carney	Farenthold	Jenkins (KS)
Carson (IN)	Farr	Jenkins (WV)
Carter (GA)	Fitzpatrick	Johnson (GA)
Carter (TX)	Fleischmann	Johnson (OH)
Cartwright	Fleming	Johnson, E. B.
Castor (FL)	Flores	Johnson, Sam
Chabot	Forbes	Jolly
Chaffetz	Fortenberry	Jones
Chu, Judy	Foster	Jordan
Cicilline	Foxx	Joyce
Clark (MA)	Franks (AZ)	Kaptur
Clarke (NY)	Frelinghuysen	Keating
Clawson (FL)	Fudge	Kelly (IL)
Clay	Gabbard	Kelly (MS)
Cleaver	Gallego	Kelly (PA)
Clyburn	Garamendi	Kennedy
Coffman	Garrett	Kildee
		Kilmer

Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—22

Bridenstine
Buck
Castro (TX)
Costa
Crowley
DeFazio
Deutch
Edwards
Fattah
Fincher
Frankel (FL)
Gosar
Grayson
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Katko
Lieu, Ted
Lummis
Meng
Pearce
Peterson
Smith (WA)

□ 1858

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded today. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall No. 139: "Aye"; and rollcall No. 140: "Aye."

□ 1900

ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 483) to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 483

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. REGISTRATION PROCESS UNDER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) FACTORS AS MAY BE RELEVANT TO AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.—Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) In this section, the phrase 'factors as may be relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety' means factors that are relevant to and consistent with the findings contained in section 101.''.

(2) IMMINENT DANGER TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY.—Section 304(d) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824(d)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''(d) The Attorney General'' and inserting ''(d)(1) The Attorney General''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) In this subsection, the phrase 'imminent danger to the public health or safety' means that, due to the failure of the registrant to maintain effective controls against diversion or otherwise comply with the obligations of a registrant under this title or title III, there is a substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of an immediate suspension of the registration.''.

(b) OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN PRIOR TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION.—Subsection (c) of section 304 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824) is amended—

(1) by striking the last three sentences;

(2) by striking ''(c) Before'' and inserting ''(c)(1) Before''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) An order to show cause under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) contain a statement of the basis for the denial, revocation, or suspension, including specific citations to any laws or regulations alleged to be violated by the applicant or registrant;

''(B) direct the applicant or registrant to appear before the Attorney General at a time and place stated in the order, but not less than 30 days after the date of receipt of the order; and

''(C) notify the applicant or registrant of the opportunity to submit a corrective action plan on or before the date of appearance.

''(3) Upon review of any corrective action plan submitted by an applicant or registrant pursuant to paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall determine whether denial, revocation, or suspension proceedings should be discontinued, or deferred for the purposes of modification, amendment, or clarification to such plan.

''(4) Proceedings to deny, revoke, or suspend shall be conducted pursuant to this section in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code. Such proceedings shall be independent of, and not in lieu of, criminal prosecutions or other proceedings under this title or any other law of the United States.

''(5) The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to the issuance of an immediate suspension order under subsection (d).''.

SEC. 3. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate identifying—

(1) obstacles to legitimate patient access to controlled substances;

(2) issues with diversion of controlled substances;

(3) how collaboration between Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and the pharmaceutical industry can benefit patients and prevent diversion and abuse of controlled substances;

(4) the availability of medical education, training opportunities, and comprehensive clinical guidance for pain management and opioid prescribing, and any gaps that should be addressed;

(5) beneficial enhancements to State prescription drug monitoring programs, including enhancements to require comprehensive prescriber input and to expand access to the programs for appropriate authorized users; and

(6) steps to improve reporting requirements so that the public and Congress have more information regarding prescription opioids, such as the volume and formulation of prescription opioids prescribed annually, the dispensing of such prescription opioids, and outliers and trends within large data sets.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The report under subsection (a) shall incorporate feedback and recommendations from the following:

(1) Patient groups.

(2) Pharmacies.

(3) Drug manufacturers.
(4) Common or contract carriers and warehousemen.
(5) Hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers.
(6) State attorneys general.
(7) Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.
(8) Health insurance providers and entities that provide pharmacy benefit management services on behalf of a health insurance provider.
(9) Wholesale drug distributors.
(10) Veterinarians.
(11) Professional medical societies and boards.
(12) State and local public health authorities.
(13) Health services research organizations.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL SERVICE AND THE NATIONAL HONOR GUARD AND PIPE BAND EXHIBITION

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 117, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 117

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, the 35th Annual National Peace Officers Memorial Service (in this resolution referred to as the ''Memorial Service''), on the Capitol Grounds, in order to honor the law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty during 2015.

(b) DATE OF MEMORIAL SERVICE.—The Memorial Service shall be held on May 15, 2016, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate jointly designate, with preparation for the event to begin on May 11, 2016.

SEC. 2. USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR NATIONAL HONOR GUARD AND PIPE BAND EXHIBITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition (in this resolution referred to as the ''Exhibition''), on the Capitol Grounds, in order to allow law enforcement representatives to exhibit their ability to demonstrate Honor Guard programs and provide for a bagpipe exhibition.

(b) DATE OF EXHIBITION.—The exhibition shall be held on May 14, 2016, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate jointly designate.

SEC. 3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board, the event shall be—

(1) free of admission charge and open to the public; and

(2) arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress.

(b) EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES.—The sponsors of the Memorial Service and Exhibition shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the events.

SEC. 4. EVENT PREPARATIONS.

Subject to the approval of the Architect of the Capitol, the sponsors referred to in section 3(b) are authorized to erect upon the Capitol Grounds such stage, sound amplification devices, and other related structures and equipment, as may be required for the Memorial Service and Exhibition.

SEC. 5. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS.

The Capitol Police Board shall provide for enforcement of the restrictions contained in section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, concerning sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the Capitol Grounds, as well as other restrictions applicable to the Capitol Grounds, in connection with the events.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE 3RD ANNUAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS CONGRESSIONAL FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 120, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 120

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS CONGRESSIONAL FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Congressional Fire Services Institute and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (in this resolution referred to jointly as the ''sponsor'') shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony (in this resolution referred to as the ''event''), on the Capitol Grounds in order to honor the firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2015.

(b) DATE OF EVENT.—The event shall be held on September 28, 2016, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate jointly designate.

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board, the event shall be—

(1) free of admission charge and open to the public; and

(2) arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress.

(b) EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES.—The sponsor shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the event.

SEC. 3. EVENT PREPARATIONS.

Subject to the approval of the Architect of the Capitol, the sponsor is authorized to erect upon the Capitol Grounds such stage, sound amplification devices, and other related structures and equipment as may be required for the event.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board are authorized to make such additional arrangements as may be required to carry out the event.

SEC. 5. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Capitol Police Board shall provide for enforcement of the restrictions contained in section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, concerning sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the Capitol Grounds, as well as other restrictions applicable to the Capitol Grounds, with respect to the event.

(b) USE OF FIRE EQUIPMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Capitol Police Board may allow the sponsor, as part of the event, to use traditional, handheld fire equipment, such as axes and Pulaski tools, and any other fire equipment that the Board determines can be used in a safe manner and will not cause damage to the Capitol Grounds or harm to any individual.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR AN EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 115, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 115

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR EVENT TO CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY OF KING KAMEHAMEHA I.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used for an event on May 22, 2016, to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING JUSTIN AND STEPHANIE SHULTS

(Mr. ROE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a heavy heart along with my friends, Congressman COOPER and Congressman BARR, to offer our sincere condolences to the family of Justin and Stephanie Shults, two of the Americans who were killed by radical Islamic terrorists in the March 22 Brussels attack.

These cowardly attacks targeted innocent bystanders like Justin and Stephanie. This is not the first time the First Congressional District of Tennessee has experienced tragedy in this manner, as Sergeant Frederick Greene was killed at Fort Hood, Texas, in the 2009 attack.

Justin Shults grew up in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, where he was the valedictorian of Gatlinburg-Pittman High. He graduated from Vanderbilt University and received his MBA from the Owen School of Management, where he met Stephanie, his beautiful wife. They shared their love of adventure, which took them to Belgium for work. Justin's mom, Sheila, was a single mom who worked hard to provide for three children. They are a loving, Christian family who ended each conversation by saying, ''I love you,'' and those were the last words that Justin's mom said to him.

I can only imagine the grief that accompanies losing your child in such a sudden and violent manner, and we all join in offering Justin and Stephanie's families our prayers and deepest sympathy.

The family wants to thank those who have called them from around the world to offer their condolences. Indeed, we extend our condolences to all families who lost loved ones.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THREE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES TO TERRORISM

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, America and the Owen School of Management of Vanderbilt University suffered three devastating losses just during the month of March.

The Shults family, which has already been mentioned, were a model American couple, but the first victim of terrorism with ties to Owen School of Management was Taylor Force, a young man who was raised in Lubbock, Texas, went to a military academy in New Mexico, was an Eagle Scout, and then attended and graduated from West Point Academy, served in the U.S. Army, did two tours in the Middle East, emerged as a captain, and then chose the Owen School of Management at Vanderbilt for his business education.

The young man was on a school trip to Tel Aviv in Israel, and he was murdered in a random knife attack by a terrorist. It is hard to think of a sadder end for a great and promising young life.

The young Shults couple—my colleague Mr. ROE from Tennessee has already mentioned them—outstanding young people, probably no finer couple ever, and a couple with a sense of adventure. They went skydiving, they ran with the bulls in Pamplona, they saw the Eiffel Tower, and then as they were saying good-bye to her mother at the airport, were killed in the terrorist attack.

So let us pay tribute to these three outstanding young people. Let's use their lives as models, and let's not be daunted by terrorism. We have to meet and beat this threat.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN HONOR OF JUSTIN AND STEPHANIE SHULTS

(Mr. BARR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, thank you to my colleagues, Congressman ROE and Congressman COOPER, for joining me in remembering our constituents, Stephanie and Justin Shults, two promising young lives tragically cut short in the barbaric terrorist attacks on March 22 in Brussels, Belgium.

Stephanie Moore Shults was born and raised in Lexington, Kentucky. She was a graduate of Bryan Station High School and of Transylvania University in Lexington. We will never forget this daughter of Kentucky, her love of her family and her husband, and her sense of adventure, as she lived and worked in Europe.

We will never forget the anguish felt by Stephanie and Justin's families as they searched for their children in the aftermath of the attack; we will never forget their grief when they learned what happened; and we will never forget the ideology of evil and religious intolerance that is responsible for taking these two innocent Americans from us.

If the terrorists' objective was to undermine our country's will to fight extremism or to compel us to surrender our liberty to their oppressive, totalitarian vision of the world, then it has failed. The terrorists' cowardly act only invigorates our Nation's resolve to overcome and defeat this evil.

As we continue to pray for these families, I would like to ask Congressman ROE and Congressman COOPER to join me and for all of my colleagues to stand and please join us in a moment of silence and prayer to honor these young American people.

RECOGNIZING FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

(Ms. GRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Florida State University for the important research they are conducting into the deadly Zika virus. In coordination with Johns Hopkins and Emory Universities, Florida State researchers have made crucial breakthroughs that will be useful in slowing or preventing the virus from spreading.

As you know, Zika has wreaked havoc across South America, and it poses a great threat to our country, especially to my home State of Florida. There have already been more than 80 Zika cases reported in Florida, and as summer approaches, the situation will likely worsen.

We can't wait any longer. It is time to put politics aside and for Congress to do its job. We must fully fund research, prevention, and response efforts to fight this deadly virus before it spreads.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN COLLINS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of a dear friend, John Collins.

John was a man of unwavering courage and dedication to our community and our country. At a very young age, John answered the patriotic call to join our proud Marine Corps, where he served for 23 years. During that time, John fought in the Korean war and was promoted on the battlefield from sergeant to lieutenant.

In 1971, after retiring from the military as a major, John moved to Florida, where he began another successful career with the Miami-Dade Police Department, where he served 26 years.

John was dedicated to his wife, Mary, a good friend with whom he celebrated 50 years of marriage this past September, and he loved their three sons and seven grandsons, three of whom continue John's legacy of service in our military.

John Collins stayed engaged in good causes in our community, joining the Veterans Committee in his hometown of Miami Lakes. May God bless and keep John Collins in his bosom and may his memory live forever in the hearts of those he knew. Semper fi, mi amigo.

TODAY WE MARK EQUAL PAY DAY

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today we mark Equal Pay Day, the day when women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid in the previous year.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable that in the United States today, women earn on average 79 cents for every dollar that a man makes. For women of color, this gap is even wider, 61 cents for African American women and 55 cents for Latinas.

This pay gap is harming working families in every State, particularly harmful to the two-thirds of families where women are the primary breadwinners. Lower paychecks mean less money for groceries, less money for rent, less money for child care or other necessities. Mr. Speaker, this has to change.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would make it easier for women to win pay discrimination cases and harder for companies to justify unequal salaries. I urge Republican leaders to bring this bill to the floor for a vote.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATING VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY WILDCATS

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 2016 NCAA Men's Basketball National Champions, the Villanova University Wildcats.

As head coach Jay Wright is fond of saying, Villanova basketball can be defined in one word: attitude. I might say it is an infectious attitude. Over the course of a magical 3-week run in the NCAA tournament, the Wildcats showed why. It was a run that culminated in one of, if not the greatest championship games in NCAA men's basketball history. It was a game that featured two intensely competitive teams, two of basketball's most talented coaches, and an ending for the ages.

Junior Kris Jenkins' championship-winning buzzer beater is the sort of moment that, for millions of kids across this country practicing in the driveways or at their neighborhood parks, dreams are made of.

Villanova's program has a long and storied history of success, both on the court and off, and in the classroom. It is a tradition of humility, grace, and integrity that our entire region can be proud of. Villanova is not a large school, but it has built a world-class basketball program deeply rooted in its values.

I congratulate National Coach of the Year Jay Wright, his players and their families, and the entire Villanova community on their victory.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about my youngest daughter's future and the future of young women across America.

My daughter, Alina, will be graduating high school next month and building a career very soon. My eldest daughter will be graduating with her master's degree next month. Ten days later, she will be giving birth to her first child.

The point I am making is that women across America make 79 cents for every dollar that a man makes for doing the same work. Minority women suffer most when Congress is inactive about making the proper changes to create inequity in our country. Minority women earn as little as 55 on the dollar when they perform the same work that a man does.

I pose this question to my colleagues: When we act to close the pay gap, who does this hurt?

And the answer is simple: No one is hurt. America benefits.

I am proud to support the Paycheck Fairness Act, along with 193 members of the House Democratic Caucus, and I look forward to working with the rest of my colleagues in the House so we can work to implement it in the San Fernando Valley and across the United States of America. Let's work together to correct this inequity.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, or the PFBC, on their 150th anniversary.

The PFBC was founded on March 30, 1866, following a convention in Harrisburg that was held to investigate water pollution caused by the effect logging in the Commonwealth was having on mountain lakes and streams. The discussion at that meeting prompted the current Governor, Andrew Curtin, to sign a law naming James Worrall as the State's first Commissioner of Fisheries, creating what would become the Nation's second oldest fish or wildlife agency.

Since its founding 150 years ago, the PFBC has grown to employ more than 400 people and operates on an annual budget of nearly $60 million funded by anglers and boaters through license and registration fees, among other methods. The PFBC is responsible for policing 86,000 miles of Pennsylvania streams, nearly 4,000 lakes, more than 60 miles of Lake Erie's shoreline, and around 400,000 acres of wetlands.

As an avid fisherman, I am proud of the work done by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in keeping our lakes and streams healthy.

FUNDS FOR ZIKA VIRUS RESEARCH

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of March, I held a briefing in Houston with leaders of the health community and our research community on the Zika virus. At that time, we had at least one case diagnosed in the city of Houston.

Since that time, we have watched the Centers for Disease Control travel to Puerto Rico, and we have seen the potential for a Zika epidemic in the United States, first starting in Florida and Texas. There are conditions in our particular area that are susceptible to the transmission of the Zika virus. Today, the Centers for Disease Control has indicated it may be more dangerous than we ever would have expected.

Over 2 months ago, I believe, the President submitted to Congress a request for $1.9 billion in an emergency supplemental. All of my constituents in the health profession are begging for this supplemental to be passed.

Yesterday I sent out a statement asking for the Speaker and the majority leader to bring the supplemental to the floor. It is an emergency.

Having gone through a number of epidemics in our community and in this Nation, it is time that we put the American people's interests first. It is now the time, Mr. Speaker, to pass the emergency supplemental and save lives.

SOUTHWEST BORDER SECURITY

(Mr. GUINTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight the connection between drug and human trafficking at the southwest border, where Mexican cartels control both. Last week I traveled to Texas and New Mexico to learn more about this connection.

The President's disregard of our immigration laws is encouraging people to risk their lives to enter the United States, enriching the same cartels that smuggle deadly heroin. Last year in New Hampshire, my home State, more than 400 Granite Staters died of a heroin or opiate overdose. There were nearly 50,000 in the United States last year.

That number is, unfortunately, trending upward, despite the best efforts of law enforcement. Border Patrol agents report that cartels are forcing illegal immigrants to carry heroin in exchange for protection. Sanctuary cities serve as way stations in this drug trade.

A secure border is a humane border. The Southwest Border Security Threat Assessment Act would compel Homeland Security to develop a better plan. Border agents need more support, as do police, across New Hampshire and this country, working to keep drugs off of our streets. Enforcing interior immigration laws would be an excellent first step.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Equal Pay Day to call for action to close that persistent wage gap that occurs in the workplace to the detriment of women.

My grandmother worked all of her life. I would see her leave in the morning and go to the bus stop. She worked at a convalescent home where she made 3 meals a day for 170 people. She worked 6 days a week. On Saturday, she would make an extra meal so they could serve it on Sunday. On Sunday, she would take off work and go to church.

When my grandmother could no longer stand on her feet, she retired. She retired on Social Security, which was $484 a month—just enough to live at my mom's home in her retirement. She had no savings and no pension. One of the reasons is because, even though women work very hard in this country, they don't get paid what their counterparts—the males—do. And so women are twice as likely to retire in poverty.

When women succeed, America succeeds. And that is why I am a proud sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

EQUAL PAY ACT

(Ms. MCSALLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, in 1963, the Equal Pay Act was signed into law, making it illegal for an employer to pay women less than a man for the same work. Yet the reality is today, over 50 years later, women are still making less than men. This is unacceptable and something which we all have a stake in fixing.

Here in the House, we are working on putting forward new ideas and solutions to empower women to fight for equal pay. We must also continue to encourage young girls to enter STEM and other higher-paying fields and to make sure they know they can be whatever they want to be.

Lastly, we must do a better job recognizing that caring for aging parents or children is a responsibility for women and men in our society.

Mr. Speaker, I have been fighting my whole life for women's rights and equality. I know we still have work to do, and I am committed to making equal opportunity for women a reality. After all, this is America, where we pick the best man for the job, even if it is a woman. And that means making sure she is getting paid what she deserves.

CONGRATULATING RIBAULT HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Ribault High School girls basketball team. Yes, the Ribault High School Trojans basketball team defeated Riverdale Baptist at Madison Square Garden to bring home to Jacksonville the Dick's Sporting Goods High School National Championship trophy.

Beyond a doubt, the Ribault High School girls basketball team is a powerhouse in the State of Florida and across the Nation. Given that the team has won 10 previous State titles and has been ranked as high as ninth in the country, they are a force to be reckoned with.

This outstanding achievement is tremendously exciting for the entire Jacksonville community, and I am proud to say once again that, on behalf of the constituents of Florida's Fifth Congressional District, I hereby honor the Ribault Trojans girls basketball team for their 11th State championship and this year's national title game in New York City's Madison Square Garden.

Go, Lady Trojans, go.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JOHN CAVANAUGH

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the achievements of an individual who has shown his dedication to the future of our Nation through educating our youth.

John Cavanaugh attended Georgetown University, where he received his Bachelor of Science in language and linguistics. He began his teaching career at Georgetown Preparatory School in 1973, and shortly thereafter moved to the Congressional Schools of Virginia in 1976. He has shown an exemplary commitment to teaching over what has now become a 40-year career.

Over the years, Mr. Cavanaugh has taught Spanish, Latin, German, Italian, English as a second language, geography, world history, American history, and government to thousands of students. Currently concentrating on Latin and history, he has shown the same dedication to his students since the first day he walked into the classroom 40 years ago. His knowledge of American history is legendary, and he instills in his students a strong desire to learn, while also encouraging them to explore their own talents.

His hard work and passion for education has led him to his peers nominating him for the Washington Post's Teacher of the Year Award. He has been described as an ''icon'' and ''shepherd'' by colleagues and students alike. His unwavering commitment to helping students thrive has been demonstrated through his early morning review sessions and his advisory role to the Yearbook Club and National Junior Honor Society.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to acknowledge Mr. Cavanaugh for his achievements over these 40 years, and I wish him the best going forward. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him for touching so many lives as a first-class educator and for his dedication to our youth.

LEGISLATION TARGETING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the hateful and discriminatory legislation targeting transgender people that is sweeping through State legislatures.

Right now, there is anti-transgender legislation pending before legislatures

in Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, South Carolina, Washington, and Tennessee.

Tomorrow, Tennessee lawmakers will vote in committee on House Bill 2414, a bill that would require students to go into gender-specific bathrooms that match the gender on their birth certificate. Yet, Tennessee is one of the few States that does not allow a transgender person to change their birth certificate. It is ultimately a lose-lose for transgender people.

This bill would cause very real emotional harm and put transgender young people in physical danger if they are required to use gender-inappropriate restrooms and locker rooms. These anti-transgender bills in the States are rooted in fear, animus, and deeply misguided notions about who transgender people are.

I speak today as a Member of Congress and as a proud grandfather of a granddaughter who is transgender. These laws do not make us safer. These laws stoke misguided fears. They divide us. We must stand up to these laws and promote our values.

□ 1930

MASTERS WEEK 2016

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the first full week of April, since the 1930s, America and the world get a peek at the world-famous Augusta National Golf Course for Masters Week.

Spectators gather in Augusta, Georgia, or join family and friends around the television to watch the world's most talented golfers compete for the highly coveted green jacket; and for 1 week each year, the world gets a glimpse into Georgia 12 and the wonderful people who live and work there, the district I have the great honor of representing.

From the pimento cheese sandwiches to the perfectly-manicured grounds, the rich tradition that encompasses the Masters is truly something special. The course, the creation of the great Bobby Jones, has seen the likes of Arnold Palmer, Byron Nelson, Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods, and spectators from all walks of life, making it a living history in the game. Jordan Spieth has been a great champion and made a historic effort to repeat as its champion.

Congratulations to this year's winner, Danny Willett, on his victory and the newest addition to his wardrobe, as well as a big thank-you to the members of the Augusta National Golf Club and all those who worked tirelessly to put the tournament on, which means so much to our district.

It was my privilege to welcome all people from around the globe to the world's greatest sporting event, as we now count down the days until Masters 2017.

HONORING COMMANDER KRISTINA DELL'ORCO, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

(Mr. ABRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Commander Kristina Dell'Orco and her service in the United States Coast Guard.

Kristina graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy and was selected to attend Naval flight training, where she trained to pilot fixed-wing aircraft. Kristina earned her wings in 1999 and received the Daughters of the American Revolution award, given annually to the Coast Guard graduate with the highest grades. Kristina would go on to win many more awards, including the Coast Guard Commendation Medal and three Coast Guard Achievement Medals.

Along with these individual awards, Kristina has trained hundreds of cadets in annual flight instruction as a senior company officer.

I serve with Kristina in the Coast Guard Auxiliary and can truly say she is dedicated to her service and this great Nation. It is an honor to recognize Kristina for all she has done for the Coast Guard and this country, and I wish her a happy retirement.

CARING FOR THOSE BATTLING ALS

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that over 30,000 Americans are living with the progressive neurodegenerative disease and condition ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease, at any time. That includes dozens in my Pennsylvania district, including Frank Mongiello and former Naval Officer Matthew Bellina.

For those impacted by this disease, the toll is extraordinary, not only on their own well-being, but on their family and their finances. Thankfully for Matt and Frank, individuals like Jim Worthington and members of the Newtown Athletic Club have stepped up to offer emotional support and raised more than $200,000 for their cause.

While these actions show the commendable efforts of one community, there is more that can be done on their behalf here in Washington. Next week, I will join Matt and Frank in the Nation's Capital to urge not only for essential ALS funding, but for access to experimental drugs. The bipartisan Right to Try Act would remove the barriers to these trial-stage medications for those with a terminal disease like ALS.

The compassion of our communities and the long-term benefits of research must not prevent us from taking every single step possible in the here and now to care for those battling ALS.

116TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES SUBMARINE FORCE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, just the other day, April 1, marked the 116th birthday and anniversary of the United States Submarine Force. This is the date the U.S. Government accepted the USS *Holland*, which is SS–1, into the U.S. Navy, again, in 1900.

This was pointed out by a good friend and a great patriot and veteran of the Submarine Forces, Jim Gibson of Redding, California, who has served on several different submarines and is a main organizer of the USS *Cuttlefish*, a veterans submarine group that does many events up in northern California. He pointed that out to me, and I want to acknowledge, again, the great work of our veterans of those subs and what they mean for the security of our Nation.

So happy 116th to the United States Submarine fleet.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this is the tale of two cities—not the tale about the cities, but about two examples of America's great embarrassment and failure to treat a brain disease called mental illness, especially serious mental illness. It is also a tale of Congress' repeated failure to address this.

Despite the cries of millions of Americans to do something about it, what we here in Washington tend to do when we hear of another tragedy that has occurred somewhere in the Nation, the

tragedies we know by the names of Sandy Hook Elementary School, or Columbine, or Aurora, Colorado, or Tucson, or Santa Barbara, what Washington tends to do is we have a moment of silence. But the people want and Members of Congress want moments of action, not moments of silence.

Let me elaborate on this tale. In this building, the U.S. Capitol, back in the 1990s, two police officers were killed when Russell Weston came into the Capitol seeking a red crystal and ended up shooting these police officers. Under his diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia, he was pushed, with his delusions and hallucinations, to take action. It ended up in tragedy.

There was also recently, over the break, another man, Larry Russell Dawson, who has been seen around this Capitol and has once, allegedly, disrupted proceedings in this Chamber and, allegedly, also suffers from some level of mental illness. When he was entering the Capitol Visitor Center, a pistol was seen going through the x-ray. When he grabbed that pistol, police officers shot and wounded him.

First of all, it is amazing to me that people did not die. We know that the entrance to the Capitol Visitor Center is a highly secure environment with many, many Capitol Police officers. These brave men and women who put themselves between danger and Members of Congress and the public showed tremendous restraint and judgment at that moment.

I might add that, many times, when a mentally ill person has a conflict, a violent conflict with a police officer, where they may be reaching into their jacket or may be pointing a pistol or approaching a police officer with a knife, it is estimated between a quarter and a half of those mentally ill people involved in a police encounter end up dead. That is a few hundred each year.

Though that is the tale in Washington, D.C., why are we dealing with mental illness as a violent threat instead of in treatment? We deal with it because, in this Nation, sadly, when someone with mental illness has reached that level or they become violent, we call the police.

The rules are, which we will look at tonight: prevent people from getting treatment; we do not have enough providers; we don't have enough places to put people, so we call the police.

Now, I should start off by saying the mentally ill are no more likely to be violent than the non-mentally ill; except when you look at those with serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar, and other illnesses such as that, they are 16 times more likely to engage in an act of violence than someone who is in treatment.

Again, a person who is seriously mentally ill and not in treatment is 16 times more likely to engage in an act of violence than someone who is in treatment.

On the West Coast, in Seattle, another tragedy was brewing. A man named Cody Miller climbed a tree, a giant sequoia tree in downtown Seattle, and it created something of a furor.

First, I want to read parts of an article that appeared in The New York Times on March 29 that describe this to show you how out of touch we are as a society when dealing with mental illness.

It said: ''For more than 24 hours last week, Cody Lee Miller perched in a giant sequoia in downtown Seattle, pelting people and cars with pine cones and tearing off branches.''

Investigators were investigating how much it would cost, using some ''complicated formula that goes far beyond the value of natural beauty,'' the article said.

''A Seattle tree expert . . . said Mr. Miller caused $7,800 in damage, according to court documents released this week. Investigators took into account the tree's age, its potential life span and how much of its lush foliage was denuded.

''The formula, created by professional foresters, goes like this. The trunk is 34 inches in diameter at breast height, an investigator's report said. The tree has a '95 percent species rating,' a '100 percent condition rating' and a 100 'percent location rating' . . . The sequoia's pre-damage value was put at $51,700. But after Mr. Miller's arboreal escapade, the tree lost 15 percent of its value, the documents show, and is now worth only $43,900 . . .'The damage to the tree was extensive,' the report said.

''Mr. Miller was charged on Monday with first-degree malicious mischief and third-degree assault. He was also ordered to stay away from the tree by observing 'no unwanted contact' ''—I repeat, ''by observing 'no unwanted contact' '' with the tree.

Now, the story goes on to describe trees and sequoias, but not until the very end of the article it mentions Mr. Miller's mother, Lisa Gossett. She said that she had not talked to her son for some 5 years. She saw it on the news and she barely recognized him.

See, what was happening is Lisa Gossett and her daughter sat in their Alaska home watching this clip of the man perched in the tree. With their hearts broken, with tears streaming down their faces, Lisa and her daughter soon came to realize they were watching their son and their brother become the latest Internet mockery of a mentally ill person.

You see, when Cody Lee Miller climbed this 80-foot tree and sat there for 25 hours, he was sporting a bushy beard and ragged clothes, and most Americans were amused by this and they called it #manintree. It was an international viral story overnight. But this was no joke; this was no prank. This was the culmination of untreated mental illness that, once again, our society turned into a joke.

And we wonder why there is a stigma, when newspapers like The New York Times write a mocking story like that towards a man who has a disease. Would they have written an article like that if it was about someone with cancer or diabetes or AIDS or any other disease? My guess is no. But somehow, in our society, it is okay to mock a person who is suffering from schizophrenia.

When he was younger, he was clean-cut and rambunctious, loving and happy. Those are the words his friends used to describe him. At a young age, he was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; however, other than excess energy, like any child, he didn't sport any behavioral issues. But then, 6 years ago, his mother began to notice an unusual shift in her son's behavior as he grew increasingly paranoid.

Let me note here that serious mental illness, about 50 percent of the time, emerges by age 14, and 75 percent of the time by age 24. It is very, very difficult to predict; although, we have now indicated some 108 genetic markers of schizophrenia and bipolar illness. Still, the issue is many parents have a loving and caring child, then something changes.

□ 1945

His behavior changed when Lisa would find knives stored under her son's pillow. And when confronting Cody about her discovery, he would simply respond: It is just to keep us safe.

As time passed on, Cody's mental instability progressed. He refused to enter certain stores downtown. When making an exception, Cody would cover his face with a hood, convinced people were constantly staring at him.

Following this enhanced paranoia came the emergence of night terrors and constant crying and shouting for his mother during the night. Cody would shriek in fear of the ''evil presence'' surrounding him.

This worrisome behavior continued to escalate as Cody spiraled out of control. He could be found walking down the street in high socks and clown glasses spreading deer bones on the road.

He hit a man with a flat tire and began to have dreams of killing his grandmother, going so far as setting her wood shop on fire. At that point, his grandmother said she could no longer handle him and sent him out.

He was caught in the revolving door of the United States' embarrassing and shamefully broken mental health system. He was constantly shuffled between homelessness and incarceration.

Lisa pleaded for others to help her son and appealed to the Alaska's Governor's office, mental health evaluators, and probation office for assistance.

But despite her efforts, Lisa's attempts to get her son proper treatment seemed hopeless due to the bureaucratic morass that is our mental health care system, which is not really a system at all.

She was sidelined from helping her son due to the inefficient system and forced to sit by and watch as Cody eroded over time.

We pretend in our own deluded state that all the seriously mentally ill are fully aware of their symptoms and welcome treatment. The fact is many don't.

Forty percent of individuals with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder don't even recognize that the delusions and hallucinations are not real. This is a medical condition called anosognosia.

Anosognosia is also something you see in people with dementia or Alzheimer's or stroke. It is very real. The person is not aware of their own problem.

But somehow we come up with this anthropomorphism which says, well, they can decide for themselves. They cannot decide for themselves when they don't even know who they are, that they exist, or what planet they are on.

They see things differently. They hear things differently. They smell things differently. They encode information differently into their brain. They process it and recall it differently. So for us to say that they just don't want treatment is a fool's errand on our part.

Can you imagine if we said that, again, to someone with cancer? ''You don't understand your disease.'' Diabetic? ''We are going to dismiss you.''

What if a person clutched his chest in a heart attack and laid unconscious in the street? Would we tell that person ''We are not going to help you until you wake up and tell us to treat you''?

Worse yet, will we say to that person ''We are not going to treat you until you are an imminent danger of killing yourself or killing someone else''? No. But that is what we do with the mentally ill.

The Energy and Commerce Committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee that I chair had a couple-year study paving the way for my bill, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act.

With 187 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle, my bipartisan measure addresses the shortage of psychiatric beds, clarifies HIPAA privacy laws so families can be allowed to have some compassionate communication and be part of frontline care, and it helps patients get treatment well before their illness spirals into crisis.

My legislation has been endorsed by dozens of publications and newspapers, including The Washington Post, The Seattle Times, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Wall Street Journal, and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Each day I hear from countless families from across the country that we are experiencing a mental health crisis, and they are counting on our efforts to bring positive changes to the mental health system. We cannot let these families down. Lives are depending upon it. We cannot wish this away, and denial is not a treatment.

But let me tell you what Americans have to say about this because, as we are dealing with this issue, Americans are wondering why Congress is not acting. Why is Congress being so passive? Why aren't we doing what we need to do?

I want to tell you about a story that I posted on my Facebook page and this picture that I posted as well.

This is Cody Lee Miller in court. Look at his hair. Look at his beard. This is a man that obviously has not been taking care of himself.

He is in shackles on his ankles and his wrists, chained at his waist, and led by two police officers wearing their purple gloves so they are not at risk of infection while a judge sits in the background. This is a man who was diagnosed with schizophrenia being treated like a criminal.

Now, I wrote on my post this: ''Friends, you really can't make this stuff up.''

A man who is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, #ManInTree, ''who desperately needs psychiatric care is brought in shackles before a judge because he has been charged with first-degree malicious mischief and third-degree assault. What was the outcome? The judge ordered him to stay away from the tree, but he first needs to make his $50,000 bail.

''Just look at this picture and tell me our mental health system isn't a mess. It is unbelievable. Recall that for 24 hours last week, Cody Lee Miller remained atop a giant sequoia tree in downtown Seattle. Since that time, there has been a greater outpouring of concern over the tree than the plight of this young man who is so clearly in the throes of a psychotic break.''

I make reference here to that article from The New York Times being far more concerned about the tree than a human being.

I wrote further: ''He is ordered to have 'no unwanted contact' with a sequoia, yet no concern about getting him into treatment. Such a sad indictment against an abusive system that would order no contact with a tree, yet remains silent on getting the mentally ill into care.

''Cody's mom talks about his downward spiral and has made it her mission to be a voice for families who desperately want to help their loved ones but are blocked by Federal and State laws that make it impossible to help mentally ill family members. Meanwhile, Congress is still stalling my Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, H.R. 2646.''

This posting must have hit a nerve. Members of Congress follow Facebook pages and Twitter, and we have our social media. Many times when we post something we may hear from a few thousand people. As of a few minutes ago, this posting has led to 1.8 million hits on my Facebook.

What is also compelling is, as sad as this story is about this man treated like a prisoner, like a common criminal, instead of getting treatment, are the heart-wrenching comments made by the families. I want to read some of them to you. These are people from around the world, really, who have commented on what is happening here.

Holly Huntley Perron wrote: ''I agree with Cody's mom. The real culprits are the State and Federal laws that prevent loved ones being able to help family members in trouble.''

By that I reference laws which say that, unless you are in imminent danger of killing yourself or someone else, no one is going to force you into treatment or laws that say, if this person says that they don't want help, you can't make them get help, or if the person in the midst of a delusion says: Don't tell my mother or my father because they are a part of the CIA or they are a Martian and they are planting thoughts in my brain, the doctors cannot tell the family members when is the next appointment, what is the medication, what is the diagnosis, and how should they treat him. They may say to take him home when the family says: What should I do?

We have heard of cases where the doctor says: We can't tell you because he doesn't want us to. But the family says: But I am taking him home. What should I do? We can't tell you.

One family member has said to the doctors: Let's just have a supposition. Just pretend that there was a case where someone with schizophrenia is going to my house. What should I do? And they say: We are not going to tell you.

These go on to happen where family members may be in court pleading in tears with the judge: Tell me where my son is. Tell me where my daughter is. Where is my father? My mother? My brother? My sister? Tell me so I can do something with them.

A caseworker may be sitting in the courtroom knowing full well where the person is and knowing there are problems, but they say: I can't tell you.

Because we believe their delusions are a reality, that they somehow have a right to be sick instead of a right to be well.

James Sobczak wrote: ''My guess is that he will get some mental health

services in jail. Evaluate him and see if they can petition him to a psychiatric hospital. This is a process.''

Here is the problem. When we take the mentally ill people into jail, 80 percent of them get no treatment. Eighty percent of people taken to jail get no treatment.

And of those in jail, 40 to 60 percent of those in jail have some level of mental illness and many are severely mentally ill. What happens instead is a person is 10 times more likely to be in jail than in a hospital if they are mentally ill.

Once there, they don't get treatment. They oftentimes are subjected to abuse by other prisoners. They may get in fights with prison guards and then charged with another crime.

Because of all these problems, a person with mental illness tends to serve a sentence four times longer for the same crime than a person without mental illness. When you discharge them, they don't get treatment. So they get involved in this revolving door.

But why? Why, in heaven's name, is jail the right place to send someone with a brain disease? Why is it that Congress doesn't wake up?

Instead of passing so many silly bills all the time, we are willing to let people continue to die, by the way, at a rate of about 10 people an hour.

Last year in the United States 41,000 deaths by suicide, 45,000-plus deaths by drug overdose, somewhere between 200 and 500 deaths of a mentally ill person confronting a police officer.

Thousands—and we don't even know accurately how many—are people who are homeless and die. One person in Los Angeles died every day who was homeless. And about 200,000 of these homeless people are severely mentally ill people.

But we have gotten ourselves accustomed to stepping over them, to ignoring them, and to treating them as an invisible class that doesn't exist and somehow saying that that is what they want to be when they are not even aware. We think it is comfortable for them to live in filth and squalor.

If you add the numbers up, the total number of mentally ill who died last year in this country, it is probably well over 85,000, maybe 100,000, maybe 120,000.

I might add that even that lowest number is far greater than the total United States' combat deaths in the entire Korean war and Vietnam war combined for the length of those wars.

In 1 year in America, that is how many died, and what we do here is we throw them in jail or, quite frankly, many of them die in jail as well.

Another comment. Jim Holden wrote: ''The 'system' is the problem. We can't help these people because 'personal choice' is championed over their health and well-being. People on the streets need to be a danger to themselves or others before we can offer much-needed help. As a social worker I have always found this frustrating.''

Another woman, Jilly Aliska White, writes: ''My brother-in-law was just arrested for doing something during a psychotic break from his textbook schizophrenia. My husband's mom thinks he is finally going to get the help he needs now that he is in the system. Yeah. Right. He is not going to be any better off. They don't give a rat's when they can just shuffle him through the corrections system. It breaks my heart to explain this to them but look at the track record of them 'helping.' ''

Deb Smith writes:

> Unfortunately, our jails and juvenile centers have become mental health facilities. While a person has mental health problems, they also may commit crimes for which they can be arrested and held. This is a very difficult and often a very dangerous situation for everyone involved. It is never as simple as get them treatment, nor is it as simple as just set them free if they commit a crime. The judge has to look at all sides, including the safety of both sides, but for the individual and the citizens in the community and what risk the person may have of further harm to himself or others if released.

Cindy Irvin writes: ''There is still a shame and embarrassment about mental illness that totally we don't understand. And then you have the people who believe that mental illness is a myth. Until these attitudes change—probably by some respected celebrity having a psychotic break—mental health care will stay in the shadows.''

Beverly Di Mele wrote: ''The problem is the mentally ill have rights, and if they choose not to seek treatment, they have that right. The treatment given to them prior to 1970s was forced and inhumane. They were locked up for decades, medicated, isolated, and restrained. This doesn't happen much anymore, thank God. They had procedures done on them like prefrontal lobotomies and were subjected to shock therapy. It was cruel and unusual treatment for humans that didn't happen to see the world as 'normal' people did. How would you like to see this treatment forced on your parent, child, or loved one?''

I agree with most of that. We don't want those treatments again, except, when she writes ''This doesn't happen much anymore, thank God,'' she is wrong. We should never allow again to bring back our asylums with its horrendous treatment.

But we have gone from a time of 550,000 psychiatric hospital beds in this country in the 1950s to less than 48,000 now. In the 1950s, the population of the United States was 150 million. Now it exceeds 316 million.

There are about 10 million people with severe mental illness, and 40 percent of them—4 million or so—don't have any treatment. And what happens to them is they go to jail.

When we closed these asylums, people didn't all of a sudden get better. Some got better because of medication. But we traded that psychiatric hospital bed for the prison cell. We traded that psychiatric hospital bed for the emergency room gurney when a person is given a five-point tie-down and sedation.

We traded that psychiatric hospital bed for the streets and subway grates for the homeless, and we traded that psych bed for the county morgue where many of them die as paupers waiting to be claimed.

Lori Welander writes: ''I suffer from major depression and had to do 10 days in jail. While there, they refused to give me my antidepressant medications. This seems to be the norm in my county's jail. It is pretty sad. This man needs people who care about humanity, not to be treated like this.''

Rhoda Robinson Brown writes: ''How about when our addicts beg the judges for treatment and get put into prison for years? Most think at least when they are in prison they won't be able to use drugs. Ask any addict that has been in county prison how easy it is to still get drugs. You will have people say they don't want their tax money paying for an addict's treatment. Don't they realize it costs more to keep them in prison for years? Our justice system is so broken.''

□ 2000

Indeed, a study done in Arkansas for their legislature found that it cost 20 times more to put a person with mental illness in jail than in an outpatient treatment—20 times more.

Listen to this one. Sylvia Blanchard writes:

> As the mother of a bipolar son, my heart goes out to his family because there is no hurt that hurts as much as watching someone you love have this happen in their own life. My son passed away 3 years ago, and I still ache. I have a child who is in the same situation. He needs mental help, then he needs to get treatment to deal with issues in his life that he ignores and uses drugs to hide from it. In and out of jail almost each week. Nothing a parent can do when it's an adult child. So sad for our system. All States need to look at what Ohio Governor did with his State to turn mental health and drug abuse around.

Heidi Meyer writes:

> This all stems from a bigger problem in that there are too few beds in mental health facilities for children. There is nowhere to get help for them when they're young and it just leads to messed up adults.

This is a problem caused by the Federal Government. I told you that we have too few psychiatric beds. One of the biggest culprits of that is Medicaid. For people who are low-income between the ages of 22 and 64, if you have a psychiatric problem—I can't make this nonsense up, it is true—a person cannot go to a private psychiatric hospital with more than 16 beds.

So where do they go?

They put them in an emergency room, they put them in a general hospital psych bed, thinking they are going to save money.

But here is what happens. If a person is in a psychiatric hospital bed, it costs about $500 a day. If they go to an emergency room, it could be $3,000 or $4,000 a day. If they go to a general hospital psych unit, it could be $1,000, $1,200, $1,400 a day.

The State of Missouri actually did a study on this and found it saved 40 percent of Medicaid dollars by allowing people to go where the care is to a psychiatric hospital to understand that medications can work.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) on this issue of medications to elaborate on this. BUDDY CARTER from the First District of Georgia, from Savannah, Georgia, knows well what medications can do when properly prescribed and properly followed to help treat someone.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman has stated, this is a serious problem. This is a problem that I have dealt with as a professional pharmacist for many years. I have dealt with it in my retail setting in my pharmacies, as well as a consultant pharmacist in a long-term care facility in skilled nursing homes. I have seen the advances that we have made in medicine over the years. I have seen us go from only having the original antipsychotics, Haldol, which was always accompanied by a prescription for Cogentin to mask the side effects that the Haldol was going to have. I have seen the evolution of the atypical antipsychotics, which, while they do have some side effects themselves, are nowhere near the side effects that the original antipsychotics had.

I do thank the gentleman for bringing this important issue to light, and I do have a few comments that I would like to make.

First of all, medication plays a major role in the treatment for many mental illnesses. With the growing burden of mental disorders worldwide, pharmacists are ideally positioned to play a greater role in supporting people with a mental illness. There is a growing amount of evidence to show that pharmacist-delivered services in mental health care help address the barriers that are hurdles for the broader mental healthcare team.

Pharmacists have three roles they can play in helping our country address the mental health crisis.

First, pharmacists can play a major role in the multi-disciplinary teams addressing health care and can support early detection of mental illness. With more pharmacists coming out of school with greater clinical experience, pharmacists can work in new roles, such as in case conferencing or collaborative drug therapy management.

These new roles would also benefit from increased pharmacist involvement, such as the early detection of mental health conditions, development of healthcare plans, and follow-up of people with mental health problems.

Secondly, pharmacists can play a role in supporting quality use of medicines and medication review, strategies to improve medication adherence and antipsychotic polypharmacy, and shared decision making.

Pharmacists would have a large impact regarding medication review services and other pharmacist-led interventions designed to reduce inappropriate use of psychotropic medicines and improve medication adherence.

Finally, pharmacists can help address barriers surrounding the implementation of mental health pharmacy services with a focus on organizational culture and mental health stigma.

Over the years, the relation between the pharmacist and the physician has become more collaborative and cooperative. With this new relationship, pharmacists can work with physicians to develop strategies to change the attitudes and stigma surrounding mental health.

As my colleague from Pennsylvania, Representative MURPHY, continues to fight for this cause, I hope he will consider me and the profession of pharmacy as a friend and collaborator so we can fight to end the mental health crisis in this country.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for bringing this most important subject to light.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and his dedication to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), who has been absolutely steadfast in his compassion and caring for this. Also, it shows a bipartisan nature of our legislation. He has been instrumental in helping me understand other aspects of this. We made a number of modifications to this bill and will continue to work on these issues together, so I thank my friend.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MURPHY. I appreciate his courtesy in permitting me to speak with him this evening.

The Sun is setting on our Nation's Capitol. Many of our colleagues have returned to Washington, D.C. They are at dinner, they are with their families, they are meeting with their constituents. I appreciate his being here on the floor this evening to highlight a critical area that he has been so committed to and has worked on so hard because it is something that each and every American needs to address and needs to focus on because we are all in this together.

I will say that earlier in my career as a child State legislator, I was part of the deinstitutionalization movement. It made a lot of sense. As my friend has said, we have had over a half million institutional beds. Some of the conditions were not what they should have been. Some of the treatment certainly is nothing that we would accept today.

The notion of allowing people to be helped in a deinstitutionalized setting made sense for a lot of people. It is sad to say we didn't do a good job of implementing it. The institutionalization worked if we were there supporting the people who were deinstitutionalized with medication, with counseling, and with housing. And sadly, when we hit some choppy waters economically in my community and others around the country who followed what was in theory a good model, we found that there were too many people out on their own.

Sadly, today, we can see evidence of the failure to do deinstitutionalization right on the streets of virtually every community large and small from coast to coast.

I appreciate his efforts to help refocus the Federal partnership. Certainly there is a role for State and local government, there is a role for the private sector, and there is a role for individuals and families. The Federal Government provides resources, provides a framework, provides a legal setting, and we need to make sure that the Federal framework reflects the lessons we have learned and the realities today.

I have been pleased that he has been so patient with me and others who have carried to him some of the questions and concerns that we have picked up from people in our communities who care about it. He has tackled an area that is complex, it is controversial, and there is room for give and take. I feel in the hours and hours that we have talked about this exchanging information, I have seen that he has done just that. He has drilled down, he has listened, he has incorporated, he has asked more questions, and I appreciate that because I think he is establishing a framework here with a number of our colleagues on a bipartisan basis that will enable this Congress to be able to make real progress that is long overdue.

In my community, we are going to open a facility in September. We call it the Unity Center. It is a collaboration between four major hospitals to have a place where we can take people with mental problems out of emergency rooms where they can't be appropriately treated and where it is costly. All we can do is stabilize them, and then turn them back out on the street until their condition deteriorates where they pose a problem to themselves and others.

As he has referenced, too much of our mental health service in this country is to be found behind bars. That is not the appropriate setting. It is not cost effective and it is not humane.

We are making a small step in our community where these institutions have come together and have established a memorandum of understanding. They realize they are still going to lose money, but they are not going to lose as much. They are going to be able to give better care to a population that is very much in need.

I am hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to, as a result of the work that he is doing with this legislation and others who he is working with, that we will be able to focus that Federal partnership yet this year, to be able to have more assistance to our communities to make sure that the Federal programs are tailored to the needs of today and the experience that we have acquired.

I am hopeful that we will be able to develop more tools for one of the most important ingredients in this equation, and that is the families who are too often prevented because of the regulatory framework we have. Some of this is understandable, but it shouldn't be a barrier for families who, in some cases, are the only people who really know the individual, who care about them, and who are equipped to be a vital partner with the mental health system.

I look forward to further progress. I look forward to bringing back to you more information from Portland, Oregon, where we are going to have another round table discussion with concerned individuals in government, in the medical profession, and advocacy groups to make sure that the input from my community is completely reflected in this.

Let me just say how much I appreciate his time and his effort, being a partner with him in this. I am looking forward to seeing the result before the final gavel comes down on this Congress.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon, and truly my friend.

I think when people look at Congress and wonder if people can work on issues in a bipartisan way, I am sure if someone looked at our voting record on other issues, we would probably be a bit different. That is okay. What still stands is that we are able to come together with a common issue.

I have no idea if this man is Republican, Democrat, registered to vote, nor should that matter to us. I have never asked a patient in my 40 years of practicing. I know he is the same way, too. We do this because compassion dictates. Sometimes we are our brother's keeper, and we need to do the right things.

□ 2015

I do value your input on this bill. We have made a number of modifications. I know that, in committee, Democrats have offered several amendments which I want to incorporate and which look at specific funding for a number of things. We need more psychiatrists and psychologists. We just have to have them. We have to put money into that. We need more programs in there. We need to bolster community mental health services. We need to make sure that there is oversight over what States are doing with those dollars in order to make sure they are putting dollars into effective programs and not into frivolous ones. That is one of the roles Congress has is to be the watchdog over that.

I am proud to say, in front of the Nation, that you have been awesome in this, and I want to continue to work with you. We will solve this will issue.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. If the gentleman would yield, I just want to say that one of the areas that is most contentious deals with when people, like the gentleman that you have pictured behind you, are going to be compelled to have treatment. You have been open to being able to refine the protections to make sure—and this is something that varies across the country—that under the auspices of your bill that we have appropriate safeguards to make sure that the rights of the individual are respected but that we acknowledge the fact that, in some cases, the right for people to self-destruct is illusory.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Exactly.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. It is dangerous to them; it is dangerous to society; and it is heartbreaking for their families.

I have appreciated our conversations on that, going back and forth, and what you have tried to do to be able to make sure that the balance is struck. I am confident, before we are through, that we can make sure that the other areas that require that give-and-take can, in fact, be met. I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of it, and I look forward to the next steps.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, what the gentleman is referring to is also something called assisted outpatient treatment. That is a program whereby 45 States and the District of Columbia—maybe 46 States now—have this. When people have a history of incarcerations, of arrests, of violence and when they are not in treatment, a judge protects their rights and may review their cases in terms of saying they can be put in inpatient care. If the judge says they do not meet the standard of imminent danger of harming themselves or someone else, assisted outpatient treatment is what may be warranted for them, which means the judge simply says: You are going to stay and continue to take your medication. You will continue to see your therapist and work on this.

That being the case, when New York State did this, it found a reduction in incarcerations and homelessness by some 70 percent. It was pretty dramatic. It found satisfaction by over 80 percent, and it found costs go down by 50 percent.

It is something on which we in Congress need to continue to work. We did pass legislation, which puts the appropriations of $15 million to help States do that, but we have a long way to go. It is a long way to go based upon what I said. I think it is 1,820,000 people so far who have commented. They have seen this on my Facebook page and have commented on it. I want to read some more comments—some heartbreaking lessons—people are making.

One is by the name of Kari Butler, who wrote on my Facebook page:

> They are falling through the cracks. Easier to just put them in jail with high bail. They do make medication for people like him, my nephews, which is to say one is in jail now since November—no release until August—mostly because he didn't follow up like he was supposed to. The prosecutor did a mental evaluation on him to see if he could withstand court, and he concluded he could; but something is not right here. He has assaulted officers and has been tased three times and has not been affected. Five police officers, it took, to get him into the back of a car. They tased him in Walmart—once in front of the whole store.

On it goes. There are many people with mental illness out there.

This person writes:

> I don't believe public servants have been trained properly to treat mental illness. I don't know what to do to help people who get the help they need to be productive.

One might say one of the aspects of our bill is to provide training for police officers—what is called emergency treatment for them. When police officers have been trained in that, we have actually seen—and the police officers like this, too—that they can quickly identify, if this is a mentally ill person in crisis, what they can do to deescalate the situation and prevent it from becoming harmful or deadly.

Here is another point that has been written by Amethyst Lees:

> First off, the health system is horrible, and I worked inside a mental institution and saw firsthand what it is like. Depending on where I was, the people were not getting their needs met or were being ignored. I even saw an incident where a man was waiting for 15 minutes for two staff members to stop talking about football just to ask for some ice. He never got his ice because he lashed out for being ignored, and, of course, he was restrained in a chair for an hour for getting angry.

Marianne Kernan writes with regard to Cody Miller:

> Talk to him. Our mental health system is shameful. I know, as I work daily with this population, many times, their treatment is inhumane. Some with dementia or Alzheimer's wouldn't be treated this way if they had a break with reality. It is a sad commentary on our lack of knowledge of dealing with serious mental illness.

Here are some more stories.

Angie Geyser writes:

My 13-year-old daughter, Morgan, was in police custody for 19 months before she finally received treatment for her schizophrenia. We had to pursue a civil commitment to make it happen. Now she is back in juvenile detention where she has no access to the outdoors and is not allowed to have physical contact with her family. The treatment of the seriously mentally ill by the criminal justice system is appallingly inhumane.

Frede Trenkle writes:

Two weeks ago, a stranger that I have been married to for 13 years came into my home, sprayed me with pepper spray, took a knife out in front of my two kids, and threatened to cut his throat. The police took him away and put him in a mental health hold. I chose not to press charges and just requested that he get help. This was his second hospital stay in a month. The hold was supposed to be for 7 days. Four days later, he got out, and I am sure because he had a plane ticket out of the State. He convinced someone out there that I was the threat. He denied ever having a knife. He manipulated the system. I received abusive texts before I changed my phone number and he sent terrible emails. I only wish he could get the help he desperately needs wherever he is, but because of the unchecked mental illness, I now have two beautiful girls, without their father, and both needing their own mental health counseling. How do we help our system on all ends?

Another woman writes:

If you want people like this young man to get help, we all need to be okay with paying more taxes and closing privatized prisons. The prison system has become the dumping ground for the pervasive mentally ill.

Another one writes:

My uncle has schizophrenia. He disappears for months at a time. I worry constantly about him being hurt by law enforcement. He was living 50 miles away, in the woods, on his father's property, in a camper, and was threatened with a gun by a neighbor because he was walking in the fields, talking to things only he can see. The cops were called, and they showed up with weapons drawn. Then they took him away and locked him up for a month. He is only 32, but the police assumed he was on drugs. He was having a psychotic episode. There is not enough education in the judicial system about mental illness, and innocent people are being killed through the ignorance.

Another woman writes:

My question is this: As the mom, where should we direct the young people with schizophrenia? Hospital care is effective, but it seems to be temporary: 6 months in and 2 years out; repeat. Has anyone found or used or heard of any successful treatment going on at treatment facilities?

The answer is yes. Actually, one of the programs in H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, is for something called RAISE, Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode. We have learned that, since schizophrenia and bipolar illness and severe mental illnesses are emerging in adolescent and young adult years, if one gets to someone early, with a low dose of medication, with proper evidence-based treatment, the prognosis is much, much better; but when we don't treat someone, every time someone has what the lay public calls a nervous breakdown or a psychotic break—a crisis—we have to understand that, over time, these lead to neurological damage. These are not harmless episodes. This is not just someone who gets upset. This is a real psychiatric disorder that comes from the brain and leads to problems, and that is why we see these problems grow.

Here is someone who doesn't quite understand the problem. A woman by the name of Julie writes:

I am very much against the families of mentally ill patients having the power to put their loved ones away against a patient's will. Let the doctors determine if the patient has a problem, not the family. Often, the family just doesn't want to deal with the illness, so they want the person to go away.

Someone by the name of Robin Duffey writes:

Julie, you don't know what you're talking about. There are more of us that do care, but because of the mental health laws, we are unable to make decisions for very sick family members. People with schizophrenia don't realize they are sick. They think their hallucinations are real, along with the commanding voices they hear. So how can such an ill person make a logical decision to get the help they need? The answer is: they can't. The doctors have to follow the laws that are in place, which is they cannot recommend committing a person unless they are an immediate threat or danger to someone or themselves. Yes, Julie. There are some families that don't want to be bothered, but I was not one of them. I highly recommend you to do research on the subject before you spout your ideas. Read the Federal and State laws.

Indeed, that is what we are trying to do with H.R. 2646.

There are a couple of thousand more comments on my Facebook page, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly ask people to go and read them. They are heartbreaking. They are horrifying. They are tragic. They are true. They go on and on because our Nation refuses to acknowledge this.

Until we pass this bill and start making changes—we can predict it—in the time that I have been speaking here, there have been several more suicides; there have been more homicides; there have been more mentally ill people whom we have abandoned; there have been people who have had chronic illnesses and who have died, because the people with serious mental illness, for multiple reasons, tend to die 10 to 25 years sooner than the rest of the population because of the fact that 75 percent of those with mental illness have at least one chronic illness, 50 percent have at least two chronic illnesses, and a third have at least three chronic illnesses. I mean things like heart disease, lung disease, infectious disease, diabetes. They get sick and they, oftentimes, are not treated. Many times, they don't seek treatment. We let them go in this slow-motion death spiral and ignore them.

We have closed the hospitals. We have put them in prisons. If they are out of control and if the police bring them to the emergency room and if there are no beds available, they tie them down to the gurney, where they may wait for days—or weeks, in some cases—where they are, perhaps, given some sedative—a chemical straightjacket, if you will—to calm them down. That is not treatment. That is abusive. That is our Nation that is doing it, and Congress is culpable in this because we refuse to act.

Once again, there will be a tragedy somewhere. I shudder to think—and I hope it is not anybody here who is injured—that, somewhere out in America today, this is going to happen. Once again, we will gather for a moment of silence; the gavel will come down; and we will go back to our regular order of business. It is sad and it disgusts me, but that is what we face: all of this closing of hospitals and not opening up community mental health; Medicaid's saying you can't see two doctors in the same day; Medicaid's saying you can't go to a hospital with more than 16 beds; HHS' saying we can't tell parents anything, so they are left in the dark; the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which funds programs that teach people to make collages, to do interpretive dances, to get off their medication, to make masks and other things that have nothing to do with serious mental illness.

We need to change the system, and that is what H.R. 2646 does. It takes that office of SAMHSA and changes it so that the director of it is the Assistant Secretary of Mental Health and Substance Abuse. That person needs to be a doctor or a psychiatrist who is trained, either an M.D. or an osteopath or a psychologist, but someone who understands the field and not just someone who is saying: Well, let's just do these other ''feel good'' programs.

The city of New York just did this, too, where the mayor put up hundreds of millions of dollars for programs that were, supposedly, for the mentally ill. They weren't for the mentally ill at all. They were programs like parks and bike trails and ''feel good'' programs to help people with sadness, not to deal with depression and serious mental illness.

How long can we continue to fool ourselves?

As for this whole idea that says ''leave it up to them if they want to choose; don't provide them the help; make it the most difficult for those people who have the most difficulty,'' all of this, Mr. Speaker, is more commentary and evidence of the grand experiment of stopping all treatment under the misguided, self-centered, and projected belief that all people who are mentally ill are fully capable of deciding their own fate and direction, regardless of their deficits and disease, and that they have the right to self-

decay and self-destruction, which overrides their right to be healthy. The most fundamental, dangerous, and destructive hidden undercurrent of prejudice is the low expectation that your disability is as good as it gets.

□ 2030

The shift to consider changes in how we treat severe mental illness is the pendulum that needs to swing the other way. The grand experiment has failed in closing down all the institutions and care and stopping all treatment and not allowing community mental health.

It is a principle that operated under the misguided, self-centered belief that people are always fully capable of deciding their own fate, regardless of their deficits and disease, and the right to self-decay and self-destruction overrides this right to health.

In so doing, we have come to comfortably advocate our responsibility to action and live under this perverse redefinition that the most compassionate compassion is to do nothing at all.

It further bolstered the most evil of prejudices that the person with disabilities deserves no more than what they are. Under that approach, no dreams, no aspirations, no goals to be better can even exist.

Indeed, to help a person heal is a head-on collision with the bigoted belief that the severely mentally ill have no right to be better than what they are and we have no obligation to help them.

This is the corrupt evil of the hands-off approach in the antitreatment model, and that perversion of thought is embedded in the glorification that to live a life of deterioration and paranoia and filth and squalor and emotional torment trumps a healed brain and the true chance to choose a better life.

This is the movement of hatred and stigma toward the mentally ill disguised as the right to let them be sick. That hatred may be embedded in our own anger, our own resentment, and one's own past experiences projected as blame or misattribution of the lives of others or maybe our own fear and loathing of the mentally ill. Either way, the outcome is tragically the same.

So we can have more moments of silence or we can have times of action. I hope the Energy and Commerce Committee picks this up.

I hope that more Members of Congress will sign on as cosponsors of H.R. 2646, the Helping Families of Mental Health Crisis Act. The day that bill signs into law, it will begin to save lives. It will begin to make a difference in people's lives.

Of all the other things we do down the road here for images or to push polling—I can tell you this, that the polling on this bill is in 70s and 80s. As politicians, we think, wow, if something polls at 55 percent, vote for it.

My concern is: Will America wake up and look toward Congress here and say: When we had a chance to do something to save lives, did we act, or are we once again just caught up in moments of silence?

Thomas Jefferson said something along the lines of: ''Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just and His justice cannot sleep forever.''

We are in that same position now. We can either have the courage to stand up, take action, and help the mentally ill or we can sit in silence. I hope this Chamber soon takes up H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act. Thank you to Congressman TIM MURPHY for hosting this important special order to discuss our country's current mental health system.

For more than two years now, I have worked with Congressman MURPHY on H.R. 2646, a bipartisan piece of legislation that has garnered support from patients, caregivers, psychiatrists, psychologists, law enforcement, and even editorial boards. As two of the few mental health providers serving in Congress, our bill reflects not only what we have learned in our own careers, but feedback from stakeholders, families, organizations, other members of Congress, and addresses many of the policies that we can change now to help patients struggling with severe mental illness and substance use disorders.

An amended version of H.R. 2646 passed the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health in November of 2015. Since then, there has been no action. I have continued to talk with members of my community about mental health issues and they demand action.

It is now April of 2016 and we must move forward on the issue of mental health. The American people expect, deserve, and demand it. H.R. 2646 takes a strong step forward in mental health reform. As days pass with no action, people are denied beds, denied care, and are floating through the pervasive cycle of mental illness without attention. Everyone deserves care. I truly hope that my colleagues will work with me to pass this bill for the sake of those who truly matter.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3340, FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL REFORM ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3791, RAISING CONSOLIDATED ASSETS THRESHOLD UNDER SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

Mr. STIVERS (during the Special Order of Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–489) on the resolution (H. Res. 671) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3340) to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2666, NO RATE REGULATION OF BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACT

Mr. STIVERS (during the Special Order of Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–490) on the resolution (H. Res. 672) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Michigan). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, my colleague just finished a very good recitation of the problems of mental health. I am going to pick up another piece of this issue which has to do with dementia and Alzheimer's, which I believe the gentleman spoke to very briefly during his presentation.

I thank him for his concern and for the work that he has been doing these many years on this profoundly important issue of brain health.

My role tonight will be kind of working off the previous presentation and taking it just a little bit in a slightly different direction, and it has to do with dementia and Alzheimer's, which is obviously a rather important issue.

I want to just put up a couple of placards here to try to demonstrate the overall nature of this problem. One way to look at it is just in terms of the numbers, and the numbers are staggering.

The number of people: Right now in America, there are about 5.1 million Americans with Alzheimer's. We expect

that number to grow not just because the baby boomers are moving into their older years, but also because of the growth of the population and the increasing incidence of Alzheimer's.

If you look at this chart, you can see it growing over the years so that, in about 2050, we expect to have 13,800,000 Americans with Alzheimer's. It is not just an issue with individuals who are suffering, whose lives are seriously disrupted. It is a serious issue for the financing of this Nation.

If you look at this, you can see this line of growth in the number of Americans with Alzheimer's and you can see the ever-rising cost. These are not inflated numbers. These are constant dollars over the years.

So when we reach 2050, not too many years from now, we are going to see an extraordinary expense of nearly three-quarters of a trillion dollars annually spent with the Medicare-Medicaid budget.

Now, many, many people on this floor are concerned about deficits. We all are. The deficits are driven by many issues: the ever-increasing cost of programs, new programs, increasing military expenditures, the growth of Medicare, Social Security, and the like.

Well, Alzheimer's is the single biggest budget issue within all of those programs. Under the Medicare-Medicaid programs, it is going to explode—you can see what we are looking at here—from $153 billion in 2015 to three-quarters of a trillion, $735 billion, in the year 2050. This will bust the budget.

Many of the deficits that we are so concerned about, in fact, that are in play today, as this House has been unable with our Republican majority to fashion a budget and all of the disruptions that that creates and then the ongoing appropriation process, which is delayed and made rather confusing as a result of not having a budget—inherent in that debate is the ever-increasing cost of Medicare and Medicaid.

Well, why is it increasing? Well, largely it is increasing because of these types of illness, such as Alzheimer's. You can see here what we are looking at, almost a $30 billion increase in just the next 4 years—or 3 years, actually.

So no wonder we are unable to get control of our budgets and our appropriations here when we are faced with this inexorable increase in an illness that affects every family in America.

It has affected my family. My mother-in-law spent the last 3 years of her life living with my wife Patty and I in our home where we took care of her. We were fortunate enough to be able to have a day nurse come in. But then in the early morning and on through the evening and night, my wife and I were responsible for caring for my mother-in-law.

It was a duty that we found to be very worthwhile. It was a duty that brought our family together in close relationship as we watched this illness take hold of a lovely lady, a very smart, very capable woman who became ultimately an invalid and died of this disease.

It is not unique. Millions of families across this Nation are taking care of their husband, wife, mother, father, and mother- or father-in-law as Alzheimer's creeps into their family's life.

Now, this problem can be addressed. We know there is a solution. This is not a hopeless case. Five years ago, if I were standing here, I would probably say that this is simply hopeless and we are going to be faced with these costs no matter what happens. That is not the case today, not at all, because today research is having an effect.

Let me show you what research has done on other illnesses that plague Americans and, indeed, humans around the world:

Breast cancer: Well, we have had an enormous increase in breast cancer research. We have seen a 2 percent decline in the number of deaths from breast cancer.

Similarly, we have looked at other cancers, like prostate cancer, and we have seen an 11 percent decline in the deaths from prostate cancer.

Heart disease: There is an enormous amount of money going into heart disease, less than for cancer, but, nonetheless, an enormous amount of money. We have seen a 14 percent decrease in deaths from heart disease as a result of treatments that are now available. Research money led to those treatments.

Stroke: There is a 23 percent decline in the number of deaths from strokes. Again, research money into heart disease, into diseases of the circulatory system, have resulted in very, very significant decreases in the deaths.

HIV/AIDS: Dramatic. There has been an enormous amount of money spent into research of HIV/AIDS. The result? There has been a 52 percent decrease in the deaths from HIV/AIDS.

So we know that, if we spend money on research, we will see a decline in the death rate from those illnesses.

Alzheimer's disease: In 2015, we spent just over 20 percent of the amount of money on researching Alzheimer's disease as we did on heart disease and on cancer. So don't be surprised with this chart.

There is a 71 percent increase in the death rate from Alzheimer's. There is a relationship here. There is a relationship between the investment that we make in research and the resultant increase or decrease in the disease.

In the case of cancer of nearly all kinds, we have seen a significant and, in many cases, dramatic decline in the death rate from those cancers.

In the case of heart disease, similarly, money spent on research, on more effective treatments, and on drug treatments has resulted in a very significant decrease in strokes and other heart disease issues.

HIV/AIDS is the most dramatic where, again, research is leading to better lives, longer lives, less death and less cost.

Alzheimer's? No. No. In 2015, we spent just over $500 million.

Is there a lesson for us here? You bet there is. Here is the lesson: You invest up front. You invest up front with research.

I want to thank the President. I want to thank the Members of Congress and the Senate, who, in this current year's appropriation, 2016, have added another $300 million to the Alzheimer's research program.

Let me put another chart up here. Alzheimer's spending, research versus treatment: In 2015, Medicare and Medicaid will spend over 261 times as much on treatment as the NIH will spend on research toward a cure.

So, in 2015, a year ago, we spent $153 billion on treating—this is Medicare and Medicaid, not private insurance, not money out of individual pockets—we spent $153 billion of your Federal tax money on caring for Alzheimer's. That was 261 times the amount of money spent on research.

□ 2045

Now, let's see, let's be accurate here because we did have an increase, as I just said. We have actually spent $936 million in 2016 on Alzheimer's research. So this 261 times is significantly less now. But we are not at the goal. We are not at the goal that we want to have in place for the treatment and the care of Alzheimer's.

The goal of the Alzheimer's Association is to raise the amount of research money to the level of about $1.5 billion. It is anticipated—and I will explain why this is a sound anticipation—it is anticipated that if we were to be able to spend that amount of money in 2017, keeping in mind that we are now just under a billion dollars for research, but if we bring it up another $500 million to $1.5 billion, if we were to do that, it is anticipated that by 2025—that is just 9 years from now—we would see a dramatic change in the incidence of Alzheimer's.

Many people would not be suffering from it, and those who do would see the onset of Alzheimer's pushed back into their later years so that they would be able to live a better, more sound, mentally sound life and more productive life and, for the taxpayers of this Nation, a significantly reduced amount of Federal support through Medicare and Medicaid.

How much does it amount to?

So if we spent that $936 million this year and in the next year ramp it up another 200 and in the following year another $300 million so that we get to the goal of $1.5 billion of research in the years between now and 2020, we

would see a dramatic reduction and a dramatic improvement in the lives of Americans, much better lives.

If this were available to my mother-in-law, perhaps she would have been able to live another 2, 3, 5 years without the onset of Alzheimer's. And what would that mean to the quality of her life as well as to her family's?

So let's assume that the research pushes back the onset of Alzheimer's by 5 years, so that in 2025 what would we see?

Well, for Medicare and Medicaid, we would see in the years 2025 to 2030 a 121-billion-dollar reduction in the cost to Medicare and Medicaid to your taxpayer dollars, and from 2025 to 2030—that is 10 years of the new treatments being in place—we would see a half-trillion-dollar reduction in the cost of Medicare and Medicaid.

Now, this isn't pie in the sky. This isn't just wishful, hopeful thinking and a prayer and a song. This is a real possibility. Those of you who have been reading the press or listening to the television news programs over the last year, you will note a significant change from hopelessness to hope. Yes, hope. There is real hope that we will be able to attack this debilitating dementia Alzheimer's, that we will be able to delay the onset and quite possibly stop it, to cure it.

Now, that may be off into the future, but we are now gaining an understanding because of the research that is being done on Alzheimer's and much of the research that was discussed earlier in the discussion of mental health programs and research that is going on by the United States military as they attack the problem of post-traumatic stress and brain damage from the men and women who have served in the recent wars.

All of that research is coming together with an understanding of how the human brain works, what the elements are that cause the damage of mental health, schizophrenia, and post-traumatic stress, as well as brain damage, perhaps for the football players in the NFL and beyond.

So here is what we are going to do. We are going to fight this year to increase this funding from beyond $236 million to just over $1 billion. We know it is a tough budget year. We know that the Republicans have been unable to even come to grips to put together a budget, let alone increase the appropriations.

But where could money be better spent than on research that is actually moving forward toward an understanding of what Alzheimer's is and how the brain is attacked, how we can stall—not yet reverse, but stall the onset of the damage that occurs as a result of Alzheimer's.

We have seen it. You have seen the stories. We know that drug treatments that were once thought to be ineffective, treatments that were done in the mid-1990s didn't work, or so they thought. Then some statisticians looked at those results of those drug trials and noticed something really important. They noticed that while the overall program didn't seem to work, they noticed that there was a subset of patients who were being treated by that drug, and they noticed that that subset was the early onset of Alzheimer's, and what they noticed was that that drug seemed to push back, seemed to hold steady that onset of Alzheimer's. Whoa, it was a eureka moment that maybe using drugs of that type applied early in the process would result in the delay, the arresting of the Alzheimer's onset.

That is what we are talking about here. If we are able to invest this money in research, we can see the probability that there are a series of drugs that do have an effect on the onset of Alzheimer's and seem to delay that onset.

Each year that goes by, what is the effect for the individual, for the family of the individual?

It means their life will be better. It means that the kind of stress, strain, and financial cost that is put on a family with Alzheimer's will be arrested. It will be delayed. Not 1 year, maybe 2 years, maybe 3, maybe 5 years. And the cost is enormous.

As I said before, if we are able to do this increased research over the next 3, 4, 5 years, working on those series of drugs that now seem to have an effect, we will be able in the years 2025 to 2030 to save you, the taxpayers, and us, the appropriators of your tax money, over $120 billion in the years 2025 to the year 2030. In 5 years beyond that, that 10-year period, a half trillion dollars.

So if you are worried about the deficit—and we all are—if you are worried about how we are going to put together a 5-year budget, which is what we do, then look at this investment. If you are worried about the effect of Alzheimer's in your family or on yourself, there are 435 of us in this House and another 100 over in the Senate. Listen, one-third of us are likely to die of Alzheimer's in the years ahead. So if you don't care about the family, you don't care about Americans, care about yourself. One-third of us are destined. If you happen to be a female, the odds are even greater.

So what is this all about?

Well, we are somehow grappling with the budget, the 5-year budget. We can't seem to get it together. Enormous chaos on the side of my Republican colleagues about how to do it. The appropriation process is underway and totally stalled out until at least May 15.

There is a solution. A small investment, a very small investment, and then we can look at the long-term deficit. Then we can be in a position to improve the lives of Americans.

Oh, by the way, the money is available. The money is available. In the budget and in the appropriations we are putting together, we are ramping up so that over the next 20 years, 25 years, we are going to spend a trillion dollars—a trillion dollars—on a brand-new nuclear arms race. We are going to rebuild all of our nuclear bombs. We are going to develop new airplanes to deliver those bombs, new satellites, new rockets, new cruise missiles, new submarines. A trillion dollars.

Well, I have got a better place to spend some of that money. I have got a better place to spend it, where the lives of Americans will be significantly improved, where the stress on families throughout this nation will be less, where the budgets of this country will not be busted, where this curve, where this curve will be flattened, where we will not in the year 2050 spend over a trillion dollars a year, a trillion dollars a year caring for people who have Alzheimer's. Three-quarters of that money is your tax money.

You can go back here, 2020, and start spending a couple of hundred million dollars, a couple of hundred million dollars on research, on promising treatments for Alzheimer's, and then beginning in 2025, watch this curve begin to flatten out.

Now, for me and for many of us in this room, we are not going to be out here in 2025, but our children and grandchildren will be, and they will be caring for us unless we begin to make these investments now in research.

So in the next couple of weeks, the men and women in purple will be here in Washington, D.C., as they do every spring, advocating for Alzheimer's research, for the caregivers, and for the families, and we ought to be paying attention.

The money is in the budget somewhere. All we need to do is to find it, move it from a few nuclear weapons over to research, delay the expenditure of a new ballistic missile or intercontinental ballistic missile, and spend it on something that affects every American every day of this year and every day of the years in the future, and that is Alzheimer's.

It is a good investment. It is an investment in the quality of life. It is an investment in our effort to reduce the deficit, and it is an investment in America's future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal business in district.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 13, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5006. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5007. A letter from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, Office of the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting reports entitled ''2016 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges'' and ''2015 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges'', pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 113 note; Public Law 107-314, 366(a)(5); (116 Stat. 2522); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5008. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of the General Counsel, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Program Integrity Issues [Docket ID: ED-2010-OPE-0004] (RIN: 1840-AD02) received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5009. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's annual report to Congress for FY 2015 regarding imported foods, pursuant to Sec. 1009 of the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007, Public Law 110-85; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5010. A letter from the Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5011. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's rule — December 2015 Revision of Form 3115 (Announcement 2016-14) received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5012. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 114th Congress; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Foreign Affairs, Oversight and Government Reform, the Judiciary, and Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ROYCE: Committee on Foreign Affairs. H.R. 1567. A bill to authorize a comprehensive, strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–482). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 2908. A bill to adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States; with an amendment (Rept. 114–483). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 4392. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require that the Office of Personnel Management submit an annual report to Congress relating to the use of official time by Federal employees; with an amendment (Rept. 114–484). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 4358. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to enhance accountability within the Senior Executive Service, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–485). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 2615. A bill to establish the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission; with an amendment (Rept. 114–486). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2733. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–487). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 3586. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve border and maritime security coordination in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–488, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STIVERS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 671. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3340) to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–489). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 672. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service. (Rept. 114–490). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3586 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 4899. A bill to restore statutory rights to the people of the United States from forced arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4900. A bill to establish an Oversight Board to assist the Government of Puerto Rico, including instrumentalities, in managing its public finances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. MESSER, Mr. DESANTIS, Ms. FOXX, Mr. BLUM, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. WALKER, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. BRAT):

H.R. 4901. A bill to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HURD of Texas (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. MCCAUL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Ms. MCSALLY):

H.R. 4902. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to expand law enforcement availability pay to employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Air and Marine Operations; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ALLEN:

H.R. 4903. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by the Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 4904. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue a directive on the management of software licenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 4905. A bill to restore the ability of law enforcement authorities to enforce gun safety laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. MEADOWS):

H.R. 4906. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify the eligibility of employees of a land management agency in a time-limited appointment to compete for a permanent appointment at any Federal agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HOLDING (for himself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. NUNES, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 4907. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free distributions from individual retirement plans to donor-advised funds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. KUSTER (for herself and Mr. NOLAN):

H.R. 4908. A bill to provide rental assistance to low-income tenants of certain multifamily rural housing projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. THORNBERRY (for himself and Mr. SMITH of Washington) (both by request):

H.R. 4909. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 4910. A bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to require that the POW/MIA flag be displayed on all days that the flag of the United States is displayed on certain Federal property; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 4911. A bill to impose criminal penalties for the unsafe operation of unmanned aircraft; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEWIS (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4912. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce taxpayer burdens and enhance taxpayer protections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4913. A bill to ensure the sufficient capitalization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and prevent any further bailout of such enterprises by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4914. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to place limitations on the possession, sale, and other disposition of a firearm by persons convicted of misdemeanor sex offenses against children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself and Ms. EDWARDS):

H.R. 4915. A bill to designate the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park comprised of certain National Park System lands, and by affiliation and cooperative agreements other historically significant resources, located in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland, that were part of the Civil War defenses of Washington and related to the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, to study ways in which the Civil War history of both the North and South can be assembled, arrayed, and conveyed for the benefit of the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. POLIQUIN (for himself and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 4916. A bill to reauthorize the program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department health care providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUSSELL (for himself, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BUCK, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. RIBBLE):

H.R. 4917. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to terminate the essential air service program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself and Mr. KATKO):

H.R. 4918. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue guidance for the safe prescribing of opioids for the treatment of acute pain; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. ADERHOLT, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana):

H.R. 4919. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Ms. HAHN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CLEAVER, and Ms. NORTON):

H. Con. Res. 127. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in honor of the Buffalo Soldiers; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself and Ms. NORTON):

H. Res. 670. A resolution expressing support for the designation of May 5, 2016, as a ''National Day of Reason'' and recognizing the importance of reason in the betterment of humanity; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GROTHMAN:

H. Res. 673. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service should provide printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 to taxpayers in the United States free of charge; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MULVANEY (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina):

H. Res. 674. A resolution recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18, 2016, as National Lineman Appreciation Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DOLD, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H. Res. 675. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WITTMAN (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. NORTON, and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H. Res. 676. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the United States during Public Service Recognition Week, the week of May 1 through 7, 2016; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

195. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, relative to House Resolution No. 223, memorializing the Congress of the United States to enact the Retail Investor Protection Act and also to enact legislation that prohibits the United States Department of Labor from amending fiduciary duty regulations to define retirement savings brokers and agents as fiduciaries, including those previously not deemed fiduciaries; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Financial Services and Education and the Workforce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. PASCRELL introduced a bill (H.R. 4920) for the relief of Malachy McAllister, Nicola McAllister, and Sean Ryan McAllister; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:
H.R. 4899.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. DUFFY:
H.R. 4900.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, section 3, clause 2

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:
H.R. 4901.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 and Clause 17 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States grants the Congress the power to enact this law.

By Mr. HURD of Texas:
H.R. 4902.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ALLEN:
H.R. 4903.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, clauses 1 and 18 of the Constitution

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:
H.R. 4904.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. BEYER:
H.R. 4905.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CONNOLLY:
H.R. 4906.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section VIII, Clause 18

By Mr. HOLDING:
H.R. 4907.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Atricle 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. KUSTER:
H.R. 4908.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: ''The Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:
H.R. 4909.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LANCE:
H.R. 4910.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Sec. 8, Clause 1, of the United States Constitution
This state that ''Congress shall have the power to . . . lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. LANGEVIN:
H.R. 4911.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Mr. LEWIS:
H.R. 4912.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. MULVANEY:
H.R. 4913.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. ''The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States . . . ;''
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''
Article I, Section 8, Clause 14. ''To make rules for the government . . . ;''
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof''

By Mr. NADLER:
H.R. 4914.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clauses 3 and 18 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 4915.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:
H.R. 4916.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 ''. . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into the Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof . . .''

By Mr. RUSSELL:
H.R. 4917.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, specifically Clause 1 and Clause 18.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER:
H.R. 4918.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:
H.R. 4919.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. PASCRELL:
H.R. 4920
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 12: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 24: Mrs. NOEM, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 27: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 188: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 225: Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 239: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 241: Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 247: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 317: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 386: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 472: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 525: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 539: Mr. VELA.
H.R. 542: Mr. DEUTCH and Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 546: Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 584: Ms. FOXX.
H.R. 592: Mr. YOHO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 649: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 654: Mr. MOOLENAAR and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 662: Mr. DUFFY.
H.R. 703: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 711: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 775: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 793: Mr. REED, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 799: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 815: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 836: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 842: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 921: Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. RUIZ, and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 923: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 952: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 973: Mr. CAPUANO and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 986: Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. ROYCE, and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 1095: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 1112: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 1170: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 1172: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1193: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 1197: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 1218: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. LEE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. BONAMICI, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1220: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 1221: Mr. FARR, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. JONES, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 1233: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 1247: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 1299: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1301: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 1302: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1355: Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 1399: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 1427: Ms. HAHN, Mr. PERRY, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. COMSTOCK, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 1453: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. DENT.
H.R. 1457: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1459: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1486: Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 1538: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 1559: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. ZELDIN.
H.R. 1571: Mr. BEYER and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 1602: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 1603: Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 1728: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 1733: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1761: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 1784: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 1821: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1858: Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 1882: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1933: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1941: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1950: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1961: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 2001: Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 2016: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 2036: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2167: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 2170: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2180: Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 2193: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 2205: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 2215: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 2260: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 2313: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2315: Mrs. COMSTOCK and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 2342: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MASSIE, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2346: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 2404: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina,
H.R. 2405: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 2450: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 2460: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2493: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 2515: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 2533: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. MENG, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SIRES, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 2540: Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.R. 2597: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2646: Mr. BOST.
H.R. 2680: Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 2694: Mr. POCAN and Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 2710: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 2715: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2726: Mr. LATTA and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 2737: Ms. MENG, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ISSA, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 2739: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2773: Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2799: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. STEWART, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 2802: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 2817: Ms. DELBENE, Mr. TONKO, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 2826: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2848: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2867: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. KEATING, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 2896: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. MCHENRY.
H.R. 2903: Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. COMSTOCK, and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 2932: Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 2948: Mr. LEWIS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. MOORE, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. WALDEN, and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2980: Mr. KING of New York, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 2992: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 3007: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3012: Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 3019: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 3048: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 3074: Mr. LANCE and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 3080: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3084: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3099: Mr. CRAMER, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 3119: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3142: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 3164: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. SPEIER, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3173: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 3209: Mr. PASCRELL, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 3222: Mr. THORNBERRY and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 3225: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 3229: Mr. VISCLOSKY and Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 3235: Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 3250: Mr. OLSON and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3294: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3308: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 3316: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3323: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 3326: Mr. BRAT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. HULTGREN, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 3339: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.
H.R. 3356: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 3377: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 3410: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3463: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 3523: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 3632: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. FARR, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3646: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 3652: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3687: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3690: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 3691: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 3694: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 3705: Mr. DUFFY.
H.R. 3713: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3724: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 3767: Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 3799: Mr. BRAT, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 3808: Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 3817: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DELBENE, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 3849: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 3892: Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BRAT, and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3929: Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. BOST, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. Graves of Missouri, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. LONG, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. LUCAS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 3965: Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3981: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3982: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 4003: Mrs. LOVE.
H.R. 4019: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 4023: Mrs. LOVE.
H.R. 4048: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 4055: Mr. BEYER and Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 4057: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4062: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 4073: Mr. LATTA, Mr. HANNA, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 4116: Ms. SINEMA, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4137: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. HAHN, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 4153: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 4167: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4169: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 4210: Mr. DUFFY.
H.R. 4216: Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. HURT of Virginia.
H.R. 4223: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4229: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 4257: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 4262: Mr. LANCE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 4264: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 4293: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 4294: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 4296: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 4298: Mr. KIND and Mr. MCCLINTOCK,
H.R. 4301: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 4313: Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 4342: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4352: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 4365: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. ZINKE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4396: Ms. MOORE, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4399: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 4403: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 4422: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 4439: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 4450: Ms. PINGREE and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 4460: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4481: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4488: Mr. HONDA, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4499: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4505: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 4509: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 4511: Ms. ESTY and Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 4514: Mr. POMPEO, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. BRAT, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4532: Mrs. WAGNER and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4534: Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 4547: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 4549: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 4552: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 4567: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 4570: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 4585: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4592: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 4599: Mr. MOULTON and Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 4607: Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4611: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 4612: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 4613: Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. LEE, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 4614: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 4616: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. POSEY, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 4625: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 4637: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
H.R. 4640: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRAT, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4648: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 4653: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4654: Mr. TONKO, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 4657: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 4662: Mr. SARBANES and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 4667: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ROSS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4668: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4677: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4681: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4694: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. MOORE, and Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 4701: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4712: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 4715: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. FOXX, Mr. COOK, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 4717: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 4720: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 4729: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 4730: Mr. BLUM, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 4738: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4747: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 4750: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4751: Mr. GUINTA and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 4754: Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. LEE, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 4764: Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LANCE, Mr. JONES, and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 4766: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 4773: Ms. FOXX, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. HARDY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. ROSS, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. POSEY, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4775: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4792: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4796: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4809: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4814: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 4815: Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 4817: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. HILL.
H.R. 4827: Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4828: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. JONES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 4835: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 4842: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 4843: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4848: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. PALMER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 4852: Mr. MCHENRY.
H.R. 4860: Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. MENG, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. VELA, and Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 4873: Mr. REED.
H.R. 4876: Mr. REED.
H.R. 4879: Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4882: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4885: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 4895: Mr. HUDSON and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 4897: Ms. NORTON, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4898: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.J. Res. 14: Mr. FLEMING.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H. Con. Res. 36: Mr. RUIZ.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. POCAN.
H. Con. Res. 50: Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H. Con. Res. 114: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. COFFMAN.
H. Res. 54: Ms. STEFANIK.
H. Res. 130: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Res. 154: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. MOULTON.
H. Res. 192: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. BASS, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H. Res. 220: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VELA, Mr. KILMER, Mr. TAKAI, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Res. 343: Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Res. 419: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H. Res. 469: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. KILMER.
H. Res. 501: Mr. HONDA, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H. Res. 540: Miss RICE of New York.
H. Res. 551: Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H. Res. 605: Mr. HONDA and Ms. EDWARDS.
H. Res. 617: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H. Res. 647: Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. KIND.
H. Res. 650: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. PETERSON.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative DOYLE or a designee, to H.R. 2666 the No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative EDWARD R. ROYCE to H.R. 3340 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ANTWAN CLARK

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Antwan Clark.

Antwan Clark was born March 26, 1980 to the proud parents of Sylvester and Jeanette Clark of Lexington, Mississippi. He has two sisters, Kadisha and Abbie.

Antwan is the epitome of the phrase ''strength through adversity''. After being left paralyzed after a car accident during his junior year of high school, Antwan persevered. His determination to attain success motivated him to graduate from J.J. McClain High School in 1998 with honors. After graduating with honors from JJMHS, Antwan attended Holmes Community College and majored in Business and Office Technology. To continue pursuing his goals, he then enrolled in Antonelli College where he earned a degree in Computer Technical Support and Networking, maintaining a 3.9 grade-point average. In 2007, the Career College Association invited Antwan to Washington, D.C., where he was awarded for his achievements.

Antwan is currently employed by the Community Students Learning Center (CSLC) in Lexington, MS as an Information Technology Specialist and Website Developer. He also uses his knowledge and technical skills to tutor and teach computer classes at CSLC. Antwan also has a home-based computer repair business called ''Top Quality Computer Services'' located at 1131 Busy Bee Road, Lexington, MS 39095. His business specializes in issues regarding: computer repair, software applications, computer networking, virus/spyware removal, and website design.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Antwan Clark for his dedication and support to the Holmes County Community.

RECOGNIZING BRANDON NORFOLK

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brandon Norfolk of Leadington, Missouri for earning the rank of Eagle Scout. The Eagle Scout Award is the highest honor attainable in Boy Scouts. Only a small percentage of scouts reach the level of Eagle Scout, which requires years of dedicated effort.

Community service, leadership, and family values are the most important aspects of scouting, and are essential to becoming an Eagle Scout. Brandon has embodied these principles as an active member of Scout Troop 423, serving the organization by holding numerous responsibilities and positions within the troop. He has been a Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Junior Scout Master, and First Vice Chief of the Order of the Arrow, as well as a member of the Order's ceremonial team. In addition, he is a veteran camper, having attended a high adventure camp at the Florida Sea Base.

Brandon has also shown himself to be a proud American with great respect for our Armed Forces. For his Eagle Scout project, Brandon constructed a gazebo in the Park Hills Veteran's Park. The gazebo housed decorative metal signs that were colored differently to represent the emblems of the military branches. He has also volunteered to be a part of many Veterans of Foreign Wars flag retirements. Outside of scouting, Brandon is an active musician, participating in the marching band, concert band, and jazz band. He is also a member of the National Honors Society. After high school, Brandon plans to study criminal justice or conservation in hopes of one day becoming a Missouri Conservation Agent.

For these accomplishments and contributions to his community, it is my great pleasure to congratulate Brandon Norfolk on his achievement of becoming an Eagle Scout and recognize him before the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING LIEUTENANT LISA MALONEY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor Lieutenant Lisa Maloney, with the City of Martinez Police Department. Lieutenant Maloney honorably retired on December 30, 2015, after more than 22 years of service.

Lieutenant Maloney began her career in law enforcement in 1993 with the Fairfax City Police Department in Virginia. The Virginia Police Chiefs recognized Lieutenant Maloney in 1996 with the Lifesaving Award for her heroic actions during an incident while on duty, which put her in harm's way while attempting to save the life of another individual. After moving to California, Lieutenant Maloney joined the Martinez Police Department in 1998 as an officer. During the course of her career she has served on various assignments including Patrol Officer, Detective, Hostage Negotiator, Defensive Tactics Instructor, Detective Sergeant and Lieutenant.

Additionally, Lieutenant Maloney completed extensive training throughout her career, demonstrating her commitment to law enforcement. She attained certification in 2013 from the Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute, an intense 8-month learning program based on experiential learning techniques covering leadership, management, and ethical decision making for law enforcement front-line supervisors. Her dedication to public safety and improving the lives of the men and women of her department speaks volumes about her character and professionalism.

Mr. Speaker, Lieutenant Lisa Maloney has protected her community for over 22 years in her remarkable career in law enforcement, and I wish her the best in retirement. The people of the City of Martinez have benefitted greatly from her public service, and it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAN SILVA

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Dan L. Silva, whose lifelong commitment to Sutter County has left a lasting impact on the community.

Born in Yuba City, Dan was a 3rd generation farmer and was a well-known figure within the agricultural community. He was an active community leader, who had a deep sense of civic duty. For 8 years, Dan served as Sutter County's 5th District County Supervisor and was involved with many boards and committees. He dedicated his career to serving others and was committed to protecting the environment through his various leadership roles on flood control, agriculture, and transportation projects.

The boards and committees Dan participated in included the following: Feather River Air Quality, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Sacramento Area Flood Control, Sierra-Sacramento Valley EMS, Sutter-Butte Flood Control Agency, Yuba City Unified School Government Liaison Committee, Yuba-Sutter Transit Authority, Sutter County Fish and Game Commissioner, Assistant State Chairman for Ducks Unlimited, CA State Reclamation Board, Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau, Valley Vision, and the Natomas Basin Conservancy.

Dan was known around the community for his welcoming smile and his dedication to helping others. He will be missed by all, and our thoughts are with his family at this time. He is survived by his children, Christopher and Stacey, and four grandchildren, Samantha, Jamie, Dylan, and Mason.

Dan's commitment to his family and to his work made his life an example for all to emulate. I am honored to pay tribute to such an extraordinary member of our community.

HONORING THE CAREER OF MR. KEN OSBORN

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the retirement of Mr. Ken Osborn. During his 45 years at the Paradise Valley Country Club, Ken has provided joy and excellent service to the Paradise Valley community as the Valet Parking Supervisor. I am incredibly proud of the work and leadership Ken demonstrated over the past 45 years and I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

HONORING CHAD HILDEBRANDT

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a great Marine and a valuable asset to our civilian workforce. Since 2013, Chad Hildebrandt has been the Rail Operations Supervisor and subject matter expert on rail transportation for the Marine Corps Logistics Base—Barstow.

Not only has Chad overseen the rail, truck, and air shipments of equipment for rotational training units, he has improved efficiency and streamlined logistics for the Marine Corps, saving millions of dollars in transportation costs and directly contributing to increased military readiness. More importantly, he has taken the time to train the next generation of our military logisticians, developing over 500 Marines, soldiers, and civilians to follow his example at logistics bases worldwide.

Today, Chad will be named the 2015 Civilian Marine Logistician of the Year as the top civilian logistician in the nation. Later this year, Chad will also be named the Marine Corps Installations Command's Civilian of the Year, as the Marine Corps top civilian employee. This recognition is well deserved, as the Marines would be unable to do the training that they do without the extraordinary efforts from extraordinary people like Chad Hildebrandt. You make the 8th District proud, Chad. Semper Fi.

RECOGNIZING THE ROTARY CLUB OF COLONIAL PARK UPON THE CELEBRATION OF ITS 65TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize the Rotary Club of Colonial Park in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania upon the celebration of its 65th Anniversary. My district has benefited tremendously from the humanitarian service of the club and continued community involvement of its members.

Representing Rotary International's motto, ''Service Above Self,'' the Colonial Park chapter contributes in the community, inspires in the workplace, and engages throughout the world. Members of the Rotary Club represent the community's professionals, and they continue to promote high ethical standards in all vocations. The men and women of the club are nonpolitical, nonreligious, and open to all cultures, races, and creeds—making their initiatives diverse and effective in elevating the community.

Through its fundraising efforts and the generosity of its members, the Rotary Club of Colonial Park contributes over $17,000 per year to community organizations, such as hospitals, fire companies, senior centers, and youth clubs. The Rotary Club created a foundation to help meet the educational, charitable, and benevolent needs of organizations in their local area, as well as in areas recently affected by disasters. Understanding the important role that education plays in fostering a prosperous future, both the Rotary Club and Foundation have contributed over $100,000 to scholarships for students attending Harrisburg Area Community College. Members have also served their community through the building and upkeep of Possibility Place Playground, installation of a beautiful clock in the town of St. Thomas to commemorate its 250th anniversary, and support of Shalom House in downtown Harrisburg. Cumulatively, these endeavors highlight the commitment to community building and fulfillment of duty that members of the club selflessly embody.

Mr. Speaker, the Rotary Club of Colonial Park is guided by core principles that resonate with each and every member. Their commitment to the community at large will continue to have profound effects in empowering those in need and enabling positive change. It is my honor to help celebrate the 65th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Colonial Park, and I wish all members the best in their future proceedings.

HONORING MR. PETER WINDREM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Peter Windrem, who today retires after 45 years of practicing law in Lake County, California.

Throughout his career, Mr. Windrem mentored young lawyers and dedicated his time to supporting numerous community organizations. I wish him a happy retirement and hope he can spend more time with his wife, Kathleen Lyon Windrem; his children, Jessica and Matthew; and his grandchildren, Carson, Elliot, Ben, and Ellen.

Mr. Windrem graduated from Kelseyville High School and Raymond College at the University of the Pacific in California, before attending law school at the University of Virginia. After completing his law degree, Mr. Windrem served with the Peace Corps in Guatemala, reflecting his lifelong interest in community service.

An active citizen of Lake County, California, Mr. Windrem served as a key advisor to the Lake County Land Trust at the time of its formation in 1999, and continues to provide the group with advice and support to this day. He also participated in the successful campaign to designate the Berryessa Snow Mountain region as a national monument, and spearheaded the efforts to create Konocti County Park and hiking trails in Lake County.

For many years, Mr. Windrem has served on the Sutter Lakeside Hospital board and the board for People Services, Inc., a group that advocates for and provides services for disabled residents of Lake County. He is a founding member of many local organizations, including the Lake County Sierra Club, the Lake County Energy Council, and the Lake County Vintners.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his career, Mr. Windrem has generously offered his time and energy to support his mentees and staff, as well as the needs of Lake County residents. He contributed greatly to the legal community of California with his passion, high standards, and strong dedication to fairness. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

COMMEMORATING THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. KURT SCHRADER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the thirty-seventh anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. Congress enacted the TRA as a way to increase trade and investment opportunities with Taiwan while also strengthening regional security efforts. The TRA is the bedrock of our relationship with Taiwan and has served both countries well. Our friendship stretches back decades and remains as important as ever in these challenging times.

Having recently visited, I can attest to how special and close our two countries are. Nationally, Taiwan is our ninth largest trading partner. They are also our seventh largest source of international students; a group that contributed almost a billion dollars to the U.S. economy in 2014 alone. The impact to my home state Oregon is even larger. Taiwan is Oregon's sixth largest export market with over $1 billion in Oregon products annually. These numbers show how vital Taiwan is to the United States, especially given the importance of the Asia-Pacific region.

As that region of the world continues to grow, it is vital that we maintain our key relationships. The Congressional Taiwan Caucus recognizes the importance of this relationship and the need to continue to build upon the strong ties between our two countries. I am proud to join with over 200 members of the House as a part of that caucus. This bipartisan support is a testament to the strength of our friendship with Taiwan.

These facts help to show the importance of the U.S.-Taiwan friendship. I join with my colleagues to renew our support between the

government and people of Taiwan. Let us always remember the strong bond between us and move towards another thirty-seven years of success.

HONORING HOSKINS LEARNING CENTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Hoskins Learning Center of Batesville, MS.

Mrs. Lillie L. Hoskins, a woman of favor and faith, is a native of Batesville. MS. She has been an educator and Daycare Provider for over 35 years and is currently the owner and operator of the Hoskins Learning Center.

She graduated from South Panola High School in 1973 and later obtained a secretarial degree from Northwest Community College. In 2000, she obtained State credentials as an Early Childhood Education Director.

Mrs. Hoskins was born into a family where she was rooted in her faith in Christ. She is the daughter of the late George and Audrey Leland and the youngest girl of eight (8) children, but even as a young girl she knew she would someday spend her life working with children.

Mrs. Hoskins is the mother of two children, a daughter-in-law and has two grandchildren. Over the course of forty-two (42) years of marriage, Lawrence and Lillie have traveled and touched the lives of many people.

In 1979, Mrs. Hoskins prayed to God through faith and opened the first daycare, Magnolia Kindergarten, which she owned and operated until 2003. In 2003, she expanded her business to include infants and early toddlers. At this time she also changed the operating name to Hoskins Learning Center, as it is known today.

Mrs. Hoskins has touched the community and the lives of children in the city of Batesville in many ways, by opening her house and heart to train and tutor our children.

As owner and operator of Hoskins Learning Center, her goal has been to serve the children of Batesville and Panola County, preparing them all to be productive and responsible adults in a rapidly changing world. Since 1979, the daycare has had a 96 percent high school graduation rate, including several valedictorians, salutatorians and honor roll students, one of which went on to play football in the NFL.

For all of her outstanding accomplishments, Mrs. Hoskins is recognized as a trailblazer in Early Childhood Education, in the great State of Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Hoskins Learning Center for their commitment and dedication to the community.

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the achievements of an outstanding faith community, the Union Baptist Church, who are celebrating their ministry's 80th Anniversary of successful service to the community of Passaic on Sunday, April 3, 2016.

Eighty years ago the Union Baptist Church was established through the merger of two parishes in the city of Passaic NJ; the Ebenezer Baptist Church and Greater St. Paul Baptist Church on April 4, 1936. The combined Church membership was approximately 150 parishioners. The Church and its members worshipped Christ for 28 years at its 315 Oak Street and 30 Ann Street location. Due to an increase in membership the Union Baptist Church purchased 221 Myrtle Ave on September 27, 1964 and began to worship there.

The Union Baptist Church is located in a welcoming neighborhood. Current ministries within the church include traditional Sunday morning worship service, Bible study, Sunday school, voluntary work such as feeding the homeless on Saturday afternoons, Camp Union for the youth, and the services provided to the senior citizens. Union Baptist has always focused on spiritual leadership accompanied by a strong sense of commitment to community involvement. I know that their dedication will continue to grow.

In fact, the church has been an integral part of Passaic and the surrounding area for more than three quarters of a century. Its hallowed grounds have witnessed the miracle of newborn baptism, the holy matrimony of marriage as well as the somber rituals of burial. But most importantly, many lives have been changed by the people that have called the Church home since 1936. Indeed, the ministry has been a major part of the Passaic community and continues to serve all.

In this sense, the Union Baptist Church clergy and organizers have worked passionately to build many bridges between different groups within the faith community. At the forefront of this cause has been the church's many leaders throughout its history. The first among several leaders to grace the halls of the church was Reverend O.D. Henry—who served from 1936–1942.

His work undoubtedly laid a strong foundation for the others to follow, such as Reverend T.H. Alexander—who continued his predecessor's work until 1932. Reverend Ronald W. Johnson was the next to answer God's calling, and he devoted himself to the Union Baptist Church until 2010. Indeed, the Union Baptist Church has had many leaders throughout its years. Today, it is led by Reverend Kortney L. Haigler, who has inspired many to follow the path of faith and kindness.

It gives me pride to recognize the excellence of the Union Baptist Church, as well as a deep sense of satisfaction for their service to the residents of Passaic. I am grateful to represent the Church and its congregation within the 9th Congressional District of New Jersey.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of faith communities such as the Union Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, and the Union Baptist Church in celebrating their 80th Anniversary and recognizing their leadership, dedication and loyalty to serving the community.

RECOGNIZING TRI COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Tri County Community Action (TCCA) upon the occasion of its 50th Anniversary. The organization's decades of committed service have brought awareness to the issue of poverty and helped lessen its impact in Pennsylvania. Helping families to identify and achieve economic self-sufficiency has enabled TCCA to increase the standard of living for my constituents in Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry counties.

Founded in 1966 as a private, nonprofit, anti-poverty planning agency, TCCA has transformed into a dynamic organization with the mission of ''creating and maximizing the resources necessary for individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency throughout a multi-county region.'' Over the course of the last 50 years, TCCA has evolved into a network of programs offering specialized assistance to at-risk youth, low income families, and poverty-stricken neighborhoods. Some of their services include providing credit counseling for families that are struggling financially, arranging self-sufficiency guidance, engaging with youth mentor programs, and leading neighborhood revitalization efforts. The organization strives to help those stricken by poverty and financial instability on an individual and family basis, with personalized action plans for socioeconomic advancement.

The lives of many in my district have been greatly improved by the work of TCCA since its inception 50 years ago. In 2014 alone, TCCA served 12,997 families representing 38,629 individuals across three counties. They have brought to light the root causes of poverty that otherwise may not have been exposed, and subsequently worked to empower members of our community to create better lives for themselves. Through strategic identification, TCCA works to empower existing community programs that can act as vessels for combating poverty and its consequences.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent a district that is home to such an impactful, successful, and benevolent organization. I commend Tri County Community Action for its accomplishments in improving the lives of my constituents, family by family, and I wish them all of the best in their continued efforts. No one chooses to live in poverty, and the pathway out can be painfully difficult, but the good work of organizations like theirs help families

grow and see possibility, where before there was only despair.

HONORING MS. GINNY CRAVEN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Ginny Craven, founder of Operation Tango Mike, for her ongoing support for veterans, active duty troops. and her Lake County, California community.

Ms. Craven's family has been in Lake County since the 1800's, and it's these strong Lake County roots that helped to form her impressive commitment to serving her neighbors. Ms. Craven is a retired Senior Deputy Probation Officer for Lake County, and for 14 years, she has served as a volunteer firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician with the Lucerne Fire Department.

Ms. Craven has a long history of ensuring service members, veterans and their families receive the care and services they need. For the past 13 years, she has led Operation Tango Mike, an all-volunteer non-profit organization that has sent over 16,000 care packages to troops serving overseas.

Locally, Ms. Craven serves as an honorary member on the United Veterans Council of Lake County, the Military Funeral Honors Team of Lake County, and the Pearl Harbor Survivors of Lake County. Ms. Craven serves as a liaison for local Gold Star families and Operation Homefront, and provides publicity, fundraising, and social media expertise for multiple veteran organizations. Furthermore, Ms. Craven has put her organizational talents and volunteer connections to work in California to assist her community during and after the Rocky and Valley Fires, coordinating with the U.S. Army to bring an engineer battalion to Lake County for flood prevention operations.

In recognition of her numerous contributions to her community, Ms. Craven was named as the 2007 Lake County Friend of the Veteran, the 2008 Stars of Lake County Woman of the Year, and the Grand Marshal of the Lake County Fair in 2011. For her contributions to the United States Army, Ms. Craven received the U.S. Army Freedom Team Salute in 2010, and for her dedication to community service, she received the Byron Whipple Award from the Lake County Association of Realtors in 2012.

Mr. Speaker, Ginny Craven has dedicated countless hours to improving the welfare of deployed troops, veterans, and her neighbors, and it is fitting and proper that we honor her here today.

HONORING HARRISON BEFFA

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Harrison Beffa of Troop 586 from St. Louis, Missouri for earning the rank of Eagle Scout. The Eagle Scout Award is the highest honor attainable in Boy Scouts. Only a small percentage of Boy Scouts reach the level of Eagle Scout, which requires years of dedicated effort.

Community service, leadership, and family values are the most important aspects of scouting, and are essential to becoming an Eagle Scout. After overcoming a difficult battle with a brain tumor, Harrison grew from this struggle into the exceptional young man he is today. He is a proud American, a helpful, honorable citizen, a strong Christian, and a leader by example.

A native of Hillsboro, MO, Harrison's Eagle Scout project involved building wagons for summer campers at Camp Rainbow, a foundation that provides camping experiences free of charge to children undergoing cancer treatment as well as to survivors. Throughout his career as a Boy Scout, Harrison has earned 25 merit badges, camped for over 76 nights, completed over 75 hours of community service, was elected into the Order of the Arrow, and served in a number of leadership roles such as Patrol Leader, Scribe, and Order of the Arrow Representative.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate Harrison Beffa on his accomplishment of becoming an Eagle Scout before the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING UPPER KUTZ BARBER & STYLE COLLEGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable business, Upper Kutz Barber & Style College.

Upper Kutz Barber & Style College maintains the philosophy that their students come to them for; education, skill development, and career advancement. They believe in equal opportunity for all students, reinforced with training. Placement assistance has helped their students to become enterprising professionals.

The school has an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere which is free from threat of physical harm. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning. The school has an atmosphere of expatiation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of the essential barber cultural skills and that they have the capability to help all students attain that mastery.

The mission of Upper Kutz Barber & Style College is to train men and women: (1) To familiarize and instruct students in the proper and most current methods in all phases of barbering; (2) To make a living in the business world; (3) To become good citizens on both local and national levels; (4) To be able to recognize problems and procedures in business and industry from the viewpoint of both producer and consumer; (5) To assist students in suitable job placement; (6) To provide assistance and counseling to graduates; (7) To develop self-discipline, self-reliance, and self-direction; and (8) To enter the national work force as productive individuals.

Furthermore, the school has at least 1200 square feet of floor space, composed of two separate areas: The classroom and lecture area and the clinical/lab area, where services are practiced on school patrons. The clinical area is equipped with at least 10 modern built-in stations, 10 mirrors, 10 hydraulic chairs, 3 sinks, 3 dryer chairs, a dispensing area, and a reception area. This salon environment prepares students for professional operation in the career field.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Upper Kutz Barber & Style College for its dedication to serving and giving back to the community.

HONORING DANIEL H. LOPEZ

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the President of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NM Tech), Dr. Daniel ''Dan'' H. Lopez, on his retirement after serving as President for the past 23 years. Dan is a leader in education and a dedicated public servant, whose contributions to our state will last generations.

Throughout his career, Dan made serving our state his priority. Before entering academia, Dan had a long and distinguished career in public policy. He served as the Secretary of Employment and Security from January 1983 to August 1984 where he worked diligently to reduce unemployment in our state. Next, Dan served as the Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration until December 1986, where he oversaw all the cabinet agency budgets. From January 1987 through March 1993, he served as the Chief of Staff of the New Mexico State Senate Finance Committee.

In July 1993, Dan became the 16th President of the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology where he has served ever since. As President of a world class institution, he is responsible for overseeing roughly 2,000 students, more than 100 tenured faculty as well as 1,000 employees, and a yearly budget of approximately $170 million. Dan has worn this responsibility well and has served as President longer than any other President in NM Tech's history.

During his tenure, NM Tech's federal funding for research programs has grown from $20 million to over $123 million. Additionally, Dan secured $200 million for construction projects including the Altamirano Apartments and the Joseph A. Fidel Student Center, which will serve students for generations to come. Dan has also worked hard to recruit minority and female students to NM Tech. Before he became President, the school was only 10 percent Hispanic. Today, the Hispanic population has risen to 26 percent. Furthermore, over the past 20 years, NM Tech has witnessed a 33 percent increase in its female student population.

We need more leaders like Dan at our universities and colleges to educate and empower future leaders. John Steinbeck once said, ''I have come to believe that a great teacher is a great artist and that there are as few as there are any other great artists. Teaching might even be the greatest of the arts since the medium is the human mind and spirit.'' Without a doubt, Dan is such a teacher.

On June 30, 2016, Dan will retire after 23 years at the helm of NM Tech. Mr. Speaker, I wish Dan all the best in retirement and know that he will stay busy working hard to help others as he always has. Dan's dedication to his community and insistence on providing the best possible educational experience for his students is a manifestation of his outstanding character and desire to serve others. His accomplishments have touched thousands and will be felt for generations to come. Congratulations Dan.

RECOGNIZING DR. SEONG-HWAN KIM UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Dr. Seong-Hwan Kim on the occasion of his retirement from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture after 43 years of dedicated service. Dr. Kim's countless contributions to preserving and fortifying the agriculture, landscape, and environment in my district and state have enabled all Pennsylvanians to enjoy a pristine natural landscape and reliable food supply for years to come. His selfless donation of time to students in my district has fostered excitement in education and laid the foundation for the next generation of scientific breakthroughs.

Dr. Kim has dedicated his life's work to botany and plant pathology, having started as a research assistant in 1965 performing fungicide evaluation at the University of Delaware. Since then, he has gone on to become an adjunct professor at The Pennsylvania State University where he works in the Department of Plant Pathology helping mold the next generation of great scientists. Dr. Kim's profound effects on the plant biology community have not gone without recognition. As a member of the American Phytopathological Society since 1965, he has received the Distinguished Service Award and held numerous advisory and chairmanship positions within the organization.

Beyond his formal positions in academia, Dr. Kim has always understood the value of community engagement. High school, undergraduate, and post-graduate students in Dauphin County have all benefited from his selfless role as a mentor and advisor in various fields of study. He has also served as an interpreter for hospitals, emergency responders, and international professional exchange programs over the years in my district and beyond. Whether volunteering in his local congregation or spending valuable time with his family, Dr. Kim's values and principles permeate all aspects of his life.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Dr. Seong-Hwan Kim for his tireless dedication and scientific excellence with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Dr. Kim's career achievements have helped shaped regulatory plant pathology into a science-based discipline that forged the foundations of nationally and internationally recognized programs. It is with gratitude and appreciation that I recognize Dr. Kim on the occasion of his retirement and wish him all the best in his next endeavor.

HONORING MR. PATRICK GARCIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Patrick Garcia, who has served the citizens of Sonoma County with distinction in various volunteer efforts since he moved to the county in 1971.

Every December, the town of Sonoma selects an Alcalde, or honorary mayor, for the year. For 2016, the city has chosen Mr. Garcia for his unfailing efforts to improve the lives of those around him, particularly those who are less fortunate. Mr. Garcia has a long list of achievements in the community. In 1972, just a year after moving to Sonoma County, he established a tutoring and mentoring program for the children of migrant farmworkers, which he operated out of an office at Sonoma State University.

Mr. Garcia also championed and helped establish a low-income housing project in Sonoma County in 1979 that was the first of its kind. The project was funded two years later by Burbank Housing, and in 1985 residents moved into 12 new homes. More recently, Mr. Garcia served as the director of the local State Historical Parks Association. He can also be found on occasion at the Basque Bakery, giving away free bread to those less fortunate in the community.

Throughout his life, Mr. Garcia has been known for aiming high and getting it done. These attributes, when paired with Mr. Garcia's passion for charity work, have made him a highly effective force for good in Sonoma County.

Mr. Garcia's charitable spirit, tireless attitude, and love for his community are all traits to be admired. Mr. Speaker, Patrick Garcia has served the Sonoma County community with dedication and compassion for over thirty years, and it is therefore fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING JANE GOLDEN

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the arts, Jane Golden, founder and executive director of the City of Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program is this year's recipient of the Pearl S. Buck International 2016 Woman of Influence Award. Established in 1978, the award honors women who, like Pearl Buck, the Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winning author and humanitarian, distinguished themselves in their career, devotion to family and pursuit of humanitarian goals. Inspired by her example and direction, the city's Mural Arts Program created more than 3,800 works of public art through collaborations with community and city agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, the private sector and philanthropies. Known nationally and internationally as an expert on urban transportation through art, Jane Golden is recognized for overseeing award-winning public art projects. She developed innovative and rigorous programs in youth art, education, restorative justice and behavioral health that have made it possible for thousands to experience the power of art. Heartiest congratulations to Jane Golden upon receipt of this prestigious award and for a distinguished career and the creative vision and spirit that made it possible.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the Illinois Association of REALTORS on their 100-year anniversary of steadfast advocacy for the real estate industry and homeowners of Illinois.

The Illinois Association of REALTORS was founded in 1916 under the principle, as declared in their mission statement, ''To concern itself in all matters for the betterment and protection of real estate interests.'' Today, Illinois REALTORS has grown to become one of the largest trade associations in the state of Illinois representing more than 44,000 realtors. The association has significantly shaped the state's real estate industry with grassroots advocacy efforts such as the ''RVOICE'' program, fighting local mandates, and lobbying state legislative proposals that encourage and protect homeownership.

Their leadership and advocacy throughout Illinois has grown and become a model for other REALTOR associations in the country. Illinois REALTORS is the first to centralize the Local Governmental Affairs Director program under the state association providing professional development and resources to ensure statewide coverage. Among other accomplishments, Illinois REALTORS is credited with advocating for the first real estate license law that went into effect in 1922 and the Association continues to shape the law to best uphold industry professionalism.

The Illinois Association of REALTORS has become an important resource for realtors throughout the state of Illinois and the communities they serve. I extend my sincere congratulations to the Illinois Association of REALTORS for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to Illinois. I hope the

organization continues to grow and prosper for the next 100 years.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE NORMAN MINETA, RECIPIENT OF THE TOMODACHI AWARD

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Norman Mineta—former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Transportation—for being honored with the prestigious Tomodachi Award from the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Washington in recognition of his lifelong dedication to growing and supporting the Japanese-American community.

The Japanese word ''Tomodachi'' translates to ''friend'' in English, therefore it is fitting that the award seeks to recognize individuals or groups who have, through their work, demonstrated a commitment to celebrate Japanese and Japanese-American culture and to strengthen cultural ties between the United States and Japan.

The Honorable Norman Mineta has led a distinguished career in public service and is a fitting recipient of the Tomodachi Award. As a former Mayor of San Jose, California, he is recognized as the first Asian American mayor of a major U.S. city. Mr. Mineta was then elected to the United States House of Representatives, where he served from 1975 to 1995. During his time as a Congressman, he co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and was the driving force behind the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which formally apologized to the Japanese American community for the injustices committed during World War II.

In 2000, President Clinton appointed Mr. Mineta as the Secretary of Commerce, where he served until he was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve as the United States Secretary of Transportation. Not only is Mr. Mineta the first Asian American to hold a post in the presidential cabinet, but he is also one of only a few individuals to hold cabinet positions in both Republican and Democratic administrations.

As Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Mineta played a pivotal role during the chaos of the attacks on September 11, 2001. Without precedent, he made the decision to ground all civilian aircraft to ensure the safety of American lives. Following the attacks, Mr. Mineta was a major proponent of the creation of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and he fought against racial profiling and extra screening of Middle Eastern and Muslim passengers.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize The Honorable Norman Mineta for his relentless dedication to public service and to strengthening Japanese American culture. He continues to play an active role in engaging the relationship between Japan and the United States and serves as an inspiration for all working in public service.

CELEBRATING MRS. KAREN HOOVER'S RETIREMENT FROM THE DISTRICT 18 VFW LADIES AUXILIARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Mrs. Karen Hoover on the occasion of her retirement from the District 18 VFW Ladies Auxiliary after 31 years of selfless service. Karen's countless contributions in my district and state reflect her dignity, honor, and dedication to improving her community and the lives of all Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Karen joined the VFW Ladies Auxiliary in 1985, under the eligibility of her father, who served in the Army during WWII, and subsequently became a life member in 1999. She was elected the Auxiliary President in 1988 and served a total of eight terms. Since 2000, Karen has served as a Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President, Secretary, and in her current role as Treasurer. Auxiliary chairmanship positions she has occupied include Americanism, Membership, Cancer, and Safety. Karen has also acted as the District 18 Chief of Staff, Color Bearer, Extensions Chairman, and Treasurer for the Voice of Democracy program.

Beyond her formal positions in the VFW, Karen has always understood the value of community engagement. She is a member of Saint Paul's Lutheran Church, the American Legion, Women of the Moose, Relay for Life Team, United Way Fundraising, and Valley Lanes Bowling League. Karen is a lifetime member of the National Home for Veterans Children and was a life member of the Scotland School for Veterans' Children until its closure in 2009. Additionally, Karen is a dedicated supporter of the Halifax Cat Rescue Association. Whether volunteering at the food stand during the Shippensburg Community Fair or spending valuable time with her family, Karen embodies the values and principles that are essential to the functioning of a productive community. Her retirement will be accompanied by quality time with her daughter Nicole, who is also an active member of the Auxiliary, her two stepsons, and three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Mrs. Karen Hoover for her tireless dedication and excellence with the Millersburg VFW Ladies Auxiliary. Karen's career achievements have produced profound effects in our community and her example of selfless leadership will continue to inspire the next generation of Veterans' advocates. It is with gratitude and appreciation that I recognize Mrs. Hoover on the occasion of her retirement and wish her all the best in her next endeavor.

HONORING MR. PAUL F. WOXLAND

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Paul F. Woxland, and to recognize the nearly twenty-five years of service that he has given to our region as well as to the federal government in his work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Woxland began his service with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1991. Paul would eventually assume the role of Director of the Minneapolis Multifamily Asset Management Division and Satellite Office Coordinator. In this role, Mr. Woxland was tasked with the ultimate responsibility for physical, managerial, and financial condition of every HUD property within the region.

Mr. Woxland has also been instrumental in the development and improvement of housing in Minnesota and in our neighboring state of Wisconsin. In this capacity, he has overseen thousands of housing developments, working diligently to provide all families with access to one of our most basic yet most needed resources, a safe space to call home. To that end, Mr. Woxland has had a direct hand in over one thousand affordable housing projects in Minnesota, and over eight hundred projects in Wisconsin. This staggering number of developments has had an immeasurable impact upon the health of the region, and in partnership has provided permanent housing to over fifteen thousand households.

Mr. Woxland's work with the Interagency Stabilization Group has shown the true level of his commitment to providing housing for very low income residents. Mr. Woxland, through this collaborative organization, has succeeded in not only preserving but stabilizing affordable housing in Minneapolis for thousands of low-income residents. Some notable developments this partnership has preserved are Ebenezer Tower, Cecil Newman Plaza, and Riverside Plaza, a local landmark that is honored in the National Register of Historic Places.

To his colleagues and staff, he is regarded as the leader of one of the most effective and efficient HUD offices in the nation. Mr. Woxland leaves a legacy at HUD of tireless commitment and of service to our most underprivileged. For that he deserves our gratitude. He also leaves a legacy of touching countless lives and fostering inclusive communities throughout the region.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. JOSEPH SHER

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Joseph Sher, who passed away on March 24, 2016 at the age of 100.

Mr. Sher was born into a family of six children on July 27, 1917 in Krzepice, Poland. During World War II, Mr. Sher was sent to a series of Nazi concentration camps, where he and other Jewish men were put to work building roads. Many members of the crew perished from disease or were shot dead by the guards. Mr. Sher and his two brothers survived the atrocities of Nazi Germany; however they lost their parents and three sisters in the Treblinka death camp. Mr. Sher married Rachel Israelowicz in 1941. Like Mr. Sher, Ms.

Israelowicz survived a series of Nazi concentration camps. The two reconnected after the war when her husband found her working in a soup kitchen.

In 1949 Mr. Sher, a tailor by trade, was one of the first survivors of the Holocaust to reach New Orleans. He was part of the resettlement program offered by the United States for residents of Displaced Persons camps. He arrived with his wife and young son by ship at the Port of Embarkation, which happened to be on Poland Avenue in the 9th Ward.

After coming to New Orleans, Mr. Sher worked as a tailor. He worked eleven hours a day, six days a week at Harry Hyman Tailors. His clients included Elvis Presley, Fats Domino, Al Hirt, Chubby Checker and Chris Owens.

Mr. Sher spoke frequently about the Holocaust and his harrowing experiences as a slave laborer. Even though reliving the horror was excruciating, Mr. Sher said he kept doing it to fulfill this admonition from his mother: ''You should tell all the world what happened to us so that no one will ever forget.''

Mr. Sher's wife preceded him in death. His survivors include two sons, Martin Sher of Plano, Texas and Leopold Sher of New Orleans; and three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the life and legacy of Mr. Joseph Sher, a beloved husband, father, and son.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT LAKES CENTER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the 50th anniversary of the Great Lakes Center (GLC). For more than half a century, the Great Lakes Center has worked to improve the quality of the environment by providing the best possible science to decision makers concerned with the health and sustainability of our freshwater resources, with a primary focus on the Great Lakes and their watersheds.

The Center was established in 1966 when Howard Sengbush formed the Great Lakes Laboratory. The Great Lakes Center's field station is located on SUNY Buffalo State's waterfront campus along the Black Rock Channel. It is a multidisciplinary research, education, and service institute focused on advancing our knowledge and understanding of the largest body of freshwater on Earth.

The Great Lakes Center is the only institution within the SUNY system with a research field station physically situated along the water. The Center maintains a large fleet of research vessels dedicated to specific types of research and educational functions.

Over the last eight years under the Direction of Sasha Karatayev, the GLC saw sustained activity and productivity: over 80 research papers published, 240 presentations given at various state, national, and international meetings and 35 funded projects totaling over 14 million dollars. This living laboratory dedicated to the investigation of the ecology of the Great Lakes and its tributaries is staffed by research scientists, educators, technicians and professors with the Biology department. The Center provides opportunities to obtain Masters of Arts and Masters of Science degrees in Great Lakes Ecosystem Science.

The Great Lakes ecosystem is complex, dynamic, and fragile. The work conducted at the GLC informs policy makers, educators, community leaders, and environmentalists—and contributes toward effective stewardship and decision-making. As part of the Great Lakes Observing System, the GLC operates the only operating observation buoy in eastern Lake Erie. The GLC continuously works to reverse the damage of decades of abuse neglect of the Great Lakes. The Center continues to explore opportunities to expand its educational programs within the regional community.

In February of this year, I was proud to speak on the House Floor during Great Lakes Day to demonstrate the importance of Congress to continue to fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Since the creation of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in 2010, nearly $1.6 billion has been invested in projects to clean up the Great Lakes, the world's largest freshwater system. Locally, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative supports a number of initiatives including the restoration of the Buffalo River.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to once again speak about the Great Lakes with pride in this visionary, vitally important and internationally renowned center whose home base is my alma mater, Buffalo State College as its Gold Anniversary will be celebrated on April 15, 2016. Congratulations and deepest appreciation to all those who contributed to the past and present of this Center as the preservation, protection and promotion of the Great Lakes is of immeasurable importance to our future.

THANKING LANICE LAWSON FOR HER HUMANITY AND TENACITY

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Ms. Lanice Lawson for the support she has offered to the city of Flint and its residents during the Flint Water Crisis.

With nearly 15 years of experience in the nursing field as an RN, Ms. Lawson knew all too well the devastating effects of lead in the body. Although no longer a resident of Flint herself, she empathized with the struggles of those affected by the water crisis specifically the children. Out of concern for these children, she organized the Bottles for Babies initiative.

Ms. Lawson's original intent was to supply the school children of Flint with clean drinking water. The water in the Flint community schools had been completely shut off and the children were expected to bring their own bottled water to school each day. With the need for clean water being so great across the city, Bottles for Babies was later extended to include consistent home deliveries to the elderly and physically handicapped.

To date over $65,000 has been raised by the Bottles for Babies GoFundMe fundraiser and over a quarter of a million bottles of water have been delivered to Flint residents. This is the type of direct support the people of Flint need. The type of support the city of Flint is still not receiving from its own State government.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work done by Ms. Lanice Lawson and thank her for the service she has provided to the city of Flint.

HONORING JOE BORELLI

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staten Island resident Joe Borelli's dedication and leadership in serving the 51st Council District and the South Shore of Staten Island.

Born in Staten Island, Joe has always been very active in his community. He has been involved in the Staten Island Growth Management Task Force, the West Shore Light Rail Task Force, the Brookfield Landfill Citizens Advisory Committee, and helped spearhead the formation of the South Shore Local Development Corporation. Additionally, Joe was one of the key leaders in the successful fight to eradicate polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from public school buildings. Joe has consistently proven himself to be a leader in the movement to reduce taxes, tolls, and fees in New York City.

As a volunteer, Joe currently serves on the Development Board of St. Joseph by the Sea High School, as well as the Friends of the College of Staten Island, an organization that raises money for scholarships. Additionally, Joe assists dozens of non-profit, veteran's, and community organizations in accessing governmental grants. Joe has also helped raise private money for equipment to support handicapped Children at Mount Loretto, and has worked with the Verdino Foundation to bring a top quality Little League facility to the South Shore.

As an elected official, Joe previously represented his South Shore constituents in the New York State Assembly. He was the ranking minority member of the Assembly Cities Committee, and he also served on the Health, the Housing, the Transportation, the Mental Health, Banks, Education, and Energy Committees. From his time in the State Assembly to his current role as a city councilman, Joe has consistently been a staunch advocate against energy cost increases, as well as the common core curriculum.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Borelli has a remarkable history of dedication to serving the people of Staten Island. I thank him for all of his great work and I am proud to honor this great man who has consistently put others before himself, and continues to be such a positive influence on our communities.

HONORING DR. RUBEN ARMIÑANA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative HUFFMAN, rise to honor Dr. Ruben Armiñana as he prepares to retire after serving as the president of Sonoma State University for over two decades. We wish Dr. Armiñana and his wife, Marne Olson, a happy retirement with time to spend with their children and grandchildren.

Born in Cuba, Dr. Armiñana came to the United States as a child with the American-sponsored Operation Peter Pan, and settled in Texas with his aunt and uncle. He earned his Associates Degree from Hill Junior College in Texas, before going on to complete his B.A. and M.A. at the University of Texas at Austin. After completing his Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of New Orleans, he joined Tulane University's administration. While living in New Orleans, Dr. Armiñana also worked as a news anchor and consultant for a Spanish-language news program. Dr. Armiñana's career in education brought him to California in 1988, and, in 1992, Dr. Armiñana was appointed President of Sonoma State University.

While California State University presidents serve five years on average, Dr. Armiñana has served Sonoma State University for 24 years—an impressive tenure in which he has supported great developments for the university. While serving as President, Dr. Armiñana oversaw the expansion of the school's curriculum and student body, making Sonoma State University one of the most sought-out campuses in the California State University system.

Dr. Armiñana's work also led to many additions to the campus during his tenure. The Environmental Technology Center, completed in 2001, used sustainable materials and building techniques and serves as a model for innovative architecture. To accommodate a growing student body, Sonoma State University doubled the capacity of residential housing, offering students diverse housing options. Through Dr. Armiñana's vision, the University opened the Donald & Maureen Green Music Center and its acoustically-perfect Joan and Sanford I. Weill Hall.

An enthusiastic community servant, Dr. Armiñana shares his educational expertise by serving on the North Bay Leadership Council and the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California, and maintains memberships in the Hispanic Association of College and Universities and the Santa Rosa Chamber Business Education Leaders Committee. Dr. Armiñana has championed Sonoma State University's commitment to diversity with the President's Diversity Council, and established the successful Osher Lifelong Learning Institute to expand services for students over the age of 50.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Armiñana has dedicated over two decades to ensuring the success of Sonoma State University. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING WHITE'S CHAPEL M. B. CHURCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor White's Chapel M. B. Church, Jackson, Mississippi.

The White's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church was organized under the pastorage of Rev. D. J. White, in the home of sister Julia Taylor located at 734 South West Street in the year 1920. The officers were: Bros. Smith, Belt, Jones, Johnson, Outlaw, Jackson, Taylor and Carter. The mothers board was composed of the following members: Sis Julia Taylor, Sis Viola Taylor and Sis Viola Ward. After four years of hard work, by a group of dedicated members, their dream to build a church became a reality. After the resignation of Rev. White, Rev. Grove served until Rev. Caesar was called.

In 1934, Rev. R. W. C. Smith was called to pastor the White's Chapel Church and served for 36 loyal years. The following officers served under Rev. Smith's leadership: Brothers Seaton, Sparkman, Nelson, Sutton, Shear, Dorsey and Williams. Rev. Smith gave his all to pastoring the church.

After the passing of Rev. R. W. Smith in 1970, Rev. James A. Washington, Sr., was called to pastor the church in the year 1971. Under his pastorship and God's divine leadership the church grew bountifully. While he pastored, members of the Deacon and Trustee Board included: Deacon Shears, Dorsey, Williams, Caston, Jennings, Mix and Trustee Robert Morris.

Under the pastorship of Rev. James A. Washington, they were blessed to have moved from 728 South West Street to their present location, where they have been for the past three years.

Rev. Washington resigned in December of 1982. After weeks of prayers the Lord saw fit to send to them in February of 1983, the Rev. Nathanial V. Booker, a great Pastor and Leader. Under his leadership present members of the Deacon Board include: Deacon Hillman Shears, Robert Dorsey, Lewis Williams, Tillman Caston, Charlie Jennings, and Ronnie Mix.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing White's Chapel M. B. Church.

RECOGNIZING CLIFFORD AND ERMA CAMPBELL

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Clifford and Erma Campbell of Bucyrus, Missouri on receiving this year's Century Farm Award. Receiving this honor is no easy task, and the Campbells have exemplified hard work, perseverance, and dedication to the community throughout their lives. The farm was originally owned by Clifford's grandparents, Edward and Ethel Campbell. The farm was purchased in 1910 and has been in the family for 106 years.

Qualifying to be a Century Farm is a great feat. The farm must be in the same family for at least 100 consecutive years and the original tract of land has to be more than 40 acres. These farms represent an important part of American heritage, feeding generations upon generations and greatly improving the quality of life of Missourians. Their integrity and determination serve as an example of the great work that farmers do for our country.

I applaud the hard work and achievements of the Campbells and look forward to seeing what they accomplish in the future. It is my pleasure to recognize the Campbell family before the House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING NICKI GROSSMAN ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of a woman whose work has greatly benefited the South Florida community. Nicki E. Grossman served for 21 years as the head of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau and, before that, served as a commissioner to both the Broward County and Hollywood Commissions.

During her tenure at the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Broward County hospitality industry grew to employ more than 168,000 people and in 2015 generated $14.1 billion in revenue with over 15 million visitors.

Under her leadership, the tourism bureau won accolades for its innovative marketing campaigns and efforts to attract LGBTQ visitors. Nicki personally received awards recognizing her outstanding work in the tourism industry and her commitment to diversity.

In honor of her retirement and years of service to her community, I am pleased to recognize Nicki Grossman and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONOR FLIGHT OF NORTHERN COLORADO

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, in honor of America's heroic veterans, the Honor Flight Network conducts a twice annual Honor Flight ceremony to Washington D.C. in order to give our nation's heroes a day to visit and reflect at their war memorials. I am pleased to recognize that an Honor Flight took place on September 13, 2015 to honor the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans of Northern Colorado.

Honor Flight Northern Colorado was founded in 2008 by retired Army Colonel Stan Cass, and recently held its 15th Honor Flight. Honor

Flight Northern Colorado shares the Honor Flight Network's philosophy that America felt it was important to honor our veterans with dedicated memorials, and it should be equally important that these courageous veterans experience their memorial in person. We honor the brave men and women who were willing to lay down their lives in service to America, and Honor Flight Northern Colorado is part of that ongoing effort.

Mr. Speaker, those who participated in this flight are as follows:

From World War II: Paul Bechthold, Floyd Cooper, Raymond Ernest, Charles Hoelscher, Joseph Isley, Carl Johnson, Frederick Kaehler, Rex McFadden, Allan Meenen, William Ramsey, Donald Stephens, John Ulvang, Ceylon Weller.

From the Korean War: Robert Ault, Adolfo Benavides, Henry Bjorklund, Edwin Bowker, Albert Cain, Kenneth Creamer, Robert Crouch, Gerald Donnelly, Robert Eckhardt, Gary Eyre, William Ferguson, Elmer Fortin, Glen Geilenkirchen, James Gribben, Kent Grimsley, Walter Harris, Warren Hawkins, Carl Heufel, Eugene Hitchman, Neil Hoffman, Frank Hummel, Harold Jochum, Eldon Johnson, Roy Johnson, Michael Kennedy, Jimmie Kramer, Burman Lorenson, Robert McCauley, Gerald Meis, Robert Plick, Donald Reininger, Earl Reynolds, William Richardson, Royal Ryser, Merle Sapp, Raymond Schmitz, Ralph Sherman, Ned Steel, Vernon Sterkel, Richard Vandewalker, Richard Weinmeister, Donald Wiseman, Paul Zimmerman.

From the Vietnam War: Walter Amack, Ernest Anderson, Bruce Avery, Allen Brink, Wayne Burris, Gary Cain, James Christopher, Richard Cobb, Harold Colaizzi, Harold Collins, William Deivert, Russell Emmons, Michael Ferrell, Osia Fox, Robert Goodwin, Jerald Gossel, Josef Gruenwald, David Hallahan, Charles Ham, Calvin Hamilton, Jr., Arnold Hart, Leland Haskell, Charles Hixon, Michael Jacomet, Dale Jenkins, Doyle Jenkins, Jimmie Johnston, Patrick Kistler, Edward Lobb, Danny Lynn, Thomas Marlo, Manuel Martinez, John McCarthy, Edward Meikel, Marilyn Miyaima, Royce Modisette, Stephen Mulvihill, Charles Munroe, Rueben Olivas, Jr., Edward Olson, Ralph Otte, Stephen Pangrac, Jerry Park, Linda Plick, Thomas Pusel, Phillip Rangel, William Rhodes, John Robley, Rodney Rodriguez, Christopher Romero, Rueben Sanchez, Kenneth Sheppard, Wayne Shortridge, Walter Silva, Dennis Sindelir, James Spears, Thomas Steinbach, Robert Stolz, David Stout, Raymond Stroot, Floyd Taladay, Dennis Teter, Larry Uhlenkott, Robert Wheeler, Everett Winkler, William Vick, Merle Wood.

It is my distinct pleasure as the U.S. Representative of the 4th District of Colorado, to recognize the honor, courage, and sacrifice of these heroes, along with all members of America's Armed Forces. I thank them for their dedication and service to this nation.

DELANO STUDENTS MAKING A NATIONAL MARK

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Gretchen Ness, Naomi Thoelke and Liliana Schroedl, all students from Delano, Minnesota who have received national recognition for producing a documentary on water pollution.

These incredible seventh grade students entered their documentary into C-SPAN's national StudentCam competition, which is meant to highlight issues students hope to see the candidates discuss during the Presidential election.

All of the girls are pet owners and thought of this project because they were deeply concerned with how water pollution negatively affects animals and the environment. Among the thousands of documentaries that were submitted, their documentary was one of fifty chosen for a prize—true testimony to a job well done.

I thank Gretchen, Naomi, and Liliana for taking an interest in our country and the environment. Our students are the future of this nation, and these three young girls make me believe that the future of this nation is a bright one.

HONORING JERRY M. JUDIN

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Staten Island resident Jerry Judin's endless commitment to legal service in the public interest.

Jerry's career as a public servant began as a Ranger for the National Park Service assigned to Liberty Island and the Statue of Liberty. After a short stint serving the public safety as an Air Traffic Controller, Jerry returned to school, attending night classes at Brooklyn Law School. Following law school, Jerry spent two years working for the Richmond County Family Court, before transferring to the Richmond County Surrogate's Court in 1982.

For the last 34 years, Jerry has been a fixture in the Surrogate's Court, and in April of 2006 he was made the first ever Supervising Court Attorney in the Surrogate's Court. As he approaches retirement, he caps his career having served three Surrogates, the people of Staten Island, and the attorneys of Staten Island for a total of 36 years. He has served his community by lecturing before civic organizations on Staten Island, and the Richmond County Bar Association. He has taught Business Law at the College of Staten Island, as well as at Rutgers, while also serving on the Board of Directors of Meals on Wheels of Staten Island.

Mr. Speaker, it is right and proper that we recognize Jerry Judin's dedication to serving his community and the legal profession. I thank him for all of his great work and I am proud to honor this great man who has consistently put others before himself.

HONORING EYESHINE CREATIVE ARTS COMPANY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable minority business, EyeShine Creative Arts Company of Clinton, Mississippi and the great leadership it is under.

EyeShine Creative Arts Company is a locally owned and operated Christian faith-based dance company and ministry that provide quality education and training for multiple dance disciplines. ECAC serves as a conduit to stage productions, TV commercials, dance competitions, and other events that allow dancers to showcase their God-given talents. EyeShine offers workshops, after school programs, Spring and Summer camps, and fitness focus classes-''Fit to Dance'', that broaden the creative experiences of dancers while developing levels of competence and confidence. The goal is not only to provide quality dance education, but also to educate, empower, and inspire the minds of students in a Christian environment.

Shawuanna, the founder of EyeShine Creative Arts Company, started her dance journey at the age of 4 years old. By age 6, she was performing with the ''Eye of the Tiger'' dance company founded and produced by Beverly Branson and her sister, a stage and television actress, Dr. Tonea Stewart. Shawuanna began performing in stage productions by the age of 7. In 1985, she was selected for the Academic and Performing Arts Complex (APAC) program, where she studied ballet, modem, and jazz at Ballet Mississippi. After experiencing traumatic situations as a teenager, Shawuanna turned to dance as a creative outlet and spiritual solace. She decided to focus on becoming a more diversified dance artist, expanding her studies from acrobatic creative dance, to more contemporary dance styles, such as: jazz, hip hop, Middle Eastern, and inspirational.

In 2004, Shawuanna relocated to Atlanta, Georgia and began working within the burgeoning entertainment industry, working with various, well-known R&B and Hip Hop artists throughout the metro Atlanta area. It was in Atlanta where she began to hone her craft as a choreographer and develop essential relationships and knowledge of the dance & entertainment industry. Inspired by FAITH and always the artist and educator at heart, in 2010, Shawuanna founded Eyeshine Creative Arts Company.

Today, in addition to operating EyeShine Creative Arts Company and non-profit organization, EyeShine Inc., Shawuanna, choreographs and ministers with the National Baptist Convention, Inc. USA dance ministry, ministers to General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Mississippi, instructs dance for Fairview Learning Academy, Agape' Phaze II

Academy, Girl Scouts of Greater MS. She also choreographs and ministers for church home, Grace Inspirations, various community events, and conferences locally and throughout the southeastern region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing EyeShine Creative Arts Company for its dedication to serving our great state of Mississippi and our country.

RECOGNIZING USNS ''BRUNSWICK'' AND BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA'S INVOLVEMENT DURING WORLD WAR II

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brunswick, Georgia's involvement in the United States' World War II effort and, in turn, the newly commissioned United States Naval Ship (USNS) *Brunswick.*

Soon after the United States' entrance into World War II, German U-Boats began to sink American cargo ships at an unprecedented rate—stalling America's war machine and creating a severe crisis for American ships at sea.

In 1942, to curtail the crisis, Vice Admiral Emory S. ''Jerry'' Land contacted the J.A. Jones Construction Company of Brunswick, Georgia, with a request to build the fastest cargo ships of the time. Although J.A. Jones was a ''building'' contractor company with no previous experience in building sea-going vessels, J.A. Jones unbelievably met the challenge.

The company produced 99 ships in 2 years. In December 1944, the U.S. Navy requested 6 ships built that month and J.A. Jones responded by building 7. The J.A. Jones employees even worked through Christmas Day and denied receiving a payment for the extra ship they built.

I rise today to recognize these brave men and women from Brunswick, Georgia, who kept America's war machine running through World War II as well as the USNS *Brunswick*, which was named in honor of the men and women of Brunswick's effort during the war. I wish the sailors of the USNS *Brunswick* the best in living up to the name of their ship.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ART PING LEE FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Art Ping Lee on his outstanding contributions to Chinese communities throughout the United States and his leadership in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Mr. Lee immigrated to the United States from the Guangdong Province of the Republic of China in 1936. He saw the toll that World War II took on Chinese citizens in the United States who were prevented from being reunited with their families due to U.S. immigration laws and immigrant quota restrictions. As a founding member of the National Chinese Welfare Council in 1957, he campaigned vigorously for the lifting of limitations on immigration quotas. As a result, 40,000 Chinese immigrants were allowed to enter the U.S. every year. Mr. Lee has also worked tirelessly to enhance and strengthen the important relationship between the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Mr. Lee, who celebrates his 102nd birthday this year, continues to be an active member of the community. He is a Senior Advisor to the Overseas Community Affairs Council of the Republic of China (Taiwan), which is a cultural, educational, economic and informational exchange organization between Taiwan and overseas communities. He is also an Honorary Elder of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Washington, DC and an Honorary Elder to The Lee Family Association in the United States.

Mr. Lee has been recognized for his work as the recipient of the Kuomintang Cathy Medal and the Hua Kuang Medal, First Class, which is awarded by the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) to Chinese who have made special contributions in overseas Chinese affairs.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Art Ping Lee on his service to Chinese communities across the United States. His efforts have made a difference to countless people and I am grateful to him for his service to others.

HONORING MR. MIKE VOORHEES

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Mr. Mike Voorhees, of Sonoma County, California, who is retiring after forty-one years of work with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Voorhees has worked in public service for his entire career. While spending thirteen years on the bench as Judge Pro Tem for the Sonoma County Superior Court, he also served as Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of the California Reserve Peace Officers Association. He spent the last eleven years working as Chief Financial Officer of the Sonoma County Reserve Deputies Association. Mr. Voorhees attained the rank of reserve captain in the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department in 1993, and has held that position ever since.

Mr. Voorhees has received many commendations for his work throughout his career. He was selected as the California Reserve Peace Officers Association 2004 Reserve Peace Officer of the Year, received the Sonoma County Sheriff's Distinguished Service Award in 2003, and earned an Award of Merit from the Santa Rosa Police Department in 2000. Mr. Voorhees has spent four decades volunteering his time, effort and resources to keeping the people of Sonoma County safe, and his commitment to public service is driven by his unwavering commitment to doing the right thing, time and time again. The community admires Mr. Voorhees for his integrity and congeniality and for always supporting those in need.

Mr. Speaker, Mike Voorhees has spent forty-one years doing his part to keep Sonoma County safe. The people of Sonoma County have benefitted greatly from his lifelong dedication to public service. For this reason, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

CONGRATULATING ROBERTA LYBYER AND THE LYBYER FAMILY

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Roberta Lybyer and the Lybyer Family of Cabool, Missouri on receiving this year's Century Farm Award. Receiving this honor is no easy task, and the Lybyers have exemplified hard work, perseverance, and dedication to the community throughout their lives. The farm was originally owned by Andrew S.P. Lybyer, the grandfather of Roberta's late husband, Floyd Lybyer. It was purchased 124 years ago on March 7, 1892.

Qualifying to be a Century Farm is a great feat. The farm must be in the same family for at least 100 consecutive years and the original tract of land has to be more than 40 acres. These farms represent an important part of American heritage, feeding generations upon generations and greatly improving the quality of life of Missourians. Their integrity and determination serve as an example of the great work that farmers do for our country.

I applaud the hard work and achievements of the Lybyers and look forward to seeing what they accomplish in the future. It is my pleasure to recognize the Lybyer family before the House of Representatives.

HONORING JOHN K. BOYLE

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staten Island resident John Boyle's endless commitment as an educator serving the people of New York.

John is a native Staten Islander, and has dedicated his life to helping others. Upon his graduation from St. John's University, he immediately went to work at Elias Bernstein Intermediate School. After six years teaching, he was promoted in 2005 to Assistant Principal at Totten Intermediate School 34 and in 2011, he became the school's Principal. As the head of I.S. 34, John spearheaded a renaissance in the school's approach to educating the youth

of the 21st century, which allowed Totten to enter the upper echelon of schools in New York City. A lifelong learner dedicated to his profession and a role model for our youth, John made the time to continue his own studies while serving as Assistant Principal, earning his first Masters in Secondary Education from the College of Staten Island in 2003 and his second Masters in Educational Administration from Touro College in 2005.

Based upon his demonstrated excellence, John was nominated by his peers to the Council of Supervisors and Administrators Executive Board where he serves as an advisor to the Executive Vice President. In 2013, John was asked by Chancellor Farina to be one of only 18 school leaders from across New York City to be a part of her Learning Partners Pilot Program. Last year, he was designated a Model Principal by the Chancellor for his work as a host principal in the Learning Partners Program. In June of 2015, John was chosen along with seven other New York City principals to expand the work of the Chancellor's Learning Partners Program into the Learning Partners Plus Program for which was named a ''Master Principal.''

Mr. Speaker, John Boyle's dedication to serving and educating our youth epitomizes the highest qualities we seek in our educators and community role models. I thank him for all of his great work and I am proud to honor this great man who has consistently put others before himself.

RECOGNITION OF AGRILIFE RESEARCH STATION

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100 year anniversary of the Agrilife Research Station in Sonora, Texas.

The Agrilife Research Station, also known as Sub-station 14, was founded in 1916 with the support of local ranchers and the Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers' Association. The station's first task was to find the cause of the bighead cattle syndrome, and other diseases harmful to the livestock industry. Their current projects include researching noxious plant control, prescribed fires, and wildlife management.

The contributions of the Agrilife Research Station have been invaluable to farmers, ranchers, and the state of Texas over the course of the past 100 years. There is no question that the station will continue to excel under its present leadership. I am proud to represent such an important pillar of Texas agriculture and to congratulate its dedicated staff and supporters on 100 years of innovation, research, and success.

HONORING WILLIAM N. TUNNELL, JR. ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important contributions of Mr. William ''Bill'' Tunnell, Jr. Bill Tunnell recently retired after almost 20 years as Executive Director of the USS *Alabama* Battleship Memorial Park in Mobile, Alabama.

Bill Tunnell's impact on Southwest Alabama and our entire state cannot really be put into words. He has succeeded in transforming Battleship Memorial Park into one of Alabama's premier tourist destinations and a top landmark along the entire Gulf Coast. Throughout the process, he has always kept the focus on inspiring patriotism and honoring those who have served our country.

Bill moved to Mobile in 1979, where he worked in the hotel and hospitality industry until 1991. It was that year that he took over as marketing and public relations director for Battleship Memorial Park. In 1997, he was named executive director.

Through busy crowds, hurricanes, and economic downturns, Bill Tunnell's steady leadership helped ensure the USS *Alabama* and Battleship Memorial Park remains well maintained and open to visitors. Most recently, Bill successfully organized and planned events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Battleship Memorial Park.

Among his many awards and honors, Bill Tunnell was the first ever inductee of the Alabama Tourism Hall of Fame, winner of the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce Community Leader of the Year award, and recipient of the Alabama Restaurant Association and Alabama Hospitality Association's Tourism Promoter of the Year award. He was named an ''Honorary Veteran'' in 2011 by the South Alabama Veterans Council, who partnered with Mr. Tunnell on countless projects and events. These are just a handful of his many honors and achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to call Bill Tunnell a friend. He is a truly outstanding individual who has never hesitated to put others above himself. Bill recently said that it is not actually the ship that makes Battleship Memorial Park. Instead, he said it is ''the heart and soul of all the people who've attached themselves'' to the ship. No one has put more of their ''heart and soul'' into the ship and the park than Bill Tunnell.

So, on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to wish Bill and his wife, Cynthia, all the best in retirement, and I hope Bill gets to spend some quality time working on his golf game. Thank you for your service and dedication to our community, our veterans, and the State of Alabama.

HONORING BEVERLY CLEARY ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, today, treasured children's author Beverly Cleary turns a remarkable 100 years old. Born in McMinnville, Oregon, Beverly Cleary later moved to Northeast Portland. Her neighborhood there, especially Klickitat Street, became the setting for her series featuring Henry Huggins, Ramona Quimby, and countless other characters who continue to hold a special place in the bookshelves and hearts of parents, children, and librarians around the world.

Cleary's books spoke to generations of children from Oregon, across the country, and around the globe. Many of her stories were inspired by her own childhood in Northeast Portland, and almost everyone can identify with the imaginative Ramona or the studious Beezus—or a little bit of both. Although Cleary's stories evolved as our nation changed, her stories about a family working hard to make ends meet or facing the challenges of adolescence are timeless in their representation of childhood for so many young people.

Cleary's love for her characters and respect for her young audience are evident in the national traditions she created. I am proud to honor her 100th birthday today, and look forward to watching her legacy continue to grow and flourish as she inspires a new generation of readers.

HONORING BETTY HARTY

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staten Island resident Betty Harty's contributions to our community and tireless service to great causes.

A native of Staten Island, Betty has been heavily involved in the Boy Scouts organization, which she joined roughly forty-nine years ago. Betty served as Den Mother and a Den leader Coach for Pack Eight, Messiah Lutheran Church for twelve years, before becoming an Advancement Chairperson, a position she held for thirty-nine years. Additionally, Betty served as Pack Eight and Group Eight Commissioner for twenty years, and is now a member of Troop 26—Castleton Hill Messiah Church.

Betty also has been a member of the District Committee. She served as the Cub Roundtable and Cub Adult Treasury. Betty also chaired the Cub Pow Wow Treasury for Staten Island Council. Currently, Betty is on the Advancement Committee for Staten Island Council for Eagle Scouts. She has been on the Staten Island Council Committee for seventeen years.

Betty has been active with parent-teacher associations at P.S. 36, Bernstein Intermediate and Tottenville High. She was a leading volunteer for five years at P.S. 36, a library

volunteer, and taught in the after school center. Betty was team mother for the South Shore Little League and the Babe Ruth League. She has also been engaged in teaching Sunday school.

Twenty years ago, Betty became involved with the Have a Heart Foundation, the Staten Island based organization that helps raise financial aid for people to fund therapy treatments not covered by insurance. This wonderful foundation helps mitigate some of the expensive medical costs in New York, and is a member of the Staten Island Children's Campaign.

Mr. Speaker, Betty Harty's dedication to serving our community and positively influencing our youth is the essence of a model humanitarian. I thank her for all of her great work and I am proud to honor this great woman who has consistently touched the lives of people across Staten Island.

HONORING DON AMADOR

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Mr. Amador for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Mr. Amador. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Mr. Amador to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HON. KURT SCHRADER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th Anniversary of the Oregon Air National Guard.

The Oregon Air National Guard was born on April 18, 1941, when Oregon's own Major G. Robert Dodson sent the celebrated message, ''We've got people, we've got a place, and we're ready!'' to the National Guard Bureau and was allowed to activate the 123rd Observation Squadron. For the next seventy-five years the Citizen Airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard have been serving Oregon and the Nation with distinction.

During World War II, the 123rd Observation Squadron patrolled the skies of the Pacific Northwest protecting our nation.

Several years later Oregon Air National Guard pilots continued to serve our nation by flying over one thousand combat missions during the Korean War.

As the Cold War took shape, the Citizen Airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard stood up to protect the Pacific Northwest. Since 1958, they have been on air defense alert twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week patrolling the skies from northern California to the Canadian border.

On September 11, 2001, the citizen-airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard were among the first in the air. After ensuring the security of our homeland they again went overseas to provide vital support to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Seventy-five years after their founding the Oregon Air National Guard continues to protect the skies of the Pacific Northwest, support our Nation's mission abroad, and stand ready to provide disaster relief for the great state Oregon and our Nation.

Today the Oregon Air National Guard is made up of 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, and the Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Oregon.

Oregonians are proud of the hallowed legacy of our citizen airmen and airwomen. I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Oregon Air National Guard and honoring those who have and continue to serve their country and the great state of Oregon.

HONORING DAMIAN MURRIEL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Damian Murriel.

It sounds strange, but owning and operating a funeral home has been a childhood dream for Mr. Damian Murriel—at least it has been ever since he started working in the business.

Damian Murriel began his first job in a funeral home at the age of 16. Then a sophomore in high school, Damian Murriel performed various custodial services at Cook's Funeral Home. When he graduated from Forest Hill High School in 1994 he left for Gupton-Jones School of Mortuary Science. Two years later after he completed his schooling and became a licensed funeral director and embalmer, he began traveling, doing internships and apprenticeships in other states, including brief stints in Illinois and Indiana. In 2000 he left for a job as funeral director of Gregory B. Levett and Sons Funeral Home in Atlanta, Georgia, where the wake for TLC's Lisa 'Left Eye' Lopes was held.

On April 17, 2003 Damian Murriel's life-long dream to own and operate a funeral home became a reality. ''I never lost sight of what I was pursuing.'' Damian Murriel said. ''I want to clean up the area and enhance the community with the funeral home.'' Murriel said. Murriel's motto is: ''Serving Families in Their Time of Need.'' He is a member of the Mississippi Funeral Directors and Morticians Association.

RETIREMENT OF WALTER G. WARGACKI

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the outstanding achievements of Walter G. Wargacki—the great Mayor of Wallington, NJ—who celebrated his retirement on April 1, 2016.

Walter Gerald Wargacki, Jr. was born on April 26, 1938, to Walter John Wargacki and Mary Dancsisin Wargacki. His service to the public began as early as 1965 when he joined the Wallington Fire Department, Park Roe Hose Company #3. He eventually was promoted to the rank of Fire Chief in 1986 for his outstanding service in the line of duty.

Yet, his service to the public was not limited to emergency services. In the same year he joined the Wallington Fire Department, he was also elected to the Wallington Board of Education where he eventually served as Board President for three terms. During his tenure, he led the way in evaluating accreditation for the Township's high school system. Furthermore, he planned the renovation and replacement of the century-old Lincoln School. Mr. Wargacki's dedication to this task was no less exemplary than his outstanding service as a fire fighter.

Upon completion of his tenure as Fire Chief and as a member of the Board of Education, Mr. Wargacki served proudly as the Mayor of Wallington for over 24 years. Through his hard work and dedication, he improved the Township of Wallington both aesthetically and communally. For instance, he oversaw the construction of new parks and recreation

areas such as Liberty Crossing Park and Centennial Field. Undoubtedly, these and other initiatives helped create the welcoming environment for families that Wallington is known for today.

Furthermore, he designated a newly constructed facility for the Wallington Emergency Squad—a testament to his years of service and dedication to emergency services. Indeed, under his leadership, the Township of Wallington has been in extraordinarily capable hands, and his leave from office will not go unnoticed amongst members of the community.

I have the great honor of representing the residents of Wallington in Congress and it gives me great pride to recognize one of their native sons who has spent his life serving the public. I can say with personal knowledge that Walt is not only a good leader, but also a good friend—the kind who can be counted on both in good times and in bad times.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of public servants such as Mayor Walter G. Wargacki of Wallington.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, denizens of Wallington, family and friends, all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing the work of Mayor Walter G. Wargacki.

CONGRATULATING RONALD AND BARBARA MCCALL

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ronald and Barbara McCall of Mountain Grove, Missouri on receiving this year's Century Farm Award. Receiving this honor is no easy task, and the McCalls have exemplified hard work, perseverance, and dedication to the community throughout their lives. The McCall family originally purchased the farm 101 years ago on February 11, 1915.

Qualifying to be a Century Farm is a great feat. The farm must be in the same family for at least 100 consecutive years and the original tract of land has to be more than 40 acres. These farms represent an important part of American heritage, feeding generations upon generations and greatly improving the quality of life of Missourians. Their integrity and determination serve as a prime example for farmers across the nation.

I applaud the hard work and achievements of the McCalls and look forward to seeing what they accomplish in the future. It is my pleasure to recognize the McCalls before the House of Representatives.

HONORING FRANCIS HARTY

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staten Island resident Francis Harty for his positive contributions to our community.

Francis was born and raised in Westerleigh, Staten Island. He graduated from Port Richmond High School and went on to work at Procter and Gamble Co. Francis has been married to his high school sweetheart, Betty, for almost sixty-one years, and they have three children together.

When Francis' son wanted to join the Cub Scouts, he also joined the Boy Scouts at the Messiah Lutheran Church. He served twenty-seven years as Scoutmaster and had one hundred Eagle Scouts in Group Eight. Francis retired as Scoutmaster in 2000, but continued to work on all District events, as well as the Council Dinner and the Fall Outing. Francis held several positions on the District Committee and the Staten Island Council. He has had an extensive influence on the programs by being heavily involved in various training programs that lay the foundations for the Boy Scouts organization's programs.

Francis has been awarded many honors to recognize his services. He has received the Award of Merit, the Silver Beaver, the Ten Mile River Award, The Good Scout Award, the Paul Intermediate School Service to Youth Award, and the Staten Island Museum Circle of Friends for Youth Volunteerism in 1994.

Outside of scouting, Francis was the Vice President for the Have a Heart Foundation for twenty-four years. He helps run the annual Golf Outing and the five kilometer race to raise funds for patients with therapy needs and parents with large medical insurance bills for their children. Due to the foundation's affiliation with the Staten Island Children's Campaign, he also works on their events including Breakfast with Santa. Additionally, Francis managed and coached in the South Shore Little League and the Babe Ruth League.

Mr. Speaker, Francis Harty's dedication to providing a role model for youth and positively impacting his community is remarkable. I thank him for all of his hard work and I am proud to honor this great man who has been such a strong influence on the residents of Staten Island.

HONORING STEVE CASTRO

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robstown baseball coach Steve Castro, who passed away in October of last year.

Steve Castro was a pillar of the community who taught baseball to hundreds of kids from 1975 to 2010 at Robstown High School. Castro taught more than the game of baseball; he taught his team the meaning of hard work and the meaning of teamwork.

Under Castro's coaching, the Robstown baseball team drew crowds of more than 3,000 people. He brought families and friends together every time there was a game.

In 2014, Castro was entered into the Texas High School Baseball Association Hall of Fame, the fifth Hispanic coach to receive the honor.

This year's Cotton Picker Baseball season will be officially dedicated to the man who brought fans and players together for 35 years.

Steve Castro will be remembered as a legend by the students he taught and the families he brought together every night for a game.

HONORING SARAH HUSBY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Ms. Husby for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Ms. Husby. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Ms. Husby to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

HONORING MILTON GASTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON
OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable civil servant, Mr. Milton Gaston.

Born in Hollandale, Mississippi, Milton Gaston was nurtured and reared by his parents, the late James and Luella Gaston, in Glen Allen, Mississippi. He is the seventh born of eleven children to his parents. Gaston proudly admits that his parents reared them to be a close-knit family and his siblings and he remain so today.

Milton Gaston was educated in the Glen Allen Public Schools.

Understanding the meaning of family as so taught by his parents, Mr. Gaston met and married Ms. Alice Watts. To their union, six (6) children and ten (10) grandchildren are being shaped for this most extraordinary world.

To support his family, Mr. Gaston began work with the Washington County Sheriff's Department on January 20, 1986 under the leadership of the late Sheriff Harvey Tackett, Sr. In July of that same year, Milton Gaston, Sr., became the only civilian sent to the Jackson Police Academy in Jackson, Mississippi to be certified and deputized under Sheriff Tackett's administration. Because of his work ethics, Greenville Optimist Club named him as Deputy Sheriff of the year in 1989.

On November 3, 2003, Washington County elected Milton Gaston, Sr. as Sheriff of Washington County, Mississippi. At the age of 42, he was the first African American in this county to hold this distinguished position. County Court Chancellor Vernita King-Johnson swore him in on January 5, 2004 to uphold this position to serve and protect the citizens of Washington County, Mississippi. Currently, Sheriff Gaston is in his third term, serving more than twenty-nine (29) years in law enforcement with a plethora of training on the state and federal level. Additionally, he has initiated and overseen a Juvenile Justice Intervention/Prevention Program that was developed to rebuild at risk youth between the ages of 12–15. The program was called ''Biggest S.U.C.C.E.S.S.,'' which is an acronym for Students Unanimously Conceiving Confidence & Excellence in Skills and Success. The program was grant funded for one year. Currently, under his leadership, the TRIAD of Washington County was established in 2012. This organization is comprised of senior citizens working with law enforcement to address their safety needs in the community. It is also state funded and has been approved for the current year's funding.

Sheriff Gaston's staff is comprised of approximately 120 people between Washington County Sheriff's Department and Washington County Regional Correctional Facility—all of whom he requires to help make Washington County, Mississippi a safe place for all of its citizens.

As if he is not constantly busy enough, Sheriff Gaston devotes his time and servitude as a member of New Hope First Baptist Church, Vice-President of the Usher Board, a member of the male choir, a member of the 100 Black Men of the Mississippi Delta, a member of the Lake Vista Masonic Lodge Number 46, a member of the Serene Lodge Number 567, a member of the NAACP, and a board member of the Boy's and Girl's Club.

Yet, after committing himself to all of this, his Lord, his family, his career, and his affiliations, he still manages to conceive other ingenious ideas to help citizens in our area. He is indeed, ''The Peoples' Sheriff,'' and he considers it a pleasure to serve the citizens of Washington County, Mississippi by striving to make it a safer place in which to live.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sheriff Milton Gaston for his dedication to serving others and giving back to his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ROOSTERTAIL AND MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS OF CREATING MEMORIES AND STORIES

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Tom and Diane Schoenith who today are observing fifty years of memories, entertainment and stories at their beloved Roostertail, a well-known institution in Southeast Michigan for gathering people of all walks of life for performances, concerts, celebrations, remembrances, rituals and traditions. Unique, colorful and with a special style carrying this couple through the decades, Tom and Diane have distinctive personas combined with big hearts and caring souls that have made them a memorable part of Detroit's and Michigan's history.

Since its opening in 1958, the Roostertail became a gathering place for people to celebrate important occasions; events of all kinds that created incredible memories as people gathered for concerts, boat races, premieres, charity events, nightclub evenings, weddings, anniversaries, galas, jubilees, birthdays, elections, solemn moments . . . special occasions of all kinds. People from the region and the country gathered at this beautiful venue located on the Detroit River off of Jefferson Avenue in the City of Detroit. Governors, mayors, local officials, celebrities, business leaders and community members looked forward to the occasions being feted or the evening out. When first founded, it was a happening place, and its path would follow the peaks and valleys that the region itself has experienced over the years.

The Roostertail has witnessed the history of the region and has been the scene of many firsts, including the opening night for the Supremes and Bobby Darin. The venue has also hosted many of the greats over the years such as Tony Bennett, Eric Clapton, The Rolling Stones, and Aretha Franklin. From the beginning, everyone was welcome through their doors, and they gave a helping hand to many who just needed someone to care or believe. In the 60's, when the Motown sound was just beginning, they created Motown Mondays which starred the Temptations, Marvalettes, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Martha Reeves, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson and the Spinners among many others. Tom and Diane helped to break down barriers during the civil rights era, making it clear there was always a place there for those who needed it and providing the platform for those who needed a simple break.

Tom and Diane Schoenith, the owners of the Roostertail, have lived through the ups and downs of Detroit and Southeast Michigan and never doubted, gave up or quit. Whether it was the riots, recession, or bankruptcy, or the rise of Motown, Motor City, and the ebbs and flows of the American middle class, they have witnessed it all. After the Detroit Riots in 1968, people were afraid to come into downtown Detroit. Tom and Diane knew they had to help bring them back and bring their customer base back as well. They organized parties with performers everyone knew and drew people back. The young people came—and others followed.

Beyond the memories and moments of the Roostertail itself, Tom and Diane have also planned and led many events and parties over the years. Many were colorful, vibrant and flashy—unique and one of a kind. Tom and Diane have been the first call for many of the most prominent non-profits and cultural institutions in Metro Detroit, helping the DIA, WTVS, the Children's Hospital of Michigan, the Detroit Symphony Opera, Gleaners, the Salvation Army, and the NAACP. These groups and more owe a thank you to Tom and Diane for their creativity, memory-creating events and dedication to our community over the years.

Tom is a member of Detroit's Schoenith family, well known for decades for being successful, interesting and sometimes controversial. His twin Jerry is well known for American boat racing with hydroplanes. Together—they are a part of Michigan's unique history.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring Tom and Diane Schoenith and the Roostertail as they celebrate this evening. It is my sincere hope that they will continue to bring smiles for many years to come.

CELEBRATING GENENTECH'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JACKIE SPEIER
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Genentech in South San Francisco—also known as the birthplace of biotechnology. Forty years ago, on April 7, 1976, Herb Boyer and Bob Swanson decided to start the first biotech company, Genentech, and sparked an industry that continues to push the boundaries of science today.

What began as a conversation over a couple of beers at a Union Street watering hole has evolved into an industry that has helped billions of people, and has ushered in new frontiers of research—such as personalized healthcare and cancer immunotherapy—that have fundamentally changed the way certain serious diseases are treated.

During the past six years alone, Genentech has brought to market nine new treatments for patients who needed them. These include the first FDA-approved medicine for people with advanced forms of B-Cell Carcinoma, the most common skin cancer, the first biologic for cystic fibrosis, the first personalized medicine that treats women with HER2+ breast cancer, and the first drug to be approved using FDA's breakthrough therapy designation—a treatment for Chronic Lymphocytic Lymphoma (CLL).

And like all of biotech, Genentech has continued to evolve over the past 4 decades. They have invested in uncharted areas of science, expanded their manufacturing capabilities, grown into a global organization, and partnered with other companies and research institutions to find breakthrough treatments for people with serious diseases who need new and improved options.

Today, Genentech's founders' spirit of taking bold risks and celebrating both successes and failures continues to drive their daily work. This year, the company will celebrate its 40th anniversary with initiatives such as 40 Defining Moments—a storytelling project to reflect on the history of Genentech through articles, pictures, and videos. And in order to recognize the role nearby communities and science education have had in its success, Genentech will also commit $1 million to STEM-focused nonprofits that provide hands-on science education to underserved students in local communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the hard work and dedication of Genentech and its employees. Genentech has always been a cutting edge company from research to workplace accommodations to creating one of the first on-site child care centers. I'm proud to represent a company that has so positively contributed to the health and wellness of our society, and to the world. I look forward to seeing what new breakthroughs the next 40 years will bring.

HONORING MADELEINE MORLINO

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Madeleine Morlino, of the Third Congressional District, on her recent acceptance into all four United States Service Academies, and to commend her for her community service and accomplishments.

Madeleine, who is a resident of Moorestown, has worked diligently to succeed academically while simultaneously engaging with her community. Madeleine maintains a 4.23 weighted grade-point average at Moorestown High School. She is an accomplished violinist, and plays for the Moorestown High School orchestra and for a local church ensemble. Additionally, she was honored with the Good Citizenship Award from the Union League of Philadelphia and volunteers for many different charitable causes and organizations.

Madeleine has a profound level of respect for our armed service men and women, and has become very involved in the veteran community. In the fall, she organized the Veterans Benefits and Job Expo at the Moorestown Community House, where national and local businesses met with veterans about meaningful employment. She also volunteers at the Disabled Veterans Physiotherapy Clinic in Philadelphia. Madeleine has worked extremely hard to follow her goal of serving the military in whatever capacity possible. She will be attending the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado after graduation.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously honored to have Madeleine Morlino as a member of their community. Ms. Molino has shown a desire to serve her nation and to give back to her community, and has worked continuously to do so at the best of her ability. I am honored to recognize her acceptance into all four United States Service Academies and to commend her for her outstanding service to her community and our veterans, before the United State House of Representatives.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,223,197,501,336.14. We've added $8,596,320,452,423.06 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

KAZAKHSTAN'S COMMITMENT TO ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, on the eve of Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev's visit to Washington, DC to participate in the Nuclear Security Summit, we see that the basics of water and energy in Central Asia need attention.

In order to obtain electric power for the industrial development, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan for several years have been trying to build hydroelectric dams on their mountain rivers. Uzbekistan sees this as a threat to their agriculture in the Fergana Valley and has made clear its adamant opposition. The only winners, if this conflict results, will be the armed extremist armies that will gather new supporters on every side of the battle.

Nuclear energy is a safe, sustainable, and affordable energy source. Kazakhstan, together with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other outside partners, established the world's first Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU) Fuel Bank. This Fuel Bank, which Kazakhstan has committed to support through facilities and resources as the host nation, provides a secondary market for LEU to guarantee that all nations have an energy source for peaceful civilian nuclear power. Affordable energy remains a prerequisite for modernization of the economies of the countries of Central Asia. More importantly, radical groups will have less impact on the region since the threat of a water crisis is not a major concern.

Kazakhstan is a suitable location for the international energy center. President Nursultan Nazarbayev is a proven leader having the respect of all of Kazakhstan's neighbors. The southernmost region of Kazakhstan is close to Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Additionally, Kazakhstan is not involved in water disputes; therefore, it can guarantee the supply of electricity to all the countries. The absence of conflicts with the neighbors and international authority of Kazakhstan make it an ideal electric energy hub for the region.

Kazakhstan has a great opportunity to take a lead in transforming the whole Central Asian region into a more stable and prosperous place. I applaud President Nazarbayev and the Kazakh people for their continued commitment to civilian nuclear energy and Central Asia's development.

HONORING GENERAL MARC A. CISNEROS

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor General Marc Anthony Cisneros, who recently received the Daughters of the American Revolution Medal of Honor.

The Daughters of the American Revolution is a volunteer organization whose members donate their time and energy toward preserving American history, funding scholarship programs, and honoring great Americans like General Cisneros who have dedicated their lives in outstanding service to the United States of America.

General Cisneros led an illustrious career in the U.S. military from 1961 until 1996. He is most remembered for his role as a commander of the U.S. Army South in the 1989 Panama invasion, where he led the effort to depose General Manuel Noriega. It was his leadership that minimized casualties while achieving a total victory in the war.

I join the Daughters of the American Revolution in thanking General Cisneros for his service.

HONORING THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Marine Mammal Center in honor

of its 40th anniversary. Located in Sausalito, California, the center seeks to expand knowledge of marine mammals and to inspire conservation efforts in the Bay Area and beyond.

Founded in 1975, the Marine Mammal Center works to advance the lives of ocean mammals and their habitats through rescue operations, rehabilitation, scientific research, and education. They have rescued and treated more than 20,000 animals over the past four decades, providing care across more than 600 miles of California coast. Additionally, their education programs engage approximately 50,000 children and adults each year through field trips, teacher training, and volunteer opportunities.

Along with providing direct care to individual animals, the Marine Mammal Center remains committed to protecting our water environments. Their ongoing awareness campaigns—from encouraging people to eat sustainable seafood to educating on the harmful effects of trash in our oceans—have made a lasting impact, and their scientific research has helped shed light on factors that impact the health of marine mammals, including the harmful effects of climate change.

The Marine Mammal Center has been a force of nature in ocean protection efforts, not just in Marin County and the California Coast but around the world. Their small but mighty staff oversees more than 1,100 volunteers, and their researchers have contributed to hundreds of publications over the years. Mr. Speaker, it is fitting to honor and thank the Marine Mammal Center on their 40th Anniversary for their unyielding commitment to our oceans and the creatures that call it home.

PORTION OF HIGHWAY 18 RENAMED TO HONOR MILITARY VETERANS

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an important ceremony that took place in my district on Friday, April 8, 2016. A stretch of State Highway 18 located in the San Bernardino mountains was dedicated as the ''Rim of the World Veterans Memorial Highway.'' I want to thank California State Assemblyman Jay Obernolte for authoring Assembly Concurrent Resolution 21, which was the legislation that was passed by the California State Assembly to rename Highway 18.

More importantly, though, I would like to commend the members of American Legion Post 360 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9624 for their tireless efforts to make this dedication come to fruition. Renaming Highway 18 to honor the sacrifices of the men and women who served in our Armed Forces exemplifies the respect that residents in the mountain communities of San Bernardino County have for our veterans.

I look forward to seeing the new signage on my next trip to the mountains. Thank you to everyone who was involved in making this special day possible but, most importantly, thank you to the veterans who've made America the greatest nation on earth.

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S GRAVITATIONAL WAVE DISCOVERY

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, our understanding of the universe leapt forward when gravitational waves were first detected. I rise today to recognize that achievement and honor six researchers from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) who were part of one of the most significant scientific discoveries in a century.

While hundreds of scientists worked together to make this discovery, I am especially proud of the researchers from RIT—James Healy, Jacob Lange, Carlos Lousto, Richard O'Shaughnessy, John Whelan, and Yuanhao Zhang. All of these researchers are members of RIT's Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation, which is led by Manuela Campanelli. Her team was one of the first groups to initially solve Albert Einstein's strong field equations describing black hole mergers. Because of this legacy, it is fitting that the recent discovery helps further confirm Einstein's general theory of relativity.

As the only microbiologist in Congress, I know that every scientist hopes to have their predictions verified by direct observation. I also know that this is relatively rare, so I stand in awe of this RIT team that accurately modeled the merger of two black holes and predicted the gravitational waves that were detected. This monumental achievement marks yet another chapter in Rochester's rich history as a center of scientific innovation and discovery.

Rochester has helped pioneer important research and develop innovative products such as the Kodak Brownie camera, the Norden bombsight, and myriad high-powered lasers. Established in 1829, RIT has not only played a critical role in Rochester's past, it continues to ensure that Rochester remains a global center of excellence. RIT makes invaluable scientific contributions to the research community, but it is also a cornerstone of the Rochester community and helps provide local businesses with the talent they need to flourish.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of this discovery is that it allows us to pose new questions and push the bounds of our collective knowledge. There's no doubt in my mind that RIT will play an essential role in these forthcoming discoveries, and I am proud that millions of people will continue learning about the world around us thanks to the contributions of researchers like Dr. Campanelli and the other members of her team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding all of the individuals who helped contribute to this monumental discovery and especially the six researchers from RIT. These Rochesterians have helped fundamentally change our understanding of the world, and I am proud to support their work in Congress.

HONORING CULTIVATING CODERS

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cultivating Coders, a technology startup from Albuquerque which, on March 13, 2016, won ''Startup of Year'' at Tech.Col's South by Southwest interactive festival in Austin, Texas.

This past November, Charles Ashley III and Charles Sandidge founded Cultivating Coders which takes an eight-week coding boot camp on the road to tribal, rural, inner-city, and otherwise underserved communities. The program provides graduates with knowledge of full stack web development theories and practical experience including web languages PHP, JavaScript, and HTML. Additionally, the company pairs students with small businesses and nonprofits in our community that need assistance with large web application development. This offers local companies access to technology services and creates job opportunities for the students.

Only 5 months old, Cultivating Coders beat out 18 other startups to share the top prize with another startup called MentorMint. But Ashley and Sandidge are just getting started. Sandidge explained their enthusiasm behind attending the competition, ''If [Cultivating Coders] can find large scale partners—IBM, Microsoft, those places that see the benefit of what we're doing and where we're doing it, and helping with diversity in tech—that's a win for us at South by Southwest.''

Cultivating Coders is increasing the number of minorities in the technology industry and creating new jobs in the process. Mr. Speaker, we need more forward thinking companies like this which serve our communities, promote local businesses, train future leaders in technology, increase diversity, and drive innovation. I look forward to watching Cultivating Coders continue to grow and achieve success. Congratulations Cultivating Coders, keep up the great work.

HONORING LINDA BECK

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, as executive director of the Indian Valley Public Library, Linda Beck's dedication and advocacy has inspired a community and, now, after 28 years she is retiring. It is widely known that libraries can be the heart of the community: Billions of Americans gravitate to public libraries each year to read, borrow books, and study. During Linda Beck's tenure, the role of the Indian Valley Public Library expanded to include services beneficial to the greater community, including Internet access for library-goers who may search for employment, schools and general information at their leisure. As executive director, she, and scores of volunteers, have improved the lives of many citizens and inspired both children and adults to read for enjoyment and learning. And so we salute Linda

Beck on this milestone, thank her for the leadership she provided and wish her many active retirement years.

RIVERHEAD FREE LIBRARY

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to honor the Riverhead Free Library's 120 years of service to the community.

Whether it is the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, or the community libraries in our home districts, it is important we recognize the tremendous value provided, even in today's technology-driven society. Since the earliest human civilizations, libraries have served as locations where information has been safeguarded and preserved, in the hopes that future generations are able to read and learn about the events of that time period. Today, our libraries' services to local communities are invaluable, providing important information to our constituents, and serving as meeting locations where people gather or relax and unwind. Libraries are also crucial to ensuring younger generations have access to information for school assignments and otherwise expand their knowledge base.

The Riverhead Free Library was organized and founded on April 4, 1896. The word ''free'' holds special significance, as it meant that all community residents of the time could borrow books without charge. The Library helped to grow and develop the diverse and bountiful community that Riverhead has become today. This service continues into the present, where members of the community go to utilize the wealth of information the library contains, and learn about the great ideas of both past and present. Today, the Library is chartered to serve over 32,000 residents of the Riverhead Central School District, and more than a dozen towns on the East End of Long Island.

It is my distinct honor to represent the Riverhead Free Library in the First Congressional District of New York, and I am grateful for all of the services it provides to my constituents. 120 years of service to the public is no simple feat. It is only through the hard-work and dedication of its employees, and the tireless hours spent overseeing its maintenance and preservation, that have made the library the great center of learning and knowledge it is today. I would like to thank the employees of the Riverhead Free Library and the community of Riverhead for helping to preserve such a significant and special place in my district.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CIVIL WAR DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate the 155th anniversary of the start of the Civil War today, my colleague Representative DONNA EDWARDS joins me to introduce a bill to recognize and preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington located in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. The defenses of Washington, including forts, unarmed batteries and rifle trenches, created a ring of protection for the nation's capital during the Civil War. This bill would redesignate the 22 Civil War Defenses of Washington currently under National Park Service jurisdiction as a national historical park, and allow other sites associated with the Civil War Defenses of Washington that are owned by a unit of state governments to be affiliated with the national historic park through cooperative agreements. This bill would also require the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the storied history of the Civil War for both the North and the South, including the history of the defenses of Washington and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, being assembled, arrayed and conveyed for the benefit of the public for the knowledge, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Civil War Defenses of Washington were constructed at the beginning of the war, in 1861, as a ring of protection for the nation's capital and for President Abraham Lincoln. By the end of the war, these defenses included 68 forts, 93 unarmed batteries, 807 mounted cannons, 13 miles of rifle trenches, and 32 miles of military roads. The major test of the Civil War Defenses of Washington came with the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, when Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Early, directed by General Robert E. Lee, sought to attack the nation's capital from the north, causing Union Forces threatening to attack Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, to be withdrawn. General Early was delayed by Union Major General Lew Wallace at the Battle of Monocacy on July 9, 1864, and was stopped at the northern edge of Washington at the Battle of Fort Stevens on July 11–12, 1864. The Shenandoah Valley Campaign ended when Union Lieutenant General Philip Sheridan defeated General Early at the Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia, on October 19, 1864.

Nearly all the individual forts in the Civil Defenses of Washington—on both sides of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers—were involved in stopping General Early's attack, and the Battle of Fort Stevens was the second and last attempt by the Confederate Army to attack Washington.

Taken together, these battles were pivotal to the outcome of the war and the freedom and democracy that the war represented for this country. It is therefore fitting that we recognize these sites by redesignating them as a national historic park as we commemorate the 155th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

HONORING PASTOR LINDA SWEEZER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a driven and ambitious woman, Pastor Linda Sweezer. Pastor Sweezer has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication and a desire to make a positive difference in doing God's will and spreading his Word.

Linda Sweezer was born the youngest child in a family of ten to Bessie Dillard and the late Alfred Dillard, Jr. in Vicksburg, Mississippi. She was saved at the tender age of ten.

She is a 1978 graduate of Vicksburg High School and attended and graduated from Milsaps College, Jackson, MS in 1982. She worked at Vicksburg Family Development Service for 19 years—fourteen of those years as the Co-Director.

She was called into the Gospel Ministry on February 5, 1995, ordained in 1997 and again in 2006 by Bishop T.D. Jakes of Dallas, Texas at The Potter's House International. She was called to pastor and founded The House of Peace Worship Church in December 2001. It is known as: ''The Church Where the Holy Spirit is in Charge.'' In May 2006, the Holy Spirit led Pastor Sweezer to begin another church in the Rolling Fork area; it is known as The House of Peace Worship Church International/Delta.

Apostle Linda Sweezer is also a playwright and has written, produced and directed fifteen major productions, which were performed in the theater in the surrounding areas of Vicksburg, Rolling Fork and Fayette, Mississippi and Texarkana, TX.

She is the author of a book entitled, ''Eating Along the Way!—A Survivor's Guide for People Who Are Serious About Hearing God's Call.'' In addition, she was the co-owner of a Christian bookstore.

She was affirmed into the Apostolic calling on July 29th 2011. The Affirmation Ceremony was conducted by Apostle Michael O. Exum, Executive Director of The Potter's House International Pastoral Alliance and Apostle Eyvone Smith of His Harvest Ministries, Oxford, Mississippi.

Some other achievements include: appointed Board Member of the United Way of West Central Mississippi (2011–2014); Director of The House of Peace Substance Abuse Prevention Program; appointed for a second term to the Election Commission (2009–2012); appointed to the Election Commission (2005–2009); appointed twice to the City of Vicksburg Civil Service Commission. Pastor Sweezer was honored as a Local Recipient of 100 Black Women; recognized as a Distinguished African American by St. Mark Freewill Baptist Church; nominated as one of the 50 Leading Business Women of America.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. named a scholarship in Pastor Linda Sweezer's name at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast and she was appointed to the Vicksburg-Warren School District Advisory Council to develop plans for building Mega Schools. She also has received several awards and recognitions. She was selected by the Ivyettes of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. as one of the Religious Role Models; Outstanding Young Women of America; Woman of Excellence Award in Art and Literature; Sower of the Lord Award and Peacemaker Award given by the Flying High for Jesus Outreach.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor Linda Sweezer for her

passion and dedication to spread the word of God and desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

COMMEMORATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF PATTY FUCHS

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Patty Fuchs on her twenty-two years of dedication and service to Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois.

From the very beginning, Patty Fuchs, a native of Peoria, Illinois and the CEO of Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois, strived to support the people around her and ensure success for every facet of the Central Illinois community. A graduate of Peoria High School and Bradley University, where she ultimately earned her master's degree, Patty decided to first give back to the Peoria education system by becoming a teacher at McKinley Grade School. At this point in her life, she discovered her passion for watching people grow to their full potential.

When Patty accepted the CEO position at Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois, she turned a struggling non-profit into a flourishing and successful institution. Under Patty's nearly two decade long tenure, Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois underwent a period of tremendous expansion. Currently, the non-profit oversees eleven stores and provides vocational programs across twenty-one counties. Because of their annual successes, total persons served grew from 100 in 1993 to 1,800 served in 2014. In addition, the organization, today, employees nearly 400 people compared to the mere 65 employed in 1993 when Patty began her role as CEO. These statistics attest to Patty's dedication to the organization and her tireless efforts to successfully expand and develop the non-profit to serve more individuals and families in the community.

Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois as well as the Central Illinois community ultimately benefited under Patty's leadership. I wish her a wonderful retirement surrounded by her family and loved ones. Again, congratulations, Patty, on your successful career and retirement.

TRIBUTE TO WARREN D. ''DUSTY'' WILLIAMS

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to Riverside County, California, are exceptional. On April 14th, Warren D. ''Dusty'' Williams will be retiring from the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District after 39 years of dedicated service, including over 13 years as its General Manager-Chief Engineer.

Dusty began his career in June 1977 as a student intern with the District. For the next four decades, he dedicated himself to loyal, conscientious, innovative and outstanding service to residents of the area, culminating with his leadership of the organization. Dusty is recognized as a national leader on flood safety, stormwater capture and environmental regulatory issues. He served as President of the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies, on national committees including the National Committee on Levee Safety, and has testified before several Congressional Committees on such important issues as levee safety and amendments to the federal Clean Water Act.

Dusty has also been a strong local partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; guiding ongoing and critical federal projects including the Santa Ana Main Stem Project and the Murrieta Creek Flood Control Environmental Restoration and Recreation Projects through technical, fiscal and administrative hurdles. I believe the reason Dusty was such an effective leader was the depth and range of his technical expertise, effective communication skills, commitment to excellence and loyalty to his community.

In light of all that Dusty has done for our region and the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, it is only fitting to honor him on the occasion of his retirement. Dusty has contributed immensely to the betterment of our community and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and my friend. To conclude, Mr. Speaker I want to thank Dusty for his service to the people of Riverside County—his dedication, insight and passion for flood management will be greatly missed.

HONORING VIVIAN LEE ON THE OCCASION OF HER INDUCTION INTO THE WASHINGTON STATE NURSES HALL OF FAME

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Vivian Lee for her recent induction into the Washington State Nurses Hall of Fame. This a fitting recognition of her years of considerable contributions to the healthcare community.

Mrs. Lee has been an influential leader in Seattle's nursing and healthcare industry for decades by demonstrating her exceptional commitment to selflessly serving others in need. During her tenure as the Program Management Officer of the federal Title X program, she helped low-income citizens receive family planning assistance, among other healthcare services, at an affordable cost.

Mrs. Lee has also pioneered the way for future African American nurses to be successful in the healthcare field. She holds the distinction of being the first African American to be admitted into the University of Washington's prestigious Bachelors of Science nursing program. She was also the first African American to receive the Washington State School Nurse of the Year Award, serve as a registered nurse at Seattle's VA Hospital, and be hired by the U.S. Public Health Service. Through these notable accomplishments, Mrs. Lee broke historic ground and her example serves as an inspiration to many in our region.

Outside of her impressive record in the healthcare field, Mrs. Lee is actively engaged in important community issues including civil rights, child nutrition, and women's issues. She has shown her passion for women's health by serving as the inaugural leader of the first Federal Regional Office on Women's Health, which has grown to 144 clinics nationwide that focus on women's reproductive health research and national women's health policy. Mrs. Lee has shown her passion for educating and mentoring students by serving on the UW Alumni Board of Trustees, cofounding the UW Multicultural Alumni Partnership, and chairing the UWAA Diversity Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Vivian Lee for her admirable achievements in the healthcare and nursing industries. Through her many accomplishments she has continued to improve the quality of healthcare that many people receive in the greater Seattle area.

EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, today is Equal Pay Day, which symbolizes how many additional days since the beginning of this year a woman had to work full-time to earn the same amount a man earned last year. The sad truth is that equal pay for American women remains a goal, not a reality.

It is unacceptable that in the 21st century, women still earn just 79 cents for each dollar a man earns. For women of color, the facts are even worse: African American women earn just 60 cents, and Latinas just 55 cents, for each dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

These pay gaps are appalling, and cannot be justified. Today, mothers are the breadwinners or co-breadwinners in more than half of U.S. households. Like men, their families depend on their salaries to pay for shelter, food, their children's education, and health care.

Women merit and deserve equal pay for equal work. Congress must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. This will strengthen America's families and our national economy as well. Let us reaffirm the simple truth that when women succeed, America succeeds.

HONORING CAROL KUNZE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and

Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Ms. Kunze for her great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates like Ms. Kunze. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Ms. Kunze to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SIKH COMMUNITY OF CONNECTICUT ON VAISAKHI

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Sikh Community of Connecticut, and their dedicated leaders who are working hard to challenge the misconceptions and stereotypes the Sikh community faces in Connecticut, and the nation as a whole. Many American Sikhs face misunderstanding in their schools and workplaces, despite the over 100-year history of the faith in America. I thank the Sikh Community of Connecticut for their work to bring greater understanding of Sikh values to all Americans. In particular, Mr. Swaranjit Singh Khalsa and the Sikh Sivak Society, who organized an awareness campaign in my district to educate eastern Connecticut residents about Sikhism through public service advertisements seen around town. I was fortunate to meet Mr. Singh in my office recently to discuss the project and the challenges the community is facing.

Sikhism originated in the Punjab region of South Asia, founded on the ideals of devotion to God, service to others, social justice, and equality of all people. Twenty-five million people practice Sikhism all over the world, including 250,000 Sikhs in the United States, making Sikhism the fifth largest religion in the world. Immigration of Sikhs to the United States primarily began in the 1960s, as many came in search of higher education, and stayed to raise families. Indeed, Sikhs have made great contributions to the culture, economy, and society of the United States.

This month, Sikhs all over the world will be celebrating Vaisakhi. This holiday commemorates the founding of the Khalsa, or the collective body of committed Sikhs.

Vaisakhi is a time to acknowledge the values of Sikhism, and the growth of the Sikh community. This year, the Sikh Community of America organized the Freedom March for Sikh Nation on April 9th in Washington, D.C. This event is a time for all Americans to come together to learn about and celebrate Vaisakhi, and bring attention to issues surrounding Sikh identity in the United States.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Sikh community for their many contributions to American culture, Mr. Singh for his efforts to bring understanding about Sikhism to my region, and to wish all a joyous Vaisakhi.

TRIBUTE TO ANNIE BRANDT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Annie Brandt for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Community Engagement Leader at Thrivent Financial Annie works tirelessly to facilitate generosity across the state of Iowa. She is reminded on a daily basis that the greatest thing a human can do is dedicate themselves to helping and giving to others. Annie exemplifies that professionally and personally. She dedicates her time and talents to a number of organizations in the community including Oakridge Neighborhoods, Des Moines Community Playhouse, Young Women's Resource Center, Habitat for Humanity, Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and Lead Like a Lady.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Annie in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Annie on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—THOMAS TORRES

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Thomas Torres from Houston, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Thomas attends J. Frank Dobie High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Thomas was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Thomas and all of his hard work, and know he will make Houston proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Thomas for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KRISTI L. NOEM

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, on March 23, 2016 I was absent. I would have voted Nay on the motion to recommit H.R. 2745. I would have voted Aye on passage of H.R. 2745. I would have voted Aye on H. Res. 658 Condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, which murdered more than 30 innocent people, and severely wounded many more.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD ''TED'' LOVETT

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representative BENNIE G. THOMPSON, I am honored to recognize Mr. Ted Lovett, Director of Legislative Affairs at the Department of Homeland Security, for his decade of selfless public service. Ted has been an exemplary representative of the Department and an incredible resource for the Members and staff of the Committee on Homeland Security.

Ted is the kind of person who goes the extra mile. The most obvious signs of his commitment are his responsiveness, his depth of knowledge regarding policy and legislative matters, his proactive outreach, and the long hours he works to ensure that Members and staff have all the information they need to do their jobs effectively. It is a matter of course to get a phone call or an email from Ted late in the evening or on the weekend to ensure Members have critical information before an issue breaks in the news.

Ted understands the critical nature of the mission to inform Congress, and it is his engagement and honesty that make a real difference. Whether he's providing technical assistance on a proposed bill, or arranging briefings to assist Congress in its mandate to provide oversight, there is no doubt that Ted's tireless efforts and vigilance have made our nation safer and more secure.

Ted has been the Department's legislative manager for the Southwest Border Initiative, Guantanamo Detention, Visa Waiver Program, Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, REAL-ID, Human Screening Programs, the Merida Initiative, the Global Supply Chain Strategy, and Countering Violent Extremism programs. He also effectively manages DHS participation in Congressional hearings, from Secretary-level to subject-matter experts.

Ted has been critical to providing information and understanding during emerging homeland security events and crises such as the ''Underwear Bomber'' attack on Northwest flight 253 on Christmas Day 2009, the 2014 Unaccompanied Children surge at the U.S. Southwest Border, and the Ebola outbreak in 2014 and 2015.

Over the past decade, Ted has fostered many enduring and trusted relationships with Congress in furtherance and advocacy of DHS priorities in connection with current legislation, prospective legislation and the implementation of security policy. What has always impressed us is that Ted is the epitome of a non-partisan public servant.

On behalf of Ranking Member THOMPSON and the Committee on Homeland Security, I want to commend and thank Ted for his dedication and commitment to keeping the homeland safe and secure and wish him the very best as the next chapter of his life opens.

HONORING THE PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special group of young people. The Paul Laurence Dunbar High School boys' basketball team recently won the Kentucky High School Athletic Association state championship, better known in Kentucky as the ''Sweet Sixteen''.

This event is very competitive and involves talented young athletes from across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Like any successful endeavor, the victory was won by dedication, hours of practice, determination, and teamwork. The young men worked very hard for this accomplishment and they learned many lessons that will benefit them throughout their lives. I want to give special recognition to head coach Scott Chalk and the entire coaching staff and to thank them for the time and dedication they provided these young athletes.

Paul Laurence Dunbar High School is located in Lexington, Kentucky. This is the school's first ever state championship in boys' basketball. In the first three games of the tournament the Bulldogs posted come-from-behind wins. However, in the final game they led wire to wire, winning 61–52. I congratulate the students and their coaches on the state championship and I am proud to honor them before the United States House of Representatives.

ALMA ARRINGTON BROWN

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this communication is forwarded on behalf of the constituents of the Fifth Congressional District of Florida and me as we pay tribute to the life of Alma Arrington Brown:

We are deeply and profoundly saddened by the loss of this great woman, mother, grandmother, loved one, friend, philanthropist, community leader and so much more. She was married to the late Ronald H. Brown who served as the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee and President Clinton's Secretary of Commerce. She passed 20 years to the day of his passing.

To her loving children, the Honorable Michael A. Brown and Tracey Brown James; her son-in-law, Kendall James; and her grandchildren, Morgan and Ryan Brown, and Harmon and Calab James, our thoughts and prayers are with you, and our hearts share your loss. She loved and cared deeply for her family, her God and her politics. I hope in some small way you know just how much I cared for and will miss her too.

She was born in Brooklyn, New York. She was a graduate of Fisk University, and received a master's degree from Manhattenville College. She lived the majority of her adult life in Washington, DC. She launched her career as an educator then worked with numerous organizations including the National Council of Negro Women, National Urban League and Girl Scouts of America. While at the District of Columbia Office of International Business, she worked with the Chinese government to construct a Chinese archway, which helped energize Chinatown. She was also a radio show host at WKYS–FM. She eventually retired as a business executive with Chevy Chase Bank. During her illustrious career, she was a fierce and formidable force for positive change and equality.

She was active with national and community social, civic and political organizations. She had leadership roles with numerous entities including The Links, Inc.; Jack and Jill; The Girl Friends Inc.; and the Smart Set.

She lived her passion for humanity by her actions. As a human rights champion, she dared us to be more than ordinary, she encouraged and pushed us to be better than we even knew we could be. As a citizen of the world, she made us understand and appreciate our individual differences, and all that we hold in common. As a true believer, she simply made us believe by her example. Her standards were high, yet attainable; her truths were straightforward and without embellishment; her voice was strong with reason and reassurance; her directions were clear, simple and intended for keeping our feet on the right path; and her love was great and powerful and showed brightly in her eyes and heart. We are better for having had her in our midst, and we now ask Our Heavenly Father to hold her gently in his loving embrace for all eternity.

HONORING JOHN YAKLIGIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. John Yakligian for being named the 2016 Senior Farmer of the Year by the Madera Chamber of Commerce. John's outstanding contributions to the agriculture industry and the Madera community are truly deserving of this special honor.

In 1955, John and his wife, Lois, moved to Madera County and began their journey of farming together. Over the last 62 years, they have farmed a variety of crops including: almonds, raisins, chickens, cotton, small grains, vegetable feed crops, and beans.

Giving back has always been a priority for John. In addition to serving on numerous California Farm Bureau Federation committees and as the President of the Madera County Farm Bureau, John served for 15 years on the Madera Community Hospital Board. He has been a member of the Madera Rotary Club for 42 years and is a founder and active member of the Grace Community Church. John is also a veteran and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

In addition to farming, John volunteered for 35 years at a non-profit organization, Far East Broadcasting Company, before becoming employed as the organization's Executive Vice President and CEO. The organization broadcasts to two-thirds of the world's population in over 141 languages to over one hundred countries.

John's family is very important to him. Lois and John have two children, Phillip and Jane,

five grandchildren, and seven great grandsons. John and Lois have given back to their community in many ways, and it is fitting and appropriate to honor them for their accomplishments and efforts.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to recognize John as the Senior Farmer of the Year presented by the Madera Chamber of Commerce. John's success is exemplary of the American Dream, and he serves as an inspiration for all of us.

TRIBUTE TO BEN BUENZOW

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ben Buenzow for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As an agent/owner at the Ben Buenzow State Farm Agency, Ben works tirelessly to provide top of the line customer service each and every day so that they can live worry free and know that their money is in good hands. Civically, Ben is one of the most dedicated individuals you will find. He is involved in a number of organizations throughout his community including serving as the director at large for the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce, the founding chairperson of the genYP Young Professionals group in Urbandale and co-chair of the Urbandale Police Department National Night Out event. He is driven by his passion for helping others and doing all he can to improve his community.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ben in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ben on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING THE AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE OF FLORIDA

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the American Muslim Alliance of Florida. Through its scholarship program, this organization has served the state of Florida by improving graduating high school seniors' access to higher education.

This year, the American Muslim Alliance of Florida is providing 15 students with scholarships totaling $10,000 to help them further their education. Past recipients have attended some of America's most prestigious universities thanks to these scholarships. I would like to extend my congratulations to this year's scholarship winners, and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

It is my great privilege to recognize the American Muslim Alliance of Florida for the work they have done for these students and South Florida community.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—SAMUEL YEBOAH

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Samuel Yeboah from Pearland, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Samuel attends St. Thomas High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Samuel was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursing science or technology. We are proud of Samuel and all of his hard work, and know he will make Houston proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Samuel for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, due to my participation in the Presidential Delegation to Cuba from March 20 through March 22, I was unable to vote on Roll Call 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, and 135. I would have voted on each had I been present.

Roll Call 130: "Aye"
Roll Call 131: "No"
Roll Call 132: "No"
Roll Call 133: "Aye"
Roll Call 134: "Aye"
Roll Call 135: "Aye"

HONORING THE COASTAL BEND COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Coastal Bend Council of Governments for their 50th anniversary. The group exists to serve 11 counties and 32 cities in South Texas with a host of services, including water quality management and waste management, and coordinates region-wide projects for its member towns and cities.

In an age of too much government, it is great to recognize such a creative and efficient collaboration between local governments and private entities. This terrific volunteer association not only serves, but protects the people of South Texas with 9-1-1 emergency services, criminal justice services, and Homeland Security programs.

For 50 years, the Coastal Bend Council of Governments has provided the Coastal Bend region with cost-efficient services through its unique partnership of the public and private sector. I honor their collaborative service to the South Texas community.

HONORING ARROWHEAD UNITED WAY

HON. PETE AGUILAR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Arrowhead United Way as it celebrates its 125th anniversary. Arrowhead United Way was founded on April 17, 1891, in San Bernardino, California. Today it serves communities throughout California's 31st Congressional District, helping thousands of families access health, education and financial resources in the areas of our region most in need.

Arrowhead United Way's ability to partner with schools, government agencies, local businesses, faith leaders and other groups allows

residents throughout the Inland Empire region to access critical everyday services. Arrowhead United Way's advocacy in our communities has advanced the common good and made the Inland Empire a better place to live.

I congratulate Arrowhead United Way on its 125th anniversary and commend the staff, both past and present, who have made and will continue to make a profound difference in the lives of so many families throughout our community.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF CAPTAIN KEITH ''JUDGE'' HOSKINS, COMMANDING OFFICER OF NAVAL AIR STATION PENSACOLA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Captain Keith ''Judge'' Hoskins, Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Pensacola, on the occasion of his retirement from the United States Navy. For more than 27 years, Captain Hoskins has served our Nation with honor and distinction as a combat pilot during Operations Decisive Edge, Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, as a member of the Navy's elite flight demonstration squadron the Blue Angels, as an action officer and executive officer in various high-level functions, as third battalion officer at the United States Naval Academy, and most recently as Commanding Officer of NAS Pensacola.

A native of Parkville, Missouri, Judge was born into a military family, learning the importance of selfless service at a young age from his father, who served in the United States Army. After graduating with a degree in electrical engineering technology from Missouri Western State University, Judge completed Aviation Officer Candidate School in September 1989, and in February 1992, he was designated a Naval Aviator. Early in his career, Judge participated in vital national security missions, when, as a member of the ''Sidewinders'' of VFA–86, he completed a deployment onboard the USS *America*, flying combat missions in support of Operations Decisive Edge and Southern Watch.

Like millions of Americans across the country, Judge was inspired as a child by the Blue Angels, but unlike most of us, he didn't just dream about becoming a Blue Angel—he actually did it. After returning stateside and serving a year as an instructor pilot for the ''Gladiators'' of VFA–106, Judge joined one of the Navy's most visible squadrons—the Blue Angels. During his three seasons as member of the Blues, Judge served as the narrator, opposing solo, and lead solo pilot, and, in addition, he also served as the Blue Angels' operations officer in his final season.

Upon his return to the fleet, Judge was assigned to the ''Fist of the Fleet,'' serving as the operations and maintenance officer of VFA–25. Like so many of our Nation's brave Naval Aviators, the place where Judge truly shined was on the battlefield, and during his time at the ''Fist of the Fleet,'' Judge flew combat missions in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Southern Watch, and Iraqi Freedom. Through these combat missions and deployments, Judge demonstrated time and again the type of brave and selfless service that exemplifies our Nation's servicemembers.

Throughout his career, Judge has also shown tremendous leadership outside the cockpit, helping fight the Global War on Terror in multiple capacities. During a tour at U.S. STRATCOM, Judge served as an action officer and executive officer in the Plans and Policy Directorate, where he wrote, assessed, and disseminated policy at the highest level as STRATCOM was in the midst of restructuring to fight the Global War on Terror. Judge's excellence and leadership at STRATCOM were recognized by his selection as the aide de camp to the STRATCOM Commander.

After his time at STRATCOM, Judge once again returned to combat posture, leading a command tour with ''The Valions'' of VFA–15, as they served a combat deployment onboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Following the completion of his command tour, Judge helped to mold the next generation of Naval Officers, serving as the third battalion officer at the United States Naval Academy, and as the national director of the NROTC program at the Naval Service Training Command.

In 2013, Judge was named the 56th Commanding Officer of NAS Pensacola. As the Cradle of Naval Aviation, Pensacola and the entire Northwest Florida community are immensely proud of our area's tradition of military service and support for those who wear the uniform. NAS Pensacola is also the proud home of the Blue Angels, and Judge became the first former Blue Angel to command NAS Pensacola.

During his long and distinguished career, Judge has logged more than 3,400 flight hours, 570 arrested landings, and he has been awarded numerous decorations including: the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Air Medal (three awards with combat ''V''), Navy Commendation Medal (three awards with combat ''V''), Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), and many unit commendations and awards.

Captain Keith ''Judge'' Hoskins embodies the selfless commitment to service, sacrifice, and exceptional skill of our Nation's servicemembers. Throughout his career, he has contributed greatly to keeping our Nation safe and protecting the freedom and liberty of all Americans, and he has also inspired countless others to pursue a career of service through his leadership and example.

On behalf of the United States Congress and the people of Florida's First Congressional District, my wife Vicki and I thank Judge for his service and leadership, we congratulate him on his retirement, and we wish him all the best for continued success in his post-Naval endeavors. Bravo Zulu.

COMMEMORATING THE INDUCTING OF CAPT. JOHN EDGAR TIPTON INTO THE ROTC HALL OF FAME

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the inducting of Capt. John Edgar Tipton into the ROTC Hall of Fame. John grew up in Granite City, Illinois and graduated from Granite City High School in 1989. After graduation he enlisted in the military to serve in Operation Desert Storm. John then went to SIUE and graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate from the Army ROTC Program in 1995. He had earned many commendations including: a Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Valorous Unit Award. And so it is most certainly fitting that such a heroic and distinguished man should be enshrined here on this historic day, the 100th anniversary of the ROTC.

On May 2, 2004 Capt. Tipton was killed when a piece of shrapnel from an explosion came through the window of his office and struck him. We will forever be indebted to him and to his family for their sacrifice. It is important, however, that we, in remembering his courageous service as a soldier, do not forget his service as a wonderful son, a devoted husband, a loving father, and a beloved friend.

I have had the privilege of knowing both his wife Susie and his in-laws for some time now. In times like these I am reminded of the comforting words of John 11:25 ''Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.'''

HONORING SHELLEY MARTIN FOR HER SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA'S 36TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, today it is my honor to congratulate and recognize Ms. Shelley Martin: a generous and selfless individual who worked as an integral part of my team for over three years.

Shelley is a long time resident of my congressional district. She grew up in the Hemet Valley and graduated from Hemet High School. She then attended The Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute in Los Angeles, and later returned back to her hometown to serve her community.

For over three years, Shelley was the gold standard for constituent services in my office. She dedicated many hours and energy to constituents, finding solutions in the most difficult cases involving social Security, Medicare, and Veterans.

While working for the People of California's 36th Congressional District, Shelley paid special care and attention to veterans in our communities. Shelley spent countless hours advocating on behalf of veterans who served our

country honorably. She treated each constituent who sought help from my office with the patience, care, and respect due to them. Shelley's selfless dedication to serving those in need in my congressional district is commendable and a model for public service.

Shelley remains passionate about serving the community she calls home. In her time with my office, Shelley successfully managed all community engagement in the communities of San Jacinto and Hemet. She is diligent and thorough, and goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve our communities, working hard to ensure that my constituents have the resources that they need.

Her selfless dedication and hard work will be greatly missed. However, her love of public service will not be forgotten. Shelley has transformed the lives of countless individuals and families in my district, and for that I am truly grateful.

I thank Shelly for her dedication and service to the constituents of the 36th district. I wish her well in her future endeavors and look forward to seeing her future accomplishments.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—TEJES SRIVASTAVA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tejes Srivastava from Sugar Land, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Tejes attends William B. Travis High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Tejes was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Tejes and all of his hard work, and know he will make Sugar Land proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Tejes for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING YOLANDA JONES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Yolanda Jones, who is a director, counselor and educator.

Yolanda Jones grew up in Greenwood, Mississippi, and after graduating from Greenwood High School she enrolled in Grambling State University.

Although she recalls her time at Grambling fondly, it was her first experience living away from home and she oscillated between being focused on schoolwork and being distracted by the more social aspects of college life. Eventually, she left Grambling before finishing her degree, working a number of odd jobs, both in Greenwood and Jackson, before deciding to re-enroll in JSU in 1999 under a program called Academic Second Chance, which is a program that allowed students, who failed to return and complete their bachelor's degree, to be under a strict retention plan.

The next year Jones, who is fluent in sign language, received her B.A. degree in Disabilities Studies and Hearing-Impaired Education graduating summa cum laude. She also earned a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from Jackson State University in 2002. She began her career as a counselor in 2002 at MVSU and currently serves as the Director of the Comprehensive Counseling Center, a position she's held since 2007. Jones also has received a master's degree in criminal justice from Mississippi Valley State University.

Additionally, Dr. Jones has also been afforded the opportunity to study abroad In the summer of 2012, she studied in Beijing, China, at the University of Trinidad and the University of West Indies.

Dr. Jones also served as: co-chair of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, for students that are not meeting satisfactory academic progress; chair of the MVSU Behavioral Intervention Team; Advisory Board Member of the Boys and Girls Club, Inc. (MVSU Unit); and also a statutory member of the Mississippi Blues Commission, where she was appointed in 2013.

Dr. Jones has presented at several state and national conferences, which included: the United States Conference on AIDS (USCA) 2010 in Miami, Florida; the White House Initiative Policy Planning meeting in 2010, where she was selected to serve as the Historically Black Colleges and Universities' representative; and most recently, at the 2015 National Association of Student Affairs Professionals conference (NASAP) in Huntsville, Alabama.

In Dr. Jones' dissertation, ''An Examination of Academic Variables that Explain Persistence to Graduation for Students who take Remedial Courses in Higher Education'', she examined academic variables between two groups of students (students that were required to take remedial courses and students that were not required to take any remedial courses) at public four year institutions to determine if there was a significant difference in their persistence to graduation. Utilizing a quantitative design, she examined the success of the students taking remedial courses as measured by graduation and the number of years it took them to meet their graduation requirements.

She is a scholar/practitioner who continues her research in this area as well as in the areas of retention, student persistence and student success among college students in hope of providing practical application that will assist in increasing the gap in college attendance and graduation rates of all students that enroll in institutions of higher learning. Jones hopes to use her doctorate in order to expand her influence in higher education administration, developing strategies that increase student retention and promote student success.

''Strategic planning is crucial!'' she emphasized. There has always been a plethora of issues in higher education; however, it is pivotal that higher education institutions began making extraordinary efforts to meet students where they are, with special emphasis on the ''under-prepared'' students, in which schools are admitting in alarming numbers every year.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Yolanda Jones, a Director, Counselor and Educator, for her dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

TRIBUTE TO COLLIN R. BARNES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Collin R. Barnes for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Collin is an interior designer and corporate focus market leader and stockholder at RDG Planning and Design. She is passionate about providing high quality, safe, and functional work environments for her clients. Collin is also an avid proponent of wellness and strives to promote it in her everyday life. Her dedication to wellness comes through in her work at RDG Planning and design as she finds new innovative ways to make client work spaces safe and healthy.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Collin in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the

United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Collin on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 17, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''YEA'' on Number 127, 128, and 129.

COMMENDING CHIEF ROBERT GUSTAFSON

HON. MIMI WALTERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, in 1975, Robert Gustafson began his career in law enforcement when he joined the Glendale Police Department. Four years later, he joined the City of Orange Police Department, where he faithfully served our community for decades. His leadership has been critical to the public safety and the betterment of Orange.

Throughout his 41 year law enforcement career, he alleviated some of the most difficult issues facing our community. He oversaw the implementation of the Youth Services Board and the SHIELD program, which provides referrals to families and children in need of additional social assistance.

Furthermore, Chief Gustafson has been instrumental in the City of Orange's efforts to reduce gang violence, helping to establish Orange's Gang Reduction and Intervention Partnership. Additionally, he has been a tireless advocate for those suffering from mental illness, and was awarded Orange Police Department's John Q. Wilson Award for Community Policing for these efforts in 2015.

Chief Gustafson also made the Five Pillars for Success the Department's standard. A selfless leader, he has always put others first and never failed to put the police department and the residents of Orange before himself. He exemplifies selfless public service, and he is a stalwart in our community. We are grateful for his leadership in Orange over the last 37 years.

I thank Chief Gustafson for his tremendous service to the City of Orange and wish him the best in the next chapter of his life.

HONORING JAKE WESTERBERG

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jake Westerberg for his hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District. He served as an intern in my Washington, DC office for the Spring 2016 session of Congress.

This young man's work has been exemplary and I know he has a bright future ahead. He served as a tour guide, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer him this educational opportunity and look forward to seeing him build his career in public service.

Jake plans to continue pursuing his degree at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs at the conclusion of his internship. As he returns to the great state of Colorado, I wish him the best in his future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Jake Westerberg for his service this Spring.

IN TRIBUTE TO DR. LESTER THUROW, TRAILBLAZING ECONOMIST AND FORMER DEAN OF THE MIT SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Lester Thurow, the iconoclastic economist and former dean of MIT's Sloan School of Management, who passed away on March 25, 2016.

Lester Thurow was born on May 7, 1938 in Livingston, Montana.

Lester Thurow's father was a Methodist minister and his mother was a teacher.

Lester Thurow worked in the local copper mines for four summers as a young man, but as an excellent student soon found himself on a fast academic track.

Lester Thurow's journey began when he received his bachelor's degree in political economy from Williams College in 1960.

Following his graduation from Williams College, Lester Thurow was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship, where he studied philosophy, politics and economics at Balliol College of Oxford University in London.

Lester Thurow graduated with first class honors from Oxford University in 1962.

In 1964, Lester Thurow earned his doctorate in economics from Harvard University.

Lester Thurow joined the faculty of MIT's Sloan School of Management in 1968 and was appointed dean in 1987, a position he held until 1993.

In 1964, Lester Thurow served on the staff of the Council of Economic Advisors during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, and served as an economic advisor to Governor Jimmy Carter during the 1976 presidential campaign.

In 1986, Lester Thurow joined with five other leading economic policy experts to found the Economic Policy Institute, the mission of which was to find solutions to address the growing problems of rising income inequality in the United States.

Lester Thurow was a longtime advocate of a political and economic system of the Japanese and European type, in which governmental involvement in the direction of the economy is far more extensive than is the case in the United States—a model that has come to be known as ''Third Way'' philosophy.

He supported policies that would help society and corporations make long-term investments in research in order to spur growth.

Lester Thurow authored several economics books targeted to a general readability in the 1990s, including:

1. ''Head to Head: The Coming Economic Battle Among Japan, Europe, and America'' (1992), which surveyed the post-Cold War economic landscape and suggested that investment and education would be keys to renewing developed economies;

2. ''The Future of Capitalism: How Today's Economic Forces Shape Tomorrow's World'' (1996); and

3. ''Building Wealth: The New Rules for Individuals, Companies, and Nations in a Knowledge-Based Economy.''

Lester Thurow's ability to explain the most complex economic issues created a path for anyone who was willing to listen and learn no matter their social or economic background.

Lester Thurow summarized the impact that economists have on society when he stated that, ''Economists, can for example, always retreat to unobservable variables to explain unwelcome facts.''

Lester Thurow knew that the advice economists give is not always what is the most popular thing to say, but what leaders and students need to hear.

On March 25, 2016, Lester Thurow passed away at his home in Westport, Massachusetts, surrounded by his family.

Lester Thurow is survived by his wife of 18 years, the former Anna Soldinger, of Westport and Tel Aviv; two sons, Torben Thurow and Ethan Thurow, both of Boston; two stepchildren, Yaron Karasik and Yael Shinar, both of Tel Aviv; a brother; and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to observe a moment of silence for this trailblazing economist and educator whose pioneering work made a significant contribution to our understanding of micro and macroeconomics.

A TRIBUTE TO JOSH BRABY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Josh Braby for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field.

The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Josh works as a Partner/Project Manager at Neumann Bros. Inc. where he works tirelessly to challenge his team by asking them to stick with the core values of the company but still finding new, innovative ways to improve their overall success. He is driven daily to make the thoughts of his clients a reality through hard work and dedication to his craft. Josh's passion for construction also translates into his civic duties where he is passionate about teaching young people the values of a skilled trade that lasts a lifetime. That passion has led him to create a program for high school students that educates them about construction through hands-on projects.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Josh in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Josh on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—ALLIX KEAN

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Allix Kean from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Allix attends Harmony Science Academy of West Houston and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Allix was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Allix and all of her hard work, and know she will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Allix for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

CONGRATULATING THE RIBAULT HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, the representative of Florida's 5th congressional district, wholeheartedly congratulate the Ribault High School Trojan girls basketball team in defeating Riverdale Baptist at Madison Square Garden to bring home to Jacksonville the Dick's Sporting Goods High School National Championship trophy. I also would like to extend my congratulations to the coaches, the staff, and the administration and all of the friends of Ribault High School on this tremendous honor.

Beyond a doubt, the Ribault High School girls' basketball team is a powerhouse in the state of Florida, and across the nation. Given that the team has won ten previous state titles and has been ranked as high as ninth in the country, they are a force to be reckoned with! Remarkably, the Lady Trojans made it through the regular season with just one loss. This did not deter them; however, as they Roared back to win the Florida state championship, and follow that up with a national championship victory in New York.

This is now the 4th time a Florida girls team has won this event in the eight years it has been held! Ribault, 30–1 this season, led by their star players Rennia Davis and Nola Carter, along with Day'Neshia Banks, played a press defense which suffocated their opponents throughout the tournament. Indeed, Ribault Coach Shelia Pennick did an outstanding job in maintaining the team's extraordinary discipline and level of fitness throughout the season. Certainly, playing full court defense with that kind of intensity is exhausting, yet her players rarely exhibited any expression of slowing down.

With each succeeding championship, the Lady Trojans basketball team climbs the list of schools with the most state titles in Florida high school athletics, now tied for seventh place with 11 state titles, the most of any girls' basketball team in the state, and a remarkable achievement for a public high school given the presence of so many private schools on the multi-championships list. Beyond a doubt, this outstanding achievement is tremendously exciting for the entire Jacksonville community and I am proud to say once again that on behalf of the constituents of Florida's 5th congressional district, I hereby honor the Ribault Trojans basketball team for their 11th state championship and this year's national title game in New York City's Madison Square Garden—Go Lady Trojans.

LOUISIANA NATIVE BECOMES THE ARMY'S FIRST FEMALE INFANTRY RECRUIT

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tammy Grace Barnett of Robeline, Louisiana, for being the first female recruit to enlist with the United States Army infantry.

I am tremendously proud of Tammy, a Louisianian who has stepped forward and answered the call to serve our nation. Prior to enlisting with the Army, Tammy has been serving her community in Louisiana as a law enforcement officer. On April 7, she gave up her Louisiana law enforcement badge and courageously took the Oath of Enlistment to become the first female recruit to enlist in the United States Army infantry division. Ms. Barnett truly reflects the spirit of Louisiana by living a life of service. We are forever indebted to these brave men and women. To commemorate this fact, I submit an article, written by Troy Washington of KSLA News.

LOUISIANA WOMAN MAKES U.S. ARMY HISTORY

(By Troy Washington)

ROBELINE, LA.—A Robeline native is making armed forces history as the first woman to enlist in the infantry in the United States Army.

Women in combat has been a topic of controversy for years, but now progress is being made.

Tammy Barnett was a police officer but traded in her badge to make history.

She's looking forward to seeing action on the front lines and making gains for women in the military.

Thursday, Barnett proudly raised her hand to take the Oath of Enlistment.

Dressed in tennis shoes, jeans and a t-shirt, 25-year-old Tammy Barnett stepped into the history books.

Barnett has been meeting with a recruiter since November and this week, at the military processing unit in Shreveport, she took a leap that's never been made before, she joined the infantry in the U.S. Army.

''They told me that I would be the first female in history to go infantry in the military,'' said Barnett.

Recently, the Defense Department lifted gender-based restrictions on military service. The historic change cleared the way for women like Barnett who want to serve on the front lines.

On April 4, the processing center received word that women would be allowed to sign up for combat jobs. Now, Barnett is hoping that others will follow her lead.

''I hope that I give them the courage, because I'm a small female, if I can do it, they can do it too, this could give them the courage to step out of their comfort zone,'' explained Barnett.

Barnett isn't fond of the limelight, but she has no problem stepping forward when it comes to service.

''I was going to go military police, but infantry is similar, and they are more on the front lines, like law enforcement here and I said that's what I want to do,'' said Barnett.

With her mind made up, Barnett isn't looking back, only forward to a future full of possibilities and breaking barriers for women in the military.

Barnett will head to Fort Benning, Georgia to start training. In the meantime, she says she's going to celebrate her history-making moment by going fishing this weekend.

HONORING EDWINA LYONS

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Edwina Lyons from Scottsville, Kentucky.

It can often be difficult to find employees who truly exemplify service, loyalty, integrity and commitment but Edwina has showcased all of these and more during her thirty-four years of service at Dollar General.

Edwina joined Dollar General on May 20th, 1982. She began in the Rework department at the Scottsville Distribution Center and grew her career and her influence through her hard work and dedication to excellence, eventually becoming the Senior Manager of Merchandise Support for the company. The length of Edwina's tenure has only been matched by the depth of her commitment to the Dollar General family.

What is truly inspirational about Edwina is the positive impact she has had on the employees at Dollar General and her community. When she departs in April, her passion for doing the right thing and her deeply rooted values will be missed.

I congratulate Edwina on an exceptional career and wish her well on her next chapter. Undoubtedly, she will continue to be of service to others.

BROADBAND IS CRUCIAL FOR MINNESOTA AND THE COUNTRY

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Blandin Foundation for their dedication to strengthening rural communities in Minnesota. One such way they are making a difference is through various programs, including their outstanding program which aims to increase access to high-speed broadband internet. I am happy to support the Minnesota Broadband Coalition's vision: ''Everyone in Minnesota will be able to use convenient, affordable world-class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe.''

Like the Blandin Foundation, I too believe that increasing and expanding broadband in Minnesota is of the utmost importance. Back in February, I had the opportunity to voice my support for broadband expansion at the Minnesota Broadband Conference.

Over the past several decades we have seen the rise of internet and technology due to its ability to improve people's lives. As a result of internet access, more businesses are emerging, new jobs are being created, and more educational opportunities abound.

However, many rural communities in Minnesota do not have consistent access to broadband, preventing their communities from thriving and keeping them at a competitive disadvantage. I commend the Blandin Foundation for their efforts to ensure that all communities have the opportunity to prosper and grow.

HONORING WAVERLY WOODSON DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as young soldier in the Korean War, I was honored to follow in the footsteps of many Blacks in the military who exhibited extraordinary heroism and patriotism abroad despite facing discrimination and challenges at home. I would not be where I am today if it were not for my service in the Army. During our annual celebration of Black History Month, I would like to honor an unsung hero from West Philadelphia named Waverly ''Woody'' Woodson, Jr., who served as a young medic of World War II.

This summer will mark the 72nd anniversary of the historic D-Day invasion of World War II. Nearly three-quarters of a century later the event is still revered by all Americans as an example of our military's strength and bravery. However, the life-risking efforts of thousands of Black veterans from the war have gone unnoticed.

The 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion, a unit of all-Black soldiers, landed in France ahead of the main invasion force. The battalion's job was to deploy and man an aerial barrage of massive helium-filled balloons to protect the American forces from enemy bomber airplanes. The balloons forced enemy pilots to fly their planes at higher altitudes to avoid becoming entangled and made it harder to effectively aim their bombs.

Among the 320th was Waverly Woodson, who enlisted in the Army on Dec. 15, 1942, during his second year of his pre-medical studies. He did not wait to be called by the draft; rather he decided to sacrifice his career, comfort and life for his country and the world. Woodson's enlistment placed him in the Anti-Artillery Officer Candidate School but he was told upon completion of his training that there was no spot open for him. Instead, he was sent for medic training with the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion. He was one of five medics aboard a Landing Craft Tank that left England on June 5, 1944, for a ninety-mile journey towards Omaha Beach.

Waverly's voyage on June 6, 1944, was commenced by a violent charge towards the shore. Along with his unit, Waverly valiantly stormed Omaha Beach in the midst of mines, mortar shells and heavy ammunition, with eyes fixes upon the mission of freedom that lay ahead. As a medic, Army Corporal Waverly Woodson Jr. risked his life to save the crippled and bleeding out American warriors clinging to their last thread of consciousness. He patched and resuscitated dozens if not hundreds of soldiers while he himself was wounded by the shrapnel ripping away at his legs. Woodson's determined efforts directly influenced the result of this battle.

Though he was segregated into a racially organized regiment, he saved the lives of numerous soldiers regardless of their skin color. Woody would later say, on that day ''they didn't care what my skin color was'' and obviously he did not care either. He was bonded to his men by the camaraderie that only war can provoke and a steadfast allegiance to defending the greatest country in the world. His dedication broke down racial divides that day, and this is history that truly deserves recognition.

Woodson was previously nominated for the Medal of Honor, but he never received it. Instead, he was given the Bronze Star, the fourth-highest military honor. There exists no record of what happened to his nomination for the Medal of Honor. Not one of the thousands of Black soldiers who served in World War II received a Medal of Honor in the immediate wake of the war. Something is detrimentally wrong with that.

However, we can always remedy the mistakes of our past. In 1995, I was honored to bring Waverly Woodson and a group of African-American World War II veterans to the floor of the House Chamber and recognize these unsung heroes for their forgotten service. As a veteran myself, I was moved to see that their sacrifice was no longer overlooked but there is more work that we must do.

Black History Month must continue to play a pivotal role in helping all of us remember, preserve, and honor the accomplishments and contributions of the Black leaders of America. The annual celebration serves as a poignant reminder of how much Black history has been lost, forgotten, or in some cases, deliberately erased from the record. The nation's commemoration of Black history is not for the Black community alone, but for our collective and cohesive recognition of American history as a whole.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—ELIZABETH ORTIZ

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Elizabeth Ortiz from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Elizabeth attends Cinco Ranch High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at

the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Elizabeth was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursing science or technology. We are proud of Elizabeth and all of her hard work, and know she will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Elizabeth for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMMIGRANTS' ASSISTANCE CENTER

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Immigrants' Assistance Center (IAC) in New Bedford, Massachusetts on their 45th anniversary, and to thank the Center for its continued service to the community.

Since its establishment in 1971 by members of the local Portuguese community, the IAC has helped immigrants throughout southeastern Massachusetts adjust to their new lives. The IAC is committed to empowering immigrants by providing them with the opportunity to successfully transition into new routines in the United States, while also preserving and maintaining the heritage of their home countries. Through their tireless work, the dedicated staff at the IAC has helped countless individuals overcome the language, economic, and cultural barriers that many immigrants and non-English speakers face upon arriving in their new communities.

Throughout its history, the IAC has also encouraged immigrants to pursue active roles in our communities. By connecting immigrants with civic advocacy groups, religious and charitable organizations, and other community service opportunities, the IAC has inspired numerous immigrants to become passionately involved in helping those who need it most.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the Immigrants' Assistance Center as it celebrates its 45th anniversary. The support provided by the IAC has greatly improved the quality of life for many residents of southeastern Massachusetts. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing the Immigrants' Assistance Center well in its continued endeavors and I look forward to hearing more about its accomplishments in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO KATIE ALBRECHT-SNELL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Katie Albrecht-Snell for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Katie serves as the manager of corporate citizenship at Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. Through her work, she is able to lend a helping hand to those in need and show others the gratification in doing so. Katie's caring and giving spirit is not only part of her professional life. She is a dedicated volunteer in the community and from a young age has always shown a passion for helping others. This year, Katie also became a mother and always finds time to be with her husband and newborn.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Katie in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Katie on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TRIBUTE TO JIM BECK

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Jim Beck, a resident and community leader from Bakersfield, California, on his retirement as the General Manager of the Kern County Water Agency. Over the past three decades with the Kern County Water Agency, Jim has been instrumental in the fight to ensure our community receives the water we need.

Jim received both his Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from the University of Pittsburgh. He joined the Kern County Water Agency nearly 32 years ago, moving from an agency chemist to Manager of Improvement District No. 4 to Assistant General Manager. In January 2005, Jim became the General Manager, undertaking an extremely important role for Kern County in California's extremely challenging world of water.

The Kern County Water Agency (KCWA) is the second-largest participant in the California State Water Project (SWP), with an annual allotment of about 1 million acre-feet of water that is delivered to 19 public water agencies through KCWA and provided to serve domestic and irrigation water supplies to families, farms, and businesses located in Kern County. As General Manager, Jim has fought hard to ensure that Kern County gets the water we deserve—the water that we contract and pay for.

The position of General Manager of KCWA is not for the faint of heart. Jim has led the agency through the most recent and currently ongoing catastrophic drought in California—the worst on record. Federal and state laws and regulations have exacerbated drought conditions resulting in significant water supply reductions from the SWP and to Kern County. Notwithstanding Jim's soft-spoken and quiet demeanor, when it comes to water advocacy, Jim has been a vociferous and unwavering ally in efforts to reform these laws and regulations to help ensure our communities get the water they need.

At my request, Jim travelled to Washington, D.C., to testify before the House Committee on Natural Resources on the importance of legislation to reform the laws and regulations that are making it impossible for the Kern County Water Agency to get its full water allocation off the SWP. And, with Jim's and his staff's expertise, legislation was drafted that united all the differing factions in California's complex water system (north and south, east and west, Federal and state) that passed the House in multiple Congresses.

Recognizing the challenges on the SWP, Jim did not stand idly by as surface water supplies became more unreliable. As General Manager, he oversaw significant capital projects at the Kern County Water Agency, including water purification and conveyance infrastructure, to ensure the water that Kern County does receive either from the SWP or Mother Nature is not lost. In addition, as General Manager, Jim oversees one of the largest groundwater banks in California, which has been invaluable as the drought continues.

Jim has been at the forefront of the fight for Kern County farmers and families. Drive up and down the Central Valley and you will see signs that say ''Food Grows Where Water Flows.'' The water that Jim and KCWA have gotten for Kern County, part of California's ''Salad Bowl,'' ensures that our community, state, and nation have access to healthy fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts and that the southern Central Valley continues to thrive.

Jim exemplifies how one can serve their community with quiet fortitude and dedication over the years. Jim and I have been in the trenches together on California water, and I have enjoyed working with him and his no-nonsense style as we fought to protect Kern County water. After many years in public service, I know that Jim looks forward to spending more time with his wife, Diane, and two sons, Chandler and Braden. Jim will be missed in the world of Kern County and California water, but I salute his lifetime of service and on behalf of our county and state, I wish him the best as he begins this new chapter of his life.

RECOGNIZING THE 37TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 37th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act and to recognize the long-standing U.S.-Taiwan relations. For the past 37 years, the Taiwan Relations Act has served as the cornerstone of the friendship between the United States and Taiwan that has been a mutually beneficial economic, cultural, and strategic relationship.

The United States and Taiwan share many of the same values, including democracy, freedom of speech and rule of law. The relations between our two countries have grown to include areas of trade, national security, and people-to-people exchanges. Taiwan has also joined the United States in providing essential humanitarian aid and promoting peace throughout the world.

As a member of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I am continuously supportive of efforts to strengthen the friendship between our two countries.

In commemorating the 37th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, I commend the work that has been done between our two countries to further democracy, and I look forward to strengthening our relationship with Taiwan in the future.

IN MEMORY OF BILL WEST

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, April 10, 2016, a Celebration of Life was conducted for William Otis West, Sr., at Holland Avenue Baptist Church of West Columbia, South Carolina, with services warmly conducted by Pastor Dow Welsh, Pastor Charles Wilson, and Dr. Bill Davidson. Musical selections were performed by Carroll Crawford, Bobby Bland, Bob Michalski, Emily Lipscombe, and Stacey Arnold.

I was grateful to provide a remembrance along with Lexington County Chronicle Editor Jerry Bellune.

A thoughtful obituary was published March 31, 2016, in the Lexington County Chronicle:

WEST COLUMBIA.—William O. ''Bill'' West passed away peacefully on Friday, March 25, 2016, at the age of 76. He was born in 1939, a son of Elizabeth and Edward West in Spartanburg, S.C.

Bill was a well-known face and voice in television and radio in South Carolina but his heart was always in newspaper journalism. Despite severe health problems, Bill continued to serve South Carolina journalism through a long career as editor of The Dispatch-News in Lexington and recently as columnist and senior editor at the Lexington County Chronicle.

His passion for print led him to serve the South Carolina Press Association as editor of the SCPA Bulletin. Bill was honored to be named State Journalist of the Year in 2009.

He was also honored for his coverage of the community by a local activist group that calls itself the Cayce Mafia, and with the Order of the Palmetto Patriot by Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer and long-time political activist Mickey Lindler.

After being named S.C. Press Association Journalist of the Year, Bill's comment was, ''I wasn't called to the pulpit, but to the press. And the past 50 years I have been very blessed by people, my writing and my God.''

Bill is survived by his wife Anne Foster West; four children and their spouses, Suzanne Davidson and Joe, Fred West and Michelle, Joe West and Elizabeth, and Billy West; six grandchildren, Bryce Davidson, Alex Davidson, Connor Davidson, Foster West, Grace Anne West and Joseph West, and a brother, Eddie West.

Services will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 10, 2016, at Holland Avenue Baptist Church, 12th Street in Cayce. The Rev. Dow Welsh, The Rev. Charles Wilson and Dr. Bill Davidson will officiate. The family will receive friends immediately after the service.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Flower Ministry at Holland Avenue Baptist Church.

My remembrance remarks for the Holland Avenue Baptist Church service are presented:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Family and friends of Bill and Anne West,

I am humbled and grateful that Bill has requested I participate in this celebration of life, especially in the company of Jerry Bellune and his wife MacLeod Bellune, who love this community and the West family.

Holland Avenue Baptist has extraordinary members. This year in January I attended the celebration of life of Johnnie Neese, a lady who made a positive difference, as a founder of a new political party in the 1960s, which is now the majority party of our community and state. She and her husband Harry were courageous.

It is clear that Bill West, a gentleman, has made a positive difference. I share his passion for print media as I was editor of my high school, college and law school newspapers, but unlike Bill, he was a superstar, being editor of the The Dispatch-News, then on to edit the South Carolina Press Association Bulletin, becoming the S.C. Press Association Journalist of the Year in 2009, before enthusiastically being a columnist and senior editor of the Lexington County Chronicle.

I saw firsthand of his professionalism, not as a journalist, but as an elected official who he professionally grilled. His thoughtful questions were very perceptive and he was evenhanded, asking the same questions, in the same tone, to friend or foe. He fulfilled his duty to inform the public with a community newspaper. I will always cherish his evenhandedness and even though he knew I admired him, his inquiries were solid and not fluff. He respected the readers by providing the truth for them to determine their views.

When he called, I always dropped everything to return the call because I knew he had a strict deadline. I also hoped it would give me a chance to speak with Anne. They are a great team raising four wonderful children and six talented grandchildren who mean so much to Roxanne and myself.

I am grateful to Bill for giving me the opportunity to be here today with a dedicated wife, family and friends. I know the Lord has welcomed Bill. ''Well done, Good and Faithful Servant.'' God Bless the West Family.

FOURTH DISTRICT OF COLORADO DELEGATES TO THE CONGRESS FOR FUTURE MEDICAL LEADERS

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize nine high school students from the fourth district of Colorado, who were selected to represent the state of Colorado as delegates at the Congress for Future Medical Leaders. The students are Tolani Adeleye of Erie High School, Danae Beauprez of Yuma High School, Cody Benson of Chaparral High School, Paola Cabrales of Lamar High School, Kali Dodd of Douglas County High School, Katie Emberley of Silver Creek High School, Ashley Joplin of Legend High School, Andrea Russell of Laurel Springs High School, and Michelle Scoggins of Windsor High School.

The Congress of Future Medical Leaders is an honors program that recognizes exceptional high school students who are pursuing careers as a physician or in medical research.

These students are the future leaders of the medical field and our country. Through their studies, they have embodied the meaning of hard work and perseverance to achieve their goals, and will better the health of future generations

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to recognize these nine students for their hard work and service to their community. I wish them luck in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO LIZ ADELMAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Liz Adelman for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Liz is the founder and CEO of Adelman Public Relations, one of the premier public relations firms in Central Iowa. She has also been tirelessly dedicated to her community and it's evident through her involvement in several area non-profits, including co-founding Art Week Des Moines, and fundraising for Central Iowa Shelter and Services, Heroes for Homeless, and Cheers for Children. Through all of her community involvement and dedication to growing her business Liz still finds time

to be with her husband and three boys, Michael, Ben, and Sammy.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Liz in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Liz on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL BY JESSICA HUANG

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Jessica Huang attends Dawson High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: With Liberty and Justice for all.

''You will never be a part of Congress.'' To this day, this statement by a past mentor is one of the main motivators that pushes me to strive towards my vocational goal of working in the government, and working my way up to become a state representative or senator someday. To any rational person, one could see that the numbers are against me—only about a fifth of Congress is women, and 11 members are Asian. Thus, being an Asian female, the overwhelming tide of numbers is clearly not in favor of my aspirations. Nevertheless, these numbers and my fifth grade teacher, who did not believe I had a chance simply due to my ethnicity and background, did not phase me. Through passion, empathy, and commitment, I strongly believe that I will one day be able to sit on Capitol Hill, in spite of my race, my gender, or others who believe I do not have a chance to make it as an Asian female politician.

I have always been interested in how government functions; it amazes me how much influence one person or representative can have over millions of people. I realize how necessary government is, and we need a government not only to protect us, but to represent us, to make life fair and equal for all. Yet, I have always found something quite contradictory in the above statement that, if a democratic government such as ours was meant to 'represent' its people, why are our representatives mostly Anglo-Saxon? Mostly male? Mostly of the upper class? It seems as if only a small portion of the American population even has a say or a position; yet Americans believe they are all 'free' and 'equal.' That may be true on paper, but when observing whole group or crowds of people, skepticism can set in.

This is what makes the political process so challenging in my opinion—the lack of representation in Congress of minority groups can make many feel oppressed, and students like me feel like we don't have a chance to achieve our dreams and goals. Regardless, I hope to be a part of the change—to become a Congresswoman and be an example to younger minority Americans who aspire to be government officials, too. After all, if we wish to be world leaders in the international community, we must first figure out internal politics to truly give ''liberty and justice for all.''

RECOGNIZING MIKE HAYWARD AND HIS YEARS OF SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO THE PEOPLE OF WALLOWA COUNTY, OREGON

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my good friend Mike Hayward for his many years of dedicated public service in Wallowa County. Mike has retired after serving 19 years on the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners, serving 15 of those years as Chairman, and I would like to pay tribute to his leadership for the people of Wallowa County and northeastern Oregon.

Born and raised in Pullman, Washington, Mike developed an early affinity for the outdoors, taking jobs in agriculture in his youth before going on to earn a degree in forestry from Washington State University. While at Washington State, he earned a summer internship that stationed him at Wallowa Lake State Park in Joseph, Oregon. After graduation, he was hired on full time at the park, which is where he eventually met his future wife, Beverly.

Mike's work with Oregon State Parks took him around the state, but in 1980, he and Bev felt the pull to return to Wallowa County and be closer to their family. Shortly thereafter, Mike took his management skills into the private sector when he and Bev bought Eagle Cap Chalets at the base of the Wallowa Mountains, which they managed for 8 years.

Surrounded by federally managed public forest and range lands, timber and livestock production has long been the base of Wallowa County's economy. Mike's knowledge of forestry and agriculture as well as several years of community leadership roles, including a seat on the Joseph City Council and time spent directing the local Chamber of Commerce, led several of his close friends to suggest he run for County Commissioner in 1997.

Since then, Mike has constantly kept a sharp eye out for opportunities to represent and defend the County's interests as a leader of a number of organizations including the Grand Ronde Model Watershed Council, Northeast Oregon Housing Authority, Association of Oregon Counties, Wallowa-Union Railroad, and several regional forestry collaboratives and resource advisory committees.

When 57 percent of your county is controlled and often mismanaged by the federal government, working to grow the economy and opportunities for the local communities can be an understandably frustrating process at times. Yet, Mike's knowledgeable, hard-working and even-keeled approach led him to become recognized as a leader on public lands and other natural resource issues affecting counties across eastern Oregon.

Over the years, I got to know Mike well and came to rely on this counsel as well. Whether it is travel management plans on the Wallowa-Whitman, or the on-going Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision process, I appreciated Mike's useful input and insight as we worked together to find creative solutions to the challenges facing Wallowa County and their neighbors in northeast Oregon.

As Mike takes on his new role as General Manager for the Wallowa County Grain Growers, his retirement from elected office doesn't mean Wallowa County will be losing his leadership or knowledge. Dedicated to his community, I know Mike will find a number of ways to continue serving and giving back. For the last six years, Mike and Bev have donated and served a community wide Thanksgiving Dinner in Enterprise. Such acts of generosity are a perfect example of the dedication Mike has shown over the years to the fellow members of his community.

Above all, Mike is dedicated to his family. He and Bev returned to the county over 36 years ago to be closer to family, and I know that he is now looking forward to having a little more time to spend with his wife and grandchild.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, please join me in recognizing and thanking my good friend, Mike Hayward, for his many years of leadership in Wallowa County. I wish Mike all the best in his new pursuits.

VOTER SUPPRESSION CONTINUES, SO WE MUST CONTINUE THE FIGHT

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today on this Restoration Tuesday, I rise to acknowledge the continued voter suppression around the country during this election year and the ongoing battle to protect the constitutional right to vote.

While the House was in recess, the state of Wisconsin seemed to digress in a decline of democracy through its restrictive voting laws hindering the most essential right on which this great democracy was founded; the right to vote. The newly implemented voter ID laws of Wisconsin have been compared to the poll taxing of the Jim Crow era and created a significant hardship disproportionately affecting some of the state's most vulnerable groups seeking identification to vote.

After the Supreme Court struck down Section 4 pre-clearance requirements in 2013,

several states, including Alabama, took that ruling as a license to trample on the Constitution and violate the voting rights of vulnerable communities and constituents across the nation. This election year has been especially revealing of the great danger involved in silencing the American voice and hindering their Constitutional right to vote. Enough is enough, and this continued voter suppression must stop now.

As devastating as it has been to see this ongoing suppression of the American vote, we can find strength and hope in our country's strong stance for democracy and equality when we look to the recent Supreme Court Ruling on the Texas ''one person, one vote'' case. The Supreme Court's refusal to change the way state and municipal districts are drawn and upholding representation based on total population truly affirmed our nation's brand as a democratic society. The Justices of the Supreme Court delivered a strong singular statement that being ineligible to vote doesn't make one invisible.

Fundamental to our democracy is that all men and women are vested with certain inalienable rights and voting is essential to those founding principles. Permanent residents have rights, the disabled should be protected, immigrants and the incarcerated should be included. The Supreme Court decision makes it clear that all people matter and all people should be counted.

We must remember that we are always more powerful united than divided and we all must continue to support equal representation and full protection of voting rights for all Americans. On this Restoration Tuesday, I give us all the charge to battle against the continued suppression of the American vote and stand strong by our principles of democracy, liberty and justice for all.

CONGRATULATING THE SEA ISLANDS SOCIETY

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today based on the simple notion of service to others, and accordingly I would like to say a few words regarding the Islands Society. A nonprofit headquartered on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, the Society's mission is to encourage islanders around the world to participate in the international community. For that mission, the Society has been recognized as one of the up-and-coming organizations by the United Nations Foundation. They also named its president and founder, Michael Edward ''Eddie'' Walsh, as a person to watch who wants to change the world.

Our region's group—The Sea Islands Society—is the only nonprofit on Hilton Head Island to be recognized as a top-rated nonprofit by GreatNonprofits. For this, I wanted to congratulate them on the achievement.

I think it is encouraging to see an organization reaching out at a local level and actively encouraging them to become leaders in the field of foreign policy.

HONORING MR. MATT PERRY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Matt Perry, who will retire on April 2, 2016 after 28 years serving the citizens of Lake County, California in county administration. I wish him a happy retirement and hope he can spend more time with his wife, Julie, and his sons and daughter-in-law Chandler, Caleb, and Ashley.

Mr. Perry completed a master's degree in Public Administration and a bachelor's degree in History at Brigham Young University in Utah, before moving to California to begin his career with Lake County in 1988 as an Administrative Analyst. Through his exemplary skills and dedication to his work, he quickly earned more responsibility and higher positions, and became a County Administrative Officer in 2012.

Lake County relied on Mr. Perry's fiscal and management expertise to navigate some of the county's most challenging periods, including the Great Recession and the Valley Fire in 2015. Mr. Perry's ability to manage everything from detailed budgeting tasks to the oversight of complex county projects demonstrates not only his value to Lake County, but also his passion for exemplary public service.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his career, Mr. Perry generously offered his time and knowledge to serve the people of Lake County and ensured prudent fiscal management for the county. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and extend our best wishes to him in retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BARRATT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mike Barratt for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Mike serves as vice president and financial consultant at Charles Schwab where he has been helping his clients manage their wealth and reach their financial goals. He focuses on changing the lives of individuals through financial freedom and firmly believes that once you change one life, you can change many. Not only is Mike successful professionally but he is deeply involved in the community. He serves as a board member at the Food Bank of Iowa and works tirelessly to eradicate food insecurity in his community.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Mike in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Mike on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

ESSAY BY GRANT DENTRY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Grant Dentry attends Pearland High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

For 54 years, the United States and Cuba have been hostile towards each other. The hostility stemmed from close diplomatic relations formed between Cuba and the USSR against the United States during the Cold War era. However, as of December 17, 2014 Barack Obama and Cuba's current leader Raul Castro agreed to normalize the relations between each other and lift restrictions placed on travel, trade and diplomatic embassies.

Reuniting the alliance of the United States and Cuba is now called ''The Cuban Thaw''. This is a significant event because it ends the last of the conflict and tensions from the Cold War which ended in 1991. This event should help both countries because we will soon be able to trade freely with each other which helps boost both economies. Also, the House of Senate removed Cuba from the United States State Sponsor of Terrorism list and the United States returned five Cuban prisoners after they returned two of our prisoners. Both governments have allowed visitation between the two countries and are positioned to lift the ban on financial transactions between banks. Cruise lines have also been approved by both governments as well as commercial flights between the countries which is expected to bolster tourism. U.S. telecommunications companies are now allowed in Cuba which will help

their infrastructure, although many Cubans may not be able to afford cell phones yet. Reuniting with Cuba may also help to soften and eliminate their communist ways of government. Because of these two countries cooperating with each other again, it builds a better reputation for the U.S. and helps expand our global networking and economic power. Many American business owners can now expand their markets to include Cuba which is a short distance from the Florida coast. The United States is now open to Cubans who want to expand their business into the U.S. which will greatly help Cuba and create new jobs in both countries.

Due to this new alliance, both countries can become stronger and benefit from each other through mutual trade, travel and business. It is a major boost to the U.S. economy because we can import and export with Cuba at a low cost due to the close proximity. The improved business activity and restored diplomatic relations with a close neighbor is good for the United States and the world.

HONORING MRS. LATONYA WILLIAMS-BRADLEY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable entrepreneur, Mrs. LaTonya Williams-Bradley.

Strands of long, black locks fell effortlessly onto the floor as a pair of young eyes looked on eagerly—carefully observing the technique of the hands behind the shears that snipped away to create a new, edgy look.

Mrs. Williams-Bradley of Cleveland watched intently as her mother cut, washed and curled mane after mane, building a strong clientele at her Rosedale salon.

She remembers while sitting and observing her mother at her salon as a child, that she desired to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a hair stylist.

But, what she didn't know was that she would also become an agent, to help others do the same, as owner and CEO of Goshen School of Cosmetology in Cleveland, Mississippi.

As a single parent Mrs. Williams-Bradley received her cosmetology education at Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where she graduated in 2006.

After passing the state licensure to become a licensed cosmetologist, Mrs. Williams-Bradley returned to Coahoma Community College to further her cosmetology career to become a cosmetology instructor and completed that course of study in 2009. She was immediately offered the opportunity to become a cosmetology instructor at Coahoma Community College.

After working at Coahoma Community College she worked at Blue Cliff College in Gulfport, Mississippi as a cosmetology instructor.

During her tenure as an instructor she decided that it was time to pursue her dream of owning her salon and began researching entrepreneurship practices and opportunities, eventually, deciding it was time to pursue her dream of one day opening her own salon. In 2011, she opened Goshen Salon and Boutique in Cleveland, Mississippi. She chose the biblical name Goshen because it is a land of plenty, comfort and growth in Egypt. On July 29, 2013 she opened Goshen School of Cosmetology with a core curriculum and institution designed to promote growth, increase and comfort.

Now, what was once the dream of a little girl has become a reality. Mrs. Williams-Bradley has enjoyed substantial success in the exciting field of cosmetology. Where over the last nine-years she owned and managed two successful hair salons while teaching at two colleges, inspired numerous students to strive for excellence and to achieve their maximum potential.

The motto she shares with others is ''Whatever is your passion and your heart's desire—pursue it and be the best at it and believe that there is nothing too hard for God.''

Mrs. Williams-Bradley is married to Tony Bradley and has four children: Teara, Tamaryea, Zira and Lauren. She is the daughter of Freddie and Barbara Graham and has two (2) siblings: Erica Jackson and Beauty Braham.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing entrepreneur.

HONORING ROGER LINDSEY

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Roger Lindsey for his time and service to Cabool, Missouri. Roger has been an active member of the community and has shown great integrity and perseverance throughout his banking career.

Roger started as a Cabool State Bank custodian in 1962 while he was still attending Cabool High School. He later became a teller, then a cashier and treasurer. In 1998 he became President of the bank, holding that position until retirement. His story exemplifies the American dream, and he was shown that hard work and determination reap great rewards.

Roger also holds various titles within the community. He is the Past President of the Cabool Chamber of Commerce, Past President of the Cabool Alumni Association, and Past President of the Twin Cities Industrial Corporation. He is the Treasurer of the Gentry Residential Treatment Center Community Liaison Council, a member of the Cabool Athletic Booster Club, a member of the Cabool Votec advisory board, and a former coach for youth baseball leagues.

His involvement and contributions to the Cabool community serve as a great example for all Missourians. For his outstanding career and community achievements, it is my pleasure to recognize Roger Lindsey before the United States House of Representatives.

ENRIQUE ARCILLA WINS MOJAVE WATER AGENCY ESSAY CONTEST

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Apple Valley, California resident Enrique Arcilla for earning first place in a student essay competition for the Mojave Water Agency. For winning the competition, Enrique will receive a $5,000 scholarship.

The theme of the competition was ''Predicting Our Future by Our Own Design,'' with a goal of increasing discussion about ensuring water reliability in the High Desert. Enrique's winning essay was titled ''The Path to Sustainability.''

On April 13, 2016, Enrique will present his essay at the 2016 High Desert Water Summit. Other finalists, who will receive $1,000 scholarships, were Raeven Jones of Apple Valley, Nolan Serumaga of Victorville, Emilia Cloutman of Hesperia, and Geng-Wei Lee of Barstow.

Again, congratulations to Enrique and all the finalists on this impressive achievement and for their interest in water conservation. Water usage is a particularly important issue for my district and California as a whole. Keep up the great work.

6TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SMOLENSK DISASTER

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I join in acknowledging the sixth anniversary of the Smolensk Disaster, a tragedy that claimed the lives of Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife, Maria, and 94 others aboard a government aircraft on April 10, 2010. Among the victims were high-ranking generals and government officials, clergy, anti-communist leaders and the family members of victims enroute to a ceremony for the 1940 Katyn Forest Massacre. Also on the plane was one American citizen on an official mission for the City of Chicago. The crash at Smolensk North Military Airfield in western Russia is central to the event sponsored by the Commemoration Committee for the Smolensk Disaster and held at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, April 17, 2016 prayers will be offered for the souls of the 96 crash victims and honor those who served their country.

TRIBUTE TO SARA BONNEY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Sara

Bonney for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Sara works as the director of marketing and communications at the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. She works tirelessly to promote the story that the Community Foundation has to tell, making the city of Des Moines a better place. Sara has also dedicated her time and talents to her community outside of her professional life. She has served on the Blank Children's Hospital Festival of Trees and Lights Gala Committee, Greater Des Moines Partnership Communications Advisory Council, Polk County Housing Trust Fund Marketing Committee, and Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Celebrate Iowa Gala Committee. She was taught at a young age that you get more when you give.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Sara in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great State of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Sara on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

ESSAY BY INGRID WU

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Ingrid Wu attends Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: What makes the political process in Congress so challenging?

One of the most challenging aspects of Congress is developing efficient communication. In our current political bill making process, as bills are passed along, discussed, voted, and decided on like a game of telephone. It may lose momentum and the vigor of one bill at the beginning of its life cycle wanes as time passes and it gets reviewed and revised over and over. Of course, when it comes to dealing with the laws of the country, everything should be reviewed with scrutiny; however, maintaining the life behind a bill is also important and a hard job of Congress.

Additionally, Congress is also met with difficulties regarding opposing opinions. In our current era, politics is something that is increasingly gaining popularity. We see it on TV talk shows, highway billboards, school posters, and even on daily consumer products. With America's two major parties—Republicans and Democrats—having such a profound influence on the opinions of society and, thus, politics, much is hindered. For example, just recently, Congress was met with the challenge of repealing the Affordable Care Act and, through this, the clash of ideals and beliefs caused the process to be in a standstill. Visibly, the repeated efforts of Congress went to vain. In recent years, the number of bills passed has been continuously decreasing. Compromising both sides of the political spectrum and creating a bill to encompass the beliefs of both sides is a necessary and difficult responsibility of Congress. One reason why such a situation is happening may be partially due to either the processes and weight of Congressional action but also the unwillingness of both branches and the party backing the majority of both the cede in some areas and the lack of constraints, especially time constraints.

Finally, another challenge of Congress is to understand the people's wants and needs, for understanding these subjects is a way to foresee which ways politics should lean and what exactly needs to be done. Through many different facets, even the Congressional Youth Advisory Council, Congress has taken initiatives to seek the opinions and analyze the lives of individuals on a small scale. Through similar programs of community outreach and developing the next generation, Congress has made great effort to reign in this challenge.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ILLINOIS REPRESENTATIVE DAVID LEITCH

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Illinois State Representative David Leitch for his tireless contributions and dedication to public service in the State of Illinois.

Representative David Leitch, State Representative of the 73rd House District of Illinois and a resident of the 18th Congressional District, has dedicated nearly three decades serving his constituents in the Illinois General Assembly. His top-notch commitment to providing timely and effective constituent service to citizens has remained steadfast since he was sworn into office 27 years ago.

Representative Leitch has built a statewide reputation, establishing himself as a leader in matters pertaining to our health care system and especially mental health care in Illinois.

A primary focus of his work has been advocacy for establishing a strong community-based mental health system in our state. He convened providers beginning 15 years ago to form the Central Illinois Coalition for Mental Health Recovery. Among its accomplishments are a Mental Health Court, a psychiatric residency at the University of Illinois-College of Medicine in Peoria, and a Crisis Center designed to divert at-risk individuals to treatment rather than emergency rooms or jail. Most recently, he passed legislation enabling college students to allow their family to be notified in the event they are struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts and legislation which improves the inclusion of mental health services for older adults into primary care health settings. His outstanding advocacy on mental health and substance abuse issues has not gone unrecognized with accolades from the Heartland Health Services, a federally designated community health organization in Central Illinois, commending his life's work in the improvement of public health policy and his receipt of the statewide President's Award from the Community Behavioral Healthcare Association.

Outside of his advocacy on issues regarding mental health recovery, Rep. Leitch is credited with passing the first state law in the nation requiring insurance coverage for mammograms, he passed the first state law in the nation allowing for the collection of cord blood stem cells, he secured funding for the expansion of the Illinois Central College campus in East Peoria and arranged the acquisition of the ICC North campus in Peoria after the closure of Zeller Mental Health Center. Illinois Central College named the David R. Leitch Career Center in honor of his dedication to the community college. Nationally, he has received the Dr. Nathan Davis Award as State Legislator of the Year in the U.S. by the American Medical Association as well as over 75 other legislator of the year (or equivalent) awards.

Representative Leitch's steadfast work to improve the lives of citizens throughout our great state embodies the manner in which progress can be made for the greater good and citizens of Illinois. Rep. Leitch epitomizes the standard for which current—and future—public servants should strive to emulate to help improve lives within our communities.

It is with great honor that I have had the ability to call Representative Leitch not only a colleague but also a friend for many years. I want to congratulate him on his tireless advocacy for the mental health community and his dedicated service to the State of Illinois.

HONORING MIA WILLIAMS 2016 WASHINGTON STATE MIDDLE LEVEL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mia Williams, the principal of Aki Kurose Middle School, who has been recognized as the winner of the prestigious 2016 Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year Award.

The Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year Award, given by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP), recognizes middle school principals who have an extraordinary impact on their students' academic success and who make great contributions to their profession. Ms. Williams stood out among a field of other highly eligible candidates.

Ms. Williams has been the principal at Aki Kurose Middle School in Rainier Beach since 2008. Since that time, she has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of her students by listening to their needs and adjusting policy and procedures based on their recommendations. Under Ms. Williams' leadership, test scores have consistently improved across the board for Aki Kurose students and continue to improve due to her persistence and continued dedication to her students. Since her arrival at Aki Kurose, the student population has grown from 420 students to 700 students. At the same time, Ms. Williams has overseen a 50 percent reduction in student absenteeism and has made progress on closing the opportunity gap. She has carefully cultivated an environment where students feel supported and capable of reaching their full potential.

Ms. Williams was a teacher in the Seattle School District before completing the Danforth Educational Leadership Program at the University of Washington to pursue her dream of serving as a principal. Her skills were recently recognized by the Johns Hopkins University's Everyone Graduates Center, who invited Ms. Williams to the White House to participate in a panel where she shared her knowledge about effective strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize principal Mia Williams for earning the Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year Award. She is an inspiration to all.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the National Collegiate Honors Council on their 50th anniversary. The National Collegiate Honors Council serves over 325,000 honors scholars at over 800 colleges and universities, including Broward College in my district. Created in 1982, Broward College's Robert Elmore Honors Institute supports over 1,200 honor students annually.

Sixteen students from the college have been awarded the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, the second highest total in the Nation. Many of these scholarship recipients have gone on to be successful thinkers, working for companies such as Facebook.

In the words of founding director Dr. Mary Jo Henderson, ''The essential worth of our honors programs is not resulting scholarship or award but the experience itself''. I commend Broward College and the National Collegiate Honors Council for creating an experience that cultivates the leaders of tomorrow.

ESSAY BY EMILY JUE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Emily Jue attends Clear Springs High School in League City, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

An important event that occurred this past year was the legalization of same-sex marriage throughout the country. Thousands of Americans gathered in Washington D.C. to hear the ruling of the Supreme Court on same-sex marriage. On June 26, 2015 the Supreme Court declared through a vote of 5–4 that all Americans would be able to marry nationwide, no matter their gender or sexual orientation. This ruling made the United States the twenty-first country to legalize same-sex marriage and specifically affected thirteen states that had a ban on same-sex marriage. This momentous event brought a new civil right to the United States and a victory to gay rights advocates.

The legalization of same-sex marriage has changed our country by offering the privilege of marriage to couples that are not the traditional ''male and female'' couples. Marriage offers a promise of love and commitment within couples and through the legalization of same-sex marriage, couples of the same-sex are able to give the same commitment and love that traditional male and female couples are able to give. The legalization of same-sex marriage in the United States also represents acceptance and equality to those in the LGBTQ community by offering these people the same civil rights as other citizens in the country have. By giving this fundamental freedom to couples of the same-sex, the United States is able to offer equality to all couples regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

The legalization of same-sex marriage has also changed our country by normalizing and bringing acceptance to those of the LGBTQ community. By allowing people in the LGBTQ community to marry, the United States fosters a sense of acceptance to these people who are sometimes treated with disrespect and contempt. Through accepting same-sex marriage, the United States accepts those in the LGBTQ community which is a step towards the equality for all people and has had momentous impacts on the United States. By legalizing same-sex marriage, the United States moves one step closer to equality for all people, regardless of gender or orientation, and offers a beacon of hope to those in the LGBTQ community and a means for acceptance.

TRIBUTE TO SOPHIA S. AHMAD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Sophia S. Ahmad for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Sophia is the vice president of public relations at the Greater Des Moines Partnership and works tirelessly to develop and promote the overall image of Central Iowa. Her work proves that Central Iowa is a perfect place to build a business, career, and a family. Sophia is among the most dedicated leaders in the community. She has volunteered her time to the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute's Curriculum Committee, Winefest Des Moines' Grand Cru, Couture for a Cause, and a number of other local volunteer organizations. Not only does Sophia dedicate herself to her work and her community, in her spare time she likes to play piano, because she's a professionally trained classical pianist.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Sophia in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Sophia on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

FOURTH DISTRICT OF COLORADO DELEGATES AT THE CONGRESS OF FUTURE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY LEADERS

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize nine high school students from the fourth district of Colorado, who have been chosen to represent the state of Colorado as

delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. The students are Christine Evans of Lyons Middle-Senior High School, Benjamin Gryboski of Dayspring Christian Academy, Brandon Lelievre of Windsor High School, Alessandra Linero of Chaparral High School, Crystal Pike of Valley High School, Courtney Ross of Yuma High School, Hannah Spain of Douglas County High School, Sara Stavaski of Rock Canyon High School, and Hanna Storey of Douglas County High School.

The Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders is an honors program that recognizes exceptional high school students who are pursuing careers as engineers, scientists, or technologists.

These students are the future leaders of the STEM fields and our country. Through their studies, they have embodied the meaning of hard work and perseverance to achieve their goals, and will advance science and technology for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to recognize these nine students for their hard work and service to their community. I wish them luck in their future endeavors.

HONORING CARR'S STEAKHOUSE

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carr's Steakhouse in Mayfield, Kentucky, on receiving the National Restaurant Association's ''Restaurant Neighbor Award.'' This award was established to honor restaurants in the field of outstanding community service and involvement. Carr's Steakhouse is among four national winners to receive this award during a gala dinner tonight here in Washington, D.C.

Though the Carr family has had extensive ties to the community through their BBQ business in town for more than 60 years, Carr's Steakhouse is only six years old but already has an impressive record of giving back. The restaurant hosts an All-Kids-In event that raises funds to assist children enrolling in youth sports and activities, regardless of a family's ability to pay. They also donate excess food to local homeless shelters; provide meals for the area's high school football teams; partner with community and school groups to host fundraisers as well as the community's Empty Bowls Project to support local food pantries.

Carr's Steakhouse sees community involvement as a win-win for the restaurant as well as the community. This was exhibited recently when General Manager, Daniel Carr, hosted a fundraiser for Princess Theaters of Mayfield. Saddled with outdated amenities and technology, the theater was struggling to stay afloat and in desperate need of upgrades. Carr decided he wanted to do more than raise money—he wanted to send a strong message to the theater's owner that the community was behind them. The response was overwhelming when Carr's provided a free meal for a donation to the movie theater. In just a few hours, the 200-seat restaurant raised more than $5,000 to be used for stadium seating and digital projectors.

This is just one of several examples of Carr's Steakhouse going above and beyond to help their community. Businesses such as Carr's Steakhouse make me proud to represent the First Congressional District of Kentucky and I am pleased they are receiving the recognition they deserve for their ongoing commitment to the community.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF BEN SLADE FROM THE ST. SIMONS LAND TRUST

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Ben Slade and all of his accomplishments as Executive Director of the St. Simons Land Trust.

Over the last 11 years, the St. Simons Land Trust has worked to preserve land on St. Simons Island, Georgia, which is home to 12,000 residents, a multitude of marshes, creeks, rivers, and fish, as well as the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale. The Land Trust works with willing property owners to preserve the beautiful land of this region and its significance to Georgia's natural habitat.

Mr. Slade has worked with the St. Simons Land Trust since its inception, leading the company from a small group to an organization that now includes 1,250 member households and 776 acres of land. During his time with the organization, Mr. Slade's numerous accomplishments have been critical to the environmental success of the island. One of his most important accomplishments was his leadership in the purchase of the 604 acre Cannon's Point area on St. Simons—the last intact maritime forest on the island.

Over Mr. Slade's career, he has continuously worked to aid the St. Simons community including his time as the Chairman and CEO of the First Federal Savings Bank of Brunswick, the founding Chair of Habitat for Humanity of Glynn County, and President of the Chamber of Commerce.

Later this year, Mr. Slade will retire as the Executive Director of the St. Simons Land Trust. I rise today to recognize his effort and accomplishments in bettering the island of St. Simons and wish him the best with his future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO ZACHARY BALES-HENRY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Zachary Bales-Henry for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Zachary serves as a real estate broker at RE/MAX Precision, a firm he started with his business partner, and works tirelessly to provide outstanding customer service to his clients throughout the home buying process. Zachary's resume outside of his professional life is just as impressive. He has started his own foundation that is dedicated to providing scholarships for students with learning disabilities. Zachary was also recently elected to the Windsor Heights City Council, where he continues his dedication to community involvement and improving the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Zachary in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Zachary on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

CUBA-U.S. RELATIONS BY EMILY GUENTHER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Emily Guenther attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is Cuba-U.S. Relations.

The United States and Cuba severed relations in 1961 because of speculation that the Cuban government could not be trusted. At that time, Fidel Castro established trade ties with the Soviet Union amid rumors that the U.S. was using the embassy for spies, which caused tension between the two. And for more than 50 years the conflict between the two countries has continued.

But in July of 2015, Cuba and The United States re-established relations and opened embassies in Havana and Washington D.C. This event has triggered much debate; with many Americans believing that this is an opportunity to regain trust with Cuba and open new areas of growth. This has been a hot topic in Washington because of the different views and opinions from both sides.

Many favor renewed relations as positive step, especially for the people along the coast with many immigrants settling in places such as Florida. They also argue that with mutual cooperation on issues such as exploration for oil, and increased trade and tourism, this can be a large boost of economy that will be crucial in the building of ties with Cuba.

Others have reacted more negatively and strongly oppose mending relations until numerous issues are addressed. Some find that Fidel Castro not being punished for his dictatorship and the lack of human rights is unfair for the citizens of Cuba.

After the new relations were addressed some things were changed quickly such as travel to and from Cuba becoming a lot easier, and few minor business deals being established. But as some relations have been established, most things remain the same; the embargo of trade with Cuba by the U.S. is still in place, which only Congress can change. And Cuba remains a communist government without free elections and still has questionable human rights issues that must be addressed. There continues to be much debate with little change since both embassies were established, and it will be difficult to undo relationships that have been hardened for many years.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Wednesday, April 13, 2016*

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 13, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID W. JOLLY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I introduced the Information Technology Modernization Act, a bill that will make our government more transparent, more efficient, more responsive, and more secure.

Dangerously, many Federal Government agencies, as we have seen, rely on technology systems that are decades old and hinder digital interagency collaboration. As a result, government services are less efficient than they could be, and Americans' personal data is put at higher risk every year that goes by without critical system upgrades. This was the experience for almost 2 million employees of our Federal Government.

I am partnering with the White House and U.S. Chief Information Officer Tony Scott to propose a new way to invest in upgrading the government technology infrastructure that serves the American people and this institution.

My bill authorizes a one-time investment of $3 billion into a revolving fund that will be overseen by an independent review board. The fund will invest in large-scale, rapid systems upgrades deemed to be in the greatest need and that would provide the greatest impact on serving the American people.

Once an upgrade is completed, the receiving agency will then begin paying back the fund over time, using the savings achieved from greater efficiency. In such a way, this one-time investment of $3 billion will support at least a minimum of $12 billion—that is 400 percent more—worth of upgrades in the first 10 years alone, after which it would continue to fund upgrades into the future.

This is a novel approach for government, though it has been employed successfully in the private sector, where it has a proven track record. Tony Scott himself, Mr. Speaker, implemented a similar program when he was the chief information officer at Microsoft, which was successful and resulted in significant long-term savings.

Additionally, the fund will ensure that upgrades make use of the latest and best practices from Silicon Valley, including shared services, cloud hosting, and agile development. This will enable agencies to create new user-friendly apps and services, and facilitate the sharing of data between agencies to root out fraud and waste. It will promote the use of systems that are secure and prevent cyberattacks.

My bill will also ensure transparency by requiring all upgrade projects to provide regular status updates on a publicly available digital dashboard.

I want to thank all those who signed on as original sponsors, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say that I had discussions last night with Mr. ISSA, the former chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. I think he is going to cosponsor this bill with me, and we want to see this bill be a bipartisan bill.

I have also talked to ranking members on my side of the aisle in each of the relevant committees: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. ROBIN KELLY, and Mr. TED LIEU, all of whom are excited to support this piece of legislation.

Again, this is a totally nonpartisan bill looking for government efficiency and safety and transparency for the American people. I hope that my friends on both sides of the aisle who care deeply about making government as effective and transparent as possible, as well as eliminating fraud and inefficiencies, will partner with us by cosponsoring this bill and helping to bring it to the floor as a bipartisan measure overwhelmingly supported by this House.

I am proud of the bipartisan work we have done together already to encourage innovation in the use of technology in Congress, particularly the hackathons I have hosted with Leader MCCARTHY and his predecessor, Mr. Cantor.

Let's work together. Let me say that again. Let's work together to expand that effort to the executive branch and make sure that the Federal Government can and is serving the American people effectively and transparently.

HONORING FLORIDA HEROINES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the many generations of women who have shaped our Nation and thank them for their invaluable contributions.

As the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress, I am grateful and inspired by their legacy. These women have influenced public policies, built institutions, and contributed to a stronger economy. Without their contributions, our society would be less lively, our culture more impoverished, and peace would be less stable. We need to respect their great achievements by continuing the job.

I share the hopes and aspirations of all women across America who wish to make the lives of our daughters, sisters, aunts, and mothers more equitable. I have always been committed and dedicated to advancing the role of women in our society, and I work toward policies that would assist them and their families. That is why I have joined the bipartisan Congressional Women's Caucus and have supported extensive legislation and programs fighting domestic violence and women's access to a quality education.

Today I would like to pay tribute to some of the more energetic champions of women's rights from my area of south Florida: Roxcy O'Neal Bolton, Helen Aguirre Ferre, Julia Tuttle, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Judge Bertila Soto.

Roxcy Bolton has had an impressive career by advocating for equal rights in the workplace and also by creating the

first rape treatment center in the country, located in my hometown of Miami. She also founded Women in Distress, the first women's rescue center in Florida. Roxcy has received numerous accolades and is an iconic and loved figure in our community.

Congratulations, Roxcy.

Helen Aguirre Ferre is another pioneer. She is an award-winning journalist and communications consultant who was recently inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. As the chair of the Board of Trustees of Miami Dade College—my alma mater—Helen is committed to promoting education and establishing policies that would help students across our community.

Congratulations, Helen.

Julia Tuttle, known as the mother of Miami, made history as the only female founder of a major U.S. city when she helped establish the city of Miami many years ago. Julia's vision and perseverance have long been traits that south Floridians have worked to carry on since the founding of our great city of Miami.

Tuttle's mantel of leadership is heavy, but it has been carried on by so many others.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas made another kind of south Florida history when she worked tirelessly to save her beloved Everglades. Her iconic book, ''The Everglades: River of Grass,'' helped awaken so many to the need of preserving this one-of-a-kind ecological wonder and led the fight to establish the Everglades National Park.

Judge Bertila Soto is a modern-day heroine. She is a fellow graduate of my alma maters, Florida International University and the University of Miami. She was named chief judge of Florida's 11th Judicial Circuit.

Bertila is both the first Cuban American and the first woman to helm the largest judicial circuit in the State. Her energy and understanding of complex legal issues have driven her to success. Every day that Judge Soto is hard at work, she is not only living, but making south Florida history.

Congratulations to Bertila.

I also want to honor our female pilots of World War II, the Women Airforce Service Pilots, also known as the WASPS. They were responsible for removing the barriers for women in the military today. And I know this because my daughter-in-law, Lindsay, was afforded the opportunity to join the Marine Corps and fly combat missions both in Iraq and Afghanistan thanks to these women pioneers.

South Florida has been home to some of these remarkable heroines like Ruth Shafer Fleisher, Shirley Kruse, and Bee Haydu, as well as Frances Rohrer Sargent and Helen Wyatt Snapp, who have passed away.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to recognize all of these outstanding women, past and present. May these role models continue to remind girls and young women that nothing can hold them back from realizing their dreams.

HEROIN AND OPIOID OVERDOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, the chart that is being set up next to me here depicts graphically one of the most sickening trends in terms of an increasing cause of death in the United States, which is heroin and opioid overdoses.

On the top, the map shows data from 2004 from the Centers for Disease Control, when 7,500 Americans lost their lives to overdose deaths. In 2014, that number has grown to 27,000.

The red shaded area is high-intensity areas of death of up to 20 per 100,000 in the population. The blue is 10 or less. And in 2014, as you can see, the red is slowly but inexorably taking over the entire country.

This is a crisis which, again, affects every part of our country, whether it is rural, suburban, or urban. It affects Republican districts. It affects Democratic districts. And it is time for our Nation to recognize that this needs to be treated the same way we would any natural disaster or public health emergency in the country.

In 2016, we know these numbers are, in fact, going to get worse.

The Office of Chief Medical Examiner in the State of Connecticut released their 2015 numbers a few weeks ago, and the number grew in the State of Connecticut by 20 percent, to 723 deaths in 2015.

Just this morning in the local press in southeastern Connecticut, a 25-year-old was found dead in a motor vehicle on Route 12 outside the Groton Navy Base, and a young man, an 18-year-old, was found dead in Norwich just a couple of days ago.

It is time for us to listen to the folks who are on the front lines—the police officers, the addiction counselors, and the folks that are dealing with this program bringing people to life with Narcan—and understand that we need a new approach to solving this incredibly dangerous crisis for our Nation.

The good news is that the Senate, a couple of weeks ago, passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act 94–1. It is a good bill. It makes some smart changes in terms of the overprescribing of painkillers. It deals with the disposal of the proliferation of painkillers that is far too great in the Nation today. It also talks about changing protocols in the FDA, HHS, DOD, VA, all of the agencies of the Federal Government that deal with folks suffering from pain. Unfortunately, though, the bill does not contain a single penny of emergency assistance which the police departments across the country, the addiction counselors across the country are begging for.

In the House, there is a bill, H.R. 4473, which does provide emergency supplemental appropriations this year to try and get resources so that folks who are dealing with this crisis and families that are dealing with this crisis are actually going to get real help. And this bill has been endorsed by 21 organizations, from the Fraternal Order of Police, the police and the cops and the firefighters who are out there saving people's lives right now with Narcan, and also the addiction counselors who, again, do not have adequate detox facilities and beds to deal with the carnage that is happening all across this country.

The Republican majority leader announced last week that in May, the House will take up the Senate bill. I wish it was this month. I wish we could move with the urgency of a natural disaster like a fire or hurricane or tornado striking parts of our country that causes devastation much less than what these maps depict. However, the fact that there is going to be some movement is some sign of hope.

□ 1015

But it is important to remember it is not enough to just pass authorizing language that is about trying to change policy without funding, because the folks who are dealing with this problem, who are watching us like a hawk because they are dealing with this problem, like that young man who was found dead last night, understand that resources are needed, just like in any other natural disaster or public health emergency facing this country.

Again, we need to turn this map around. We need to change this so that, again, the devastation that is being caused in families of middle class, upper class, lower income families across the country is going to stop.

There are real-life solutions that the folks who are at the front lines are prepared to move forward. They are on standby. What they are waiting for is this Congress to move forward with the real resources that we would deal with as a great Nation in terms of any other epidemic or any other massive public health or health emergency in this Nation.

We need to include H.R. 4473. We need to listen to the 21 organizations that deal with this problem all across America so that we get real help out on the streets of America and not just give lip service to solving this critical problem.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF CAPTAIN JAMES T. DEAN, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Captain James T. Dean, Jr., an Army veteran from the Vietnam war.

Jim was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1944. In 1962, he joined the Army and graduated from Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He served in Korea with a Sergeant missile unit before being deployed to a beautiful place during an ugly time. He served in Vietnam from January 1968 to September 1969, serving with the 2nd Battalion, 40th Field Artillery, of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

A proud redleg, Jim received the Bronze Star with ''V'' device for heroism in ground combat, the Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters for meritorious achievement in ground operations against hostile forces, the Purple Heart for wounds received in action, along with numerous other awards and decorations for his service.

Following his service, Jim and his wife, Carla, moved to Naples, Florida, where he started several businesses before returning to his true passion, horticulture.

Jim worked for the city of Naples as the assistant parks and parkway supervisor. He was proud to have played a significant role in the Naples-scape project to beautify the city.

He was a civic leader, serving on the board of the Greater Naples Better Government Committee as well as the Marco Island Kiwanis. He was an ordained elder within the Presbyterian Church, and he and Carla were members of the Collier County Republican Executive Committee.

Jim also battled bladder cancer and, with Carla and other friends, formed the Bladder Cancer Foundation of Florida to raise awareness.

Sadly, Jim succumbed to bladder cancer and passed away last month, on March 23. His name will not appear on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall; however, make no mistake about it, like too many other survivors, Jim was a casualty of the war due to his exposure to Agent Orange.

Recently, the National Institute of Medicine forwarded to the VA that ''there is limited or suggestive evidence of an association between chemicals of interest and bladder cancer.''

Adding bladder cancer to the list of medical conditions that qualify veterans for a presumption of exposure to Agent Orange would allow veterans easier access to critical healthcare benefits.

Unfortunately, it is too late for Jim, but many Vietnam veterans continue to suffer from this disease. I call on VA Secretary McDonald to approve this designation so our Vietnam war veterans can receive the help that they have so solemnly earned.

I know I speak on behalf of the entire Congress and a grateful Nation to express our deepest condolences to his widow, Carla; daughter, Michelle; and his many friends and loved ones. I pray for God's mercies upon them as they cope with their pain.

BUDGET CUTS AT THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this week in 2 days is April 15, the day that our income taxes are due. We have seen that day difficult enough under the best of circumstances, be made even more difficult, purposely, for millions of Americans. My Republican friends have decided to take out their differences with the IRS, their opposition to taxation, by deliberately torturing the American taxpayer.

Ours is the largest tax system in the world that relies primarily on volunteer compliance. Each 1 percent where people decide not to comply costs the Treasury $30 billion. Now, most, in fact, do comply, but an ever-increasingly complex tax system makes compliance difficult.

It should be noted that it is not the IRS that makes the Tax Code complicated; it is Congress that is constantly changing that Code. Sometimes it is so late in meeting its obligations with tax changes that the Service doesn't even have time to print the forms on time.

In order to help citizens with Congress' complex tax system, the Internal Revenue Service runs the largest consumer service operation in the world. Last year, it was a disaster. Well, this process has been deliberately sabotaged by the Republican approach to the agency budget. It has 30,000 fewer employees than it had in 1992, down 13,000 from 2010, despite the fact that the Code gets more complex and there are more people filing returns every year.

Congress should have been a constructive partner in streamlining, modernization, with new computers, but the IRS budget prevents it from modernizing information technology. It still uses applications that were running in the early 1960s. And you cannot completely computerize the simple task of answering phone calls and talking to taxpayers.

When you visit the IRS offices, as I have, you find employees who are sad and angry that they are unable to meet the needs of the taxpayers. They don't like getting somebody who has been on hold for 20 or 30 minutes and then not having the time to work with them to answer their questions. It frustrates the taxpayer, and it breaks the heart of our employees.

Now, it is no secret that some people forget or cheat on their taxes, but Congress has not equipped the IRS to do the audits necessary to actually collect the money that is due. This year, when we have a big deficit, there will be $300 to $400 billion of taxes that are due and owing but won't be paid. Yet Congress is deliberately trying to make it worse. They have 12,000 fewer enforcement staff, a reduction of 23 percent, and I am going back to a Ways and Means Committee where one of the proposals would cut that budget another $500 million. It is not fair to the taxpayer, it is not fair to our employees, and it makes it hard to fund the needs of our Nation.

People talk around here about running government like a business. What business undercuts, underfunds, and slashes its accounts receivable department? They may think it is good politics to make the taxpayer experience as miserable as possible, but it is ultimately bad judgment, poor politics, and a disservice to the American people as we undercut the ability to fund essential government services.

Many of my Republican colleagues have been looking for scandal within the IRS. Whatever problems they uncover or imagine, the real scandal is how they are treating the American public and the people who work for them at the vital service of the Internal Revenue Service.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 195th anniversary of Greek independence.

Citizens of Greece have always been a proud people in body, mind, and spirit. From Pericles, Greek statesman and general, dubbed ''the first citizen of Athens''; to Plato, who laid a groundwork in philosophy so vast that the entirety of European philosophical tradition is said to simply be a footnote to his work; to Count Ioannis Kapodistrias, the first head of state of an independent Greece, Greeks have been exceptional and continue to be exceptional, Mr. Speaker.

I am almost certain that Thomas Jefferson cast an eye across the Atlantic towards Greece when he uttered these words in 1821: ''The flames kindled on the Fourth of July 1776 have spread over too much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism. On the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.''

I am blessed to be of two cultures, Mr. Speaker, that have been beacons of liberty for all of civilization: the place of my birth, the land of the free and the home of the brave, the United States of America; and the land of my ancestors, the birthplace of democracy, the Hellenic Republic.

Many Greeks fought for years, holding on to their heritage, their culture, their faith. Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the emblem of freedom for Hellenes, the flag bearing a white cross and nine blue and white stripes representing the nine letters, ''Eleftheria,'' which means freedom.

Eight years of bloodshed and battle led to the Treaty of Adrianople, the formal declaration of a free and independent Greece.

Greece was the world's first advanced civilization, one that provided a cultural heritage that has influenced the world. Firsts in philosophy, mathematics, politics, sports, and art all stemmed from a free Greece.

Liberty and justice, freedom to determine the path of one's own life, these are human desires and were embodied by Greece throughout their fight for independence. Those unyielding Hellenes paid life and limb for those desires, and generations of Greeks for decades to come owe their ancestors thanks.

As George Washington once said: ''Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.'' This held true in Greece in 1821, as it did in America in 1776.

''Freedom or Death,'' Eleftheria i thanatos, was the battle cry of the revolutionaries nearly 200 years ago. It rings true today.

Freedom is a powerful and beautiful notion. The Greek people achieved that for themselves 195 years ago, and I am proud to celebrate in memory of those who fought bravely to shed the shackles of the Ottoman Empire.

Greece has its own unique challenges today but, also, a history of resilience and ability to climb its way out of turmoil. As centuries-long allies, we must continue to creatively come up with solutions to help Greece control the flow of refugees arriving on its shores.

I am encouraged by the growing cooperation and collaboration that our closest allies in the Eastern Mediterranean are proving this year. The trilateral agreements between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel are a refreshing reminder that we stand united with our allies in the fight for security, stability, and prosperity in a volatile region.

We celebrate Greek independence to reaffirm the common democratic heritage we share, and, as Americans, we must continue to pursue this spirit of freedom and liberty which characterizes both of our great nations.

Zito I Ellas. God bless America.

□ 1030

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, this morning I intend to comment on middle class budgets. But, before that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just very briefly reflect on a trip I just took to visit with our troops in the Middle East, in Iraq and elsewhere.

I have been to Iraq about 10 times. I think one of the fundamental responsibilities we have, as Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, is not just to talk about supporting our troops, but to go into the theater, visit with them, and learn firsthand the challenges they face.

Every time I visit with our troops, when I come back, I think the same thing: that we are so blessed to live in a country that gives us the right to agree with the decision to put people in harm's way, we have the right to disagree with that decision, and we have the right to remain silent, but no American has the right to forget even for a day the sacrifices that those men and women are making for us every single day.

We owe them our support and our awareness for the work that they do and, more importantly, supporting their families who are here and supporting our troops when they return as veterans.

Mr. Speaker, Friday, April 15, is a day of two deadlines. That is the deadline most Americans know by which they must pay their Federal income taxes. Everybody understands that deadline, and Americans don't have a choice but to comply with that deadline.

The other deadline is that that is the day by which Congress must pass a budget, and it is up to the Republican majority to produce that budget and bring that budget to the floor for a vote.

Unfortunately, the Republican majority will miss that deadline and fail the American people in our fundamental responsibility to earn our pay by passing budgets.

That is what we are put here to do: to debate priorities and pass budgets; yet, this deadline will be missed. Failing to pass a budget by the deadline is a fundamental failure to the American people.

I will say, however, that, in this case, a missed budget may be a little better than the bad budget that Republicans have originally proposed. It is a budget that fundamentally fails the middle class.

It is a budget, as proposed, that gets rid of the Medicare guarantee. It is a budget, as proposed, that slashes $6.5 trillion in fundamentally important priorities to the middle class in making sure that their kids are well educated, making sure that we are rebuilding America with infrastructure and trying to reduce traffic jams, rebuilding our bridges and our tunnels, and modernizing our airports. It is a budget that undermines the middle class. It is a budget that fails the middle class.

Now, I understand the need for us to reduce spending, and I have supported significant reductions in spending in my time in Congress.

But what this budget does is it takes away from the middle class in order to further enrich the most powerful: the special interests.

That is why people are so angry out there. They understand that Washington has to do more with less, but not give more to people who already have the most.

That is what the Republican budget does. That is the architecture of spending tax dollars that must be paid by April 15.

You take away from the middle class and you give more to people who are doing pretty well already, people who are doing so well that they can hire all sorts of friends to do their work here in Washington and maybe even contribute to some super-PACs. I think that is wrong.

People are angry because not only are our priorities wrong, but they see very little evidence of a Congress, under Republican leadership in the Senate and the House, that is doing its job.

They are angry because the Republican Senate won't even debate and vote on a Supreme Court nomination. You can vote for it. You can vote against it. They won't even vote on that nomination.

That is a failure to do the job that they are paid to do. They are angry because the majority here in the House of Representatives won't do their job and pass a budget.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, maybe no budget is better than a bad budget, but both represent failure for the American people.

The Pew Research Center did a study just several weeks ago that said that, for the first time since the Depression, to be in the middle class in America is to be in the minority. About 49 percent of Americans are in the middle class. The rest are either richer or poorer.

An economy grows best when the middle class is strongest. We need to fulfill our responsibility to that middle class by doing what they will pay us to do on April 15: just do our jobs and pass a budget that invests in their growth, in their families, in their children, and, as I opened, invests in our troops, our national security, and makes sure that every veteran in America is taken care of. Those are the priorities we have in our budgets.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 34 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Stephen Thomlison, St. Stephen's Catholic Church, Exeter, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Good and gracious God, we come before You filled with gratitude for the many blessings You have bestowed upon us. Humbly, we ask for Your forgiveness for when we have chosen the wrong path.

We beseech Your mercy, O Lord, upon our Nation. Rain down from heaven Your holy fire—not a fire of wrath or destruction, but a fire of love, a fire of mercy, and a fire of wisdom so that we may love as You love.

Pour into this Chamber today a spirit of civility, a freshness of renewal, and a bountiful grace of new ideas.

Bless these legislators, their families, their staff, and abundantly bless all those they represent. May the work of this Chamber be guided by Your divine hand.

Hear us, O Lord, for I ask this in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND STEPHEN THOMLISON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome Father Steve Thomlison, and thank him for serving as our guest chaplain today.

Father Thomlison serves as chaplain for both the Nebraska Army National Guard and the Nebraska State Patrol, actually, as well as the FBI, providing support to hundreds of our servicemen and -women, first responders, law enforcement, and their families.

Ordained in the Catholic Diocese of Lincoln, Father Thomlison pastors the parish of St. Stephen's Church in Exeter, Nebraska, and the mission parish of St. Wenceslaus Church in Milligan, Nebraska.

He did not enter the priesthood right away, but by his mid-thirties, a restless heart and a renewed focus on prayer led him to the seminary. He was ordained a priest at age 41.

It is also important to note Father Thomlison is a proud Cornhusker, having attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

It is my honor to welcome Father Thomlison to the United States House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

BALD EAGLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WINS NUTRITION HABIT CHALLENGE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend several school districts in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District for their work in helping promote healthy lifestyles for their students, staff, and residents.

In 2015, more than 2,200 people participated in the Nutrition Habit Challenge, which was established 3 years ago by One on One Fitness, a local fitness consulting company, in order to inspire people across the county to make better choices for their diet and exercise habits.

Each year, the winning school district is picked based on the number of successful participants divided by the district's total number of students. Those who participate must commit to changing a nutritional behavior over the course of 1 month.

This year, the Bald Eagle Area School District, my alma mater, won $500 through the competition. District officials say families participating in the challenge cut soda from their diets and increased consumption of water, while others packed salad for lunch instead of opting for fast food.

I commend the students, the staff, and residents of all Centre County's school districts for participating in this unique challenge.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF BILL ROSENDAHL

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my dear friend and former Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, who lost his battle with cancer on March 30.

In 2005, Bill became the first openly gay man to be elected to the Los Angeles City Council. I remember how brave he was in the face of adversity. He became a fearless supporter of the Los Angeles LGBT community, and he left behind a legacy of fighting for HIV and AIDS research and an end to discrimination.

Bill was one of the most selfless and kindhearted individuals I have ever known. That heart made him an incredible advocate and a beloved champion for the people he represented.

I visited Bill recently in hospice and had a chance to hold his hand and tell him stories about when we served together on the city council in Los Angeles.

I will never forget his joyfulness, his gregarious laugh that never failed to put a smile on my face. I have cherished his friendship, and I will miss him dearly.

May he rest in peace.

MAIN STREET JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, talk to any small-business owner, and they will tell you how challenging it is to operate in this environment: heavy-handed regulations, confusing paperwork requirements, a complex and unfair Tax Code. I hear it all the time as I travel Michigan's Seventh District, hold listening sessions, and tour local shops and manufacturing facilities. That is why I am introducing the Main Street Jobs and Opportunity Act.

To grow a healthy economy, we need to foster policies that help small businesses do what they do best: bring their products to market and hire new workers in the community.

It is time for Big Government to stop squeezing the small family farmer in Jackson County, the local diner in Eaton County, and the manufacturer in Monroe County. Instead of building up Washington or Wall Street, let's focus on helping Main Street.

HONORING THE 65TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the 65th Infantry Regiment, a segregated Puerto Rican unit known as the Borinqueneers.

The regiment was created in 1917, and it remained segregated throughout World Wars I and II and most of the

Korean war, even after President Truman ordered the desegregation of the Armed Forces. These soldiers sacrificed everything for a country that had not yet embraced the rights of Hispanic Americans—a shame for our country, but a show of incredible loyalty and service by those who served.

Today, the House and Senate leaders will present a Congressional Gold Medal in honor of the 65th Infantry Regiment. In attendance will be Cas Rodriguez, Sr., chairman of the Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York.

I thank Cas and the others who worked so hard to make sure that Americans will never forget the service of the 65th Infantry Regiment.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO DO ITS JOB AND PASS A BUDGET

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, by law, Congress must enact a budget resolution by April 15. That is Friday. Yet, after months of promising to return to so-called regular order, Speaker RYAN has failed to bring a budget to the floor of this House for us to act upon.

I don't know about you, but my constituents, the people I work for, are tired of a do-nothing Congress.

The Republican majority has failed to pass a budget resolution. We need a resolution that supports working families, a budget that supports growing the economy in this country. But instead of that, the Republicans have decided not to pass a budget at all.

Under this Republican majority, rather than working with those of us on this side of the aisle and finding some common ground around a budget resolution, the majority has been held hostage to the most extreme voices within their conference—the Tea Party members. And because they want to cut Medicare, change it in ways that I think would be destructive to our economy, they can't bring a budget to the floor of the House of Representatives.

We need to do our job.

LEAD CONTAMINATION IN GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I stand here as a Member of Congress; but years before that, I was a mother and a grandmother, and I still am. It is from all of these perspectives that I am deeply disturbed by recent tests in Galesburg, Illinois, that show a high contamination of lead. Even more alarming is that 5 percent of our children tested have elevated levels in their small bodies.

If this happened to one of my kids, I can tell you I would ask for immediate answers and immediate action; and these families and these children deserve no less.

Last Friday, I met with Galesburg city officials, and I urged them to apply for the low-interest Federal loans to replace the lead pipes that go to 4,700 homes in Galesburg. In addition to that, I support legislation that would call for improved reporting, testing, and monitoring of lead levels.

As a Congresswoman, as a mom, as a grandma, I say to all responsible here: It is time. It is past time. No more excuses. No more delays. We need a long-term solution to a long-term problem.

CONGRATULATING UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM ON EIGHTH NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

(Mr. CRAMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, the University of North Dakota is the State's largest and oldest university, with nearly 15,000 students, 225 fields of study, 3,000 courses, and 84 graduate education programs. UND has a reputation for research and scholarship in the health sciences, in energy and the environment, in aerospace and entrepreneurship—oh, yeah, and in hockey.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, in Tampa, Florida, the University of North Dakota men's hockey team won its eighth NCAA Championship by defeating Quinnipiac five goals to one. UND hockey is legendary in the NCAA, with 22 Frozen Four appearances to go along with their eight national championships.

Congratulations to Coach Brad Berry, to President Ed Schafer, the entire team—outstanding team—of student athletes and, of course, the incoming president and former Member of the House of Representatives, Mark Kennedy—for whom my advice would be, ''Don't screw this thing up''—and the entire UND family on their latest accomplishments.

Thank you for a great season and for your tremendous example of excellence. As you raise another NCAA championship trophy, you also raise the bar for all of those who follow. That is a really good thing.

TEAM 26'S FOURTH ANNUAL RIDE ON WASHINGTON

(Ms. ESTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Team 26, some of whom are here in the gallery with us today, for their courageous efforts to continue the call for this House and this body to take responsible action to end the scourge of gun violence in this country.

This courageous group of riders, 26 men and women, mothers and fathers, high school students and veterans, rode to Washington to renew the call for all victims of gun violence. This is their fourth year.

This year, they bring with them petitions signed by nearly 40,000 Americans demanding that we in Congress do our job by ensuring that all our students are safe and that we allow our college campuses to be gun-free zones. It is my privilege to present this petition to the entire House and to thank Team 26 for their courageous efforts and for their relentless efforts to make sure that we in Congress do our job.

Team 26 rides to bring a message of hope and peace and love. It is time for this House to respond to their call for action with action of our own.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Veterans Legal Institute, an organization that resides right in the middle of my district serving our veterans in Orange County, California, since 2014.

It is a nonprofit organization and provides pro bono legal assistance to our veterans on a myriad of issues, for example, on some of the education issues going on using their GI Bill and housing—because we have so many of our veterans, as you know, that are homeless—with respect to health care, getting into those VA hospitals and to the agencies, and, of course, with respect to employment.

The organization's ongoing efforts have become an important factor in helping us to bring veterans along and to ensure that they are an integral part of our community.

Veterans Legal Institute is committed to providing our everyday heroes with the resources and the support that they deserve, and I believe that we must do our part by supporting organizations such as Veterans Legal Institute so that they can effectively serve this community.

HAWAII STATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

(Mr. TAKAI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a woman of extraordinary talent and devotion, Stephanie Mew, the Hawaii State Teacher of the Year.

Stephanie is currently an elementary school teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School, but her career has taken

her all across the globe to the U.S. mainland, Thailand, Japan, and India.

She came to teaching because she was touched by the struggles of at-risk youth and wanted a job in which she could plant seeds for a successful, productive, and peaceful life. Through her nearly 20 years as a teacher, she has done just that for her countless students.

Her service doesn't stop there. Stephanie also volunteers to feed the homeless and sings at a local nursing home for the kupuna residents.

Mahalo, Stephanie Mew, for your dedication to such an important occupation and for sharing your knowledge and light with your students and colleagues day in and day out.

Congratulations on this most prestigious award. I wish you the best of luck in the final selection for National Teacher of the Year.

WEAR RED WEDNESDAY: BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today is Wear Something Red Wednesday to bring back our girls.

This week marks the second anniversary of the April 14, 2014, kidnapping of the Nigerian Chibok schoolgirls, 730 days.

This week and next, Members of Congress will join us in commemorating the tragic event that captured the world's attention and calling for increased action to defeat Boko Haram, the world's deadliest terrorist organization.

Members of Congress—Republicans and Democrats, men and women—have all galvanized behind this cause. House leadership, including House Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI and Conference Chair CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, have joined us in wearing something red on Wednesday to bring attention to this cause.

I urge my colleagues and everyone to continue to lend their voices to this cause and join us. We should never forget. We must never forget the Nigerian Chibok girls.

For almost 2 years we have tweeted to raise awareness to this issue in Congress, and we will continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls. Tweet every day. Tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls.

THE BUDGET RESOLUTION

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, households across America have budgets. People sit around the kitchen table trying to make the hard choices, figuring out should they send their kid to summer camp, can they afford to go out to dinner more often, can they afford a family trip.

Businesses have budgets. I was in the private sector before I came here, and we had to have those tough discussions and discuss where we were going to reinvest and where we were going to cut.

But, apparently, for the Republicans, they say that our country shouldn't have a budget. The time is running short in which the Republicans can present and pass a budget for the United States of America.

Shouldn't America have a budget just as it has had in the past, just as families across our country have, and just as businesses have?

What is it that they are trying to hide? Can they not make the numbers match without privatizing Social Security and Medicare? Are they trying to hide huge tax increases for the middle class?

We will never know unless the public pressure is so great that the Republicans feel that they have to present a responsible budget before our body. I hope we see it soon.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 13, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 13, 2016 at 9:20 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2133.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2666, NO RATE REGULATION OF BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 672 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 672

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 672 provides for consideration of H.R. 2666, the No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act.

The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

The Committee on Rules made in order three amendments that were submitted to the committee, all three of which were submitted by the minority.

Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a

final opportunity to amend the legislation should the minority choose to exercise that option.

H.R. 2666, the No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act, was introduced by Mr. KINZINGER, a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, to address the issue of an out-of-control independent agency, the Federal Communications Commission, or the FCC.

The bill is targeted and does one thing only. It prohibits the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access.

In February of 2015, the Federal Communications Commission voted on a party-line vote to adopt rules that reclassify broadband Internet access as a title II telecommunications service, reversing their previously stated position that they would not reclassify the Internet under title II, and, in fact, afterwards, the President himself interjected into the debate and demanded that the Commission reconsider and that they do so.

The rules prevent blocking, throttling, and paid prioritization of the Internet. This reclassification poses a serious risk for the regulation of rates charged by providers for the delivery of Internet service, a move that has never before been taken by the government.

Under the Federal Communications Commission's unprecedented use of a 100-year-old statute to regulate the Internet under its net neutrality rule, the Commission gave itself the authority to regulate the rates that Internet service providers charge to consumers for service.

In response to this power grab by the Commission, the Energy and Commerce Committee held oversight hearings. That resulted in the drafting and passage of the legislation before the House this week, which is intended to prevent the Federal Communications Commission from using reclassification of broadband Internet service to engage in rate regulation, whether that be directly through tariffing or indirectly through enforcement actions.

Rate regulation—or even the threat of rate regulation—out of the Federal Communications Commission creates massive uncertainty for Internet service providers. Because of this, Internet service providers could slow or stop altogether the investment and will be less likely to offer specialized or unique pricing offers to their consumers.

As the Federal Communications Commission consolidates more and more power to regulate the Internet—and make no mistake, the Federal Communications Commission is very eager to regulate the Internet—providers will have fewer and fewer avenues for providing consumer service plans and packages.

The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Tom Wheeler, and President Obama have both stated that net neutrality rules would not result in the FCC regulating rates.

Yet, less than a year after the rules were adopted in March of 2016 during an Energy and Commerce hearing, Chairman Wheeler admitted that the FCC should and will have the authority to regulate broadband rates under these new rules.

Like all government agencies, the Federal Communications Commission can't help itself. It sees an unregulated space—the Internet—and it just can't allow it to go on without government control.

Under net neutrality, the Federal Government will have the ability to control the Internet. Let me say that again. Under net neutrality, the Federal Government will have the ability to control the Internet.

Even if this current Federal Communications Commission chooses not to regulate the rates charged, the Commission's net neutrality rules permit future FCC commissioners to do exactly that.

These rules from the Federal Communications Commission have the potential to cost well north of 43,000 jobs, according to a recent study commissioned by the United States Telecom Association. The bill before us this week will take a step toward protecting the Internet industry from those job losses.

I urge my colleagues to support today's rule and support the underlying legislation to protect consumers from an out-of-control Federal bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have just days before the legally mandated budget deadline. Yet, instead of debating your budget, Mr. Speaker, my budget, Mr. Speaker, anybody's budget, Mr. Speaker, we are debating whether to codify existing FCC policy.

There is limited time to provide a budget for our country. Households across our country have budgets, and businesses have budgets. Unless there is an announced change to the schedule in bringing Congress to work on Friday and Saturday and Rules Committee convening today or tomorrow, it seems like Congress will miss the deadline for the budget and perhaps never produce a budget.

Now, folks on the other side will say that there have been years Democrats didn't produce a budget, and that is true. But Republicans ran to take over this body, saying: We are going to do better. We are going to produce a budget. Republicans have had the chance, and there is not even a vote on the budget.

I am going to offer later in this debate a motion to defeat the previous question. If that passes, Mr. Speaker, I will be able to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the budget resolution.

I hope it does. I hope there are enough Democrats and Republicans in this Chamber who are outraged by the failure of the Republican leadership to allow the Republican and Democratic Members of this body to present and vote on their budgets.

□ 1230

We have historically had a very open process around budgets. There is usually five or six budgets that come before the House and we try to get to one that passes. There have been years where I think they have a king of the hill process and whichever one gets the most votes can become the budget.

But it looks like, rather than any of those debates or give Members who have thoughtfully been preparing the budgets from the Republican Study Group or from the progressive Democratic coalition the chance to present their budgets, along with the Republican and Democratic members of the Budget Committee, I think the Republicans are saying: we don't want to have those tough decisions about where to cut or where to tax; we would rather just pretend like our country is in good fiscal order and spend the day discussing codifying FCC policy rather than discussing what the American people sent us here to do—how to balance the budget, restore fiscal stability, and pass a budget.

There is another missed opportunity here today. When talking about broadband—if that is what we are going to talk about—in districts like mine in Colorado, we have communities that simply don't have reasonable access to the Internet. I talk to constituents in Evergreen and Conifer in Grand County every day, rapidly growing communities, where people only have access to speeds that were more relevant to the 20th century rather than the 21st century. I remember I visited a school in Grand County where the district has an initiative to provide every child with a Chromebook computer and the computer science teacher there didn't even have high-speed access from his own home.

Access to broadband is essential for our economy, particularly our rural economy like those in my district. It is essential for the education of our kids, for a vibrant private sector, for civil society, and democracy. While the FCC and the Department of Commerce have some tools in place, there is not nearly the tools they need or the resources to make our Nation competitive coast to coast by making sure that every American has access to broadband.

Bills that try to codify regulations certainly have their place. I would

argue it is probably not when we are 48 hours from reaching a budget deadline. But I want to make sure that even if we are going to spend time discussing codifying FCC policy, that we have the more important discussion about how we can make sure that broadband access is available to our rural communities, such as the ones that I represent.

Democrats and Republicans largely agree on some of the goals of this bill. In fact, I think there is a missed opportunity to have worked on a bipartisan version that likely could have passed on suspension. There are a number of amendments under consideration, and it is my hope that some of the consumer protection issues can be addressed through that.

But I think the big picture here, Mr. Speaker, is we are just 2 days away from Congress' own deadline for passing a budget with no budget in sight. If we can defeat the previous question, we can immediately move to consider the budget. I call upon my Republican and Democratic colleagues to do that. As we look at broadband, which I am hopeful that we can do after this deadline passes—I am happy to revisit this bill if my motion to defeat the previous question passes and we move into the budget debate—I will be happy to resume this debate next week. I haven't seen any particular reason that we have to try to cram in codifying FCC regulations around broadband in the 48 hours before our own budget deadline expires.

So let's get back to talking about the budget. It is never easy. The Republicans have certainly talked about how they wanted the country to have a budget. Well, the country is not going to have a budget unless Congress gets to work debating it and passing it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH).

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

I rise to oppose the rule on this legislation, not necessarily because this is a bad bill—I do think it is a vague solution in search of a nonexistent problem—but I oppose the rule for another reason, and that is because I thought that since we were going to bring this bill to the floor anyway, even though it is unnecessary, even though Chairman Wheeler of the FCC has said that the FCC does not intend to regulate rates on broadband, I thought maybe I would at least try to accomplish something productive and offer an amendment to solve a real problem that the American people are seeing in front of them every day right now. That is the problem of television ads, political ads, that do not truly identify their source.

Under section 317 of the Communications Act of 1934, the FCC requires broadcasters to put on the ad the true identity of the people running the ad. This makes a lot of sense. The idea is that when you see somebody trying to influence your vote or to influence your attitude about a particular public issue, that you should understand who is actually trying to influence you.

But because of dramatic changes in the way campaign laws are implemented and because of the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, what has happened is that we now have ads run by organizations like Americans for Kittens and Puppies, and that doesn't do the American voter, the American consumer, any good. They don't understand who is actually paying.

What my amendment would have done, had it been made in order by the Rules Committee, it would have basically restated the law that exists and say the FCC should regulate these ads by requiring the true identity. Right now they are relying on a 1979 staff interpretation of true identity. They are saying we need to put the sponsor of the ad on the ad, but the sponsor of the ad, again, is a nebulous, vague, title organization that nobody knows who they are.

What we would like to do is say you have to put on the ad who is really paying for it. So instead, for instance, if you had an ad in support of sugared soft drinks and it was being paid for by Coca-Cola, under this interpretation you could put the ad agency that actually put the ad on the air and nobody would know that Coca-Cola was actually paying for it.

The people, again, are seeing this every day on their television screens right now. These laws and interpretations have resulted in endless sums of anonymous money coming into the system trying to influence the outcomes of our elections. That is not what Congress intended. Despite having the authority to do it, the FCC has refused to take action to close this loophole.

My amendment would have restated the original Congressional intent and would send a message to the FCC that it is time to act. This amendment would have been germane, it would have been within the rules of the body, and, most importantly, it would have been supported by the vast majority of Americans: Republicans, Democrats, and Independents who want us to reform our campaign finance system so that it is on the up and up, so people understand who is trying to influence them and also to end the influence of big money in politics.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Kentucky an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. YARMUTH. I wish that the Rules Committee had made that amendment in order, but they didn't, so I will oppose the rule and urge my colleagues to do so.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the gentleman from Colorado how many additional speakers he has?

Mr. POLIS. I am prepared to close.

Mr. BURGESS. In which case, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the Republican budget resolution and allow for consideration of alternative budget proposals under a similar process to that which we have used every year in recent history. It is truly time for the Republicans to stop the partisan game and finally consider a budget before this Friday's legally mandated deadline.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, Americans get it. Households have to balance their budget, businesses have to balance their budget. Not talking about it and putting your head in the sand is only a recipe for increased debt and increased liability for future generations of Americans.

The fact that we are spending $400 billion or $500 billion more than we are taking in—of course we might not know about that for the next year until after the fact if we don't have a budget—the fact that we have enormous unfunded liabilities in Medicare and Social Security doesn't go away just because Republicans ignore the topic and refuse to have a debate on balancing our budget.

I am proud to sponsor a balanced budget amendment. I think that by working together, Democrats and Republicans can restore fiscal responsibility to our Nation.

How can we do it?

Well, I will tell you how we can't do it. We can't do it by 48 hours from the deadline to pass a budget by discussing obscure bills to codify FCC regulations with our valuable floor time.

It starts with an honest discussion. It starts with Democrats and Republicans offering their budgets. I have been proud in the past to support bipartisan budgets that have come to this body. I have supported and opposed some of the Democratic budgets that my colleagues have offered, but we have to have that discussion on the floor. The work doesn't do itself and the problem doesn't go away when Republicans choose to ignore it.

I wish our budget deficit was as easy to solve as simply ignoring it. Wouldn't that be convenient if we could simply ignore the budget deficit and it would go away? Wouldn't it be convenient if we could just ignore the national debt and it would go away? Wouldn't it be convenient if we could ignore the damage to agencies that an indiscriminate sequester has caused and it would simply go away?

I like that line of thinking, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, it is completely unrealistic. The American people realize it is completely unrealistic. That is why when America looks to Congress and says: we have these discussions in our households about our budget, and businesses have these discussions. Why can't you, Mr. Speaker? Why can't you? That is the reason the Congressional approval rating is so low.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, back in the late 1990s, in the middle of what was called the dot-com boom, my predecessor, the then-majority leader of the House of Representatives, Richard Armey, came and spoke to the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of his discussion that day was to talk about the dot-com boom that the economy was experiencing.

He confessed that the Internet was the gosh darnedest thing, no one had ever seen anything like it, but he cautioned us. As business leaders that day, he cautioned us. He said: Look, when the government doesn't understand something, the first thing it will want to do is regulate it, the next thing it will want to do is tax it, and you have then effectively killed it.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn't an accident that I used in the opening statement the language that under the proposed rules from the FCC, the Federal Government will have the ability to control the Internet. That is a significant and important fact. If you allow the Federal Government to control the Internet, you have effectively damaged the promise of the Internet to the point where it will no longer function for its citizens the way it was intended to function: as a free and open process.

Mr. Speaker, it is pretty simple. Today's rule provides for consideration of a bill to rein in the Federal Government that is all too eager to regulate every aspect of our lives.

H.R. 2666 will protect the Internet from government regulation and allow it to continue to thrive without interference.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. KINZINGER for his work on this legislation, and I want to thank the committee for the work that they did in getting this legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 672 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 2. At any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 125) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed four hours, with three hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Tiberi of Ohio and Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York or their respective designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. No amendment shall be in order except amendments in the nature of a substitute. Each such amendment shall be considered as read, and shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 7 of rule XVI (germaneness). If more than one such amendment is adopted, then only the one receiving the greater number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. In the case of a tie for the greater number of affirmative votes, then only the last amendment to receive that number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. After the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment and a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution to the House with such amendment as may have been finally adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1245

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3340, FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL REFORM ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3791, RAISING CONSOLIDATED ASSETS THRESHOLD UNDER SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 671 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 671

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3340) to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; (2) the further amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; (2) the amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for H.R. 3340, the FSOC Reform Act, and for H.R. 3791, the Raising Consolidated Assets Threshold Under Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement. House Resolution 671 provides structured rules for both bills. The resolution provides each bill 1 hour of debate that is equally divided between the chair and the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee. Additionally, the resolution provides for the consideration of one amendment to each bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution and the underlying legislation.

The Dodd-Frank Act created the Financial Stability Oversight Council, which is dedicated to identifying threats to the stability of the American financial system. The FSOC is supported in this mission by the Office of Financial Research, which was also created by Dodd-Frank.

The OFR is armed with subpoena power to compel vast amounts of nonpublic, sensitive information from institutions across the financial system. The OFR feeds this data to the FSOC, which is empowered to designate banks, as well as nonbank institutions, as ''systemically important financial institutions,'' or SIFIs. This designation significantly increases the regulatory burdens that are faced by these institutions, and they have far-reaching effects on the entire financial system. The impact of excessive regulation trickles down to customers, resulting in higher borrowing costs that may stop Americans from realizing their dreams of homeownership, of purchasing cars, of pursuing higher education, or other goals.

Despite the vast power that the FSOC and OFR have, neither organization is subject to the annual appropriations process. The OFR is funded through assessments on banks, and it pays for the FSOC through these funds. As such, the FSOC is insulated from the transparency and accountability that Congress would give to normal organizations by virtue of this self-funding mechanism. This has, effectively, shielded the FSOC from any congressional oversight.

The FSOC Reform Act would, simply, fix those problems. It does not reduce the FSOC's budget or the OFR's, but it would require that they be under annual appropriations. It would also require occasional reports to Congress on their expenses, objectives, and performance measures. Congressional approval of FSOC's budget would encourage transparency with regard to FSOC's methodology for designating SIFIs. It would also make it clear what their objectives are and what they see as concerns for our financial system. I believe this bill will actually increase the transparency of the process, and it will make sure that we look out for the financial security of the American financial system.

The bill also requires the FSOC to engage in a public notice and comment period before issuing any new rules and regulations. These changes will put the FSOC in line with other agencies that have to engage in public notice and comment periods before they provide new rules and regulations.

I thank the sponsor of H.R. 3340, Representative TOM EMMER of Minnesota, for introducing this important legislation that will increase the oversight and transparency to ensure we have a safe and competitive financial market in the United States.

The other measure for consideration under the rule is H.R. 3791, which is a bill sponsored by Representative MIA LOVE of Utah.

Last year, Congress passed and the President signed legislation providing relief to community banks by increasing the Federal Reserve's Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement threshold to include small bank holding companies with up to $1 billion of consolidated assets. This was in response to the small banks' difficulty in accessing capital as a result of significant changes in the regulatory landscape.

This bill provides further relief by expanding the Fed's policy statement to include small bank and savings and loan holding companies with up to $5 billion of consolidated assets. This will provide needed relief for about 400 small bank and thrift holding companies. The $5 billion level matches the threshold that was offered in the last Congress by the current ranking member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, my

fellow Ohioan, Democratic Senator SHERROD BROWN. He did that in S. 798, so this should not be controversial. It is bipartisan. Democrats and Republicans have been for this.

Since the second quarter of 2010, around the time that the Dodd-Frank Act was passed by Congress, the community banks' share of U.S. commercial banking assets has declined at a rate that is almost double that experienced between 2006 and 2010. What is happening in our financial system is that the big are getting bigger, and the small are disappearing. That is why it is important to give regulatory relief to some smaller community banks that are caught in the middle. According to the FDIC, there were more than 18,000 banks in the 1980s as compared to just 6,400 in the first quarter of 2015, and we are currently losing community banks at a rate of one every day.

Increasing the eligibility threshold to $5 billion will ensure that small bank and savings and loan holding companies will be able to issue debt and raise capital so that the community banks can continue to provide financial services to the customers they serve and increase their involvement in promoting economic growth in their local communities.

It is important to note that this bill maintains the requirements that these holding companies meet regulations related to nonbanking activities, off-balance sheet activities, and publicly registered debt equity. The legislation also maintains a safeguard that allows the Federal Reserve to deny an increased debt level to any bank holding company it deems at risk of failure.

Together, these bills will help ensure that powerful regulators act in a transparent manner and are accountable to Congress, and they will provide needed relief for community banks that are attempting to survive in a difficult environment.

I look forward to debating these bills with my colleagues, and I urge support for the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my friend, the gentleman from Ohio, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the rule that is providing for the consideration of both H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act, and H.R. 3791, the Raising Consolidated Assets Threshold Under Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement, and for other purposes.

These partisan financial services bills, in my opinion, would weaken and politicize the institutions that were created after the financial crisis to identify and guard against systemic risk in our financial system; and they will allow even larger bank holding companies to leverage themselves with debt when financing the purchase of other banks.

In reviewing this legislation, I have to ask myself: Are the memories of my Republican friends really so short that they do not remember the pain that our Nation went through only a few short years ago?

The financial crisis of 2008, by everybody's statement, was the worst economic downturn that this great Nation has faced since the Great Depression. It left millions out of work and millions out of their homes. Yet, instead of supporting efforts to ensure that a collapse of this magnitude never happens again, the majority has chosen to weaken the very protections that are designed to prevent such a crisis. This is even more appalling when you consider that we are still dealing with the fallout from the crisis. Just this week, Goldman Sachs agreed to pay $5 billion to settle claims that it misled mortgage bond investors during the financial crisis. I was pleased to see that a portion of its repayment is going to go to low-income and moderate-income housing.

Mr. Speaker, I guess we really shouldn't be surprised by the actions of my friends in the majority. With the kinds of bills that have come to the floor under this Republican Congress, whether they be to roll back environmental protections, 60-plus repeals of the Affordable Care Act, or to deny access to women's health care, I guess it is not a surprise that now my Republican friends are bringing up legislation to help the big banks and strip away the protections to prevent another financial crisis.

I am also left wondering: Why are we debating a rule for these bills today at all? I would like to remind the majority—and I will now and twice again before I yield back my time—that, by law, this body must produce a budget resolution by Friday of this week. Despite this requirement, we still have no budget or a clear path to one. I ask the question: Where is the budget?

I pause here to yield to my friend from Ohio if I could get his attention just for a moment. I know the gentleman is on the Committee on Financial Services. We serve together on Rules, but I am not in the majority and am not privy to what may happen this Friday. I am just curious: Since the gentleman is in the majority, what is the gentleman hearing, if anything, regarding our having a budget by this Friday?

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

□ 1300

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

I am hearing that negotiations are ongoing, and I am hopeful that we can have a budget by this Friday. There is a bit of disagreement, even inside our Conference, about how to move forward on the budget as far as the numbers. But there are a lot of discussions ongoing, and I am hopeful.

I support passing a budget. I have voted for a budget since I have been here. We have passed budgets every year since I have been here. We have not passed the deadline yet for this budget. I am hopeful that we can get it done, but it is an ongoing negotiation.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's response.

I urged that yesterday in the Rules Committee. Aside from your subcommittee holding a hearing this Thursday at 3, we were advised by the chair that there would be no further business of the Rules Committee.

So I assumed, if that is the case, that we won't be going back to the Rules Committee. And I am sure that the budget, if it were to be here by Friday, would require a rule.

Despite all of these things, I empiricize the fact that it doesn't appear that we will have a budget by Friday.

Mr. Speaker, here is how we got to this point: last fall Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a bipartisan budget agreement. Now, however, Republicans are refusing to support their party's own budget proposal.

Now, I understand what my friend said about negotiations going on, and that is good. It would be helpful if those negotiations were going on with Democrats in the room as well.

I was very optimistic, as I am sure all of us were and, to a relative degree, still are, when Speaker RYAN promised to end Republican obstructionism and return to regular order. I felt very optimistic about that.

It seemed that the now-dubbed do-nothing Congress is back and, with it, total dysfunction on the Republican side of the aisle. The dysfunction is so bad that Republicans cannot even agree to a budget number that they have already agreed to.

Now, Democrats don't want to weaken the financial protections keeping our economy stable and strong. Instead, Democrats are ready to pass a budget that creates and helps create jobs and grow the paychecks of hard-working Americans.

We would like to work in a bipartisan way, and we would assuredly like to work in a way that would bring us to the work that is needed to be done in a positive manner.

If only the Republican Conference could stand up to the extreme faction in their own party to work with us, then we could get this business done.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I have no more speakers. If the gentleman from Florida

wants to close, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

These financial services bills are not what the American people want. These are bills that big banks want.

Instead of debating and passing a budget, which we are required to do by law by the end of this week, as I have said, the majority has decided that we should spend what precious legislative time we have left debating bills that would roll back vital protections to the systemic health of our financial system.

So now not only is the dysfunction in the Republican Conference putting one of this institution's most basic functions in jeopardy, which is passing a budget to fund the government, but, to add insult to injury, the majority has decided now is the best time to debate putting our entire financial system in jeopardy by rolling back measures designed to protect it.

I might add that there is an appellate decision that is not on this measure, but on another that we dealt with earlier. I don't understand why we are going forward on these measures when we know, in fact, that they aren't going to go anywhere in the other body.

Mr. Speaker, in my judgment, the American people deserve better.

So since Congress is required to pass a budget by Friday of this week and there is absolutely little sign that the Republican majority intends to fulfill that responsibility, well, Mr. Speaker, I want to give my friends on the other side of the aisle the opportunity to end the obstructionism and meet their and our obligation to pass a budget.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the Republican budget resolution and allow for the consideration of alternative budget proposals under the same process we use every year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question and vote ''no'' on the rule and the underlying bills.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I appreciate the comments of my colleague. I can assure him we are working hard on a budget resolution. Although we cannot notify the committee of any upcoming meeting because we don't know when it will be because we don't know when the negotiations will be, I am hopeful that that will happen and we will actually end up having a budget that will be passed before the deadline.

So, again, I am hopeful, but none of us can control that ourselves. The negotiations are ongoing.

I would just say that these two bills and the rule don't do anything to undermine our financial stability. The first bill puts the FSOC and the OFR on budget. It requires that they have appropriations every year.

You might be familiar with the appropriations clause of the U.S. Constitution: ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . .''

So we just want the normal constitutional checks and balances that exist in every other agency to exist here, to increase the transparency and accountability for what these agencies do.

So the first bill puts FSOC and OFR on budget. It requires appropriations to be passed. It also requires periodic reports on what their goals and objectives are and how their meeting goes. That is kind of a no-brainer.

Again, Senator SHERROD BROWN, the Democrat minority ranking member on the Senate Banking Committee, has a bill that—I'm sorry. It is the second bill. I apologize.

It makes sense to do this, to put them on appropriations.

The second bill is a bill that raises the limit for small financial institutions, community banks, up to $5 billion. We are talking about 400 banks. It is not the biggest banks.

In fact, the biggest banks in America are almost a trillion dollars. We are talking about $5 billion in consolidated assets in banks and savings and loans.

These are community-based financial institutions. There are about 400 of them. They are struggling right now. We are losing a community bank a day in this country. We need to make sure that we do everything that we can to help those community banks continue.

I know that is a bipartisan effort to do that. This may not be the exact way that the other side of the aisle wants to move forward on that.

I offered to the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee yesterday in the Rules Committee that I would be happy to work with her on some other method.

If she thinks she wants to use an activity test, if she wants to require some kind of loans to assets, if she wants to require some kind of capital in this, I would be happy to work with her because we have to help our community banks. I know that is a bipartisan feeling.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Florida that I know that the other side of the aisle feels the same way. We may have a tactical disagreement, but we all feel that way. So I would love to work on that.

In the meantime, I hope my colleagues will support both these bills and the underlying rule. I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bills.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 671 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 3. At any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 125) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed four hours, with three hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Tiberi of Ohio and Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York or their respective designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. No amendment shall be in order except amendments in the nature of a substitute. Each such amendment shall be considered as read, and shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 7 of rule XVI (germaneness). If more than one such amendment is adopted, then only the one receiving the greater number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. In the case of a tie for the greater number of affirmative votes, then only the last amendment to receive that number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. After the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment and a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution to the House with such amendment as may have been finally adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to

offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 1:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1330

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan) at 1 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 672;

Adopting House Resolution 672, if ordered;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 671; and

Adopting House Resolution 671, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2666, NO RATE REGULATION OF BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 672) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 243, nays 182, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 141]

YEAS—243

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright

Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Bridenstine
Engel
Fattah
Jackson Lee
Lee
Lieu, Ted
Murphy (PA)
Van Hollen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1352

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Messrs. ASHFORD, AL GREEN of Texas, SCHIFF, and Ms. BONAMICI changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 182, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 142]

AYES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Bridenstine
Crawford
Engel
Fattah
Lieu, Ted
McNerney
Ribble
Sanford
Van Hollen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1359

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3340, FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL REFORM ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3791, RAISING CONSOLIDATED ASSETS THRESHOLD UNDER SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 671) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3340) to place the Financial Stability Oversight

Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 243, nays 182, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 143]

YEAS—243

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Bridenstine
Engel
Fattah
Grijalva
Lieu, Ted
McNerney
Stewart
Van Hollen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1406

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 182, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 144]

AYES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson

Smith (MO)	Turner	Westmoreland
Smith (NE)	Upton	Whitfield
Smith (NJ)	Valadao	Williams
Smith (TX)	Wagner	Wilson (SC)
Stefanik	Walberg	Wittman
Stewart	Walden	Womack
Stivers	Walker	Woodall
Stutzman	Walorski	Yoder
Thompson (PA)	Walters, Mimi	Yoho
Thornberry	Weber (TX)	Young (AK)
Tiberi	Webster (FL)	Young (IA)
Tipton	Wenstrup	Zeldin
Trott	Westerman	Zinke

NOES—182

Adams	Fudge	Napolitano
Aguilar	Gabbard	Neal
Ashford	Gallego	Nolan
Bass	Garamendi	Norcross
Beatty	Graham	O'Rourke
Becerra	Grayson	Pallone
Bera	Green, Al	Pascrell
Beyer	Green, Gene	Payne
Bishop (GA)	Grijalva	Pelosi
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Perlmutter
Bonamici	Hahn	Peters
Boyle, Brendan F.	Hastings	Peterson
	Heck (WA)	Pingree
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Pocan
Brown (FL)	Himes	Polis
Brownley (CA)	Hinojosa	Price (NC)
Bustos	Honda	Quigley
Butterfield	Hoyer	Rangel
Capps	Huffman	Rice (NY)
Capuano	Israel	Richmond
Cárdenas	Jackson Lee	Roybal-Allard
Carney	Jeffries	Ruiz
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Ruppersberger
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Rush
Castor (FL)	Kaptur	Ryan (OH)
Castro (TX)	Keating	Sánchez, Linda T.
Chu, Judy	Kelly (IL)	
Cicilline	Kennedy	Sanchez, Loretta
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clay	Kind	Schiff
Cleaver	Kirkpatrick	Schrader
Clyburn	Kuster	Scott (VA)
Cohen	Langevin	Scott, David
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Sewell (AL)
Cooper	Lawrence	Sherman
Costa	Lee	Sinema
Courtney	Levin	Sires
Crowley	Lewis	Slaughter
Cuellar	Lipinski	Smith (WA)
Cummings	Loebsack	Speier
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Takai
DeFazio	Lowey	Takano
DeGette	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Thompson (CA)
Delaney		Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Titus
DelBene		Tonko
DeSaulnier	Lynch	Tsongas
Deutch	Maloney, Carolyn	Vargas
Dingell		Veasey
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Vela
Doyle, Michael F.	Matsui	Velázquez
	McCollum	Visclosky
Duckworth	McDermott	Walz
Edwards	McGovern	Wasserman Schultz
Ellison	Meeks	
Eshoo	Meng	Waters, Maxine
Esty	Moore	Watson Coleman
Farr	Moulton	Welch
Foster	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Frankel (FL)	Nadler	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Bridenstine	Lieu, Ted	Torres
Engel	Love	Van Hollen
Fattah	McNerney	Young (IN)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1412

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

□ 1415

BORDER AND MARITIME COORDINATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3586) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve border and maritime security coordination in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3586

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Border and Maritime Coordination Improvement Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION COORDINATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 420. IMMIGRATION COOPERATION PROGRAM.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within U.S. Customs and Border Protection a program to be known as the Immigration Cooperation Program. Under the Program, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, pursuant to an arrangement with the government of a foreign country, may cooperate with authorities of that government, air carriers, and security employees at airports located in that country, to identify persons who may be inadmissible to the United States or otherwise pose a risk to border security.

''(b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the program, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers posted in a foreign country under subsection (a) may—

''(1) be stationed at airports in that country, including for purposes of conducting risk assessments and enhancing border security;

''(2) assist authorities of that government, air carriers, and security employees with document examination and traveler security assessments;

''(3) provide relevant training to air carriers, their security staff, and such authorities;

''(4) exchange information with, and provide technical assistance, equipment, and training to, such authorities to facilitate risk assessments of travelers and appropriate enforcement activities related to such assessments;

''(5) make recommendations to air carriers to deny boarding to potentially inadmissable travelers bound for the United States; and

''(6) conduct other activities, as appropriate, to protect the international borders of the United States and facilitate the enforcement of United States laws, as directed by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''SEC. 420A. AIR CARGO ADVANCE SCREENING.

''The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall—

''(1) consistent with the requirements enacted by the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–210)—

''(A) establish a program for the collection by U.S. Customs and Border Protection of advance electronic information from air carriers and other persons and governments within the supply chain regarding cargo being transported to the United States by air; and

''(B) under such program, require that such information be transmitted by such persons and governments at the earliest point practicable prior to loading of such cargo onto an aircraft destined to or transiting through the United States; and

''(2) coordinate with the Administrator for the Transportation Security Administration to identify opportunities where the information furnished in compliance with the program established under this section can be used to meet the requirements of a program administered by the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

''SEC. 420B. U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION OFFICE OF AIR AND MARINE OPERATIONS ASSET DEPLOYMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Any deployment of new assets by U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Air and Marine Operations following the date of the enactment of this section, shall, to the greatest extent practicable, occur in accordance with a risk-based assessment that considers mission needs, validated requirements, performance results, threats, costs, and any other relevant factors identified by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Specific factors to be included in such assessment shall include, at a minimum, the following:

''(1) Mission requirements that prioritize the operational needs of field commanders to secure the United States border and ports.

''(2) Other Department assets available to help address any unmet border and port security mission requirements, in accordance with paragraph (1).

''(3) Risk analysis showing positioning of the asset at issue to respond to intelligence on emerging terrorist or other threats.

''(4) Cost-benefit analysis showing the relative ability to use the asset at issue in the most cost-effective way to reduce risk and achieve mission success.

''(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—An assessment required under subsection (a) shall consider applicable Federal guidance, standards, and agency strategic and performance plans, including the following:

''(1) The most recent departmental Quadrennial Homeland Security Review under section 707, and any follow-up guidance related to such Review.

''(2) The Department's Annual Performance Plans.

''(3) Department policy guiding use of integrated risk management in resource allocation decisions.

''(4) Department and U.S. Customs and Border Protection Strategic Plans and Resource Deployment Plans.

''(5) Applicable aviation guidance from the Department, including the DHS Aviation Concept of Operations.

''(6) Other strategic and acquisition guidance promulgated by the Federal Government as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(c) AUDIT AND REPORT.—The Inspector General of the Department shall biennially audit the deployment of new assets by U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Air and Marine Operations and submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the compliance of the Department with the requirements of this section.

''(d) MARINE INTERDICTION STATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an identification of facilities owned by the Federal Government in strategic locations along the maritime border of California that may be suitable for establishing additional Office of Air and Marine Operations marine interdiction stations.

''SEC. 420C. INTEGRATED BORDER ENFORCEMENT TEAMS.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish within the Department a program to be known as the Integrated Border Enforcement Team program (referred to in this section as 'IBET').

''(b) PURPOSE.—The Secretary shall administer the IBET program in a manner that results in a cooperative approach between the United States and Canada to—

''(1) strengthen security between designated ports of entry;

''(2) detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to terrorism and violations of law related to border security;

''(3) facilitate collaboration among components and offices within the Department and international partners;

''(4) execute coordinated activities in furtherance of border security and homeland security; and

''(5) enhance information-sharing, including the dissemination of homeland security information among such components and offices.

''(c) COMPOSITION AND LOCATION OF IBETS.—

''(1) COMPOSITION.—IBETs shall be led by the United States Border Patrol and may be comprised of personnel from the following:

''(A) Other subcomponents of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''(B) U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, led by Homeland Security Investigations.

''(C) The Coast Guard, for the purpose of securing the maritime borders of the United States.

''(D) Other Department personnel, as appropriate.

''(E) Other Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate.

''(F) Appropriate State law enforcement agencies.

''(G) Foreign law enforcement partners.

''(H) Local law enforcement agencies from affected border cities and communities.

''(I) Appropriate tribal law enforcement agencies.

''(2) LOCATION.—The Secretary is authorized to establish IBETs in regions in which such teams can contribute to IBET missions, as appropriate. When establishing an IBET, the Secretary shall consider the following:

''(A) Whether the region in which the IBET would be established is significantly impacted by cross-border threats.

''(B) The availability of Federal, State, local, tribal, and foreign law enforcement resources to participate in an IBET.

''(C) Whether, in accordance with paragraph (3), other joint cross-border initiatives already take place within the region in which the IBET would be established, including other Department cross-border programs such as the Integrated Cross-Border Maritime Law Enforcement Operation Program established under section 711 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012 (46 U.S.C. 70101 note) or the Border Enforcement Security Task Force established under section 432.

''(3) DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS.—In determining whether to establish a new IBET or to expand an existing IBET in a given region, the Secretary shall ensure that the IBET under consideration does not duplicate the efforts of other existing interagency task forces or centers within such region, including the Integrated Cross-Border Maritime Law Enforcement Operation Program established under section 711 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012 (46 U.S.C. 70101 note) or the Border Enforcement Security Task Force established under section 432.

''(d) OPERATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—After determining the regions in which to establish IBETs, the Secretary may—

''(A) direct the assignment of Federal personnel to such IBETs; and

''(B) take other actions to assist Federal, State, local, and tribal entities to participate in such IBETs, including providing financial assistance, as appropriate, for operational, administrative, and technological costs associated with such participation.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Coast Guard personnel assigned under paragraph (1) may be assigned only for the purposes of securing the maritime borders of the United States, in accordance with subsection (c)(1)(C).

''(e) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate the IBET program with other similar border security and antiterrorism programs within the Department in accordance with the strategic objectives of the Cross-Border Law Enforcement Advisory Committee.

''(f) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Secretary may enter into memoranda of understanding with appropriate representatives of the entities specified in subsection (c)(1) necessary to carry out the IBET program.

''(g) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which an IBET is established and biannually thereafter for the following six years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees, including the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and in the case of Coast Guard personnel used to secure the maritime borders of the United States, additionally to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, a report that—

''(1) describes the effectiveness of IBETs in fulfilling the purposes specified in subsection (b);

''(2) assess the impact of certain challenges on the sustainment of cross-border IBET operations, including challenges faced by international partners;

''(3) addresses ways to support joint training for IBET stakeholder agencies and radio interoperability to allow for secure cross-border radio communications; and

''(4) assesses how IBETs, Border Enforcement Security Task Forces, and the Integrated Cross-Border Maritime Law Enforcement Operation Program can better align operations, including interdiction and investigation activities.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 419 the following new item:

''Sec. 420. Immigration cooperation program.
''Sec. 420A. Air cargo advance screening.
''Sec. 420B. U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Air and Marine Operations asset deployment.
''Sec. 420C. Integrated Border Enforcement Teams.''.

(c) DEADLINE FOR AIR CARGO ADVANCE SCREENING.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall implement section 420A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by this section, by not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. BORDER AND MARITIME SECURITY EFFICIENCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 231 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

''SEC. 434. BORDER SECURITY JOINT TASK FORCES.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and operate the following departmental Joint Task Forces (in this section referred to as 'Joint Task Force') to conduct joint operations using Department component and office personnel and capabilities to secure the land and maritime borders of the United States:

''(1) JOINT TASK FORCE–EAST.—Joint Task Force-East shall, at the direction of the Secretary and in coordination with Joint Task Force West, create and execute a strategic plan to secure the land and maritime borders of the United States and shall operate and be located in a place or region determined by the Secretary.

''(2) JOINT TASK FORCE–WEST.—Joint Task Force-West shall, at the direction of the Secretary and in coordination with Joint Task Force East, create and execute a strategic plan to secure the land and maritime borders of the United States and shall operate and be located in a place or region determined by the Secretary.

''(3) JOINT TASK FORCE–INVESTIGATIONS.—Joint Task Force-Investigations shall, at the direction of the Secretary, be responsible for coordinating criminal investigations supporting Joint Task Force–West and Joint Task Force–East.

''(b) JOINT TASK FORCE DIRECTORS.—The Secretary shall appoint a Director to head each Joint Task Force. Each Director shall be senior official selected from a relevant component or office of the Department, rotating between relevant components and offices every two years. The Secretary may extend the appointment of a Director for up to two additional years, if the Secretary determines that such an extension is in the best interest of the Department.

''(c) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The Secretary shall make the following appointments to the following Joint Task Forces:

''(1) The initial Director of Joint Task Force–East shall be a senior officer of the Coast Guard.

''(2) The initial Director of Joint Task Force–West shall be a senior official of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''(3) The initial Director of Joint Task Force–Investigations shall be a senior official of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

''(d) JOINT TASK FORCE DEPUTY DIRECTORS.—The Secretary shall appoint a Deputy Director for each Joint Task Force. The Deputy Director of a Joint Task Force shall, to the greatest extent practicable, be an official of a different component or office than the Director of each Joint Task Force.

''(e) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each Joint Task Force Director shall—

''(1) identify and prioritize border and maritime security threats to the homeland;

''(2) maintain situational awareness within their areas of responsibility, as determined by the Secretary;

''(3) provide operational plans and requirements for standard operating procedures and contingency operations;

''(4) plan and execute joint task force activities within their areas of responsibility, as determined by the Secretary;

''(5) set and accomplish strategic objectives through integrated operational planning and execution;

''(6) exercise operational direction over personnel and equipment from Department components and offices allocated to the respective Joint Task Force to accomplish task force objectives;

''(7) establish operational and investigative priorities within the Director's operating areas;

''(8) coordinate with foreign governments and other Federal, State, and local agencies, where appropriate, to carry out the mission of the Director's Joint Task Force;

''(9) identify and provide to the Secretary the joint mission requirements necessary to secure the land and maritime borders of the United States; and

''(10) carry out other duties and powers the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(f) PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES OF JOINT TASK FORCES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, upon request of the Director of a Joint Task Force, allocate on a temporary basis component and office personnel and equipment to the requesting Joint Task Force, with appropriate consideration of risk given to the other primary missions of the Department.

''(2) CONSIDERATION OF IMPACT.—When reviewing requests for allocation of component personnel and equipment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the impact of such allocation on the ability of the donating component to carry out the primary missions of the Department, and in the case of the Coast Guard, the missions specified in section 888.

''(3) LIMITATION.—Personnel and equipment of the Coast Guard allocated under this subsection may only be used to carry out operations and investigations related to securing the maritime borders of the United States.

''(g) COMPONENT RESOURCE AUTHORITY.—As directed by the Secretary—

''(1) each Director of a Joint Task Force shall be provided sufficient resources from relevant components and offices of the Department and the authority necessary to carry out the missions and responsibilities required under this section;

''(2) the resources referred to in paragraph (1) shall be under the operational authority, direction, and control of the Director of the Joint Task Force to which such resources were assigned; and

''(3) the personnel and equipment of the Joint Task Forces shall remain under the administrative direction of its primary component or office.

''(h) JOINT TASK FORCE STAFF.—Each Joint Task Force shall have a staff to assist the Directors in carrying out the mission and responsibilities of the Joint Task Forces. Such staff shall be filled by officials from relevant components and offices of the Department.

''(i) ESTABLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE METRICS.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) establish performance metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the Joint Task Forces in securing the land and maritime borders of the United States;

''(2) submit such metrics to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and in the case of metrics related to securing the maritime borders of the United States, additionally to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, by the date that is not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this section; and

''(3) submit to such Committees—

''(A) an initial report that contains the evaluation described in paragraph (1) by not later than January 31, 2017; and

''(B) a second report that contains such evaluation by not later than January 31, 2018.

''(j) JOINT DUTY TRAINING PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a Department joint duty training program for the purposes of enhancing departmental unity of efforts and promoting workforce professional development. Such training shall be tailored to improve joint operations as part of the Joint Task Forces established under subsection (a).

''(2) ELEMENTS.—The joint duty training program established under paragraph (1) shall address, at minimum, the following topics:

''(A) National strategy.

''(B) Strategic and contingency planning.

''(C) Command and control of operations under joint command.

''(D) International engagement.

''(E) The Homeland Security Enterprise.

''(F) Border security.

''(G) Interagency collaboration.

''(H) Leadership.

''(3) OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS.—The joint duty training program established under paragraph (1) shall consist of—

''(A) one course intended for mid-level officers and officials of the Department assigned to or working with the Joint Task Forces, and

''(B) one course intended for senior officers and officials of the Department assigned to or working with the Joint Task Forces,

to ensure a systematic, progressive, and career-long development of such officers and officials in coordinating and executing Department-wide joint planning and operations.

''(4) TRAINING REQUIRED.—

''(A) DIRECTORS AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), each Joint Task Force Director and Deputy Director of a Joint Task Force shall complete relevant parts of the joint duty training program under this subsection prior to assignment to a Joint Task Force.

''(B) JOINT TASK FORCE STAFF.—All senior and mid-level officers and officials serving on the staff of a Joint Task Force shall complete relevant parts of the joint duty training program under this subsection within the first year of assignment to a Joint Task Force.

''(C) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) does not apply in the case of the initial Directors and Deputy Directors of a Joint Task Force.

''(k) ESTABLISHING ADDITIONAL JOINT TASK FORCES.—The Secretary may establish additional Joint Task Forces for the purposes of—

''(1) coordinating operations along the northern border of the United States;

''(2) homeland security crises, subject to subsection (l);

''(3) establishing other regionally-based operations; or

''(4) cybersecurity.

''(l) LIMITATION ON ADDITIONAL JOINT TASK FORCES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not establish a Joint Task Force for any major disaster or emergency declared under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) or an incident for which the Federal Emergency Management Agency has primary responsibility for management of the response under title V of this Act, including section 504(a)(3)(A), unless the responsibilities of the Joint Task Force—

''(A) do not include operational functions related to incident management, including coordination of operations; and

''(B) are consistent with the requirements of sections 509(c), 503(c)(3), and 503(c)(4)(A) of this Act and section 302 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5143).

''(2) RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS NOT REDUCED.—Nothing in this section reduces the responsibilities or functions of the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency under title V of this Act, provisions of law enacted by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–295), and other laws, including the diversion of any asset, function, or mission from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency pursuant to section 506.

''(m) NOTIFICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit a notification to the Committee on

Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and in the case of a Joint Task Force in which the Coast Guard will participate or a Joint Task Force established under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (k) to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, 90 days prior to the establishment of the Joint Task Force.

''(2) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may waive the requirement of paragraph (1) in the event of an emergency circumstance that imminently threatens the protection of human life or the protection of property.

''(n) REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the Department shall conduct a review of the Joint Task Forces established under this section.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The review required under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of the effectiveness of the Joint Task Force structure in securing the land and maritime borders of the United States, together with recommendations for enhancements to such structure to further strengthen border security.

''(3) SUBMISSION.—The Inspector General of the Department shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that contains the review required under paragraph (1) by not later than January 31, 2018.

''(o) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'situational awareness' means a knowledge and unified understanding of unlawful cross-border activity, including threats and trends concerning illicit trafficking and unlawful crossings, and the ability to forecast future shifts in such threats and trends, the ability to evaluate such threats and trends at a level sufficient to create actionable plans, and the operational capability to conduct continuous and integrated surveillance of the land and maritime borders of the United States.

''(p) SUNSET.—This section expires on September 30, 2018.

''SEC. 435. UPDATES OF MARITIME OPERATIONS COORDINATION PLAN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a maritime operations coordination plan for the coordination and cooperation of maritime operations undertaken by components and offices of the Department with responsibility for maritime security missions. Such plan shall update the maritime operations coordination plan released by the Department in July 2011, and shall address the following:

''(1) Coordination of planning, integration of maritime operations, and development of joint maritime domain awareness efforts of any component or office of the Department with responsibility for maritime homeland security missions.

''(2) Maintaining effective information sharing and, as appropriate, intelligence integration, with Federal, State, and local officials and the private sector, regarding threats to maritime security.

''(3) Leveraging existing departmental coordination mechanisms, including the inter-agency operational centers as authorized under section 70107A of title 46, United States Code, Coast Guard's Regional Coordinating Mechanisms, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations Center, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Operational Integration Center, and other regional maritime operational command centers.

''(4) Cooperation and coordination with other departments and agencies of the Federal Government, and State and local agencies, in the maritime environment, in support of maritime homeland security missions.

''(5) Work conducted within the context of other national and Department maritime security strategic guidance.

''(b) ADDITIONAL UPDATES.—Not later than July 1, 2020, the Secretary, acting through the Department's Office of Operations Coordination and Planning, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an update to the maritime operations coordination plan required under subsection (a).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 433 the following new items:

''Sec. 434. Border Security Joint Task Forces.

''Sec. 435. Updates of maritime operations coordination plan.''.

SEC. 4. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

''Subtitle G—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Public Private Partnerships

''SEC. 481. FEE AGREEMENTS FOR CERTAIN SERVICES AT PORTS OF ENTRY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 13031(e) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(e)) and section 451 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1451), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may, upon the request of any entity, enter into a fee agreement with such entity under which—

''(1) U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall provide services described in subsection (c) at a United States port of entry or any other facility at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide such services;

''(2) such entity shall remit to U.S. Customs and Border Protection a fee imposed under subsection (e) in an amount equal to the full costs that are incurred or will be incurred in providing such services; and

''(3) if space is provided by such entity, each facility at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection services are performed shall be maintained and equipped by such entity, without cost to the Federal Government, in accordance with U.S. Customs and Border Protection specifications.

''(b) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—The services described in this section are any activities of any employee or contractor of U.S. Customs and Border Protection pertaining to, or in support of, customs, agricultural processing, border security, or immigration inspection-related matters at a port of entry or any other facility at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services.

''(c) LIMITATIONS.—

''(1) IMPACTS OF SERVICES.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

''(A) may enter into fee agreements under this section only for services that will increase or enhance the operational capacity of U.S. Customs and Border Protection based on available staffing and workload and that will not shift the cost of services funded in any appropriations Act, or provided from any account in the Treasury of the United States derived by the collection of fees, to entities under this Act; and

''(B) may not enter into a fee agreement under this section if such agreement would unduly and permanently impact services funded in any appropriations Act, or provided from any account in the Treasury of the United States, derived by the collection of fees.

''(2) NUMBER.—There shall be no limit to the number of fee agreements that the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may enter into under this section.

''(d) FEE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of the fee to be charged pursuant to an agreement authorized under subsection (a) shall be paid by each entity requesting U.S. Customs and Border Protection services, and shall be for the full cost of providing such services, including the salaries and expenses of employees and contractors of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, to provide such services and other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to such services, such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such employees and contractors.

''(2) TIMING.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may require that the fee referred to in paragraph (1) be paid by each entity that has entered into a fee agreement under subsection (a) with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in advance of the performance of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services.

''(3) OVERSIGHT OF FEES.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall develop a process to oversee the services for which fees are charged pursuant to an agreement under subsection (a), including the following:

''(A) A determination and report on the full costs of providing such services, as well as a process for increasing such fees, as necessary.

''(B) Establishment of a periodic remittance schedule to replenish appropriations, accounts, or funds, as necessary.

''(C) Identification of costs paid by such fees.

''(e) DEPOSIT OF FUNDS.—

''(1) ACCOUNT.—Funds collected pursuant to any agreement entered into under subsection (a) shall be deposited as offsetting collections, shall remain available until expended without fiscal year limitation, and shall be credited to the applicable appropriation, account, or fund for the amount paid out of such appropriation, account, or fund for any expenses incurred or to be incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection in providing U.S. Customs and Border Protection services under any such agreement and any other costs incurred or to be incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to such services.

''(2) RETURN OF UNUSED FUNDS.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall return any unused funds collected and deposited into the account described in paragraph (1) in the event that a

fee agreement entered into under subsection (a) is terminated for any reason, or in the event that the terms of such fee agreement change by mutual agreement to cause a reduction of U.S. Customs and Border Protections services. No interest shall be owed upon the return of any such unused funds.

''(f) TERMINATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall terminate the provision of services pursuant to a fee agreement entered into under subsection (a) with an entity that, after receiving notice from the Commissioner that a fee under subsection (d) is due, fails to pay such fee in a timely manner. In the event of such termination, all costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection which have not been paid shall become immediately due and payable. Interest on unpaid fees shall accrue based on the rate and amount established under sections 6621 and 6622 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(2) PENALTY.—Any entity that, after notice and demand for payment of any fee under subsection (d), fails to pay such fee in a timely manner shall be liable for a penalty or liquidated damage equal to two times the amount of such fee. Any such amount collected pursuant to this paragraph shall be deposited into the appropriate account specified under subsection (e) and shall be available as described in such subsection.

''(g) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Finance of the Senate an annual report identifying the activities undertaken and the agreements entered into pursuant to this section.

''(h) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed as imposing in any manner on U.S. Customs and Border Protection any responsibilities, duties, or authorities relating to real property.

''SEC. 482. PORT OF ENTRY DONATION AUTHORITY.

''(a) PERSONAL PROPERTY DONATION AUTHORITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, may enter into an agreement with any entity to accept a donation of personal property, money, or nonpersonal services for uses described in paragraph (3) only with respect to the following locations at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services:

''(A) A new or existing sea or air port of entry.

''(B) An existing Federal Government-owned land port of entry.

''(C) A new Federal Government-owned land port of entry if—

''(i) the fair market value of the donation is $50,000,000 or less; and

''(ii) the fair market value, including any personal and real property donations in total, of such port of entry when completed, is $50,000,000 or less.

''(2) LIMITATION ON MONETARY DONATIONS.—Any monetary donation accepted pursuant to this subsection may not be used to pay the salaries of U.S. Customs and Border Protection employees performing inspection services.

''(3) USE.—Donations accepted pursuant to this subsection may be used for activities related to a new or existing sea or air port of entry or a new or existing Federal Government-owned land port of entry described in paragraph (1), including expenses related to—

''(A) furniture, fixtures, equipment, or technology, including installation or the deployment thereof; and

''(B) operation and maintenance of such furniture, fixtures, equipment, or technology.

''(b) REAL PROPERTY DONATION AUTHORITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the Administrator of the General Services Administration, as applicable, may enter into an agreement with any entity to accept a donation of real property or money for uses described in paragraph (2) only with respect to the following locations at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services:

''(A) A new or existing sea or air port of entry.

''(B) An existing Federal Government-owned land port of entry.

''(C) A new Federal Government-owned land port of entry if—

''(i) the fair market value of the donation is $50,000,000 or less; and

''(ii) the fair market value, including any personal and real property donations in total, of such port of entry when completed, is $50,000,000 or less.

''(2) USE.—Donations accepted pursuant to this subsection may be used for activities related to construction, alteration, operation, or maintenance of a new or existing sea or air port of entry or a new or existing a Federal Government-owned land port of entry described in paragraph (1), including expenses related to—

''(A) land acquisition, design, construction, repair, or alteration; and

''(B) operation and maintenance of such port of entry facility.

''(3) LIMITATION ON REAL PROPERTY DONATIONS.—A donation of real property under this subsection at an existing land port of entry owned by the General Services Administration may only be accepted by the Administrator of General Services.

''(4) SUNSET.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority to enter into an agreement under this subsection shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this subsection.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The termination date referred to in subparagraph (A) shall not apply to carrying out the terms of an agreement under this subsection if such agreement is entered into before such termination date.

''(c) GENERAL PROVISIONS.—

''(1) DURATION.—An agreement entered into under subsection (a) or (b) (and, in the case of such subsection (b), in accordance with paragraph (4) of such subsection) may last as long as required to meet the terms of such agreement.

''(2) CRITERIA.—In carrying out agreements entered into under subsection (a) or (b), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, shall establish criteria that includes the following:

''(A) Selection and evaluation of donors.

''(B) Identification of roles and responsibilities between U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the General Services Administration, as applicable, and donors.

''(C) Identification, allocation, and management of explicit and implicit risks of partnering between the Federal Government and donors.

''(C) Decision-making and dispute resolution processes.

''(D) Processes for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the General Services Administration, as applicable, to terminate agreements if selected donors are not meeting the terms of any such agreement, including the security standards established by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''(3) EVALUATION PROCEDURES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, as applicable, shall—

''(i) establish criteria for evaluating a proposal to enter into an agreement under subsection (a) or (b); and

''(ii) make such criteria publicly available.

''(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—Criteria established pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall consider the following:

''(i) The impact of a proposal referred to in such subparagraph on the land, sea, or air port of entry at issue and other ports of entry or similar facilities or other infrastructure near the location of the proposed donation.

''(ii) Such proposal's potential to increase trade and travel efficiency through added capacity.

''(iii) Such proposal's potential to enhance the security of the port of entry at issue.

''(iv) For a donation under subsection (b)—

''(I) whether such donation satisfies the requirements of such proposal, or whether additional real property would be required; and

''(II) an explanation of how such donation was acquired, including if eminent domain was used.

''(v) The funding available to complete the intended use of such donation.

''(iv) The costs of maintaining and operating such donation.

''(v) The impact of such proposal on U.S. Customs and Border Protection staffing requirements.

''(vi) Other factors that the Commissioner or Administrator determines to be relevant.

''(C) DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a proposal to enter into an agreement under subsection (a) or (b), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, with the concurrence of the Administrator of General Services, as applicable, shall make a determination to deny or approve such proposal, and shall notify the entity that submitted such proposal of such determination.

''(4) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING.—Except as required under section 3307 of title 40, United States Code, for real property donations to the Administrator of General Services at a GSA-owned land port of entry, donations made pursuant to subsection (a) and (b) may be used in addition to any other funding for such purpose, including appropriated funds, property, or services.

''(5) RETURN OF DONATIONS.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, or the Administrator of General Services, as applicable, may return any donation made pursuant to subsection (a) or (b). No interest shall be owed to the donor with respect to any donation provided under such subsections that is returned pursuant to this subsection.

''(6) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN FUNDING.—Except as provided in subsections (a) and (b) regarding the acceptance of donations, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border

Protection and the Administrator of General Services, as applicable, may not, with respect to an agreement entered into under either of such subsections, obligate or expend amounts in excess of amounts that have been appropriated pursuant to any appropriations Act for purposes specified in either of such subsections or otherwise made available for any of such purposes.

''(7) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in collaboration with the Administrator of General Services, as applicable, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on Environment and Public Works, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate an annual report identifying the activities undertaken and agreements entered into pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, nothing in this section may be construed as affecting in any manner the responsibilities, duties, or authorities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection or the General Services Administration.

''SEC. 483. CURRENT AND PROPOSED AGREEMENTS.

''Nothing in this subtitle may be construed as affecting in any manner—

''(1) any agreement entered into pursuant to section 560 of division D of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113–6) or section 559 of title V of division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (6 U.S.C. 211 note; Public Law 113–76), as in existence on the day before the date of the enactment of this subtitle, and any such agreement shall continue to have full force and effect on and after such date; or

''(2) a proposal accepted for consideration by U.S. Customs and Border Protection pursuant to such section 559, as in existence on the day before such date of enactment.

''SEC. 484. DEFINITIONS.

''In this subtitle:

''(1) DONOR.—The term 'donor' means any entity that is proposing to make a donation under this Act.

''(2) ENTITY.—The term 'entity' means any—

''(A) person;

''(B) partnership, corporation, trust, estate, cooperative, association, or any other organized group of persons;

''(C) Federal, State or local government (including any subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof); or

''(D) any other private or governmental entity.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by adding at the end of the list of items relating to title IV the following new items:

''Subtitle G—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Public Private Partnerships

''Sec. 481. Fee agreements for certain services at ports of entry.
''Sec. 482. Port of entry donation authority.
''Sec. 483. Current and proposed agreements.
''Sec. 484. Definitions.''.

(c) REPEALS.—Section 560 of division D of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113–6) and section 559 of title V of division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (6 U.S.C. 211 note; Public Law 113–76) are repealed.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341, et. seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 708. OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Office of Biometric Identity Management is established within the Department.

''(b) DIRECTOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office of Biometric Identity Management shall be administered by the Director of the Office of Biometric Identity Management (in this section referred to as the 'Director') who shall report to the Secretary, or to another official of the Department, as the Secretary may direct.

''(2) QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES.—The Director shall—

''(A) have significant professional management experience, as well as experience in the field of biometrics and identity management;

''(B) lead the Department's biometric identity services to support anti-terrorism, counter-terrorism, border security, credentialing, national security, and public safety and enable operational missions across the Department by matching, storing, sharing, and analyzing biometric data;

''(C) deliver biometric identity information and analysis capabilities to—

''(i) the Department and its components;

''(ii) appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies;

''(iii) appropriate foreign governments; and

''(iv) appropriate private sector entities;

''(D) support the law enforcement, public safety, national security, and homeland security missions of other Federal, State, local and tribal agencies, as appropriate;

''(E) establish and manage the operation and maintenance of the Department's sole biometric repository;

''(F) establish, manage, and operate Biometric Support Centers to provide biometric identification and verification analysis and services to the Department, appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies, appropriate foreign governments, and appropriate private sector entities;

''(G) in collaboration with the Undersecretary for Science and Technology, establish a Department-wide research and development program to support efforts in assessment, development, and exploration of biometric advancements and emerging technologies;

''(H) oversee Department-wide standards for biometric conformity, and work to make such standards Government-wide;

''(I) in coordination with the Department's Office of Policy, and in consultation with relevant component offices and headquarters offices, enter into data sharing agreements with appropriate Federal agencies to support immigration, law enforcement, national security, and public safety missions;

''(J) maximize interoperability with other Federal, State, local, and international biometric systems, as appropriate; and

''(K) carry out the duties and powers prescribed by law or delegated by the Secretary.

''(c) DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—There shall be in the Office of Biometric Identity Management a Deputy Director, who shall assist the Director in the management of the Office.

''(d) CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Office of Biometric Identity Management a Chief Technology Officer.

''(2) DUTIES.—The Chief Technology Officer shall—

''(A) ensure compliance with policies, processes, standards, guidelines, and procedures related to information technology systems management, enterprise architecture, and data management;

''(B) provide engineering and enterprise architecture guidance and direction to the Office of Biometric Identity Management; and

''(C) leverage emerging biometric technologies to recommend improvements to major enterprise applications, identify tools to optimize information technology systems performance, and develop and promote joint technology solutions to improve services to enhance mission effectiveness.

''(e) OTHER AUTHORITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may establish such other offices within the Office of Biometric Identity Management as the Director determines necessary to carry out the missions, duties, functions, and authorities of the Office.

''(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Director exercises the authority provided by paragraph (1), the Director shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate not later than 30 days before exercising such authority.''.

(b) TRANSFER LIMITATION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may not transfer the location or reporting structure of the Office of Biometric Identity Management (established by section 708 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section) to any component of the Department of Homeland Security.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 707 the following new item:

''Sec. 708. Office of Biometric Identity Management.''.

SEC. 6. COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF CO-LOCATING OPERATIONAL ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For any location in which U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Air and Marine Operations is based within 45 miles of locations where any other Department of Homeland Security agency also operates air and marine assets, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall conduct a cost-benefit analysis to consider the potential cost of and savings derived from co-locating aviation and maritime operational assets of the respective agencies of the Department. In analyzing such potential cost savings achieved by sharing aviation and maritime facilities, such analysis shall consider, at a minimum, the following factors:

(1) Potential enhanced cooperation derived from Department personnel being co-located.

(2) Potential costs of, and savings derived through, shared maintenance and logistics facilities and activities.

(3) Joint use of base and facility infrastructure, such as runways, hangars, control towers, operations centers, piers and docks, boathouses, and fuel depots.

(4) Potential operational costs of co-locating aviation and maritime assets and personnel.

(5) Short term moving costs required in order to co-locate facilities.

(6) Acquisition and infrastructure costs for enlarging current facilities, as needed.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and

Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report summarizing the results of the cost-benefit analysis required under subsection (a) and any planned actions based upon such results.

SEC. 7. STRATEGIC PERSONNEL PLAN FOR U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION PERSONNEL DEPLOYED ABROAD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days of after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a three year strategic plan for deployment of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (in this section referred to as ''CBP'') personnel to locations outside the United States.

(b) CONTENTS.—The plan required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A risk-based method for determining expansion of CBP international programs to new locations, given resource constraints.

(2) A plan to ensure CBP personnel deployed at locations outside the United States have appropriate oversight and support to ensure performance in support of program goals.

(3) Information on planned future deployments of CBP personnel for a three year period, together with corresponding information on locations for such deployments outside the United States.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In preparing the plan required under subsection (a), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall consider, and include information on, the following:

(1) Existing CBP programs in operation outside of the United States, together with specific information on locations outside the United States in which each such program operates.

(2) The number of CBP personnel deployed at each location outside the United States during the preceding fiscal year.

SEC. 8. THREAT ASSESSMENT FOR UNITED STATES-BOUND INTERNATIONAL MAIL.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an assessment of the security threats posed by United States-bound international mail.

SEC. 9. EVALUATION OF COAST GUARD DEPLOYABLE SPECIALIZED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that describes and assesses the state of the Coast Guard's Deployable Specialized Forces (in this section referred to as the ''DSF''). Such report shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:

(1) For each of the past three fiscal years, and for each type of DSF, the following:

(A) A cost analysis, including training, operating, and travel costs.

(B) The number of personnel assigned.

(C) The total number of units.

(D) The total number of operations conducted.

(E) The number of operations requested by each of the following:

(i) The Coast Guard.

(ii) Other components or offices of the Department of Homeland Security.

(iii) Other Federal departments or agencies.

(iv) State agencies.

(v) Local agencies.

(F) The number of operations fulfilled by the entities specified in subparagraph (E).

(2) Mission impact, feasibility, and cost, including potential cost savings, of locating DSF capabilities, including the following scenarios:

(A) Combining DSFs, primarily focused on counterdrug operations, under one centralized command.

(B) Distributing counter-terrorism and anti-terrorism capabilities to DSFs in each major United States port.

(b) DEPLOYABLE SPECIALIZED FORCE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Deployable Specialized Force'' means a unit of the Coast Guard that serves as a quick reaction force designed to be deployed to handle counter-drug, counter-terrorism, and anti-terrorism operations or other maritime threats to the United States.

SEC. 10. CUSTOMS-TRADE PARTNERSHIP AGAINST TERRORISM IMPROVEMENT.

(a) C-TPAT EXPORTERS.—Section 212 of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 962) is amended by inserting ''exporters,'' after ''Importers,''.

(b) RECOGNITION OF OTHER COUNTRIES' TRUSTED SHIPPER PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 218 of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 968) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 218. RECOGNITION OF OTHER COUNTRIES' TRUSTED SHIPPER PROGRAMS.

''Not later than 30 days before signing an arrangement between the United States and a foreign government providing for mutual recognition of supply chain security practices which might result in the utilization of benefits described in section 214, 215, or 216, the Secretary shall—

''(1) notify the appropriate congressional committees of the proposed terms of such arrangement; and

''(2) determine, in consultation with the Commissioner, that such foreign government's supply chain security program provides comparable security as that provided by C-TPAT.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 is amended by amending the item relating to section 218 to read as follows:

''Sec. 218. Recognition of other countries' trusted shipper programs.''.

SEC. 11. STRATEGIC PLAN TO ENHANCE THE SECURITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY CHAIN.

Paragraph (2) of section 201(g) of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 941) is amended to read as follows:

''(2) UPDATES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains an update of the strategic plan described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 12. CONTAINER SECURITY INITIATIVE.

Subsection (l) of section 205 of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 945) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30, 2007,'' and inserting ''Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of the Border and Maritime Security Coordination Improvement Act,'';

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (H) as paragraphs (1) through (8), respectively (and by moving the margins of such paragraphs 2 ems to the left); and

(3) by striking paragraph (2).

SEC. 13. TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION CREDENTIAL WAIVER AND APPEALS PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''(r) SECURING THE TRANSPORTATION WORKER IDENTIFICATION CREDENTIAL AGAINST USE BY UNAUTHORIZED ALIENS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, shall seek to strengthen the integrity of transportation security cards issued under this section against improper access by an individual who is not lawfully present in the United States.

''(2) COMPONENTS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall—

''(A) publish a list of documents that will identify non-United States citizen transportation security card applicants and verify the immigration statuses of such applicants by requiring each such applicant to produce a document or documents that demonstrate—

''(i) identity; and

''(ii) proof of lawful presence in the United States; and

''(B) enhance training requirements to ensure that trusted agents at transportation security card enrollment centers receive training to identify fraudulent documents.

''(3) EXPIRATION.—A transportation security card issued under this section expires on the date of its expiration or on the date on which the individual to whom such card is issued is no longer lawfully entitled to be present in the United States, whichever is earlier.''.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate information on the following:

(1) The average time for the completion of an appeal under the appeals process established pursuant to paragraph (4) of subsection (c) of section 70105 of title 46, United States Code.

(2) The most common reasons for any delays at each step in such process.

(3) Recommendations on how to resolve any such delays as expeditiously as possible.

SEC. 14. REPEALS.

The following provisions of the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–347) are repealed:

(1) Section 105 (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

(2) Subsection (c) of section 108.

(3) Subsections (c), (d), and (e) of section 121 (6 U.S.C. 921).

(4) Section 122 (6 U.S.C. 922) (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

(5) Section 127 (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

(6) Subsection (c) of section 233 (6 U.S.C. 983).

(7) Section 235 (6 U.S.C. 984) (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

(8) Section 701 (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

(9) Section 708 (and the item relating to such section in the table of contents of such Act).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3586, the Border and Maritime Coordination Improvement Act. I believe that this bill will provide the Department of Homeland Security the tools and the authority to find efficiencies to improve operations amongst all of its various components.

In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was cobbled together from 22 different offices and agencies—a very huge logistical and management challenge. We knew that there would be significant growing pains before that agency would function well and as a unified department.

Each component of the Department, be it Customs and Border Protection or Immigration and Customs Enforcement or the U.S. Coast Guard, has a tendency to sort of operate in their own silo, without the coordination required to make border and maritime security efforts as successful as they should be and can be.

This has had a negative effect, actually, on logistics, on communications, and, most importantly, on operations. In an attempt to adopt a better structure with a goal of enhancing border security and maritime security operations, this legislation, Mr. Speaker, authorizes joint task forces on border security.

The goal of these task forces is to improve border security outcomes, and this legislation provides explicit authority to guide the task force operations and to allow this pilot concept to be utilized to secure our borders.

While this concept is not unique, we intentionally provided a sunset date for the joint task force authority to give the next administration the opportunity to come back to the Homeland Security Committee and to the next Congress to demonstrate that this organizational structure has really contributed to border security, and it is not just simply another layer of bureaucracy.

The second part of this bill, Mr. Speaker, requires the Department to take a very hard look at potential efficiencies in its maritime security efforts. During my time as the chair of the Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, we held hearings with CBP that address some of the overlap and the redundancies in the maritime environment, particularly with the units of the Coast Guard and the CBP Air and Marine Operations that, in many cases, are in very close geographic proximity.

This bill also requires CBP's Office of Field Operations, the Air and Marine Operations, and the Coast Guard to evaluate their role in the maritime and supply chain security to ensure that their missions are consistent with our current threats and to find ways to consolidate operations, where possible. We think these steps are commonsense, and I certainly think that they will help save our taxpayers a number of dollars, and, most importantly, improve operations and coordinations for our homeland security.

Again, finding creative ways to fund the staffing and infrastructure needs at our Nation's aging ports of entry was really the driving force behind another piece of this legislation, which is the permanent authorization of CBP's Public-Private Partnership program, which is also included in this legislation.

Allowing public and private sector port of entry operators and others to enter into agreements with CBP to fund small-scale infrastructure expansion or to fund overtime needs will improve security and, as well, increase the flow of commerce that is so vital to our economy.

I want to specifically thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD), who will be speaking in just a moment, for offering the amendment, Mr. Speaker, during the markup regarding the authorization of public-private partnerships. His leadership on this issue has been absolutely vital to bringing this legislation to the floor today.

I certainly also want to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Representative BARLETTA from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for working so diligently with us on this particular provision.

Lastly, this bill authorizes the Department's Office of Biometric Identity Management, or OBIM as we call it, for the first time. Since 2003, biometrics have been a very important part of the Nation's border security efforts.

The biometric service OBIM provides is not limited to any one component. It is a department and a government-wide asset. For that reason, we believe that it should not be located in a single component, like the CBP, where the information could, again, be siloed to the detriment of other Department of Homeland Security components. In order for biometrics to be used to their very fullest potential, we think we need to appropriately fund and modernize the data systems that power the matching and the collection of biometric information.

Mr. Speaker, our borders can and should be secured. We believe that this bill provides a framework to really help organize the Department for success and to improve the coordination of border and maritime security components whose job it is to secure our great Nation.

Lastly, I would like to also thank the ranking member of our committee, Mr. THOMPSON, and the ranking member on our subcommittee, Mr. VELA, as well as all of their staffs, for working with us in the spirit of bipartisanship to strengthen our security.

I ask our colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3586, the Border and Maritime Coordination Improvement Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation aims to improve the unity of effort between the various DHS components charged with securing our land and maritime borders. H.R. 3586 also seeks to push out border security to mitigate threats at the earliest possible point. Collaboration and cooperation are vital to ensuring our efforts are efficient and effective.

H.R. 3586 allows the Department to leverage the capabilities of its components, such as Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Coast Guard, to improve its approach to our border and maritime security.

The bill requires the Department to assess the use of its resources, air and marine assets, and personnel deployed both domestically and abroad in order to identify opportunities to better coordinate and streamline its operations and ensure the success of its border and maritime security missions.

H.R. 3586 also formally authorizes the DHS Secretary's Border Security Joint Task Forces, which utilize Department component personnel and capabilities, to secure the land and maritime borders of the United States.

These tasks were launched in May of 2014 through the Secretary's Southern Border and Approaches Campaign and represents a more collaborative approach to border security missions than we have previously seen.

H.R. 3586 also authorizes two programs specifically intended to bolster

the Department's ability to identify and prevent threats from entering the United States via commercial aircraft—the Air Cargo Advance Screening pilot and the Immigration Advisory Program. Through these two programs, DHS is able to thoroughly screen and vet cargo and passengers coming to the United States from abroad on commercial airplanes and share information with international partners prior to departure.

There is strong bipartisan support and interest in strengthening and improving our border and maritime security efforts among my colleagues on the Committee on Homeland Security. I urge my colleagues in the House to support H.R. 3586 as well.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD), from the 23rd Congressional District, who actually has 800 miles of the southwest border in his district.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the representative of dozens of border communities in Texas, I take the obligation to stand up for them seriously. Improvements to security are a key portion of this bill. However, I have long maintained that they are not enough and they are not the only part of a successful border strategy.

Trade is the lifeblood of many of these communities. Yet, far too often they find themselves relying on ports of entry that are understaffed and out of date. This limits growth and strains the ties of the local communities. In many cases, they want to do more to expand on the Federal resources that currently exist. Public-private partnerships are key to enabling this.

Let me be clear: port of entry infrastructure is a Federal responsibility, but that doesn't mean that local communities and businesses shouldn't be able to pitch in.

Since January 2014, the Public-Private Partnership pilot program run through the Customs and Border Protection has made a difference. It has enhanced the ability of CBP to increase resources and decrease wait times at ports of entry. This program provides guidance for reimbursable services and allows CBP to tailor its services to the needs of the stakeholders while meeting the demands associated with decreasing budgets.

Both CBP and stakeholders have been exceedingly pleased with the results of this pilot program. Unfortunately, it could come to an end.

In an effort to ensure the longevity of this program, language in the bill permanently authorizes portions of the Public-Private Partnership program for reimbursable services and donation authority and it establishes a framework to guide its implementation in a responsible manner.

Public-private partnership authority for CBP is a critical issue for border communities like mine and has proven to be an essential tool to reduce wait times at the border and enhance the security of the homeland. I believe that we can secure our border and facilitate the flow of goods and services at the same time. The public-private partnerships that would be codified by this law will ensure just that.

I would like to thank Representative MILLER for her leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1430

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3586 helps enhance the coordination and cooperation among DHS' border security components, and it authorizes integral border security programs that enhance homeland security.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

When we think about some of the remunerative responsibilities that Members of Congress have, certainly, securing our border is one of the most important. As we can see by what is happening this year throughout the country, there is an enormous amount of interest in making sure that we do secure our border. I feel that this piece of legislation is a critical component but that it is not nearly what we need to be doing to secure our border. We would like to see a border security bill come to the floor. At any rate, I think this is a very, very important piece of legislation.

Again, it is important to note that this has been a bipartisan effort on this legislation, and I certainly appreciate the consideration and the work that we have achieved together, both Democrats and Republicans, as we have worked to secure our borders. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3586.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, and former ranking member of its Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee, I rise in support of H.R. 3586, the "Border and Maritime Coordination Improvement Act."

Our Nation has thousands of miles of coastlines, lakes, and rivers and hundreds of ports that provide opportunities for legitimate travel, trade, and recreation.

There are currently 328 ports of entry to the U.S., including 167 land ports of entry with Canada and Mexico, staffed by approximately 21,000 CBP officers in the U.S. and abroad.

There are more people and goods coming through our ports of entry than ever before.

Last fiscal year, CBP inspected more than 360 million travelers at our air, land, and sea ports of entry.

Since 2009, we have seen growth in both trade and travel.

In Fiscal Year 2013, total passenger volume was 6.4% higher and total import value was nearly 40% higher than in Fiscal Year 2011.

Houston's George Bush International and the William P. Hobby Airports are vital hubs for domestic and international air travel:

1. Nearly 40 million passengers traveled through Bush International Airport (IAH) and an additional 10 million traveled through William P. Hobby (HOU);

2. More than 650 daily departures occur at IAH;

3. IAH is the 11th busiest airport in the U.S. for total passenger traffic; and

4. IAH has 12 all-cargo airlines that handled more than 419,205 metric tons of cargo in 2012.

It was reported in October 2015 that the William P. Hobby Airport has opened a new 280,000 ft complex that includes 5 gates for its international concourse in an effort to re-establish the airport's daily international air service.

The addition is expected to support travel service for nearly 7,500 international passengers and 25 departing flights a day.

At the same time, these waterways offer opportunities for terrorists and their instruments, drug smugglers, and undocumented persons to enter our country.

Protecting the nation's border—land, air, and sea—from illegal entry of people, weapons, drugs, and contraband is vital to our homeland security, as well as economic prosperity.

The Border and Maritime Coordination Improvement Act:

Creates an office of Biometric Identity Management;

Establishes the Border Security Joint Task Forces in the East, West and for investigations;

Updates the Maritime Operations Coordination Plan;

Establishes an Asset Development for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Air and Marine;

Secures the Transportation Worker Identification credential against use by unauthorized aliens;

Creates a cost-benefit analysis of co-locating operational entities;

Evaluates the Coast Guard Deployable Specialized Forces;

Constructs an evaluation of Coast Guard Deployable Specialized Forces; and

Establishes a Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism Improvement among other important changes.

I support this legislation because it will help protect the integrity of our borders and the security of our homeland.

H.R. 3586 provides specific responsibilities for the Undersecretary to establish and operate the newly implemented departmental Joint Task Forces and appointing the directors to those joint task forces.

Under H.R. 3586, the Joint Task Force—East and Joint Task Force—West is to execute a strategic plan to secure the land and maritime borders, which will coordinate criminal investigations supporting such task forces.

The bill also directs the the DHS to establish additional Joint Task Forces to:

1. coordinate operations along the northern border;

2. prevent and respond to homeland security crises;

3. establish other regionally based operations; and

4. combat cybersecurity.

The smuggling of illicit drugs, illegal immigrants, and contraband weapons over the Texas border is a major problem that needs to be addressed.

Approximately 1 million passengers and pedestrians cross the Texas border on a daily basis; of these, on average 23 of these persons are wanted for arrest.

H.R. 3586 is a positive step in the right direction and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3586, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SOUTHWEST BORDER SECURITY THREAT ASSESSMENT ACT OF 2016

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4482) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to prepare a southwest border threat analysis, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4482

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Southwest Border Security Threat Assessment Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. SOUTHWEST BORDER THREAT ANALYSIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a southwest border threat analysis that includes the following:

(1) An assessment of current and potential terrorism and criminal threats posed by individuals and organized groups seeking to—

(A) unlawfully enter the United States through the southwest border; or

(B) exploit security vulnerabilities along the southwest border.

(2) An assessment of improvements needed at and between ports of entry along the southwest border to prevent terrorists and instruments of terror from entering the United States.

(3) An assessment of gaps in law, policy, and coordination between State, local, or tribal law enforcement, international agreements, or tribal agreements that hinder effective and efficient border security, counterterrorism, and anti-human smuggling and trafficking efforts.

(4) An assessment of the flow of legitimate trade along the southwest border.

(5) An assessment of the current percentage of situational awareness achieved by the Department of Homeland Security along the southwest border.

(6) An assessment of the current percentage of operational control (as such term is defined in section 2 of the Secure Fence Act of 2006 (8 U.S.C. 1701 note; Public Law 109–367)) achieved by the Department of Homeland Security of the southwest.

(7) An assessment of impact of trusted traveler programs on border wait times and border security.

(8) An assessment of traveler crossing times and any potential security vulnerability associated with prolonged wait times.

(b) ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS.—For the southwest border threat analysis required under subsection (a), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider and examine the following:

(1) Technology needs and challenges, including such needs and challenges identified as a result of previous investments that have not fully realized the security and operational benefits that were sought.

(2) Personnel needs and challenges, including such needs and challenges associated with recruitment and hiring.

(3) Infrastructure needs and challenges.

(4) The roles and authorities of State, local, and tribal law enforcement in general border security activities.

(5) The status of coordination among Federal, State, local, tribal, and Mexican law enforcement entities relating to border security.

(6) The terrain, population density, and climate along the southwest border.

(7) International agreements between the United States and Mexico related to border security.

(c) CLASSIFIED THREAT ANALYSIS.—To the extent possible, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit the southwest border threat analysis required under subsection (a) in unclassified form. The Secretary may submit a portion of such threat analysis in classified form if the Secretary determines such is appropriate.

SEC. 3. BORDER PATROL STRATEGIC PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the submission of the threat analysis required under section 2 but not later than June 30, 2017, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Chief of U.S. Border Patrol, shall, in consultation with the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department of Homeland Security, issue a Border Patrol Strategic Plan.

(b) CONTENTS.—The Border Patrol Strategic Plan required under subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, a consideration of the following:

(1) The southwest border threat analysis required under section 2, with an emphasis on efforts to mitigate threats identified in such threat analysis.

(2) Efforts to analyze and disseminate border security and border threat information between Department of Homeland Security border security components and with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies with missions associated with the border.

(3) Efforts to increase situational awareness, including the following:

(A) Surveillance capabilities, including capabilities developed or utilized by the Department of Defense, and any appropriate technology determined to be excess by the Department of Defense.

(B) Use of manned aircraft and unmanned aerial systems, including camera and sensor technology deployed on such assets.

(4) Efforts to detect and prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States.

(5) Efforts to detect, interdict, and disrupt aliens and illicit drugs at the earliest possible point.

(6) Efforts to focus intelligence collection to disrupt transnational criminal organizations outside of the international and maritime borders of the United States.

(7) Efforts to ensure that any new border security technology can be operationally integrated with existing technologies in use by the Department of Homeland Security.

(8) Technology required to maintain, support, and enhance security and facilitate trade at ports of entry, including nonintrusive detection equipment, radiation detection equipment, biometric technology, surveillance systems, and other sensors and technology that the Secretary of Homeland Security determines necessary.

(9) Operational coordination unity of effort initiatives of the border security components of the Department of Homeland Security, including any relevant task forces of the Department.

(10) Lessons learned from Operation Jumpstart and Operation Phalanx.

(11) Cooperative agreements and information sharing with State, local, tribal, territorial, and other Federal law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction on the northern or southern border.

(12) Border security information received from consultation with State, local, tribal, territorial, and Federal law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction on the northern or southern border, or in the maritime environment, and from border community stakeholders (including through public meetings with such stakeholders), including representatives from border agricultural and ranching organizations and representatives from business and civic organizations along the northern or southern border.

(13) Staffing requirements for all departmental border security functions.

(14) A prioritized list of departmental research and development objectives to enhance the security of the southwest border.

(15) An assessment of training programs, including training programs regarding the following:

(A) Identifying and detecting fraudulent documents.

(B) Understanding the scope of enforcement authorities and the use of force policies.

(C) Screening, identifying, and addressing vulnerable populations, such as children and victims of human trafficking.

(16) An assessment of how border security operations affect crossing times.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SITUATIONAL AWARENESS.—The term ''situational awareness'' means a knowledge and unified understanding of unlawful cross-border activity, including threats and trends concerning illicit trafficking and unlawful crossings (which may be used to forecast future shifts in such threats and trends), and the operational capability to conduct continuous and integrated surveillance of the international borders of the United States.

(2) SOUTHWEST BORDER.—The term ''southwest border'' means the land and maritime borders between the United States and Mexico.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, we are considering a critical piece of legislation that would require the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a full assessment of the threats that are coming across our southern border.

Evaluating our border threats regularly seems like common sense, especially given the ever-evolving nature of cartel and smuggling activity; yet DHS has not conducted a systematic threat assessment of our southern border in over 20 years. A lot has changed since then.

Southern Arizonans know well that our border is not secure. Transnational criminal organizations are trafficking drugs, money, people, and weapons into and through our communities. This poses a significant public safety risk and national security threat. For my constituents, this is not just an abstract issue but is something that is a part of their everyday lives.

The brave men and women of the Border Patrol do all they can with the tools they are provided, but they are restricted by outdated strategies and political leadership that does not have the resolve to let agents do what they do best—secure the border. In addition, not only is our strategy based off of outdated information, but the metrics used to measure that strategy are inconsistent and incomplete.

The last time DHS measured security along the border, which was in 2010, a mere 44 percent of it was under operational control. Recently, DHS claimed they have been over 80 percent effective along the border; yet the best analytical research, using all available data, puts the true probability of apprehension much closer to 50 percent. Likewise, a month ago, in a hearing I led as the chairwoman of the Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee, the Border Patrol confirmed they have only a little over 50 percent situational awareness of the border. That means, of illicit activity coming across our, roughly, 2,000-mile southern border, we only know of a little over half of it. We will never secure the border unless we have a full awareness of where we are getting beat by the cartels.

The first step to fixing something is actually understanding the problem. My bill requires a full assessment of the threats along our southern border, including where we have vulnerabilities, where we can better leverage technology, and what percentage of situational awareness and operational control we have. Once we understand and identify the gaps in our defenses, then we can develop a better plan to address those shortfalls through a change of strategy that modifies how we deploy agents, technology, and infrastructure. That is why my bill also requires the U.S. Border Patrol to design a new strategic plan that is based on a new threat analysis required by this bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is always a lot of talk about securing the border here in Washington, D.C. It is time to actually take some action. This bill is a critical first step in building trust in our system and in our ability to accurately measure illicit activity along the border and respond to it. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4482, the Southwest Border Security Threat Assessment Act of 2016.

H.R. 4482 would help enhance the Department of Homeland Security's border security efforts by enhancing DHS' understanding of the relevant vulnerabilities and capabilities and by requiring a strategic plan to ensure border security personnel, technology, and infrastructure resources are being used to their fullest.

Specifically, the bill would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to assess vulnerabilities and capabilities on the southwest border to help counter threats and illegal activities. The assessment is to include an analysis of the improvements needed at and between the ports of entry; gaps in law and policy between State, local, and tribal law enforcement and international agreements that hinder border security efforts; the flow of legitimate trade along the southwest border; and the percentage of situational awareness and operational control achieved by DHS in the region. The bill also requires the Chief of the Border Patrol to issue a Border Patrol Strategic Plan every 5 years based on this assessment.

Last month, the bill was reported to the House by the Committee on Homeland Security after the inclusion of provisions that were offered by the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), in order to strengthen an already good, commonsense bill.

H.R. 4482 would help the DHS and the Border Patrol, in particular, to understand and to mitigate border security threats, to improve coordination and cooperation between DHS' border security components and partners, and to increase situational awareness along the border.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4482.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 4482.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4482, a legislation that will require an analysis of the Southwest Border Threat from the Secretary of Homeland Security and a Border Patrol Strategic Plan from the Chief of the Border Patrol.

I support this legislation as a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations; I believe that Congress can and should do more to ensure the safety of our southern border from terrorism and criminal threats.

My service in the House of Representatives has focused on making sure that our nation is secure and prosperous.

The U.S. has thousands of miles of coastlines, lakes, and rivers and hundreds of ports that provide opportunities for legitimate travel, trade, and recreation.

Ports serve as America's gateway to the global economy since the nation's economic prosperity rests on the ability of containerized and bulk cargo arriving unimpeded at U.S. ports to support the rapid delivery system that underpins the manufacturing and retail sectors.

A central component of national security is the ability of our international ports to move goods in and out of the country.

According to the Department of Commerce in 2012, Texas exports totaled $265 billion.

In 2012, ship channel-related businesses contributed 1,026,820 jobs and generated more than $178.5 billion in statewide economic activity.

The Port of Houston is a 25-mile-long complex of diversified public and private facilities located just a few hours' sailing time from the Gulf of Mexico.

In 2014, the Port of Houston was ranked among U.S. ports:

1st in foreign tonnage;

1st among Texas ports with 46% of market share by tonnage and 95% market share in containers by total TEUS in 2014;

1st among Gulf Coast container ports, handling 67% of U.S. Gulf Coast container traffic in 2014; and

2nd in U.S. ports in terms of total foreign cargo value (based on U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census).

The Government Accountability Office (GAO), reports that the Port of Houston and its waterways and vessels, are part of an economic engine handling more than $700 billion in cargo annually.

The Port of Houston houses approximately 100 steamship lines offering services that link Houston with 1,053 ports in 203 countries.

The Port of Houston is home to a $15 billion petrochemical complex, the largest in the nation and second largest in the world.

With the nation's largest petrochemical complex supplying over 40 percent of the nation's base petrochemical manufacturing capacity, what happens at the Port of Houston affects the entire nation.

At the same time, these waterways offer opportunities for terrorists and their instruments, drug smugglers, and undocumented persons to enter our country.

U.S. seaports, like the Port of Houston, are vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

H.R. 4482 will require the Secretary of Homeland Security to analyze and assess the southwest border threat:

Terrorism and criminal threats seeking unlawful entrance to the U.S. through the southwest border or exploiting border vulnerabilities;

Improvements needed in border ports to prevent the entrance of terrorism into the U.S.;

Law, policy, cooperation between state, local or tribal law enforcement, international or tribal agreements that hinder effective and efficient border security, counterterrorism, anti-human smuggling and trafficking efforts and legitimate trade along the southwest border;

Current percentage of situational awareness and operational control of U.S. borders achieved by DHS of international land and maritime borders of the U.S.

H.R. 4482 will require the Chief of the Border Patrol to issue by March 1, 2017, and every five years after, a Border Patrol Strategic Plan:

Evaluation of southwest border threat analysis;

Assessment of principal border security threats;

Efforts to focus intelligence collection to disrupt transnational criminal organizations outside of U.S. borders;

Ensure new border security technology can be operationally integrated with existing DHS technologies;

Technology required to maintain, support, and enhance security and facilitate trade at ports of entry;

Cooperative agreements and information sharing with state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction on the northern and southern borders;

Prioritized list of research and development objective to enhance the security of borders;

Assessment of training programs for detecting fraudulent documents, understanding scope of enforcement authorities and the use of force policies, and screening, identifying, and addressing vulnerable populations;

Assessment of how border security operations affect crossing times.

Let me close by reminding my colleagues that earlier this year we passed the Northern Border Security Act, which secured our border with Canada.

Now it is time to protect our Southern Border, therefore I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 4482.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4482, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STATE AND HIGH-RISK URBAN AREA WORKING GROUP ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4509) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to clarify membership of State planning committees or urban area working groups for the Homeland Security Grant Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4509

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act''.

SEC. 2. ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION OF CERTAIN DHS GRANTS.

Subsection (b) of section 2021 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 611) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) PLANNING COMMITTEES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any State or high-risk urban area receiving a grant under section 2003 or 2004 shall establish a State planning committee or urban area working group to assist in preparation and revision of the State, regional, or local homeland security plan or the threat and hazard identification and risk assessment, as the case may be, and to assist in determining effective funding priorities for grants under such sections.

''(2) COMPOSITION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The State planning committees and urban area working groups referred to in paragraph (1) shall include at least one representative from each of the following significant stakeholders:

''(i) Local or tribal government officials.

''(ii) Emergency response providers, which shall include representatives of the fire service, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and emergency managers.

''(iii) Public health officials and other appropriate medical practitioners.

''(iv) Individuals representing educational institutions, including elementary schools, community colleges, and other institutions of higher education.

''(v) State and regional interoperable communications coordinators, as appropriate.

''(vi) State and major urban area fusion centers, as appropriate.

''(B) GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION.—The members of the State planning committee or urban area working group, as the case may be, shall be a representative group of individuals from the counties, cities, towns, and Indian tribes within the State or high-risk urban area, including, as appropriate, representatives of rural, high-population, and high-threat jurisdictions.

''(3) EXISTING PLANNING COMMITTEES.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to require that any State or high-risk urban area create a State planning committee or urban area working group, as the case may be, if that State or high-risk urban area has established and uses a multijurisdictional planning committee or commission that meets the requirements of this subsection.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise in support of H.R. 4509, the State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act, which was introduced by the subcommittee's ranking member, Congressman PAYNE.

The Homeland Security Act requires States and urban areas that are receiving State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Areas Security Initiative funds to have planning committees to determine how to efficiently and effectively expend these funds. H.R. 4509 expands the stakeholders who are required to be involved in these committees to include representatives from public health, educational institutions, fusion centers, and interoperability coordinators, as appropriate.

In New York City, the New York City Police Department, the FDNY, emergency management, and public health, along with other partners, work together to ensure that these grant funds provide the biggest return on investment for the city's security. Time and again, these officials have told me how important these funds are to their ability to ensure the security of millions of residents, commuters, and visitors in the city each day. They have used these funds to train personnel, to conduct exercises, and to procure helicopters, fireboats, cameras, and radiation detection equipment.

This funding is vital now more than ever. Securing high-risk urban areas, like New York City, becomes more challenging every day considering the fact that we are at our highest threat level since the September 11 terrorist attacks. That is why it is so outrageous that the President's fiscal year 2017 budget proposes to cut more than $500 million from grants to support States, localities, ports, and transit systems.

The Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held a hearing last month on the proposed cuts. We heard from representatives of emergency management, law enforcement, the fire service, and fusion centers. They all had

the same message: these grants have made a difference, and cutting them now would have disastrous effects on their ability to prevent, to prepare for, and to respond to terrorist attacks. Not only would they be unable to make new security investments, but the investments they have made since 9/11 would be eroded. In this threat environment, this is not the time to back away from our support of our Nation's first responders.

Mr. Speaker, the States and urban areas that are receiving Homeland Security grant funding take their responsibilities to secure their areas very seriously. They diligently work through the planning committees that are discussed in this bill in order to make sure they make sound investments to secure their jurisdictions. The President must take the security of these jurisdictions equally as seriously and fund these programs accordingly.

I support the passage of H.R. 4509.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4509, the State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act.

Before I begin my statement, I would like to support the comments made by my chairman in his being very concerned about the cuts to the grant that have been proposed.

□ 1445

Mr. Speaker, I represent the 10th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey. Communities throughout my district from Newark to Jersey City have built robust capabilities to prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist attacks and natural disasters with State Homeland Security grants and the Urban Areas Security Initiative funding.

I am proud of the progress New Jersey has made in preparing and protecting against terrorist attacks with these important grant dollars. I cannot stress enough the critical role these funds play in my district's ability to protect itself from terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

Over the past 3½ years, I have served as the ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security's Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee. In this capacity, I have seen the benefits realized across the Nation from DHS' Homeland Security Grant Program.

With this funding, State and local governments equip first responders with the much-needed protective equipment and emergency communications technologies as well. These grants also help jurisdictions develop and exercise disaster response plans. These activities facilitate important relationships among the individuals and entities that play critical roles in disaster prevention and response.

As successful as DHS' Homeland Security Grant Programs have been, however, more needs to be done to ensure those who are responsible for the various aspects of the disaster response plan, train, and exercise together before a disaster strikes.

Indeed, Save the Children testified before my subcommittee about the disconnect in some communities between emergency planners and school districts and childcare facilities.

A GAO report I requested with former subcommittee chair SUSAN BROOKS released earlier this week revealed that about 68 percent of school districts surveyed incorporate the district emergency management plans into the broader community's emergency management plan. That is good progress, but we must do better.

The State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act seeks to build upon the relationships that the State Homeland Security Grant Programs and the Urban Areas Security Initiative facilitate and to ensure decisionmakers have a complete understanding of a community's vulnerabilities so that investments can be prioritized appropriately.

H.R. 4509 would facilitate the whole community approach to disaster planning by identifying key players to be included in the State planning committee's Urban Area Working Groups.

From firefighters and police to medical community and school officials, H.R. 4509 would ensure that the right people are at the table when decisions are made about how Federal Homeland Security Grant funds are to be spent at the State and local levels.

H.R. 4509 was approved by the Committee on Homeland Security by voice vote, and similar language was approved in a larger package late last year.

The legislation also has the support of the Security Industry Association, and I include in the RECORD a letter from the Association.

SECURITY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,
March 22, 2016.

Hon. DONALD PAYNE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE PAYNE: On behalf of the Security Industry Association (SIA), and its more than 600 corporate members, I would like to express our strong support for H.R. 4509, the State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act, which clarifies the roles and responsibilities of state planning committees and urban area working groups under the Homeland Security Grant Program.

H.R. 4509 amends Title 6 U.S.C. 611 to include additional stakeholder representation in committees and working groups that set local priorities for grants awarded through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP). We believe this is critical in light of recent attacks and broader terrorist threats against vulnerable targets such as schools and workplaces, and the desire of state and local governments to provide additional protections and response capabilities.

SIA and its members believe that the inclusion of educational facilities, emergency communications coordinators and fusion centers will help improve state and local homeland security grant planning processes as they are aligned with evolving threats.

SIA members have assisted many homeland security grantees with technology solutions essential to securing critical infrastructure such as maritime ports and airports, schools, power generation and transmission systems, hospitals, factories, transit systems, and governmental buildings.

SIA urges swift consideration of H.R. 4509 by the House Homeland Security Committee, and on the House floor. We stand ready to provide any further information you may need. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

DON ERICKSON,
CEO, Security Industry Association.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4509, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers. If the gentleman from New Jersey has no other speakers, I am prepared to close once the gentleman does.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4509. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his astuteness, along with Mr. WALDEN, for a very important initiative.

Having been on the Homeland Security Committee since the tragic terrorist attack against the United States, I have watched the formation of this department and the issues that are important to secure America.

I have lived through various processes and various disasters that are not terrorist related to know how important these grants overall are.

The grants, in particular, that are dealing with this bill in planning committee are extremely important to add to the planning committee those individuals who are beyond the very able work of our firefighters and police officers. Those are first responders. But it is very important to engage the community, such as schools, medical professions, and beyond.

I hope, as this legislation passes, we will also look to having on the planning committee some of the leaders on Homeland Security issues that are in our community.

For example, I have an individual by the name of Charles X. White who has led issues on homeland security for a very long time. His activism created an opportunity for there to be a homeland security specialty and discipline at Texas Southern University because the community is involved, involved on issues of evacuation, involved on issues of restoration, involved on issues of making sure funding gets to those necessary entities that may not be known on a global sense and, when I say that, in a countywide, city-wide, or statewide sense.

They provide the insight into neighborhoods. I think it is important that, as this bill makes its way, its interpretation will be that we add community leaders who are the kind of persons who are engaged with the day-to-day goings-on of neighborhoods, knowing how important it is for them to be heard during times of a terrorist act or any other disaster to be restored.

Again, I am grateful for this legislation and the leadership of Mr. PAYNE and Mr. WALDEN. I ask my colleagues to enthusiastically support this legislation.

To those who may be engaged all around America with preparedness, it is important, of course, to have every aspect of our community involved in these planning committees so that their voices can be heard on how best to heal, to solve, and to restore after a tragedy has occurred in our local communities.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Time and time again, we have learned the true value of Homeland Security grant dollars comes from the relationships built through planning, training, and exercises that are done in these communities.

H.R. 4509 would facilitate the whole community approach to disaster response and planning by adopting a more inclusive definition of emergency response.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Committee on Homeland Security as well as the Security Industry Association for their support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4509.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4509, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TREATING SMALL AIRPORTS WITH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4549) to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4549

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. CONDUCT OF SECURITY SCREENING BY THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AT CERTAIN AIRPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide for security screening to be conducted by the Transportation Security Administration at, and provide all necessary staff and equipment to, any airport—

(1) that lost commercial air service on or after January 1, 2013; and

(2) the operator of which, following the loss described in paragraph (1), submits to the Administrator—

(A) a request for security screening to be conducted at such airport by the Transportation Security Administration; and

(B) written confirmation of a commitment from a commercial air carrier—

(i) that such air carrier intends to resume commercial air service at such airport; and

(ii) to resume such service not later than the date that is one year after the date of the submission of the request under subparagraph (A).

(b) DEADLINE.—Subject to the one-year limitation described in subsection (a)(2)(B)(ii), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall ensure that the process of implementing security screening by the Transportation Security Administration at an airport described in subsection (a) is complete not later than the later of—

(1) the date that is 90 days after the date on which the operator of such airport submits to the Administrator a request for such screening under paragraph (2)(A) of such subsection; or

(2) the date on which the commercial air carrier that is the subject of such a request intends to resume commercial air service at such airport.

(c) EFFECTS ON OTHER AIRPORTS.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall carry out this section in a manner that does not negatively affect operations at airports not described in this section that are otherwise provided security screening conducted by the Transportation Security Administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As a Representative, I love fighting for the little guy, battling the bureaucracy on behalf of those who can't. Today I am fighting for the little airports.

I think that the people who are dependent on small airports in order to travel and conduct business deserve the same security that those at larger airports get. And this isn't just about security. It is about jobs and the economy.

In the past 3 years, nearly 30 airports across the country have lost commercial service. This wreaks havoc on the local economy and, ultimately, the community. In at least six of these cases, airlines have reevaluated and sought to return at a later date.

Unfortunately, in many cases, even if it has only been several months, TSA has already removed their resources from the airports and have refused to return. The irony is that many of these airports have simultaneously been awarded funding by the U.S. Department of Transportation in order to regain and promote commercial air service.

While one Federal agency agrees to invest in getting the airport up and going, another Federal agency is refusing to provide security screening. This makes no sense from a budgetary standpoint and is simply unfair.

These airports are located in important cities. For example, Del Rio is home to Laughlin Air Force Base, numerous DHS facilities, and a growing community that facilitates international trade between the U.S. and Mexico.

Given the national and homeland security-related institutions serviced directly by the Del Rio airport and the potential boost to the economy, it only makes sense to provide basic screening.

Del Rio, Texas, is not alone. This is playing out across the country from New Jersey to California. By screening these passengers at the point of origin, we are further decreasing wait times at our larger hub airports.

The bill is a bipartisan effort and has passed out of the Homeland Security Committee with unanimous support. Equally bipartisan companion legislation with the exact same language has been included in the Senate's FAA reauthorization, which passed out of committee unanimously as well.

We are all in agreement that this is an important step towards achieving economic and national security. I want to thank my fellow Members, Representatives WALDEN, DEFAZIO, LUMMIS, KILMER, and DAVIS, who cosponsored this piece of legislation.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4549, the Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016.

Under this act, TSA would be required to provide staffing and screening equipment to any airport that lost

commercial air service on or after January 1, 2013, if the operator submits a request to TSA together with a written commitment from a commercial air carrier that such carrier intends to resume service at such airport not later than 1 year after the date on which the request is submitted.

It is my understanding that, without this legislation or alternative measures, should commercial service return to the affected airports, the passengers who depart the airport would fly unscreened to their destination and be subject to security screening upon arrival if they have to connect to another destination via commercial air flight.

The potential universe of airports that are believed to be implicated by this legislation is over 20, but there are at least 6 airports that are expected to pursue Federal screening operations.

□ 1500

As a member of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, I believe that it is important that passengers undergo a security screening before boarding commercial flights.

As we have heard from TSA and various media reports, this travel season is expected to be the busiest in many years. One of the factors contributing to the long wait times at airports across the Nation is the lack of adequate staffing.

During consideration of this measure in committee, the committee approved an amendment offered by the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON, to ensure that when TSA acts to implement this law and provides screening services to new airports, they do not do so at the expense of other airports in the system.

If TSA does this right and manages its staffing resources in a thoughtful and holistic manner, there is no reason for other airports to be negatively impacted.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), the principal author of this legislation, a gentleman who has been fighting for small communities and communities all over the country.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman HURD for his leadership on this issue. I want to thank as well the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for helping us out on this, and certainly Chairman MICHAEL MCCAUL.

This answer by the TSA makes no sense from a security standpoint and hurts our smaller communities that may go from time to time without air service but clamor for air service. If you are a big airport and you lose a carrier, you probably have several others there serving the people of that area.

If you are a small airport and you have one carrier, as is the case in Klamath Falls, Oregon, in June of 2014, when SkyWest pulled out, they had no other carriers, so they immediately began to seek additional air service. The city of Klamath Falls acted diligently. They recruited a new partner, Peninsula Airways, in July of 2015, so like a year later they had somebody in line and everything was working out.

They go to TSA, and TSA says: No, we are not coming back.

Their answer was to reverse screen.

I said: Well, what is that?

Well, that means you board the 28- or 30-passenger airplane with all your luggage, everything else, and then you fly—in this case 236 miles north to Portland, Oregon, Oregon's largest city—then you deplane on the tarmac, and you come back through like you had just driven up.

Well, that is an interesting way to provide security for the Nation's communities and airplanes because that means you have flown right up the entire length of Oregon, from the California border down here in Klamath Falls all the way to Portland.

Now, let me put that in an East Coast perspective for you. That would be like boarding a plane in Raleigh-Durham International Airport down in Raleigh, North Carolina, and then you would fly all the way up to Reagan Washington National Airport, up to DCA here. Actually, we go 4 miles farther in Oregon, but we will leave that aside for the moment, 232 miles versus 236. Then you get off the airplane here at Reagan National, and then we will screen you. We will find out what you are carrying, what is in your bags, and then we will put you on a connecting flight.

Does anybody think that is good security? Does anybody think that people who want to do us harm aren't going to figure that gaping hole out?

Portland International Airport was willing to work with us, but it made no sense. So we pleaded with TSA: Can't you come back? You were here before. It won't take much.

And they basically said no. And that is what brings us here today. For our Nation's security, for the economic security of our small communities, we need to pass this bipartisan legislation.

On a side note, the Nation's only F–15 training unit is in Klamath Falls at Kingsley Airfield. So our F–15 pilots have to come out now, and rather than fly into Klamath Falls, they have to fly into an airport that is at least, well, on a bad day probably 2 hours over the mountains, and then come over. So we are paying all that extra transportation cost, we are paying hotels, everything else, delaying their access to training, and that doesn't make sense, either.

So let's be safe and secure. Let's be smart and prudent. Let's pass this legislation and allow our communities to have the air service they need and our country to have the security that we demand. This is commonsense legislation that we need to pass. I thank both sides of the aisle for their great work on this with us. Together, we are going to do the right policy even when TSA wouldn't.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me the time and for his support of the bill. I thank the majority side also.

I don't represent the area where this airport is located, but GREG WALDEN and I represent two of the largest districts, geographically speaking, in Congress. The problems that are created by the lack of air service to Klamath Falls, the gentleman has already well documented. It is about a 4-hour drive to Portland, which is the nearest place where you can get a variety of hubbed destinations out of there. Flying a plane into the Portland metropolitan area, twin-engine, fairly heavy plane with no screening and no security, defies common sense.

Now, unfortunately, I was principal, after 9/11, with JOHN MICA in creating TSA, and there are days when we have concerns and regrets, and this is certainly one of them. It was not our intent to create an agency that could dictate who could and couldn't have air service. That is not within TSA's scope of jurisdiction. This is outrageous that they would try to deny this.

Remember, TSA, you can't lobby Congress. But I hear they have been lobbying in some phone calls, saying: this will cost $50 million; it will take away service from your airport, which is why the committee said they can't take it away.

No, these are going to be part-time screeners. Klamath Falls has even offered to hire private screeners. TSA says no. TSA is giving away equipment, surplusing equipment that is still perfectly functional for an airport like Klamath Falls, so there is no cost involved there. At worst, they are going to have a few part-time screeners and they are going to have to move the surplus equipment there and plug it back in. This isn't going to cost millions of dollars.

This is, plain and simple, a commonsense approach to how we will make our entire system safer and also provide what small cities need. Airports are a critical, critical factor in economic development and recruitment for small cities across the western United States. When you have a willing partner, a growing airline, PenAir, that has signed a commitment to come back in and provide service, as they do for some communities in my district, then it is not the place of the TSA to say, oh, no, hold it up, sorry, can't do

that. PenAir probably wouldn't even be willing to provide the service without screening because what would their liability be if they are flying unscreened passengers on a commercial airline? I am not even sure what the FAA would have to say about that.

This is absolutely outrageous, and it is just absurd that Congress has to step in and act to rectify this misguided step by the TSA, but by passing this bill, we will. I recommend this bill to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues from Texas and across the Nation who, as I have discovered with this bill, have similar problems. In my particular case, it is the city of Salina, Kansas, which is located only 100 miles from the closest hub, and it has long provided valuable air service either to Kansas City or a little bit farther to Denver. Due to circumstances beyond Salina's control, just in January their air carrier stopped providing flights from Salina, and TSA obviously withdrew screening services.

However, just a few weeks later—just a few weeks later—the airport and Great Lakes Airlines reached an exciting agreement to restore air service to and from Salina. As we have heard the same story, the airport sent a request to TSA asking them to reinstate screening services—again, this is just a few weeks after they had ended the services—to begin these much-needed flights.

Shortly thereafter, without adequate explanation, TSA, of course as we have heard, denied the request. I soon learned from other airports, other communities across America that I wasn't alone. Other airports located predominantly in rural communities, in nearly identical situations, were also being denied screening services.

Perhaps most troubling to me—and I heard a lot of troubling testimony here—was that no credible reason was given for declining the screening services, again, just a few weeks after they were still screening flights in Salina, Kansas, saying we can't do it now.

I believe our rural communities in Kansas and others across the Nation are tired of being left with the short end of the stick and Washington bureaucrats thinking they can get away with it.

In response to these lame excuses, I urge passage of our TSA Fairness Act today. This legislation will reverse the denial by TSA and ensure they stop discriminating against rural communities like Salina, Kansas. The service agreement they have reached with Great Lakes Airlines will support our region's continued economic growth. As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax and Capital Access, I understand how important reliable air service is for Salina, Kansas, and our region. It is a simple fix with this bill.

I appreciate my colleague from Texas carrying this on the floor. It will ensure TSA continues to fulfill its mission, which is to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce, and again for Salina and other rural communities across Kansas.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey. I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), the sponsor of this bill, as well as the numbers of individuals who came to the floor.

I chaired the Subcommittee on Transportation Security of the Committee on Homeland Security some years ago and happily remain on that committee because I do think it has a crucial and important role. I do believe in your cause and in this legislation.

We like to think of rural America as being tranquil areas. But in light of the recent incident in Brussels, many of us who are students of aviation security are well aware of a number of elements of weakness, period. Whether or not it is the perimeters of the airports or ingress and egress of airports, whether or not it is the access of employees, of which we make no general indictment of the hardworking individuals who work at airports, but we know that the ingress and egress in many of our large airports still gives us pause, and now, obviously, the conspicuous utilization of the open space where the terrorists did their havoc in Brussels.

We would hope that would not be the case in America, and as well in rural airports. But certainly if a commercial airline comes back to a rural community, they need appropriate security. As we grow in developing our security matrix, they may need security that expands into the outer areas, depending upon risks. But the one thing we know is that they need to fall in the category of what we said after 9/11: a professional, well-trained security team, the Transportation Security Administration and TSO.

I have a lot of confidence, as I have had in previous TSA Administrators, in their understanding of the seriousness of their responsibilities. I have the same kind of confidence in the admiral, along with Secretary Johnson, that they understand that we are the front line on securing this Nation. So the airports that have a commercial airline signed, agreed, and sealed need that kind of security. We must leave no stone unturned as it relates to airport security.

Now, obviously, with no security mechanism, it makes it difficult to have a commercial structure, but more importantly, it opens up the airport system to get into, if you will, the system of travel and, not knowing how terrorists think, to start at one point that is more vulnerable than others and wind up in the Nation's busiest airports.

□ 1515

So I support this legislation. I look forward to determining and encouraging funding for this expansion. Obviously, that would be the concern—certainly, in the appropriations process—and I can only imagine that there are those of us who are committed in a bipartisan way to making sure that every aspect of the Nation's travel system, whether you are going from rail to bus to plane or in any other manner, is, of course, protected.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, and I thank Mr. PAYNE and Mr. HURD for their leadership.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee and a former chair of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, I rise in support of H.R. 4549, "Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016" which requires the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to restore security and screening services to any airport that lost air services after January 1, 2013 but has a guarantee from a commercial airline to resume service.

A number of airports in rural parts of the United States have lost commercial air service in the past years.

Those living in rural areas without easy access by highway to other airports have lost a vital travel option.

Once an airport receives a commitment from an airline to begin or re-establish service it at an airport, it also must get TSA to re-establish passenger and baggage screening, but in some cases TSA denies the airport's request to re-establish security screening.

For example, TSA at Crater Lake-Klamath Regional Airport in southern Oregon denied the airport's request to restore security screening, citing the unpredictability of air service in the region and the inability to maintain consistent passenger loads.

Without TSA security screenings, airports must make alternative security arrangements, such as having security screening of passengers and baggage occur once the flight arrives at a large connection airport.

Under H.R. 4549, TSA must begin security screenings at an airport either 90 days after a request for screening is made by the airport or when commercial air service commences, whichever is later.

This requirement would apply only to airports where the airline has said it will resume services within a year of when the airport has requested the restoration of TSA screening.

Small cities in 25 States have lost commercial air service and the local economy of the cities involved suffers.

The loss of airports in these small communities results in using small propeller-powered planes that charge fares much higher proportionately than those of conventional airlines.

Closing airports in these cities results in lost tourist dollars and airport revenue which benefits the community tremendously.

H.R. 4549 directs TSA to restore security and screening services to airports that lost air service and have a guarantee from a commercial airline to resume service.

H.R. 4549 requires restoration of TSA screening to a limited number of airports that have a guarantee from a commercial airline including: Klamath Falls, Oregon; Del Rio, Texas; Sheridan, Wyoming; and Salina, Kansas.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 4549.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to note the bipartisan nature in which this measure comes to the floor today. I thank Members for their support of this measure, and I encourage support for this legislation. Enactment will contribute to strengthening the aviation security system by ensuring that passengers undergo screening before boarding commercial flights.

I had the pleasure of being in south Texas in the last week, and I flew out of McAllen, Texas. I see the nature and size of these airports; but, nevertheless, they should have the same support as the larger airports.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today is a good day. Despite the circus atmosphere that we often see in Washington, D.C., we are strengthening national security and improving the communities across our Nation, and we are doing this in a bipartisan effort.

I would like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and, again, urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 4549.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office regarding H.R. 4549.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 13, 2016.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4549, the Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Megan Carroll.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 4549—Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016

Summary: Under current law, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is required to screen passengers and property on scheduled commercial flights and some charter flights involving aircraft that meet certain capacity-related specifications. Broadly speaking, the agency oversees or conducts screening at most airports with commercial service; for all other airports, the agency uses a risk-based methodology for determining appropriate policies for security-related screening of passengers and cargo.

H.R. 4549 would require TSA to provide screening services at certain airports that lost or experienced a disruption in service by commercial airlines after January 1, 2013. Based on information from the agency, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost $33 million over the 2017–2021 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.

Pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply because enacting H.R. 4549 would not affect direct spending or revenues. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

H.R. 4549 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 4549 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 400 (transportation).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017–2021
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Estimated Authorization Level	8	5	6	7	8	34
Estimated Outlays	6	6	6	7	8	33

Basis of estimate: for this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 4549 will be enacted before the start of fiscal year 2017 and the estimated amounts will be appropriated each year.

At the request of the operator of an airport that lost commercial air service after January 1, 2013, H.R. 4549 would require TSA to provide screening services at that airport. According to the agency, 22 airports could become eligible for federal screening services under the bill, several of which have agreements with commercial airlines to resume service in the near future. TSA has denied requests from some of those airports to resume screening services in the recent past and CBO expects that under current law the agency is unlikely to provide screening services at such airports in the near future. As a result, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4549 would increase the cost of TSA's aviation security programs.

Based on information from TSA about average screening-related costs for airports with characteristics similar to those that would be affected by the bill, CBO estimates that increased spending for aviation-related screening would total $6 million in 2017 and $33 million over the 2017–2021 period. That amount includes roughly $9 million in one-time costs to acquire and install screening-related equipment and $24 million in ongoing personnel costs and other expenses. CBO expects that initially about one-third of the airports that would be eligible for screening services from TSA under the bill—particularly those with agreements from air carriers to resume commercial service—would apply for such services, with that number doubling by 2021.

CBO also estimates that implementing H.R. 4549 would not affect security-related fees collected by TSA to offset a portion of the agency's screening costs. Such fees are collected by air carriers from passengers when tickets for commercial flights are sold—whether or not TSA performs security screening—and would be unaffected by this legislation.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: None.

Increase in long-term direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 4549 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 4549 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Megan Carroll; Impact on state, local, and tribal governments: Jon Sperl; Impact on the Private Sector: Amy Petz.

Estimate approved by: H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4549, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENHANCING OVERSEAS TRAVELER VETTING ACT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4403) to authorize the development of open-source software based on certain systems of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to facilitate the vetting of travelers against terrorist watchlists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4403

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act''.

SEC. 2. OPEN-SOURCE SCREENING SOFTWARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (c), the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State—

(1) are authorized to develop open-source software based on U.S. Customs and Border Protection's global travel targeting and analysis systems and the Department of State's watchlisting, identification, and screening systems in order to facilitate the vetting of travelers against terrorist watchlists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis; and

(2) may make such software and any related technical assistance or training available to foreign governments or multilateral organizations for such purposes.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan to implement subsection (a).

(c) PROVISION OF SOFTWARE AND CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 15 days before the open-source software described in subsection (a) is made available to foreign governments or multilateral organizations pursuant to such subsection, the Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Director of National Intelligence, shall—

(1) certify to the appropriate congressional committees that such availability is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(2) provide to such committees information on how such software or any related technical assistance or training will be made available.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The authority provided under this section shall be exercised in accordance with applicable provisions of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.), the Export Administration Regulations, or any other similar provision of law.

(e) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) in the House of Representatives—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security; and

(ii) the Committee on Foreign Affairs; and

(B) in the Senate—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and

(ii) the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(2) EXPORT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS.—The term ''Export Administration Regulations'' means—

(A) the Export Administration Regulations as maintained and amended under the authority of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) and codified in subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations; or

(B) any successor regulations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to begin by thanking our colleague, Mr. HURD from Texas, for his work here on behalf of the safety and security of the American people. He is a former CIA undercover officer. As a result of that, I think he had some unique insights here in moving this legislation. The name of this bill is Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act.

I would also like to thank one other Member, and that is the Homeland Security chairman, Mr. MCCAUL. He is also on the committee that Mr. SHERMAN and I serve on, but I thank him for his leadership on the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel. That task force made recommendations, with the help of Mr. HURD, and it led to the introduction of this important piece of legislation. It was passed out of the committee I chair, the Foreign Affairs Committee, back in February. I also want to recognize Mr. ELIOT ENGEL and Mr. SHERMAN for their assistance and support on this as well.

I think the reason this has such resonance with the Members in the House is because the global threat of terrorism has never been as high as it is today. In just the last 12 months, we have seen terrorists strike in my home State of California; we have seen it in France, Belgium, Turkey, India, Tunisia—where I just was a few days ago—the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Iraq. We were up in Erbil and Baghdad.

And I have got to tell you, this is a situation that is compounding. No country is immune. This radical ideology that is now on the Internet—a virtual caliphate on the Internet, we should call it—knows no boundaries. It is pulling individuals from all over the globe. It is radicalizing them and, increasingly, doing it without them even having to leave their neighborhood.

I just returned, as I mentioned, from Iraq, Tunisia, and Jordan, and I heard firsthand there about the foreign fighter threat. You have got 35,000 foreigners right now, and 3,600 of them were from Europe. They are actually from a total of 120 countries. They have traveled to the Middle East to join ISIS. Many of these fighters are now looking to return to their homes back in Brussels, back in Paris and the capitals of Europe—even here in the United States.

Bazi was the name of a young girl who testified before our committee. Mr. SHERMAN and I remember some of the things she told us. She was taken captive by an American who had been recruited over the Internet to join ISIS. She became his concubine, and he felt compelled to tell her this was part of his ideology. He had converted to this. As a result of her being an apostate, she had to go through what other Yazidis and Christians and other faiths had to go through, which was to submit to him and to the will of his particular code.

Eventually, she got loose. She got free of him and told us that tale of how, ultimately, she lost every male in the village—all her brothers—and how her sisters are now concubines. Many of them were foreign fighters, and that is why information sharing between countries is more critical now than ever, because this thing is everywhere now.

The bipartisan task force's report highlighted the lack of any comprehensive global database of foreign fighters and suspected terrorists. In its absence, the U.S. and other countries rely on a patchwork system for exchanging extremist identities, which is weak and increases the odds that foreign fighters and suspected terrorists will be able to cross borders undetected.

So this bill, thanks to Mr. HURD's expertise, will authorize the Secretaries of the Department of State and Homeland Security to develop open-source software platforms to vet travelers against terrorist watch lists and against law enforcement databases. It permits the open-source software to be shared with foreign governments and multilateral organizations for police purposes, like INTERPOL.

This bill reflects the recommendations made by, as I said, our colleagues on the task force, which we have worked together on. I thank Mr. HURD and Chairman MCCAUL for their leadership working to make our Nation safer against terrorist threats.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4403, the Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act.

I want to associate myself with the comments of our committee chair, particularly his praise for the hard work of Mr. HURD and the involvement of Chairman MCCAUL of the Homeland Security Committee.

I am a cosponsor of this legislation, and I supported it in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which considered the bill on February 24, and voted it out by voice unanimously, with no opposition. It is also my understanding that the bill also passed unanimously in the Committee on Homeland Security.

As the chairman of our committee explained, this legislation authorizes the State Department and the Department of Homeland Security to develop open-source versions of software that

vets travelers against terrorist watch lists and law enforcement databases. Once the software is developed, we will be able to share it with our allies and multilateral organizations involved in police work, such as INTERPOL. That means that we will have better software in the hands of worldwide law enforcement sooner and it will be interoperable.

As things stand now, we do not have a comprehensive global database for identifying and tracking terrorists. As the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel, which was established by Chairman MCCAUL and the Committee on Homeland Security, highlighted in its September 2015 report, ''countries, including the United States, rely on a patchwork system for swapping extremist identities, increasing the odds foreign fighters will slip through the cracks.''

The Paris and Brussels terrorist attacks demonstrate the need for a global system. Since those tragedies, there has been finger pointing about missed intelligence and criticism over the lack of information sharing across borders.

Just in February, Europol warned that more than 5,000 Europeans with European passports had traveled to ISIS and Syria to become ISIS fighters. In late March, European security officials told the Associated Press that the Islamic State group had trained at least 400 attackers and sent them to Europe to carry out specific attacks.

Of course, we have a visa waiver relationship with most of Europe, and that means these European passport holders will be able to visit the United States without special vetting by our officials. There is an exception to that for those European passports that have been stamped indicating they visited Syria or Iraq.

This should not give us a whole lot of false security because, typically, foreign fighters who want to join ISIS travel to Turkey, where their passport is stamped with a Turkish stamp and then they sneak into ISIS-controlled areas. ISIS does not stamp their passport entry into the Islamic State, so the passports of these Europeans that have gone to fight for ISIS in Iraq and Syria do not bear a Syrian or Iraqi stamp.

□ 1530

In addition, if, for some reason, they did bear such a stamp, any European can simply go and ask for a replacement passport and, in most cases, there will be no record available to the United States that this person had ever visited Syria or Iraq.

So we need a system that gives us the best possible opportunity to identify foreign fighters, but especially those who hold European passports.

If we are going to fight and prevent global terrorism in tandem with other countries, the United States and our allies must be on the same page when it comes to vetting travelers and tracking would-be terrorists. This legislation helps us do just that.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4403.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD), who is a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, and he is also the author of this bill.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SHERMAN for his support of this bill; and I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE, not only for his support of this bill, but for everything that he does on his committee to make sure that our allies know that they can trust us and that our enemies know they should fear us.

Last month, terrorists struck again in the heart of Europe. Their attack in Brussels was part of a wider ISIS campaign to ramp up external operations. Already, the group has been tied to more than 80 terrorist plots or attacks against the West. This is an unprecedented figure.

We have been sounding the alarm here in Congress about the rising tide of terror, as well as the global security gaps being exploited by extremists. My bill, H.R. 4403, would help close one of those major loopholes to make it harder for terrorists to cross borders.

This bill was a recommendation of the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel, on which I served.

In our final report in September, we found that ''gaping security weaknesses overseas—especially in Europe—are putting the U.S. homeland in danger by making it easier for aspiring foreign fighters to migrate to terrorist hotspots and for jihadists to return to the West.''

I saw firsthand that our partners are in a pre-9/11 mindset, and that many of them have failed to conduct adequate counterterrorism screening. For instance, key operatives behind the Paris and Brussels attacks managed to travel back and forth to Syria and throughout Europe, undetected, even though some were on terrorist watch lists. This should not just be a wake-up call, it should be a call to action.

My bill would allow the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to develop specially tailored, open-source watch-listing and screening systems to help our foreign partners disrupt terrorist travel. We have an interest in providing it to several foreign countries, and we should do that.

However, as a matter of overarching Federal policy, this bill does not choose open-source over proprietary. Indeed, the Federal Government should consider proprietary and open-source software and make an educated choice on which one fits the need the best. In this case, providing our partners with software they trust simply makes sense.

Thousands of ISIS fighters have Western passports, and if our overseas partners don't stop them first, we might have to confront them here at home. Yet many governments lack the capacity to properly vet travelers and weed out known or suspected jihadists. That is why we must act today on this legislation and send a clear signal to our allies that America is ready to lead this fight.

I want to thank my fellow members on the task force for their hard work, and I want to particularly thank Mr. VELA and Mr. KEATING, on the Democratic side, for their leadership and support for this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this measure.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, seeing as I have no additional speakers, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4403, the Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would just say this for the Members. The 9/11 Commission Report was pretty prescient on this point. It said: ''The U.S. Government cannot meet its own obligations to the American people to prevent the entry of terrorists without a major effort to collaborate with other governments.''

The report said further: ''We should do more to exchange terrorist information with trusted allies and raise U.S. and global borders security standards for travel and border crossing, over the medium and long term, through extensive international cooperation.''

This is what the bill does. And, frankly, the Department of State here and the Department of Homeland Security, giving them this authorization to develop this open-source software, to vet those travelers against terrorist watch lists and against those law enforcement databases, is absolutely vital.

I will just mention that the so-called Islamic State—we call it Daesh or ISIS—has already threatened to send hundreds of its European fighters back to the continent to carry out attacks like those attacks that they have already carried out in Paris and Brussels and, frankly, attacks like the one they carried out in San Bernardino, California. So I think this measure really deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HURD of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4403, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE FUTURE FORUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Future Forum to provide an update on our past year's work and activity and to discuss the work we must still do to move America's millennials forward.

Yesterday, April 12, marked the 1-year anniversary of Future Forum, and what a year it has been. I encourage everyone at home to follow along as we talk about these issues this afternoon at #futureforum on Twitter or Instagram and Facebook. Send us your questions. I will look at them live here on the floor and talk about them and continue the dialog beyond today's conversation.

Our membership has grown from 14 members a year ago when we started, to 18 of the House's youngest Members. We have traveled to 14 cities now across this great Nation, from San Diego, California, to Manchester, New Hampshire, and to, most recently, last week, hosted by Representatives DEGETTE, POLIS, and PERLMUTTER, Denver. We were even joined there in Denver by our House Minority whip, STENY HOYER.

On each visit we talk to young people at universities, community colleges, coworking spaces, and startup companies, to learn about the issues most important to them, the issues that they are finding as their own personal barriers to success.

Overwhelmingly, we have heard millennials across the Nation share that they are most concerned about issues relating to student loan debt, college affordability, climate change, and campaign finance reform. I want to talk about a few of these issues, and I first start with student loan debt.

At many of these sites with a polling app we ask people: What issue is most important to you? Across the country, the issue that we have seen most often, regardless of what part of the country we are in, what crowd we are in front of, has been student loan debt.

Now, this is an issue that is very personal to me. I just brought my own student loan debt just under $100,000 within the last few months; and I have seen, in my own life, in my constituents' lives in California's East Bay and with the people we have talked to at these Future Forum discussions, that student loan debt has put an entire generation into financial quicksand, and it affects almost every life decision that young people are making.

The biggest decisions you will make in your life: the decision to start a family, we are delaying that decision by about 5 years later than the generation before us; the ability to buy a house, we are perhaps the least homeowning generation America has ever known; the decision and the ability to go out on your own and start your own business—well, actually, millennial entrepreneurship is on the decline. From 2014 to 2015, 5 percent fewer millennials started a business.

How is that?

You look at Silicon Valley, you look at Silicon Alley, you look at Silicon Beach, you look up in the Northwest at Silicon Forest, you see all of these startups across our country and you think, well, this is the startup generation.

In fact, we are more risk averse than you would think. It is because of the student loan debt that we carry that makes it so hard to go out on your own to find that capital you need to take that risk to start a business to create jobs that will help grow our economy.

These are the four issues we are seeing that student loan debt is affecting: starting a family, buying a home, starting a business, and then, finally, being able to save.

We are also the generation that has saved the least of any generation that has ever come before us. And it makes sense, right?

Every month, you have approximately 40 million young people, with $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, hundreds of dollars each month going out the window, going to pay off this debt, making it very hard for you to rent near where you work, let alone even realize that American Dream of homeownership.

Now, while higher education also remains a worthwhile investment, we have found on our tour that, by 2018, 63 percent of new jobs will require a college education. But here is the problem. The cost of college continues to go up.

One of our biggest challenges, perhaps, is making and having generations that have come before us understand that what they experienced 30, 40 years ago, is just not what young people are going through today. It is apples and oranges in terms of experiences. In fact, the cost of college tuition has gone up higher and faster than any other good or service that Americans consume.

In California, for example, in the sixties and seventies, if you were qualified and you were able, you could go to a UC—University of California—school and walk away with, essentially, a debt-free education.

The return on that investment, when Californians and the Federal Government valued public education as a public good, was a workforce that built the greatest tech and biotech economy that the world has ever seen. The tech economy that drives northern California, the biotech economy that is thriving down in San Diego, the minds that are powering the inventive forces in the entertainment industry down in Los Angeles, that is the return on investment that we received when we treated education as a public good in California, and you could have an UC degree and walk away with a debt-free education.

Now, an issue that is also important to millennials and new to Future Forum and affecting young Americans is the issue of diversity in the tech industry.

□ 1545

We love the tech industry in California. It has created so many new jobs and a lot of traffic to go with it, but people who are driving to good-paying jobs.

Silicon Valley in the bay area is at the helm of America's burgeoning tech industry, which is constantly developing innovative ways to interact within a global environment and compete in the 21st century. These cutting-edge companies are creating new ways to communicate, travel, buy, sell, and listen.

The tech industry is led by some of the best and the brightest our Nation has to offer. But there are some statistics about the tech industry I want to share with you that are quite disturbing. The tech industry is not as diverse as California or our country is.

Millennials are at the center of this industry. They are the largest generation in the U.S. workforce. By 2020, millennials will make up 50 percent of the global workforce.

However, over the past 2 to 3 years, major concerns have been raised that tech lacks one major component. We are the largest workforce America has ever known, and we are the largest and most diverse generation America has ever known, but the tech industry is missing a diverse workforce.

Despite making up significant portions of the U.S. population, women and minorities are drastically underrepresented in this industry. Let me give you an example.

In the United States, women compose 50.8 percent of our population. However, women only make up about one-third of the tech workforce.

Ethnic diversity in tech tells a similar story. Eight percent of the tech workforce is Hispanic, 7 percent is African American, 23 percent is Asian, and 60 percent is White.

How can we resolve this? Many tech firms have made great strides toward improving workforce gender and ethnic diversity by releasing workforce data and creating internal programs to address this disparity.

However, action must continue to be taken every single day to address the root of the problem, like improving access to STEM education. The tech industry also needs to seriously examine recruitment measures in order to encourage a more diverse workforce.

I recently introduced the STEM K to Career Act. This bill would provide Federal loan forgiveness for STEM teachers in low-income schools, create a tax credit for paid STEM internships and apprenticeships, and ensure that 7 percent of Federal Work Study funds are used for STEM jobs.

This would help make sure that every corner in America, every classroom across our country, is treated equally and receives the same amount of funding for STEM and make sure that every child has that freedom to dream.

I am also a cosponsor of Representative RICK LARSEN of Washington's Youth Access to American Jobs Act, which will connect students to training in STEM skill positions to prepare them for well-paying jobs. Just last month I signed a letter urging for an increase in Federal support of Hispanic-serving institutions.

Someone in the House who has worked on this issue who is my neighbor in the east bay and someone I have been proud to serve with is Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. I would like to welcome my distinguished colleague to add to this discussion.

I will start, Congresswoman, by asking: This is an industry that has expanded beyond just San Francisco and Silicon Valley. We are seeing major investments put into Oakland and also out in the tri-valley.

What are you hearing back in the bay at home, outside of that Warriors fever—because tonight they are going to set the NBA's single-season wins record—but outside of that fever, what are we hearing at home about the tech industry and what we can do better?

Ms. LEE. First of all, I thank the gentleman so much for his tremendous leadership in Future Forum. I want to thank him also for really stepping up since he has been here in Congress not only in showing dedication and phenomenal representation for his constituents, but, also, he has shown such a tremendous ability to organize his peers and to really focus on the issues that really give our young people, the millennials, a hope that they can actually achieve the American Dream. So I thank the gentleman very much.

I am really proud to share our region with Congressman SWALWELL. I want to first congratulate him also because I think today is the anniversary of Future Forum. One year?

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. One year.

Ms. LEE. The gentleman is doing such critical work to make college affordable and debt free and to really provide opportunities for our young people and our millennials. So I thank the gentleman.

We represent the east bay, as we have said. For years now, this is nothing new to us. I have my office full of cases that go back, actually, 10 years of qualified people of color who wanted to work in the tech sector and never could get in the door.

Let me also say that 40, 50 percent of the jobs in the tech sector are non-tech-related. They are human resources attorneys, lawyers, jobs that many people of color qualify for and still they have been shut out from these opportunities. So this is an important issue to talk about.

Tech is making a home for itself in my district and your district, and it is creating new jobs.

Unfortunately, too many of my African American and Latino constituents have been locked out of these opportunities for years, which have been created by the region's booming sector.

Believe you me, it is not unique to your district or my district. It is a systemic problem that we need to address across the country.

When major tech firms have released workforce data—and, mind you, many have not—we have seen that, at some firms, employees that are African American can make up as much as 7 percent of the workforce. At other firms, this can be below zero percent.

I don't know how you get below zero percent, but some don't even think about it, despite the fact that African Americans, for example, make up 14 percent of the American population.

So that is why I am really honored to serve with our Congressional Black Caucus chair, Chairman BUTTERFIELD, as his co-chair of the CBC Diversity Task Force.

In May of last year, our task force launched the TECH 2020 initiative to increase diversity and inclusion in the tech sector by 2020, specifically as it relates to African American diversity.

Let me just take a moment to thank Reverend Jesse Jackson and Rainbow PUSH because they have been for several years now really making sure these companies commit to releasing their data and coming up with a plan to address inclusion and diversity.

The core principles of TECH 2020 initiative let me lay out very quickly. T, transparency; education and training; corporate responsibility and investment; hiring and retention.

Transparency means ensuring that companies set and achieve inclusion goals, release their data annually, and put this information in a central location for the public to access.

Education and training, STEM education, commitment to long-term STEM investments, working with minority-serving institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, HBCUs, and advancing public and private investment in education.

Corporate responsibility and investment means working to increase board of director diversity. When you look at the boards, you don't see much inclusion at all in diversity.

We have to target philanthropic investments, expand venture capital to diverse ideas, to new, young ideas, seek out diversity in the supplier area and helping young, millennial small businesses grow.

The last principle, hiring and retention, means encouraging companies to provide specific programs, goals, and timetables focused on inclusion and recruit from minority-serving institutions and invest in African American and Latino employees.

The TECH 2020 initiative—we have taken these principles on the road to the boardrooms of some of the biggest names in the tech sector.

So I am pleased that we are continuing this conversation tonight with the head of Future Forum because this really is about the future.

In our district, we have many, many young people, many young African American young men and women, who are working on coding, BlackGirlsCode.

When you look at some of the investments that the Kapor Institute, Mitch and Freada Kapor, have made in terms of investments in firms that require inclusion in STEM education, it is really phenomenal.

We have seen companies add highly qualified people of color, business leaders, to their board of directors, not enough, only a couple, but we are going to continue to work to develop and implement and, most importantly, disclose their diversity and their inclusion plans.

We have also made progress in gaining commitments to investments in science, technology, engineering, and math—of course, the STEM pipeline—to help educate and create the next generation of coders, innovators, and tech leaders.

Last year I was proud to lead a letter—and it was cosigned by 67 of our colleagues—to support the President's Computer Science for All Initiative, which will ensure that every student from preschool to grade 12 will be able to learn how to code.

This initiative specifically focuses on girls and students of color and will help us close the achievement gap in STEM education.

These are all steps in the right direction, but we can and we must do more. America has become more and more diverse. Increasing diversity and inclusion within the tech sector really is not only a moral imperative, it is an economic imperative.

As a former businessowner myself, I can tell you that diversity is really good for business. It is good for the bottom line. When you have a diverse and dynamic employee base, new doors of opportunity open.

So I am very pleased to be helping to lead this effort with our chair of the Black Caucus, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and other colleagues and yourself to achieve parity in the tech sector.

I also look forward to working with Future Forum in addressing these critical issues as we move forward with Future Forum in terms of the next generation of leaders.

Young people are concerned about student loan debt, college affordability, and climate change, all the issues that really create a planet worthy of the future of our young people.

As future members of the modern workforce, they are also concerned about equity. So I have to commend the gentleman once again in Future Forum for his vision and his efforts to engage and empower our future leaders.

I know that together we can and we will achieve a future where people of color, African Americans and Latinos, are fully represented within every level of the tech sector, from entry-level coders and H.R. representatives, legal professionals, C-suite officers, and corporate directors.

Finally, let me say that one effort that some of the companies are mounting, which I think you know about, which we need to talk a little bit more about in the future and Future Forum should look at, are the unconscious bias studies that these companies are undertaking.

Because oftentimes it is the culture of the organization and unconscious biases that translate into policies and programs that create a discriminatory effect which, in fact, need to be addressed and dealt with, and they are so unconscious that people don't even realize that this is the ultimate outcome of those unconscious biases.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Do you think that shining a light on workforce data is probably one of the best ways to kind of reverse an unconscious bias, that unless you are forced to look at the numbers and the behaviors of your company, you are not going to make a change that results in having a diverse workforce?

Ms. LEE. Yes. Absolutely. If you don't have the facts, if you don't have the data, how do you know, first of all, that there is an issue and a problem of exclusion?

Secondly, oftentimes people hire people and work with people whom they are familiar with. There are some systemic issues that, unless you have the data, you don't know what these systemic issues are.

So that is absolutely essential. That is why we continue to ask tech companies to release their data and to really be transparent.

So you have to know what the issues are and what the problem is before you can look at how to rectify it and how to move forward.

So I think that many employees and many corporate officials want to do the right thing. They just have not done the right thing, and they are trying to begin to understand what to do next.

So Future Forum, the Congressional Black Caucus, our Tri-Caucus, all of us here, our Dem Caucus, have really been working hard to try to get this movement forward.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. In your district, you have one of the best universities in the world, UC-Berkeley, and we have heard on our Future Forum's tour from young students who are either right out of college or about to be out of college that the amount of debt they have is driving the decision about where to work, that a lot of times their choices are limited to where their parents live because they know they can't afford to live in the bay area. So they are going to have to boomerang back home with their parents who have just gotten used to their being out of the house.

So what have you heard from the students or the recent graduates in your area about how student loan debt is affecting major life decisions?

Ms. LEE. Student loan debt really is hampering our young people from moving forward. They are concerned mainly about how to get a job that is going to pay enough money to pay down their debt when, really, they should be looking at how to move forward and get the type of job they want, buy a home if they want, have a family or do some of the things that their dreams have been in their minds, in their vision, and in their heart for years. Now their dreams are deferred because they have to just hang on with their families and pay student loan debt.

Secondly, in our area, the cost of housing is outrageous. We met with the Secretary of HUD last week to try to determine what the Federal Government could do to help with, first, displacement and, secondly, to help develop more affordable housing, which, of course, will help young people because they can't afford to live now in the east bay or in the bay area, really.

Our region is just excessively expensive, and we have to figure out how young people can stay where they want to stay and how they can have the type of life they deserve.

They have gotten a degree. I went to UC-Berkeley. That is my alma mater—go Bears—and I know what a phenomenal education it is.

But I also know, when you get out, you think that that degree, that piece of paper, is a ticket to something better, and here you end up having to go back home, live with your parents, and pay down your student debt. That is outrageous. It doesn't make any sense. Our young people deserve more.

□ 1600

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. A lot of times I have told young people our generation is the least home-owning generation America has ever known. In the bay area and the L.A. area, they say: Forget home owning. We just want to be able to rent near where we live.

Right now, rents are so expensive. Oakland now ranks in the top five most expensive rent cities.

Ms. LEE. I think it is the fourth in the country.

It is outrageous. Homeownership is not even a dream anymore that young people have.

How do you acquire wealth in this country?

When you look at what happened to African Americans, for example, and Latinos during the subprime meltdown and crisis, our net worth is gone. Most of that was equity in our home.

Young people deserve to be able to buy a house so they can begin to acquire some wealth, so they can begin to do what they want to do with their lives. Until we get this housing piece right, we are not going to get anything else right in terms of inequality and equity for our young people or for people of color.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. As we talk to young people and we listen to these stories across the country, it is heartening, though, to offer solutions. I know you are a part of many of the solutions that the Future Forum has been promoting.

One of them is the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing bill—it is JOE COURTNEY's bill, our colleague—which says that if the banks can refinance at the lowest rate, if a homeowner can refinance at the lowest rate, and an auto loan can be refinanced at the lowest rate, why can't our students refinance at the lowest rate? Why should they have to pay so much money in interest and not get more competitive rates?

Ms. LEE. There is no reason why. Here you have young people starting out making a life for themselves. They should be able to do the same thing. The banking institutions should allow young people the same opportunities as they do other people who own mortgages and who own cars. This, to me, is discriminatory.

I am really pleased to be a cosponsor of the bill. I hope we can pass this on a bipartisan basis. I would give young people just a bit of hope that it can be done, that they can be made whole, and that their college education, the sacrifices that they made, was worth it because now they are going to the next step.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. In the bay area, young people are so collaborative and inventive that they have powered this innovative innovation economy. Then they look at Washington and they wonder, why isn't the majority party in the House collaborating on these student loan bills?

If you look at every student loan bill that is out there right now, I think 9 out of 10 of them have been offered by our side. This is an issue that should not be owned by a political party. People are hurting out there.

Ms. LEE. Republican young people are hurting also. I would think that the majority party would want to help their young people also find a path to the American Dream. Certainly refinancing student loan debt is a major step. It should be bipartisan, it should be nonpartisan, and we should be working together to get this passed.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I don't know if you have any constituents who are in bankruptcy because of student loan debt, but we found that three things in this country will follow you to your grave and have no statute of limitations: murder, treason, and student loan debt.

We have constituents who have had their Social Security garnished because of outstanding student loan debt and people who cannot discharge as they get that second chance in life, that jubilee that bankruptcy is, they can't discharge their student loan debt. It hangs over them until they go to the grave.

Ms. LEE. Many constituents are in very similar circumstances, Congressman SWALWELL. On top of that, their credit score goes down, so then they can't even buy a car, even if they wanted to. They are not able to do anything else because they are delayed on their payments. They are behind because they can't afford it. They get dings on their credit score, and then they can't buy anything else on credit. It is a vicious cycle. They end up in debt and out there not being able to participate in the mainstream economic fabric of our society because of that.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. Another bill we have to support that is the Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act, offered by Congressman COHEN of Tennessee, who seeks to address this issue and relieve young people from having to have this follow them for a lifetime.

Congresswoman, I am glad you came to join us to talk about diversity in tech and about larger Future Forum goals. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the east bay and across our country to take as many young people as we can out of financial quicksand.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SWALWELL, and I thank him for his leadership. I am confident we can with his leadership and with all of us working together.

I know that both Democrats and Republicans want the same thing, I am confident of that, but we are just not matching our rhetoric with reality. Hopefully they will begin to understand, the majority will, that this is good for America, not just for Democrats and not just for our young people.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. LEE.

I also see in the House with us this afternoon is another California colleague, someone who I was hoping maybe could talk a little bit about what students in her part of California are going through, one of the youngest Members of the House as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES).

Congresswoman, we are just talking about student loan debt. In California, we have got the greatest education system in the world, but because of the amount of student loan debt young people are facing, it is just putting them, as I said, in financial quicksand. We have got a lot of solutions here in the House.

Is there anything you are hearing in your Congressional District from young people and what they want to see from their leaders?

Mrs. TORRES. Absolutely. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SWALWELL for bringing this topic to the forefront.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. We are celebrating a year of the Future Forum tonight.

Mrs. TORRES. One year. That is wonderful.

This issue is not limited to the students. At a Congress in Your Corner last November, I heard from parents of a constituent who were nearly in bankruptcy because the student loan from not one child, but two, was so much that it was actually more than their mortgage payment. So here they are working in their late 60s to try to help make payments for their students.

This is a critical issue. They are not able to purchase a vehicle and they are not able to purchase a home. I bought my home in my early 20s. I know that 20-year-olds today, or 23-year-olds today, could not do that because of the high student loan ratios that they have.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. I call it getting lapped, which is we are seeing parents today who are still paying off their student loans, then their kids are going off to college, and now they are doubling down. It has become a family matter.

We talked on a Future Forum tour to a mother who showed up to an event that had 200 millennials in Boston. She kind of sheepishly raised her hand and said: I know I am not supposed to be here, but I am here because I am worried about my daughter. She was the first in our family to go to college. We were really excited. We sent her off and we missed her dearly for that first year she was gone. We got used to her being gone in years two, three, and four. We never expected that she would boomerang back home because she couldn't afford to live near where she works.

This was at the same time that this mother's own mother was going into a costly assisted living facility. It is a family matter. It is squeezing baby boomers right now because their kids are incurring student loan debt and their parents are taking on costly assisted living. So you are right.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. TORRES for sharing what is going on in her area.

Maybe my other colleague, another one of California's millennial-minded Members down in the L.A. area, TONY CÁRDENAS, what is he hearing as we celebrate a year of being on the road with Future Forum and talking to thousands of young people? What is he hearing about student loan debt or any issues that are important to millennials?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS).

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SWALWELL for bringing this issue to the floor. It is incredibly important not just for millennials, but as our colleague, NORMA TORRES, pointed out, for people who are at retirement age, people who want to retire but can't because they have these generational issues that are costly and they can't move on and then follow through with their version of the American Dream in different phases of their life.

What I am hearing is that this is not just an issue of young people who are in college. This is an issue of entire families wondering whether or not their children can afford to do that and whether the family can come together for that bright individual who wants to succeed and wants to get that education, and yet they are doubting themselves as to whether or not that is the path for them.

That is unfortunate because the fact of the matter is that the United States of America for many, many generations has been the place for hope and expectation of a brighter future for generations. Yet, at the same time, because, in my opinion, Congress is not doing enough to make sure that we can right the situation, we can make sure that we can right size the environment of making sure that when a young bright person in America wants to get an education, that there are ways in which they can afford to do that, regardless of where they come from, regardless of whether their parents are farm workers, like my parents, or whether their parents live on the other side of town where they can afford to do that.

Our environments and the universities shouldn't be left only to the individuals who have the affluency to be able to be in that environment. One of the reasons why we have created these wonderful universities that have 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, and 30,000 people there is so that they can be an eclectic environment, so people can learn to become friends with people that otherwise they might not have rubbed elbows with.

What I am hearing is that people are afraid. Too many Americans are afraid.

I am hearing that too many bright individuals are doubting whether or not they can afford to get that degree, not that they can't do it, not that they are not bright enough.

The problem that I am hearing from my constituents and people around America is that it is tough to make that decision because too many young people now have examples that they are in debt $100,000, $200,000, $300,000. And then on top of that, they can't find a right size job to fit their skill set. And then on top of that, they have got this mounting debt. That is something that too many people are afraid to enter into. That is unfortunate. It shouldn't happen in our country.

I am glad that Mr. SWALWELL is bringing this issue up. Let's continue to try to do many, many things about righting the ship that we have about our young people being too afraid to incur the kind of debt that they are forced to do in order to get an education.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Amen. Well said.

I think young Californians, in my experience, want us to be as collaborative in solving this problem as they are in charting the innovation economy. You are right. Out of those environments in our UC and Cal State systems and our community colleges, we are creating minds and experiences that are building this new economy. So they look to us and say: Why aren't Democrats and Republicans working together?

Right now, I see our caucus is the only one that is offering solutions. I think we are putting our hands out there saying: Work with us, we are ready to talk about this, but you have got to come to the table because Republican and Democratic kids across this country are in financial quicksand and are counting on us.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CÁRDENAS and Mrs. TORRES.

That will conclude our one-year celebration of Future Forum. We are certainly not looking backwards. We are looking to the future. We have more visits ahead across the country, across California, and, of course, with my colleagues who have participated already.

Continue this conversation with us at #FutureForum or, of course, follow @RepSwalwell on Twitter, Snapchat, and Facebook.

This generation is aspirational and optimistic. It just needs its leaders here in this House and the majority party, I think, to join with the Democrats to put forward solutions that can move our generation forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) for 30 minutes.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, California is a much warmer State and much more beautiful, if I may add that.

I rise today to recognize National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

After 17½ years as a 9-1-1 dispatcher, I know firsthand the challenges our public safety dispatchers face, the stress they are put under, and the critical importance of their work. That is why I am proud to introduce a resolution commemorating National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

I remember working the graveyard shift at the LAPD, sitting four floors below ground, taking calls from people from all walks of life, often during their most vulnerable time in their lives.

□ 1615

In fact, it was my work as a 9-1-1 dispatcher that got me involved in politics.

When I was working for the LAPD, I took a call from a little girl who ended up being murdered at the hands of her uncle. When I answered that 9-1-1 call, all I could hear was thumping. Later, I learned that that thumping noise was her head being bashed against the wall. Soon after, five shots were fired, and she was murdered—11 years old, murdered at the hands of her uncle.

I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from the San Fernando Valley, Congressional District 29, TONY CÁRDENAS, to share with us some information about how he supports 9-1-1 dispatchers in his district.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. I thank the gentlewoman.

To my colleague, NORMA TORRES, thank you for bringing up this very, very important opportunity for awareness of this issue on the floor of the House of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, yes, it is National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, but it is really important for us to understand that, in America, everything starts with us—the individuals.

I will just add to this dialogue that it is up to all of us to keep our communities safe. If we do that well, maybe we won't need so many 9-1-1 operators. We have heard so many times and too often of those frantic calls when someone is calling 9-1-1 because the action has already started, because the atrocity has already begun. As Americans, we should be vigilant and understand that we all have a collective responsibility to be the safe keepers of our communities so that we minimize the number of 9-1-1 calls any one individual in our neighborhoods or in our communities across America would ever have to make.

I take this opportunity to mention someone, Krystal Blackburn, who is the assistant supervisor at the Harrodsburg Police Department. She has been a 9-1-1 operator for some time now, and I quote one portion of what was mentioned on the House floor this afternoon:

> 9-1-1 has changed my life. It has shaped me, and I have grown into a role that I wasn't even sure I wanted in the beginning. It has become a way of life that I wouldn't change for any reason. I am 9-1-1.

Once again, ladies and gentlemen, I think it is important for us to take the opportunity to recognize and appreciate the eclectic responsibilities that friends and neighbors have in every community across America. In every situation, let people take on that professionalism so as to be the solution—to be the go-to person—when we need them most. It is important for people to understand that our dispatchers at 9-1-1 and that our safety community around America deserve our support and deserve our recognition. Most importantly, they deserve our thanks.

I thank the gentlewoman for giving me the opportunity to express my thoughts on this very important issue.

Mrs. TORRES. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, so few people know what it is like to be an emergency dispatcher and don't truly understand how crucial our role is. They don't get that without us. They don't get that without you. First responders wouldn't be able to do their jobs without someone's answering that 9-1-1 call.

Back when I served in the California State Assembly, the State budget crisis meant that 9-1-1 dispatchers were furloughed because they weren't exempt as public safety professionals. Hundreds of calls went unanswered. Who knows how many lives were put at risk? I spent months badgering Governor Schwarzenegger until he realized the catastrophic effect the policy was having on our State. God forbid there had been an event like San Bernardino during that time and calls couldn't get through or first responders didn't know where to go.

Sadly, too many people think of dispatchers as a little more than glorified receptionists. This means that they don't often get the resources, the training, and the support they need and deserve in order to do their jobs. Dispatchers are the first points of contact in the event of an emergency, and they are the sole link between those in trouble and the personnel who can help them. Better training and more support would go a long way toward improving service and increasing staff retention.

During this year's State of the Union, I had the honor of inviting as my guest the dispatch supervisor who directed radio and call traffic during the San Bernardino attack. While the police, fire, and EMS responders definitely deserve a lot of credit, there had

been very little mention in the media about the key role the public safety telecommunicators played.

Annemarie Teall and her team were the ones behind the scene, making sure the first responders were deployed efficiently and effectively. They fielded calls from the community, from law enforcement agencies, and from callers from all over the country and the world. During a situation that can quickly become pure chaos, they stayed calm, took action, and helped save lives.

When she was here, Annemarie discussed the training she had received in dealing with these types of situations and how grateful she was for that training. Unfortunately, this kind of training isn't a regular occurrence.

Without public safety telecommunicators, our first responders can't do their jobs. The response of police, firefighters, and paramedics is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of the information the dispatcher is able to provide. Public safety telecommunicators don't just take calls and relay information; they also play a key role in coordinating multiple teams of first responders from multiple agencies during times of crisis. They are a vital link for police, fire, and EMS as they monitor their activities by radio and provide them with information that can ensure their safety and an efficient, effective response.

9-1-1 dispatchers have also helped in the apprehension of criminals and have helped bring them to justice because, in many cases, they are witnesses to the crimes as they occur. In the case that I stated earlier, I was the only witness. It was that recorded call that brought justice to that little girl.

Public Safety Telecommunicators Week not only provides us with the opportunity to recognize the hard work of our dispatchers, but it is also a reminder to our constituents of the importance of maintaining emergency lines free for just that—emergencies. There is no excuse for 9-1-1 abuse. Some estimates indicate that 15 to 20 percent of incoming calls are nonemergencies. These calls could prevent legitimate emergency calls from getting through and being answered. For example, as a 9-1-1 dispatcher, I remember receiving calls from those who were asking for directions to Disneyland, who were asking if an earthquake had just occurred, or who were asking for the time of day. Those are not emergencies. Dispatchers can't send for assistance if they never receive the call.

9-1-1 is not an information line. Local governments have limited resources and few dispatchers. Many localities have info lines—for example, 3-1-1 or 5-1-1. I encourage individuals to look up their local police departments and have their nonemergency police numbers on hand. I also encourage them to add that information to their cell phones so that the number is readily available when they have emergencies.

I can give you many examples of when people have dialed 9-1-1 from a cell phone and the dispatcher does not have the accurate location. Imagine if you were in the middle of having a heart attack and if you were not able to voice your location. Having that local telephone number is important because your call would be expedited to the local paramedic or to the local police department that has jurisdiction over where you may be.

It is never too early to teach kids about the proper uses of 9-1-1. You never know when an emergency will happen, and your child may be the only one who is able to get help. Teach children how to dial the number and stay on the line and when they should and shouldn't dial 9-1-1. One bad example is when my children were looking for me. They knew at the time that I worked at the 9-1-1 center. They dialed 9-1-1 and asked for their mom. That is not a true, good 9-1-1 call. Discourage your children from making inquiries to that emergency line.

Every day, public safety dispatchers help save lives, provide comfort and reassurance, and are a critical part of our law enforcement teams, but, too often, their work goes unrecognized. When you need a calming voice to guide you through a crisis, when law enforcement, fire safety, and rescue personnel are in need of seamless coordination at a moment's notice, when every second counts, they are on the other line. 9-1-1 dispatchers are the unsung heroes of the first responder community.

I want to share with you another story of a 9-1-1 dispatcher:

I had to make sacrifices as a soldier to serve my country, and I have to make sacrifices as a dispatcher to serve my community. I knew this when I chose this profession—we have to be on call; we have to work overtime; we have to work holidays; we have to work nights; we have to work weekends; and we have to be reachable 24/7, and it is tough.

I spent most of my life in the service of others—22 years in the military, 8 years with the Texas Youth Commission, over 2 years in Iraq assisting military forces, and nearly 8 years as a 9-1-1 dispatcher. I can't remember how many life events I have not been a part of because I was working, sacrificing, in order to help others. It is only tolerable and manageable with the assistance of my fellow team and family members helping me when I just couldn't get through it without their help.

We have committed ourselves to this calling, and we are very good at it. We have sacrificed ourselves in the service of others because someone had to do it.

That came from Richard Dulin of the Coleman Police Department.

The first thing he said when I answered the phone was: ''I just shot myself in the heart.'' Given that he was still speaking, I figured he probably didn't hit his heart, but the point was pretty clear. I established that he had, in fact, shot himself in the chest about 30 minutes before he had dialed 9-1-1. He waited to call because he was not sure if he wanted to live.

Unfortunately, we don't tend to get a lot of closure, so I have no idea if he lived or died.

Kyle from Kitsap County, Washington.

The stories go on and on, and I could go on and on for the rest of the time and share with you about the wonderful work that these committed people do each and every single day for our communities.

I close, Mr. Speaker, by thanking the 9-1-1 dispatchers and recognizing the hard work they do for our communities every single day.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 192. An act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 14, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5013. A letter from the Under Secretary, Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter reporting a violation of the Antideficiency Act, Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General case number 15-01, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; Public Law 97-258, Sec. 1351; (96 Stat. 926); to the Committee on Appropriations.

5014. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General David D. Halverson, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5015. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army, Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, Department of Defense, transmitting the Report on Use of Authority for Army Industrial Facilities to Engage in Cooperative Activities with Non-Army Entities, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4544 note; Public Law 110-181, Sec. 328(b) (as amended by Public Law 112-81, Sec. 323(b)) (125 Stat. 1362); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5016. A letter from the Law Enforcement Policy Analyst, Office of the Provost Marshal General, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Law Enforcement

Reporting [Docket No.: USA-2010-0020] (RIN: 0702-AA62) received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5017. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Mark S. Bowman, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5018. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility; Alabama: Ariton, Town of, Dale County [Docket ID: FEMA-2016-0002; Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8427] received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5019. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council 2015 Annual Report, pursuant to Sec. 1006(f) of the Financial Regulatory and Interest Rate Control Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3305); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5020. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Office of Regulations and Interpretations; Office of Exemption Determinations, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Definition of the Term ''Fiduciary''; Conflict of Interest Rule--Retirement Investment Advice (RIN: 1210-AB32) (ZRIN: 1210-ZA25) received April 8, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5021. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Food and Drug Administration's FY 2015 Performance Report to Congress, pursuant to the Generic Drug User Fee Amendments of 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5022. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, Regulatory Affairs Division, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Safety Standard for Architectural Glazing Materials [CPSC Docket No.: CPSC-2012-0049] received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5023. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2015 Medical Device User Fee Financial Report required by the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5024. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2015 report on the financial aspects of the implementation of the Biosimilar User Fee Act of 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5025. A letter from the Chief, Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revision of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Permit Unlicensed National Information Infrastructure (U-NII) Devices in the 5 GHz Band [ET Docket No.: 13-49] received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5026. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting a notification of a federal vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5027. A letter from the Human Resources Specialist, Department of Justice, transmitting six notifications that concern positions requiring Presidential nomination and Senate confirmation, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5028. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5029. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5030. A letter from the Director, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5031. A letter from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5032. A letter from the Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity Programs, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5033. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5034. A letter from the Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5035. A letter from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Federal Voting Assistance Program's 2015 Annual Report to Congress, pursuant to 52 U.S.C. 20308(b) Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on House Administration.

5036. A letter from the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rules — Revised Procedural Schedule in Stand-Alone Cost Cases [Docket No.: EP 732] received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5037. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled, ''Special Diabetes Program for Indians 2014 Report to Congress, Changing the Course of Diabetes: Turning Hope into Reality'', pursuant to Public Law 105-33; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Natural Resources.

5038. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Finalizing Medicare Rules under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 for Calendar Year 2015'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395hh(a)(3)(D); Public Law 108-173, Sec. 902(a)(1); (117 Stat. 2375); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

5039. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Extension of the Workers' Compensation Offset from Age 65 to Full Retirement Age — Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act [Docket No.: SSA-2015-0018] (RIN: 0960-AH85) received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4509. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to clarify membership of State planning committees or urban area working groups for the Homeland Security Grant Program, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–491). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4482. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to prepare a southwest border threat analysis, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–492). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4549. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–493). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WALKER:

H.R. 4921. A bill to amend chapter 31 of title 44, United States Code, to require the maintenance of certain records for 3 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 4922. A bill to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code, to apply the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act to the National Security Council, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. BLUMENAUER,

Mr. REED, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WALKER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. BLUM):

H.R. 4923. A bill to establish a process for the submission and consideration of petitions for temporary duty suspensions and reductions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (for himself, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. PETERSON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. PITTS, Mr. STEWART, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. PALMER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. MESSER, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. OLSON, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. JONES, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. YODER, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SHUSTER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KLINE, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. RIBBLE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BABIN, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. FLORES, Mr. LATTA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia):

H.R. 4924. A bill to prohibit discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex or race, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. JORDAN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. UPTON, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. TURNER, Mr. GIBBS, and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 4925. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 229 West Main Cross Street, in Findlay, Ohio, as the ''Michael Garver Oxley Memorial Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BABIN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. TURNER):

H.R. 4926. A bill to direct the Librarian of Congress to retain the headings ''Aliens'' and ''Illegal aliens'' in the Library of Congress Subject Headings; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4927. A bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to require congressional approval of determinations to revoke the designation of the People's Republic of China as a nonmarket economy country for purposes of that Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GUINTA (for himself, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BARR, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. SALMON, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. BOST, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan):

H.R. 4928. A bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to amend the requirement that interstate firearms sales by Federal firearms licensees be made in accordance with the State law where the transaction occurs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself and Ms. DEGETTE):

H.R. 4929. A bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act to establish a biennial commission to develop a comprehensive energy policy for the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE (for himself and Mr. NUNES):

H.R. 4930. A bill to ensure appropriate protections and redress for travelers, consistent with the transportation security and national security of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER:

H.R. 4931. A bill to direct the Attorney General to establish a national pharmaceutical stewardship program to facilitate the collection and disposal of prescription medications; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H.R. 4932. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on inaccurate caller identification information and to require providers of telephone service to offer technology to subscribers to reduce the incidence of unwanted telephone calls, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 4933. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to change certain eligibility provisions for loan forgiveness for teachers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4934. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the excise tax on wine; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. TSONGAS (for herself, Mr. POLIQUIN, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. JONES, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. MOULTON):

H.R. 4935. A bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to require compliance with domestic source requirements for footwear furnished to enlisted members of the Armed Forces upon their initial entry into the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. KLINE, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. PETERSON):

H. Res. 677. A resolution congratulating the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team on winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Ice Hockey Championship; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 678. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of March 27, 2016, through April 2, 2016, as National Young Audiences Arts for Learning Week; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. AMODEI, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. RENACCI, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KILMER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H. Res. 679. A resolution expressing support for designation of May 2016 as ''National Brain Tumor Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

196. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas, relative to House Resolution No. 6045, urging the Federal Government to require the use of sound science in evaluating crop protection chemistries and nutrients; to the Committee on Agriculture.

197. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Arkansas, relative to Senate Joint Resolution 1, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the states to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

198. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Resolution No. 12, supporting the recommendations of the Chicago Area Waterway System Advisory Committee to prevent Asian Carp from entering the Great Lakes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WALKER:
H.R. 4921.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution
By Mrs. WALORSKI:
H.R. 4922.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. ''To provide for the common defense,'' ''to raise and support Armies,'' ''to provide and maintain a Navy,'' and ''to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.''
By Mr. BRADY of Texas:
H.R. 4923.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution.
By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:
H.R. 4924.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
(1) the Commerce Clause;
(2) section 2 of the 13th amendment;
(3) section 5 of the 14th amendment, including the power to enforce the prohibition on government action denying equal protection of the laws; and
(4) section 8 of article I, to make all laws necessary and proper for the carrying into execution of powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States.
By Mr. LATTA:
H.R. 4925.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7
To establish Post Offices and post Roads.
By Mrs. BLACK:
H.R. 4926.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution as well as Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution which grants Congress the authority to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Ms. DELAURO:
H.R. 4927.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.
By Mr. GUINTA:
H.R. 4928.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8 Clause 18
Congress shall have the power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, asn all other powers vested by the Constitution in the government of the United States
By Mr. MCKINLEY:
H.R. 4929.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
According to Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout.
By Mr. RATCLIFFE:
H.R. 4930.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.
By Ms. SLAUGHTER:
H.R. 4931.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.
By Ms. SPEIER:
H.R. 4932.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. TAKANO:
H.R. 4933.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. THOMPSON of California:
H.R. 4934.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
United States Constitution Article I, Section 1.
By Ms. TSONGAS:
H.R. 4935.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 20: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 40: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 228: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 303: Mr. WELCH, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 333: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 415: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 446: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 491: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 581: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 605: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 729: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 762: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 789: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 802: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 837: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 849: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 863: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 885: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 911: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 953: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Mr. COOK.
H.R. 973: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1114: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 1148: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1153: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1185: Mr. KILMER, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 1188: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1206: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1211: Ms. ESTY and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1292: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 1336: Mr. PETERS and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 1343: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 1422: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1427: Mr. TAKAI, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 1441: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 1523: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 1552: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 1559: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 1588: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1595: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 1603: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. CARTER of Texas.
H.R. 1655: Mr. RUSH and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 1769: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 1854: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1859: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. CRAMER, and Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1943: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1963: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 2031: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 2072: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 2102: Mr. PETERSON,
H.R. 2121: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 2170: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2237: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2264: Mr. HARPER and Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 2274: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 2280: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2368: Mr. WALZ and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 2411: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2518: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2656: Miss RICE of New York and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 2713: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 2726: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2805: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 2846: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2872: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 2903: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 2920: Mr. GIBSON and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 2942: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 2992: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 3002: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3007: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 3054: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 3119: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 3123: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3165: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3180: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 3209: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3235: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 3326: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 3349: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 3381: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. POMPEO, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 3427: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 3514: Mr. KIND, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 3515: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 3546: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 3604: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 3632: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3687: Ms. DELAURO and Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 3765: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3841: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3849: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 3870: Mr. WELCH and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 3871: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 3952: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 3989: Mr. VEASEY and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4006: Mr. COSTA and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 4027: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 4055: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4165: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 4219: Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 4223: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 4247: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4352: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4365: Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4447: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4499: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 4514: Mr. WENSTRUP, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4538: Mr. HULTGREN and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 4558: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4562: Ms. GRAHAM.
H.R. 4563: Ms. GRAHAM.
H.R. 4570: Mr. REED.
H.R. 4594: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4599: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 4602: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4611: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 4615: Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. FARR.
H.R. 4617: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 4625: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4636: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4646: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. WELCH, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. FARR, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4652: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4667: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 4683: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 4684: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. JONES, and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4694: Mr. POCAN and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4706: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 4715: Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 4750: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4756: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4764: Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BRAT, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 4765: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 4768: Mr. ROKITA and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 4770: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 4775: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. LONG, and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4779: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4787: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 4792: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4807: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 4818: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4828: Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 4829: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4830: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4835: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 4844: Mr. JEFFRIES and Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 4851: Ms. MCSALLY and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4880: Mr. WOMACK, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4892: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 4901: Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4904: Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. BLUM, and Mr. HURD of Texas.
H.R. 4915: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 4919: Mr. DONOVAN.
H.J. Res. 52: Mr. NORCROSS.
H. Con. Res. 112: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. GOSAR.
H. Res. 14: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H. Res. 290: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H. Res. 318: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Res. 569: Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H. Res. 590: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H. Res. 591: Mr. WITTMAN, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 612: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 633: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H. Res. 634: Mr. COHEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BARR, Mr. COLE, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H. Res. 645: Mr. POMPEO.

SENATE—*Wednesday, April 13, 2016*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the refuge of the distressed, thank You that in our troubles You sustain us with Your loving kindness and tender mercy. Forgive us when we neglect to find in You a shelter from life's storms.

Today, fill our Senators with a vibrant faith. Give them complete confidence in Your providential leading. May the fire of Your love consume all things in their lives that displease You. As they are led by Your Spirit, give them Your peace.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, whether traveling for business or leisure, American passengers want to feel safe and informed when flying. They also want to feel assured that in light of recent terror attacks, more is being done in our airports and in our skies. Chairman THUNE knows this, and that is why he has worked attentively with Members from both sides to put forth this bipartisan FAA reauthorization and security bill. I appreciate his work with the Aviation Subcommittee chair, Senator AYOTTE, and their counterparts, Senator NELSON and Senator CANTWELL, to move this important bill forward.

There are several good security measures included in the bill, such as increased efforts to prevent cyber security risks and efforts to help better prepare us when it comes to communicable diseases. But these Senators didn't stop there; they worked to include additional safety measures in an amendment that passed by a bipartisan majority.

Here is what we know the amendment will do: It will help prevent the ''inside threat'' of terrorism by enhancing inspections and vetting of airport employees. It will require a review of perimeter security. It will also improve various efforts to secure international flights coming into our airports.

In addition to these steps designed to ramp up security, we also adopted an amendment from Senator HEINRICH that would increase security in prescreening areas which could be vulnerable to terror attacks. And Senators TOOMEY and CASEY have worked tirelessly to get the Senate to pass an amendment addressing the security of cockpit doors.

These three amendments, put forth by Republicans and Democrats, emphasize the bipartisan nature of this issue and of this bipartisan FAA reauthorization and security bill.

Nearly 60 amendments from both sides were accepted in committee, and more than a dozen from both sides were accepted here on the floor. I encourage Members to continue working across the aisle to move this bill forward.

As the chairman reminded us yesterday, this bill contains the most comprehensive set of aviation security reforms in years. So let's take the next step in passing this legislation and getting it one step closer to becoming law.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE CATUCCI

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 40 years ago this week, Christine Catucci set out to spend her summer as a tour guide at the Capitol. She still remembers her first day in the summer of 1976. It was a much different time back then, without the screening protocols and limitations on where visitors could go as we have today. Christine parked her car and walked straight up the main Rotunda steps, ready to work.

She didn't have intentions of staying past the summer, much less for four decades. But today, some 16 Sergeants at Arms and 7 Presidential administrations later, Christine is still a smiling, friendly face to those who enter, which is important because, as director of the Senate Appointment Desk, she is often the first person a visitor sees when visiting the Capitol.

As the years have gone by, Christine's responsibilities and admiration for the Senate have grown. She still considers it an honor and a privilege to help those visiting the Capitol, and that is true, she says, ''whether it is an official business visitor or a 'starry-eyed' tourist.'' She says that she loves seeing the awe people have when they visit the Capitol and she is proud to be a part of that experience.

The joy this institution and this career have brought to Christine obviously made a pretty big impact on the love of her life, her daughter Nichole. Nichole works just one floor up from her mom, and in Christine's words, she is ''a constant reminder . . . that family comes first.''

Today, Christine's Senate family would like to congratulate her on this notable milestone. We thank her for her four decades of steadfast service, and we look forward to seeing the impact she will continue to make here in the Capitol.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

AN ENJOYABLE DIVERSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, no matter what work or occupation one has, it is always good to have a diversion away from their duties of the day.

I am very careful about never speaking for the Republican leader, but I will make an exception today and talk a little bit about my friend the Republican leader.

We both find a diversion during baseball season. We can leave here—it really doesn't matter what time; usually the games are at night—and we can watch the Nationals play baseball. The Republican leader and I have talked about this often—how much we enjoy the games—and we have enjoyed the games much more since this young man from Las Vegas, Bryce Harper, is on the baseball team, the Washington Nationals. He comes from a great family, a working family. His father was an ironworker. They are a close family.

Prior to the Nationals even having a team here—I have been here a long time—I followed the Orioles, and just as a side note, I should mention how happy I am for Peter Angelos, the owner, that fine man, that his team is doing so well this year. They are 7 and 0.

So Senator MCCONNELL and I enjoy baseball season. It gives us an opportunity to focus on things other than what is going on in the Senate.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE CATUCCI

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I join with the Republican leader today in honoring Christine Catucci on the occasion, which has already been mentioned, of her 40th anniversary of working for the U.S. Senate.

In any given year, about 2½ million people visit this beautiful building. Bill Dauster, who is here with me and is with me virtually every day, every place I go, was just commenting before the prayer was given how fortunate we are to work in this magnificent building. And as the Republican leader mentioned in his comments about Ms. Catucci, people become starry-eyed looking at this building. We are here all the time, and we may not appreciate it as much as we should every day. It is a beautiful building.

For those of us who are fortunate enough to venture over to the place where she works—down on the first floor is where she spends most of her day, and that is where most of the people come into that floor—you will see a great smile. That smile belongs to her. I first saw that smile many years ago. We had a Senate retreat. She was there to help staff us, and she played a vital role in making sure the retreat worked well. I have always remembered her from that one experience. She does have a disarming smile, for which we should all be grateful. I know I am.

She has been here for 40 years. The only person who has been here as a Senator longer than Christine is PAT LEAHY from Vermont. She has seniority over everybody except Senator LEAHY.

Her career began in the last year of Gerald Ford's Presidency. She worked as a tour guide, chaperoning people through the Capitol and giving people explanations as to what they were looking at at the time. In 1980 she moved to the Office of the Doorkeeper of the Senate and moved through a number of positions there for 11 years.

In 1991, she arrived at the Senate Appointment Desk, where she has worked for the last 25 years. She is the director, overseeing a staff of nine.

Over the years, she has developed a close relationship with Senators and staff, and she can recount with pleasure the times that Senator Robert Byrd—the legendary Robert Byrd from West Virginia—would invite her and some of her coworkers to have lunch with him in his Capitol office. He didn't eat much, if anything, but he talked all the time, telling stories. I was the recipient of a number of the stories of the late, great Senator Byrd.

The Senate is her family, literally. Her father was a Senate doorkeeper from 1967 to 1977. Her daughter Nichole works in the cloakroom right behind us. That is three generations of Senate staffers.

It was Nichole who summed up everything great about her mother for me when she said: ''My mom raised me all by herself and did an amazing job as a single mom while working full-time.''

So this is Christine Catucci. It is her work ethic and caring dedication that she has brought to the Senate every day for the last 40 years—four decades. Thank you very much for being a part of our Senate family.

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, throughout his career in the Senate, the senior Senator from Iowa has styled himself as an advocate for transparency in government. A number of years ago he said:

> I believe in the principle of open government. Lack of transparency in the public policy process leads to cynicism and distrust of public officials. . . . As a matter of principle, the American people need to be made aware of any action that prevents a matter from being considered by their elected Senators.

He reiterated his beliefs just a few days ago here in this Chamber, and here is what he said last week:

> The principle of government transparency is one that does not expire. . . . Open government is good government. And Americans have a right to a government that is accountable to its people.

So Senator GRASSLEY's commitment to transparency is as shallow as the shallowest puddle you could find.

All it took was one phone call, obviously, from the Republican leader for Senator GRASSLEY to abandon any pretense of transparency and shut the American people out of the Supreme Court nomination process—shut them out.

This is the same Senator who once said, ''As a matter of principle, the American people need to be made aware of any action that prevents a matter from being considered by their elected Senators.''

Nothing that Senator GRASSLEY has done with respect to the Supreme Court vacancy meets his own standard for transparency.

There was no transparency when the Judiciary Committee chairman and his Republican committee members shut Democrats out and met with the Republican leader behind closed doors. There was no transparency when he twisted the arms of his own committee members to sign a loyalty oath, again behind closed doors. There was no transparency when he sought to move a public committee meeting behind closed doors just to avoid talking about the Supreme Court nomination. And there was certainly no transparency on Tuesday—yesterday—when at 8 o'clock in the morning he met downstairs with Judge Merrick Garland in the private Senate Dining Room moments before slipping out the back door to avoid reporters. This is how CNN reported it: ''The Iowa Senator left the high-profile but out-of-sight meeting via a backdoor that leads to his private 'hideaway.' ''

One television station in Iowa put it this way: ''Grassley evaded reporters.''

This is the same Senator who once supported cameras in Federal courtrooms, including the Supreme Court. Why? To increase transparency, so he said. But Senator GRASSLEY only wants transparency to apply to others, I guess not to himself. When it comes to transparency, his attitude is strictly: ''Do as I say, not as I do.''

He won't even apply a degree of that same openness as he blocks a nominee to the highest Court in the land. There will be no transparency if Senator GRASSLEY fails to call an open hearing where Chief Justice Garland can present himself to the American people.

I have had people ask me: Why wouldn't there be a hearing? Well, it is obvious. They are all afraid. The chairman of the Judiciary Committee is afraid that this good man, if the American people see him, will understand why he is a nomination that couldn't be better. They are afraid to allow this man to be seen by the American public. Talking about transparency, there won't be any if the Republican Senators aren't going to be able to even have a vote on the nomination.

All of this that has been going on is not like the Senator GRASSLEY who I have served with for more than three decades. By carrying out the present leader's failed strategy to undermine this Court, the Senator from Iowa is undermining years of his own hard work in pushing for more open government. All that he has done talking about transparency is gone.

Senator GRASSLEY should take his own medicine and stop retreating behind closed doors with private conversations that shut the American people out of the important confirmation process. If the senior Senator from Iowa truly believes in transparency, he should simply do his job and give Merrick Garland a hearing and a vote.

Mr. President, there appears to be no one seeking the floor. Will the Presiding Officer announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING THOMAS EATON STAGG, JR.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise in support of designating the Shreveport Federal Building as the ''Tom Stagg Federal Building and United States Courthouse.'' The Honorable Thomas or ''Tom'' Eaton Stagg, Jr., of Shreveport passed away last June. He was an inspirational figure.

He graduated from Byrd High School in Shreveport and joined the U.S. Army preparing for World War II. He rose to the rank of captain, earning the Combat Infantryman Badge, a Bronze Star for valor, another Bronze Star for meritorious service, the Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster.

At one point, he was saved from death when a German bullet was stopped by a Bible he carried in his pocket. It was as if he was fated to live. After World War II, Tom attended Cambridge and then LSU Law Center and then served in private practice.

Tom's reputation was described as a combination of ''intelligence, spirit, patriotism, wisdom and wit'' and resulted in his nomination to serve on the Federal bench for the Western District of Louisiana in 1974. He was named chief judge in 1984, a position he held until 1991. Many testimonials, one of which a close colleague said of Judge Stagg:

> Without a doubt he was the finest trial judge I have ever met. Without ever knowing it, he had served as my silent mentor, a role model. . . . To have served the job with Judge Tom Staff on the federal bench for 12 years is a singular honor. A giant has fallen . . . this remarkable man left a legacy of love of family, of duty and honor and love of this nation, its judicial system and the rule of law.

The colleague continues:

> Tom Stagg loved being a federal judge. We will all miss him.

Judge Stagg assumed senior status on the court in 1992, but he didn't retire. He maintained a full caseload, serving on Federal circuit courts of appeals panels. Judge Stagg loved being a judge, but his love for the job also came second after his love for his family. Judge Stagg married the former Mary Margaret O'Brien in 1946 and is survived by her and their two grandchildren, Julie and Margaret Mary.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

> McConnell (for Thune/Nelson) amendment No. 3679, in the nature of a substitute.
>
> Thune amendment No. 3680 (to amendment No. 3679), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly to the legislation before us, the FAA reauthorization.

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, which I chair, was instrumental in bringing this bill to the floor. Our committee has a long and proud history of bipartisan cooperation on important matters under its jurisdiction. This extends to the bill before us today, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, which I, along with my colleagues, introduced and marked up in front of our committee.

The legislation before us today includes the most passenger-friendly provisions, the most significant aviation safety reforms, and the most comprehensive aviation security enhancements of any FAA reauthorization in recent history. This bill helps passengers and Americans who use the national airspace for many different transportation needs.

For example, since the last reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration in 2012, the use of drones has increased dramatically. According to its most recent aerospace forecast, the FAA estimates that annual sales of both commercial and hobby unmanned aircraft could be 2.5 million in 2016—a number they estimate may increase to 7 million units annually by 2020. But the FAA has an outdated legislative framework being used to shape the use of this rapidly growing technology for both hobbyists and commercial operators. This is slowing down innovation and advancements in safety. Our bill gives the FAA new authority to enforce safe drone usage. This includes efforts to make sure drone users know and follow basic rules of the sky to avoid dangerous situations.

To support job growth in the aerospace industry, our legislation reforms the process the FAA uses for approving new aircraft designs. Our goal is to shorten the time it takes for U.S. aerospace innovations to go from design boards to international markets while maintaining safety standards.

For the general aviation community, we are also streamlining redtape and adding safety enhancements for small aircraft by including provisions from the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2.

Finally, we increase authorized funding for the Airport Improvement Program, which pays for infrastructure like runways, by $400 million with existing surplus funds. This allows us to help meet pressing construction needs without raising taxes or fees on the traveling public.

We developed this bill through a robust and open process that allowed every member of the Commerce Committee to help guide the content of this critical aviation legislation. Last year the Commerce Committee held six hearings on topics that helped inform our legislation. At the committee markup last month, we accepted 57 amendments, 34 of which were sponsored by Democrats and 23 of which were sponsored by Republicans.

Since debate began on the bill last week, we have successfully included an additional 19 amendments here on the floor of the Senate. Ten of these amendments are sponsored by Democrats and nine by Republicans.

This bill deserves the Senate's support. I urge Members to remember all of the important improvements this legislation puts in place for aviation security, consumer protection efforts, American innovation, safety, and job creation. I hope we will be able to send this bill to the House soon. We are on a pathway that will enable us to do that. As I mentioned before, we have had a number of amendments that have been disposed of, processed here on the floor already. Nineteen amendments have been added to the bill since it came to the floor, in addition to the 57 we adopted at the committee level.

I want to credit the hard work that has been done by the staffs on both sides. The Commerce Committee staff obviously has been very involved on the majority side as well as the minority side in helping to shape this as it came out of the committee and to the floor. Lots of hours were put into getting us to where we are today. I think where we are is we have a bipartisan bill which has been broadly supported coming out of the committee, which has numerous safety enhancements in it—the most we have seen in a decade—and a bill which is worthy of all Senators' support.

Having said that, there are other amendments that have been filed. I am not sure what the number is today, but we had 198 amendments filed to the bill, and we are continuing to work with the sponsors of those amendments to try to get additional amendments adopted. We obviously have to have cooperation from Members on both sides in order for that to happen. We have a list of another 10 or a dozen amendments we think could be cleared and could be added to the legislation, but

we are going to need Members who currently have holds on that process to lift those holds.

We are on a glidepath to getting this bill to votes coming up tomorrow, so we have today and perhaps part of tomorrow in which to process additional amendments. I hope Members will decide to work with us. We think this bill has obviously been very well vetted. As I said, it was debated heavily at the committee level, and we have now had opportunities to offer amendments on the floor. But there are always ways in which it can be improved. There are a lot of worthy amendments that Members have interest in adding to this legislation, some of which are germane to the legislation, some of which are not. Obviously, once we get to cloture on the bill, only those amendments that are germane will be able to be voted on, but we would like to get other amendments processed.

So what I am saying is that throughout the day today, if Members will work with us, and for those who currently have holds on that process moving forward, if you would lift those, it will enable us to process a lot of amendments Senators are interested in having added to the bill.

We will continue throughout the day to negotiate with Members and hopefully have an additional list of amendments that we can adopt. I would say again that my colleague, the ranking Democrat on the Commerce Committee, Senator NELSON and I have worked very carefully throughout this process to make sure it is an open process and incorporates the best ideas from both sides. Today we have in front of us a bill which I think does that, and that is the reason I think it is very worthy of our Members' support.

We have had a lot of participation. Members of our committee on both sides have had ample opportunities to get amendments considered and voted on, 57 of which were adopted during the committee deliberations on this. It is the product of a lot of work.

I think we are at a place that when we report this out, it is a product we can be proud of, and we can send it to the House of Representatives in hopes that they will pick it up or, if they decide to pass their own version of this legislation, meet us in conference where we can work out the differences but get these important safety measures—these important measures that will support jobs and innovation in our economy—onto the President's desk where they can be signed into law and can be implemented and put into effect.

That is where we are at the moment. Again, I thank all of our colleagues for their cooperation to date and hope that we can see more of that moving forward because it will enable us, in my view, to continue to strengthen this bill before it gets to its ultimate passage, which I hope will be sometime later this week. We have been on it now for a couple of weeks, and it is time to get it off the floor, get it to the House, and, hopefully, eventually onto the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

TERRORISM

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, as I traveled all over Oklahoma during the State work weeks in March, I heard the concerns over and over from families in my State about terrorism. I talked with a gentleman in Coalgate, OK, who absolutely could not understand how the United States could release $1 billion to Iran the same month that rural hospitals across our State and across America were facing new cuts from CMS in new criteria there. That $1 billion that was sent by the United States to Iran could have bailed out every single rural hospital in America.

I talked to a mom in Lawton who did not understand why there was a conversation in DC about closing the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and bringing those individuals into the United States.

I talked to a dad in Tulsa, a dad of a soldier, who wanted to know what is happening with terrorism and what is America's response.

I talked to an Oklahoma business owner who is very concerned about cyber security and the threat of foreign governments attacking his network and other networks and businesses around the country.

As details come out about what happened in Brussels in that terrorist attack, every American has their security and their family in mind. I continue to pray for the victims of those awful attacks and work to determine the best way our great Nation can confront this threat.

As the only Member of this body who serves on both the Homeland Security and the Intelligence Committees, I have the privilege to ensure that Oklahomans and Americans have a strong voice in the discussion over our Nation's national security priorities. There is no simple solution, though, and there is no single method to confront terrorism. But we must be absolutely clear that terrorists will find no quarter in the land of the free, in the home of the brave.

As a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I walk behind a heavy door several times a week to hear the sobering details about foreign threats and the amazing work that Americans do to confront them. I wish we could talk about all those things here because I believe Americans would be very proud of the work that is going on.

We can talk about disrupted terrorist plots and insight into adversaries' plans that allow us to adjust and to prepare and to confront those terrorists before they bring the fight here. There are hard questions behind those closed doors. Oversight should be expected, and open discussions should be expected.

Let me say today how incredibly grateful I am for the people in the intelligence community who work hard every single day. Members of our military and members of law enforcement around the country wear uniforms, and we get a chance to say thank you to them personally when we see them. But members of the intelligence community are patriotic Americans who are working to protect their families and our families every day. We don't get to say thank you to them because we don't know who they are. But let me say thank you to them today from our country.

Right now, members of radical Islamic groups around the world are calling out on social media, through encrypted messages and in public forums around the world, for the small minority of Muslims who believe as they do and who believe in their hate-filled doomsday mission. They tell people that if they believe as they do, they should kill as they do. ISIS is enraged by our views about free speech, freedom of religion, girls attending school, equal pay, equal opportunity, and even voting in elections. It is almost impossible for Americans to imagine their hatred for the modern world and for freedom and basic human rights.

How do you win against an enemy like that? You confront them is how you do it, not ignore them. You deal with their ideology that spreads like a cancer around social media platforms around the world.

Some people say poverty and lack of education creates radicalism. There are billions of people in the world who live in poverty, and most of them do not practice this particular form of radical Islam. The shooters in San Bernardino, CA, weren't living in poverty or lacking in education. The killers in Paris and Brussels were not isolated and poor. While refugees and isolated communities in poverty are undoubtedly breeding grounds for anger and frustration, that is not the primary cancer of terrorism. There are millions of people living as refugees in the world right now who are not extremists. They are not terrorists; they just want peace so they can go home and have a normal life again.

We do have a moral and national security obligation to help the vulnerable when we can. The refugee crisis is immense, and it is affecting millions worldwide. Many countries are at the brink, and we need to stay engaged. But America has already given billions of dollars in aid. No country—no country has done more for the refugees than the United States. Our logistics, our

support, and our financial aid have sustained most of the refugee communities there either through direct aid or what we are doing through the United Nations right now. But the people living as refugees need access to education and training so their children will grow up with skills and opportunity. We can help them have a second chance. But that is not the primary source.

We need to engage with religious leaders around the world. We cannot and we will not define faith for them, but we can challenge any faith that promotes the death of people because of their race, their belief, or their gender. We should work to shut off terrorists' financing around the world, their illegal energy trade, their drug trafficking, their extortions, and persons in wealthy countries who send money with the implicit promise that those terrorists will not bring terrorism to their country if only they will send them money to do terrorism in other places.

We must also fight and confront those individuals militarily. We must learn the lesson of 9/11. They are not just a group of radical thugs over there who we can ignore. They hate us, and they will find every way possible to attack us here and to attack our allies. No one wants war, but we cannot stand by and watch terrorists beheading Egyptian Christians on the beaches of Libya, killing Shia Muslims because of their faith in Iraq, blowing themselves up in an airport in Brussels, shooting people at a rock concert or a synagogue in Paris or just people enjoying a party at work in California. We can't put our heads in the sand and ignore what is really happening and assume it will just go away if we do nothing.

As long as they hold territory, they call out to people worldwide to come join them in their caliphate to come fight for them or to fight where they are. We are Americans. We lose track of that at times, I am afraid. No one in the world has the same logistical capability as the United States of America. No one in the world has the most moral, most powerful military in the world like the United States of America. No one has our intelligence capability. No one in the world has our Tax Code planning capability. So the whole world is waiting on America to decide what we are going to do so they can decide if they are going to join us in this fight against this radical Islamic terrorism. It is not about massive troops on the ground; it is about a clear plan and a clear strategy to carry it out. It is why the Russians currently look more mobile and more capable than us all of a sudden.

So the ''now what'' question rises large in this body.

No. 1, there are multiple proposals in State and foreign operations for how we can engage in peaceful activities: helping refugees, helping those in poverty, helping to bring education to places, helping engage diplomatically with religious leaders around the world and with other countries to deal with terrorist financing. Those are things we could and should do and should do more aggressively.

No. 2, the national defense authorization is coming, and it is coming soon. We need to give great military clarity—not only rules of engagement in the battlefield, but what is the clear purpose militarily for the United States in this battle against radical Islam?

No. 3 is tougher for this Nation, apparently: Believe and understand that Iran is one of the key areas in this fight. I believe this administration has been too eager to believe good news about Iran and is ignoring the concerns that many of us hold. I have stood here several times in the past year to speak out against the President's reckless nuclear deal with the Iranian Ayatollah. I didn't like it then, I still don't like it, and I still don't believe Iran can be trusted to be able to carry out its end of bargain.

I recently authored a resolution that clearly outlines to the administration how the United States should respond if Iran—and I believe when Iran—breaches the nuclear agreement. We should reapply waived sanctions and U.N. Security Council resolutions and limit Iran's ability to import defensive equipment so they can stop fortifying their nuclear capabilities over the next 10 years. When all the enrichment limitations are lifted, they will be well prepared to defend those facilities they have now created.

As I have said many times, until Iran proves it is a peaceful, responsible player in the Middle East, the international community must be vigilant in pushing back against Iran's harmful and destructive influence among its neighbors.

Last week I spoke with Adam Szubin, Acting Under Secretary of the Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, and he communicated to me exactly what everyone already knows and fears—that Iran has become even more of a destabilizing factor in the region after the nuclear deal was signed.

This is clearly evident in Iran's continued, unabashed support for terrorism and terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, their propping up of the Assad regime in Syria—a government that continues to blow up its own people and butcher its own people—and Iran's shipments of weapons to rebels in Yemen to be able to fuel their civil war there, right on Saudi Arabia's southern border.

We haven't even discussed Iran's testing of ballistic missiles in direct violation of international law. If Iran can't be trusted to uphold the law now, how can it be trusted to be able to uphold some agreement which it hasn't even signed? That is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Congressionally imposed sanctions on Iran is what brought the Ayatollah to the negotiating table. Let's be honest about this. Regardless of what some people may say about the momentum of the moderates and the reformists inside of Iran, Iran's foreign policy, especially in dealing with the United States, runs through the Ayatollah Khamenei. He has made it crystal clear that his regime is built on radical Islamist views, and this particular view of Shia Islam—though it is opposed to ISIS—is supportive of spreading their views around the world. It is absolutely anti-American.

It is essential that the Treasury continue to completely shut down Iran's access to the U.S. dollar, and it is essential that Treasury rigorously enforce the still-standing human rights and terrorism-related sanctions on Iran.

I spoke with DNI Clapper in this administration just a few weeks ago. When I asked the Director of National Intelligence if there has been any change in Iran's focus on being the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, this administration's Director of National Intelligence said there has been no change in Iran's behavior since the nuclear deal was signed in relation to terrorism.

We should not release known terrorists or bring them to U.S. soil. I can't believe I have to even raise this as an issue in this Nation. We should keep Guantanamo Bay, known as Gitmo—that detention facility—open and operational rather than releasing known terrorists back into the battlefield or bringing them to the United States.

In this era of growing threats, why would we irresponsibly release these individuals? Senator KIRK and I, along with four other members of this body, introduced a bill last week to prohibit the President from transferring terrorists detained in Guantanamo Bay to any other state where they may go and actually sponsor terrorism. It is not a hard decision; it is common sense.

Our bill is very clear: If those individuals are transferred out of Guantanamo to some other state and then they later commit some act of terrorism, that state's foreign aid is cut off. The expectation is if these individuals go to that location, that location is actually going to monitor them. Americans assume that at this point, but it is not happening.

Senator INHOFE and I will introduce a bill later today which prohibits the transfer to the United States or release of terrorists held in Guantanamo Bay. It also goes further than what we do with Senator KIRK's bill, and it actually prohibits the President from closing the facility entirely. The President

should not risk our Nation's national security just to fulfill some campaign promise that makes absolutely no sense and puts our country at risk.

The executive branch occasionally laments congressional engagement in foreign policy, but this is the way the American people speak out because the people in Oklahoma are absolutely concerned about what is happening in national security and they want this administration to hear it loud and clear. There seems to be no clear plan, and the plans that are clear seem to weaken our resolve on national security.

Today I simply ask my colleagues to join me and do what the people who we represent sent us here to do—to assume the mantle of responsibility as leaders and to show them that we are not afraid to work with this administration or any administration. We need to take responsibility for setting the Nation's national security agenda. It must be done.

It can't be done just militarily. It must be done in a broad method by reaching out, not only strategically and diplomatically through our State Department but also militarily with a clear focus to make sure we protect the Nation and that we don't release terrorists and actually do what we are supposed to do—guard this Nation's security.

With that, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if we ask most Americans: What is the difference between a for-profit college and university and a not-for-profit college and university, a private university, most of them would say: I am not sure I can tell you.

Well, certainly for-profit, by definition, is a business. It is primarily a business that generates a profit for the company if it is successful. It pays for the salaries and compensation of those who work for the company, and if there are shareholders, it tries to increase the value of shares and maybe even pay a dividend.

The others—the not-for-profits—by definition don't do that, and most private universities are not for profit. Examples: University of Illinois, a public university, the University of Maryland. Private universities: Georgetown University, George Washington University. For-profit universities: The University of Phoenix—people have probably heard of it—DeVry University out of Chicago, IL; ITT Tech; Kaplan, these are for-profit colleges and universities. Are they different? They are dramatically different.

Let me give my colleagues three numbers that define the difference between for-profit colleges and universities and all the others. Here are the numbers: Ten percent of all of college students in America go to for-profit colleges and universities, like the University of Phoenix. These, many times online, universities including Kaplan and DeVry, 10 percent of the students go to them.

Twenty percent of all of the Federal aid to education goes to for-profit colleges and universities. Why is it twice as much as the percentage of students? They are darned expensive. They have tuition that is usually much more costly than other colleges and universities.

So that is 10 percent of the students, 20 percent of the Federal aid to education, and the next number is 40. Forty percent of all the student loan defaults in the United States of America are students attending for-profit colleges and universities—10 percent of the students, 40 percent of the student loan defaults. Why? The answer is obvious. They are very expensive and the education they provide often isn't worth much.

Students who enroll and start courses at for-profit colleges and universities get in over their heads and drop out—the worst possible outcome. Now they are deep in debt with no degree, and they default on their loan. Some finish, and for many of them, it is even worse. After they have stacked up all of this debt, they graduate from a for-profit college and university and find out the diploma is worthless. That is the reality of higher education in America today.

For quite a long time I have come to the Senate floor and talked about these for-profit colleges and universities. I got into this by meeting a young woman from a southern suburb of Cook County. She went to a place called Westwood College, a for-profit college and university based out of Colorado. She had been watching all of these CSI shows and the rest of them. She was just caught up in law enforcement. She wanted to get into law enforcement. So she enrolled at this for-profit college—Westwood—and started attending classes. Well, it turned out to be expensive, and then it turned out to be a disaster.

Five years later, she graduated and received her diploma from Westwood. She took the diploma to police departments and sheriffs' offices all around the region and they looked at her and said: Sorry, but that is not a real university. You have gone to school there for 5 years, and I know you have the diploma, but we don't recognize Westwood. Westwood College is not a real university.

So she found out her diploma was worthless, she couldn't get a job, but here is the worst part: At that point, she had $95,000 in student debt—$95,000 in debt—and a worthless diploma. Where do you turn?

Well, let me tell you what happened to her. She moved back in with her parents, living in the basement. Her dad came out of retirement, took a job to try to help her pay off her student loans at Westwood, and she started to think about: How do I go to a real school now—a community college or something—so I can get an education. She wasted 5 years of her life, and her decisions from that point forward will reflect the fact that she had this terrible experience.

There are things which these for-profit colleges and universities do which other universities wouldn't do. I want to talk about one of them today. The abuses of this industry are clear. Hundreds of thousands of students have been deceived, misled, and harassed into enrolling in these schools where they end up with a mountain of debt and a worthless diploma. Every day seems to bring news about another for-profit college scam, and I have been giving these speeches for a while, and it keeps unfolding day after day. Here is the latest: the complaint the attorney general of Massachusetts filed recently against ITT Tech for abusive recruitment tactics. I know this ITT Tech because in my hometown of Springfield, IL, at White Oaks Mall, they have a big sign. They look like the real thing, but when Massachusetts took a look at their recruiting tactics, it turned out they were lying to the students. You see, they need to lure in students to sign up at ITT Tech, they make promises they can't keep, and many times they lure in students who are not ready for college. Why do they do that? Because the minute a low-income student signs up at ITT Tech, the Pell grant, which goes to low-income college students, flows through the student to ITT Tech. There is $5,800 just for being low income and signing up, not to mention what follows—the college student loans.

If a student is lucky—if they are lucky—the for-profit college will lead them to the college loans originated by the government. Those are more reasonable. If they are unlucky, they get steered by these for-profit colleges to private loans with dramatically higher interest rates and terms which are not the least bit forgiving.

We say to ourselves: These students ought to know better. Well, how smart were you when it came to the ways of the world when you were 19 years old? How much did you know about borrowing $10,000 when you were 19 or 20 years old, when they shoved across the desk a stack of papers and said: If you will sign these for your loan, you will be able to start classes Monday. You know what happens. The students sign up. They have been told their whole

lives: This is what you need to do. When you finish high school, you go to college.

Here is another part of it that is very important. Right now, the Department of Education is working on new Federal regulations so that when the students go to these for-profit schools—or any school for that matter—and the school engages in unfair, deceptive, or abusive conduct, there is some protection. The Department has set up a rulemaking, but because the negotiations with outside stakeholders haven't reached a consensus, they are still working on the rule.

Let me talk about one issue that I think is critical that is under consideration by the Department of Education when it comes to these for-profit colleges: mandatory arbitration clauses. You are going to find at for-profit colleges—and at virtually no other college—a little paragraph stuck in that enrollment agreement, stuck in your enrollment contract, which says that if you have any grievance with that for-profit school, if you think they deceived you, defrauded you, lied to you, if you think that you got in debt for a promised degree that was going to lead to a job, you can't plead your case in court after you sign this agreement.

You have to go to mandatory arbitration. Mandatory arbitration, for those not familiar with it, is a closed-door process. The company or school, in this case, sets standards about who will decide your fate and about what of anything that happened to you ever becomes public. Why do the for-profit schools do this? They don't want to be taken to court—no company does. They certainly don't want to face a class action lawsuit by students who have been defrauded by these for-profit schools, and they certainly don't want the Department of Education to know that a certain number of students of for-profit schools have a grievance about the way they were treated. So they have come up with a mandatory arbitration clause in documents a student has to sign to go to class. Students by and large don't even see them. They are buried in the document. If they did see them, they would find it hard to even explain. These clauses require students to give up their right to a day in court. It means, for example, that if a student is misled or deceived by the school's advertising or Web site and the student goes into debt and then can't find a job or can't qualify for a job that they promised you could, the student doesn't get a day in court. Instead, the student is forced into the secret arbitration proceeding where the deck is stacked against them. It allows schools to avoid accountability for misconduct. It prevents prospective students from knowing that there were an awful lot of other students at the same school that had the same bad experience.

It is fine for schools to give students the choice of arbitration, but to say it is mandatory and that you have no other choice is wrong. Mandatory arbitration clauses are not used by legitimate not-for-profit colleges and universities. Not-for-profit colleges, public and private, are comfortable with being held accountable to the students. They don't require mandatory arbitration in order for the students to sign up for classes. The Association of Public Land Grant Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Association of Community College Trustees, and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers all confirmed what I just said. Unfortunately, mandatory arbitration clauses are a hallmark of the for-profit industry, used by nearly all major companies—DeVry, the University of Phoenix, and ITT Tech, just to name a few.

These same clauses were used by a for-profit school called Corinthian, which went bankrupt. What happens when a for-profit college goes bankrupt? They have received the money through the student from the Federal Government. They have received all those Pell grants. They have received the money for government loans, and now they are officially out of business.

Where does that leave the student if the school closes? Well, we give them a pretty tough choice. The first choice is to keep the credit hours they earned at the for-profit school and transfer to another school—too often another for-profit. Is that worth the effort? Well, the student has to decide or drop those credit hours of the for-profit school and get what is called a closed school discharge. You don't have to pay it back. Who loses in that deal? The taxpayers. The taxpayers who have sent thousands of dollars to these worthless for-profit schools.

I am hoping the Department of Education will promulgate a rule that protects students and their families when it comes to these for-profit schools. There is one last thing I want to say about college loans, and it probably is the most important. If someone borrows money for a car or a home or a piece of property somewhere or to buy some goods and then they fall on hard times—somebody in the family gets sick, there are big medical bills, someone loses a job, or there is a divorce—and they are forced into bankruptcy court to clear their debts, they are going to find out if they have a student loan, they can't discharge a student loan in bankruptcy. It means, frankly, that it is with them for a lifetime. When grandma decides to cosign her granddaughter's college loan and her granddaughter defaults on the loan, the collection agency calls her grandmother. We have cases that have been reported where grandmothers have their Social Security checks basically garnished to pay off the granddaughter's student loan. It is a debt, frankly, that will be with them for a lifetime. That is why this conversation is so important.

A few years ago, the for-profit colleges and universities ended up with the same treatment as every other college and university, and they, too, when it comes to student debt, have their investment protected because the student cannot discharge it in bankruptcy.

This Senator thinks the Department of Education has the authority to clean this up.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a legal analysis put together by Public Citizen outlining the authority the Department of Education has to ban mandatory arbitration.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

PUBLIC CITIZEN,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2016.

Dr. JOHN B. KING, Jr.,
Acting Secretary of Education,
Washington, DC.

CITIZEN PETITION

The federal government spends more than $128 billion annually on student aid distributed under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), 20 U.S.C. §1070 et seq. This aid, which includes Stafford, PLUS, and Perkins loans, as well as Pell grants, is the largest stream of federal postsecondary education funding.

While profiting from U.S. taxpayers, some predatory schools—particularly in the for-profit education sector—target underserved populations of students, including people of color, low-income individuals, and veterans, with fraudulent recruitment practices. These schools provide students with an education far inferior to what has been promised. They offer low quality programs and faculty, provide few if any student-support services, and have abysmal graduation and job-placement rates. Many students drop out once they realize the extent of a school's misrepresentations. Those who do not may find themselves with a worthless degree. In either case, the school's wrongdoing leaves many students with a debt to the federal government that they cannot repay.

Unfortunately, the courthouse doors are closed to many of these students because they signed mandatory, pre-dispute arbitration agreements at the time of their enrollment. Under these agreements, students are required to use binding arbitration to resolve any dispute they may later have with the school; they are barred from the courts. As demonstrated in this petition, these arbitration clauses are detrimental to students, hamper efforts to uncover wrongdoing by institutions receiving Title IV assistance, and place the federal investment in Title IV programs at risk.

Public Citizen, Inc., a consumer organization with members and supporters nationwide, submits this citizen petition under 5 U.S.C. §553(e) to request that the Department of Education issue a rule requiring institutions to agree, as a condition on receipt of Title IV assistance under the HEA, not to include pre-dispute arbitration clauses in enrollment or other agreements with students. This rule would be consistent with the Department's legal authority under the HEA

and with the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA), 9 U.S.C. §1 et seq. It would also be in line with a call by members of Congress for the Department to condition Title IV funding on a school's commitment not to use forced arbitration clauses or other contractual barriers to court access in student enrollment agreements.

I. STATEMENT OF INTEREST

Since its founding in 1973, Public Citizen has advocated on behalf of its members and supporters for public access to the civil justice system. As part of that work, it seeks to end the use of forced arbitration clauses in consumer contracts because these clauses are fundamentally unfair to consumers, encourage unlawful corporate behavior, and weaken the utility of enforcement efforts to protect the public. Public Citizen is engaged in efforts to encourage the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to ban pre-dispute arbitration agreements in consumer and investor agreements. Public Citizen's counsel have represented parties in several major cases involving the scope of the FAA and the enforceability of pre-dispute arbitration agreements. Public Citizen also frequently appears as amicus in cases involving these issues.

In addition to its arbitration work, Public Citizen supports robust regulation of predatory educational institutions and student lending practices that leave students saddled with debt for overpriced educations. It participated in the Department's Gainful Employment rulemaking, and its attorneys represent twenty-eight organizations as amici in support of that rule in Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities v. King, No. 15–5190 (D.C. Cir.). Counsel for Public Citizen have also represented parties and amici in numerous cases involving misconduct by for-profit educational institutions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, countless veterans groups, consumer advocates, legal aid lawyers, and student organizations support a full ban on mandatory arbitration clauses in higher education. I hope the Department of Education responds to this. I hope they have the resolve and the political will to get this done.

It is sad when students end up with a good diploma and a ton of debt. It is unforgiveable for us to be complicit when the students end up with a ton of debt and a worthless diploma from a for-profit college or university.

Mr. President, the Federal Aviation Administration is now operating under its second extension. Like too many important issues, we just keep patching up the system. Last year, the Senate worked together to pass a 5-year transportation bill. Finally, after 30 patches of a national transportation program, both parties came together to pass the first long-term bill in over 10 years. This was an important step for the Nation and for my State of Illinois.

Fixing and maintaining our infrastructure involves planning, and planning includes certainty. If we don't know we are going to be funded 6 months from now, it is very tough to plan a highway, a bridge, or how we are going to administer an airport.

We have an opportunity to do the same for the Federal Aviation Administration. Senators THUNE and NELSON—Republican and Democrat—put together the bipartisan bill that we are currently debating. I hope we can give this bill careful consideration. One of the items we should carefully consider is security at airports.

Since 9/11 we have focused more and more on the security of airports, and when we hear of these terrible terrorist incidents overseas, we understand that we can't drop our guard. There were 32 people who died in Belgium, and many were injured. The terrorists targeted people who were just going about their daily routine, catching an airplane. The terrorists took advantage of a vulnerable system. At the airport, two bombs were set off before any security screening took place. That should be a wake-up call for all of us.

Last week Senator HEINRICH offered an amendment that I was proud to cosponsor for commonsense measures to strengthen security at U.S. airports in places such as transit stops. I am pleased it passed with strong bipartisan support. It adds extra security in these areas where people take planes and trains where we were vulnerable before the checkpoints. It adds law enforcement officials, inspectors, specialists in explosives, dogs, and experts who can help with the screening process. It gives more flexibility to our States in cities like Chicago, which I am honored to represent, to grant security funding for better protecting these vulnerable areas, and it gives more flexibility in spending the money.

O'Hare is one of the busiest airports in the world, with 77 billion passengers last year. Chicago is also host to many major national and global events with millions of travelers. We have one of the busiest networks of commuters and travelers by transit, with 1.6 million people riding Chicago's CTA every day, getting to work by bus or train. Nearly 300,000 passengers take Chicago's Metra commuter rail every day. We must ensure we are doing everything we can to keep them safe.

Communities such as Aurora, IL, that have experienced their own threat not long ago will remember September of 2014. I am filing an amendment which I hope will be considered on this bill to improve security in our air traffic control facilities after the experience we had back in 2014. There was a fire at the air traffic facility in Aurora. That center directs about 9,000 flights a day over 6 States, including, of course, the Chicago region. The fire grounded thousands of flights. Its impact was felt for 2 weeks. It caused $5.3 million in damages to the traffic control facility, and hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact.

The air traffic controllers, local police, and fire department did all they could do, but there turned out to be bigger issues at play. This was a case of arson by an employee at the air traffic control facility.

I went in and actually saw the damage that he did. Following the incident, I worked with the FAA and called on the Department of Transportation to investigate what happened and to come up with recommendations on how to improve security. After the Department of Transportation investigation, FAA and DOT found there was not enough focus on insider threats, and, clearly, better equipment is needed to help communication from going down. Once again, we are dealing with an area that is not as secure as it should be.

The amendment I have offered to this bill builds on some of the recommendations. It requires the FAA to make plans for law enforcement and other authorities in the event of an incident. It requires the FAA to develop guidelines for training and response to security threats and active shooter incidents and to ensure that, as the FAA makes investments in infrastructure and basic equipment such as electrical systems and telecommunications, they think about resiliency and survivability.

We learned those lessons the hard way in Chicago. I hope the Senate will take up my amendment so other airports as well as Chicago will be ready in the future.

These events are reminders of the damage that can be done. With a similar spirit of bipartisanship, we need to have a commitment to our security at our airports and around the United States.

TRIBUTE TO RAY LAHOOD

Mr. President, while I am on the subject of airports, I want to recognize my friend and former colleague in the House, Congressman Ray LaHood. He was named Secretary of Transportation by President Obama. On Tuesday, the Peoria International Airport honored him by naming their new international terminal after him. Ray served the Peoria region proudly for 14 years as Congressman and for 4 years as President Obama's Secretary of Transportation. Secretary Foxx went out to Peoria to show support for his predecessor.

Ray LaHood has been and continues to be a strong advocate for Illinois and for our Nation's infrastructure. This honor is certainly a fitting tribute, and I congratulate my former colleague, Congressman Ray LaHood.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, first I have an item I want to speak about on the pending bill. There is another item I want to discuss, first of all, but even before that, I want to add that I caught the tail end of the statement of the

Senator from Illinois about student loans. When I first arrived here in the Senate and I was sworn in right where our pages are sitting now, I had over $100,000 in student loans that I had taken on during my undergraduate but primarily my postgraduate education. I can state that had it not been for the blessings of the proceeds of a book that I wrote called ''American Son,'' I am not sure I would have ever paid those loans off. I was fortunate. I went to law school and got a law degree and was employed. I know firsthand the struggle that millions of Americans are facing and the young people who have taken on substantial student loan debt, some of whom have never graduated from institutions and others who have graduated, frankly, with pieces of paper of degrees that, unfortunately, are not worth the paper they are printed on. As a result, they are stuck with a debt that can never be discharged.

There are only two ways to get rid of a student loan—die or pay it off. For many people, paying it off is not going to happen. It is an issue that this Senator hopes Congress will confront. It is a looming crisis in America. There is over a trillion dollars of student loan debt. Quite frankly, it holds people back. When that student loan is sitting on your credit report, you won't get a loan to buy a home. If your wages are being garnished and other issues come up as a result of paying it off, it is a debilitating problem that people face. We have discussed throughout the years the hopes of steps we can take to address it, and I hope we will have a chance to do that before this Congress finishes its work.

HONORING THE 65TH INFANTRY REGIMENT ''BORINQUENEERS''

Mr. President, before I speak on the bill, I want to rise today to pay tribute to a distinguished group of American heroes. It is a group that for too long was denied the honors and benefits they were owed for their service to our Nation.

The 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers, is a predominantly Puerto Rican regiment that is the only Hispanic segregated unit to fight in every global war of the 20th century. Historically, the Borinqueneers were denied equal benefits and equal honors for their service, despite the fact that their regiment experienced equal risk and equal duty in combat during World War I, World War II, and the Korean war.

They have since been decorated for their extraordinary service on the battlefield. In the Korean war alone, the regiment earned more than 2,700 Purple Hearts, 600 Bronze Stars, 250 Silver Stars, 9 Distinguished Service Crosses, and 1 Medal of Honor.

There is another medal, however, that has yet to be presented, but that will change later this afternoon when the Borinqueneers and their families will celebrate the unveiling of the long overdue Congressional Gold Medal. This is the highest civilian honor in the United States.

The medal will be unveiled today at a ceremony in the Capitol. It will then be given to the Smithsonian Institute and placed on public display. It is my hope that the more than 1,000 Borinqueneer veterans living throughout the United States, as well as the family members of those fallen, departed, and missing in action, will know at last that their service has received the ultimate tribute from a grateful Nation. Over the years, even in the shadow of unequal treatment, the Borinqueneers never faltered and never failed to prove just how valuable they are to the cause of freedom.

My favorite example is the story of Operation Portrex—a military exercise that occurred on the eve of the Korean war. It was intended to test how the Army, Marines, Navy, and Air Force would do as liberators of an enemy-controlled island. The Borinqueneers were tasked with playing the role of ''the enemy aggressors'' and attempting to prevent the more than 3,200 American troops from liberating the island in this exercise. It was a task that, quite frankly, they were not expected to accomplish. Yet, much to the surprise of the Army commanders, the 65th Infantry, badly outnumbered, was able to halt the offensive forces on the beaches.

So it is no surprise that after seeing the tremendous skill of the Borinqueneers, our Army commanders quickly deployed them into the heart of the Korean war, trusting them with numerous important offensive operations. One of those operations occurred on January 31, 1951. It is credited as having been the last battalion-size bayonet charge by a U.S. Army unit. Of that charge, the commanding general, Douglas MacArthur, later wrote:

> The Puerto Ricans forming the ranks of the gallant 65th Infantry regiment, on the battlefields of Korea, by valor and determination and a resolute will to victory, give daily testament to their invincible loyalty to the United States and the fervor of their devotion to those immutable standards of human relations to which the Americans and the Puerto Ricans are in common dedicated. They are writing a brilliant record of achievement in battle. I am proud indeed to have them in this command. I wish that we might have many more like them.

Throughout the storied history of the 65th, there are countless examples of valor that have distinguished this regiment. Today, Puerto Ricans serve in our military at some of the highest rates of any demographic group in the Nation, which is no doubt a lasting legacy of the Borinqueneers.

It has been one of my great honors as a Senator to be involved in the effort to secure the Congressional Gold Medal by cosponsoring the legislation that passed the Senate in 2014. I was also honored to stand in the White House as President Obama signed the bill into law.

Today, I want to thank two congressionally designated liaisons who worked tirelessly to make this day a reality: San Rodriguez and Javier Morales. Both of them are Army veterans. They made it their mission to ensure that through the design of the medal and its unveiling ceremony, these men who have honored our Nation receive the honor they deserve in return. I thank both of them for their work.

I would also like to say a special thank-you to the students at St. Luke's Lutheran School in Oviedo, FL, and to their teacher, Ms. Carla Cotto Ford, who is the granddaughter of two Borinqueneers. Ms. Ford and her students raised thousands of dollars in their community toward an ongoing national effort to ensure that every single living Borinqueneer would receive a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal.

The passionate efforts of Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Morales and Ms. Ford and her students and so many others who have labored to make this day a reality are part of what makes this Congressional Gold Medal so special. It reminds us that the legacy of past Borinqueneers who have fought and died for America is indeed a living legacy.

Today that legacy, alive and well, reminds us that America truly is an exceptional country. Ours is a nation made up of people from all different backgrounds and all different cultures who came together as one Nation because we share a common idea: that everyone deserves the freedom to exercise their God-given rights. Each member of the 65th Infantry Regiment fought for that freedom not just for themselves but for every man and woman and child in these United States.

In closing, to the Borinqueneers, I would like to say congratulations on the unveiling of your well-deserved Congressional Gold Medal. More importantly, on behalf of my staff and my family and the people of Florida, I would like to say thank you. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your courage. Thank you for fighting to make this Nation the best it can be.

Mr. President, on another topic, I want to briefly discuss an amendment I now have pending on the bill before us, the bill on the FAA. It is an amendment that is drafted to the finance portion of this bill and that deals with welfare reform.

For two decades now, it has been the policy of the United States that new immigrants to the United States do not qualify for welfare and other public assistance programs for their first 5 years in the country. Just to lay out what that means, if you are a legal immigrant to the United States, for the

first 5 years that you are in this country, you do not qualify for any Federal welfare or other public assistance programs. Of course, illegal immigrants do not qualify at all for Federal assistance programs. But there is an exception to this Federal law. The exception for this policy is for refugees and asylees who come to our shores seeking shelter from persecution. So while immigrants to the United States do not get Federal benefits, if you can prove you are a refugee fleeing persecution, then you do qualify for Federal assistance.

For those people who can prove they are fleeing persecution, our compassionate country makes this financial commitment so they can get a new start on life and a leg up. But there is a provision of existing law that many people are not aware of. A provision of this existing law basically says that anyone who comes from Cuba—regardless of why they come to the United States, they are automatically and immediately presumed to be a refugee, and therefore they are automatically and immediately eligible for welfare and other public assistance. In essence, our existing law treats all Cubans categorically as if they are refugees, whether or not they can prove it.

As many of you know, I am the son of Cuban immigrants. I live in a community where Cuban exiles have had an indelible imprint on our country, on the State of Florida and in South Florida in particular. Yet I stand here today to say that this provision of law, this distinction, is no longer justified. This financial incentive, this notion, this reality that if you get here from Cuba, you are going to immediately qualify for Federal benefits has encouraged the current migratory crisis in which today thousands of Cubans are making dangerous trips to come to the United States of America. It is creating pressure for foreign governments—for example, in Central America—that simply cannot host them, and it is now adding pressure to our southwest border.

Just to outline what is happening, traditionally, Cubans come to the United States on a raft, on an airplane, or on a visa, but now many are making to trip to Costa Rica or Honduras and they are working their way up to Central America, through Mexico, and crossing our southern border.

It is my belief—and I think well-founded based on much of the evidence we have now received in testimony and in newspaper articles; the South Florida Sun Sentinel, one of our newspapers based in Broward County, has extensively documented this and other abuses that are going on—that a significant number of people are drawn to this country from Cuba because they know that when they arrive, if they can step foot on dry land, they will immediately receive status and they immediately qualify for a package of Federal benefits that no other immigrant group would qualify for unless they can prove they are refugees.

This current policy is not just being abused, it is hurting the American taxpayers. There are reports that indicate that financial support for Cuban immigrants exceeded $680 million in the year 2014 alone. Those numbers, by the way, have quite frankly grown since then.

On top of the fundamental unfairness of the policy, recent reports in the media indicate that there is gross abuse of this policy. In Florida, we are now hearing many stories of individuals coming to this country and claiming their benefits regularly and repeatedly returning to Cuba—in essence, the country you are supposed to be fleeing because you fear for your life and your freedom. If you are a refugee, it means you are seeking refuge. It is difficult to justify someone's refugee status when after arriving in the United States they are traveling back to the place they are ''fleeing'' from, 10, 15, 20, 30 times a year.

By the way, this places the Cuban act in particular danger. That is a separate topic not dealt with in my amendment and one that I have said publicly should perhaps be reexamined and adjusted to the new reality we now face. But I am not dealing with that right now. We are dealing with the benefits portion of this.

It is difficult to justify refugee benefits for people who are arriving in the United States and are immediately traveling repeatedly back to the nation they claim to be fleeing. Others who are immediately traveling back to the island are actually staying there.

Let me paint the picture for you. You come from Cuba on the Cuban Adjustment Act. You arrive in the United States because you crossed the southwest border with Mexico or you landed on a raft on a beach somewhere in Florida. You claim your status as a Cuban refugee, and then less than a year later or a year later, you travel back to Cuba and you stay there for weeks or months at a time. But because you qualify for Federal refugee benefits, you are receiving benefits from the Federal Government, but you are living in Cuba. And how this practice works is that while you are living in Cuba, relatives or friends in America are getting hold of your benefits, which are mailed to you or direct-deposited, and then they are making sure you get that money to subsidize your lifestyle.

I can tell you today unequivocally that there are people living basically permanently on the island of Cuba, with an occasional visit back to the United States, who are living a lifestyle that is being subsidized by the U.S. taxpayer because of this abuse.

This practice, quite frankly, is illegal under current law, but the responsible agencies seem to have failed to enforce this law. So I have offered an amendment to this bill that puts an end to this abuse and puts an end to the unfairness of the existing law. All my amendment would do is it would simply require those who come from Cuba—they would still be able, under the Cuban Adjustment Act, to receive permanent status in the United States, but they are going to be treated like every other immigrant. They are going to be ineligible for most Federal benefit programs for 5 years unless they can demonstrate and prove they qualify for refugee status.

Let me paint a picture of what that would look like. If you come from Cuba and you can prove that you are fleeing oppression, that you are involved politically, that you are a dissident, that you are someone who the government is persecuting, then you are a refugee and you will be treated like a refugee and you will qualify for refugee benefits. But if you simply arrive from Cuba because you are seeing a better life for yourself from an economic standpoint, you will still be able to benefit from the Cuban Adjustment Act in that status, but you will not qualify for Federal benefits and you will be treated like any other immigrant who comes to the United States.

We should be clear that the Castro regime does indeed repress hundreds of people every week. There is no question that there are many who still come here from Cuba who are refugees and are fleeing persecution. There is no doubt that there are people who will arrive this month and this year from Cuba who have left Cuba because they are being politically persecuted. There is no doubt about that. So we are not talking about excluding them. They will be able to prove they are refugees and they will be able to qualify for refugee benefits. While it is clear that there are still many people facing persecution in Cuba and fleeing, it is also clear that it is not everyone who is coming from Cuba.

So all this amendment would do is bring parity between Cuban refugees and every other refugee. I say this to you as someone whose parents came from Cuba. I propose this amendment as someone who lives in a community where Cuban Americans comprise a significant plurality of the population. I see firsthand these abuses that are occurring. It is not fair to the American taxpayer. It is costing us money. Quite frankly, it is encouraging people to come here to take advantage of this program.

By passing this amendment—if we pass it—Congress will not only save taxpayers millions of dollars, but I believe it will also help minimize the increase we have seen in migration of Cubans over the last couple of years by weeding out bad actors who only come

to the United States in search of government benefits they can take advantage of for the first 5 years they are here.

I believe this is responsible. I believe this is the right approach for our Nation fiscally but also from an immigration standpoint. I hope I can earn bipartisan support for passing this very sensible proposal.

I encourage my colleagues to go on the Web site of the South Florida Sun Sentinel, a newspaper in South Florida. You can see they have extensively documented not just these abuses but a series of other abuses that are occurring as well as part of this overall program.

So it is my hope that I can earn the support of my colleagues to convert this idea into law.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JESSIE'S STORY

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I am rising to share Jessie's story. Jessie's story is the story of Jessie Grubb from Charleston, WV, who passed away. She was only 30 years old.

After years of struggling with heroin addiction, she had been doing well. Her parents and family members and all her close friends were very proud of the progress she was making. She had been sober since August, but last month she had surgery for an infection. The infection was related to a running injury, and she died a day after leaving the hospital.

Jessie's story with addiction is known to many. Her father David Grubb was a colleague of mine—a State senator, and a very good State senator, I might add. We worked together in the legislature. He shared their family's struggle with addiction with President Obama. I was very pleased President Obama came to a State where he probably has the least popularity but which has the greatest challenge with opioid addiction—West Virginia. He came there and he heard the struggles. He saw it firsthand, and I think it moved him and made him more committed to fighting this drug abuse that is going on in America.

As I said, David Grubb shared his family's story with President Obama when he came to West Virginia last October and, like I said, it has made a difference. In West Virginia, not unlike Iowa, we have been hit very hard. As a matter of fact, West Virginia has been hit the hardest by opioid addiction. It is an epidemic.

When we think about an epidemic, pandemics—we talk about Ebola and the Zika virus and all the things we hear about, but we haven't heard a whole lot about opioid addiction. It has been a silent killer. It is one where we are all ashamed if it happens to us or our family. We don't talk much about it. We think we can handle it within our own structure. Yet it is an epidemic. I say there is not a person in our country who doesn't know someone in their immediate or extended family who hasn't been affected. That is an epidemic, and it is something we have to cure.

Drug overdose in my little State of West Virginia has increased by more than 700 percent between 1999 and 2013. Last year alone, over 600 lives were lost to prescription drug abuse—overdose. Now that is legal. These are products produced by legal manufacturing companies, pharmaceuticals. These are products approved by the Food and Drug Administration, a watchdog responsible for making sure our food and all of our drugs are safe. So this is something that is legal and that our doctors prescribe. Our most trusted people in America—our doctors—are prescribing something they think will help us. Yet it is something that is killing Americans everywhere.

So this is Jessie's story and her family's pain, which is all too familiar and all too common in West Virginia and throughout the Nation. As I said, we lost 627 West Virginians last year, and 61,000 West Virginians used prescription pain medications for nonmedical purposes in 2014—nonmedical purposes. This includes 6,000 teenagers.

Our State is not unique. Every day in the country, 51 Americans are dying—51 Americans die every day from opioid abuse. Since 1999, we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse. Think about that: 200,000 in a little over a decade. That is unheard of. In any other category we would be doing something monumental.

Jessie's story deeply impacted the President, and I spoke with him about her death and the pain her family is going through. When the President came to Charleston, Jessie was in a rehab facility in Michigan for the fourth time—for the fourth time. Before her life was taken over by addiction in 2009, Jessie's future was very bright. She was truly an unbelievable young lady. She was the beloved daughter of David and Kate Grubb, the beloved sister to her four sisters, and a beloved friend to family and to many others.

Jessie was an excellent student and scored in the 99th percentile on every one of her tests. She was a cheerleader at Roosevelt Junior High School and was an avid runner. At the time of her death, she was looking forward to running in her first marathon. The only trouble she had ever gotten into in school was when she protested the Iraq war. Needless to say, she was a natural born leader. She truly was. She was one of those girls who was captivating.

After graduating from Capital High School, she was thrilled and looking forward to her bright future at the University of North Carolina, Asheville. She was sexually assaulted during her first semester, which caused her to withdraw from school and return home to Charleston.

That traumatic event caused Jessie to turn to heroin to escape her pain. Over the next 7 years, Jessie would battle her addiction. She would overdose four times and go into rehab four times, but up until her death, she had been sober for 6 months and was focused on making a life for herself in Michigan, and one her parents were very proud of.

All of Jessie's hard work was ruined because of a careless mistake—one mistake. Jessie's death is particularly heartbreaking because it was 100 percent preventable—100 percent. Her parents traveled to Michigan for Jessie's surgery and told her doctors and hospital personnel that she was a recovering addict. Jessie was having hip surgery that was caused by all her running, and they were treating her for an infection. However, after her surgery, the discharging doctor who said he didn't know she was a recovering addict sent her home with a prescription for 50—50—OxyContin pills. She should never have been given one—not one—for opioid medication.

We must ensure this never happens again. Jessie passed away that night and think about how preventable this was. Because of a lot of the privacy laws, we can't tell. That doctor didn't know. Did someone mess up? We don't know. If you are allergic to penicillin or something, it is on your chart. They know all the way through if you are allergic to anything, but if you are an addict and you are allergic to opioids, because they will kill you, they can't reveal that.

So, Madam President, I will be asking for your help, as always, and I know you will be compassionate about this. Next week I will be introducing Jessie's Law to make sure this type of careless mistake never happens to another daughter, a son, a nephew, a niece, anyone in America.

The bottom line is, we need to go at this problem from every angle and with the help of everyone—family assistance, counseling programs, drug courts, consumer and medical education, law enforcement support, State and Federal legislation. We need to throw everything we have at this. With continued support and tireless work from everyone, we can beat this epidemic once and for all.

Jessie's death is heartbreaking to anybody who knew her or the family or their contribution to society every day. This is a tremendous family who

gives so much back. We all know someone who has been impacted. We do, every one of us. Every one of our young interns here know. Our pages know. They see it in their schools. Everybody sees what is going on, but we have to speak up. This is a fight we have to win.

This opioid epidemic is claiming a generation and taking them away from us. I am committed to this more than I have been committed to anything. If I have one purpose of being in the Senate, it is to bring to light these young people whose lives have been changed, whose families' lives have been changed all over West Virginia, all over America. There has been silence for far too long, and we are not going to keep silent any longer.

People are sending me letters from Iowa, letters from my State of West Virginia, and they are saying: Please use my name. Put a face and a name to a tragedy. They want us to know in Congress that something has to be done. We don't need all these drugs on the market. We don't need the pharmaceutical companies putting out more and more powerful opioids. We don't need a business plan that is destroying people's lives.

I think this is something we agree on. This is something that will unite us like nothing else in Congress. It is not a Democratic or a Republican epidemic. It is not a disease that is killing Democrats and Republicans. It is killing Americans, and we are Americans. So I am hopeful, and I have been very pleased with all of the support we are getting from both sides, Democrats and Republicans, coming together on this issue. We have important legislation coming forward. I believe this is going to allow us for the first time to make a monumental change. I thank VA Secretary Bob McDonald. He is trying very hard to change the culture of the VA, of treating pain with alternatives. There is so much more we need to do. I will be getting into that later.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the great job she does for the great State of Iowa.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that amendments submitted to the previous substitute, Senate amendment No. 3464, be considered to be submitted to the new substitute, Senate amendment No. 3679, as long as the instructions to the clerk are drafted properly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am trying to get a vote on an amendment that Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have submitted. To explain it, I want to show you this graphic.

These are two airplanes that are exactly the same size, they are flying across the same sky, and they are flying over the same homes. But there is a difference—a difference that I am trying to fix. This one is a passenger plane. Due to an FAA regulation that Senator Snowe and I were able to get in place through a vote in this Chamber several years ago, the pilots in the passenger plane can fly only up to 9 hours a day. After that, they have to rest because pilot fatigue is a very dangerous situation facing not only our pilots but their crews and everyone that is in their vicinity.

What happened when Senator Snowe and I wrote our legislation? We assumed that the regulation that would be forthcoming from the FAA would cover both passenger and cargo planes because, again, these planes share the same skies, go over the same airspace, and go over the same homes. It is a straightforward point, and fatigue is fatigue. They are not less fatigued because they are carrying cargo rather than passengers. These pilots can fly up to 16 hours a day. We know from the pilots themselves—many pilots organizations have endorsed this—that this is a very dangerous disparity, and it needs to be fixed.

I am asking the majority for an up-or-down vote on this amendment. It is real simple. It simply says the FAA should get rid of this disparity and make the cargo pilots have the same rules as the passenger pilots—real simple.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, the No. 1 safety issue is fatigue. This is what they cite as the No. 1 problem across the board. So we need to fix this. I have spoken to both of my friends, Senator NELSON, who supports this, and Senator THUNE, who has been a little more subtle about how he feels about this. I asked them if I could have the up-or-down vote. I hope I can have the up-or-down vote. I am not asking for anything special. A 60-vote threshold is fine.

If people want to vote against the amendment, fine; let them be held accountable. But it is a moral issue right now. The bottom line is, people are in jeopardy right now.

I don't know exactly what is going to happen. The reason we are at a standstill is partly because I said I want a vote, and that promptly stopped things. I do it rarely, but I know if we pass this, we are going to save lives. It is written somewhere in the Old Testament that if you save one life, you save humanity. Saving lives is one thing we should do, and since we know about this disparity and we have proof that we need to fix it, we need to fix it.

All I am asking for is an up-or-down vote. If people want to vote no, that is fine with me. Hopefully, most will vote yes, and hopefully we will get this done. We got it done before, and we should be able to get it done again.

What could be happening is that we could get that vote. Of course, what I would love to death is if Senator THUNE and NELSON just took our amendment and put it in the package. That would be wonderful. But if they don't want to do that, I want a vote.

What I hope doesn't happen is that they will say: OK. We will give you a vote, but we are going to take two really poison pill amendments and force everybody to vote on those.

This is not a game. I am not here to have a game. I am here to have a vote, up or down. This should not be tied to anything else.

I want to read to you the incredible words that were spoken. These are excerpts from UPS Flight 1354. This is a cockpit conversation that took place minutes before a crash. These words are coming from the grave. Listen to these words and make up your own mind as to whether I am being unreasonable here in wanting to have a vote.

Pilot 1: I mean I don't get it. It should be one level of safety for everybody.

Pilot 2: It makes no sense at all.

Pilot 1: No, it doesn't at all.

Pilot 2: And to be honest, it should be across the board. To be honest, in my opinion, whether you are flying passengers or cargo, if you are flying this time of day, you know fatigue is definitely—

Pilot 1: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Pilot 2: When my alarm went off, I mean, I am thinking, I am so tired.

Pilot 1: I know.

''When my alarm went off, I mean, I am thinking, I am so tired.''

This photograph shows what happened to that cargo jet. It happened over Alabama in 2013. This is what happened. The NTSB said it was definitely fatigue that played a role in this crash. So am I being unreasonable to say this is the FAA bill—this is the bill we do every couple years about air safety? Am I being unreasonable to ask my colleagues to vote up or down on whether there ought to be parity between passenger pilots and cargo pilots? I don't think so.

Remember Captain Sullenberger, who was the hero? Captain Sullenberger

was the hero who landed his plane in the water—the ''Hero of the Hudson.'' He is a superstar. He did this. He knows about safety. He knows it.

A passenger on that flight said: I could feel the water running over the top of my feet, and that is what really scared me. ''I thought, I survived the impact and now I am going to drown.'' That was a passenger who said that—how the pilot saved them all. We all know who saved 155 people as he landed the jet in the frigid New York Hudson River.

Let's see what Sully Sullenberger says about the situation of fatigue. If we cannot listen to this, who are we listening to? By the way, these comments are not aimed just at my colleagues; they are aimed at the administration that has not done this, which is wrong. They are wrong.

Listen to what Captain ''Sully'' Sullenberger, the hero of Flight 1549, said: ''You wouldn't want your surgeon operating on you after only 5 hours of sleep, or your passenger pilot flying the airplane after only 5 hours sleep, and you certainly wouldn't want a cargo pilot flying a large plane over your house at 3 a.m. on 5 hours of sleep trying to find the airport and land.''

So the question is: Who do we listen to? Do we listen to the companies that are afraid it is going to cost them a few dollars? Do we listen to the pilots? Do we listen to Sully Sullenberger, who is telling us fatigue kills? It is a killer. That is what he said at the press conference yesterday.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD two articles that appeared recently in the news.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Daily News, April 12, 2016]

MIRACLE ON THE HUDSON PILOT PUSHES SAFE SKIES ACT TO GRANT CARGO PILOTS REST PROTECTIONS

(By Nancy Dillon)

Tom Hanks will play him in a Clint Eastwood-directed biopic due out this summer, but Chesley Sullenberger isn't leaning his seat back.

The Miracle on the Hudson pilot was in Washington, D.C. Tuesday, pushing lawmakers to pass the Safe Skies Act and grant cargo pilots the same rest protections as passenger pilots.

''This is not a partisan issue, it's a science-based, commonsense issue,'' Sullenberger told the Daily News.

He said cargo pilots generally fly at night and deserve the same sleep standards already guaranteed to passenger pilots—flights limited to eight or nine hours and minimum 10-hour rest periods.

''It's really just flat wrong (to exclude cargo pilots). They're the ones who need it most. They have their natural circadian rhythms disrupted the most,'' Sullenberger told The News.

''If you're home in the evening when hundreds of cargo airplanes are flying overhead, it doesn't matter if those planes are carrying people or packages. It matters that their pilots are alert enough to do their job safely,'' the retired U.S. Airways captain turned author and aviation safety consultant said.

Sullenberger joined Senators Barbara Boxer (D–CA) and Amy Klobuchar (D–MN) in Washington to close the ''dangerous loophole'' in prior legislation that carved out the exception for cargo pilots at the request of cargo carriers, he said.

The Safe Skies Act would be an amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill, according to a press release from Boxer's office.

Currently, cargo pilots can be on duty for up to 16 hours at a time, the release said.

At least one freight giant is against the proposal.

''Cargo and passenger pilots have very different schedules, and one size does not fit all when it comes to air travel safety. Forcing cargo pilots to fly according to a set of rules developed for distinct conditions in a different industry will make them less safe,'' FedEx said in a statement to the Daily News.

''Safety is our top priority. That's why we oppose legislation mandating passenger-pilot scheduling limits for cargo pilots,'' the statement said.

Sullenberger said its doubtful he and his crew could have landed U.S. Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009—saving all 155 souls—if they were deprived sleep.

''I've proven in the most dramatic way what I'm talking about,'' Sullenberger said. ''Had (copilot) Jeff (Skiles) and I been fatigued, we could not have performed at that level.''

The legendary landing on the frigid Hudson—caused by a bird strike the crippled the plane's engines after takeoff from LaGuardia Airport—is something he still thinks about constantly, he said.

''I get daily reminders of that remarkable day. So many people rose to the occasion—the crew, all the rescue workers,'' he said. ''It was the result of the efforts of many people, but I've become the public face.''

Asked about Warner Bros planned release of ''Sully'' this September—a movie based on his autobiography ''Highest Duty''—Sullenberger, 65, said he's grateful for all the continued attention.

''I'm doing very well. I've been saying that for a long time. If I was not doing well, it would be my own fault. I get to travel the world, meet world leaders and leaders in the fields of health, technology,'' and of course Hollywood, he said.

''It's really been a fascinating education.''

[From The Hill, April 12, 2016]

DEMS WANT PILOT-REST PROVISION IN FAA BILL

(By Melanie Zanona)

Senate Democrats want to grant cargo pilots the same rest standards as passenger pilots as a provision of a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill.

Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) are leading the fight to attach an amendment to the FAA bill that would limit cargo plane pilots to flying no more than nine hours a day—the same standard for passenger pilots. Cargo pilots can currently fly up to 16 hours a day.

Captain Chesley ''Sully'' Sullenberger, the retired airline captain who safely executed an emergency landing in the Hudson River in 2009, is also backing the provision. He was spotted talking to members about the amendment in the Senate basement after a Tuesday press conference.

''Fatigue is a killer,'' Sullenberger said at the press conference. ''It's time to right this wrong. It's time to fix this rule.''

Boxer said she would filibuster the FAA bill if the pilot provision does not get a vote.

''I think this is an absurdity to block a vote on something as important at this,'' she said.

The comments come amid growing concern that pet interests could bog down the entire FAA bill, including a push to include renewable energy tax breaks. The agency's current legal authority expires July 15.

''There are other problems with the bill that people are weighing as well, so I think this bill has a very shaky future,'' Boxer added.

Boxer and Klobuchar first crafted legislation to make sure passenger and cargo crews had the same flight- and duty-time requirements after the Department of Transportation (DOT) wrote new rules to address pilot fatigue following a deadly passenger airline crash in 2009.

The DOT standards require passenger pilots to be limited to flying either eight or nine hours, with a minimum of 10 rest hours and the opportunity for at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep. But cargo pilots were not included in the rules.

''This doesn't make sense,'' Boxer said Tuesday. ''It's dangerous.''

A group of shipping companies wrote a letter to Senate leadership explaining why they thought the amendment ''could actually make our operations less safe and put our pilots at risk.''

''Measures used to prevent fatigue must be different for passenger carriers than they are for cargo carriers because our work schedules are different,'' wrote FedEx, UPS, ABX Air and Atlas Air.

''We fly fewer legs, have longer layovers, and have better rest opportunities on our trips, including while technically 'on duty' waiting for our nightly sorts to occur.''

Boxer beat back against the letter, accusing special interests of intervening.

''The proof is in the pudding,'' Boxer said. ''Special interests are doing what they always do: trying to get a deal.''

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Here it is. This one in The Hill is quoting Captain Sullenberger:

''Fatigue is a killer''. . . . ''It's time to right this wrong. It's time to fix this rule.''

Here is another quote in the New York Daily News, with a picture of Captain Sullenberger saying:

''This is not a partisan issue, it is a science-based commonsense issue.''

He said cargo pilots generally fly at night and deserve the same sleep standards already guaranteed to passenger pilots—flights limited to eight or nine hours and minimum of 10-hour rest periods.

''It is really just flat wrong (to exclude cargo pilots). They're the ones who need it most. They have their natural circadian rhythms disrupted the most.''

Just standing next to the guy was a thrill for me. Captain Sullenberger told the News:

''If you're home in the evening when hundreds of cargo airplanes are flying overhead, it doesn't matter if those planes are carrying people or packages. It matters that their pilots are alert enough to do their job safely,'' the retired U.S. Airways captain said.

Do you know what Sullenberger said? He said that ''it's doubtful he and his

crew could have landed U.S. Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009—saving all 155 souls—if they were deprived of sleep.''

Look, we can all put ourselves in a situation, whether we are young—and the young can take lack of sleep a lot better. As we age, it is tougher. I used to take the redeye all the time, and I can state that I felt it for days. Do we want to have a pilot in a circumstance where he or she is sleep deprived and they find themselves in an emergency? I don't think so. None other than Sullenberger said that he is doubtful he and his crew could have landed that flight if they were sleep deprived.

He said again—this is in another article from the Daily News. He said:

''I get daily reminders of that remarkable day. So many people rose to the occasion—the crew, all the rescue workers,'' he said. ''It was the result of the efforts of many people, but I've become the public face . . . and had I been fatigued, we could not have performed at that level.''

This is the classic case of a no-brainer. The people who fly the airplanes are telling us that fatigue is a killer. They are telling us in a circumstance of emergencies that they will not be able to function.

We have an opportunity to fix it, but we don't have a vote right now. We don't have a vote. As I understand it, we might have a vote, but they may then say to vote on two other issues that are poison pill issues. That is the way it goes around here.

Someday I am going to write a book called ''How a Bill Really Becomes a Law.'' The truth is that is how it goes around here. If one wants to vote on something, then they say: Swallow a porcupine, and maybe we will give you a vote.

Now here is another one. ''Miracle on the Hudson Pilot Pushes More Rest for Cargo Crews.'' He and I are standing there, and all I am saying is:

We just need a vote on this, and you know if people want to come down in the well and vote the wrong way on safety, then they have shown themselves . . . [but], frankly, they are putting the lives of people at risk.

And I am asking for a vote. Again, Sully Sullenberger is quoted:

''Let me be very direct: Fatigue is a killer. . . . It's a ruthless indiscriminate killer that our industry and our regulators have allowed to continue killing for way too long.''

This is not partisan. I have a Democratic administration who did the wrong thing on this. I have a Republican Senate that is not giving me a vote on this. Come on. When people die in an airplane crash, we don't know if they are Democrats or Republicans; we just know we cry our hearts out for the families.

I am going to show you the crashed plane again. This is what happens when there is fatigue. This is what can happen. There have been many of these crashes because the pilots are flying on 5 hours of sleep.

All I am asking for is a vote. Give us a vote. If you want to vote it down, vote it down. You will be judged. That is OK. That is your problem, not mine.

I want to praise Senator KLOBUCHAR, who is the coauthor of this amendment. She was very effective in her comments both in the committee and at the presser yesterday.

Sullenberger, the ''Hero of the Hudson,'' said this in this other article:

''This rule was written the way it was, not for scientific reasons, but for economic ones, by those who are more concerned about an additional burden that they consider an additional cost. It's time to right this wrong. It's time to fix this rule.''

You know, those of us who have been around a long time remember the Ford Pinto. That car exploded when there was a crash. I think a lot of us remember it. When discovery was done by the attorneys for the victims, they found out the cold and calculating ways the corporation viewed these accidents and losses of life. Oh, they said, we can stand X number of accidents a year, no problem, because we have insurance. It will not affect us. But, gee, it will cost us X number of dollars to fix the problem.

What could be more callous? What could be more cold? It is the same thing here. It is the companies.

Do you know what is fascinating? The airlines that now operate under the 9-hour rule—I will put up the chart that shows the two planes with the different times. The airlines that now fly their pilots up to 9 hours a day, compared to the cargo plane owners who permit their pilots to work up to 16 hours a day, they—the airline industry is doing great. They never said word one of a problem. They had rested pilots, they had happier crews, and they are doing fine. So why is it that we get letters from the corporations that fly these planes—God forbid we should tell them to give their pilots rest.

I want to tell you who is on our side. The Southwest Airlines Pilot Association—this thrills me—just sent us a letter:

On behalf of the more than 8,000 pilots—

This is actually to Senator THUNE—

I urge you to include Senator Barbara Boxer's Safe Skies Act in the FAA reauthorization.

They say:

It fixes a huge safety gap that exists in our air transportation today.

They talk about the Colgan Air crash in 2009. We took action to fix the problem on passenger planes, but it was inexplicable that it was left out of the cargo planes.

As pilots, they say safety is their No. 1 priority.

They say:

''We cannot do our job if we are not all held to the same safety standard. A tired and fatigued pilot is a danger to everyone in their path.''

That is the point. These passenger pilots are rested; the cargo pilots are fatigued. They fly in the same sky, in the same airspace. They try to land at the same airports. Having this disparity is a nightmare.

They say:

''Please, do not let another tragedy be the reason for action. This is your chance to fix the cargo carve-out and ensure safe skies in this nation.''

I thank these pilots for weighing in on this issue. It means a lot to me that they did it.

The Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations talks about the Klobuchar amendment, which is this amendment, and they ask us to please allow this vote.

They say:

''We cannot continue operating with two levels of safety and we sincerely hope you are able to fix the cargo carve-out once and for all.'' We urge your support for this amendment.

I thank so much Captain Michael Karn, president of the Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations.

You know, I want to say to my colleagues who might be listening from their offices: We get on planes all the time. We have 100-percent faith in the pilot. We all do. They have the responsibility of getting us to our families safely. Every single pilots association is saying to us: Fix this carve-out. It is dangerous.

Any of us could be on a passenger plane just doing great with the rested pilot, and somehow a cargo plane crashes into us because that pilot had 5 hours of sleep.

So we have all of these letters from the Independent Pilots Association, the Allied Pilots Association, the International Brothers of Teamsters, Teamsters Local 1224, Teamsters Local 357. They are all saying the same thing: We cannot do our job if we are not all held to the same safety standard. A tired and fatigued pilot is a danger to everyone. Don't let another tragedy be the reason for action.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD two letters I have referred to.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COALITION OF AIRLINE PILOTS ASSOCIATIONS,
Washington, DC, March 31, 2016.

Hon. JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. BILL NELSON,
Ranking Member, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THUNE AND RANKING MEMBER NELSON: I am writing you today on behalf of 28,000 professional airline pilots in support of the Klobuchar Amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill. As you know, during the committee mark-up Senator Klobuchar respectfully withdrew consideration of her amendment with the hope and committee leadership would work with her to solve what is known as the cargo carve-out.

As you are aware, Congress passed legislation in 2010 following the deadly 2009 Colgan Air Flight 3407 crash that claimed the lives of 45 passengers, 4 crew members and 1 individual on the ground. As the details of the pilots' lack of training and fatigue came to light, the American public demanded that more be done to ensure safety in our skies.

Congress heard these concerns and included a requirement in the 2010 FAA reauthorization that the Department of Transportation promulgate rules on pilot duty and rest hours to prevent fatigue and ensure flights are safely operated by pilots with adequate rest.

As well-intended as those rules were, somehow through a cost benefit analysis and other inexplicable changes to the original rules as proposed, cargo pilots were carved out of these new regulations, apparently because it was too costly to ensure cargo pilots had adequate rest.

Time and time again we see tragic, and avoidable, plane crashes where fatigue is one of the factors contributing to, or out right to blame, for these accidents. In fact, the National Transportation Safety Board listed preventing fatigue related accidents as their number one most wanted improvement in transportation safety for 2016, citing a 2013 UPS plane crash in Birmingham, Alabama as an example.

When the FAA reauthorization legislation reaches the Senate floor for debate, we urge you to use this opportunity to protect your constituents and all Americans across this country. Please do not wait until faced with another tragic accident to address this issue.

We cannot continue operating with two levels of safety and we sincerely hope you are able to fix the cargo carve-out once and for all. We urge your support for the Safe Skies Act and Senator Klobuchar's amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important aviation safety issue.

Sincerely,

Captain D. MICHAEL KARN,
President.

APRIL 8, 2016.

Hon. JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. BILL NELSON,
Ranking Member, Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THUNE AND RANKING MEMBER NELSON: We the undersigned unions representing more than 30,000 pilots across the United States urge you to include Senator Barbara Boxer's Safe Skies Act in the 2016 FAA Reauthorization currently before the full Senate.

Senator Boxer's bill, S.A. 3489, fixes a huge safety gap in our air transportation system today. After the Colgan Air crash in 2009, Congress took action to prevent future tragedies mandating that the Department of Transportation issue science-based regulations addressing pilot fatigue in our nation's airlines. After substantial research and review of undisputed scientific evidence on sleep cycles and fatigue, the draft rules created a new set of requirements related to duty and rest time for all pilots.

Ignoring these irrefutable facts and the recommendations from safety experts, the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs removed all references to cargo airlines from the final rules suggesting that a cost of imposing this safety regulation did not outweigh the benefits to the public. Or more simply stated, preventing the death of two pilots and the loss of some cargo does not exceed the cost to a corporation to change their pilots' schedules.

As pilots, safety is our number one focus. Rather than argue and dispute the details of the process that created the cargo carve-out, we are more interested in fixing the problem. When we are behind the controls of an airplane trying to get from point A to point B, we do not think about the costs or the benefits of what we do in the cockpit. Our work before, during and after our flights is 100% focused ensuring safety. Our lives depend on it, the lives of those on our planes depend on it and certainly the lives of those who see us flying overhead depend on our commitment to safety.

We cannot do our job if we are not all held to the same safety standards. A tired and fatigued pilot is a danger to everyone in their path. Please do not let another tragedy be the reason for action. This is your chance to fix the cargo carve-out and ensure safe skies in this nation.

Sincerely,

Captain KEITH WILSON,
President, Allied Pilots Association.
Captain ROBERT TRAVIS,
President, Independent Pilots Association.
Captain DAVID BOURNE,
Director, Airline Division, International Brotherhood of Teamsters.
Captain DANIEL WELLS,
President, Teamsters Local 1224.
Captain JAMES CLARK,
President, Teamsters Local 357.

Mrs. BOXER. I know people are saying: BARBARA, why are you being so tough and not letting us vote on other things?

I have to say this: If we don't use this occasion to fix a problem that is listed as the No. 1 safety issue by the NTSB, and we can do it in 2 minutes—I have spoken my piece. You know, one of my staffers said she explained to her 6-year-old child what the issue is because he is always interested in what she is working on. She said: Jacob, the fact is, the planes are the same size, and the man who is flying this one and the lady flying this one get different hours of rest.

I see that my friend from Florida, the great ranking member of the Commerce Committee, might want to ask a question.

Mr. NELSON. Will the Senator yield?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, I will.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for yielding. I just want to bring to the Senator's attention that I am very hopeful that we are getting an agreement that there will be a vote on the Senator's amendment and some other amendments. I thought the Senator would be happy to hear the news that it looks as if we are coming to an agreement where there will be a vote on the Senator's amendment.

Mrs. BOXER. Well, if I could respond through the Chair, the words of my colleague are very hopeful. I just hope it is not tied to some poison pills that other people have a problem with. You never know around here what is going to happen. In my view—and I know the Senator shares it because I know his passion is with me on this—the fact is, this should be an up-or-down vote. It should not be related to other things. It is the No. 1 safety issue of the NTSB.

My friend from Florida is like a brother to me, and we counsel each other on issues on which we have some expertise. I know he is in there fighting to get a vote. I am so grateful to him. I have added a whole bunch of support for this.

I will close at this point because I think my friend has given me some hope. I am going to close reading the recording. I don't know—I ask Senator NELSON, did you ever hear this? I want to make sure you did. This will take just a moment. This is from the excerpt from the flight deck before a plane went down:

Pilot 1: I mean, I don't get that. You know, it should be one level for everybody.

These are words from the grave.

Pilot 2: It makes no sense at all.

Pilot 1: No, it doesn't.

Pilot 2: To be honest, it should be across the board. To be honest, in my opinion, whether you are flying passengers or cargo, if you are flying this time of day, you know fatigue is definitely—

Pilot 1: Yeah, yeah.

Pilot 2: When my alarm went off, I mean, I'm thinking I'm so tired.

Pilot 1: I know.

Now, when this happened, I thought for sure that our administration would take care of this and change that rule. They didn't. That is why we are here.

I wanted everyone to know this: Sometimes it is hard to look at something like this, but it is harder to look at the final result of what happened from fatigue. This is what happened within minutes of that conversation. People could not function. Captain Sullenberger said it well: Fatigue is a killer.

We could fix it here today. We fixed it—Olympia Snowe and I—years ago for passenger aircraft. We need to fix it for cargo pilots. They deserve our support and the support of people who rely on them—all of us—because they share the sky with the passenger aircraft. We need to fix this.

I thank the Senator from Florida.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Georgia.

IRAN

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an issue that we too often forget about here after the fact. We move on to the next topic of the day. But it was just 1 year ago, on April 2, that actually marked the framework for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the President's nuclear deal with Iran. That was the day

it was announced. We were promised by this administration at all levels that this nuclear agreement would make the world a safer place. I have traveled the world quite a bit in the last year. I just got back from another trip to the Middle East. I believe the world possibly is more dangerous right now than at any time in my lifetime.

Unfortunately, the message that the world is safer did not resonate with Iran. The world was given a false promise that this nuclear deal would serve as a catalyst for change and a moderation within Iran. We have seen change, but it has only been for the worse. Iran is both enriched and emboldened by this dangerous deal. The President's deal provided Iran with over an estimated $100 billion, approximately, windfall.

The Secretary said just this January that Iran ''had massive needs within their country and we, the U.S., will be able to track where this money is going, what is happening with it.'' But instead of focusing these funds inward, as we were assured, on improving the lives of their people, Iran has chosen to use the money to bolster its conventional forces and cyber capabilities, to strengthen its proxies, to crack down on its own people, and to further destabilize the region.

Iran has test-launched four ballistic missiles since the nuclear deal was announced. Most recently, these missiles were launched with the words ''Death to Israel'' emblazoned on their side. The most recently launched missiles were more advanced, by the way, precision-guided and more sophisticated.

Iran has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. They continue in developing space-launch vehicles as well that are a transparent guise for seeking longer range missile capability.

Iran humiliated and detained at gunpoint U.S. Navy sailors, in violation of international law.

According to American officials, Iran is using cyber espionage and cyber attacks as a tool of influence with Iranian hackers, breaking into email and social media accounts of employees of our very own State Department who worked on Iran-related issues.

Iran used American hostages for strategic and economic leverage from this administration, only turning over innocent Americans when the administration freed 7 Iranian sanctions violators and dismissed charges on 14 other Iranians, including 2 men who helped transfer soldiers and weapons to the Assad regime and to the terror group Hezbollah.

Iran continues to spend millions to support the Houthi insurgency that is contributing to the security vacuum in Yemen. Just last week, the U.S. Navy confiscated another weapons cache from the Arabian Sea believed to be en route from Iran to Yemen in support of the Houthis. This shipment included about 1,500 Kalashnikov rifles, 200 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and 21 .50-caliber machine guns. That would be bad enough if it were the only one, but this is the fourth such seizure in the region just since September of last year. I think it is very clear what Iranian intentions are with regard to the rebels in Yemen and also to the terrorists of Hezbollah, Hamas, and others in the region.

According to the State Department, Iran continues to be the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. That is our own State Department. In its quest to dominate the Middle East and expel American influence, Iran has exploited terrorism as a tool of statecraft to oppose U.S. interests and objectives in Iraq, Bahrain, Lebanon, and Palestinian territories. Iran continues to spend an estimated $6 billion a year in support of Bashar al-Assad in Syria and millions of dollars and materiel to Hezbollah and Hamas.

On a recent trip to the Middle East just a few weeks ago, I heard these concerns from our friends and allies in the region firsthand. Iran's domestic repression has also gotten worse. The crackdown on dissent is at its worst since the 2009 Green Movement, according to the NGOs. Iran continues to imprison those who disagree with the mullahs and imprisons those who are at odds with the regime. Executions are at their highest level since 1989. Further, the regime disqualified thousands of reformist candidates in its recently held parliamentary elections.

When you look at the facts, it is clear the Middle East, and I would argue the world, is potentially worse off since the signing of the President's nuclear deal. What are we doing about it? I think that is the question the American people should keep their eyes on. According to Secretary Kerry, ''Iran deserves the benefits of this agreement that they struck.''

Despite the four ballistic missile launches, the administration will not call them a violation of U.N. Security Council resolution 2231. This is the resolution that includes the nuclear deal, arms embargo, and ballistic missile prohibitions. Just last week, Ambassador Shannon, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, told the Foreign Relations Committee that he believes these ballistic missile tests ''violated the intent'' of the U.N. Security Council resolution but would not call it a violation. I am troubled by that. Iran's ever-increasing support for terrorism and instability is going essentially unchecked. This is no way to handle a rogue regime. Instead, we need to take a tougher stance on Iran now that we see their intentions postdeal.

On ballistic missile violations, we must go beyond the President's designation of 11 individuals and companies for the ballistic missile launches. The Iranians pay for that technology somehow. Yet no financial institution was sanctioned for this transaction. The technology arrived in Iran by boat or by plane. Yet no shipping line or airline or any logistics firm was included in the sanctions.

We need to codify sectoral sanctions on Iran for ballistic missiles and impose tougher standards for mandatory sanctions, including acquisition or development of ballistic missiles as activity requiring sanctions. We need to show Iran we are serious about stopping their continued support of terrorism and human rights violations. We should impose stricter sanctions on the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps for their support of terrorism. We need to freeze assets owned by the IRGC, its members, and its affiliates. We should codify Executive Order 13599 which prohibits Iran's direct and indirect access to the U.S. financial system. We need to improve new sanctions against Iran as a money-laundering entity for terrorist groups and for its human rights abuses.

We need to reauthorize the Iran sanctions act. This vital legislation, which is one of the most important linchpins in U.S. sanctions architecture on Iran, is due to expire at the end of this very year. Without the authorization of ISA, the Iran sanctions act, the threat of snapback for Iranian violations of the nuclear deal doesn't carry much weight. We need to have these sanctions reauthorized so we can use them swiftly in the event of any future Iranian violation. President Obama has already admitted that Iran has violated the spirit of the nuclear agreement.

Finally, we must ensure that Israel is able to maintain its qualitative military edge—this is a standard that we have upheld for many years—and equip our gulf allies against increased Iranian aggression from proxies.

Iran's behavior over the past year has proven they are not worthy of the trust bestowed upon them by this administration. While the administration refuses to admit reality, Congress must hold Iran's feet to the fire to get a stronger U.S. policy toward Iran. We cannot afford to give this rogue regime the benefit of the doubt any longer.

Iran refuses to be an honest actor. It is clear from Iranian actions, just since the nuclear deal was announced, that they have not changed their behavior on missile testing, human rights violations, or support for terrorism. Our policies must change to reflect the dangerous reality.

The Obama administration should work with Congress to strengthen our sanctions, reauthorize the Iran sanctions act, and stand up to Iran's total disregard for international restrictions and the original intent of this nuclear deal.

The world is a very dangerous place. Iran needs to see a strong America stand up and lead again in the region. On this recent trip, the question we asked most of these leaders was: What do we need to do as America? The No. 1 answer by these heads of State was universal: America needs to lead again.

We have created these power vacuums. It is time now to close this one with Iran.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELCOMING TEAM 26 FROM NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, the Senate has remarkable, even magic moments. Yesterday was one such time for my colleague from Connecticut and me. Senator MURPHY and I had the great honor and privilege to again welcome Team 26 from Newtown, CT, at the end of a truly extraordinary journey—their fourth bike ride from Newtown—to commemorate and remember the 26 beautiful children and educators who were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

This incredibly searing and horrific moment in the life of our State in December of 2012 was marked by their first journey 3 years ago. This one was their fourth ride through rough roads and tough traffic, and snow and rain across the Northeast as they pedaled—literally pedaled—to Washington, DC, from Newtown.

We said goodbye to them on Saturday morning in some pretty cold weather. I was there. They braved some fierce storms to be here, but the memory they carried with them and the resolve and resilience they showed truly epitomizes the spirit of Sandy Hook and its wonderful people who not only survived that unspeakable tragedy of December 2012 but also showed America a lesson with acts of kindness, unceasing advocacy, resilience, resolve, and—most importantly—a message of peace, love, and hope.

I wear still on my wrist a bracelet I received then. Its lettering is worn out, so it is no longer readable, but it is that same message of hope, peace, and love they brought with them as they traveled here.

Today a number of them came to the Capitol. I was proud to greet them with their leader, Monte Frank, who organized that first ride. He is responsible for the extraordinary leadership in keeping that together and keeping them going over those rough roads.

With us at the Capitol today were Peter Olsen, Andrea Myers, Drew Cunningham, and Ken Eisner. They are among the 26 riders who came to Washington yesterday, met with us outside the House of Representatives, then went to the White House and met with officials there—including Valerie Jarrett—and eventually with the Vice President of the United States, Mr. BIDEN.

The members of Team 26 chose to ride to Washington, DC, not only for their personal reasons but to deliver a petition with a very clear message that guns have no place on campuses. They have no place on school grounds. They have no safety reason to be there. In fact, they aggravate the danger of firearms and other kinds of peril on school property. They also ride on behalf of commonsense, sensible measures that can be achieved—and we have an obligation to achieve. That is what they said to us as we met with them in front of the Capitol yesterday.

Their message was that we can save lives, that we can work together. We can get things done across the aisle, on a bipartisan basis, to do what 90 percent of the American people want, which are universal background checks to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people and criminals, making sure gun trafficking is a Federal crime and that straw purchases are against Federal law, ensuring that fewer guns get into the hands of dangerous people, particularly domestic abusers. When domestic abuse is combined with a gun in the home, death is five times as likely.

This message ought to also include limiting the use of high-capacity magazines that can prevent all kinds of terrible rampages with assault weapons that have become all too prevalent in this country. Providing protection when temporary restraining orders are issued in domestic violence cases can help some of the most vulnerable members of our society, victims of domestic abuse, at a time when they need it most, and making sure the gun-manufacturing industry is not given an exemption from liability that every other industry has to defend against when it breaks the law. PLCCA ought to be repealed, and I have introduced legislation that would do it.

This problem of gun violence affects all of us—not just through the mass shootings and massacres that occurred, such as Sandy Hook, but 30,000 deaths every year. Many of them are suicides, preventable, senseless, and avoidable if we take action to tackle the problem of gun violence in this country. That is the message of the riders who braved those storms, who traveled those rough roads, and reminds us that Congress has been complicit in these deaths by its failure to act. Congress is complicit in gun violence and its deadly toll in this country.

Monte Frank is a Sandy Hook resident who was one of the founders and leaders of Team 26. He rode here again this year and has ridden every year. I am proud he is a friend. He recently wrote:

> Team 26 will ride again because we promised the families in Sandy Hook that we would continue to honor their lost loved ones. We made the same promise to the many victims' families we have met since then in Baltimore; Bridgeport, Conn.; Harlem, N.Y.; and the District of Columbia. While we established Team 26 for Sandy Hook, Team 26 could just as easily be named for the victims of gun violence in Chicago on a given weekend. In fact, gun violence is so prevalent that we could be called Team 26,000 and that number would fall short of the number of gun deaths each year in America.

I have with me the petition they brought here, but more important, I am here to tell my colleagues we must act. We must cease our complicity in this body. If tens of thousands of people in this country were infected with Ebola or the Zika virus or the flu, there would be drastic and urgent action to meet that public health crisis. The epidemic of gun violence in this country is no less a public health crisis. It is equally an epidemic, and it can be stopped. It must be stopped.

I want to close with the words of Dennis Niez of Bethlehem, CT. Dennis rode here with Team 26 and wrote the following, entitled ''Why I Ride.''

> I ride for the kids who will never know the joy of riding a bike, the feeling of freedom, the visits of their best friends to their house. All of it taken away in a split second with a firearm left loaded in the same house where they're supposed to feel safe.
>
> I ride because the same people who have serious mental health issues are able to purchase deadly firearms without a background check because of a loophole.
>
> I ride because the same people who have a temporary restraining order because of domestic violence are sometimes able to keep a deadly firearm.
>
> I ride so our elected officials, regardless of affiliation, will feel shame when they look at themselves for not doing enough to keep guns away from people who should not have them.
>
> I ride because kids in the U.S. are nine times more likely to die from a gunshot than in any other western country.
>
> I ride because Dawn Hochsprung was my kid's principal in Bethlehem, CT, someone they will always remember. She was a friend to all the kids.
>
> I ride because doing nothing won't make the problems go away.

On that beautiful, sunny day yesterday, as remarkable and magic a time as it was, I thought of all those Sun-filled days that those 20 beautiful children and 6 great educators will never have and that others also will be deprived of having because Congress is failing to act. We must act, and I hope we will act and carry with us in our hearts always the message of Team 26.

I am proud to yield to my colleague and partner in this effort, Senator CHRIS MURPHY of Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I thank very much my colleague Senator

BLUMENTHAL. I want to associate myself with all the remarks of my colleague from Connecticut.

Let me congratulate the riders from Team 26 for making it through such inclement weather, making it through such a challenging ride to bring these messages to the Halls of Congress and to the White House.

It strikes me that there are similarities between this ride and the challenges ahead of us. Every tough ride is a long stretch of both peaks and valleys. The challenge is knowing there is another hill coming before you and not giving up, knowing that at the end of that long ride, there is reward.

When we talk about the scope of our fight to change the laws of this country to try to put a dent in this epidemic of gun violence, we have to view our journey the same way. There are going to be peaks and there are going to be valleys. There will be moments of triumph where we change the laws for the better, where we see progress, as we have in Connecticut, where a new State law has resulted in a 40-percent diminution in the number of gun homicides. Then there are the valleys—moments like we had here in early 2013, where despite 90 percent of Americans supporting the idea that you should prove you are not a criminal before you buy a gun, we weren't able to pass that law because of a filibuster here. Every great change is defined not only by failures but by peaks and valleys, as was their ride. I join Senator BLUMENTHAL in thanking them for focusing on this particular issue of guns on campuses.

It is up to every individual as to whether they choose to buy a firearm, but they should make that decision imbued by the facts. And the facts are pretty clear that if you have a firearm in your home, it is much more likely to be used to kill you or to kill a family member than it is to kill an intruder, to kill someone trying to do harm to you.

Nancy Lanza had guns in the home for a variety of reasons, but one of the reasons, apparently, was that as a single parent, she wanted firearms for protection. Of course, her guns were used to kill her and then 20 small first graders and their teachers. Similarly, on campuses, the data tells us that in areas that have more guns, you are more likely to have higher rates of gun homicides. This fiction that if you just arm all the good guys, they will kill all the bad guys is not actually how it plays out in real life.

So I thank them for bringing these petitions here to shed focus on this movement to make sure we don't have students walking around campuses with concealed weapons. That doesn't make for a safer campus environment.

Lastly because I know others want to speak, I want to talk about two things that struck me from our meeting at the White House at the end of the day yesterday. The first was when all the riders on Team 26 got to tell their stories about why they decided to join this ride. Many of them, frankly, were doing it for deep love and affection for Monte Frank, but they all shared a common cause with him. Around that table were individuals who had suffered gun violence in their immediate family. One woman's son committed suicide shortly after the murders in Sandy Hook. Another husband and wife lost close friends in a mass shooting. But many of the individuals who were there were simply there because they had children who were in school, and they knew that there but by the grace of God, it could be their child.

I have a first grader I drop off every morning at school, and I know there is nothing different about my child's school than Sandy Hook Elementary School. And I think about Nicole Hockley almost every morning when I drop off my 7-year-old. She said she never imagined that it would be her, and she doesn't know why more parents don't step up and try to do something about this before it is their child.

The second thing I was struck by was their experience along the road. They noted that in over 4 years, they haven't run into anybody who has disagreed with their mission or who has given them a hard time about their advocacy. And that is really not surprising given the fact there is broad consensus among the American public as to what we should do.

There really is no disagreement in any of our States—regardless of geography, race, or political ideology—on whether we should make sure that criminals don't buy guns, make sure that people who have a serious mental illness can't get their hands on firearms. This appears to be controversial and politically toxic, the way we talk about it, but the way it is talked about on the Main Streets that Team 26 rode down, it is not controversial at all. It is a settled issue: Criminals shouldn't buy guns. And there is no justification, in most Americans' minds, for a Federal law that today, on average, allows for four of six guns to be sold without a criminal background check. They want the law changed. We shouldn't pretend this issue is politically controversial. It might be amidst lobbying circles in Washington, but it is not in the communities Team 26 rode through, and they can tell you that because they were cheered everywhere they went.

It is no small feat to organize this ride. It makes a difference in the communities in which they do events, the communities through which they ride, and it will ultimately make a difference here. Every great movement for change is a long journey made worthwhile at the end when, after you have ridden up lots of hills and down into valleys, you end up at the finish line.

I thank Team 26 for their work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, while my friend from Connecticut is on the floor, let me say that I have been here long enough now to realize it is hard to change things with just a speech. Indeed, it is hard to change things by just voting up or down on bills. The way we actually solve problems is by trying to find consensus.

I know the Senator from Connecticut and I have different views on the Second Amendment, and that may be because there are different views around the country based on our experiences and the culture in which we were raised. I realize that in urban areas, particularly in the Northeast, the idea of people being raised around guns as a sort of way of life for recreation and self-defense and the like is just not their experience, but in other parts of the country—where the Presiding Officer lives and where I live—it is, and people feel very strongly about their rights under the Second Amendment.

There is a common ground here, and the Senator from Connecticut and I have talked about this, and that has to do with the mental health issue, where I hope we can find that consensus because as long as we are talking past each other, we are never going to resolve any of these issues, and I do think there is some common ground. In the end, a gun is an inanimate object. The fact is, if we continue to ignore the fact that mental illness is very often a factor in acts of gun violence, I think we are going to continue to talk past each other.

As the Senator and I have discussed, I actually have a bill that I have introduced—the safer cities and mental health reform bill—which includes a provision allowing people like Adam Lanza's mother to go to court and get a civil court order that would mandate that Adam Lanza take his prescribed anti-psychotic drugs.

I don't know in this instance if it would have changed the course of events, but I do know it would have given Adam Lanza's mother—whom he murdered, and he stole her guns and then killed these poor, innocent children at Sandy Hook—an additional tool and may have just possibly averted the tragedy.

I know there are many families in America today who would welcome additional tools by which they could then help loved ones become compliant with their doctors' orders to take their medication and become productive people.

There is a gentleman named Pete Earley whom I know the Senator knows and who has testified here often. He is a journalist, but he wrote a book

called ''Crazy.'' It is a book about his son's experience, who had mental illness. It is not about his son. The title is not for his son. It is about the so-called system that fails people like Pete Earley's son because it doesn't provide the options they need in order to deal with their mental illness.

So I do think there are ways we can work together, but as long as we just keep making speeches to our respective constituents back home, we are never going to do that.

I know we are working on the mental health issue now, and I would just say to my colleague: I am more than happy to try to find some common ground on this issue because I do think we need to improve the background check system for people who are adjudicated mentally ill, such as the shooter at Virginia Tech. This was a failure of the current system, where the Virginia law did not require that this mental health adjudication be uploaded into the background check system and then this terrible tragedy occurred.

There are things we can do to improve the current background check system. There are things we can do to arm parents and families with new tools to help their mentally ill loved ones and maybe, just maybe, change the course of some of these incidents of mass violence, which are a terrible tragedy. So I make that offer.

I know the Senator is not ready to cosponsor my legislation as currently written, but I would invite him to take a copy of it, mark through in a pencil the things he doesn't like and can't live with and give me what he can live with, and then we can perhaps begin that conversation.

I thank the Senator for listening.

BANKRUPTCY, NOT BAILOUTS BILL

Mr. President, I came to speak on the FAA bill, the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill, but I first want to commend our colleagues in the House for passing some important legislation yesterday called the ''Bankruptcy, Not Bailouts'' bill—a bill that will put to rest once and for all the concept that it is somehow the taxpayers' responsibility to bail out financial institutions when they fail, putting our financial system in jeopardy. Of course, the idea of too big to fail was an unfair and, I think, an erroneous concept made part of the law in the Dodd-Frank legislation that prioritizes large financial institutions over the needs of American families.

We need to do everything we can to protect taxpayers from having been called upon to bail out banks. We need to let banks go bankrupt and use existing laws to restructure their debt and then to get back on track. So this is actually a very important step in the right direction.

I commend Chairman HENSARLING in the House of Representatives for passing this important piece of legislation. It is similar to legislation that I have introduced here in the Senate with Senator TOOMEY, the junior Senator from Pennsylvania, and I hope we can move forward soon.

I have one other interjection on the whole idea of bankruptcy versus bailouts. I read in the press and I hear from some of our colleagues in the House that they think the bankruptcy laws are somehow a bailout. It is the antithesis of a bailout. It is the opposite of a bailout because what it does is it authorizes a court of law under established rules and laws to restructure the debt of the bankrupt person or business. In doing so, it allows them to get it behind them and then to get on and continue to live a productive life as an individual or to deal with a productive business if you are a business.

But the idea that somehow taking advantage of the bankruptcy laws is a taxpayer bailout is flat wrong. I hope our colleagues in the House have the courage, particularly as we look at the Puerto Rico situation, to realize that at some point, unless we act in the House and the Senate to deal with the impending crisis in Puerto Rico, unless we act in advance of that crisis, we are going to be presented with an emergency situation, and we are going to be asked to bail out Puerto Rico using taxpayer dollars, and I want none of that.

I think all of us who were here during the financial crisis in 2008 would say the same thing: We want none of that. So let's do our work, whether it is ending too big to fail for large financial institutions or dealing with the impending bankruptcy and financial crisis in Puerto Rico.

Mr. President, to the topic of the day, for the past few days we have been working on this legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. Chairman THUNE of the Commerce Committee and his staff have been doing some good work and making a lot of progress toward completing the bill. I hope that cooperation continues and that we are able to conclude this legislation tomorrow.

This legislation would do some very important things. It would streamline critical new investments in airport infrastructure and aviation safety to protect passengers and to help them get where they need to go more efficiently. It would also include the most comprehensive airline security reforms since President Obama took office. For example, it strengthens the vetting process for airport employees and addresses a growing number of cyber security threats facing aviation and air navigation system.

Most important of all, it puts American consumers and safety first. It does so without raising taxes or adding fees to customers that feel like a tax. You may call it a fee. But if it costs money, it really doesn't feel any different than a tax.

I would also like to point out the benefits to States like mine, Texas. It protects air traffic partnerships that supports dozens of Texas airports and directly responds to requests that I have gotten from Texas communities looking for new opportunities to improve regional air traffic management or expand service in order to meet demand—all crucial measures that help Texas communities move people and goods safely through airports.

I have introduced an amendment to this legislation with the two Arizona Senators and the junior Senator from Nevada, Mr. HELLER, that would do even more to help our ports of entry by strengthening public-private partnerships at air, land, and sea ports. The fact of the matter is that financial resources—money—is always in short supply, and rather than always coming back to the taxpayer and saying you need to pay more, what we need to do is become more creative. That is why public-private partnerships are important.

Local communities are willing to join in a partnership with the Federal Government to deal with these critical infrastructure needs at land, air, and sea ports, and that is what this amendment would do.

We have already seen in my State time and again how important these partnerships can be to help reduce wait times at ports of entry—at the land-based ports of entry such as Laredo, which is the largest land-based port of entry in the United States. If you have ever been there, you have seen the trucks stacked up coming from Mexico. There is important trade that goes on between our two countries that supports 6 million jobs in the United States alone. But these public-private partnerships have been very successful in helping to deal with our infrastructure needs. It is not just about convenience. It has an economic impact as well.

I mentioned that the 6 million people who benefit because of their jobs depend on binational trade between the United States and Mexico. For example, according to one study, each minute a truck sits idle at the border waiting to come to the United States, even though they are legally authorized to come here to bring goods manufactured or produced in Mexico, more than $100 million in economic output is lost or forfeited.

Let me say that again. For every minute a truck sits at the border because we don't have the infrastructure to process the truck into the United States, more than $100 million in economic output is lost or forfeited.

So this amendment would authorize more of these partnerships, which would also facilitate staffing and better protect legitimate trade and travel and keep our economy running smoothly and keep jobs being created. I hope

my colleagues will consider this amendment and vote to build on the success of similar programs in the past, both in Texas and across the country.

I want to mention one last amendment, one introduced yesterday, as well, that would target the world's foremost sponsor of terrorism. That is the country of Iran. Mahan Air is Iran's largest commercial airline, and it has repeatedly played a role in exporting Iran's terrorism.

We all know Iran as being the No. 1 state sponsor of international terrorism, and Mahan Air is one of the ways they export that terrorism. We might call Mahan Air ''Terrorist Airways.'' That would perhaps be more precise. It not only supports the efforts of the Quds Force, a special unit of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard, but of another Iranian-backed terrorist group, Hezbollah.

To put it simply, Mahan Air enables the reach of Iranian personnel and weapons throughout the Middle East, as well as Iran's proxies, as the regime continues unabated to undercut the interests of the United States and our allies in the Middle East, such as Israel. Unfortunately, today Mahan Air is working to expand its international operations now that the Obama administration has lifted sanctions as part of the misguided Iran nuclear deal.

Mahan Air is expanding its operations and adding more international airports to its flight patterns, including several in Europe in an effort to increase its bottom line. Mahan Air's unfettered support of terrorism in the worst aspects of the Iranian regime should give us all pause. I am concerned about the security risks of Americans who fly in and out of the same airports serviced by a Mahan Air aircraft.

My amendment would require the Department of Homeland Security to compile and make public a list of airports where Mahan Air has recently landed. I think the public has a right to know that the airports they are flying into are being used to service an airline of the Iranian Government used to export terrorism. It would also require the Department of Homeland Security to assess what added security measures are needed. We must protect our country and our citizens from an airline that is complicit in terrorist activity.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this commonsense amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill to help shine a light on this bad actor.

I will close with this. Under new leadership, the 114th Congress has actually gotten the Senate back to work again. It is not just for the benefit of the majority party. It is not just for the benefit of the minority party. It is actually for the benefit of the constituents we serve, because they are the ones who benefit when we can try to work and find common ground and move legislation forward where we can find agreement, knowing that there are many areas where we will never find agreement because of fundamental principle differences of opinion. But this is another example of an important piece of legislation that will benefit the entire country. It definitely isn't a partisan piece of legislation. So it is something I am glad we have been able to move forward on, and I look forward to concluding this legislation tomorrow.

It is time we upgrade our air transportation system for the entire country, and it is time to put the safety of airline customers first. This bill does that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

AMERICA'S COAL INDUSTRY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about something very dear to me and to so many of my fellow Wyomingites, particularly those in Gillette, WY, where I used to be the mayor. It is the third largest town in Wyoming. It has 30,000 people. That would be a very small town to the rest of the Nation, but here is an effect it is having. This administration has made no secret about its continuous efforts to whittle away at America's coal industry. Well, very sadly, 2 weeks ago those efforts resulted in unprecedented layoffs, as two of Wyoming's biggest coal mines let go of 15 percent of their workforce. My wife and I were heartbroken to see these 456 miners suddenly out of work.

Besides the mines, there are railroad layoffs because that is how Wyoming coal is delivered to the other 40 States in the Nation. Outside of Gillette, there are 130 coal engines parked, not to mention trains. That means 1,200 railroad workers are out of jobs. Today, Peabody coal announced that they are filing chapter 11 bankruptcy. We will see more of that.

I know the suffering of the 456 people and the 1,200 railroad people suddenly out of work may not sound so bad in places such as California or New York, but in Wyoming, whole communities feel that kind of impact. Folks I talked to in Wyoming are depressed and angry, and it is because the energy industries they support and rely upon have for too long been the target of bad Federal policies.

People have been mining coal in Wyoming since the mid-1800s, but it wasn't until the 1970s that the industry really took off. The Clean Air Act of 1970 implemented the original restrictions on sulfur dioxide emissions, and, suddenly, the low sulfur content, the clean coal from Wyoming's Powder River Basin was in high demand. Wyoming went from producing just under 2 percent of our Nation's coal in the late 1960s to producing 9 percent by the end of the 1970s. That number rose to 31 percent by the end of the 1990s.

By the end of 2014, 39 percent of the Nation's electricity was generated by coal, according to the Energy Information Administration, and 40 percent of that coal was generated in Wyoming. That year, Wyoming's 20 mines directly employed over 6,500 workers who earn an average salary of nearly $84,000—almost twice the statewide average. The industry indirectly employs tens of thousands more contractors in jobs that support the coal industry. The coal industry paid over $1.14 billion to Wyoming in taxes, royalties, and other revenue in 2014. That is money that was used for schools, roads, and community colleges across the State. Those are all in jeopardy.

With all of this affordable energy, with all of these well-paying jobs, how did Wyoming find itself losing jobs last week? How did Wyoming wind up with the fastest growing unemployment rate in the Nation? Well, I recently ran across this 2011 editorial cartoon that I think helps explain how this administration is bringing down the coal industry.

This cartoon was drawn and dedicated to the Wyoming Legislature when they were talking about some similar things. It is still pertinent, but we have to change the tattoo on the arm to say administration, and the dates need to be changed to 2012, when the Environmental Protection Agency issued its final Mercury Air Toxics Standard rule. This needs to be changed to 2015, when the Department of Interior piled on with its proposed stream protection rule and the EPA leased its final Clean Power Plan. We need to change this to 2016, when Interior froze the Federal Coal Leasing Program. If we imagine those changes, this cartoon can explain how we got where we are today. We are killing the golden goose, the producer of low-cost energy for the United States.

Let me expand on those issues a bit further. It is a little hard to understand with only the titles. In 2012 the EPA finalized a standard that required a strict reduction in air emissions from electric-generating units. It was known as the Mercury Air Toxics Standards—or MATS—rule, and like many of the rules from the EPA, the cost of this regulation was immense and the benefits were limited, even if the benefits are calculated over a much longer period of time than the costs. The EPA estimated that the rule would create $500,000 to $6 million in benefits related to this mercury reduction. It would cost—remember that this is $500,000 to $6 million in benefits—nearly $10 billion annually to implement the rule.

Luckily the Supreme Court rejected the MATS rule last year, stating that the EPA should have considered costs before setting out to regulate mercury from fossil-fuel fired power plants. But

the administration wasn't deterred. Last year Congress disapproved of both the Stream Protection Rule and the Clean Power Plan—disastrous rules aimed at eliminating the extraction and use of low-cost energy—by using the Congressional Review Act. We did so with bipartisan support. Yet the President did not listen and instead chose to veto those bills.

I believe U.S. Presidents should first and foremost seek to help the citizens of the United States, and that means the President must have a deep understanding of the people and the challenges they face. President Obama and others in his administration—and some seeking to replace him—have demonstrated how woefully little they understand about coal, the jobs that are related to coal, the people who produce it, and even the people who use it.

Many folks in Wyoming who produce and use coal have reached out to me, and I want this administration to hear from them. The administration needs to hear from people like Nancy from my hometown in Gillette. She wrote last week to tell me about losing her job at a mine where she worked for 9 years. She is 64 years old, single, and takes care of her elderly father. She has a house payment—a house she worked very hard to keep after going through a divorce. Now she is worried about her house and just wants a job so she can keep her house and retire with a little money in her pocket.

To understand the impact these policies have on not just energy workers but the communities in which they live, the administration needs to hear about Sarah from Newcastle, which is about 70 miles from Gillette and about 50 miles from any coal mines. Sarah and her husband started a carpet and flooring store and had been successfully managing it for over three decades. She is sad to see so many in her community out of work and fearful that the economic downturn will mean the end of a business she has devoted her life to creating.

The administration needs to hear from Robert, again from Gillette, his and my hometown. He recently lost his job at a smaller coal mine and had to uproot his family to move to another State in order to find work. He knows that out West the media markets are small and the national news will never cover the heartbreaking stories of his colleagues and neighbors in this coal market. Robert needs to know that maybe the media won't cover his family's story, but I won't forget about him, and I won't stop fighting the bad policies this administration has created.

America has the resources, America has the manpower, and America has the reserves to provide the energy we need for a strong economy and a healthy environment. Nobody knows that better than the folks in Wyoming, where people for generations have made a good living extracting energy from the same lands on which they love to hunt, fish, hike, and camp. People are dedicated stewards of the land and want their children and grandchildren to enjoy it in the same way. That is why Wyoming coal mines are recognized year after year for their outstanding reclamation efforts. You can see that in this photo of the beautiful land in Wyoming where a short time before a coal mine existed.

On occasion, I take people out to view the coal mines, and usually, as we get close to the coal mine, they say: Oh, don't let them tear up that land over there. It is beautiful.

We have to explain to them: That is where the mine used to be; this is where it is headed.

They say: Oh. If you can change that into this, do it.

There are some difficulties with replacing it like this. This hill had to be exactly the same as it was before the coal was removed. If there are stones in there, they have to be put back where they were before.

The ranchers who border on these coal mines think, why would anybody move that much dirt and put it back the way it was?

Well, it is the law, and they have been following the law and getting phenomenal results.

What Wyoming and other States that produce and rely on fossil fuels need is innovative policies that will encourage new ways to continue to develop and use America's huge reserves of coal, oil, and gas. We are the Saudi Arabia of coal, and that can displace some of what Saudi Arabia has been thrusting on us for decades. One of those options is carbon sequestration, which Senators from both sides of the aisle in this Chamber have historically supported. Using that technology, carbon dioxide emitted from combusting fossil fuels can be captured and routed to secure geological storage, preventing it from being released into the atmosphere, although plants need that. The carbon dioxide can also be used for enhanced recovery of oil and natural gas to help ensure that America efficiently utilizes these resources.

When a well is drilled and pumped, you get about 25 percent of the oil out of the ground. There is some enhanced recovery that has been invented and since that time, and they can get about another 20 percent out of the ground. That means that 55 percent of our value is still underground. People are working to invent ways to take care of that and take care of the energy we are going to need to be energy independent.

Even the White House supports investment in research and development projects to make carbon capture more accessible, deployable, and affordable.

I hope my colleagues from any State that uses or produces fossil fuels will join me in supporting policies to encourage carbon sequestration and the use of carbon. There are a number of uses, and one of those is to get that enhanced oil recovery.

Last week was a tough one for Wyoming, but I am proud to be from a State that has always found a way to bounce back from any bust. Actually, what we have is a leveling out, but it is a difficult leveling out because for the first time coal prices, oil prices, and natural gas prices are all down at the same time. When you have an economy that is building for growth and it levels out, it seems like a dramatic bust.

This is not the end of coal's chapter in Wyoming history. I will keep working to make sure of that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article that just came out today entitled ''The Powder River Basin: Creating a new future in Wyoming's biggest coal town,'' which talks about some of the innovative things people are doing and how it will help Gillette, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

POWDER RIVER BASIN: CREATING A NEW FUTURE IN WYOMING'S BIGGEST COAL TOWN

(By E&E reporter, Brittany Patterson, April 13, 2016)

GILLETTE, WY.—Laura Chapman's best-selling cupcake is the ''Coal Seam Overload,'' a decadent chocolate cake topped with rich chocolate frosting and dark chocolate toppings.

It's a tribute to her home state's top export, a product that eventually is used by 1 out of every 5 homes or businesses in the United States.

''It does permeate the whole lifestyle here,'' she said, from inside Alla Lala Cupcakes and Sweet Things, Gillette's first and only cupcake shop, which Chapman opened in the town's downtown district in 2013.

On its face, a specialty store like Chapman's might seem out of place in a town that since its founding has been strongly rooted in producing coal, oil, natural gas and methane.

Located in the heart of the Powder River Basin, Gillette is surrounded by 12 coal mines, some of the largest in the country, employing some 5,600 people, according to 2014 data. In a county just shy of 50,000, the mines provide jobs for 1 out of every 10 residents.

On a recent March morning, charter buses, similar to the ones that ferry tech workers to the Google and Facebook campuses, head out of Gillette. Yet these buses aren't filled with coders and app designers, but with miners. Pickup trucks sporting long poles topped with bright orange flags follow suit. The flags are to make sure those operating the living room-sized coal trucks don't accidentally engage in an unintentional monster truck brawl.

On the south side of town at mining parts supplier L&H Industrial, a 13,000-square-foot mural is devoted largely to an image of inky black coal being scooped into a coal truck, a train filled with coal passing by.

Since 1990, the town's population has doubled to a little more than 30,000, a respectable size in a state where pronghorn antelopes outnumber people. But the promise of

plentiful, good-paying jobs has not only brought people to the self-styled, ''Energy Capital of the Nation,'' but also brought tax revenues and prosperity.

Wyoming produces 39 percent of the nation's coal, or about 382 million tons in 2014, according to the Bureau of Land Management. Because Gillette is so interconnected with coal and other fossil energy resources, it faces a barrage of assaults, both economic and regulatory. Production of Wyoming coal has declined 14 percent since 2011. Late last month, mass layoffs were announced.

At the largest mine in the region, Peabody Energy Corp.'s North Antelope Rochelle mine, 235 workers were told not to come to work. Arch Coal Inc. cut 230 jobs. The reductions represent about 15 percent of each company's workforce in the state.

A boomtown since its founding, Gillette is acutely aware of the central role that natural resources, especially coal, have played in its existence. And yet Gillette seems determined to survive in a world that is pushing coal out. It has invested in itself and planned for a future where coal is not king.

The question now facing Gillette is whether it has done enough: Can this boomtown weather this bust?

Shedding a boomtown stigma.

Founded in 1892, the city was named after railroad surveyor Edward Gillette. Today, between 80 and 100 trains speed out of the region daily, carrying Wyoming coal to more than 30 states.

In the 1960s, oil development about doubled the city's population from about 3,500 to more than 7,000. The rapid population growth spurred violence and crime, so much that psychologist Eldean Kohrs in 1974 coined the term ''Gillette Syndrome'' to describe the social problems that accompany a boomtown.

With the passage of the Clean Air Act in 1963 and subsequent amendments in the years after, power plants began turning to Powder River Basin coal. Gillette officially became a coal town.

It wasn't until the mid-1970s that then-mayor and now U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi (R) crafted a city expansion plan aimed at changing the public perception about Gillette. A major component included investing in infrastructure to support the growing population.

Built on a 19-mile grid, present-day Gillette is an amalgamation of strip malls newly filled with chain stores like Petco and Buffalo Wild Wings. Rows of hotels and motels advertise weekly rates, and newly constructed subdivisions rise out of the hilly landscape. Shiny trucks, boats and campers litter driveways. There are two frozen yogurt shops and two golf courses.

Recent growth has been steady since the mid-2000s, which Chapman said has led to more boutique shops like hers opening downtown.

About a decade ago, the city and county began investing a sizable portion of revenues from the energy sector back into services for the community. For $53 a month, residents can use the state-of-the-art recreation center featuring a six-lane indoor track and a 42-foot climbing wall designed to resemble aspects of the nearby Devils Tower National Monument.

The Gillette that Chapman grew up in hardly resembles the one that exists today, she said.

''Hell, when Applebee's opened 10 years ago, it was like the town wanted to throw a party, because before then, the only chains we had were fast-food restaurants,'' she said, laughing. ''And I know that sounds weird, but that's an exciting thing to realize, 'Hey, we've gotten to this point they're going to build an Applebee's.' ''

REIMAGINING A CITY WITH FEWER PEOPLE

But as the coal industry feels the pinch, the city's investments are being tested. Gillette is losing people as mines make layoffs, supporting service companies shutter their doors, and oil and gas production falls, said Wyoming state Sen. Michael Von Flatern (R). About 1,500 people have packed up and left in the last year, and he expects another couple of thousand to move on before the summer is out.

''I expect we'll lose 10 percent of our population over the next year,'' he said. Charlene Murdock, executive director of the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce, embodies the interconnectedness of the energy industry and business community in Gillette. She spent nearly eight years with the chamber in the 1990s and then did communications work for energy companies, most recently working for four years with Peabody Energy.

She is generous with her laughter but also gives off a no-nonsense vibe, and she is quick to shoot down the word ''bust'' as a descriptor for the current situation in Gillette, preferring to call it a ''softer economic period.''

''Bust, to me, says something like 'We have no jobs, we have no people, we have no income,' '' Murdock said, noting that Gillette's latest ''boom'' was more like steady growth for the last 12 years.

Murdock sees this period as one of ''leveling off'' in Gillette, even a chance for the community to catch its breath.

At the height of the energy boom in the 2007–08, unemployment was less than 2 percent. Houses were on the market mere hours before being snapped up.

And yes, she said, this downturn might mean the end of some businesses and services. For example, Gillette might lose one of its frozen yogurt shops. Perhaps, this year, housing development will not occur, she allowed. But whether it's growth or decline, she said, those who have made roots in Gillette are aware that energy commodities drive the economy and uncertainty isn't new.

''I really don't see us not having an energy industry in two years' time,'' Murdock said. ''While I think certainly people are apprehensive about what the future looks like, I think they also are resilient, and we'll see that resiliency really pay off for us.''

Not everyone is convinced.

Greg Cottrell, owner of the Big O Tires in Gillette, falls into the worried camp. He worked for 14 years in the Cordero Rojo mine when it was owned by Kennecott Energy, and he said this downturn feels different.

''We've never had a war on coal before coming from the administration,'' he said. 'We've had coal companies since the '70s. So for 40 years, they've been a very big part of this community and the growth and the reason we have very good schools and hospitals and recreation centers for kids.''

LOOKING FOR A PLAN B

That phrase ''the war on coal'' isn't uncommon in Wyoming.

Many in Gillette feel President Obama's environmental policies targeting carbon emissions have doomed the industry.

Concerns abound about a decision earlier this year by the Department of the Interior to pause federal coal leasing for three years while the agency conducts a review of the program. All of the mines near here are part of the federal coal program.

Another fear is U.S. EPA's Clean Power Plan, which which is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 nationwide.

Gillette is surrounded by, and in some cases part owner of, three coal-fired power plants. Some could be on the chopping block in order for the state to meet its emissions cuts under the rule.

Some of the worry is tied to Gillette's deep financial dependence on coal. Revenues from the resource are the second-largest cash stream for state and local governments in Wyoming. In 2014, the total amounted to $1.14 billion.

In addition, since 1992, Wyoming has received more than $2 billion in coal bonus bids, which are paid to BLM and the state over a five-year period once a lease is issued. The money has been used to fund schools, highways and community colleges across the state.

Right now, Cottrell said, companies that supported the energy industry, especially the oil industry, have closed shop or aren't spending money, at least not on new tires.

He concedes that the city is different, bigger.

''We don't have so much of an up-and-down economy now because Gillette is a little more diversified,'' he said, but added, ''I wouldn't call it self-sustaining yet, though.''

Last month, the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services reported that Campbell County had experienced one of the largest jumps in unemployment across the state. From January 2015 to January 2016, unemployment rose from 3.6 percent to 6 percent. That was before the huge mine layoffs were announced.

A population exodus means a loss of sales tax revenue for the city, but a downturn in the energy sector also affects the tax base significantly. Each living room-sized coal truck, road grader or shovel is purchased by the mines from businesses on the south side of town.

The city, for its part, has recently re-evaluated how it will invest in major capital projects over the next five years, according to Gillette City Administrator Carter Napier, but with no way to know if revenues from the energy sector might rebound, the city is facing tough decisions.

''The further questions we need to have are with regard to what services we may need to cut and what programs we may need to curtail until we can feel comfortable that revenue is back to at least an understandable level,'' he said.

But if it doesn't come back, there might be a plan B.

MEET THE MAN TRYING TO DIVERSIFY GILLETTE

Soft-spoken, with wire-rimmed glasses, Phil Christopherson's current job is engineering, but of a different kind than the former Boeing employee was trained to do.

As CEO of Energy Capital Economic Development, his job is to help diversify the city's energy-intensive economy. The two-person entity is both publicly and privately funded and tasked with promoting, retaining and expanding business in Gillette.

The state-of-the-art sports complex, events center and other niceties in Gillette were part of that calculation, the idea being that they would foster community and help provide reasons to stay even when times get tough.

Expanding the community college is another form of economic diversification, one that required the city, the county and private industry to step up financially. Inside the Technical Education Center, part of Gillette College, students can earn associate's

degrees in welding, industrial electricity, mining machine tools and diesel technology. There's a popular nursing program, as well. Inside the Peabody Energy Hall, students rehearse for an upcoming musical performance. The college is expanding and adding an arena, and more dorms are under construction.

In 2010, the group partnered with the city to revitalize the downtown shopping district now home to the cupcake shop, a brewery, boutique clothing stores and a meadery, among others. Public art adorns the corners of South Gillette Avenue. Art is also sprinkled throughout town—a lustrous palm tree, a polar bear sculpture and a larger-than-life spider.

''There's never not something to do,'' added Mary Melaragno, director of business retention and expansion with Energy Capital Economic Development.

The group's newest endeavor, with help from a grant from the Wyoming Business Council, is to purchase office space it could then rent to new businesses looking to relocate, like an incubator.

In the wake of the historic layoffs, Christopherson sees the role of diversifying Gillette as even more important.

''It's interesting,'' he said. ''You have some people that are quite worried and quite fearful, but there's a segment of the population that has stepped up.''

Some residents have even started a ''Stay Strong Gillette'' movement, he said.

And why not Gillette, supporters say. The city has the rail and road infrastructure, access to cheap and plentiful electricity and a workforce that is used to working hard.

Already, one company, Atlas Carbon LLC, has moved to town with a business plan that includes using coal—in this case manufacturing activated carbon (the stuff found in water filters)—but not burning it for energy.

Christopherson said he hopes it's enough. He concedes that if the community had prioritized this effort five or 10 years ago, ''we could have helped insulate against some of this.''

Still, he doesn't see Gillette existing without coal mining.

And he's not alone. Most people in Gillette don't believe coal will disappear from their lives anytime soon, if ever. Instead, the consensus seems to be that the peak of coal production in Campbell County has come and gone.

''There is a way to continue Gillette's economic success and move us into a future that is not dependent upon coal and oil and methane,'' said Chapman, back at the cupcake shop. ''I just feel like there's a way to do it right, a way that lessens the impact on the people who live and work here and a way that lessens the impact on our future.''

For now, Chapman said business is good and she is content to continue whipping up cupcakes and baking birthday cakes. Her husband is in the process of opening a whiskey barber shop across the street.

''Of course I'm optimistic,'' she said laughing. ''I opened a cupcake shop, didn't I?''

Mr. ENZI. If we eliminate coal, it will force people across the Nation to pay more for their energy.

Coal has a good base load. It runs all the time. It is not like wind. If the wind doesn't blow, you don't have it. It is not like solar. If the sun doesn't shine, you don't have it. Coal can work 24 hours a day, and it is low cost. There has also been more done to clean up coal-burning power plants than anywhere else.

We invite people to come to Gillette, WY, and look at the power plants and clean air that we have. The only time we get regional haze is when the forests burn in Oregon or Washington and blow into Wyoming and make our mountains disappear. You won't find coal dust around there, either, because people don't let anything blow away that they can sell.

We hope everyone will come and take a look at the environment and the power plants so you, too, can say: You know, coal is not bad, and America needs it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, this is now my 39th edition of ''Waste of the Week.'' For 39 weeks I have been back on the floor when the Senate has been in session to talk about unnecessary, fraudulent, wasted, abusive spending of taxpayer dollars.

We have run up quite a toll—more than I thought we would—but the more I dig into this and the more information we get from the agencies that are looking at how we spend taxpayers' dollars, the more alarmed I have been and the public should be and our colleagues should be over how these hard-earned tax dollars are spent in a wasted and abusive way or a fraudulent way. So I am going to keep doing this to alert my colleagues and alert the American people—in particular, people in my State—that there are ways we can better and more efficiently use their tax dollars or not require them in the first place.

This week I am focusing on documented abuse of the Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Most Hoosiers and other Americans know this as the Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program has had some ups and downs in terms of our support, and there has been a lot of bad publicity about the abuse of this program. I get many letters and contacts in my office describing standing in the grocery line and seeing someone use food stamps not for milk for their children or cereal or nutritious food but for junk food or tobacco or alcohol. The program is not supposed to be used for that kind of thing, but somehow we keep reading about potential misuse of what this program is intended to do.

Now, the SNAP program, as it is now called—Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, S-N-A-P, the SNAP program—exists to provide low-income individuals with their nutrition needs and food items. It is funded by the Federal Government, and it is administered by the States.

Let me begin by saying I am not here to do a critique of the program. That is a topic for a different discussion. I am here to talk about whether this program is being effectively run by the States and effectively funded by the Federal Government. What we have learned is that—no surprise—as with so many other Federal programs, there has been gaming and fraudulent use of the program. There clearly are people who don't qualify and are not eligible for receiving these food stamp vouchers but are nevertheless receiving them through this program.

The government has become modern with the digital age, and instead of food stamps they issue an electronic benefits transfer card. It is like a debit card that people carry in their wallet. Money is added to that card electronically and it can be used at grocery stores. People swipe it. Hopefully, it works better than Secretary Clinton's card worked at the subways of New York. Anyway, you can swipe this card, and it will deduct the amount you have, in terms of the cost of the food provided, and it is refreshed on a monthly basis.

In looking at the program, the General Accountability Office got some tips about the fact that a lot of replacement cards were being sent out. We all leave our license on the counter in the kitchen or our credit card and we wonder, ''Where is that credit card,'' and then we need a replacement. This happens. We understand that. So there is a replacement card program available through SNAP. You say you lost your card and they send you a new one. The problem is that GAO—the Government Accountability Office—learned from the program that a tremendous amount of replacement cards were going out to people—sometimes over four. Then, they say: Wait a minute. Maybe we ought to look at this because this person has been asking for replacement cards on a regular basis. Are they really losing those cards or are they using them for other purposes?

So they set up a trial program. They looked at three States—Massachusetts, Michigan, and Nebraska—and found that more than 7,500 households receiving these SNAP benefits had suspicious transactions and were using four or more EBT cards in a year during key times, such as when cards were credited with benefits, and all of a sudden the request came in, saying: I lost my card—and by the way this is the fifth time or sixth time or whatever.

In totaling all of this, the General Accountability Office said this accounted for more than $26 million of suspicious transactions. Now, that was just from the three States. These are

sizable States—Massachusetts, Michigan, and Nebraska—but they pale in comparison to say Florida, Texas, California, and New York. So if it was $26 million of suspicious transactions for just these three States that were looked into, imagine what it would be if they checked all 50 States.

So we did some calculations using the same proportion of SNAP households as those identified by GAO as affecting the whole country, and we came up with roughly $3.2 billion of waste over a 10-year period of time. That is not small change. A lot of people work awfully hard to accumulate the kind of money needed to total $3.2 billion and then only to see it wasted.

People said: Maybe these suspicious transactions were legitimate. So we did a quick search on Craig's List. Craig's List is this list you go into—I know all of the young pages understand this. We old people aren't necessarily up to speed on all of these new electronic transactions and processes and so forth. I got into it with the help of my young staff. We got into Craig's List and we found that what was being advertised—see, on Craig's List you put up something that others will want to buy, and it can be anything from a washing machine to a lawn mower, to a picture frame or whatever. We found some people advertising these SNAP cards, these EBT cards. For instance, a mechanic named Marco could—this was not MARCO RUBIO, by the way—a mechanic named Marco will accept EBT cards as payment for auto care, he said. In other words, if you have a problem with your car, come over to my shop. I will fix it for you, and instead of cash, you can give me EBT cards. So probably that is pretty tempting. How much to fix my automobile? Thirty-five bucks. I have an EBT card. It has $33.47 left on it. How about I pay you with that? He says: OK. I can take that in payment. Then they apply for a replacement card. That is probably one of the ways it adds up.

Another person advertised two Beyonce tickets. I haven't been to a Beyonce concert, but I actually know who she is. I actually realize, even at my age, that she is a star and everybody wants these tickets. So they advertised two tickets for $1,200 and said: We can accept EBT cards for payment. Somebody has to accumulate a lot of these cards to come up with a payment for two tickets to a Beyonce concert.

Another post on Craig's List reads: ''I have around $1,300 in food stamps and have no need for it at all.'' I will sell this card with $1,300 in credits if you will send me $300. I guess that raises questions about how these cards are being used, and these are just a few examples.

This kind of fraud obviously needs to be addressed. As all of the other 38 weeks of ''Waste of the Week'' I have put up here continues to accumulate, these cards obviously are not being used—all of them—for those who need it and for its intended purpose. It is clear that we ought to be adopting GAO's methodology of tracking both the number of recipients that receive more and more EBT cards at specific times of the year and those with suspicious transactions, and I think a lot of this abuse could be eliminated.

So what we are doing today is we are adding another $3.2 billion of waste, and we continue to raise the amounts. It is now $162 billion of waste, fraud, and abuse. This is going to continue as we alert the American people, inform my colleagues in the Senate and the Congress, and inform the administration that there are ways to better use, and hopefully not even have to request in the first place, the kind of tax dollars we are paying for a clearly dysfunctional Federal Government program.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the FAA reauthorization legislation before us, as well as the managers' amendment filed yesterday on this key piece of legislation.

This is an important bill that will ensure the airport and airway trust fund will remain solvent and that our Nation's airway system—and the countless jobs that are impacted by the system—do not have to deal with a funding shortfall or a lapse in authorization.

The airport and airway trust fund finances many of our national aviation programs. Currently, expenditures from the trust fund are authorized through July 15 of this year. The provisions that ensure adequate funding for the trust fund expire at the same time. That means that, absent congressional action, national airway programs and projects will come to a screeching halt about 3 months from now.

Make no mistake, this bill is about protecting jobs and consumer interests across the country. No one would benefit from a lapse in funding or authorization as either one would threaten the livelihoods of people throughout the country. While from time to time the passage of what should be considered routine legislation can get weighed down by unrelated issues, no one seriously disputes the need to get the bill over the finish line.

As the Presiding Officer knows, the Senate Finance Committee, which I chair, is responsible for the tax title of the FAA bill. The trust fund is paid for through a number of tax provisions that are set to expire in July along with the authorization of expenditures from the trust fund. These provisions include longstanding taxes on domestic and international airfares, taxes on jet fuel, and others.

In years past, the Finance Committee has introduced and debated legislation to renew and, if necessary, update those provisions. We typically have a markup and report the legislation out of committee. I had intended to follow a similar course with this year's FAA bill. Unfortunately, that isn't how things worked out.

As we were working through the process in committee to set up an FAA markup, it became clear that my friends on the other side of this aisle saw the bill as an opportunity to add a number of extraneous items—provisions that had nothing whatsoever to do with the FAA—to the bill and set the stage for a politically charged debate in the Finance Committee.

Now, I am not one to shy away from controversy, but with an item of this importance—one that is a priority for Members on both sides—I didn't see the benefit for either side in turning the FAA tax title into another wide-ranging tax extenders bill and reducing the robust debate process in the Finance Committee to a series of controversial votes. Moreover, given the small lead time before the authorizing bill was to be up for floor debate, a markup that addressed anything more than the Finance Committee's basic responsibility to fund the FAA would have prejudiced Members on both sides in terms of preparation. For all of these reasons, we decided not to mark up the bill in committee, and, instead, to resolve the matter here on the floor.

It appears that it has been resolved. There will be voting before the end of the week on a simple extension of the taxes dedicated to the airport and airway trust fund through the end of Fiscal Year 2017. Ultimately, a clean extension of the FAA taxes like the one before us is probably the best approach. My main priority in developing this legislation was to ensure adequate funding for the FAA and airway projects and programs throughout the country and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Over the past few weeks, we heard a lot of talk about adding additional provisions to the tax title and there were some efforts to once again stack this legislation with extraneous items. Indeed, leading up to yesterday, lobbyists and special interest groups all over town were waiting with baited breath to see what was in the tax title.

Don't get me wrong. I am not a purist or foolhardy idealist. While I have made it clear that I would prefer that the Senate pass a clean FAA bill, I know that none of us can reasonably

expect to get everything we want out of every piece of legislation, particularly when the goal is bipartisan compromise. I am very much in favor of practicing the art of the doable, which sometimes means accepting things I don't want to see happen. I have been willing to work with my colleagues to include other provisions in the tax title in order to get a deal on the overall FAA bill.

I will leave it to others to characterize what happened in those negotiations, as none of the items under discussion were high priorities for me. I will just note that after weeks of discussion, finger-pointing, and a little bit of grandstanding, the decision was made to move forward on a clean 18-month extension of the FAA funding provisions, which once again, was my preference from the outset.

Needless to say, I am pleased with the outcome. I wish we could have taken a less contentious path to arrive at this conclusion.

Still, this is a good outcome for the American people and for all the industries that rely on a fully functional airway system. The legislation before us will extend the programs for a year and a half and provide greater certainty for people and businesses around the country. On top of that, it will improve security on planes and in our Nation's airports while also providing much needed improvements to help consumers and airline passengers.

I know that the people of Utah in my home State are particularly interested in seeing Congress finish its work on the FAA reauthorization. Over the last few months, I have heard from many groups and businesses from Utah and elsewhere on a number of issues addressed by this bill, including airport funding, drone safety, rural airport needs, and general aviation.

Many people, when they think about Utah's airways, probably think that we just have the one airport in Salt Lake City. Make no mistake, that is an important airport, not only to Utah but to air travel and shipping all across the country and other parts of the world. But my State's interest in the FAA bill extends well beyond the Salt Lake City International Airport. All told, we have 47 total airports in the State of Utah, varying greatly in purpose, size, and overall capacity, all of which would benefit from this legislation. Many of these airports have new development or expansion projects either underway or in the planning stages. The legislation before us will give assurances to these airports and allow them to plan for future needs.

The bill also includes important provisions from the Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act, which constitutes section 5028 of the FAA bill. This legislation will help a number of smaller rural airports, such as some of those in Utah, to bring back TSA staff and security screening equipment if certain conditions are met.

Under subtitle F of the bill, we have language taken from Pilot's Bill of Rights 2, a bill that the Senate passed with unanimous consent last year but was not yet passed in the House. The general aviation community in Utah will benefit tremendously from these provisions, which could potentially help thousands of general aviation pilots in Utah, saving them time and money in managing their health and fitness to fly. There are other provisions in the bill that will benefit Utah and most States throughout the country.

In short, this is a good bill. From the FAA reauthorization provisions to the tax and funding title, it is the right approach to addressing these particular needs, and we need to get it done. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support Senator THUNE's managers' amendment as well as the overall FAA bill.

ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. President, I would like to talk for a few minutes on S. 483, the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act. The Senate unanimously passed this crucial legislation last month, and just yesterday the House passed the bill as well. The bill now goes to President Obama for signature.

I would like to begin by thanking Senator WHITEHOUSE for his important work on this legislation. He and his staff have been crucial partners in helping to move it forward. I am also grateful for the support of our other cosponsors—Senators RUBIO, VITTER, and CASSIDY.

S. 483 is not a long bill, but it is an important one. It clarifies several key provisions of the Controlled Substances Act in ways that will strengthen efforts to fight prescription drug abuse while ensuring patients retain access to needed medications.

As we all know, prescription drugs play a crucial role in treating and curing illness, alleviating pain and improving quality of life for millions of Americans. Unfortunately, these drugs can also be abused. A balance is necessary to ensure that individuals who need prescription drugs for treatment receive them but that such drugs are not diverted for improper purposes. To this end, S. 483 makes three important changes to the Controlled Substances Act.

First, it clarifies the factors that the Attorney General is required to consider when deciding whether to register an applicant to manufacture or distribute controlled substances. The current text of the Controlled Substances Act instructs the Attorney General to consider factors that ''may be relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety,'' but it does not provide any guidance as to what those factors might be. This vague language creates uncertainty among advocates regarding the standards they must meet to obtain a registration.

S. 483 reduces this uncertainty by tying those standards to Congress's findings in section 101 of the Controlled Substances Act regarding the benefits, harms, and commercial impact of controlled substances. This change will bring clarity to the registration process and provide better guidance to regulators as they consider applications to manufacture or distribute controlled substances.

The second change S. 483 makes is to delineate the standards under which the Attorney General may suspend a Controlled Substances Act registration without a court proceeding. Under the terms of the Controlled Substances Act, the Attorney General may suspend a registration to manufacture or distribute controlled substances without court process if she determines there is an imminent danger to the public health and safety. But the Act does not define what constitutes an imminent danger, leaving the Attorney General's authority under this provision essentially open-ended. This in turn leads companies to operate in the shadow of uncertainty regarding when and whether a registration might be summarily suspended.

S. 483 clarifies the Attorney General's authority to immediately suspend a registration by specifying that such a suspension may be appropriate where there is a ''substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of an immediate suspension of the registration.'' This will permit the Attorney General to issue immediate suspension orders when necessary to protect against an imminent threat of harm, while at the same time ensuring that this power does not become a sword constantly hanging over the head of law-abiding companies.

In addition to these important clarifications, S. 483 will also facilitate greater collaboration between distributors, manufacturers, and relevant Federal actors in combatting prescription drug abuse. In particular, the bill provides a mechanism for companies that violate the Controlled Substances Act to correct their practices before the Attorney General suspends or revokes their registration. Even inadvertent violations may lead to suspension or revocation, disrupting the supply chain for the company's prescription drugs. This in turn can cause hardship for patients who rely on the company's drugs for treatment and cure.

S. 483 alleviates this problem by allowing companies to submit a collective action plan to remediate the violation before suspension or revocation, thus ensuring that supply chains remain intact. This provision will also

encourage greater self-reporting of violations and promote joint efforts between government and private actors to stem the tide of prescription drug abuse.

S. 483 takes a balanced approach to the problem of prescription drugs. It clarifies and further defines the Attorney General's enforcement powers while seeking to avoid situations that may lead to an interruption in the supply of medicine to suffering patients. It reflects a measured, carefully negotiated compromise between stakeholders and law enforcement that will enable both to work together more effectively. Most importantly, it will make a meaningful difference in our homes and communities.

I want to thank my colleagues for their support of this legislation, and I urge the President to sign it into law.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

REMEMBERING RAY THORNTON

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, Arkansas lost a political legend today when former Congressman Ray Thornton passed away at the age of 87.

Ray Thornton grew up in Sheridan, the child of two teachers. Ray's intellect and quick wit was evident from an early age. He graduated from high school at just 16 years old. He then headed off to the University of Arkansas, eventually winning the Navy Holloway Program scholarship to attend Yale University. After college, Ray heeded what would be the first of several calls to serve his country and joined the U.S. Navy, where he served 3 years with the Pacific Fleet during the Korean war.

After leaving the Navy, Ray returned home to Arkansas, earned a law degree from the University of Arkansas, and married Betty Jo, with whom he raised three daughters.

Ray began a successful legal career before being elected attorney general in 1970. After one term, Ray was elected to the House of Representatives from Arkansas's Fourth District. Ray served with distinction, including on the Judiciary Committee, where he helped draft the articles of impeachment against President Nixon.

In 1978, he narrowly lost an epic Senate primary fight, featuring him, fellow Congressman and later Governor Jim Guy Tucker, and Governor, later Senator, David Pryor. He then returned to the family business of education, becoming the only man to serve as president of both Arkansas State University and the University of Arkansas.

Ray returned to politics in 1990, winning election to the House of Representatives again, this time from Arkansas's Second District, serving another three terms. Representing the Little Rock area, Ray was President Clinton's Congressman, yet he voted against the President's signature budget in 1993. Also, around this time, Arkansans passed an amendment to our State's Constitution limiting the terms of Federal officeholders.

In the ensuing landmark case, U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton, the Supreme Court held that States cannot add additional qualifications to Federal offices, including a limitation on terms. Ray was the named defendant and believed in this constitutional principle. But shortly after the decision, he announced his retirement from Congress, proving that the case was never really about him but rather his devotion to the Constitution.

On a personal note, I got to know Ray as he prepared to retire from Congress. Thanks to the recommendation of a family friend who worked for Ray, I interned at Ray's Little Rock office for a few weeks in the summer of 1996. Rather than the usual intern routine of ''clips''—for you pages down front, that is when interns literally clip stories out of the newspaper—I spent days and days at a storage unit in southwest Pulaski County, sorting through more than a quarter century of Ray's public papers and preparing them for the archives under the supervision of his longtime, matchless advisor, Julie Baldridge.

It was a fascinating history lesson in Arkansas politics, and it highlighted a common theme of Ray's career: his commitment to do the right thing, as he saw the right, even when it was the tough thing. Whether it was impeachment, that 1993 budget vote, or the term limit case, Ray stood his ground. But Ray did not leave public life after Congress, for he answered another call to service, this time on the Arkansas Supreme Court, where he served until 2005.

Now Ray has gone home to his Maker. While we join his family and friends in mourning the loss, we also celebrate his long, well-lived life in service to our country and Arkansas. Rest in peace, Ray Thornton.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from South Dakota.

(The remarks of Mr. ROUNDS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2796 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, as we are trying to determine whether we have a path forward for an energy bill we have been working on for months, as well as the FAA reauthorization, I thought I would take the time to come to the floor to speak about the importance of this much needed Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, recognizing the importance of what the FAA does. It is just a reminder to us that when we delay needed reforms and those initiatives that provide some certainty of funding for airport improvements, it doesn't help us out here, and that making sure we are attending to these matters in a timely manner is important.

I think it is fair to say that all of us in this body travel a fair bit. Most everyone, seemingly, will fly home to their respective States, visit with their constituents, and be with their families on weekends. Some of us who are from farther away make efforts to be back home as often as we can, but the distances might complicate it a little bit more. But I think it is fair to say that we see firsthand the inside of many of our Nation's airports and see firsthand those areas where improvements can certainly be made.

In my State of Alaska, for some of us the airport is almost as common and matter-of-fact as going to the grocery store. It seems as though we are in and out of our small airports so much because it is how we get around. In a State where 80 percent of our communities are not connected by a road, how do you get around? How do you get to Dillingham? How do you get to Fort Yukon? Well, you can take a boat. You could take a snow machine in the winter. But the fact is, we fly. We are a flying State. And it is not a matter of flying because it is a vacation or a business trip. It is to go see the doctor. It is to go to high school. It is to go to the grocery store—literally to the grocery store. So many of the people in the outlying rural parts of the State will fly to Anchorage so they can shop at Costco, and instead of taking luggage back home with them, they take toilet paper, diapers, canned goods, and their grocery items. In one community, we have kids who literally instead of a schoolbus to get to school, they take a small plane to fly across the river that separates their community from the school.

We are working to get them a bridge. Some might suggest these are bridges to nowhere. We think this is about connecting people. Right now it is pretty limited in our ability to move in and out. When we talk about flying, for us

in Alaska, it is a very matter-of-fact way to travel. It is no frills.

You come from a cold State, Mr. President. You know that if you and your family are going on a long trip out on the road and you are going to be in the high mountains and the roads might be treacherous and it is cold, you will be smart and you will pack some snow gear in the trunk. You might have some emergency supplies there. We do that when we are flying on the airplanes too. Make sure you have snow pants and boots on because sometimes these airplanes are cold, and unfortunately sometimes things happen. This is a fact of life, and I think the Alaska delegation probably logs as many miles as any Members out there—perhaps our friends from Hawaii just a little bit more. It is a part of who we are. We have come to rely on that access with a pragmatism that perhaps some others don't necessarily appreciate.

I can be at Reagan National, and if a plane is canceled or there is a mechanical problem, the tension is almost so thick you can cut it with a knife. People are so frustrated. If your flight gets grounded in Alaska, it is like, well, the weather has set in. My sister lived on the Aleutian Islands for many years in a community called Unalaska. When she needed to take her family into Anchorage some 800 miles or so away for medical care or any other issues that presented themselves that she would have to go to town, she basically planned for 3 days on either end of her trip because weather shuts you in.

I was in Fairbanks, AK, on a field hearing for the Energy and Natural Resources Committee 2 weeks ago, and it was a quick day trip up and back, but there was no plane that came my way. In fact, all the planes were grounded in Fairbanks because a volcano blew about 800 miles to the south and the winds were strong. It picked up the volcanic ash and deposited it all the way from Pavlof Volcano, down in the Aleutians, up to Barrow and down into the interior of Fairbanks. So what do we do? We don't panic. I was able to spend the night with my sister, catch up on family stuff, rent a car, and drove the 7 hours to Anchorage the next day. It messed up my schedule, but it is a matter-of-fact part of flying in Alaska. At the end of that week, I took a quick supposedly day trip to Kodiak to attend our commercial fishing symposium. Halfway through the day, weather kicked up again. It wasn't a volcano, but it was pretty tough winds, rain, and fog. While the airport wasn't shut down, the airplanes weren't flying. You find a friend's house to go camp out for the evening, and you hope the skies are favorable the next day. You don't want to press the weather because when you are in the air and you are flying, you want to be safe.

I don't tell you these stories to be dramatic about what happens with volcanos and weather in Alaska but to speak to how integral air transportation is to people in my State. A good airport, a reliable flight schedule, this is the equivalent of having a good road and a good car on the road.

I look very critically and very carefully at things such as the FAA Reauthorization Act because some of what we deal with in this measure is effectively a matter of life safety for many of my constituents. Some of those for whom flight is the only option in my State live in the small community of Little Diomede. Little Diomede is about 16 miles off the coast of Alaska. It is in the middle of the Bering Strait. You may have heard of Little Diomede because it is 2½ miles from Big Diomede. Little Diomede is owned by the United States. Big Diomede is owned by Russia. So when you hear that statement about you can see Russia from Alaska, when you are on Big Diomede, that is a true statement.

When you are sitting in this small island community of some 110 people, your hub community for food, for health care, for pretty much anything is Nome, AK. That is where you go. During the summertime, during the time when the ice is not frozen over in the Bering Strait, literally the only way to get in and out is by helicopter because the island is so small and it is such a peaked island—basically a big rock coming out of the water—there is no flat space for a runway. So you have a helicopter that provides for medical in and out and travel in and out. In the winter, the residents will actually carve a runway into the ice so planes can land on the ice to deliver essential products, whether it is food or medicine or the such. Sometimes you can't put the runway on the ice because the ice has been so compressed and jumbled and you have ice ridges that don't allow for a place to land. Again, you are back to helicopter.

The good news for the residents of Little Diomede—and this is thanks to the good work of my colleague Senator SULLIVAN—Little Diomede will be joining the other 43 communities in the State that are part of the Essential Air Service, and this will help provide funding to keep the airport open so people can continue to live in a place they have lived for generations.

Nowhere in this country is Essential Air Service so vital. The reason they call it Essential Air Service is because it is essential. In a place like Little Diomede, it is essential. Forty-three communities in the State of Alaska, compared to 113 across the rest of the country, are in Alaska. Many of these locations are only accessible by air. As with Little Diomede, you don't have a road in, you don't have a road out. It truly does make the phrase ''Essential Air Service'' have meaning.

Another community you have heard me speak about at great length—and in fact we are going be having a hearing focused on King Cove, AK. King Cove is a community that is at the beginning of the Aleutian chain. This is a community that has no road access in or out. It is accessible only by plane. It is an area that suffers from some very difficult weather conditions because of where it sits on the peninsula—the mountains, the ocean. The dynamics are such that it doesn't allow their small airport to be open for about one-third of the year. Think about that—getting goods in and out, getting people in and out, getting to safety if there is a medical emergency. There is a small airstrip there in King Cove. It is about 3,500 feet long. It is made of gravel. We have been working to try to get access for the people of King Cove for about 25 years, access to the State's second longest runway, which is in Cold Bay.

We have an opportunity tomorrow morning in the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to shine a spotlight on this issue, to remind people that since 1980 we have had 19 people die due to plane crashes or injured residents who have waited for a safe way out. I have brought up this issue with Secretary Jewell so many times I can't count it, but she continues to be a blockade and refuses to allow a road to be built so these people can gain safe passage.

Since 2013, there have been 42 medevacs out of King Cove; 16 of them carried out by the Coast Guard. This is one of those examples where if you have people who live in a place where the elements and their geography dictate a level of concern for safety, where we can provide for safe transportation systems, where we can provide them the access to the best air transportation possible, which is over in Cold Bay, then we should be trying to do that.

The last issue I want to raise with the FAA bill that is very important is all that is going on with unmanned aerial systems. Alaska is home to one of the six official FAA sites for unmanned aerial systems. It is managed by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The Pan-Pacific UAS Test Range Complex is huge. It covers an area from the Arctic all the way down to the tropics. In Alaska, we have six test ranges. I think it is fair to say that provides some pretty unique range for an opportunity to conduct experiments.

In addition to incredible range, the Arctic itself offers a unique opportunity for testing our UAS. It is vast. It is remote. You are away from the congestion of the lower 48. You are in different climate conditions. So this is something where Alaska truly has been leading and pioneering, and we are very proud of that.

I am encouraged that this bill requires the Department of Transportation to develop a plan allowing UAS

to operate in designated areas of the Arctic 24 hours a day and beyond line of sight. I think this is important not only from the research perspective but hopefully for the commercial purposes as well.

I think it is fair to say there is good work, strong work that has gone into this FAA reauthorization. I commend the chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator THUNE, for his leadership, and I look forward to its passage in the very short term. I will certainly stand in support of that measure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

MS. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016. I wish to thank Senators THUNE and NELSON for their work on this bipartisan bill. The Presiding Officer also serves on the Commerce Committee. Thank you.

I also thank Senator MURKOWSKI because in 2013 we worked together to pass the Small Airplane Revitalization Act, and the law requires the FAA to move forward with modernizing the Part 23 safety certification process for small airplanes. Updating the Part 23 process—why we brought the bill together and passed it—will improve safety, decrease costs, and encourage innovation for American small airplane manufacturers.

The bill before us actually builds on those efforts by requiring the FAA to finish the Part 23 rulemaking by the end of the year and make further reforms to the certification process. It will also help to ensure greater coordination with FAA regional officers when they interpret and implement FAA rules and regulations so that the aviation industry has certainty. There are also are provisions to help the FAA and industry maintain global leadership on safety at a time when the aviation market is becoming increasingly competitive and global.

Senator MURKOWSKI and I have similar but different interests here. In Alaska, of course, people fly on a lot of small planes to get places, and in Minnesota we do the same thing, but we also make planes. We have one of the biggest domestic manufacturers, Cirrus, in Duluth, MN, and so we share an interest in the safety of small planes and also in expediting these safety regulations and getting them approved. It has been taking the FAA a while to do that, so we are really glad this bill before us, the FAA reauthorization, actually includes a deadline so that this can get done.

Last week I spoke about the security elements of this bill. I am a cosponsor of the amendments that we passed to strengthen airport security, improving security in nonsecure areas of the airport, such as the check-in and baggage claim, and also tightening airline employees' access to secure areas of our airport. Those are important security advancements and show how we can make bipartisan progress on an important issue.

My airport has been experiencing significant delays in processing passengers. There has been a bit of an improvement since the Homeland Security TSA Administrator actually came out and saw for himself what was going on, and as a result, they gave us additional dog teams—similar to what we are talking about in this bill—to help us with security. In this case they also walk the longer lines of passengers. Once they are able to use the dogs, which are highly efficient and good, it will help to expedite the lines because the passengers become the equivalent of a precheck passenger, and they can move them along faster.

When I first heard we were getting a few dog teams, I wasn't sure if that would actually solve our problem when the average line was up to 45 minutes, and as a result many people would miss their planes. We have seen some improvement, including adjusting to the reconfiguration at our airport.

Another issue the bill addresses that I think is really important is human trafficking. During the Commerce Committee markup, we adopted my Stop Trafficking on Planes Act as an amendment. This bill, which Senator WARNER and I introduced, will require training for flight attendants so they can recognize and report suspected human trafficking. Flight attendants are on the frontlines in the battle against trafficking, and this amendment will ensure they have the training they need to help prevent the horror and violence women and children suffer as victims of human trafficking. Obviously, Senator CORNYN and I led a significant bill last year on this issue to give our law enforcement some better tools to be able to go after these perpetrators, and this is really a continuation of that work.

There is another important safety priority which I am concerned this bill does not address. I filed an amendment with Senators MORAN and INHOFE to clarify that the Oklahoma City aircraft registry office provides essential services and should remain open during a government shutdown. One might wonder why the Senator from Minnesota is concerned about the Oklahoma City aircraft registry office. The reason for the concern is that every aircraft sold domestically, exported, or imported to the United States must be registered and obtain FAA approval. These registrations are vital to the safety of our national airspace system, and they are all processed by the Oklahoma City aircraft registry office.

In addition to the safety risk from closing the registry office—and that is what occurred during the shutdown—we saw that it had a devastating economic impact. The company I am talking about, Cirrus, which makes these jets, had jets lined up in a warehouse for weeks and weeks and weeks—multimillion dollar products that were supposed to be sold around the world. They were unable to ship them out because this particular office in Oklahoma had been shut down. The General Aviation Manufacturers Association estimates that $1.9 billion worth of aircraft deliveries were delayed during the last shutdown, putting a severe strain on many general aviation manufacturers and their employees.

The Oklahoma City aircraft registry office is vital to the safety of our national airspace system and the economic well-being of our aviation sector. An entire sector was shut down because they couldn't get approval to keep selling their planes for a number of weeks. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment to ensure that this important office remains open in case we have another shutdown, which we all hope does not occur.

The last issue I came to the floor to speak about in terms of a grouping of provisions in this bill is the Safe Skies amendment. I am on this amendment with Senator BOXER. She is leading this amendment, which is based on her bill, the Safe Skies Act. This bill will close the so-called cargo carve-out. There is absolutely no reason to exempt cargo pilots from the stronger pilot fatigue rules that we all passed and Congress mandated after the tragic 2009 crash of Colgan Flight 3407 outside of Buffalo.

I met those family members, I have seen the tragedy, and I have talked to others who have been in other crashes that were the results of pilot fatigue. We had our own tragic air crash in Minnesota when Senator Paul Wellstone and his wife Sheila died in a small airplane, not a commercial airplane, due to pilot error. That pilot supposedly had not slept for a long time, and so we have seen this in my own State.

Cargo airline operations share the same airspace as passenger airplanes, the same runways, and the same airports as the rest of the airline industry and the flying public. A tired pilot is a danger not only to himself or herself but to others in the air and to those on the ground.

This issue is a top priority at NTSB. They want to have this loophole closed, and I don't know how it could be more telling than this dialogue. This happened in 2013 when two cargo airline pilots were tragically killed in a crash near the airport in Birmingham, AL. I will read an excerpt, which is right here on the chart, from the cockpit voice recorder on that flight. These were the two pilots speaking to each other just 20 minutes before this flight went down.

Pilot 1: I mean, I don't get that. You know, it should be one level of safety for everybody.

They are actually discussing the fact that these rules don't apply to them. They are not protected. They don't have the 8-hour flying rule, and then they can rest.

Pilot 2: It makes no sense at all.

Pilot 1: No it doesn't at all.

Pilot 2: And to be honest, it should be across the board. To be honest in my opinion whether you are flying passengers or cargo . . . if you're flying this time of day—

They often fly in the evenings—

you know fatigue is definitely . . .

Pilot 1: Yeah . . . yeah . . . yeah . . .

Pilot 2: When my alarm went off I mean I'm thinkin' I'm so tired.

Pilot 1: I know.

Twenty minutes later, this plane crashed, and both of the pilots were killed. We shouldn't have to wait for more tragedies before we close this gap in aviation safety.

I urge all my colleagues to support Senator BOXER's amendment and create a uniform rest standard for all pilots. I don't know how much clearer it can be when the actual pilots who crashed were discussing the fact that they were too tired because of the way the cargo rules work.

This bill—the general bill that is before us—makes great strides in aviation security and safety. I think there are some things we can add to this bill. By the way, Captain Sully Sullenberger did an event yesterday with Senator BOXER and me. He feels strongly about this issue. He was the one who made that miraculous landing in New York. He stood with us and a bunch of pilots and said there is absolutely no difference between flying cargo and flying people; it is just a different kind of cargo.

I look forward to continuing to work on these amendments, and I urge my colleagues to support this long-term FAA reauthorization and avoid the uncertainty of further short-term extensions. I hope we will be able to have a vote on this very important safety amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise once again to talk about the urgency of our passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act in the House of Representatives. This is legislation that passed the Senate with a 94-to-1 vote about a month ago. In fact, the Senator from Minnesota, who just spoke, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, is one of the four original cosponsors of this legislation. She is one of those who feels so passionately about it, along with Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator AYOTTE.

When this came bill came up for a vote, all but one Senator said that this is important, it is urgent, and we need to address it. Passing it in the Senate with that kind of a vote meant that the House of Representatives would likely take it up quickly, partly because over the last 3 years we worked with the House. We didn't just make this bipartisan, we made it nonpartisan. We didn't just make it a Senate project, we made it a House-Senate project. It was bicameral. We introduced the same legislation in the Senate that they introduced in the House. I believe there are 119 cosponsors of that bill in the House.

It has been subject to a lot of hearings over here. It has been subject to five different summits here in Washington, DC. We brought experts from all over the country to tell us what to do. We don't have all the best ideas here in Washington, so we got the ideas from around the country. One reason the legislation got this strong vote of 94 to 1 in the Senate is that it does address the problems people see in their communities.

I want the House to act on this because it is so urgent. This legislation will help right away in terms of helping to prevent drug abuse, helping young people to make the right decisions, and helping people get into treatment and recovery which is evidence-based and works, rather than people overdosing and dying from this heroin and prescription drug epidemic.

It has been more than a month since we voted on this bill in the Senate. Every day it is estimated that 120 Americans die from drug overdoses. That means we have lost more than 3,800 Americans to drug overdoses since the legislation passed the Senate. We can't wait. We have to move, and we have to move quickly on this because it is an epidemic.

The experts say that from 2000 to 2014, the rate of overdose deaths doubled, leaving nearly half a million Americans dead from drug overdoses. That is why we call it an epidemic.

In Ohio alone, we have lost 160 Ohioans since the Senate passed CARA. Since 2007, drug overdoses have killed more Ohioans than car accidents. Car accidents used to be the No. 1 cause of accidental deaths in Ohio, and now it is drug overdoses. It is probably true in your State too.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, Ohio now has the fifth highest overdose death rate in the country—top five, not something to be proud of. Statewide, overdose deaths more than tripled from 1999 to 2010. We have been told that over 200,000 Ohioans are addicted to opioids right now. It is not slowing down. Unfortunately, this crisis continues, and therefore our response cannot slow down. In fact, it needs to speed up.

Washington is not going to solve this problem. It will be solved in our communities back home, but we can help. We can be better partners, and that is what the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, does. It makes Washington a better partner to be able to save lives.

Last week I talked about how it is affecting one of our cities in Ohio—Cleveland, OH. I would like to update everybody here and my colleagues in the House about what is happening in Cleveland, OH. From March 10, which was the day we passed CARA, to March 27, the latest date for which we have statistics, 29 people died from overdoses, and that is in one 17-day period in one city. Over the course of one long weekend during that period, eight men and four women died of overdoses. During one long weekend in one city, 12 Ohioans overdosed, which included a 21-year-old and a 64-year-old. Some of the victims were White, some of the victims were African American, some of the victims were from the suburbs, and some of the victims from were from the inner city. This is affecting all ages, all races, all backgrounds, and all ZIP Codes.

Some of you may have heard the story of Jeremy Wilder. He is from Portsmouth, OH, one of the areas that is hardest hit in Ohio.

In Portsmouth, OH, we had a townhall meeting 6 years ago. I brought in the drug czar and law enforcement officials to deal with the prescription drug epidemic that was exploding at that point. As we made more progress on prescription drugs, heroin started to come in, which is a cheaper alternative, and unfortunately more and more people got into the grip of that heroin addiction.

Jeremy Wilder of Portsmouth, OH, said he became addicted to heroin and sold drugs to pay for his own use. He told National Public Radio this:

I sold dope to cops, I sold dope to lawyers, I sold dope to doctors. I had a cop that used to drive me to my drug connection—rich kids. I had two good friends that were very wealthy, and because of their addiction, their parents have nothing today because their children just drained them.

That was on National Public Radio.

There is no demographic, no State, no city, no county that is safe from this epidemic.

One of the big issues we have now in Ohio is heroin laced with what is called fentanyl, which is an even more powerful drug. In 2013, five people in Cleveland died of overdoses of fentanyl, which we are told is up to 100 times more potent than heroin, depending on the fentanyl. In 2014, that number increased by more than 700 percent. So from 2013 to 2014, a 700-percent increase to 37 people dying. Last year, by the way, that number more than doubled to 89 people dying of fentanyl overdoses.

Over the weekend—4 weeks after the Senate passed CARA—in the middle of the day, a man overdosed and died at a McDonald's in a suburban community

outside of Cleveland in front of a lot of people, and there was a lot of media coverage as a result.

In Franklin County, annual overdose deaths have nearly quadrupled in the last decade.

In Toledo, we lost 214 people to overdoses last year—a 50-percent increase in just 1 year. We think now that some 10,000 people in the area are addicted to heroin or opioids.

People in Akron have been heartbroken over the story of Andrew Frye. Andrew's mom was a heroin addict. Andrew, his mom, and his grandmother all did heroin. Last week, Andrew's mom found him dead at the age of 16 in a Summit County hotel room. That was his last week, 16 years old.

Summit County, by the way, where Akron is located, has seen its overdose death rate double in just 5 years.

I think we get the picture. This is clearly a growing epidemic. It is a problem that must be addressed. As I have said, no ZIP Code, no congressional district is safe from this threat. In Ohio, we understand that. Just in the last few weeks, there have been summits on this issue in Cincinnati, in Middletown, in Cedarville, OH. Again, suburban, rural, and inner city communities are all affected.

On March 23, nearly 2 weeks after CARA passed, the Franklin County coroner, Dr. Anahi Ortiz, convened the Franklin County Opiate Crisis Summit. She says she has seen children as young as 14 die of drug overdoses. She has seen toddlers and seniors alike die of overdoses as the coroner in that community.

There is a sense of urgency across Ohio about this, a sense that it has gotten out of control. It is in the headlines. People understand it. Washington could use that sense of urgency too. Communities are taking action. Ohio is taking action. Other States are taking action. The Senate has taken action by a 94-to-1 vote. That means it is now time for the House of Representatives to take action. Right now, the House version of CARA has 113 cosponsors.

This bill was written together with us, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, to ensure that we could get this legislation through to the President for signature and get it out to our communities to begin helping to avoid not just these overdose deaths but all the dislocations occurring because of this epidemic, all the families and all the communities that are being torn apart and devastated. Prosecutors in Ohio told me 80 percent of crime is related to this opiate addiction issue.

I know the House majority leader has said he wants the House to take on this drug epidemic and pass legislation sometime this month. I appreciate that, and I know he is sincere. I watched the Republican weekly address by Congressman BOB DOLD of Illinois. He did a very good job. It is clear to me that he is passionate about this issue, and I appreciate his advocacy on behalf of those who need our help. But I would say that I didn't notice any hearings or markups this week.

We passed this legislation in the Senate. It has been subject to all kinds of scrutiny and hearings, and it passed with a 94-to-1 vote. Are there other ideas? Of course there are, and that is fine. But we know these ideas work: better prevention; better education; more people in treatment and in recovery that is actually evidenced-based, and it works; helping police officers to have the Narcan they need to save lives—this miracle drug that can stop an overdose from turning into a death; helping to ensure that prescription drugs are taken off the bathroom shelves; stopping this overprescribing by having a drug-monitoring program because most people who are hooked on heroin started with prescription drugs. We know these things. This legislation does this.

It provides around $80 million in additional funding going forward. That funding is needed, again, to be a partner with State and local governments and nonprofits, not to take their place. We know this.

Let's get this legislation passed. Let's move this legislation separately. It can be sent to the President's desk next week. We can begin to make progress now. If there are other ideas, that is great; send them over here and we will work on them. We will work on our own ideas. There is always more to do on this issue. Unfortunately, there is always more to do.

We know the bill we passed here works. We know it is bicameral, and we know it has cosponsorship in the House to be able to get it done. We hope the House will simply put CARA on the floor, pass it by a large bipartisan margin, just as the Senate did, and get it to the President's desk for his signature. This is close to being a historic achievement for this Congress and, much more importantly, for the American people. It is really one vote away—one vote away—on the floor of the House of Representatives.

I will tell my colleagues why it is going to pass. It is going to pass because Senators from every State in the Union representing every single congressional district supported this bill. It has the support, more importantly, from groups all over the country, including 130 different organizations, stakeholders, the people who represent those who are in the trenches dealing with treatment, in the trenches dealing with prevention. Our law enforcement community—the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association—they all endorse this legislation. These groups understand what is needed, and they want this help now.

This is a unique opportunity for us to move forward. In this political year, in this partisan atmosphere, this is one issue that should not have any partisanship to it at all. It should just get done.

Senator WHITEHOUSE and I crafted this legislation together, again working with others in the Chamber, as we talked about earlier. We drafted it with a lot of different stakeholders from around the country, holding five forums on various aspects of this debate. These forums were here in Washington, but we brought in experts from all over the country, knowing that is where the best ideas are going to be.

The best practices around the country are represented in the legislation. We have done this. We have done the factfinding. We have consulted with the experts—with the doctors, law enforcement, the patients in recovery, with the drug experts in the Obama administration, including the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, including the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice. We brought in people from all over, and they agree that this is where we can make progress and make progress now.

That work is important. It should not be ignored. But much more important is the fact that people out there are waiting for us. They are waiting for us to act. Thousands of veterans, pregnant women, and first responders are waiting because this legislation affects all of them. Every single one of these groups would benefit from CARA, and they want it now.

Think about the peace of mind we could give parents by expanding prevention and educational efforts to prevent prescription and opioid abuse and the use of heroin so that their kids don't make that tragic mistake of experimenting one time—one time—which is sometimes all it takes. CARA could give them some peace of mind.

CARA would increase drug disposal sites to keep these medications—these prescription drugs and pain killers—from getting into the wrong hands. We are already told by the Centers for Disease Control that the amount of prescription opioids sold in the United States nearly quadrupled since 1999; yet there has not been an overall change in the amount of pain Americans report. So how do we explain this dramatic increase in prescriptions? Some of these drugs are being abused, or sold on the street to addicts. A survey in 2013 found that 4.5 million Americans use opioids for nonmedical purposes. CARA would help make sure that prescription drugs don't get into the wrong hands. And set up the drug-monitoring program to better know who is getting these drugs and why and be able to stop the inappropriate use.

CARA would create law enforcement task forces to combat heroin and methamphetamine and expand the availability of naloxone and Narcan to our

law enforcement and first responders. They know how important that is. They know that if they had more training and more availability, they could save more lives. Again, that is why law enforcement, including the Fraternal Order of Police, supports this legislation. Thank God we have them out there. If you talk to your police officers and firefighters, you will find that they are doing this work every single day. They are intervening and saving lives every single day in your community.

They know that this addiction epidemic is driving lots of other crime too. It causes thefts, violence, and human trafficking. Last month in Columbus, I met with a group of trafficking victims. These were women. They all told me the same thing, which is that their pimps, their traffickers, got them hooked on heroin and then trafficked them, and in each case they were trafficked on this Web site: backpage.com. This drug issue and human trafficking are definitely related.

We are told by law enforcement that so much of the crime—the majority of the crime in our State has been driven by this drug addiction.

There are so many heartbreaking stories, but there are also stories of hope. I have heard them firsthand. I have met people who have been in recovery, who have made it through to the other side. So part of what this legislation is saying is that this addiction issue is an illness. Addiction is an illness and, like other illnesses, needs to be treated that way. It is a disease. But also, part of our legislation is saying that there is hope. We have seen where treatment and recovery that is evidenced-based can work to get people's lives back on track, to bring families back together.

I have heard so many stories. I was in a treatment center in Athens, OH, a couple of weeks ago meeting with women who are now reunited with their children for the first time in years because they have taken the brave and courageous step to get into treatment. This grip of addiction is very difficult. It is very difficult to escape from, but they have done it. They are now in long-term recovery. They are back at work. They have the dignity and self-respect that come with taking care of their family and being at work.

On March 29, 19 days after we passed CARA, the President spoke at the National Prescription Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit in Atlanta, GA. At that summit we heard from Crystal Oertle of Shelby, OH. She told her story of trying Vicodin because someone offered it to her. She became addicted because she tried it once. Eventually she needed something stronger and stronger, and pills weren't always available and they were more expensive. Heroin was more readily available and cheaper, so she started using heroin. She would drive an hour to Columbus, OH, with her 2-year-old daughter every day to get her heroin. Her addiction drove her to theft. Her family supported her and begged her to get help. She is now being treated. She is more than 1 year sober. She is part of an outreach program, the Urban Minorities Alcohol and Abuse Outreach Program. She is taking opiate blockers, drugs that actually block the effects of opiates. This is exciting new medication. She is getting counseling. She is part of a support group with other people in treatment. It is working. It is working for her, and it is working for many other Americans. She is dedicating herself to eliminating the stigma around addiction to get more people to step forward and to get into treatment because she knows that if you treat addiction like other diseases, it will have an impact on that stigma, more people will come forward, and more people will be able to get their lives back on track.

There is hope. Addiction is treatable. We are told that 9 out of 10 people who need treatment aren't getting it. Again, this is one reason CARA is so important: It will get more people into treatment.

As I said before, I take the House leadership at their word when they say they would like to move this legislation and move it through regular order. I understand that, but I will say this: They need to move and they need to move quickly because of the urgency of this issue, because of the fact that in their communities and in the communities represented here on the Senate floor, which is every community in America—every single State here has a U.S. Senator who supports this legislation.

People are waiting. They need the help. We can provide the help. We can make the Federal Government a better partner. We can deal with this crisis.

I am going to do everything in my power to protect the people of Ohio, even if that means continuing to come out here on the floor every week and continuing to do everything I can, including making calls, as I did yesterday, over to the House of Representatives; including talking to my colleagues personally; and including telling some of these stories I have told today. People's lives are at stake. We have to move this legislation. We need to get it to the President's desk. He will sign it. And it can then begin to make a real difference for the families we represent who are so affected by this epidemic.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2200

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, yesterday many Members of the Senate came down to the floor to discuss the importance of equal pay for equal work.

Republicans remain committed to enforcing our equal pay laws and preventing discrimination. We all believe wage transparency is an important tool, and we agree that employees have a right to freely discuss their compensation without the fear of retaliation. This transparency will allow employers and employees to identify what trends or factors exist and how they are actually contributing to wage disparities.

No meaningful change to overcoming the opportunity gap can occur without this knowledge. We have bipartisan agreement that preventing retaliation will empower American workers and will enable them to negotiate more effectively for the wages that they have earned. Protecting employees from retaliation is an issue that all of us, Democrats and Republicans, can agree on. Today we have a unique opportunity to pass a bill that will strengthen our Nation's equal pay laws for the first time in over 50 years. Today we have a chance to make a difference for American workers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 278, S. 2200. I ask consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 862

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the bill my colleague from Nebraska is asking to bring to the floor falls far short of closing the wage gap. I want to speak for a few minutes about why. At the end of my remarks, I have a unanimous consent request.

If we really want to offer working women solutions for wage discrimination, we should instead pass Senator MIKULSKI's Paycheck Fairness Act because today women across the country make just 79 cents for every $1 a man makes. This is an issue that Democrats have been focused on for years. I am glad at least some Republicans finally recognize there is a wage gap problem, and I welcome their support for fixing this systemic problem. Unfortunately, the Republican proposal that is offered today will not provide the solutions working women need.

Many companies prohibit workers from discussing their pay. So if a woman talks with her male colleague about their salary and discovers there is a wage gap, her employer could fire her or retaliate in some other way. The Republican bill would make it illegal for an employer to retaliate against workers for discussing salary but only when those conversations are for the express purpose of finding out if the employer is providing equal pay for equal work.

Nonretaliation is only one small part of the wage gap problem. It doesn't provide nearly enough protections to actually make a difference in closing the pay gap. In today's workplace, many workers find out about pay discrimination by accident. Maybe they see a spreadsheet that was left on a copy machine or maybe a male colleague's salary comes up in casual conversation, but in these circumstances, any worker who attempts to address the problem would have no protections from retaliation under this bill. The only way to qualify for these limited protections is if a woman uses the magic words that pass a legal test when discussing equal pay with her colleagues.

It is even worse than that. This bill can give workers a false sense of security that their conversations about equal pay are protected, when instead women can still be reprimanded or, worse, lose their jobs altogether for finding out their male colleagues earn more than them. So this Republican bill wouldn't even solve the one narrow problem it is trying to address.

Thankfully, we do have a bill that would address the wage gap. It is the Paycheck Fairness Act that Senator MIKULSKI has championed. The Paycheck Fairness Act would make it unlawful for employers to retaliate against workers for discussing pay, period. It wouldn't involve a complicated legal test like the Republican proposal, and the Paycheck Fairness Act would help close the wage gap in so many important ways.

If a woman finds out her male colleagues are paid more for the same work, the Paycheck Fairness Act backs her up. It would empower women to negotiate for equal pay, it would close loopholes in the Equal Pay Act, and it would create strong incentives for employers to provide equal pay.

I want to make one thing very clear. The Republican bill being offered today has zero Democratic cosponsors. It is not bipartisan. By contrast, before Republicans politicized equal pay for equal work, the Paycheck Fairness Act actually passed the House of Representatives in both 2008 and 2009 with bipartisan support. Unfortunately, since then, some Republicans have decided to make the wage gap about politics and blocked it in the Senate. So today I am glad Republicans do agree with us that this is an urgent problem. We need real solutions to address it.

That is why I object to the Fischer bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the Paycheck Fairness Act that would tackle pay discrimination head-on.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 862, the Paycheck Fairness Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

I have heard many times from my friends on the other side of the aisle that my proposal doesn't go far enough. Respectfully, I believe some of the provisions of the Paycheck Fairness Act go too far. I take issue with the accusation from those who wrongly assert that my bill will make it harder for women to discuss wage discrimination. I understand that my nonretaliation language is different from the Paycheck Fairness Act, but the intent and the effect are the same. My bill will protect women and men from retaliation when they learn about or seek out information about how their compensation compares with other employees.

It is clear there is common ground to make progress on equal pay when it comes to wage transparency. Every Senate Republican is on board with this proposal. It is a needed update to our equal pay laws. In 2014, every Senate Democrat welcomed a more limited but similar Executive order that was issued by President Obama that pertained only to Federal workers.

My Workplace Advancement Act goes further. It protects all Americans. Moreover, it is bipartisan. Five Senate Democrats are already on the record in support of this plan. So why do my friends from the other side of the aisle not now support my bill?

Colleagues, this is an issue we can agree on. It is clear my legislation enjoys bipartisan support, and it can make meaningful progress for American women. While I am disappointed in today's objection to my bill, I hope we can move beyond sound bites because this issue is too important to politicize year after year.

The Paycheck Fairness Act that my colleague speaks of will inhibit employers' ability to establish merit-based pay systems, and it will inhibit employees' ability to negotiate flexible work arrangements.

The Independent Women's Forum recently conducted a study on what matters to women when they choose a job. They found that flexibility was a common theme. Whether providing flexible scheduling or offering alternatives like telecommuting, women value flexibility, and they value it at about the same level as receiving 10 paid vacation and sick days or receiving $5,000 to $10,000 in extra income. This is important to women. We should be doing it.

The survey showed what many of us already know. Every situation is different, and by providing more options, workers can negotiate work arrangements that can suit their own particular needs.

With these concerns in mind, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mrs. FISCHER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with the Senators from Minnesota and Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, in the months since world powers reached an agreement to block Iran's pathway to building a nuclear weapon, Iran's behavior has given the international community reasons for both some optimism and continuing, serious concern. The positive news has been that Iran has taken some real steps to restrain its nuclear programs. It has disabled two of its short-term pathways to producing weapons-grade material by shipping nearly its entire stockpile of enriched uranium out of the country and by filling its plutonium reactor with concrete.

Iran has reduced its number of functioning uranium-enrichment centrifuges by two-thirds, and the country has provided international inspectors 24/7 access to continuously monitor all of Iran's declared facilities. These are positive developments. Yet, at the same time, Iran continues to engage in deeply concerning activities, such as support for terrorism and efforts to foment instability in the Middle East, to conduct illegal ballistic missile tests, and to continue to violate its citizens' most basic human rights.

Today, my colleagues and I come to the floor to draw attention to some of the more grave, more concerning developments of recent weeks. I am honored to have the company of my friend, the senior Senator from Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, who joins me in addressing why Russia's refusal to condemn

Iran's bad behavior—and, in fact, in some ways encouraging it—poses huge security risks for our allies in the Middle East.

I would now like to yield, if I could, to my colleague from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to express my gratitude to my friend from Delaware, who is truly an expert on this issue, as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. He has been a leader in this area, and I am delighted and honored to join him on the floor today to discuss the ever-evolving and concerning cooperation between Russia and Iran, particularly in recent months. He has very eloquently and persuasively described a number of the concerns that we share. I want to associate myself with what he has said here this afternoon.

As we all know, Iran has conducted multiple ballistic tests in the last several months. That is beyond question. I have continuously condemned both Iran's ongoing ballistic program and Iran's failure to uphold its international obligations under the U.N. Security Council resolutions by calling for sanctions enforcement at the Armed Services Committee hearings and in letters to the administration and in public statements.

We have been steadfast in this effort. While the administration has heeded my calls by enforcing sanctions against 11 entities and individuals supporting Iran's missile program, clearly more must be done. The United States and the international community must vigilantly enforce sanctions on Iran's ballistic development, as well as its state sponsorship of terrorism and human rights violations which continue day in and day out.

These steps must be taken to hold this regime accountable and prevent Tehran from believing it can violate international law with impunity. Nothing less is at stake here than that principle. Yet Russia has refused to punish Iran. As a world power and permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, Russia can and must be doing more to counter Iran's destructive deeds, including ensuring that Iran abides by U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231.

This resolution calls on Iran ''not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches, using ballistic missile technology.'' That is a quote. That mandate applies for up to 8 years from the JCPOA's adoption day, October 18, 2005.

In March, one of Iran's defiant tests notoriously involved a missile that had a disturbing and alarming message scrawled on the side: ''Israel must be wiped off the face of the Earth.'' This explicit message, by the way, written not only in Persian but in Hebrew, was designed to directly threaten Israel. That is hardly speculation.

It should not be tolerated by any Nation. Even worse than Russia's refusal to condemn Iran's ballistic missile tests, is that Russia has essentially rewarded Iran for its bad behavior by continuing—even increasing—its cooperation with Iran through military deals.

In February, Iran's Defense Minister visited Moscow to discuss purchasing an array of weapons. Any sale of major combat systems to Iran in the next 5 years would require approval by the U.N. Security Council under Resolution 2231. But the United States has made it clear that such a sale will not be supported. Therefore, it will not be approved by the U.N. Security Council.

Media reports in recent weeks have highlighted Russia's shipment of parts of an S–300 air defense system to Iran. In addition, Russia and Iran are supposedly in talks over Sukhoi fighter jets. If such sales are finalized and the systems are delivered, Russia would be directly defying U.N. Resolution 2231.

Supplying weapons to Iran is particularly dangerous and potentially damaging because it is not done in a vacuum. Russia's growing partnership has far-reaching ramifications because Hezbollah, Iran's terrorist proxy in Lebanon, also benefits, at least indirectly, from Russian arms and military operational experience in Syria.

The flow of support from Russia to Iran to Hezbollah feeds into yet another threat that deeply concerns me and our greatest ally in the Middle East and one of our greatest in the world, Israel. Coupled with continued chaos in the region, the Russian-Iranian cooperation, which strengthens Hezbollah, only adds to the urgency and importance of ensuring that Israel remains secure, stable, and independent.

Last November, Senator BENNET and I co-led a letter to the President concerning the need to renew the memorandum of understanding on U.S. military assistance—the MOU, as it is known—with Israel to help that nation prepare for, respond to, and defend against threats in an uncertain regional environment and to ensure its qualitative military edge. There is nothing original or novel about that policy or principle.

The current MOU provides $30 billion in assistance to Israel through fiscal year 2018. As threats in the region continue to evolve, including Iran's malign influence, reinforced and enabled by Russia, the administration must engage at the highest levels to continue to develop a shared understanding of threats confronting Israel by strengthening the MOU that serves as the foundation of our bilateral security efforts. Those efforts support not only Israel, they are in the national interests of the United States of America. Indeed, they are essential to our national interests in the region and in the world.

While negotiations remain ongoing between the United States and Israel regarding the historic renewal of the MOU, I want to express that I continue to support making the MOU a truly transformational investment to deepen the U.S.-Israel strategic partnership. It is based on a shared understanding of the environment that confronts Israel and the United States together. Russia is only exacerbating the threats in the region to our partnership—the United States and Israel—as well as to each of our nations.

The Russian-Iranian cooperation legitimizes and strengthens Tehran's adventurism, as well as the Assad regime in Syria, and threatens international security. Moscow's affair with Tehran and beyond has brought Russian military might to a network of terrorism that we must continue to monitor closely and work to combat for the safety and security of the United States. It is our security and it is Israel's security that is at stake, and the entire international community's security.

I again thank my colleague from Delaware for giving me this time and his patience in hearing me out. I look forward to working with him and other colleagues who are concerned about the Russian-Iranian cooperation. They are certainly deeply concerning. I thank him again for his leadership and vision on this topic.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Connecticut—who has been determined, engaged, and thoughtful—for his wise words today and for his persistence and his efforts in making sure that our colleagues on both sides of the aisle are aware of alarming developments in the region and continuing to do everything we can in a responsible and bipartisan way to support Israel's security through the MOU, which he has referenced and on which he led a letter about the importance of a prompt and supportive renegotiation of that MOU, and calling attention to Russia's destabilizing actions.

As Senator BLUMENTHAL just referenced, recent reports convey that Iran is reporting that Russia has already delivered parts of this S–300 weapons system—a defense system, they claim, but a weapons system that would significantly change the regional balance of power.

I again thank my colleague from Connecticut for being shoulder-to-shoulder with me on the floor today and in the months and years behind us and the months and years ahead of us because it will be a longstanding challenge to keep the Members of this body and folks in Washington focused on the very real threat to America's security and Israel's security that is presented by Iran and its actions.

As Senator BLUMENTHAL mentioned, when it comes to countering Iranian

aggression in the Middle East, a number of Russia's recent actions do threaten to do more harm than good.

Last summer, when the United States came together with the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Russia to reach an agreement with Iran to block their pathway to build a nuclear weapon, the international community was clear that the success of this deal relied on every signatory keeping its word and doing its part to prevent Iran from violating the deal.

The responsibility to enforce the terms of the JCPOA goes hand-in-hand with an understanding that world powers must also push back on Iran's bad behavior outside the four corners of this agreement—specifically, its support for terrorism, its continued illegal ballistic missile tests, and its human rights violations.

Despite its participation in the negotiations that led to the agreement, Russia reportedly plans to sell missile systems to the still-dangerous Iranian regime, as well as—as referenced by Senator BLUMENTHAL—advanced fighter jets. Russia also continues to block the U.N. Security Council from taking action—necessary and responsible action—after Iran's recent illegal missile tests, which contravene its commitments under U.N. Security Council resolution 2231.

Despite the divisions that have brought Congress to a standstill in recent years, I am confident that we all agree on one thing: that Iran must not be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon. I continue to believe the JCPOA represents the least bad option for blocking Iran's pathway to a nuclear bomb.

In recent months, as I have said, Russia has repeatedly undermined the spirit of that agreement, using the JCPOA as an excuse to proceed with dangerous and provocative sales of allegedly defensive equipment to Iran. According to news reports, as I said, Russia has begun delivering parts of the S–300 surface-to-air missile system to Iran. Although it is unclear how much of that system has already been delivered, the five S–300 systems Russia has promised to Iran would contain 40 launchers, which could shoot down missiles or aircraft as far as 90 miles away. One version of the S–300 currently in use by the Russian military can travel nearly 250 miles at five times the speed of sound. In a worst-case scenario, if Iran backs out of the nuclear deal, this S–300 system would substantially limit the international community's options to act to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

That is not all, though. Recent news reports indicate Russia and Iran are actively negotiating an agreement to allow Iran to purchase an unknown number of Sukhoi Su-30 fighter jets—similar to the one pictured here—some of the most advanced fighter jets available in the world. Although it is unclear what specific version of this aircraft Iran is seeking to obtain, these advanced weapons would significantly enhance the capabilities of Iran's Air Force.

Currently, Iran fields an outdated mix of antiquated Russian, Iraqi, American, and Chinese-built aircraft. Many of these planes date from the Cold War. One particularly advanced variety of this Russian jet, for example, is armed with air-to-air, anti-ship, and land attack missiles and bombs—precision munitions that would significantly increase the performance capabilities of the Iranian Air Force. They could target other fighter aircraft, stationary military facilities, and naval vessels. In the hands of Iran, these fighter jets would fundamentally change the balance of power in the Middle East and pose a threat to U.S. facilities and our local allies.

More concerning, according to some reports, Iran is seeking not just to buy these aircraft but also to license their production in Iran, which would greatly strengthen Iran's industrial base and its technical knowledge. It would also leave the international community with even fewer options to prevent Iranian access to this technology in the future.

At a recent Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, Tom Shannon, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, said the United States would ''block the approval of fighter'' aircraft sales from Russia to Iran. I urge the Obama administration to use all diplomatic measures available to it to ensure that we fulfill Under Secretary Shannon's commitment.

As my colleagues know, Iran could use these weapons to threaten U.S. assets in the Persian Gulf region, challenge the safety of our vital ally Israel and other close partners, or to protect illicit nuclear sites within Iran's borders. These threats are not just hypothetical. Iran remains a rogue and unpredictable regime that supports terrorism in the region and is publically committed to the destruction of valley.

The international community cannot stand by while Iran continues to threaten our allies and destabilize the Middle East. Its illegal ballistic missile tests in March served as yet another example that the Iranian regime is not a responsible member of the international community. These tests help Iran to further develop missiles capable of reaching most of the Middle East and even parts of Europe, and they destabilize the region and belie Iran's supposedly peaceful intentions, stated often by both its President and Foreign Minister. They claim Iran's intentions are to serve as a responsible member of the international community, but these provocative missile tests clearly contradict their commitments under U.N. Security Council resolution 2231 and demand a response.

Last week I met with Vitaly Churkin, the Russian Ambassador to the United Nations. While Ambassador Churkin reiterated Russia's commitment to the JCPOA and our shared goal of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, I left our conversation convinced that Russia will continue to stand in the way of the international community's efforts to penalize Iran for its ballistic missile tests.

Russia's military sales to Iran and intransigence at the U.N. Security Council are disappointing, to say the least, in light of Russia's agreement to the terms of this nuclear deal and the importance of all of us working together in the international community to constrain Iran's bad behavior.

The challenge for American diplomacy is to convince Russia that its military sales to Iran, its refusal to engage in multilateral action to punish Iranian ballistic missile tests, and its hesitancy to sanction Iran for supporting terrorist groups harm not only American interests but Russian interests as well.

Enabling Iran to strengthen its military capabilities makes it easier for Iran in the future to one day return to an effort to develop a nuclear weapon. Ballistic missile tests foment instability in the whole Persian Gulf and southern Europe, both of which lie close to Russia. As we have tragically seen in recent weeks, the scourge of modern terrorism does not abide by international borders and poses a real threat to Russia as well.

In the coming months and years, the United States must continue to pursue action at the Security Council and work with our European allies to punish Iran for its bad behavior.

With that, I yield to my friend the senior Senator from Minnesota, who has just joined me for the colloquy. Senator KLOBUCHAR has joined me to talk about the importance of continuing to work to hold Iran accountable under the JCPOA, to urge a need to confirm senior national security nominees, and the imperative to support our regional partners, especially of our ally Israel.

Senator KLOBUCHAR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I thank Senator COONS for his work. As he stated, Russia's actions are very harmful in the effort to bring peace in the Middle East. Russia reportedly plans to sell advanced aircraft and missile systems to Iran, as Senator COONS noted, and may begin making these shipments in the next few days. These weapons could be used to destabilize the region and threaten the security of our allies, especially Israel.

Russia also continues to block the U.N. Security Council from taking action in response to Iran's recent illegal missile tests. These actions can only

embolden Iran and encourage Iran to disregard its commitment.

Russia, as a JCPOA country, a world power, and a member of the U.N. Security Council, needs to be convinced that it is in its best interests and in the interests of the international community that Iran stick to its commitments under the JCPOA. I thank Senator COONS for making those points.

As he noted, I also stress the need to enforce Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and also to confirm nominees for positions vital to national security and to support our allies in the Mid East. Preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is one of the most important objectives of our national security policy.

I strongly advocated for and supported the economic sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table over the last few years. Those sanctions resulted in a nuclear nonproliferation agreement between Iran and the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China that was implemented in January. But our work is clearly not done. As we have seen over the past few months, Iran continues to conduct ballistic missile tests and continues to support terrorism and threatening regional stability. Now we are reading news reports, as I noted, that Russia is selling a long-range surface-to-air missile defense system to Iran.

All of this means we have to remain vigilant in our monitoring and in our verification. That is why I sponsored the Iran Policy Oversight Act and encourage my colleagues to pass it. The bill does three important things to hold Iran accountable. First, it allows Congress to more quickly impose economic sanctions against Iran's terrorist activity. Second, the bill expands military aid to Israel. Third, the bill ensures that agencies charged with monitoring Iran have the resources they need.

We also have to reauthorize the Iran Sanctions Act in order to ensure that we can hold Iran accountable if it violates the deal. The Iran Sanctions Act is up for reauthorization this December and has been a pivotal component of U.S. sanctions against Iran's energy sector, and its application has been steadily expanded to other Iranian industries. Given Iran's history, we can anticipate that it will continue to test the boundaries of international agreements, and we have to be ready to respond when it does so.

In summary, we must hold Iran accountable every step of the way. Imposing harsh sanctions, as the administration must do, against those responsible for Iran's ballistic missile program, which threatened regional and global security, is, of course, a good start, but we must continue to sanction Iran's ballistic missile program as well as its sponsorship of terrorism and abuse of human rights.

Any person or business involved in helping Iran obtain illicit weapons should be banned from doing business with the United States, have their assets and financial operations immediately frozen, and have their travel restricted. Minimizing the threat Iran poses also means working to ensure that the money flowing into Iran now that nuclear sanctions are lifted is not used to further destabilize the region and spread terrorism. We must monitor the flow of terrorist financing and use every tool available to punish bad actors who seek to do harm. But it is also important for Iran to understand that we will not hesitate to snap back sanctions if Iran fails to comply its commitments under the JCPOA. Sanctions were effective at getting Iran to the table and they will continue to be a tool that allows the United States and our allies to minimize the threat posed by Iran.

We must also continue to work with our partners, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the European Union, and Russia to ensure that the agreement is strictly enforced. Iran must know that if it violates the rules, the response will be certain, swift, and severe. As Senator COONS mentioned, when the agreement was reached, its success is ultimately dependent upon every country keeping its word to keep Iran from violating its commitments under the agreement. We need the support of the international community to ensure that Iran sticks to its commitments. As we just heard from Senator COONS, Russia's actions are harmful to this effort.

Russia reportedly plans to sell advanced aircraft and missile systems to Iran and may begin making these shipments in the next few days. These weapons could be used to destabilize the region and threaten the security of our allies, especially Israel. Russia also continues to block the U.N. Security Council from taking action in response to Iran's recent illegal missile tests. These actions can only embolden Iran and encourage Iran to disregard its commitments. Russia, as a JCPOA country, a world power, and a member of the U.N. Security Council, needs to be convinced that it is in the best interest of the international community that Iran sticks to its commitments under the JCPOA.

We also need to make sure that we fill vacant frontline positions that hamper our ability to protect our country and work with our allies. While I was pleased that the Senate Banking Committee voted 14–8 last month to approve the nomination of Adam Szubin as undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the Department of Treasury, the fact remains that it should not have taken 325 days for the committee to vote. This position is essential to national security as it tracks the source of terrorist funding around the world and should be filled as soon as possible.

We cannot delay confirmations if the reasoning has nothing to do with policy and everything to do with politics. Senator SHAHEEN came to the floor several times to call for swift action on his confirmation, and I join her to urge my Senate colleagues to vote on his confirmation as soon as possible. Our allies and our enemies need to see a united and functional American frontline. And in order to hold Iran accountable, we have to have these positions filled. It is that simple.

The United States needs to limit Iran's destabilizing activity in the region. We need to give our allies in the region the support they need. As the Administration negotiates a new Memorandum of Understanding for security assistance to Israel, I, along with many of my colleagues, support a substantially enhanced agreement to help provide Israel the resources it requires to defend itself and preserve its qualitative military edge. Israel remains America's strongest ally in this troubled region. A strong and secure Israel remains a central pillar of our national strategy to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East.

Those of us who supported the Iran nuclear agreement have a special responsibility to ensure that it works. In fact, this whole Senate has a responsibility, regardless of whether Members supported it or not. It is in the best interest of our country. We cannot shirk from our duties and we must be vigilant. We owe it to the American people, to Israel, and to our allies.

Our mission here is clear: We must protect our own citizens by exercising our authority to enact strong legislation to ensure that Iran does not cheat on its international commitments. Because we know from experience that Iran will test the international community, we must be ready to respond when it does. We must also minimize the threat Iran poses to our citizens and the world by doing everything in our power to stop Iran from funding the world's terrorists.

It is critical that we take additional steps to stop countries like Iran from funding terrorism and destabilizing the world. Stopping Iran's support of terrorism protects us here at home, but it also helps millions of refugees fleeing Syria, the children that are starving in cities like Madaya, and the families fleeing mortar fire in Yemen. Our values of justice, democracy, and freedom for all demand nothing less.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I want to thank Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUMENTHAL for joining me in this colloquy, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 2012

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 2012 and that it be in order to call up the following amendments en bloc, and that the amendments be called up and reported by number: amendments Nos. 3276, Cantwell, striking certain provisions; 3302, as modified, Klobuchar, modifying a provision; 3055, Flake; 3050, Flake; 3237, Hatch; 3308, Murkowski; 3286, as modified, Heller; 3075, Vitter; 3168, Portman-Shaheen; 3292, as modified, Shaheen; 3155, Heinrich; 3270, Manchin; 3313, as modified, Cantwell; 3214, Cantwell; 3266, Vitter; 3310, Sullivan; 3317, Heinrich; 3265, as modified, Vitter; 3012, Kaine; 3290, Alexander-Merkley; 3004, Gillibrand-Cassidy; 3233, as modified, Warner; 3239, Thune; 3221, Udall-Portman; 3203, Coons; 3309, as modified, Portman; 3229, Flake; 3251, Inhofe.

I ask consent that immediately following the reporting of the amendments, it be in order for the Senate to vote on these amendments en bloc, as well as the Murkowski amendment No. 2963, with no intervening action or debate; further, that it be in order to call up the following amendments en bloc and that the amendments be called up and reported by number: amendments Nos. 3234, as modified, Murkowski-Cantwell; 3202, Isakson-Bennet; 3175, Burr; 3210, Lankford; 3311, Boozman; 3312, Udall; 3787, Paul; that there be 2 hours of debate, equally divided in the usual form, on the amendments concurrently; that no further amendments to these amendments be in order; and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the amendments in the order listed, with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for adoption of each of the amendments with no intervening action or debate; further, that following the disposition of the Paul amendment No. 3787, the Senate vote on the Cassidy amendment No. 2954, with a 60-vote-affirmative threshold for adoption; that following the disposition of the Cassidy amendment, the substitute amendment No. 2953, as amended, be agreed to, and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture, upon reconsideration, on S. 2012, as amended; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of S. 2012, as amended; finally, that budget points of order not be barred by virtue of this agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. To clarify, amendments Nos. 3055 by Flake and 3229 by Flake.

Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to take a moment here to congratulate Chairman MURKOWSKI for what could best be described as a long march. Her persistence and determination to pull this very important bill together with a lot of Senators with different views at points along the way has been a really extraordinary accomplishment and, frankly, has been fun to watch because she certainly knows how to manage a bill, how to get to a conclusion, and she did that in an extraordinary fashion.

I also want to thank Senator CANTWELL, her ranking member. The two of them worked well together, and I think we are on the cusp here of something very important and very much worth doing for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am very happy we are at this point. This legislation has taken 3 years. It has been hard to get to where we are today. We can go back to a lot of hurdles that we have had to jump to get to where we are now, and we can affix blame to a lot of different people, but there is no need to do that today. We are where we are, and we should accept that with glee.

I am gratified we are able to reach this agreement, and that is an understatement. It is an important piece of legislation. Is it perfect? Of course not. But nothing we do legislatively is. We are trying to work things out through compromise. This is a good opportunity for us to show we can do that.

We have tried to move this legislation for 3 years, and I really appreciate the patience of JEANNE SHAHEEN from New Hampshire. She has worked on this and has been so disappointed so many times. I hope she feels as good as the rest of us.

I also want to thank the ranking member of the Energy Committee. She has had other responsibilities before, but those of us who have worked with Senator CANTWELL know how persistent she can be. She is tireless in advocating for what she thinks is appropriate. So I appreciate what she has done in the last few days to get us to this point.

I am grateful that we are done with this and that we are going to finish this bill. We will have to work it out timewise. It will not be the easiest thing, but we should be able to do that. We have other things we need to do. We have an appropriations bill coming up. We are going to finish with the FAA, I hope, pretty soon. I hope nobody is going to be demanding a lot of postcloture time on that.

So I would hope, Mr. President, we can use this as a pattern for what we can do in the future to get things done for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to acknowledge and thank the majority leader and the minority leader for their cooperation and their help in getting us here and specifically recognize the good work of Senator CANTWELL. You do not get to a point in this body with significant legislation if you don't have a willing partner on the other side.

We have not taken up energy reform or any real energy legislation in over 8 years now, and in those intervening 8 years, much has happened in the energy space. Our policies as they relate to energy, whether it is LNG exports or renewables, haven't advanced. And the commitment that Senator CANTWELL and I made to one another over a year ago to try to move legislation—not just to move messages but to move legislation—was a commitment that held us through a lot of hearings, a lot of discussion, a lot of debate going back and forth, but to the point where we are today with an agreement to move forward to final passage on a very significant energy bill for the country.

So I thank Senator CANTWELL, and I would also like to recognize her staff, led by Angela Becker-Dippmann, and my energy team, led by Colin Hayes, who have put in yeoman's work to get us to this point.

I would like to think we could kick this whole thing out tonight, but we are not going to be doing that. We do, however, have the glidepath forward, and I thank not only those on our respective teams but also those here on the floor who have helped us with this as well.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the University of North Dakota men's hockey team, which won a national championship last Saturday. Undoubtedly, like everybody else, the Presiding Officer was glued to his TV set watching the exciting game between the University of North Dakota men's hockey team and Quinnipiac. The UND hockey team prevailed 5 to 1 in an exciting game in front of about 20,000 fans. It was just fantastic.

So I am here to read a resolution into the record from the United States Senate congratulating the University of North Dakota men's hockey team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division I Men's Hockey Championship.

Whereas the University of North Dakota (referred to in this preamble as ''UND'')

Men's Hockey Team won the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') Division I Men's Hockey Championship Game in Tampa, Florida, on April 9, 2016, in a hard fought victory over the Quinnipiac University Bobcats of Connecticut by a score of 5 to 1;

Whereas the UND men's hockey team and Coach Brad Berry had an incredible 2015–16 season and became the first head coach to win the National Championship in his first season as head coach;

Whereas UND has won its eighth NCAA Frozen Four Championship—

Second only to Michigan. Michigan has won nine. We hope to remedy that next year and get our ninth, and then pass by the University of Michigan—

ending the season with a 34–6–4 record;

Whereas Coach Berry and his staff have instilled character and perseverance in the UND players and have done an outstanding job with the UND hockey program;

Whereas the leadership of Interim President Ed Schafer and Athletic Director Brian Faison has helped further both academic and athletic excellence at UND;

Whereas thousands of UND fans attended the championship game, reflecting the tremendous fan base of the University of North Dakota that showcases the spirit and dedication of UND hockey fans, which has helped propel the team's success; and

Whereas the 2016 NCAA Frozen Four Division I Hockey Championship was a victory not only for the UND men's hockey team, but also for the entire State of North Dakota—

We take great pride in our hockey and our tremendous UND hockey team—

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of North Dakota men's hockey team, the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Hockey champions;

(2) commends the University of North Dakota players, coaches, and staff for their hard work and dedication; and

(3) recognizes the students, alumni, and loyal fans for supporting the UND men's hockey team on their successful quest to capture another NCAA National Championship trophy for the University of North Dakota.

We are very proud of our university, of the leadership there at the university, of the coaches, the staff, and these tremendous student athletes. They conducted themselves so well both on and off the ice. They had an absolutely impressive run through the postseason.

I think Quinnipiac only lost about three games all year, so they had an incredible record. They were rated No. 1 in the country. Our hockey team came in and played a fantastic game. It was an exciting game to watch, but on both sides tremendous athletes. Congratulations to Quinnipiac on a great year and on an outstanding program.

We played Denver in the semifinals. They also had a great year. Boston College was in the other bracket. They were outstanding hockey programs. It was a great hockey tournament. There was a fantastic fan base from all the schools. Again, back to the quality of the athletes, the student athletes who were competing—great character. They handled themselves well and had great sportsmanship. It is exactly the kind of thing we like to see not only for our State but the other States that were there and the teams that were representing.

It was a great tournament all around. Also, thanks and congratulations to everyone in Tampa for hosting the tournament and doing an absolutely fantastic job. We had thousands of fans outside the arena after the game savoring the victory and having a great time. The city of Tampa and the arena could not have been more hospitable, so we want to say thank you and express our appreciation. Again, congratulations to a great team on a great year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this is the 133rd climate speech that I have delivered, and it has been an amazing week. On Saturday, the New York Times posted its cover story about dying coral reefs in our oceans. On Sunday, the cover story in the Providence Journal was about drowning salt marshes in Rhode Island. Both are the handiwork of climate change.

Even more amazing, listen to what a Koch brothers operative said last week: ''Charles has said the climate is changing. So, the climate is changing.'' That was Sheryl Corrigan speaking, of Koch Industries, the massive fuel conglomerate led by Charles and David Koch, and the Charles was Charles Koch.

She went on: ''I think he's also said, and we believe that humans have a part in that.''

Climate change is real, it seems, and manmade if even they say so.

What this really means is that the denial shtick has collapsed entirely. We saw this coming with the oil and gas CEOs. In the runup to the Paris climate summit, the chief executive officers of 10 of the world's largest oil and gas companies declared their collective support for a strong international climate change agreement.

''We are committed to playing our part,'' they professed. ''Over the coming years we will collectively strengthen our actions and investments to contribute to reducing the GHG intensity of the global energy mix.''

So if the oil and gas CEOs will not do it and now even the Koch brothers will not do it, it looks like denying climate change is no longer acceptable—even to those who most cause it.

As we know, Big Coal took another path, denying to the end, and for many players in the coal industry it really is the end. The industry is being devastated by market forces and is in precipitous decline. As I noted in my last climate speech, the Wall Street Journal reported that the ''war on coal'' was a war on coal by the natural gas industry, and the natural gas industry has won.

Appalachian Power president and CEO Charles Patton told a meeting of energy executives last fall that coal was losing a long-term contest with natural gas and wind power. Today we learned America's largest coal company, Peabody Energy, filed for bankruptcy, as Arch Coal did in January.

In recent years, one report found 26 U.S. coal companies have gone into bankruptcy. Some of the most notable bankruptcies include James River Coal and Patriot Coal Corporation, which had combined assets that totaled $4.6 billion.

Denial was not a winning strategy for the coal industry. If outright denial of manmade climate change is no longer a viable strategy, what is left? It is an old classic: Dissembling—saying one thing and doing another. The polluters say climate change is real and they say that a carbon fee makes sense, but they put their entire massive lobbying and political operations to work to prevent Congress from actually acknowledging that climate change is real or from working on legislation to establish a carbon fee—even a carbon fee that would dramatically reduce the corporate income tax rate.

For example, USA TODAY reported this week that oil titan Chevron has pumped at least $1 million into the super PAC set up to keep the Senate in the hands of the climate denial party. I don't know of a penny that Chevron has put into supporting climate action in Congress. Say one thing; do another.

A new report from the nonprofit research organization Influence Map shows that two other major oil companies, along with three of their industry trade groups, spend as much as $115 million a year to lobby against the very climate policies they publicly claim to support. Say one thing, do another.

This chart shows the streams of money from ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch Shell—whose CEO, by the way, signed the oil-and-gas Paris declaration—as well as the American Petroleum Institute, the Western States Petroleum Association, and the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association. That is Shell and that is Exxon.

This money deluge—total spent, $114 million—includes advertising and public relations, direct lobbying here in Congress and at State houses, and political contributions and electioneering. Don't think any of this goes to support a solution to climate change.

What this chart doesn't show is the dark money these corporate behemoths

funnel through phony-baloney front groups, often untraceable, to undermine public understanding of the climate crisis and to undermine action in Congress. Front groups have been testifying this very week in the Environment and Public Works Committee against climate action. Was there any pushback from Charles Koch or from the oil CEOs? No. Nor does this chart show the undisclosed fossil fuel millions dumped into our elections thanks to the regrettable Citizens United Supreme Court decision.

Academic researchers like Robert Brulle at Drexel University, Riley Dunlap at Oklahoma State University, Justin Farrell at Yale University, and Michael Mann at Penn State University, among many others, have studied and are exposing the precise dimensions and functions of the corporate climate denial machine. It is quite a piece of machinery. Investigative writers like Naomi Oreskes, Erik Conway, Naomi Klein, and Steve Coll are also on the hunt.

Jane Mayer of The New Yorker has put out an important piece of legislation—her new, aptly titled book ''Dark Money,'' about the secret but massive influence-buying of rightwing billionaires led by the infamous Koch brothers. Mayer's book catalogs the rise and the expansion into a vast array of front groups of this operation and the role in it of two of America's more shameless villains Charles and David Koch.

If you want a little more history on this unholy alliance, you can read ''Poison Tea,'' a new book out by Jeff Nesbit. Mr. Nesbit was a Republican who worked in the Bush 41 White House. He was there at the creation. He has reviewed an enormous array of documents and he has written an amazing exposé.

The Koch brothers' say one thing, do another strategy is every bit as bad as the say one thing, do another strategy of their oil and gas allies. Remember, here is what they now say:

Charles has said the climate is changing. So, the climate is changing. . . . I think he's also said, and we believe that humans have a part in that.

Again, that is the Koch Industries' rep.

Here is what they still do: They threaten that Republicans who support a carbon tax or climate regulations would ''be at a severe disadvantage in the Republican nomination process. . . . We would absolutely make that a crucial issue.''

That is the President of Americans for Prosperity, the juggernaut of the Koch brothers-backed political network, which has promised to spend, believe it or not, $750 million just in this 2016 election. What on Earth could they possibly want to spend $750 million on?

Americans for Prosperity's president also takes credit for the ''political peril'' they are proud to have created for Republicans who cross them on climate change. This threat is not subtle. Step out of line and here come the attack ads and the primary challengers all funded by the deep pockets of the fossil fuel industry, powered up by Citizens United.

The result? The issue of climate change is completely absent from the Republican campaigns. They really don't want to talk about it. Every Republican candidate has gone into silence or outright denial. Their silence or outright denial is exactly paralleled on the floor of this body.

Just this week, a bipartisan effort to extend tax incentives for renewable energy fell apart after it was reported that the Kochs and an array of their front groups told the Senate majority to cease and desist from allowing an extension of renewable tax credits the majority had already agreed to.

So down came the FAA bill compromise. Of course, the Big Oil tax credits have been baked into the Tax Code, and there is no contesting them that is allowed. We now have a field in which renewable tax credits that were agreed to are not in place, but Big Oil protects its own tax breaks as the fossil fuel industry attacks the renewable tax breaks.

Look at what fossil fuel influence has done to the business lobby groups. The Chamber of Commerce, which is probably more accurately defined now as the chamber of carbon, the American Petroleum Institute, even the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Federation of Independent Business, and the Farm Bureau—Big Oil and the Koch brothers have locked them all down. It is a wall of opposition among those groups to any sensible conversation about carbon pollution.

I have spoken before about the well-defended castle of denial constructed by the big polluters to attack and harass their opponents and to keep out the unwelcome truths of climate science. Built as it is on a foundation of lies, the denial castle is bound to crumble. We have seen cracks begin to appear in the edifice. This revelation on the part of the Koch brothers that they finally see that climate change is real and manmade is another collapse. It is a big collapse. But don't believe they are surrendering their position entirely. What we see here in Congress is that they are still fighting as hard as ever. They are just conceding some of their more extreme positions because they know some of their nonsense is now simply beyond the pale and is not acceptable. This is just a strategic retreat from a preposterous stance.

Every major scientific society in America agrees on the cause and urgency of climate change, and, I think, so do every one of our major State universities—certainly every one I have looked at—all of our National Labs, NASA, NOAA, America's national security and intelligence community, and all the corporations that signed the American Business Act on Climate Pledge, which includes major corporations from a lot of our Republican colleagues' home States. That is a lot of information to deny and ignore, and that is an awful lot of legitimate people to claim our part of the hoax.

Here it comes—the whole structure of deceit and denial erected by the fossil fuel interest is creaking and crumbling. More than a dozen attorneys general are starting to poke and probe. My Republican colleagues may want to consider getting out of the way of this because the day is coming—and soon—when the whole denier castle collapses, and that day cannot come too soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK AND THE JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, every year in April, we pause to observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and this year marks its 35th anniversary. Since 1981, in communities across the Nation, people have observed this week with candlelight vigils and public rallies to renew our commitment to crime victims and their families. Vermonters have always banded together to help crime victims and their families. That is just who we are, and I am proud of that long tradition. It is vitally important that we continue to recognize the needs of these survivors and work together to promote victims' rights and services.

One of our most important tools to do so is the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 and the crime victims fund that it created. I strongly supported passage of this critical legislation, which has been the principal means through which the Federal Government has supported essential services for crime victims and their families for more than three decades. It is time to review and renew that law, and I have been working closely with Senator GRASSLEY in that effort. Next week, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing to assess the crime victims fund and discuss how to ensure that it continues to meet the changing needs of victims.

The Justice for All Act is another important law that promotes victims'

rights. I am working with Senator CORNYN to reauthorize this vital legislation. Our bill will further strengthen the rights of crime victims; improve the use of forensic evidence, including rape kits, to provide justice as swiftly as possible; and protect the innocent by improving access to post-conviction DNA testing.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act builds on the work I began in 2000, when I introduced the Innocence Protection Act, which sought to ensure that defendants in the most serious cases receive competent representation and, where appropriate, access to post-conviction DNA testing. I served proudly as a prosecutor in Vermont for 8 years, and I believe that we must find those responsible for crimes and prosecute them. But we must also ensure that our system does not wrongly convict those who are innocent. DNA testing is often necessary to prove the innocence of individuals in cases where the system got it grievously wrong. ''Innocent until proven guilty'' is a hallmark of our criminal justice system, but when a person who has been found guilty is truly innocent, we cannot stand idly by. We must act to exonerate that person.

The Innocence Protection Act passed as part of the original Justice for All Act in 2004, and since that time, at least 26 people have been exonerated through DNA testing funded by the legislation. In North Carolina, for example, a man was released after spending 37 years in prison for a double murder he did not commit. In Virginia, a man was released after spending 27 years in prison for violent rapes he did not commit. And in New Orleans, a man was released after spending 20 years in a State mental health hospital for an abduction and rape he did not commit. We must continue funding this critical post-conviction DNA testing since we know our system does not always get it right. It is an outrage when an innocent person is wrongly punished, and this injustice is compounded when the true perpetrator remains on the streets, able to commit more crimes. We are all less safe when the system gets it wrong.

As we begin this year's Crime Victims' Rights Week, I look forward to working with Senators on both sides of the aisle to update and reauthorize both the Victims of Crime Act and the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. Survivors and their families deserve nothing less.

OBSERVING WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate April 17 as World Hemophilia Day where we recognize the serious challenges of the 20,000 Americans who suffer each day from hemophilia and where we raise awareness to fight for a cure.

Hemophilia is a rare genetic disorder that prevents an individual's ability to form a proper blood clot. Patients with hemophilia need immediate access to care and lifesaving therapies. There is currently an enormous discrepancy in the level of care available to patients with hemophilia. While some are diagnosed very young and have medical care throughout their life, most do not or do not have the access to diagnosis and treatment they need. As a physician, I have treated patients with hemophilia, and I know how debilitating the health problems endured by those living with hemophilia can be. If left untreated, a bleeding episode can lead to terrible pain, chronic joint and muscle damage, serious injury, or even death.

I am hopeful that through attention, diligence, and raised awareness we might prevent more complications, unnecessary procedures, and disabilities so often caused by these diseases. As we increase our understanding and awareness of hemophilia, we also increase our ability to find treatments and eventually, a cure for this disease. I'm proud to stand today in support of all Americans with hemophilia on World Hemophilia Day.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me today in recognizing, celebrating, and highlighting the significance of the 70th anniversary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service, VAVS, this year. This program is one of the largest centralized volunteer groups in the Federal Government with approximately 75,000 volunteers providing more than 9.7 million hours of service for our Nation's veterans during their hospital stay.

It has been 70 years since this program started in 1946. Since then, the volunteers have donated more than 782.2 million hours of service to support our veterans. More than 7,400 national and community organizations support the volunteers, including support by a national advisory committee, comprising 55 major veteran, civic, and service organizations who work together to improve volunteerism in VA.

Keeping up with the VA's fast-paced efforts to expand access to care for veteran patients into the community, this program, too, has strived to continue their efforts to assist our veterans. The volunteers serve in many different ways, including supplementing staff in hospital wards, community living centers, outpatient clinics, community-based volunteer programs, respite care programs, end-of-life care programs, creative arts, adaptive sports, vet centers, veterans homes, national cemeteries, and veterans benefits offices.

Just in 2015, the volunteers contributed a total of 10.8 million hours of service. The current monetary value of those hours from all of the volunteers is more than $250 million. Additionally, the volunteers and their organizations contributed more than $105 million in gifts and donations in 2015, for a combined total value of $355.5 million in volunteer service and giving.

While the tangible value of these volunteer activities is impressive, it is impossible to calculate all of the compassionate care and efforts that the volunteers provide for our veterans. These volunteers are a priceless asset for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I ask that the Senate join me in celebrating the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service on 70 years of outstanding service to our Nation's veterans and wishing them the best in continuing to serve.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF U.S. NAVAL SHORE ESTABLISHMENTS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the contributions of the National Association of Superintendents of U.S. Naval Shore Establishments, NAS NSE, on the occasion of its 100th national convention. Since its founding near the time of World War I, NAS NSE has worked to promote the welfare of its members and increase the efficiency of work at Navy yards and naval stations.

The members of NAS NSE encompass diverse trades, including shop superintendents and senior managers from engineering, project management, financial, business office, facilities, base operations, and resource management. Despite their varied backgrounds, these professionals possess a common ability to lead, educate, and manage, as well as a true dedication to the protection of our country. In particular, the NAS NSE chapter at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is committed to ensuring the Navy's submarines are maintained, repaired, and modernized to the highest degree in order to fulfill the Navy's mission of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas.

As threats facing our Nation increase and become more complex, the Navy's ability to project power and uniquely provide worldwide presence plays an increasingly critical role in protecting our national security. As such, it is critical that our naval fleet is properly maintained so it can be positioned around the world where and when we need it. NAS NSE members play a vital role in ensuring that our ships are ready to deploy on schedule and in good condition.

Over the past 100 conventions, NAS NSE has worked on many important issues, including many shipyard safety

and leadership issues. This year, their efforts continue to focus on empowering shipyard workers to be leaders, helping new employees to efficiently achieve proficiency in necessary skills, and developing innovation in the shipyard. Through these and many other initiatives aimed at increasing the safety and abilities of its members, NAS NSE has improved both the lives of shipyard workers and the efficiency of our shipyards.

I commend the organization for its commitment to passing on a strong and healthy program of naval maintenance, so that future generations can benefit from a Navy ready to defend our freedoms. It is an honor for me to pay tribute to the National Association of Superintendents of U.S. Naval Shore Establishments as they celebrate 100 years of meeting to work on behalf of our shipyard workers and our naval shipyards.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I join my esteemed colleague, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, in recognizing the 100th Convention of the National Association of Superintendents of the U.S. Naval Shore Establishments, NAS NSE. This association works diligently to implement a strong and healthy program of naval maintenance and modernization at our naval shipyards, so future generations can benefit from a Navy that is always ready to defend our freedom.

I specifically wish to recognize the work of the NAS NSE chapter at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, ME. Maintaining the structural and functional integrity of our Navy's submarines enables the United States to consistently serve and protect our Nation's interests around the globe, and the NAS NSE of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard serves as a paragon of efficient, quality service on behalf of our Navy's ships and servicemen. Portsmouth has earned a reputation as the Navy's Center of Excellence for attack submarine maintenance, which is a reflection of the hard work and determination of the association to manage and protect these American treasures for national security. Through their consistent dedication and skillful work, the men and women of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard play a vital role in furthering the esteemed tradition of excellence within the NAS NSE.

Building on over a century of work to promote our Navy's strength, this year's historic convention focuses on the national initiative of improving productive capacity throughout the association. This year's convention will help to further streamline systems, optimize production, and enhance safety across all the NAS NSE's operations. Discussing and implementing improved strategies will help to ensure the continued effectiveness of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and shipyards all across the country.

I congratulate the NAS NSE on their 100th convention, and I thank them for their dedication and hard work on behalf of our shipyards. I wish them continued success in the future as the association continues to ensure the safety of our Nation for generations to come.

OBSERVING THE HOLIDAY OF VAISAKHI FOR THE SIKH COMMUNITY

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I wish to honor and celebrate the holiday of Vaisakhi, a very important day for those who practice Sikhism.

The world's fifth largest religion, Sikhism was founded over five centuries ago and was introduced to the United States in the 19th century. There are over 500,000 Sikh adherents in the United States.

Pennsylvania is the home of many proud Sikh Americans, who contribute and make a positive impact in their workplaces, communities, and to our country. They are part of the rich cultural fabric of the Commonwealth.

As a member of the American Sikh Congressional Caucus, I rise to honor this community on the holiday of Vaisakhi. This is an important celebration for the Sikh community and is celebrated this year on April 13. On this day in 1699, Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa, a fellowship of devout Sikhs. Vaisakhi is a festival which marks this occasion and the spring harvest.

The Sikh community around the world recognizes this important holiday with parades, dancing, singing, and other festivities. Celebrations also include performing seva, or selfless service, such as providing free meals to others and volunteering for service projects in their communities.

I am proud to represent the Sikh community of Pennsylvania, and I wish the Sikh American community a joyous Vaisakhi.

Thank you.

HONORING OFFICER NATHAN TAYLOR

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of California Highway Patrol Officer Nathan Daniel Taylor, a beloved husband, father, brother, son, and grandson who tragically lost his life in the line of duty on March 13, 2016.

Officer Taylor was born on January 17, 1981, in Baltimore, MD. His family later moved to Loomis, CA, where Officer Taylor was an active member of the Boy Scouts, earning the highest rank of Eagle Scout. After graduating from Del Oro High School, Officer Taylor attended Brigham Young University on a full academic scholarship and received a bachelor's degree in history. He spent 2 years in Venezuela serving as a church missionary before joining the California Highway Patrol, continuing his commitment to helping those in need. Officer Taylor completed cadet training in 2010 and was assigned to the San Jose area office before transferring to the Gold Run area in 2013.

Colleagues fondly recalled Officer Taylor's tremendous service to the public, offering examples of his selflessness and compassion. ''Officer Taylor was the most genuine, honest officer I knew,'' said CHP Officer Josh Webb. ''He would literally give the shirt off his back for somebody.'' His ability to go above and beyond the call of duty also earned the appreciation and affection of the community he served. In fact, he received so many thank-you letters from the public that his colleagues joked that he must have written them himself.

Officer Taylor truly embodied the very best of law enforcement, and his courageous service will be forever remembered. On behalf of the people of California, whom Officer Taylor served so bravely, I extend my gratitude and deepest sympathies to his wife, Becky; sons Preston, Wyatt, and Joshua; parents, Jeff and Linda; brothers Karl, Collin, and Steven; sister, Sarah; and grandparents, Karl and Virginia.

TRIBUTE TO JANET AIRIS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I join with the vice chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI, and the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator ENZI and Senator SANDERS, in honoring Janet Airis on her retirement after 32 years of distinguished service to the Congress with the Congressional Budget Office. Janet is highly regarded by both Republicans and Democrats on both sides of the Capitol for her encyclopedic knowledge of the appropriations and budget process and its lexicon, her responsiveness to committee and Member staff, and her dedication to the nonpartisan role that CBO plays in the successful enactment of appropriations bills year after year. Janet has been a valuable asset to eight of the nine CBO directors.

Janet came to CBO in the waning days of 1983, fairly soon after graduating from Wellesley College. She joined the scorekeeping unit in the budget analysis division, which has the responsibility of tracking and scoring the appropriations bills at each legislative stage as well as tracking mandatory spending in authorizing legislation. Janet was hired to assist in maintaining the database used by the division. Janet has worked to keep the database in sync with the many changes in the budget process, integrating new categories and methods so that CBO could accurately tabulate and report on Federal spending. Janet started as the scorekeeper for the defense and military construction appropriation bills. Over the course of her

career, she also handled the Transportation, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Agriculture, and legislative branch appropriations bills, in the process gaining a vast array of knowledge of a substantial part of the Federal budget.

In 2000, Janet made the transition to unit chief. For the past 16 years, she has successfully overseen the analysis of the President's budget request for each of the appropriation bills, the scoring of the appropriation bills at each stage, the production and review of baselines, and the writing and coordination of CBO's annual report on unauthorized appropriations and expiring authorizations. Through all of these tasks, she has been the steady hand of the scorekeeping unit, generous with her time and knowledge, and vital to the smooth functioning of the budget analysis division. Senate staff and colleagues have come to depend on her for her ready expertise, diligence, and attention to detail.

Janet is also famous for sharing her prodigious baking talent. Every year she has coordinated the provision of cookies during the conclusion of the December baseline, which often coincided with the final days of a congressional session. The appearance of a red-clothed table outside of the scorekeeping unit bearing plates of homemade cookies always brings a smile to stressed budget analysts checking final numbers or scoring final bills.

Janet's expertise, corporate knowledge, and generosity of time and spirit will be sorely missed, but she well deserves an opportunity to rest after her years of outstanding service to the Congress. We are grateful for that service, and we wish her the best in the years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JAMES BARRETT MCNULTY

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to James Barrett McNulty, former mayor of my hometown Scranton, PA. Former Mayor McNulty was a dedicated public servant who made a lasting impact on Scranton and all of Pennsylvania.

Born on February 27, 1945, in the High Works section of Scranton, Jim attended South Scranton and South Catholic High School. In 1966, he graduated from the University of Scranton as student body president with a bachelor of arts in political science. A member of the Young Democrats for John F. Kennedy, Jim McNulty answered President Kennedy's call to young people to serve their community and their country.

The extraordinary love that Mayor McNulty had for public service and for the people of Scranton was felt by all who had the good fortune of being in his presence. As a committed public servant, Jim McNulty joined the staff of Congressman Dan Flood and then transitioned to work on the mayoral race in Scranton in 1969. By 1974, Jim was deputy mayor. He quickly rose through the ranks as director of the Department of Public Works, chairman of the Scranton Redevelopment Authority, chairman of the Scranton Recreation Authority, City of Scranton Urban Affairs coordinator and member of the City of Scranton Government Study Commission. In 1981, he was elected to serve as the 26th mayor of Scranton.

John F. Kennedy once said: ''For I can assure you that we love our country, not for what it was, though it has always been great—not for what it is, though of this we are deeply proud—but for what it someday can, and, through the efforts of us all, someday will be.'' Jim McNulty was a visionary mayor who saw the greatness in the city of Scranton and its people. He fought tirelessly to make life better for residents with his instrumental actions in making the Steamtown Historic Site and the Hilton at Lackawanna Station a reality.

His joyful presence around Scranton left an indelible mark long after his mayoralty ended. Mayor McNulty's voice would paint a picture of the city of Scranton through his public affairs program ''Sunday Live'' with Jim McNulty and WARM radio talk show ''the Mayor of WARMland.''

May his memory live on through the love of his wife, Evie; the McNulty family; his many friends; and the ongoing efforts to enhance the Scranton community. We honor him for his love for all the people of northeastern Pennsylvania and his commitment to service.●

TRIBUTE TO OFFICER MICHAEL STONEKING

● Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Eastern Iowa Airport Transportation Security Officer Michael Stoneking for recent actions he took to aid a choking passenger.

Officer Michael Stoneking, while on duty at Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids, IA, was on his way to take his break when he was alerted by another airport employee that a passenger was in distress. Officer Stoneking was directed to a female passenger who had her hands at her throat indicating that she was choking. Officer Stoneking performed the Heimlich maneuver and was able to successfully remove the obstruction from the passenger's throat, allowing her to breathe clearly. The passenger's family and the passenger, once able to speak, thanked Officer Stoneking and credited him with saving her life. Official Transportation Security Administration reports from the scene praise Officer Stoneking for his command presence and calm professionalism, stating that his ability to think clearly and react saved a life.

At a time when transportation security is on everyone's mind, it is comforting to know that we have such capable security officers in our airports. Those who go above and beyond the call of duty, as Officer Stoneking did, are to be commended and serve as an example of what dedicated law enforcement officers can accomplish.

I am very proud today to share Officer Stoneking's story with our colleagues and would ask that they join me in commending Officer Stoneking for his actions that saved a passenger's life.

Thank you.●

CONGRATULATING AIRBUS EMPLOYEES IN MOBILE, ALABAMA

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I commend Airbus and its employees at the Mobile Aeroplex facility on the completion of their first aircraft, the Airbus A321. This great achievement was years in the making, and I am delighted that Mobile is home to the first A321 built in the United States.

Aviation manufacturing is extremely valuable to the State of Alabama's economy. Airbus plays a significant role in this sector, which brings welcomed job creation and economic growth to south Alabama and across the State. Airbus's presence in Alabama also underscores the fact that our great State is open for business, leading the Nation in both cutting-edge technology and workforce.

It is my great honor to congratulate Airbus and all of those who played a role in the making of this momentous occasion. I look forward to many more accomplishments by Airbus's Mobile facility and additional aircraft that will be proudly made in Alabama.●

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I congratulate the University of South Dakota, USD, Coyotes women's basketball team as they celebrate winning the 2016 Women's National Invitation Tournament, WNIT.

The Coyotes won their first WNIT championship by outscoring the Florida Gulf Coast Eagles 71–65. The win was especially poignant as the WNIT championship game was the last women's basketball game to be held in USD's iconic DakotaDome. Starting next season, USD basketball games will be held in a brand-new facility, and the record turnout for the championship game was a fitting way to end the DakotaDome's 37-year history.

The Coyotes were led by head coach, Amy Williams, who received her second

consecutive Coach of the Year honor from the Summit League earlier in the season. Seniors Tia Hemiller and Nicole Seekamp were named to the WNIT All-Tournament team, with Seekamp also being recognized as the Most Valuable Player of the Postseason WNIT. Seekamp is also the 2016 Summit League Women's Basketball Player of the Year.

Once again, congratulations to the entire USD Coyotes women's basketball team on this impressive accomplishment. I commend the players and coaching staff for all of their hard work this season and wish them the best of luck in their future.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am proud to join Oregonians all across our State in marking the 75th anniversary of the Oregon Air National Guard. For three-quarters of a century, thousands of Oregon's sons and daughters have joined the Air National Guard, dedicating themselves to defense of the Constitution of the United States and service to their fellow Americans and Oregonians. Today I want to take a moment, here on the Senate floor to thank them for their service and for their sacrifices on our behalf.

The Oregon Air National Guard traces its beginnings back to April 1941, when a small group of 110 airmen boldly stepped forward and volunteered for duty in the months before the U.S. entered the Second World War. Initially activated as the Oregon National Guard Air Corps 123rd Observation Squadron, their first mission was to conduct maritime surveillance of the continental United States following the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1947, following the allied victory in World War II, Congress officially established the U.S. Air Force as a separate military service, apart from the U.S. Army, and designated the Air National Guard as a reserve component.

In the decades since, the Oregon Air National Guard has played a vital national defense role in the Korean war, the Vietnam war, the Cold War, and in many global operations in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Today's Oregon Air National Guard units include the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, and the Joint Forces Headquarters in Salem. Oregon's F–15s serve on guard 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to defend the skies above America's western coast. In addition to protecting that airspace, Oregon airmen are the sole providers of F–15 flight training for the U.S. Air Force.

But Oregon's airmen and women aren't simply ready to respond in times of conflict; they also answer the Governor's call during natural disasters to protect Oregonians from floods, forest fires, volcanic eruptions, and medical emergencies. Through the State partnership program, Oregon Guardsmen also have played a powerful role to improve relations with our State's partners in Vietnam and Bangladesh. In doing so, they demonstrate the best of American generosity in communities throughout the world.

The strength of any organization is its people and here the men and women of the Oregon Air National Guard, like its counterpart the Oregon Army Guard, are at the top of their class. Oregon guardsmen come from diverse backgrounds and bring top notch private sector skills to bear on behalf of the State and the country. The nearly 2,300 men and women now serving in the Oregon Air National Guard contribute to the long legacy of volunteerism and community service for which the organization is already so well known.

As a Senator, it has always been one of my highest honors to represent the men and women of the Oregon Air and Army National Guards in Congress, and as an Oregonian, I am so proud of today's Oregon Air National Guard and its rich heritage. It is a privilege to serve these heroes—active, retired, and those who have given their lives in defense of our nation and helping others. I know I speak for people in Oregon, across the country, and around the world when I thank the Oregon Air National Guard for 75 years of fabulous service, congratulate them on this historic milestone, and wish them continued success in the years and decades to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 483. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

S. 2512. An act to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

At 10:15 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1567. An act to authorize a comprehensive, strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2947. An act to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy.

H.R. 4676. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 115. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

H. Con. Res. 117. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

H. Con. Res. 120. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 192. An act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2947. An act to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4676. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, April 13, 2016, she had presented the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 192. An act to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–5101. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alternative to Fingerprinting Requirement for Foreign Natural Persons'' (RIN3038–AE16) received in the Office of the President of the

Senate on April 6, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5102. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Tomatoes Grown in Florida; Decreased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–15–0058) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5103. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half) in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5104. A communication from the Executive Director, Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of the Comptroller's 2015 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5105. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5106. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicaid Program; Deadline for Access Monitoring Review Plan Submissions'' ((RIN0938–AS89) (CMS–2328-F2)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5107. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Program Integrity Issues'' (RIN1840–AD02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5108. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–355, ''Construction Codes Harmonization Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5109. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–356, ''Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5110. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–357, ''Walter Reed Development Omnibus Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–144. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Nevada memorializing the State of Nevada's petition to the United States Congress calling for a convention of the States for the purpose of proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of Nevada, jointly, That this legislature respectfully petitions the Congress of the United States to call a convention for the purpose of proposing the following article as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

''ARTICLE __''

''Section 1. No provision of this Constitution, or any amendment thereto, shall restrict or limit any state in the apportionment of representation in its legislature.

''Section 2. The judicial power of the United States shall not extend to any suit in law or equity, or to any controversy relating to apportionment of representation in a state legislature.

''Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.'' Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That if Congress shall have proposed an amendment to the Constitution identical with that contained in this resolution prior to January 1, 1965, this application for a convention shall no longer be of any force or effect; and be it further,

Resolved, That a duly attested copy of this resolution be immediately transmitted to the Secretary of the Senate of the United States, the Clerk of the House of Representatives of the United States and to each member of the Congress from this State.

POM–145. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to citizenship and sovereignty; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

POM–146. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to the enacting of laws; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2786. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2787. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide the same level of Federal matching assistance for every State that chooses to expand Medicaid coverage to newly eligible individuals, regardless of when such expansion takes place; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2788. A bill to prohibit closure of United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to prohibit the transfer or release of detainees at that Naval Station to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2789. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a free online tax preparation and filing service and programs that allow taxpayers to access third-party provided tax return information; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEE (for Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. CORNYN)):

S. 2790. A bill to provide requirements for the appropriate Federal banking agencies when requesting or ordering a depository institution to terminate a specific customer account, to provide for additional requirements related to subpoenas issued under the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2791. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the treatment of veterans who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as radiation exposed veterans for purposes of the presumption of service-connection of certain disabilities by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2792. A bill to reestablish and enhance the Defense Research and Development Rapid Innovation Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2793. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to reauthorize and improve the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BURR, Mr. CASEY, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. COATS):

S. 2794. A bill to establish a process for the submission and consideration of petitions for temporary duty suspensions and reductions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2795. A bill to modernize the regulation of nuclear energy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 2796. A bill to repeal certain obsolete laws relating to Indians; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2797. A bill to establish the Refund to Rainy Day Savings Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 2798. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to terminate the essential air service program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. PAUL):

S.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution to provide limitations on the transfer of certain United States munitions from the United States to Saudi Arabia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. Res. 419. A resolution congratulating the University of North Dakota men's hockey team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association division I men's hockey championship; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. Res. 420. A resolution congratulating the 2016 national champion Augustana Vikings for their win in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II Men's Basketball Tournament; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 421. A resolution congratulating the University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I title; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 422. A resolution supporting the mission and goals of 2016 ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week'', which include increasing public awareness of the rights, needs, concerns of, and services available to assist victims and survivors of crime in the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 423. A resolution congratulating the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team on winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Ice Hockey Championship; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. Res. 424. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 151

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 151, a bill to require the Secretary of Defense to establish a process to determine whether individuals claiming certain service in the Philippines during World War II are eligible for certain benefits despite not being on the Missouri List, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 577

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 577, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate the corn ethanol mandate for renewable fuel.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 1112

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1112, a bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to expand coverage under the Act, to increase protections for whistleblowers, to increase penalties for high gravity violations, to adjust penalties for inflation, to provide rights for victims or their family members, and for other purposes.

S. 1444

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1444, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the rate of tax regarding the taxation of distilled spirits.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 1651

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1651, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to provide an exception from certain group health plan requirements to allow small businesses to use pre-tax dollars to assist employees in the purchase of policies in the individual health insurance market, and for other purposes.

S. 2200

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2200, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to strengthen equal pay requirements.

S. 2217

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2217, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

S. 2283

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2283, a bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements.

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2385

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2385, a bill to strengthen protections for the remaining populations of wild elephants, rhinoceroses, and other imperiled species through country-specific anti-poaching efforts and anti-trafficking strategies, to promote the value of wildlife and natural resources, to curtail the demand for illegal wildlife products in consumer countries, and for other purposes.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Louisiana

(Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2577

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2577, a bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner offices, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes.

S. 2707

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2707, a bill to require the Secretary of Labor to nullify the proposed rule regarding defining and delimiting the exemptions for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees, to require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a full and complete economic analysis with improved economic data on small businesses, nonprofit employers, Medicare or Medicaid dependent health care providers, and small governmental jurisdictions, and all other employers, and minimize the impact on such employers, before promulgating any substantially similar rule, and to provide a rule of construction regarding the salary threshold exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and for other purposes.

S. 2736

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2736, a bill to improve access to durable medical equipment for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2770

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2770, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide call location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical injury or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services.

AMENDMENT NO. 3286

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3286 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3490

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3490 proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3548

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3548 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3557

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3557 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3563

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3563 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3568

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3568 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3591

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3591 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3624

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3624 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3654

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3654 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3657

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3657 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3683

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3683 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 2796. A bill to repeal certain obsolete laws relating to Indians; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce a bill to begin to address the list of historic wrongs against Native American citizens brought by the early U.S. Government.

The idea that these laws were ever considered is disturbing, but the fact that these laws remain on our books is, at best, an oversight. Currently, Native Americans who are U.S. citizens just like you and me are still legally subject to a series of obsolete, historically wrong statutes. These statutes are a sad reminder of the hostile aggression and overt racism that the Federal Government exhibited toward Native Americans as the government attempted to assimilate them into what was considered modern society.

In 2016, laws still exist that would allow for the forced removal of their children, who can be sent to boarding schools, and they can be denied rations if they refuse. They can still be subject to forced labor on their reservations as a condition of their receipt of supplies. Moreover, they can be denied funding if found drunk on a reservation.

These statutes actually remain on the books of the land and, in many cases, are more than a century old and continue the stigma of subjugation and paternalism from that time period. It is without question that they should be stricken.

We cannot adequately repair history, but we can move forward. Because of this, today I am introducing the RESPECT Act or the Repealing Existing Substandard Provisions Encouraging Conciliation with Tribes Act.

I wish to list some of the 12 existing laws that the RESPECT Act will repeal. In Chapter 25 of the United States Code, section 302, entitled ''Education of Indians, Indian Reform School; rules and regulations; consent of parents to placing youth in reform school,'' the Commissioner of Indian affairs was directed to place Indian youth in Indian reform schools without the consent of their parents.

The issue of off-reservation Indian boarding schools, in particular, is a rightfully sensitive one for our Native Americans. Between 1879 and into the 20th century, at least 830,000 Indian children were taken to boarding schools to allegedly ''civilize them.'' Many parents were threatened with surrendering their children or their food rations. This law, in fact, is also still on the books.

A requirement exists in section 283, entitled ''Regulations for withholding rations for nonattendance at schools,'' that the Secretary of the Interior could ''prevent the issuing of rations or the furnishing of subsistence to the head of any Indian family for or on account of any Indian child or children between the ages of eight and twenty-one years who shall not have attended school in the preceding year in accordance with such regulations.''

Yet there still exist other outdated laws relating to wartime status between Indians and the United States, such as those found in section 72 of the Code, entitled ''Abrogation of treaties.'' Here the President was authorized to declare all treaties with such tribes ''abrogated if in his opinion any Indian tribe is in actual hostility to the United States.''

In section 127, entitled ''Moneys or annuities of hostile Indians,'' moneys or annuities stipulated by any treaty with an Indian tribe could be stopped if the tribe ''has engaged in hostilities against the United States, or against its citizens peacefully or lawfully sojourning or traveling within its jurisdiction at the time of such hostilities.''

Likewise, in section 128, entitled ''Appropriations not paid to Indians at war with United States,'' none of the appropriations made for the Indian Service could ''be paid to any band of Indians or any portion of any band while at war with the United States or with the white citizens of any of the States or Territories.''

Moreover, in section 138, entitled ''Goods withheld from chiefs violating treaty stipulations,'' delivery of goods or merchandise could be denied to the chiefs of any tribe by authority of any treaty ''if such chiefs'' had ''violated the stipulations contained in such treaty.''

Finally, in section 129, entitled ''Moneys due Indians holding captives other than Indians withheld,'' the Secretary of the Interior was ''authorized to withhold, from any tribe of Indians who may hold any captives other than Indians, any moneys due them from the United States until said captives shall be surrendered to the lawful authorities of the United States.''

In section 130, entitled ''Withholding of moneys or goods on account of intoxicating liquors,'' racist identifications tying drunkenness by Indians to receipt of funds still exist, stipulating that no ''annuities, or moneys, or goods'' could ''be paid or distributed to Indians while they'' were—and, once again, I will quote—''under the influence of any description of intoxicating liquor, nor while there are good and sufficient reasons leading the officers or agents, whose duty it may be to make such payments or distribution, to believe that there is any species of intoxicating liquor within convenient reach.''

Mandatory work on reservations still exists in section 137, entitled ''Supplies distributed to able-bodied males on condition.'' Once again, I will quote from the text: ''For the purpose of inducing Indians to labor and become self-supporting, it is provided that, in distributing the supplies and annuities to the Indians for whom the same are appropriated, the agent distributing the same could require all able-bodied male Indians between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to perform service upon the reservation, for the benefit of themselves or of the tribe'' in return for supplies.

Let me summarize what I said in the beginning. In the year 2016 in the United States, Native Americans—citizens like you and me—are still legally subject to outrageous, racist, and outdated laws that were wrong at their inception. There is no place in our legal code for such laws.

In my home State of South Dakota, which is home to 9 tribes and roughly 75,000 enrolled members, we strive to work together to constantly improve relationships and to mend our history through reconciliation and mutual respect. It is not always easy, but with our futures tied together, with our children in mind, reconciliation is something we are committed to.

History also proves that since the onset of the government's relationship with the tribes, it has been complicated and challenging over the years, sometimes downright dark and disrespectful, and to this day often has led to mistreatment by the Federal Government.

As Governor of South Dakota, I proclaimed 2010 the Year of Unity in South Dakota. This was done in recognition of the need to continue building upon the legacy and work of those who came before us. The year 2010 also marked the 20th anniversary of the Year of Reconciliation in South Dakota, which was an effort by the late Governor George Mickelson as a way to bring all races together. The Year of Unity and the Year of Reconciliation were efforts to build upon a common purpose, acknowledge our differences, and yet find ways to work together. I suspect we could use a lot more of that in Washington, DC.

While legislative bodies before us have taken steps to rectify our previous failures relative to Native Americans, sadly, these laws remain, and out of a sense of justice, I believe we should repeal them. Imagine a scenario where descendants of those from Norway, Britain, Italy, or any other country for that matter, were treated with the same patronizing air of superiority. Only Native Americans face this discrimination, and it is long overdue to repeal these noxious laws.

I would take this opportunity to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill and to put an end to this blatant discrimination against Native Americans. We can't change our history, but we can start to change the paternalistic mentality of the Federal Government toward the Native people.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 419—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 419

Whereas the University of North Dakota (referred to in this preamble as ''UND'') men's hockey team won the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') division I men's hockey championship game in Tampa Bay, Florida, on April 9, 2016, in a hard-fought victory over the Quinnipiac University Bobcats of Connecticut by a score of 5 to 1;

Whereas the UND men's hockey team had an incredible 2015–16 season, during which Coach Brad Berry became the first head coach to win an NCAA division I men's hockey national championship in an individual's first season as head coach;

Whereas the UND men's hockey team won its eighth NCAA division I men's hockey championship and ended the 2015–16 season with a 34–6–4 record;

Whereas Coach Brad Berry and the coaching staff have instilled character and perseverance in the UND men's hockey team players and have done an outstanding job coaching the UND men's hockey program;

Whereas under the leadership of Interim President Ed Schafer and Athletic Director Brian Faison, academic and athletic excellence has been promoted at UND;

Whereas thousands of UND fans attended the NCAA division I men's hockey championship game, reflecting the tremendous fan base of UND, which showcases the spirit and dedication of UND hockey fans and has helped to propel the success of the UND men's hockey team; and

Whereas the UND men's hockey team's victory in the 2016 NCAA division I men's hockey championship was also a victory for the entire State of North Dakota: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of North Dakota men's hockey team, the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association division I men's hockey champions;

(2) commends the players, coaches, and staff of the University of North Dakota men's hockey team for their hard work and dedication; and

(3) recognizes the students, alumni, and loyal fans for supporting the University of North Dakota men's hockey team on a successful quest to capture another National Collegiate Athletic Association division I men's hockey championship trophy for the University of North Dakota.

SENATE RESOLUTION 420—CONGRATULATING THE 2016 NATIONAL CHAMPION AUGUSTANA VIKINGS FOR THEIR WIN IN THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION II MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 420

Whereas, on March 26, 2016, the Augustana University Vikings defeated the Lincoln Memorial University Railsplitters 90 to 81 in the championship game of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II Men's Basketball Tournament in Frisco, Texas;

Whereas this is the first national title for the Augustana Vikings basketball program and the third national title overall for the school;

Whereas Augustana senior student athletes Daniel Jansen and Casey Schilling have been named 2 of 13 finalists for the Bevo Francis Award, which honors the player who had the best overall season within Small College Basketball;

Whereas the Augustana coach, Tom Billeter, was named Coach of the Year by the National Association of Basketball Coaches;

Whereas, during the 2015–2016 season, the Augustana Vikings finished with a record of 34–2; and

Whereas the presence of 3 seniors and 4 juniors on the roster of the Augustana Vikings represents the commitment of those students to the university and the work of Augustana University to enshrine the ideal of the student athlete into the ethos of the university: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and honors the Augustana University men's basketball team and its loyal fans on the performance of the team in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II Men's Basketball Tournament; and

(2) recognizes and commends the hard work, dedication, determination, and commitment to excellence of the players, parents, families, coaches, and managers of the team.

SENATE RESOLUTION 421—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I TITLE

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 421

Whereas, on Tuesday, April 5, 2016, the University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team (in this preamble referred to as ''UConn'') won the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association (in this preamble referred to as the ''NCAA'') Division I title with an 82-51 win over the Syracuse Orange at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, Indiana;

Whereas this is UConn's fourth consecutive NCAA national championship and 11th NCAA national championship overall;

Whereas Breanna Stewart was awarded the Most Outstanding Player of the Final Four for an unprecedented fourth time;

Whereas UConn finished the 2015-2016 season with a record of 38-0 and extended its winning streak to 75 games;

Whereas UConn has won 122 of its last 123 games, with each win coming by double digits; and

Whereas Geno Auriemma passed John Wooden for the most national championships won by any head coach in NCAA Division I basketball history: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I title;

(2) congratulates the fans, students, and faculty of the University of Connecticut; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the President of the University of Connecticut, Susan Herbst; and

(B) the Head Coach of the University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team, Luigi ''Geno'' Auriemma.

SENATE RESOLUTION 422—SUPPORTING THE MISSION AND GOALS OF 2016 ''NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK'', WHICH INCLUDE INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE RIGHTS, NEEDS, CONCERNS OF, AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF CRIME IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 422

Whereas individuals in the United States are the victims of more than 20,000,000 crimes each year;

Whereas crime can touch the lives of anyone, irrespective of age, race, national origin, religion, or gender;

Whereas a just society acknowledges the impact of crime on individuals, families, schools, and communities by—

(1) protecting the rights of crime victims and survivors; and

(2) ensuring that resources and services are available to help rebuild the lives of the victims and survivors;

Whereas, as of 2008, the most conservative estimate for the economic cost of violent and property crimes in the United States was $17,000,000,000 per year;

Whereas that economic cost does not account for the struggle of a crime victim to be made whole or losses that result from being the victim of a crime, including losses of psychological, emotional, and physical well-being;

Whereas despite impressive accomplishments between 1974 and 2016 in increasing the rights of, and services available to, crime victims and survivors and the families of the victims and survivors, many challenges remain to ensure that all crime victims and survivors and the families of the victims and survivors are—

(1) treated with dignity, fairness, and respect;

(2) offered support and services, regardless of whether the victims and survivors report crimes committed against them; and

(3) recognized as key participants within the criminal, juvenile, Federal, and tribal justice systems in the United States when the victims and survivors report crimes;

Whereas crime victims and survivors in the United States and the families of the victims and survivors need and deserve support and assistance to help cope with the often devastating consequences of crime;

Whereas, during each year beginning in 1984 through 2015, communities across the United States joined Congress and the Department of Justice in commemorating ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week'' to celebrate a shared vision of a comprehensive and collaborative response that identifies and addresses the many needs of crime victims and survivors and the families of the victims and survivors;

Whereas Congress and the President agree on the need for a renewed commitment to serve all victims and survivors of crime in the 21st century;

Whereas the theme of 2016 ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week'', celebrated during the week of April 10 through April 16, 2016, is ''Serving Victims; Building Trust; Restoring Hope'' and highlights the collaborative and multifaceted effort to provide comprehensive and quality support to survivors;

Whereas engaging communities in victim assistance is essential to promoting individual and public safety;

Whereas the United States must empower crime victims and survivors by—

(1) protecting the legal rights of the victims and survivors; and

(2) providing the victims and survivors with services to help them in the aftermath of crime; and

Whereas the people of the United States recognize and appreciate the continued importance of—

(1) promoting the rights of and services for crime victims and survivors; and

(2) honoring crime victims and survivors and individuals who provide services for the victims and survivors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the mission and goals of 2016 ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week'', which include increasing individual and public awareness of—

(A) the impact of crime on victims and survivors and the families of the victims and survivors;

(B) the challenges to achieving justice for victims and survivors of crime and the families of the victims and survivors; and

(C) the many solutions to meet those challenges; and

(2) recognizes that crime victims and survivors and the families of the victims and survivors should be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect.

SENATE RESOLUTION 423—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY TEAM ON WINNING THE 2016 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 423

Whereas, on Sunday, March 20, 2016, the University of Minnesota Gophers won the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') Women's Ice Hockey Championship against previously undefeated Boston College by a score of 3 to 1;

Whereas, on Friday, March 18, 2016, Sarah Potomak scored the game-winning goal in overtime to give the University of Minnesota a 3-2 win over rival University of Wisconsin in a Frozen Four semifinal game and advance to the national championship game for the fifth consecutive year;

Whereas the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team won an impressive 35 games during the 2015-2016 season;

Whereas the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team has won 4 of the last 5 national championships;

Whereas the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team has won 7 national championships overall, including back-to-back championships in 2004 and 2005, 2012 and 2013, and 2015 and 2016;

Whereas the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team has the most NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championships and NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Tournament wins; and

Whereas the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey program—

(1) benefits from 7 years of steady leadership from Head Coach Brad Frost;

(2) features 3 All-Americans, as named by the American Hockey Coaches Association, on the 2015-2016 team;

(3) has a remarkable roster of players, including Amanda Kessel, Sarah Potomak, Amanda Leveille, and Lee Stecklein, all of whom were named to the 2016 Frozen Four All-Tournament Team; and

(4) has a multitude of players, past and present, who have represented the United States in Olympic competition: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes—

(1) the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team on winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Ice Hockey Championship; and

(2) the achievements of the players, coaches, staff, and fans who contributed to the championship season.

SENATE RESOLUTION 424—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY

Mr. BURR (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 424

Whereas the Take Our Daughters To Work program was created in New York City as a response to research that showed that, by the 8th grade, many girls were dropping out of school, had low self-esteem, and lacked confidence;

Whereas, in 2003, the name of the program was changed to ''Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work'' so that boys who face many of the same challenges as girls could also be involved in the program;

Whereas, in 2016, the mission of the program, to develop ''innovative strategies that empower girls and boys to overcome societal barriers to reach their full potential'', fully reflects the addition of boys;

Whereas the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Foundation, a nonprofit organization, has grown to be one of the largest public awareness campaigns, with more than 39,000,000 participants annually in more than 3,000,000 organizations and workplaces representing each State;

Whereas, in 2007, the Take Our Daughters To Work program transitioned to Elizabeth City, North Carolina, became known as the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Foundation, and received national recognition for its dedication to future generations;

Whereas, every year, mayors, governors, and other private and public officials sign proclamations and lend support to Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day;

Whereas the fame of the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work program has spread overseas, with requests and inquiries being made from around the world on how to operate the program;

Whereas 2016 marks the 23rd anniversary of the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work program;

Whereas Take Our Daughters And Sons to Work Day will be observed on Thursday, April 28, 2016; and

Whereas, by offering opportunities for children to experience activities and events, Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day is intended to continue helping millions of girls and boys on an annual basis to examine their opportunities and strive to reach their fullest potential: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the goals of introducing our daughters and sons to the workplace; and

(2) commends all participants of Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day for the—

(A) ongoing contributions that the participants make to education; and

(B) vital role that the participants play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3685. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3686. Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3687. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3688. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3689. Mr. FRANKEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3690. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3691. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3692. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3693. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3694. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3695. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3696. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3697. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3698. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3699. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3700. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3701. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3702. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3703. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3704. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. LEE, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3705. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3706. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3707. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3708. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3709. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3710. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3711. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3712. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3713. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3714. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3715. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3716. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3717. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3718. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3719. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3720. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3721. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3722. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3723. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3724. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3725. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3726. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3727. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3728. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3729. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3730. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3731. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3732. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3733. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3734. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3735. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3736. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3737. Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3738. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3739. Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3740. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3741. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3742. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3743. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3744. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3745. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3746. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3747. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3748. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3749. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3750. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3751. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3752. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3753. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3754. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3755. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3756. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3757. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3758. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3759. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3760. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3761. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3762. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3763. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3764. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3765. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3766. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3767. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3768. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3769. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3770. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3771. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3772. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3773. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3774. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3775. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3776. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3777. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3778. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3779. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3780. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3781. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3782. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3783. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3784. Mr. PERDUE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3785. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KAINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3786. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3787. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3788. Mr. INHOFE (for Mr. CASEY) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1493, to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3685. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. EXPANSION OF ALLOWABLE COSTS UNDER PORT OF ENTRY PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 559(e)(3) of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) is amended—

(1) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) FOR CERTAIN COSTS.—The authority found in this subsection may only be used at U.S. Customs and Border Protection-serviced air ports of entry to enter into reimbursable fee agreements for—

''(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

''(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employees;

''(iii) the salaries and expenses of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

''(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such individuals.''; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (D).

(b) TRANSITION RULE.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may modify a reimbursable fee agreement entered into under section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, to include costs specified in subsection (e)(3)(B) of that section, as amended by subsection (a).

SEC. 5038. EXPANSION OF ALLOWABLE COSTS UNDER CERTAIN REIMBURSABLE SERVICES AGREEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 560(g) of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 380) is amended to read as follows:

''(g) The authority found in this section may be used only at U.S. Customs and Border Protection-serviced air ports of entry to enter into reimbursable fee agreements for—

''(1) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

''(2) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for payment of overtime to employees;

''(3) the salaries and expenses of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

''(4) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to U.S. Customs and Border Protection services, such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such individuals.''.

(b) TRANSITION RULE.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may modify a reimbursable fee agreement entered into under section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, to include costs specified in subsection (g) of that section, as amended by subsection (a).

SA 3686. Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. OBSTRUCTION EVALUATION AERONAUTICAL STUDIES.

The Secretary of Transportation may implement the policy set forth in the notice of proposed policy entitled ''Proposal To Consider the Impact of One Engine Inoperative Procedures in Obstruction Evaluation Aeronautical 7 Studies'' published by the Department of Transportation on April 28, 2014 (79 Fed. Reg. 23300), only if the policy is adopted pursuant to a notice and comment rulemaking.

SA 3687. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 158, line 8, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

On page 159, line 17, strike ''an inspection or other investigation'' and insert ''an accident finding, inspection, or other investigation''.

Strike section 5013.

SA 3688. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF ADVANCED BIOFUEL TAX INCENTIVES.

(a) EXTENSION OF SECOND GENERATION BIOFUEL PRODUCER CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 40(b)(6)(J)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to qualified second generation biofuel production after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) EXTENSION OF SPECIAL ALLOWANCE FOR SECOND GENERATION BIOFUEL PLANT PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 168(l)(2)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to property placed in service after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) EXTENSION OF EXCISE TAX INCENTIVES FOR ALTERNATIVE FUELS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6426 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(5), by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019'', and

(B) in subsection (e)(3), by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(2) PAYMENTS.—Section 6427(e)(6)(C) of such Code is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this paragraph shall apply to fuel sold or used after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) EXTENSION OF CREDIT FOR ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE REFUELING PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 30C(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to property placed in service after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3689. Mr. FRANKEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT FOR COMMUNITY WIND PROJECTS HAVING GENERATION CAPACITY OF NOT MORE THAN 20 MEGAWATTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Distributed and Community Wind Energy Act''.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 48(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified small wind energy property' means—

''(i) property which uses a qualifying small wind turbine to generate electricity, or

''(ii) property which uses 1 or more wind turbines with an aggregate nameplate capacity of more than 100 kilowatts but not more than 20 megawatts.'',

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D) and by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

''(C) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be appropriate to prevent improper division of property to attempt to meet the limitation under subparagraph (A)(ii).'', and

(3) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2021''.

(c) DENIAL OF PRODUCTION CREDIT.—Paragraph (1) of section 45(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting ''or any facility which is a qualified small wind energy property described in section 48(c)(4)(A)(ii) with respect to which the credit under section 48 is allowable.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3690. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1305. AIRPORT VEHICLE EMISSIONS.

Section 40117(a)(3)(G) is amended to read as follows:

''(G) A project to reduce emissions under subchapter I of chapter 471 or to use cleaner burning conventional fuels, or for acquiring for use at a commercial service airport vehicles or ground support equipment that include low-emission technology or use cleaner burning fuels, or if the airport is located in an air quality nonattainment area (as defined in section 171(2) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501(2))) or a maintenance area referred to in section 175A of such Act (42 U.S.C. 7505a), a project to retrofit any such vehicles or equipment that are powered by a diesel or gasoline engine with emission control technologies certified or verified by the Environmental Protection Agency to reduce emissions, if such project would be able to receive emission credits for the project from the governing State or Federal environmental agency as described in section 47139.''.

SA 3691. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REGULATIONS PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF FEES THAT ARE NOT REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONAL TO THE COSTS INCURRED.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AIR CARRIER.—The term ''air carrier'' means any air carrier that holds an air carrier certificate under section 41101 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) INTERSTATE AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term ''interstate air transportation'' has the meaning given that term in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations—

(1) prohibiting an air carrier from imposing fees described in subsection (c) that are unreasonable or disproportional to the costs incurred by the air carrier; and

(2) establishing standards for assessing whether such fees are reasonable and proportional to the costs incurred by the air carrier.

(c) FEES DESCRIBED.—The fees described in this subsection are—

(1) any fee for a change or cancellation of a reservation for a flight in interstate air transportation;

(2) any fee relating to checked baggage to be transported on a flight in interstate air transportation; and

(3) any other fee imposed by an air carrier relating to a flight in interstate air transportation.

(d) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the standards required by subsection (b)(2), the Secretary shall consider—

(1) with respect to a fee described in subsection (c)(1) imposed by an air carrier for a change or cancellation of a flight reservation—

(A) any net benefit or cost to the air carrier from the change or cancellation, taking into consideration—

(i) the ability of the air carrier to anticipate the expected average number of cancellations and changes and make reservations accordingly;

(ii) the ability of the air carrier to fill a seat made available by a change or cancellation;

(iii) any difference in the fare likely to be paid for a ticket sold to another passenger for a seat made available by the change or cancellation, as compared to the fare paid by the passenger who changed or canceled the passenger's reservation; and

(iv) the likelihood that the passenger changing or cancelling the passenger's reservation will fill a seat on another flight by the same air carrier;

(B) the costs of processing the change or cancellation electronically; and

(C) any related labor costs;

(2) with respect to a fee described in subsection (c)(2) imposed by an air carrier relating to checked baggage—

(A) the costs of processing checked baggage electronically; and

(B) any related labor costs; and

(3) any other considerations the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) UPDATED REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall update the standards required by subsection (b)(2) not less frequently than once every 3 years.

SA 3692. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. AUTHORITY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES AT AIRPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administration of the Transportation Security Administration shall require that the air transportation security program required by section 44903(c)(1) of title 49, United States Code, for each covered airport include the following:

(1) Beginning not more than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that a State or local law enforcement officer is stationed not more than 300 feet from each passenger screening checkpoint at each covered airport.

(2) Beginning not more than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that an explosives detection canine team of a State or local law enforcement agency is assigned to each terminal at each covered airport.

(b) TECHNICAL SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide technical and other support to State or local law enforcement agencies providing the personnel described in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a).

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CATEGORY I AIRPORT.—The term ''Category I airport'' means an airport subject to the security program requirements of section 1542.103(a) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or similar successor regulation), where the aircraft operator or foreign air carrier is subject to section 1544.101(a)(1) or 1546.101(a) of such title (or similar successor regulation) and the number of annual enplanements is 5,000,000 or more and the number of international enplanements is 1,000,000 or more.

(2) CATEGORY X AIRPORT.—The term ''Category X airport'' means an airport subject to the security program requirements of section 1542.103(a) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or similar successor regulation), where the aircraft operator or foreign air carrier is subject to section 1544.101(a)(1) or 1546.101(a) of such title (or similar successor regulation) and the number of annual enplanements—

(A) is 1,250,000 or more and less than 5,000,000; or

(B) is 5,000,000 or more but the number of annual international enplanements is less than 1,000,000.

(3) COVERED AIRPORT.—The term ''covered airport'' means a Category X airport or a Category I airport.

(d) FUNDING.—Out of funds made available to the Transportation Security Administration for fiscal year 2016, $20,000,000 shall be available for State and local law enforcement agencies, as a transfer of funds, to train, certify, and utilize explosives detection canines.

SA 3693. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle G—Arm All Pilots Act

SEC. 2701. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Arm All Pilots Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2702. FACILITATION OF AND LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) IMPROVED ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(ii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The training of'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The training of''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Arm All Pilots Act of 2016, the Secretary shall—

''(aa) designate 5 additional firearms training facilities located in various regions of the United States for Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment;

''(bb) designate firearms training facilities approved before such date of enactment for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers as facilities approved for initial training and certification of pilots seeking to be deputized as Federal flight deck officers; and

''(cc) designate additional firearms training facilities for recurrent training of Federal flight deck officers relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such date of enactment.''.

(b) FIREARMS REQUALIFICATION FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—Section 44921(c)(2)(C)(iii) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Under Secretary shall'' and inserting the following:

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall'';

(2) in subclause (I), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking ''the Under Secretary'' and inserting ''the Secretary, but not more frequently than once every 6 months,''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) USE OF FACILITIES FOR REQUALIFICATION.—The Secretary shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to requalify to carry a firearm under the program through training at a private or government-owned gun range certified to provide firearm requalification training.

''(III) SELF-REPORTING.—The Secretary shall determine that a Federal flight deck officer has met the requirements to requalify to carry a firearm under the program if—

''(aa) the officer reports to the Secretary that the officer has participated in a sufficient number of hours of training to requalify to carry a firearm under the program; and

''(bb) the administrator of the facility at which the officer conducted the requalification training verifies that the officer participated in that number of hours of training.''.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—Section 44921(c)(2) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) LIMITATIONS ON TRAINING.—

''(i) INITIAL TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) initial training of not more than 5 days for a pilot to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for not more than 2 days of such training; and

''(III) not more than 3 days of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.

''(ii) RECURRENT TRAINING.—The Secretary may require—

''(I) recurrent training of not more than 2 days, not more frequently than once every 5 years, for a pilot to maintain deputization as a Federal flight deck officer;

''(II) the pilot to be physically present at the training facility for a full-day training session for not more than one day of such training; and

''(III) not more than one day of such training to be in the form of certified online training administered by the Department of Homeland Security.''.

(d) OTHER MEASURES TO FACILITATE TRAINING.—Section 44921(e) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Pilots participating'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Pilots participating''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) FACILITATION OF TRAINING.—

''(A) TIME OFF FOR TRAINING.—An air carrier shall permit a Federal flight deck officer or a pilot seeking to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer to, in consultation with the air carrier, take a reasonable amount of leave from work to participate in initial and recurrent training for the program. An air carrier shall not be obligated to provide such an officer or pilot compensation for such leave.

''(B) PRACTICE AMMUNITION.—At the request of a Federal flight deck officer, the Secretary shall provide to the officer sufficient practice ammunition to conduct at least one practice course every month.''.

SEC. 2703. CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS BY FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Section 44921(f) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall authorize a Federal flight deck officer to carry a firearm while engaged in providing air transportation or intrastate air transportation. The authority provided to a Federal flight deck officer under this paragraph includes the authority to carry a firearm—

''(A) on the officer's body, loaded, and holstered;

''(B) when traveling to a flight duty assignment, throughout the duty assignment, and when traveling from a flight duty assignment to the officer's home or place where the officer is residing when traveling; and

''(C) in the passenger cabin and while traveling in a cockpit jump seat.

''(2) CONCEALED CARRY.—A Federal flight deck officer shall make reasonable efforts to keep the officer's firearm concealed when in public.

''(3) PURCHASE OF FIREARM BY OFFICER.—Notwithstanding subsection (c)(1), a Federal flight deck officer may purchase a firearm and carry that firearm aboard an aircraft of which the officer is the pilot in accordance with this section if the firearm is of a type that may be used under the program.''.

(b) CARRIAGE OF FIREARMS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS.—Paragraph (5) of section 44921(f), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended to read as follows:

''(5) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary may take such action as may be necessary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm in a foreign country whenever necessary to participate in the program.

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH FEDERAL AIR MARSHAL PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding standard 4.7.7 of Annex 17 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, done at Chicago December 7, 1944, and entered into force April 4, 1947 (TIAS 1591), the Secretary shall work to make policies relating to the carriage of firearms on flights in foreign air transportation by Federal flight deck officers consistent with the policies of the Federal air marshal program for carrying firearms on such flights.''.

(c) CARRIAGE OF FIREARM IN PASSENGER CABIN.—

(1) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Section 44921 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a Federal flight deck officer to place a firearm in a locked container, or in any other manner render the firearm unavailable, when the cockpit door is opened.''.

(2) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 44921(b)(3) is amended—

(A) by striking subparagraph (G); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (H) through (N) as subparagraphs (G) through (M), respectively.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall—

(1) prescribe regulations on the proper storage of firearms when a Federal flight deck officer is at home or where the officer is residing when traveling; and

(2) revise the procedural requirements established under section 44921(b)(1) of title 49, United States Code, to implement the amendments made by subsection (c).

SEC. 2704. PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921(d)(2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as clauses (i), (ii), and (iii), respectively, and by moving such clauses, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(2) by striking ''A pilot is'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A pilot is''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) CONSISTENCY WITH REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL CERTIFICATES.—In establishing standards under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary may not establish medical or physical standards for a pilot to become a Federal flight deck officer that are inconsistent with or more stringent than the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for the issuance of a first- or second-class airman medical certificate under part 67 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. 2705. TRANSFER OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.

Section 44921(d) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) TRANSFER FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.—A pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer who moves to inactive status for less than 5 years may return to active status after completing one program of recurrent training described in subsection (c).''.

SEC. 2706. FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.

Section 44921, as amended by section 2703(c)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) FACILITATION OF SECURITY SCREENING OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—

''(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPEDITED SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to be screened through the crew member identity verification program of the Transportation Security Administration (commonly known as the 'Known Crew Member program') when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(2) PROHIBITION ON PAPERWORK.—The Secretary may not require a Federal flight deck officer to fill out any forms or paperwork when entering the sterile area of an airport.

''(3) STERILE AREA DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'sterile area' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).''.

SEC. 2707. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 44921, as amended by this subtitle, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''Under Secretary of Transportation for Security'' and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security'';

(2) in subsection (d)(4), by striking ''may,'' and inserting ''may'';

(3) in subsection (i)(2), by striking ''the Under Secretary may'' and inserting ''may'';

(4) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(B) by striking ''APPLICABILITY'' and all that follows through ''This section'' and inserting ''APPLICABILITY.—This section'';

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(n) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) PILOT.—The term 'pilot' means an individual who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight or any other flight deck crew member.

''(2) ALL-CARGO AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term 'air transportation' includes all-cargo air transportation.''; and

(6) by striking ''Under Secretary'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary''.

SEC. 2708. REFUNDS OF CERTAIN SECURITY SERVICE FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.

Section 44940 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) REFUND OF FEES FOR AIR CARRIERS WITH FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS ON ALL FLIGHTS.—From fees received in a fiscal year under subsection (a)(1), each air carrier that certifies to the Secretary of Homeland Security that all flights operated by the air carrier have on board a pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer under section 44921 shall receive an amount equal to 10 percent of the fees collected under subsection (a)(1) from passengers on flights operated by that air carrier in that fiscal year.''.

SEC. 2709. TREATMENT OF INFORMATION ABOUT FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS AS SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revise section 15.5(b)(11) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to classify information about pilots deputized as Federal flight deck officers under section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as sensitive security information in a manner consistent with the classification of information about Federal air marshals.

SEC. 2710. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SA 3694. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 234, line 9, insert '', aviation safety engineers,'' after ''specialists''.

SA 3695. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 63, line 14, insert '', except those operated for news gathering activities protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States'' after ''system''.

SA 3696. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2144. PROHIBITION ON OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT CARRYING A WEAPON.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 463 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a weapon

''(a) IN GENERAL.—A person shall not operate an unmanned aircraft with a weapon attached to, installed on, or otherwise carried by the aircraft.

''(b) PENALTIES.—A person who violates subsection (a)—

''(1) shall be liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $27,500; and

''(2) may be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

''(c) NONAPPLICATION TO PUBLIC AIRCRAFT.—This section does not apply to public aircraft.

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of the Administrator with respect to manned or unmanned aircraft.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.—The term 'unmanned aircraft' has the meaning given that term in section 44801.

''(2) WEAPON.—The term 'weapon'—

''(A) means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury; and

''(B) includes a firearm or destructive device (as those terms are defined in section 921 of title 18).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46301(d)(2) of such title is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting ''section 46320,'' before ''or section 47107(b)''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 463 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 46319 the following:

''46320. Prohibition on operation of unmanned aircraft carrying a weapon.''.

SA 3697. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REIMBURSEMENT FOR AIRPORT SECURITY PROJECTS.

Paragraph (3) of section 44923(h) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount made available under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, up to $ 50,000,000 shall be used to make discretionary grants, including other transaction agreements for airport security improvement projects, with priority given to small hub airports and nonhub airports.

''(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—For each fiscal year, of the amount available under paragraph (1), up to $20,000,000 shall be made available for reimbursement to airports that have incurred eligible costs under section 1604(b)(2) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 121 Stat. 481).''.

SA 3698. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PROMOTION OF EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''exit lane breach control technology'' refers to any automated system, or series of systems, designed to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area.

(4) STERILE AREA.—The term ''sterile area'' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling)

(b) STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) INITIAL REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop standards and requirements for the use of exit lane breach control technology at airports.

(2) QUALIFIED PRODUCT LIST.—The Administrator shall establish, publically post, and maintain a qualified product list of exit land breach control technology that shall includes all previously-approved systems.

(c) BENEFITS FOR AIRPORTS USING EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.—If an airport deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) and the deployment results in the need for fewer employees of the Administration to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area, the airport's Federal security director may reallocate such employees to other transportation security missions, including passenger screening, within that airport if the Administrator certifies that the reallocation will not negatively impact the security of that airport.

(2) NO LOSS OF ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not decrease, under the Staffing Allocation Model, any successor allocation process, or any other circumstances, the number of employees of the Administration assigned to an airport that deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) on the basis that the deployment results in the need for fewer such employees to provide security for sterile areas of the airport.

(B) MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—Subject to subparagraph (C), if an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under paragraph (1), the Administrator—

(i) shall determine the minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for that airport prior to the deployment of the exit lane breach control technology; and

(ii) may not allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport for any year that is less than such minimum number.

(C) WAIVER OF MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—If the Administrator has determined a minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for an airport under subparagraph (B)(i), the Administrator may only allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport that is less than such minimum number if the total passenger count for that airport in any 6-month period declines more than 5 percent compared to the same 6-month period during the preceding calendar year.

(D) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives not less than 45 days prior to making an allocation authorized under subparagraph (C).

(d) RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING PASSENGER EXIT POINTS.—If an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under subsection (c)(1), the Administrator shall have met the responsibility of the Administration to monitor passenger exit points required by subsection (n) of section 44903 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3699. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PROMOTION OF EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''exit lane breach control technology'' refers to any automated system, or series of systems, designed to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area.

(4) STERILE AREA.—The term ''sterile area'' has the meaning given that term in section 1540.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling)

(b) STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) INITIAL REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall develop standards and requirements for the use of exit lane breach control technology at airports.

(2) QUALIFIED PRODUCT LIST.—The Administrator shall establish, publically post, and maintain a qualified product list of exit land breach control technology that shall includes all previously-approved systems.

(c) BENEFITS FOR AIRPORTS USING EXIT LANE BREACH CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.—If an airport deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) and the deployment results in the need for fewer employees of the Administration to monitor exit points from an airport sterile area, the airport's Federal security director may reallocate such employees to other transportation security missions, including passenger screening, within that airport if the Administrator certifies that the reallocation will not negatively impact the security of that airport.

(2) NO LOSS OF ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may not decrease, under the Staffing Allocation Model, any successor allocation process, or any other circumstances, the number of employees of the Administration assigned to an airport that deploys, on a nonreimbursable basis, exit lane breach control technology that satisfies the standards and requirements developed under subsection (b) on the basis that the deployment results in the need for fewer such employees to provide security for sterile areas of the airport.

(B) MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—Subject to subparagraph (C), if an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under paragraph (1), the Administrator—

(i) shall determine the minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for that airport prior to the deployment of the exit lane breach control technology; and

(ii) may not allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport for any year that is less than such minimum number.

(C) WAIVER OF MINIMUM STAFFING LEVELS.—If the Administrator has determined a minimum number of full-time equivalent employees of the Administration required for an airport under subparagraph (B)(i), the Administrator may only allocate a number of employees of the Administration for that airport that is less than such minimum number if the total passenger count for that airport in any 6-month period declines more than 5 percent compared to the same 6-month period during the preceding calendar year.

(D) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives not less than 45 days prior to making an allocation authorized under subparagraph (C).

(d) RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING PASSENGER EXIT POINTS.—If an airport is eligible for the Administrator to reallocate employees under subsection (c)(1), the Administrator shall have met the responsibility of the Administration to monitor passenger exit points required by subsection (n) of section 44903 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3700. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1305. AIRPORT VEHICLE EMISSIONS.

Section 40117(a)(3)(G) is amended to read as follows:

''(G) A project to reduce emissions under subchapter I of chapter 471 or to use cleaner burning conventional fuels, or for acquiring for use at a commercial service airport vehicles or ground support equipment that include low-emission technology or use cleaner burning fuels, or, if the airport is located in an air quality nonattainment area (as defined in section 171(2) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501(2))) or a maintenance area referred to in section 175A of such Act (42 U.S.C. 7505a), a project to retrofit any such vehicles or equipment that are powered by a diesel or gasoline engine with emission control technologies certified or verified by the Environmental Protection Agency to reduce emissions, if such project would be able to receive emission credits for the project from the governing State or Federal environmental agency as described in section 47139.''.

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. REDUCTION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION, EMISSIONS, AND NOISE FROM CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAM.—From amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a research program related to reducing civilian aircraft energy use, emissions, and source noise with equivalent safety through grants or other measures, which shall include cost-sharing authorized under section 106(l)(6) of such title, including reimbursable agreements with other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSORTIUM.—

(1) DESIGNATION AS CONSORTIUM.—The Administrator shall designate, using a competitive process, one or more institutions or entities described in paragraph (2), to be known as a ''Government led Consortium for Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise'' or ''CLEEN'', to perform research in accordance with this section.

(2) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator shall include educational and research institutions or private sector entities that have existing facilities and experience for developing and testing noise, emissions, and energy reduction engine and aircraft technology, and developing alternative fuels, in the research program required by subsection (a) to fulfill the performance objectives specified in subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION MECHANISMS.—In conducting the research program required by subsection (a), the consortium designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) coordinate its activities with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(B) consult on a regular basis with the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative.

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—Not later than January 1, 2021, the Administrator shall seek to ensure that the research program required subsection (a) supports the following objectives for civil subsonic airplanes:

(1) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces aircraft fuel burn 40 percent relative to year 2000 best-in-class in-service aircraft.

(2) Certifiable engine technology that reduces landing and takeoff cycle nitrogen oxide emissions by 70 percent over the International Civil Aviation Organization standard adopted in 2011.

(3) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces noise levels by 32 decibels cumulatively, relative to the Stage 4 standard, or reduces the noise contour area in absolute terms.

(4) The feasibility of use of drop-in alternative jet fuels in aircraft and engine systems, including successful demonstration and quantification of benefits, advancement of fuel testing capability, and support for fuel evaluation.

(d) CERTIFIABLE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''certifiable'' means the technology has been demonstrated to Technology Readiness Level 6 or 7, and there are no foreseen issues that would prevent certification to existing standards.

SEC. 5038. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall submit to Congress a joint plan to carry out the research described in subsection (a).''.

SA 3701. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. REDUCTION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION, EMISSIONS, AND NOISE FROM CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAM.—From amounts made available under section 48102(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a research program related to reducing civilian aircraft energy use, emissions, and source noise with equivalent safety through grants or other measures, which shall include cost-sharing authorized under section 106(l)(6) of such title, including reimbursable agreements with other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSORTIUM.—

(1) DESIGNATION AS CONSORTIUM.—The Administrator shall designate, using a competitive process, one or more institutions or entities described in paragraph (2), to be known as a ''Government led Consortium for Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise'' or ''CLEEN'', to perform research in accordance with this section.

(2) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator shall include educational and research institutions or private sector entities that have existing facilities and experience for developing and testing noise, emissions, and energy reduction engine and aircraft technology, and developing alternative fuels, in the research program required by subsection (a) to fulfill the performance objectives specified in subsection (c).

(3) COORDINATION MECHANISMS.—In conducting the research program required by subsection (a), the consortium designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) coordinate its activities with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant Federal agencies; and

(B) consult on a regular basis with the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative.

(c) PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.—Not later than January 1, 2021, the Administrator shall

seek to ensure that the research program required subsection (a) supports the following objectives for civil subsonic airplanes:

(1) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces aircraft fuel burn 40 percent relative to year 2000 best-in-class in-service aircraft.

(2) Certifiable engine technology that reduces landing and takeoff cycle nitrogen oxide emissions by 70 percent over the International Civil Aviation Organization standard adopted in 2011.

(3) Certifiable aircraft technology that reduces noise levels by 32 decibels cumulatively, relative to the Stage 4 standard, or reduces the noise contour area in absolute terms.

(4) The feasibility of use of drop-in alternative jet fuels in aircraft and engine systems, including successful demonstration and quantification of benefits, advancement of fuel testing capability, and support for fuel evaluation.

(d) CERTIFIABLE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''certifiable'' means the technology has been demonstrated to Technology Readiness Level 6 or 7, and there are no foreseen issues that would prevent certification to existing standards.

SEC. 5038. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall submit to Congress a joint plan to carry out the research described in subsection (a).''.

SA 3702. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, after line 24, add the following:

(d) FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION TO ENHANCE THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY CAPABILITIES OF PUBLIC UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Administrator shall assist and enable, without undue interference, Federal civilian government agencies that operate unmanned aircraft systems within civil-controlled airspace, in operationally deploying and integrating sense and avoid capabilities, as necessary to operate unmanned aircraft systems safely and effectively within the National Air Space.

SA 3703. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2144. SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE AND MILITARY TRAINING ROUTES.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a comprehensive assessment of the risk to military aircraft of civil unmanned aircraft systems operating in or transiting special use airspace or military training routes.

SA 3704. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. LEE, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2152.

SA 3705. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. MODIFICATION OF FINAL RULE RELATING TO FLIGHTCREW MEMBER DUTY AND REST REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSENGER OPERATIONS TO APPLY TO ALL-CARGO OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall modify the final rule specified in subsection (b) so that the flightcrew member duty and rest requirements under that rule apply to flightcrew members in all-cargo operations conducted by air carriers in the same manner as those requirements apply to flightcrew members in passenger operations conducted by air carriers.

(b) FINAL RULE SPECIFIED.—The final rule specified in this subsection is the final rule of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) published in the Federal Register on January 4, 2012 (77 Fed. Reg. 330); and

(2) relating to flightcrew member duty and rest requirements.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF RULEMAKING REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the modification required by subsection (a).

SA 3706. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5003.

SA 3707. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 180, line 26, strike the period and insert the following: ''or the acceptance or validation by the FAA of a certificate or design approval of a foreign authority.''.

SA 3708. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 226, strike lines 1 through 11, and insert the following:

(3) UNDEVELOPED DEFINED.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(F), the term ''undeveloped'' means a defined geographic area where the Administrator determines low-flying aircraft are operated on a routine basis, such as low-lying forested areas with predominate tree cover under 200 feet and pasture and range land.

(4) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—The Administrator shall define such other terms as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) DATABASE.—The Administrator shall—

(1) develop a database that contains the location and height of each covered tower;

(2) keep the database current to the extent practicable;

(3) ensure that any proprietary information in the database is protected from disclosure in accordance with law; and

(4) ensure that, by virtue of accessing the database, users will be deemed to agree and acknowledge—

(A) that the information will be used for aviation safety purposes only; and

(B) not to disclose any such information regardless of whether the information is marked or labeled as proprietary or with a similar designation.

SA 3709. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2153(a) and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Small unmanned aircraft systems may use spectrum for wireless control link, tracking, diagnostics, payload communication, and collaborative-collision avoidance, such as vehicle-to-vehicle communication, and other uses, consistent with the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), Federal Communications Commission rules, and the safety-of-life determination made by the Federal Aviation Administration, and through voluntary commercial arrangements with service providers, whether they are operating within a UTM system under section 2138 of this Act or outside such a system.

SA 3710. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. JURISDICTION OVER OFFENSES COMMITTED BY CERTAIN UNITED STATES PERSONNEL STATIONED IN CANADA.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act of 2016''.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 212A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the chapter heading, by striking ''**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**''; and

(2) by adding after section 3272 the following:

''§ 3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever, while employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice and stationed or deployed in Canada pursuant to a treaty, executive agreement, or bilateral memorandum in furtherance of a border security initiative, engages in conduct (or conspires or attempts to engage in conduct) in Canada that would constitute an offense for which a person may be prosecuted in a court of the United States had the conduct been engaged in within the United States or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States shall be fined or imprisoned, or both, as provided for that offense.

''(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'employed by the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice' means—

''(1) being employed as a civilian employee, a contractor (including a subcontractor at any tier), or an employee of a contractor (or a subcontractor at any tier) of the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of Justice;

''(2) being present or residing in Canada in connection with such employment; and

''(3) not being a national of or ordinarily resident in Canada.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Part II of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the table of chapters, by striking the item relating to chapter 212A and inserting the following:

''212A. Extraterritorial jurisdiction over certain offenses ..... 3271'';

and

(2) in the table of sections for chapter 212A, by inserting after the item relating to section 3272 the following:

''3273. Offenses committed by certain United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to infringe upon or otherwise affect the exercise of prosecutorial discretion by the Department of Justice in implementing this provision.

SA 3711. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. LIMITATIONS ON OPERATING CERTAIN AIRCRAFT NOT COMPLYING WITH STAGE 4 NOISE LEVELS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 475 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 47535. Limitations on operating certain aircraft not complying with stage 4 noise levels

''(a) REGULATIONS.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the International Civil Aviation Organization, shall issue regulations to establish minimum standards for civil turbojets to comply with stage 4 noise levels.

''(b) GENERAL RULE.—The Secretary shall issue regulations to, except as provided in section 47529—

''(1) establish a timeline by which increasing percentages of the total number of civil turbojets with a maximum weight of more than 75,000 pounds operating to or from airports in the United States comply with the stage 4 noise levels established under subsection (a), beginning not later than December 31, 2022; and

''(2) require that 100 percent of such turbojets operating after December 31, 2037, to or from airports in the United States comply with the stage 4 noise levels.

''(c) FOREIGN-FLAG AIRCRAFT.—

''(1) INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall request the International Civil Aviation Organization to add to its Work Programme the consideration of international standards for the phase-out of aircraft that do not comply with stage 4 noise levels.

''(2) ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary shall enforce the requirements of this section with respect to foreign-flag aircraft only to the extent that such enforcement is consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

''(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—Beginning with calendar year 2020—

''(1) each air carrier shall submit to the Secretary an annual report on the progress the carrier is making toward complying with the requirements of this section and regulations issued to carry out this section; and

''(2) the Secretary shall submit to Congress an annual report on the progress being made toward that compliance.

''(e) NOISE RECERTIFICATION TESTING NOT REQUIRED.—

''(1) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require the noise certification testing of a civil turbojet that has been retrofitted to comply with or otherwise already meets the stage 4 noise levels established under subsection (a).

''(2) MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING COMPLIANCE WITH STAGE 4 NOISE LEVELS.—The Secretary shall specify means for demonstrating that an aircraft complies with stage 4 noise levels without requiring noise certification testing.

''(f) NONADDITION RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and section 47530, a person may operate a civil jet aircraft with a maximum weight of more than 75,000 pounds that is imported into the United States after December 31, 2020, only if the aircraft—

''(A) complies with the stage 4 noise levels; or

''(B) was purchased by the person importing the aircraft into the United States under a legally binding contract entered into before January 1, 2021.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Transportation may provide for an exception from paragraph (1) to permit a person to obtain modifications to an aircraft to meet the stage 4 noise levels.

''(3) AIRCRAFT DEEMED NOT IMPORTED.—For purposes of this subsection, an aircraft shall be deemed not to have been imported into the United States if the aircraft—

''(A) was owned on January 1, 2021, by—

''(i) a corporation, trust, or partnership organized under the laws of the United States, a State, or the District of Columbia;

''(ii) an individual who is a citizen of the United States; or

''(iii) an entity that is owned or controlled by a corporation, trust, or partnership described in clause (i) or an individual described in clause (ii); and

''(B) enters the United States not later than 6 months after the expiration of a lease agreement (including any extension of such an agreement) between an owner described in subparagraph (A) and a foreign air carrier.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 475 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 47534 the following:

''47535. Limitations on operating certain aircraft not complying with stage 4 noise levels.''.

SEC. 5033. STANDARDS FOR ISSUANCE OF NEW TYPE CERTIFICATES.

(a) APPLICABILITY OF STAGE 5 NOISE STANDARDS TO CIVIL JETS WITH A MAXIMUM WEIGHT OF MORE THAN 121,254 POUNDS.—On and after December 31, 2017, the Secretary of Transportation may not issue a new type certificate for a civil jet with a maximum weight of more than 121,254 pounds for which an application was received after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless the person applying for the type certificate demonstrates that the civil jet complies with stage 5 noise levels.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF STAGE 5 NOISE STANDARDS TO ALL CIVIL JETS.—On and after December 31, 2020, the Secretary may not issue a new type certificate for any civil jet for which an application was received after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless the person applying for the type certificate demonstrates that the civil jet complies with stage 5 noise levels.

SA 3712. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an

amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5023. HELICOPTER NOISE ABATEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue a final rule setting forth guidelines and regulations relating to stringency standards for Stage 3 noise levels for helicopters that—

(1) create a requirement to retrofit existing helicopters to comply with Stage 3 noise levels as prescribed in subpart H of part 36 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(2) require the retirement of helicopters not in compliance with Stage 3 noise levels by December 31, 2024.

(b) EXEMPTIONS.—Helicopters utilized for medical purposes or governmental functions (as defined in section 1.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations) shall be exempt from the guidelines and regulations required by subsection (a).

(c) STAGE 3 NOISE LEVELS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Stage 3 noise level'' has the meaning given that term in section 36.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

SA 3713. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5023. MINIMUM ALTITUDES FOR HELICOPTERS OVER POPULATED AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish a process for evaluating—

(1) whether minimum altitude requirements for helicopter routes over populated areas can be safely set for the purpose of reducing noise effects on the surrounding community; and

(2) in the case of routes for which minimum altitudes cannot be safely set, whether those routes should be otherwise modified, restricted, or eliminated due to excessive noise effects.

(b) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.—In establishing the process required by subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(1) review and respond to requests made by States, political subdivisions of States, other elected officials, and community organizations to evaluate specific helicopter routes to reduce noise; and

(2) provide a means for the public to participate in the process.

SA 3714. Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 97, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

''(b) ASSISTANCE BY FEDERAL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—The Secretary shall include, in the guidance regarding the operation of public unmanned aircraft systems required by subsection (a), guidance with respect to allowing unmanned aircraft systems owned or operated by a Federal agency to assist Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement organizations in conducting law enforcement activities in the national airspace system.

SA 3715. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 92, line 15, insert after ''unmanned aircraft'' the following: '', including in circumstances in which there has been significant experience operating the associated unmanned aircraft within a country with which the United States maintains a trusted aviation relationship''.

SA 3716. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REQUIREMENT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES AT AIRPORTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT.—The Administration of the Transportation Security Administration shall require that the air transportation security program required by section 44903(c)(1) of title 49, United States Code, for each covered airport include the following:

(1) Beginning not more than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that a State or local law enforcement officer is stationed not more than 300 feet from each passenger screening checkpoint at each covered airport.

(2) Beginning not more than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, that an explosives detection canine team of a State or local law enforcement agency is assigned to each terminal at each covered airport.

(b) TECHNICAL SUPPORT.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall provide technical and other support to State or local law enforcement agencies providing the personnel described in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a).

(c) COVERED AIRPORT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered airport'' means the 25 airports in the United States with the highest numbers of passengers enplaned each year.

(d) FUNDING.—Out of funds made available to the Transportation Security Administration for fiscal year 2016, $20,000,000 shall be available for State and local law enforcement agencies, as a transfer of funds, to train, certify, and utilize explosives detection canines.

SA 3717. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS FOR PASSENGER SCREENING AND DATA PROCESSING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall direct the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration and the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to set service level standards for the processing of passengers in air transportation and associated electronic travel data.

(b) SECURITY SCREENING.—Section 44901 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The physical screening of passengers and their property, while in federally controlled areas, and screening of electronic travel data, shall be performed in accordance with service level standards established by the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration and agreed to by the Aviation Security Advisory Committee.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDARDS.—The service level standards established under paragraph (1) shall provide for—

''(A) a 10-minute maximum wait time for 99 percent of all passengers as measured in 15-minute periods each calendar day;

''(B) a 5-minute maximum wait time for 95 percent of all passengers as measured in 15-minute periods each calendar day;

''(C) 98 percent passenger satisfaction with screening processes as measured by customer satisfaction surveys;

''(D) 99 percent passenger satisfaction with the cleanliness and hygiene of the screening area;

''(E) 98 percent of responses to submissions of electronic passenger data returned within 4 seconds; and

''(F) 95 percent of all calls to the Transportation Security Administration's resolution desk answered within 30 seconds.

''(3) SUSPENSION OF STANDARDS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may suspend the standards established under paragraph (1) for reasons of national emergency for not more than 30 days and shall report the circumstances for suspension to Congress not later than 90 days after suspending such standards.''.

(c) REVISED CUSTOMS REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revise section 122.49(a) of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, to require that the screening of passenger and

crew manifests be performed in accordance with service level standards established by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and agreed to by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection User Fee Advisory Committee.

(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDARDS.—The service level standards established pursuant to paragraph (1) shall provide for—

(A) 98 percent of responses to submissions of electronic passenger data to be completed within 4 seconds;

(B) 95 percent of all calls to any resolution desk to be answered within 30 seconds;

(C) 95 percent of all advance passenger information submitted via interactive batch-style manifest submissions to be returned within 3 minutes;

(D) 95 percent of all data submissions requiring manual resolution by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to be provided within 5 minutes; and

(E) 99.7 uptime for all passenger information processing systems.

(3) SUSPENSION OF STANDARDS.—The Secretary may suspend the standards established pursuant to paragraph (1) for reasons of national emergency for not more than 30 days and shall report the circumstances for suspension to Congress not later than 90 days after suspending such standards.

(d) AMENDMENT TO CUSTOMS LAWS.—Section 3061 of the Revised Statutes (19 U.S.C. 482) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) SEARCHES AT PORTS OF ENTRY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Search of passengers pursuant to subsection (a) at service ports and ports of entry (as listed in section 101.3 of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulations or ruling)), shall be performed in accordance with service level standards established by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and agreed to by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection User Fee Advisory Committee.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDARDS.—The service level standards established under paragraph (1) shall provide for—

''(A) 95 percent of all persons not requiring more than normal inspection to be processed and cleared within 30 minutes of disembarkation;

''(B) a 15-minute average queue dwell time between entering the secondary inspection area and commencing an initial interview with a U.S. Customs and Border Protection secondary inspector; and

''(C) 98 percent of all requests for capture of biometric data for visitors to the United States at the primary inspection booth to be completed within 15 seconds.

''(3) SUSPENSION OF STANDARDS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may suspend the standards established under paragraph (1) for reasons of national emergency for not more than 30 days and shall report the circumstances for suspension to Congress not later than 90 days after suspending such standards.''.

SA 3718. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF ENERGY CREDIT FOR OTHER ENERGY PROPERTY.

(a) QUALIFIED FUEL CELL PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(1)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(b) QUALIFIED MICROTURBINE PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(2)(D) of such Code is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(c) COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEM PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(3)(A)(iv) of such Code is amended by striking ''which is placed in service before January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022''.

(d) QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—Section 48(c)(4)(C) of such Code is amended by striking ''for any period after December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''the construction of which does not begin before January 1, 2022''.

(e) THERMAL ENERGY PROPERTY.—Section 48(a)(3)(A)(vii) of such Code is amended by striking ''periods ending before January 1, 2017'' and inserting ''property the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022''.

(f) PHASEOUT OF 30 PERCENT CREDIT RATE FOR FUEL CELL AND SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—Subsection (a) of section 48 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) PHASEOUT FOR QUALIFIED FUEL CELL PROPERTY AND QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—In the case of qualified fuel cell property or qualified small wind energy property, the construction of which begins before January 1, 2022, the energy percentage determined under paragraph (2) shall be equal to—

''(A) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2019, and before January 1, 2021, 26 percent, and

''(B) in the case of any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2020, and before January 1, 2022, 22 percent.''.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3719. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 298, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(3) choices that consumers have in choosing an air carrier based on change, cancellation, and baggage fees in large, medium, and small markets; and

(4) the potential effect on availability of air service if change, cancellation, or baggage fees were regulated by the Federal Government.

SA 3720. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 116, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 117, line 6, and insert the following:

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Any person who operates an aircraft and, in doing so, knowingly or recklessly interferes with firefighting, law enforcement, or emergency response activities, shall be subject to the penalties provided under subsections (b) and (c).

''(b) CRIMINAL PENALTIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), whoever commits or attempts to commit an offense under subsection (a) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

''(2) SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH.—Whoever attempts to cause, or knowingly or recklessly causes, serious bodily injury or death during the commission of an offense under subsection (a) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both.

''(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—Whoever operates an aircraft as described in subsection (a) is liable to the United States for a civil penalty of not more than $20,000.

SA 3721. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2138 and insert the following:

SEC. 2138. UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

(a) RESEARCH PLAN FOR UTM DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop a research plan for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management (referred to in this section as ''UTM'') development.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the research plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) identify research goals related to—

(i) operational parameters related to altitude, geographic coverage, classes of airspace, and critical infrastructure;

(ii) avionics capability requirements or standards;

(iii) operator identification and authentication requirements and capabilities;

(iv) communication protocols with air traffic control facilities that will not interfere with existing responsibility to deconflict manned aircraft in the national airspace system;

(v) collision avoidance requirements;

(vi) separation standards for manned and unmanned aircraft;

(vii) spectrum needs; and

(viii) provision of traffic position information and weather through a traffic information service to operators of unmanned aircraft systems;

(B) evaluate options for the administration and management structure for the traffic

management of low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems;

(C) ensure the plan is consistent with the broader Federal Aviation Administration regulatory and operational framework encompassing all unmanned aircraft systems operations expected to be authorized in the national airspace system; and

(D) ensure the plan utilizes existing surveillance networks and services provided under the surveillance and broadcast services program, augmented as necessary with additional surveillance assets to provide additional low altitude coverage.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—The research plan under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of—

(A) the ability to allow near-term small unmanned aircraft system operations without need of an automated UTM system;

(B) the full range of operational capability any automated UTM system should possess;

(C) the operational characteristics and metrics that would drive incremental adoption of automated capability and procedures consistent with a rising aggregate community demand for service for low altitude operations of small unmanned aircraft systems;

(D) the integration points for small unmanned aircraft system traffic management with the existing national airspace system planning and traffic management systems; and

(E) the ability of a common air traffic surveillance platform to provide situational awareness for beyond-line-of-sight operations.

(4) DEADLINES.—The Administrator shall—

(A) initiate development of the research plan not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) complete the research plan;

(ii) submit the research plan to the appropriate committees of Congress; and

(iii) publish the research plan on the Federal Aviation Administration's Web site.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date the research plan under subsection (a) is submitted under paragraph (4)(B) of that subsection, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the small unmanned aircraft systems industry to develop operational concepts and top-level system requirements for a UTM system pilot program, consistent with subsection (a).

(2) USE OF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND TEST SITES.—In developing and carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, leverage the capabilities of and utilize the Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the test sites (as defined by section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121).

(3) SOLICITATION.—The Administrator shall issue a solicitation for operational prototype systems that meet the necessary objectives for use in a pilot program to demonstrate, validate, or modify, as appropriate, the requirements developed under paragraph (1).

(c) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date the pilot program under subsection (b) is complete, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and in consultation with the head of each relevant Federal agency, shall develop a comprehensive plan for the deployment of UTM systems in the national airspace.

(2) SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive plan under paragraph (1) shall include requirements or standards consistent with established or planned rulemaking for, at a minimum—

(A) the flight of small unmanned aircraft systems in controlled and uncontrolled airspace;

(B) communications, as applicable—

(i) among small unmanned aircraft systems;

(ii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft operating in the same airspace; and

(iii) between small unmanned aircraft systems and air traffic control as considered necessary;

(C) air traffic management for small unmanned aircraft systems operations; and

(D) networked air traffic surveillance.

(d) SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.—Based on the comprehensive plan under subsection (c), including the requirements under paragraph (2) of that subsection, and the pilot program under subsection (b), the Administrator shall determine the operational need and implementation schedule for evolutionary use of automation support systems to separate and deconflict manned and unmanned aircraft systems.

SA 3722. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. CUBAN IMMIGRANTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Cuban Immigrant Work Opportunity Act of 2016''.

(b) CERTAIN CUBANS INELIGIBLE FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (8 U.S.C. 1522 note) is amended—

(A) in the title heading, by striking ''**CUBAN AND**'';

(B) in section 501—

(i) by striking ''Cuban and'' each place such phrase appears;

(ii) in subsection (d), by striking ''Cuban or''; and

(iii) in subsection (e)—

(I) in paragraph (1)—

(aa) by striking ''Cuban/'' and

(bb) by striking ''Cuba or''; and

(II) in paragraph (2), by striking ''Cuba or''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996.—Section 403(b)(1)(D) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1613(b)(1)(D)) is amended, by striking ''a Cuban'' and all that follows and inserting ''an eligible participant (as defined in section 101(3) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (8 U.S.C. 1522 note)).''.

(B) OMNIBUS EDUCATION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1981.—Section 543(a)(2) of the Omnibus Education Reconciliation Act of 1981 (title V of Public Law 97–35) is amended by striking ''a Cuban-Haitian entrant'' and inserting ''a Haitian entrant''.

(C) IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.—Section 245A(h)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255a(h)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''a Cuban'' and all that follows and inserting ''an eligible participant (as defined in section 101(3) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (8 U.S.C. 1522 note)).''.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this subsection shall only apply to nationals of Cuba who enter the United States on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Social Security Administration shall submit a report to Congress that describes the methods by which the provision described in section 416.215 of title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, is being enforced.

SA 3723. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 84, between lines 13 and 14, insert the following:

''(f) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS IN THE ARCTIC.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, and not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Secretary shall determine if certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the Arctic beyond the limitations of the notice of proposed rulemaking relating to operation and certification of small unmanned aircraft systems (80 Fed. Reg. 9544), including operation of such systems beyond the visual line of sight of the operator.

''(2) ASSESSMENT OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—In making the determination required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall determine, at a minimum—

''(A) which types of unmanned aircraft systems, if any, as a result of their size, weight, speed, operational capability, proximity to airports and populated areas, and operation beyond visual line of sight do not create a hazard to users of the airspace over the Arctic or the public or pose a threat to national security;

''(B) which beyond-line-of-sight operations provide extraordinary public benefit justifying safe accommodation of the operations while minimizing restrictions on manned aircraft operations; and

''(C) whether a certificate of waiver, certificate of authorization, or airworthiness certification under section 44704 is required for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems identified under subparagraph (A).

''(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE OPERATION.—If the Secretary determines under this subsection that certain unmanned aircraft systems may operate safely in the Arctic beyond the visual line of sight of the operator, the Secretary shall establish requirements for the safe equipage and operation of such

aircraft systems while minimizing the effect on manned aircraft operations.''.

SA 3724. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF EXCISE TAX EXEMPTION FOR SMALL AIRCRAFT ON ESTABLISHED LINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4281 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''6,000 pounds or less'' and inserting ''12,500 pounds or less'', and

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) ESTABLISHED LINE.—For purposes of this section, an aircraft shall not be considered as operated on an established line if operated under an authorization to conduct on-demand operations in common carriage pursuant to section 119.21(a)(5) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable transportation provided after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3725. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. AUTHORIZATION OF AIR CARRIERS TO PROVIDE SERVICE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA FOR CITIZENS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WITH ITINERARIES THAT BEGIN AND END OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an air carrier providing permissible scheduled service between the United States and Cuba pursuant to a frequency allocation by the Department of Transportation may carry passengers who are citizens of countries other than the United States or Cuba and their accompanied baggage to or from Cuba to the same extent as the air carrier would be authorized to carry those passengers to any other destination, provided that the ticketed itinerary for those passengers begins and ends outside the United States.

(b) CITIZENSHIP.—An air carrier may rely on the passport presented by the passenger in determining the citizenship of the passenger under subsection (a).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall prescribe regulations to implement this section.

SA 3726. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5009 and insert the following:

SEC. 5009. INTERFERENCE WITH AIR CARRIER EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 46503 is amended by inserting after ''to perform those duties'' the following '', or who assaults an air carrier customer representative in an airport, including a gate or ticket agent, who is performing the duties of the representative or agent,''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46503 is amended in the section heading by inserting ''**or air carrier customer representatives**'' after ''**screening personnel**''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 465 is amended by striking the item relating to section 46503 and inserting the following:

''46503. Interference with security screening personnel or air carrier customer representatives.''.

SA 3727. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE JET FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

Section 911 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 44504 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''to assist in'' and inserting ''with the objective of accelerating'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by inserting ''and ability to prioritize researchable constraints'' after ''with experience''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) COLLABORATION AND REPORT.—

''(1) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, shall continue research and development activities into the development and deployment of jet fuels described in subsection (a).

''(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Agriculture, and after consultation with the heads of other relevant agencies, shall submit to Congress a joint plan to carry out the research described in paragraph (1).''.

SA 3728. Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 198, strike lines 3 through 11, and insert the following:

(b) CONTENTS.—In revising the regulations under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure that a flight attendant scheduled to a duty period of 14 hours or less is given a scheduled rest period of at least 10 consecutive hours and that such rest period is not reduced under any circumstances.

SA 3729. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following.

(3) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP CONTROL REQUIREMENTS.—Section 46301(a), as amended by paragraph (1), is further amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting ''(except as provided in paragraph (7))'' after ''chapter 411''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP CONTROL REQUIREMENTS.—(A) A person that controls an air carrier required to hold a certificate under section 41101(a) or to be exempted from such requirement under section 40109 and is not a citizen of the United States—

''(i) shall be liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $25,000 for each day or each flight during which the person is not in compliance with section 41101(a) or 40109, as applicable (or of not more than $1,100 for each such day or such flight if the person is an individual or small business concern and the controlled air carrier is also a small business concern);

''(ii) shall not be jointly and severally liable for any civil penalty imposed pursuant to paragraph (1) on the air carrier under such unlawful control;

''(iii) shall be deemed to have engaged in unfair and deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition in violation of section 41712; and

''(iv) shall be jointly and severally liable, together with the air carrier operating under such unlawful control, to pay restitution to any air carrier subject to such unfair and deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition as ordered by the Secretary of Transportation.

''(B) The Secretary of Transportation is authorized to consider any amounts paid in restitution as a mitigating factor when imposing a civil penalty under this paragraph.

''(C) Any aircraft operated by an air carrier that is not a citizen of the United States shall be prohibited from operating within the United States until any civil penalty or restitution imposed pursuant to this paragraph has been satisfied.''.

SA 3730. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. ENFORCEMENT OF CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) CIVIL ACTIONS AUTHORIZED.—Section 46101(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5)(A) If a complaint filed under this subsection alleges that an air carrier required to hold a certificate under section 41101(a) or exempted from such requirement under section 40109 is not a citizen of the United States, and the Secretary of Transportation, the Under Secretary for Policy, or the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration dismisses the complaint without a hearing or fails to resolve the complaint on the merits within 180 days after such complaint is filed, the complainant may bring a civil action against the air carrier in a district court of the United States pursuant to section 46108.

''(B) A civil action authorized under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to dismissal or stay on the grounds that administrative remedies have not been exhausted or that the action is subject to the primary jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(C) Nothing in this paragraph may be construed to require a person to file a complaint pursuant to paragraph (1) before bringing a civil action pursuant to section 46108.''.

(b) REMEDIES.—Section 46108 is amended—

(1) by striking ''An interested person'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An interested person'';

(2) in subsection (a), as designated, by striking ''of this title'' and all that follows and inserting ''or to enforce the terms of an exemption issued under section 40109.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) DEFENDANTS.—A person that controls an air carrier required to hold a certificate under section 41101(a) or exempted from such requirement under section 40109 may be named as a defendant in an action under this section if such person is not a citizen of the United States.

''(c) LIABILITY.—A person described in subsection (b)—

''(1) shall be jointly and severally liable for any damages suffered by a citizen of the United States as a result of the person's failure to comply with section 41101(a); and

''(2) shall be subject to injunctive relief.

''(d) VENUE.—A civil action under this section may be brought in the judicial district in which any defendant does business or in the judicial district in which the violation occurred.''.

(c) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP CONTROL REQUIREMENTS.—Section 46301(a), as amended by section 2133(b)(1), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting ''(except as provided in paragraph (7))'' after ''chapter 411''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP CONTROL REQUIREMENTS.—(A) A person that controls an air carrier required to hold a certificate under section 41101(a) or to be exempted from such requirement under section 40109 and is not a citizen of the United States—

''(i) shall be liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $25,000 for each day or each flight during which the person is not in compliance with section 41101(a) or 40109, as applicable (or of not more than $1,100 for each such day or such flight if the person is an individual or small business concern and the controlled air carrier is also a small business concern);

''(ii) shall be jointly and severally liable for any civil penalty imposed pursuant to paragraph (1) on the air carrier under such unlawful control;

''(iii) shall be deemed to have engaged in unfair and deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition in violation of section 41712; and

''(iv) shall be jointly and severally liable, together with the air carrier operating under such unlawful control, to pay restitution to any air carrier subject to such unfair and deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition as ordered by the Secretary of Transportation.

''(B) The Secretary of Transportation is authorized to consider any amounts paid in restitution as a mitigating factor when imposing a civil penalty under this paragraph.

''(C) Any aircraft operated by an air carrier that is not a citizen of the United States shall be prohibited from operating within the United States until any civil penalty or restitution imposed pursuant to this paragraph has been satisfied.''.

SA 3731. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

PART V—SAFE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

SEC. 2171. SHORT TITLE.

This part may be cited as the ''Safety for Airports and Firefighters by Ensuring Drones Refrain from Obstructing Necessary Equipment Act of 2016'' or the ''SAFE DRONE Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2172. CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR OPERATING DRONES IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 40A. Operating drones in certain locations

''(a) OFFENSE.—It shall be unlawful for a person to knowingly operate a drone in a restricted area without proper authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to operations conducted for purposes of firefighting or emergency response by a Federal, State, or local unit of government (including any individual conducting such operations pursuant to a contract or other agreement entered into with the unit).

''(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Attorney General shall, by regulation, establish penalties for a violation of this section that the Attorney General determines are reasonably calculated to provide a deterrent to operating drones in restricted areas, which may include a term of imprisonment.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'drone' has the meaning given the term 'unmanned aircraft' in section 44801 of title 49;

''(2) the terms 'large hub airport', 'medium hub airport', and 'small hub airport' have the meanings given those terms in section 47102 of title 49; and

''(3) the term 'restricted area' means—

''(A) within a 2-mile radius of a small hub airport, medium hub airport, or large hub airport;

''(B) within 2 miles of the outermost perimeter of an ongoing firefighting operation involving the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior; or

''(C) in an area that is subject to a temporary flight restriction issued by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''40A. Operating drones in certain locations.''.

SA 3732. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title IV, insert the following:

SEC. 4118. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE NEXT GENERATION AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Next Generation Air Transportation System (known as ''NextGen'') could, if properly implemented, provide much needed modernization of air traffic technologies to meet the future needs of the national airspace;

(2) once fully implemented, advancements from implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System could result in billions of dollars of economic benefits to air carriers and the travel industry;

(3) the Next Generation Air Transportation System has the potential to improve air traffic management by—

(A) improving weather forecasting;

(B) enhancing safety;

(C) creating more flexible spacing and sequencing of aircraft;

(D) reducing air traffic separation; and

(E) reducing congestion;

(4) improvements to air traffic management through the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System will provide benefits—

(A) to the flying public, such as reduced delays, reduced wait times, more direct flights, and an overall enhanced flying experience; and

(B) to commercial air carriers, such as fuel cost savings, lower operational costs, and improved customer satisfaction; and

(5) fully and swiftly implementing the Next Generation Air Transportation System should remain a top priority for the United States to maximize the efficiency of the airspace system of the United States, maintain a competitive advantage, and remain a global leader in aviation.

SA 3733. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle A of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2144. EXEMPTION FOR THE OPERATION OF CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT AT TEST SITES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and without the opportunity for prior public notice and comment, the Administrator shall grant an exemption for the operation of unmanned aircraft systems for any non-hobby, non-recreational, and non-commercial purpose under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site to all persons that meet the terms, conditions, and limitations described in subsection (b) for the exemption. All such operations of unmanned aircraft systems shall be conducted in accordance with a certificate of waiver or authorization issued to the unmanned aircraft system test site by the Administrator.

(b) TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND LIMITATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The exemption granted under subsection (a) or any amendment to that exemption—

(A) shall, at a minimum, exempt the operator of an unmanned aircraft system from the provisions of parts 21, 43, 61, and 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, that are applicable only to civil aircraft or civil aircraft operations;

(B) may contain such other terms, conditions, and limitations as the Administrator may deem necessary in the interest of aviation safety or the efficiency of the national airspace system; and

(C) shall require a person, before initiating an operation under the exemption, to provide written notice to the unmanned aircraft system test site overseeing the operation, in a form and manner specified by the Administrator, that states, at a minimum, that the person has read, understands, and will comply with all terms, conditions, and limitations of the exemption and applicable certificates of waiver or authorization.

(2) TRANSMISSION TO FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.—The unmanned aircraft system test site overseeing an operation shall transmit to the Federal Aviation Administration copies of all notices under paragraph (1)(C) relating to the operation in a form and manner specified by the Administrator.

(c) NO AIRWORTHINESS OR AIRMAN CERTIFICATE REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), (2)(A), or (3) of section 44711(a) of title 49, United States Code, the Administrator may allow a person may operate, or employ an airman who operates, an unmanned aircraft system for any non-hobby or non-recreational purpose under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site without an airman certificate and without an airworthiness certificate for the aircraft if the operations of the unmanned aircraft system meet all terms, limitations, and conditions of an exemption issued under subsection (a) and of a certificate of waiver or authorization issued to the unmanned aircraft system test site by the Administrator.

(2) PILOT CERTIFICATION EXEMPTION.—If the Secretary proposes, under this section, to require an operator of an unmanned aircraft system to hold an airman certificate or a medical certificate, or to have a minimum number of hours operating a manned aircraft, the Secretary shall set forth the reasoning for such proposal and seek public notice and comment before imposing any such requirements.

(d) DATA AVAILABLE FOR CERTIFICATE OF AIRWORTHINESS.—The Administrator shall accept data collected or developed as a result of an operation of an unmanned aircraft system conducted under the oversight of an unmanned aircraft system test site pursuant to an exemption issued under subsection (a) for consideration in an application for an airworthiness certificate for the unmanned aircraft system.

(e) SUNSET.—The exemption issued under subsection (a), and any amendment to that exemption, shall cease to be valid on the date of the termination of the unmanned aircraft system test site program under section 332(c) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

(f) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROCEDURE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The issuance of an exemption under subsection (a), the issuance of a certificate of waiver or authorization (including the issuance of a certificate of waiver or authorization to an unmanned aircraft test site), the amendment of such an exemption or certificate, the imposition of a term, condition, or limitation on such an exemption or certificate, and any other activity carried out by the Federal Aviation Administration under this section shall be made without regard to—

(A) the notice and comment provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'').

(2) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to—

(A) affect the issuance of a rule by or any other activity of the Secretary of Transportation or the Administrator under any other provision of law; or

(B) invalidate an exemption granted or certificate of waiver or authorization issued by the Administrator before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) AIRMAN CERTIFICATE.—The term ''airman certificate'' means an airman certificate issued under section 44703 of title 49, United States Code.

(3) CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''certificate of waiver or authorization'' means an authorization issued by the Federal Aviation Administration for the operation of aircraft in deviation from a rule or regulation and includes the terms, conditions, and limitations of the authorization.

(4) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT; UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The terms ''unmanned aircraft'' and ''unmanned aircraft system'' have the meanings given those terms in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121.

(5) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM TEST SITE.—The term ''unmanned aircraft system test site'' means an entity designated to operate a test site, as defined by section 44801of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 2121.

SA 3734. Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle A of title II, insert the following:

SEC. _____. COLLABORATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

(a) COLLABORATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense shall collaborate on developing ground-based sense and avoid (GBSAA) and airborne sense and avoid (ABSAA) capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The collaboration required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Assisting the Administrator in safely integrating unmanned aircraft systems and manned aircraft in the national airspace system.

(B) Building upon Air Force and Department of Defense experience to speed the development of civil standards, policies, and procedures for expediting unmanned aircraft systems integration.

(C) Assisting in the development of civil unmanned aircraft airworthiness certification, development of airborne and ground-based sense and avoid capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems, and research and development on unmanned aircraft systems, especially with respect to matters involving human factors, information assurance, and security.

(b) PARTICIPATION BY FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may participate and provide assistance for participation in test and evaluation efforts of the Department of Defense, including the Air Force, relating to ground-based sense and avoid and airborne sense and avoid capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems.

(2) PARTICIPATION THROUGH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND TEST SITES.—Participation under paragraph (1) may include provision of assistance through the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Center of Excellence and Unmanned Aircraft Systems Test Sites.

SA 3735. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. LIMITATION ON DISCRETION OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION TO SPEND FEES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any amounts collected as fees by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall be deposited in the general

fund of the Treasury and shall be available to U.S. Customs and Border Protection only as provided for in advance in an appropriations Act.

SA 3736. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 125, line 11, insert '', or commercial operators operating under contract with a public entity,'' after ''systems''.

SA 3737. Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE PRACTICES AND UNFAIR METHODS OF COMPETITION.

Section 41712 is amended—

(1) in subsections (a) and (b), by striking ''air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent'' each place that term appears and inserting ''air carrier or foreign air carrier''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''ticket agent,''.

SA 3738. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. MODIFICATIONS TO PILOT PROGRAM ON PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF AIRPORTS.

(a) SUPPORT FOR ESSENTIAL PREDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.—Section 47134 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, out of funds available to the Federal Aviation Administration, $15,000,000 for purposes of making grants to airports, in an amount not to exceed $750,000 per grant, to carry out predevelopment activities relating to the pilot program under this section, subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may reasonably require.''.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF ENTITIES PARTIALLY OWNED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES TO PARTICIPATE IN PILOT PROGRAM.—Subsection (a) of such section is amended by striking ''public agency'' and inserting ''person owned solely by a public agency''.

(c) INCREASE IN PARTICIPATION OF CERTAIN AIRPORTS.—Subsection (d)(2) of such section is amended by striking ''more than 1 application submitted by an airport'' and inserting ''more than 3 applications submitted by airports''.

SA 3739. Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. AIRLINE TRANSPORT PILOT CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS.

Subsection (d) of section 217 of the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–216; 49 U.S.C. 44701 note) is amended by striking ''courses,'' and inserting ''courses and courses offered by certificated air carriers,''.

SA 3740. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

Section 40122(g)(2)(B) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''3304(f),'' before ''3308-3320''; and

(2) by inserting ''3330a, 3330b, 3330c, and 3330d,'' before ''relating''.

SA 3741. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 339, strike line 24, and all that follows through page 340, line 5, and insert the following:

(c) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any employee of the Federal Aviation Administration or the Transportation Security Administration hired on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall

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SA 3742. Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. EXCEPTIONS TO RESTRUCTURING OF PASSENGER FEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44940(c) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''Fees imposed'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraph (2), fees imposed'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Fees imposed under subsection (a)(1) may not exceed $2.50 per enplanement, and the total amount of such fees may not exceed $5.00 per one-way trip, for passengers—

''(A) boarding to an eligible place under subchapter II of chapter 417 for which essential air service compensation is paid under that subchapter; or

''(B) on flights, including flight segments, between 2 or more points in Hawaii or 2 or more points in Alaska.''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF FEE EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall implement the fee exceptions under the amendments made by subsection (a)—

(1) beginning on the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) through the publication of notice of the fee exceptions in the Federal Register, notwithstanding section 9701 of title 31, United States Code, and the procedural requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

SA 3743. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEER PILOTS WHO FLY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(A) Many volunteer pilots fly for the public benefit for nonprofit organizations and provide valuable services to communities and individuals in need.

(B) In each calendar year volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for provide long-distance, no-cost transportation for tens of thousands of people during times of special need. Flights provide patient and medical transport, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance, and conduct other charitable missions that benefit the public.

(C) Such nonprofit organizations have supported the homeland security of the United States by providing volunteer pilot services during and following disasters and during other times of national emergency.

(D) Most other kinds of volunteers are protected from liability by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14501 et seq.), but volunteer pilots are not.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are, by amending the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997—

(A) to extend the protection of that Act to volunteer pilots;

(B) to promote the activities of volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for in providing flights for the public benefit; and

(C) to sustain and enhance the availability of the services that such pilots and nonprofit organizations provide, including—

(i) transportation at no cost to financially needy medical patients for medical treatment, evaluation, and diagnosis;

(ii) flights for humanitarian and charitable purposes; and

(iii) other flights of compassion.

(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Section 4 of the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14503) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (f) as subsections (c) through (g), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''subsections (b), (c), and (e)''; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Except as provided in subsections (c) and (e), no volunteer of a volunteer pilot nonprofit organization that arranges flights for public benefit shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization if, at the time of the act or omission, the volunteer—

''(1) was operating an aircraft in furtherance of the purpose of, and acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities on behalf of, the nonprofit organization;

''(2) was properly licensed and insured for the operation of the aircraft;

''(3) was in compliance with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for recent flight experience; and

''(4) did not cause the harm through willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer.''.

SA 3744. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3110 and insert the following:

SEC. 3110. REFUNDS FOR OTHER FEES THAT ARE NOT HONORED BY A COVERED AIR CARRIER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations that require each covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, of any ancillary fees paid by the passenger for a service, as defined and disclosed by the air carrier, that, except as provided in subsection (b), the passenger does not receive, including on the passenger's scheduled flight or, if the flight is rescheduled, a subsequent replacement itinerary.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) VOLUNTARY CHANGES IN ITINERARY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if a passenger does not receive a service described in that subsection because the passenger voluntarily chose to make changes to the passenger's flight itinerary.

(2) EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANES.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to a fee for a service if the carrier is prevented from provide the service by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

SA 3745. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 5023 and insert the following:

SEC. 5023. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL AIR CARRIER ALLIANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of certain cooperative agreements between United States air carriers and non-United States air carriers (referred to in this section as ''alliances'') that—

(1) have been created pursuant to section 41309 of title 49, United States Code; and

(2) have been exempted from antitrust laws (as defined in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12)) pursuant to section 41308 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess—

(1) the public benefits to consumers of alliances and the consequences of alliances, if any, to competition, pricing, and new entry into markets served by alliances;

(2) the representations made by air carriers to the Secretary of Transportation for the necessity of an antitrust exemption;

(3) the Department of Transportation's expectations of public benefits resulting from alliances, including whether such expected benefits were actually achieved;

(4) the Department of Transportation's role in the approval and monitoring of alliances;

(5) whether there has been sufficient transparency in the approval of alliances, including opportunities for public review and feedback;

(6) the role of the Department of Justice in the oversight of alliances;

(7) whether there are alternatives to antitrust immunity that could be conferred that would also produce public benefits; and

(8) the level of competition between alliances.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress the results of the study conducted under subsection (a).

SA 3746. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3109 and insert the following:

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid by the passenger if the air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage and, except as provided in subsection (b), the air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger within 24 hours of the time of arrival of the passenger at the passenger's destination.

(b) EXCEPTION.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to checked baggage if the air carrier is prevented from delivering checked baggage by the time specified in subsection (a) by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

Strike section 3110 and insert the following:

SEC. 3110. REFUNDS FOR OTHER FEES THAT ARE NOT HONORED BY A COVERED AIR CARRIER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall promulgate regulations that require each covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, of any ancillary fees paid by the passenger for a service, as defined and disclosed by the air carrier, that, except as provided in subsection (b), the passenger does not receive, including on the passenger's scheduled flight or, if the flight is rescheduled, a subsequent replacement itinerary.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) VOLUNTARY CHANGES IN ITINERARY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if a passenger does not receive a service described in that subsection because the passenger voluntarily chose to make changes to the passenger's flight itinerary.

(2) EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANES.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to a fee for a service if the carrier is prevented from provide the service by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

Strike section 5023 and insert the following:

SEC. 5023. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL AIR CARRIER ALLIANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of certain cooperative agreements between United States air carriers and non-United States air carriers (referred to in this section as ''alliances'') that—

(1) have been created pursuant to section 41309 of title 49, United States Code; and

(2) have been exempted from antitrust laws (as defined in the first section of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12)) pursuant to section 41308 of title 49, United States Code.

(b) SCOPE.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess—

(1) the public benefits to consumers of alliances and the consequences of alliances, if any, to competition, pricing, and new entry into markets served by alliances;

(2) the representations made by air carriers to the Secretary of Transportation for the necessity of an antitrust exemption;

(3) the Department of Transportation's expectations of public benefits resulting from alliances, including whether such expected benefits were actually achieved;

(4) the Department of Transportation's role in the approval and monitoring of alliances;

(5) whether there has been sufficient transparency in the approval of alliances, including opportunities for public review and feedback;

(6) the role of the Department of Justice in the oversight of alliances;

(7) whether there are alternatives to antitrust immunity that could be conferred that would also produce public benefits; and

(8) the level of competition between alliances.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress the results of the study conducted under subsection (a).

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEER PILOTS WHO FLY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(A) Many volunteer pilots fly for the public benefit for nonprofit organizations and provide valuable services to communities and individuals in need.

(B) In each calendar year volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for provide long-distance, no-cost transportation for tens of thousands of people during times of special need. Flights provide patient and medical transport, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance, and conduct other charitable missions that benefit the public.

(C) Such nonprofit organizations have supported the homeland security of the United States by providing volunteer pilot services during and following disasters and during other times of national emergency.

(D) Most other kinds of volunteers are protected from liability by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14501 et seq.), but volunteer pilots are not.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are, by amending the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997—

(A) to extend the protection of that Act to volunteer pilots;

(B) to promote the activities of volunteer pilots and the nonprofit organizations those pilots fly for in providing flights for the public benefit; and

(C) to sustain and enhance the availability of the services that such pilots and nonprofit organizations provide, including—

(i) transportation at no cost to financially needy medical patients for medical treatment, evaluation, and diagnosis;

(ii) flights for humanitarian and charitable purposes; and

(iii) other flights of compassion.

(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Section 4 of the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (42 U.S.C. 14503) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (f) as subsections (c) through (g), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsections (b) and (d)'' and inserting ''subsections (b), (c), and (e)''; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR PILOTS THAT FLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT.—Except as provided in subsections (c) and (e), no volunteer of a volunteer pilot nonprofit organization that arranges flights for public benefit shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization if, at the time of the act or omission, the volunteer—

''(1) was operating an aircraft in furtherance of the purpose of, and acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities on behalf of, the nonprofit organization;

''(2) was properly licensed and insured for the operation of the aircraft;

''(3) was in compliance with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for recent flight experience; and

''(4) did not cause the harm through willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer.''.

SA 3747. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2321. AVIATION RULEMAKING COMMITTEE FOR PILOT REST AND DUTY REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall convene an aviation rulemaking committee to review pilot rest and duty regulations under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The aviation rulemaking committee convened under subsection (a) shall consist of members appointed by the Administrator, including—

(1) applicable representatives of industry;

(2) a pilot labor organization exclusively representing a minimum of 1,000 pilots who are covered by—

(A) part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) subpart K of part 91 of such title; and

(3) aviation safety experts with specific knowledge of flight crewmember education and training requirements relating to part 135 of such title.

(c) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESS.—In reviewing the pilot rest and duty regulations under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, the aviation rulemaking committee shall consider the following:

(1) Recommendations of aviation rulemaking committees convened before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) Accommodations necessary for small businesses.

(3) Scientific data derived from aviation-related fatigue and sleep research.

(4) Data gathered from aviation safety reporting programs.

(5) The need to accommodate diversity of operations conducted under part 135 of such title.

(6) Such other matters as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(d) REPORT AND NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—The Administrator shall—

(1) not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report based on the findings of the aviation rulemaking committee convened under subsection (a); and

(2) not later than 12 months after submitting the report required under paragraph (1), issue a notice of proposed rulemaking consistent with any consensus recommendations reached by the aviation rulemaking committee.

SA 3748. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3109 and insert the following:

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue final regulations to require a covered air carrier to promptly provide a refund to a passenger, upon request, in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid by the passenger if the air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage and, except as provided in subsection (b), the air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger within 24 hours of the time of arrival of the passenger at the passenger's destination.

(b) EXCEPTION.—An air carrier is not required to provide a refund under subsection (a) with respect to checked baggage if the air carrier is prevented from delivering checked baggage by the time specified in subsection (a) by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided by the air carrier even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

SA 3749. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2320. INCREASED PENALTIES FOR UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE AIRFARE ADVERTISING PRACTICES.

Section 46301(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE AIRFARE ADVERTISING PRACTICES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the maximum civil penalty assessed on a person for an unfair or deceptive practice in violation of section 41712 and described in section 399.84 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations

(or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling), shall be—

''(A) $55,000; or

''(B) if the person is an individual or small business concern, $2,500.''.

SA 3750. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 2502, add the following:

(d) PROHIBITION ON CERTIFICATION OF A FOREIGN REPAIR STATION IN A COUNTRY THAT HAS REPEATEDLY PROVIDED SUPPORT FOR ACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not certify any foreign repair station under part 145 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, in any country designated as a country that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism under section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)), section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780), or section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371).

SA 3751. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 2502, add the following:

(d) CERTIFICATION OF FOREIGN REPAIR STATIONS SUSPENSION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may not certify any foreign repair station under part 145 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, beginning on the date that is—

(1) 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, if the final rule required by subsection (b)(2) has not been issued; or

(2) 180 days after such date of enactment, if the requirements of subsection (c) have not been fully carried out.

SA 3752. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. NORTHERN BORDER SECURITY REVIEW.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Northern Border Security Review Act''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(H) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

(2) NORTHERN BORDER.—The term ''Northern Border'' means the land and maritime borders between the United States and Canada.

(c) NORTHERN BORDER THREAT ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a Northern Border threat analysis that includes—

(A) current and potential terrorism and criminal threats posed by individuals and organized groups seeking—

(i) to enter the United States through the Northern Border; or

(ii) to exploit border vulnerabilities on the Northern Border;

(B) improvements needed at and between ports of entry along the Northern Border—

(i) to prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States; and

(ii) to reduce criminal activity, as measured by the total flow of illegal goods, illicit drugs, and smuggled and trafficked persons moved in either direction across to the Northern Border;

(C) gaps in law, policy, cooperation between State, tribal, and local law enforcement, international agreements, or tribal agreements that hinder effective and efficient border security, counter-terrorism, anti-human smuggling and trafficking efforts, and the flow of legitimate trade along the Northern Border; and

(D) whether additional U.S. Customs and Border Protection preclearance and preinspection operations at ports of entry along the Northern Border could help prevent terrorists and instruments of terror from entering the United States.

(2) ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS.—For the threat analysis required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider and examine—

(A) technology needs and challenges;

(B) personnel needs and challenges;

(C) the role of State, tribal, and local law enforcement in general border security activities;

(D) the need for cooperation among Federal, State, tribal, local, and Canadian law enforcement entities relating to border security;

(E) the terrain, population density, and climate along the Northern Border; and

(F) the needs and challenges of Department facilities, including the physical approaches to such facilities.

(3) CLASSIFIED THREAT ANALYSIS.—To the extent possible, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit the threat analysis required under paragraph (1) in unclassified form. The Secretary may submit a portion of the threat analysis in classified form if the Secretary determines that such form is appropriate for that portion.

SA 3753. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. STATE PRIORITIZATION OF DISPATCH OF AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDERS.

(a) AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, including section 41713 of title 49, United States Code, a State may enact or enforce a law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law that creates a primary and secondary call list of air ambulance service providers in the State for distribution to emergency response entities and personnel to prioritize the dispatch of air ambulance serve providers. Prioritization may be based on—

(1) participation in health insurance provider networks in the State; or

(2) participation in mediation for reimbursement of out-of-network emergency services.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—Except as specifically provided in subsection (a), nothing in this section may be construed as limiting the applicability or otherwise modifying any aviation safety, aviation operations, or other requirement of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3754. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. ADDITIONAL BEYOND-PERIMETER SLOT EXEMPTIONS AT RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sections 49104(a)(5), 49109, and 41714 of title 49, United States Code, not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall, by order, grant to an air carrier described in subsection (b) 2 exemptions from the requirements of subparts K, S, and T of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to enable that air carrier to provide air transportation on routes between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and an airport described in subsection (c).

(b) AIR CARRIER DESCRIBED.—An air carrier described in this subsection is an air carrier that, as of January 1, 2016—

(1) is not a limited incumbent air carrier at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport; and

(2) utilitizes 4 exemptions from the requirements of subparts K, S, and T of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to operate flights between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and an airport described in subsection (c).

(c) AIRPORTS DESCRIBED.—An airport described in this subsection is a large hub airport that is between 1840 and 1855 great circle

miles from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

(d) LIMITATION ON AIRCRAFT SIZE.—An air carrier may not operate a flight using an exemption granted under subsection (a) using a multi-aisle or widebody aircraft.

(e) EXEMPTIONS NOT TRANSFERRABLE.—In accordance with section 41714(j) of title 49, United States Code, an exemption granted under subsection (a) to an air carrier may not be bought, sold, leased, or otherwise transferred by the air carrier.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AIR TRANSPORTATION; LARGE HUB AIRPORT.—The terms ''air transportation'' and ''large hub airport'' have the meanings given those terms in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(2) LIMITED INCUMBENT AIR CARRIER.—The term ''limited incumbent air carrier'' has the meaning given that term in section 41714 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3755. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. FLIGHT NOISE IMPACT AND POTENTIAL REMEDIATION STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States, in consultation with State and local governments, air carriers, general aviation, airports and air traffic controllers, and where applicable local resident advisory committees, shall initiate a study of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Next Generation Air Transportation System's impact on the human environment in the vicinity of large-hub airports and selected medium-hub airports located in densely populated areas.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study under subsection (a) shall include—

(A) an analysis regarding the statistical relationship of discrete noise-related complaints in communities located near large-hub airports and selected medium-hub airports located in densely populated areas to changes in noise exposure since the implementation of the Next Generation Air Transportation System and to absolute levels of noise exposure experienced by those registering noise complaints;

(B) an analysis of the decrease in noise experienced by communities through the development of Performance Based Navigation Procedures;

(C) recommendations for processes to track and measure those impacts or benefits, if appropriate;

(D) a review and evaluation of the FAA's current policies and abilities to respond and address noise concerns;

(E) an evaluation of the human environment and health impacts of changes in flight traffic in these communities including issues related to aircraft noise and pollution, including potential trade-offs between noise and carbon dioxide or emissions associated with air quality;

(F) an analysis of the processes used to determine how Next Generation Air Transportation System flight paths could be altered to mitigate the noise caused by these flights and for assessing any carbon dioxide or air quality emissions trade-offs attendant to such altered flight paths;

(G) recommendations on the best and most cost-effective approaches to address increased noise complaints associated with the Next Generation Air Transportation System; and

(H) such other issues as the Comptroller considers appropriate.

(b) REPORT.—Upon completion of the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), including the Comptroller General's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

SA 3756. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) There is scientific consensus based on sound scientific evidence that climate change is occurring due to increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and that human activity has caused a significant increase in the amount of these greenhouse gases.

(2) Scientific measurement shows that the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere ranged from 170 to 300 parts per 1,000,000 for at least 800,000 years, which is 4 times as long as the species Homo sapiens has existed, but, in measurements taken at the Mauna Loa Observatory in each of the 2 years preceding the date of enactment of this Act, exceeded 400 parts per 1,000,000.

(3) Transportation emissions accounted for approximately 28 percent of total carbon dioxide emissions in the United States in 2012, with emissions from the aviation sector representing about 12 percent of transportation emissions in the United States.

(4) Commercial-only aviation emissions in the United States are projected to grow by almost 25 percent by 2030.

(5) Climate change diminishes the efficiency of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft by increasing the likelihood of takeoff weight restrictions due to warmer ground level air reducing the lift force on the wings.

(6) Climate change increases the likelihood of clear-air turbulence, which already injures hundreds of passengers and causes structural damage to aircraft.

(7) The 2015 primer of the Federal Aviation Administration entitled ''Aviation Emissions, Impacts & Mitigation'' acknowledges that ''emissions associated with commercial aviation . . . degrade not only air quality but also the broader climate,'' and will hurt the health and welfare of society.

(8) The scientific consensus about climate change and the findings from the Federal Aviation Administration support the conclusions that—

(A) climate change poses a challenge to the growing national aviation industry of the United States; and

(B) aviation activities have a measurable effect on climate.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) climate change is real and human activity is significantly contributing to climate change;

(2) the scientific consensus on climate change and the findings of the national aviation community that climate change poses real challenges to the growing aviation industry of the United States are not products of a hoax or deception perpetrated on the people of the United States; and

(3) reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change is in the national interest of the United States.

SA 3757. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. AMOUNTS PAID FOR AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 4261 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) AMOUNTS PAID FOR AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No tax shall be imposed by this section or section 4271 on any amounts paid by an aircraft owner for aircraft management services related to—

''(i) maintenance and support of the aircraft owner's aircraft; or

''(ii) flights on the aircraft owner's aircraft.

''(B) AIRCRAFT MANAGEMENT SERVICES.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'aircraft management services' includes assisting an aircraft owner with administrative and support services, such as scheduling, flight planning, and weather forecasting; obtaining insurance; maintenance, storage and fueling of aircraft; hiring, training, and provision of pilots and crew; establishing and complying with safety standards; or such other services necessary to support flights operated by an aircraft owner.

''(C) LESSEE TREATED AS AIRCRAFT OWNER.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'aircraft owner' includes a person who leases the aircraft other than under a disqualified lease.

''(ii) DISQUALIFIED LEASE.—For purposes of clause (i), the term 'disqualified lease' means a lease from a person providing aircraft management services with respect to such aircraft (or a related person (within the meaning of section 465(b)(3)(C)) to the person providing such services), if such lease is for a term of 31 days or less.

''(D) PRO RATA ALLOCATION.—If any amount paid to a person represents in part an amount paid for services not described in subparagraph (A), the tax imposed by subsection (a), if applicable to such amount, shall be applied to such payment on a pro rata basis.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to amounts paid beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3758. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 43, line 9, strike ''Section 47109(a)(5)'' and insert the following:

(a) GRANDFATHER RULE.—Section 47109(c)(2) is amended by inserting ''or non-primary commercial service airport that is'' after ''primary non-hub airport''.

(b) MULTI-PHASED CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.—Section 47109(a)(5)

SA 3759. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION FOR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS AGAINST AIR CARRIERS.

Section 41705 is amended—

''(d) CIVIL ACTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person aggrieved by a violation by an air carrier of this section or a regulation prescribed under this section may, not later than 2 years after the date of the violation, bring a civil action in the district court of the United States in the district in which the person resides, in the district in which the principal place of business of the air carrier is located, or in the district in which the violation occurred.

''(2) RELIEF.—In a civil action brought under paragraph (1) in which the plaintiff prevails—

''(A) the plaintiff may obtain equitable and legal relief, including compensatory and punitive damages; and

''(B) the court shall award reasonable attorney's fees, reasonable expert fees, and the costs of the action to the plaintiff.

''(3) NO REQUIREMENT FOR EXHAUSTION OF REMEDIES.—Any person aggrieved by a violation by an air carrier of this section or a regulation prescribed under this section is not required to exhaust administrative complaint procedures before filing a civil action under paragraph (1).

''(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to invalidate or limit other Federal or State laws affording to people with disabilities greater legal rights or protections than those granted in this section.''.

SA 3760. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF DISABILITY FOR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS AGAINST AIR CARRIERS.

Section 41705(a) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In providing air transportation, an air carrier, including (subject to section 40105(b)) any foreign air carrier, may not discriminate against an individual on the basis of disability, as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102).''.

SA 3761. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5037. REGULATIONS RELATING TO E-CIGARETTES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration shall, in coordination and consultation with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration—

(1) finalize the interim final rule of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration issued October 30, 2015, pertaining to e-cigarettes; and

(2) expand that rule to prohibit the carrying of battery-powered portable electronic smoking devices in checked baggage and in carry-on baggage.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''battery-powered portable electronic smoking devices'' means e-cigarettes, e-cigs, e-cigars, e-pipes, e-hookahs, personal vaporizers, and electronic nicotine delivery systems.

SA 3762. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. IMPROVING AIRLINE COMPETITIVENESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The people of the United States and the United States economy depend on a strong and competitive passenger air transportation industry to move people and goods in the fastest, most efficient manner.

(2) In a global economy, air carriers connect the people of the United States with the rest of the world. A strong air transportation industry is essential to the ability of the United States to compete in the international marketplace.

(3) A strong air transportation industry depends on competition between a number of air carriers servicing a variety of routes for domestic and international travelers, at both the national and local levels.

(4) Important stakeholders contribute to, and are dependent on, a robust air transportation industry, including—

(A) business and leisure travelers;

(B) the tourism sector;

(C) shippers;

(D) State and local governments and port authorities;

(E) aircraft manufacturers; and

(F) domestic and foreign air carriers.

(5) As a result of the consolidation of United States air carriers, there has been a precipitous decline in the number of major passenger air carriers in the United States.

(6) In the past few years, the air transportation industry has become increasingly concentrated. In 2015, the top 4 major air carriers accounted for 80 percent of passenger air traffic in the United States.

(7) The continued success of a deregulated air carrier system requires actual competition to encourage all participants in the industry to provide high quality service at competitive fares.

(8) Further consolidation among air carriers threatens to leave the industry without sufficient competition to ensure that the people of the United States share in the benefits of a well-functioning air transportation industry.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL COMMISSION TO ENSURE ALL AMERICANS HAVE ACCESS TO AND BENEFIT FROM A STRONG AND COMPETITIVE AIR TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY.—There is established a Commission, which shall be known as the ''National Commission to Ensure All Americans Have Access to and Benefit from a Strong and Competitive Air Transportation Industry'' (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'').

(c) FUNCTIONS.—

(1) STUDY.—The Commission shall conduct a study of the passenger air transportation industry, with priority given to issues specified in subsection (d).

(2) POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.—Based on the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), the Commission shall recommend to the President and to Congress the adoption of policies that will—

(A) achieve the national goal of a strong and competitive air carrier system and facilitate the ability of the United States to compete in the global economy;

(B) provide robust levels of competition and air transportation at reasonable fares in cities of all sizes;

(C) provide a stable work environment for employees of air carriers;

(D) account for the interests of different stakeholders that contribute to, and are dependent on, the air transportation industry; and

(E) provide appropriate levels of protection for consumers, including access to information to enable consumer choice.

(d) SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED.—In conducting the study under subsection (c)(1), the Commission shall investigate—

(1) the current state of competition in the air transportation industry, how the structure of that competition is likely to change during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, whether that expected level of competition will be sufficient to secure the consumer benefits of air carrier deregulation, and the effects of—

(A) air carrier consolidation and practices on consumers, including the competitiveness

of fares and services and the ability of consumers to engage in comparison shopping for air carrier fees;

(B) airfare pricing policies, including whether reduced competition artificially inflates ticket prices;

(C) the level of competition as of the date of the enactment of this Act on the travel distribution sector, including online and traditional travel agencies and intermediaries;

(D) economic and other effects on domestic air transportation markets in which 1 or 2 air carriers control the majority of available seat miles;

(E) the tactics used by incumbent air carriers to compete against smaller, regional carriers, or inhibit new or potential new entrant air carriers into a particular market; and

(F) the ability of new entrant air carriers to provide new service to underserved markets;

(2) the legislative and administrative actions that the Federal Government should take to enhance air carrier competition, including changes that are needed in the legal and administrative policies that govern—

(A) the initial award and the transfer of international routes;

(B) the allocation of gates and landing rights, particularly at airports dominated by 1 air carrier or a limited number of air carriers;

(C) frequent flier programs;

(D) the rights of foreign investors to invest in the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(E) the access of foreign air carriers to the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(F) the taxes and user fees imposed on air carriers;

(G) the responsibilities imposed on air carriers;

(H) the bankruptcy laws of the United States and related rules administered by the Department of Transportation as such laws and rules apply to air carriers;

(I) the obligations of failing air carriers to meet pension obligations;

(J) antitrust immunity for international air carrier alliances and the process for approving such alliances and awarding that immunity;

(K) competition of air carrier codeshare partnerships and joint ventures; and

(L) constraints on new entry into the domestic air transportation marketplace;

(3) whether the policies and strategies of the United States in international air transportation are promoting the ability of United States air carriers to achieve long-term competitive success in international air transportation markets, and to secure the benefits of robust competition, including—

(A) the general negotiating policy of the United States with respect to international air transportation;

(B) the desirability of multilateral rather than bilateral negotiations with respect to international air transportation;

(C) whether foreign countries have developed the necessary infrastructure of airports and airways to enable United States air carriers to provide the service needed to meet the demand for air transportation between the United States and those countries;

(D) the desirability of liberalization of United States domestic air transportation markets; and

(E) the impediments to access by foreign air carriers to routes to and from the United States;

(4) the effect that air carrier consolidation has had on business and leisure travelers, and travel and tourism more broadly; and

(5) the effect that air carrier consolidation has had on—

(A) employment and economic development opportunities of localities, particularly small and mid-size localities; and

(B) former hub airports, including the positive and negative consequences of routing air traffic through hub airports.

(e) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 21 members, of whom—

(A) 7 shall be appointed by the President;

(B) 4 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(C) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(D) 4 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; and

(E) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be appointed from among United States citizens who bring knowledge of, and informed insights into, aviation, transportation, travel, and tourism policy.

(B) REPRESENTATION.—Members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be appointed in a manner so that at least 1 member of the Commission represents the interests of each of the following:

(i) The Department of Transportation.

(ii) The Department of Justice.

(iii) Legacy, networked air carriers.

(iv) Non-legacy air carriers.

(v) Air carrier employees.

(vi) Large aircraft manufacturers.

(vii) Ticket agents not part of an Internet-based travel company.

(viii) Large airports.

(ix) Small or mid-size airports with commercial service.

(x) Shippers.

(xi) Consumers.

(xii) General aviation.

(xiii) Local governments or port authorities that operate commercial airports.

(xiv) Internet-based travel companies.

(xv) The travel and tourism industry.

(xvi) Global distribution systems.

(xvii) Corporate business travelers.

(3) TERMS.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(4) CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman of the Commission shall be elected by the members of the Commission.

(5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(6) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members shall serve without pay, but shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) STAFF.—The Commission may appoint and fix the pay of such personnel as the Commission considers appropriate.

(g) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon the request of the Commission, the head of any Federal agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of that agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties under this section.

(h) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon the request of the Commission, the Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, the administrative support services necessary for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

(i) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal agency information (other than information required by any provision of law to be kept confidential by that agency) that is necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this section. Upon the request of the Commission, the head of such agency shall furnish such nonconfidential information to the Commission.

(j) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which initial appointments of members to the Commission are made under subsection (e)(1), and after a public comment period of not less than 30 days, the Commission shall submit a report to the President and Congress that—

(1) describes the activities of the Commission;

(2) includes recommendations made by the Commission under subsection (c)(2); and

(3) contains a summary of the comments received during the public comment period.

(k) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate on the date that is 180 days after the date of the submission of the report under subsection (j). Upon the submission of such report, the Commission shall deliver all records and papers of the Commission to the Administrator of General Services for deposit in the National Archives.

SA 3763. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 206, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(c) JOINT TASK FORCE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the head of the Federal agency authorized to regulate the use of laser pointers, and any other appropriate Federal stakeholders, shall establish a joint task force (referred to in this section as the ''Laser Pointer Safety Task Force'') to address dangers from laser pointers by establishing a coordinated response to mitigate the threat of laser pointers aimed at aircraft.

(2) REPRESENTATION.—The Administrator shall appoint a representative of the Federal Aviation Administration to lead the Laser Pointer Safety Task Force, which shall also includes representatives of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal agency authorized to regulate the use of laser pointers, and any other appropriate Federal stakeholder.

(3) PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.—The Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall develop a public education campaign to inform the public of the dangers of pointing a laser at aircraft.

(4) INCIDENT DETECTION AND REPORTING.—The Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall develop methods for—

(A) encouraging the reporting of incidents of laser pointers aimed at an aircraft; and

(B) assess what technology could be used to enhance the detection of such incidents and to protect pilots from such incidents.

(5) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the

Laser Pointer Safety Task Force shall submit a report to Congress that describes its efforts under this subsection and includes recommendations for further measures needed to prevent or respond to the use of laser pointers against aircraft.

(6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the Laser Pointer Safety Task Force to carry out the objectives set forth in this subsection.

SA 3764. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 197, beginning on line 14, strike ''first- or second-class airman'' and insert ''first-, second-, or third-class airman''.

SA 3765. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike subtitle F of title II and insert the following:

Subtitle F—Exemption From Medical Certification Requirements

SEC. 2601. REPORTING BY PILOTS EXEMPT FROM MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall require any pilot who is exempt from medical certification requirements to submit, not less frequently than once every 180 days, a report to the Department of Transportation that—

(1) identifies the pilot's status as an active pilot; and

(2) includes a summary of the pilot's recent flight hours.

SEC. 2602. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ASSESSING EFFECT ON PUBLIC SAFETY OF EXEMPTION FOR SPORT PILOTS FROM REQUIREMENT FOR A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives that assesses the effect of section 61.23(c)(ii) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (permitting a person to exercise the privileges of a sport pilot certificate without holding a medical certificate), on public safety since 2004.

SA 3766. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 258, after line 25, add the following:

(m) RULEMAKING ESTABLISHING MINIMUM LIABILITY INSURANCE LEVELS FOR PILOTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate a rulemaking to establish minimum levels of liability insurance for any pilot covered under this section.

SA 3767. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 59, line 12, strike ''A violation'' and insert the following:

(a) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION AGAINST UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE PRACTICES.—Section 41712 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person aggrieved by an action prohibited under this section may file a civil action for damages and injunctive relief in any Federal district court or State court located in the State in which—

''(A) the unlawful action is alleged to have been committed; or

''(B) the aggrieved person resides.

''(2) ENFORCEMENT BY A STATE.—The attorney general of any State, as parens patriae, may bring a civil action to enforce the provisions of this section in—

''(A) any district court of the United States in that State; or

''(B) any State court that is located in that State and has jurisdiction over the defendant.''.

(b) VIOLATION OF A PRIVACY POLICY.—A violation

SA 3768. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 279, line 7, strike ''Not later than'' and insert the following:

(a) NO PREEMPTION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION CLAIMS.—Section 41713(b)(4) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) NO PREEMPTION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION CLAIMS.—Nothing in subparagraphs (A) through (C) may be construed—

''(i) to preempt, displace, or supplant any action for civil damages or injunctive relief based on a State consumer protection statute; or

''(ii) to restrict the authority of any government entity, including a State attorney general, from bringing a legal claim on behalf of the citizens of such State.''.

(b) SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—Not later than

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SA 3769. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 222, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 2321. CABIN AIR QUALITY TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall initiate research and development work on effective air cleaning and sensor technology for the engine and auxiliary power unit for bleed air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck of a pressurized aircraft.

(b) TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS.—The technology developed under subsection (a) shall be capable of—

(1) removing oil-based contaminants from the bleed air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck; and

(2) detecting and recording oil-based contaminants in the bleed air fraction of the total air supplied to the passenger cabin and flight deck.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report to Congress that describes the results of the research and development work carried out under subsection (a).

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SA 3770. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5032. DIVERSIONS TO BRADLEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall coordinate with the operator of Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Connecticut, to develop and implement a plan for irregular operations that result in aircraft being diverted to the airport to ensure that the airport is not adversely affected.

SA 3771. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ON BAGGAGE FEES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report assessing—

(1) the extent to which baggage fees imposed by air carriers have led to—

(A) increased security costs at airports, as reflected by the need for more security screening officials and security screening equipment; and

(B) economic disruption, such as requiring passengers to spend increased time waiting in line instead of pursuing more worthwhile, productive pursuits; and

(2) whether any increased costs have been borne disproportionately by taxpayers instead of air carriers.

SA 3772. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 112, strike line 18 and all that follows through page 113, line 5, and insert the following

''(a) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of publication of the guidance under subsection (b)(1), it shall be unlawful for any person to introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce any unmanned aircraft manufactured unless a safety statement is attached to the unmanned aircraft or accompanying the unmanned aircraft in its packaging.

''(b) SAFETY STATEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue guidance for implementing this section.

SA 3773. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subsection (a) of section 3114 add the following:

(5) by adding after subsection (d), as redesignated, the following:

''(e) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Upon receipt of any complaint, an air carrier shall send the content of the complaint to the Aviation Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Transportation.''.

SA 3774. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 286, strike lines 5 through 19, and insert the following:

(1) each covered air carrier to disclose to a consumer any ancillary fees, including the baggage fee, cancellation fee, change fee, ticketing fee, and seat selection fee of that covered air carrier in a standardized format; and

(2) notwithstanding the manner in which information regarding the fees described in paragraph (1) is collected, each ticket agent to disclose to a consumer such fees of a covered air carrier in the standardized format described in paragraph (1).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations under subsection (a) shall require that each disclosure—

(1) if ticketing is done on an Internet Web site or other online service—

(A) be prominently displayed to the consumer through a link on the homepage of the covered air carrier or ticket agent and prior to the point of purchase; and

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SA 3775. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3124. UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE PRACTICES RELATING TO TRAVEL INSURANCE.

Section 2 of the Act of the Act of March 9, 1945 (59 Stat. 33, chapter 20; 15 U.S.C. 1012) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), the Secretary of Transportation may investigate, and take action under section 41712(a) of title 49, United States Code, with respect to, unfair or deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition with respect to insurance relating to travel in air transportation.''.

SA 3776. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 3124. REGULATIONS RELATING TO DISCLOSURE OF FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations prohibiting an air carrier from limiting the access of consumers to information relating to schedules, fares, and fees for flights in passenger air transportation.

(b) AIR CARRIER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means an air carrier or foreign air carrier, as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3777. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 201, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

''(3) the existence and utility of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center.

SA 3778. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 2307, insert the following:

SEC. 2307A. TRAINING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR ADDITIONAL AIR CARRIER PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each air carrier shall provide ticket counter agents, gate agents, and other personnel of such air carrier whose duties include regular interaction with passengers training on recognizing and responding to victims and potential victims of human trafficking. Such training shall be in addition to any other training provided by an air carrier to such personnel.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''air carrier'' means a person, including a commercial enterprise, that has been issued an air carrier operating certificate under section 44705 of title 49, United States Code.

SA 3779. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—CROSS-BORDER TRADE ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2016

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act of 2016''.

SEC. __02. REPEAL AND TRANSITION PROVISION.

(a) REPEAL.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) and section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) are repealed.

(b) AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act

may be construed as affecting in any manner an agreement entered into pursuant to section 560 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (division D of Public Law 113–6; 127 Stat. 378) or section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that is in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, and any such agreement shall continue to have full force and effect on and after such date.

(c) PROPOSED AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), nothing in this Act may be construed as affecting in any manner a proposal accepted for consideration by U.S. Customs and Border Protection pursuant to section 559 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (division F of Public Law 113–76; 6 U.S.C. 211 note) that was accepted prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. _03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' mean the General Services Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' mean the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) COMMISSIONER.—The term ''Commissioner'' means the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(4) DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term ''donation agreement'' means an agreement made under section _05(a).

(5) FEE AGREEMENT.—The term ''fee agreement'' means an agreement made by the Commissioner under section _04(a)(1).

(6) PERSON.—The term ''person'' means—

(A) an individual;

(B) a corporation, partnership, trust, estate, association, or any other private or public entity;

(C) a Federal, State, or local government;

(D) any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a Federal, State, or local government; or

(E) any other governmental entity.

(7) RELEVANT COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''relevant committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. _04. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO FEE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN SERVICES OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.

(a) FEE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) AUTHORITY FOR FEE AGREEMENTS.—Notwithstanding section 13031(e) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(e)) and section 451 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1451), the Commissioner may, upon the request of any person, enter into an agreement with that person under which—

(A) U.S. Customs and Border Protection will provide the services described in paragraph (4) at a port of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services;

(B) such person will remit a fee imposed under subsection (b) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection in an amount equal to the full costs incurred or that will be incurred in providing such services; and

(C) any additional facilities at which U.S. Customs and Border Protection services are performed or deemed necessary for the provision of services under an agreement entered into under this section shall be provided, maintained, and equipped by such person, without additional cost to the Federal Government, in accordance with U.S. Customs and Border Protection specifications.

(2) CRITERIA.—The Commissioner shall establish criteria for entering into a partnership under paragraph (1) that include the following:

(A) Selection and evaluation of potential partners.

(B) Identification and documentation of roles and responsibilities between U.S. Customs and Border Protection, General Services Administration, and private and government partners.

(C) Identification, allocation, and management of explicit and implicit risks of partnering between U.S. Customs and Border Protection, General Services Administration, and private and government partners.

(D) Decision-making and dispute resolution processes in partnering arrangements.

(E) Criteria and processes for U.S. Customs and Border Protection to terminate agreements if private or government partners are not meeting the terms of such a partnership, including the security standards established by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(3) PUBLICATION.—The Commissioner shall make publicly available the criteria established under paragraph (2), and shall notify the relevant committees of Congress not less than 15 days prior to the publication of the criteria and any subsequent changes to such criteria.

(4) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—Services described in this paragraph are any services related to, or in support of, customs, agricultural processing, border security, or inspection-related immigration matters provided by an employee or contractor of U.S. Customs and Border Protection at ports of entry or any other facility where U.S. Customs and Border Protection provides or will provide services.

(5) MODIFICATION OF PRIOR AGREEMENTS.—The Commissioner, at the request of a person who has previously entered into an agreement with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the reimbursement of fees in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, may modify such agreement to implement any provisions of this title.

(6) LIMITATION.—The Commissioner may not enter into a reimbursable fee agreement under this subsection if such agreement would unduly and permanently impact services funded in this Act or any appropriations Act, or provided from any account in the Treasury of the United States derived by the collection of fees.

(7) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Except as provided in paragraphs (8) and (9), there shall be no limit to the number of fee agreements that may be entered into by the Commissioner.

(8) AUTHORITY FOR NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—

(A) RESOURCE AVAILABILITY.—If the Commissioner finds that resource or allocation constraints would prevent U.S. Customs and Border Protection from fulfilling, in whole or in part, requests for services under the terms of existing or proposed fee agreements, the Commissioner shall impose annual limits on the number of new fee agreements.

(B) ANNUAL REVIEW.—If the Commissioner limits the number of new fee agreements under this paragraph, the Commissioner shall annually evaluate and reassess such limits and publish the results of such evaluation and affirm any such limits that shall remain in effect in a publicly available format.

(9) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS AT AIR PORTS OF ENTRY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner may not enter into more than 10 fee agreements per year to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at air ports of entry.

(B) CERTAIN COSTS.—A fee agreement for U.S. Customs and Border Protection services at an air port of entry may only provide for the reimbursement of—

(i) salaries and expenses of not more than 5 full-time equivalent U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers;

(ii) costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the payment of overtime to employee;

(iii) the salaries and expenses of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at air ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers; and

(iv) other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to services described in paragraph (2), such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of such employees.

(C) PRECLEARANCE.—The authority in the section may not be used to enter into new preclearance agreements or initiate the provision of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services outside of the United States.

(10) PORT OF ENTRY SIZE CONSIDERATION.—If the number of fee agreement proposals that meet the eligibility criteria established in paragraph (2) exceed the number of fee agreements that the Commissioner is permitted by law to enter into, then the Commissioner shall—

(A) ensure that each fee agreement proposal is given equal consideration regardless of the size of the port of entry; and

(B) report to the relevant committees of Congress on the number of fee agreement proposals that the Commissioner did not enter into due to legal restrictions on the number of fee agreements that the Commissioner is permitted to enter into.

(11) DENIED APPLICATION.—If the Commissioner denies a proposal for a fee agreement, the Commission shall provide the person who submitted the proposal a detailed justification for the denial.

(12) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(A) to require a person entering into a fee agreement to cover costs that are otherwise the responsibility of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection or any other agency of the Federal Government and are not incurred, or expected to be incurred, to cover services specifically covered by an agreement entered into under authorities provided by this title; or

(B) to unduly and permanently reduce the responsibilities or duties of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide services at ports of entry that have been authorized or mandated by law and are funded in any appropriation Act or from any accounts in the Treasury of the United States derived by the collection of fees.

(13) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Decisions of the Commissioner under this subsection are in the discretion of the Commissioner and not subject to judicial review.

(b) FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who enters into a fee agreement shall pay a fee pursuant to such agreement in an amount equal to the full cost of U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

(A) of the salaries and expenses of individuals employed or contracted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide such services; and

(B) of other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection related to providing such services, such as temporary placement or permanent relocation of employees.

(2) ADVANCE PAYMENT.—The Commissioner, with approval from a person requesting services of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services pursuant to a fee agreement, may accept the fee for services prior to providing such services.

(3) OVERSIGHT OF FEES.—The Commissioner shall develop a process to oversee the activities for which fees are charged pursuant to a fee agreement that includes the following:

(A) A determination and report on the full cost of providing services, including direct and indirect costs, as well as a process, through consultation with affected parties and other interested stakeholders, for increasing such fees as necessary.

(B) The establishment of a periodic remittance schedule to replenish appropriations, accounts or funds, as necessary.

(C) The identification of costs paid by such fees.

(4) DEPOSIT OF FUNDS.—Amounts collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall—

(A) be deposited as an offsetting collection;

(B) remain available until expended, without fiscal year limitation; and

(C) be credited to the applicable appropriation, account, or fund for the amount paid out of that appropriation, account, or fund for—

(i) any expenses incurred or to be incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection in providing such services; and

(ii) any other costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection relating to such services.

(5) TERMINATION BY THE COMMISSIONER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner shall terminate the services provided pursuant to a fee agreement with a person that, after receiving notice from the Commissioner that a fee imposed under the fee agreement is due, fails to pay such fee in a timely manner.

(B) EFFECT OF TERMINATION.—At the time services are terminated pursuant to subparagraph (A), all costs incurred by U.S. Customs and Border Protection which have not been paid, will become immediately due and payable.

(C) INTEREST.—Interest on unpaid fees will accrue based on the quarterly rate(s) established under sections 6621 and 6622 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(D) PENALTIES.—Any person that fails to pay any fee incurred under a fee agreement in a timely manner, after notice and demand for payment, shall be liable for a penalty or liquidated damage equal to 2 times the amount of such fee.

(E) AMOUNT COLLECTED.—Any amount collected pursuant to a fee agreement shall be deposited into the account specified under paragraph (4) and shall be available as described therein.

(F) RETURN OF UNUSED FUNDS.—The Commissioner shall return any unused funds collected under a fee agreement that is terminated for any reason, or in the event that the terms of such agreement change by mutual agreement to cause a reduction of U.S. Customs and Border Protections services. No interest shall be owed upon the return of any unused funds. (i)

(6) TERMINATION BY THE SPONSOR.—Any person who has previously entered into an agreement with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the reimbursement of fees in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, or under the provisions of this Act, may request that such agreement make provision for termination at the request of such person upon advance notice, the length and terms of which shall be negotiated between such person and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each fee agreement made during the previous year; and

(2) not less than 15 days before entering into a fee agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(d) MODIFICATION OF EXISTING REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Section 907(b) of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–125) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) the program for entering into reimbursable fee agreements for the provision of U.S. Customs and Border Protection services established by the Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act of 2016.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission to enter into new fee agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any fee agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that fee agreement.

SEC. __05. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) COMMISSIONER.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator as provided under subsection (f), may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, for activities in subsection (b) at a new or existing land, sea, or air port of entry, or any facility or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services within the United States.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—Where the Administrator owns or leases a new or existing land port of entry, facility, or other infrastructure at a location where U.S. Customs and Border Protection performs or will be performing inspection services, the Administrator, in collaboration with the Commissioner, may enter into an agreement with any person to accept a donation of real or personal property, including monetary donations, or nonpersonal services, at that location for activities set forth in subsection (b).

(b) USE.—A donation made under a donation agreement may be used for activities related to construction, alteration, operation or maintenance, including expenses related to—

(1) land acquisition, design, construction, repair, and alteration;

(2) furniture, fixtures, equipment, and technology, including installation and the deployment thereof; and

(3) operation and maintenance of the facility, infrastructure, equipment, and technology.

(c) LIMITATION ON MONETARY DONATIONS.—Any monetary donation accepted pursuant to a donation agreement may not be used to pay the salaries of employees of U.S. Customs and Border Protection who perform inspection services.

(d) TRANSFER.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER.—Donations accepted by the Commissioner or the Administrator under a donation agreement may be transferred between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Administration.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—Prior to executing a transfer under this subsection, the Commissioner or Administrator shall notify a person that entered into the donation agreement of an intent to transfer the donated property or services.

(e) TERM OF DONATION AGREEMENT.—The term of a donation agreement may be as long as is required to meet the terms of the agreement.

(f) ROLE OF ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator's role, involvement, and authority under this section is limited with respect to donations made at new or existing land ports of entry, facilities, or other infrastructure owned or leased by the Administration.

(g) EVALUATION PROCEDURES.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROCEDURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment, the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administrator as appropriate, shall issue procedures for evaluating proposals for donation agreements.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The procedures issued under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public.

(3) COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS.—In issuing the procedures under paragraph (1), the Commissioner, in consultation with the Administration, shall evaluate the use of authorities provided under this section to enter into cost-sharing or reimbursement agreements with eligible persons and determine whether such agreements may improve facility conditions or inspection services at new or existing land, sea, or air ports of entry.

(h) DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after receiving a proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall notify the person that submitted the proposal as to whether it is complete or incomplete.

(2) INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS.—If the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, determines that a proposal is incomplete, the person that submitted the proposal shall be notified and provided with—

(A) a detailed description of all specific information or material that is needed to complete review of the proposal; and

(B) allow the person to resubmit the proposal with additional information and material described under subparagraph (A) to complete the proposal.

(3) COMPLETE APPLICATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a completed and final proposal for a donation agreement, the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall—

(A) make a determination whether to deny or approve the proposal; and

(B) notify the person that submitted the proposal of the determination.

(4) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making the determination under paragraph (3)(A), the Commissioner, and Administrator if applicable, shall consider—

(A) the impact of the proposal on reducing wait times at that port of entry or facility and other ports of entry on the same border;

(B) the potential of the proposal to increase trade and travel efficiency through added capacity; and

(C) the potential of the proposal to enhance the security of the port of entry or facility.

(i) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING.—Any property, including monetary donations and nonpersonal services, donated pursuant to a donation agreement may be used in addition to any other funds, including appropriated funds, property, or services made available for the same purpose.

(j) RETURN OF DONATION.—If the Commissioner or the Administrator does not use the property or services donated pursuant to a donation agreement, such donated property or services shall be returned to the person that made the donation.

(k) INTEREST PROHIBITED.—No interest may be owed on any donation returned to a person under this subsection.

(l) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN FUNDING.—The Commissioner and the Administrator may not, with respect to an agreement authorized under this section, obligate or expend amounts in excess of amounts that have been appropriated pursuant to any appropriations Act for purposes specified in the agreement or otherwise made available for any of such purposes.

(m) ANNUAL REPORT AND NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Commissioner, in collaboration with the Administrator if applicable, shall—

(1) submit to the relevant committees of Congress an annual report that identifies each donation agreement made during the previous year; and

(2) not less than 15 days before entering into a donation agreement, notify the members of Congress that represent the State or district in which the affected port or facility is located.

(n) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, nothing in this section may be construed as affecting in any manner the responsibilities, duties, or authorities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection or the Administration.

(o) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—The authority for the Commission or the Administrator to enter into new donation agreements shall be in effect until September 30, 2025. Any donation agreement entered into prior to that date shall remain in effect under the terms of that donation agreement.

SA 3780. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the, end of section 2154, add the following:

(d) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—**[**Nothing in this section shall prohibit the Administrator from authorizing the owner of a fixed site facility to operate an aircraft, including a UAS, over its own property/Nothing in this section may be construed as prohibiting the Administrator from authorizing an owner of a fixed site facility to operate an aircraft, including an unmanned aircraft system, over, under, or within a specified distance from that fixed site facility**]**.

SA 3781. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2406. COMPLETION OF CERTAIN PROJECTS BY STATE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION.

With respect to a proposed construction or alteration for which notice to the Federal Aviation Administration is required under section 77.9 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, upon receiving such notice, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall allow a State department of transportation to carry out such construction or alteration, and shall not require an aeronautical study under section 77.27 of such title, if such State department of transportation—

(1) has appropriate engineering expertise to perform the construction or alteration; and

(2) complies with applicable Federal Aviation Administration standards for the construction or alteration.

SA 3782. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REPORT ON CONSPICUITY NEEDS FOR SURFACE VEHICLES OPERATING ON THE AIRSIDE OF AIR CARRIER SERVED AIRPORTS.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall perform a study of the need for the Federal Aviation Administration to prescribe conspicuity standards for surface vehicles operating on the airside of the categories of airports that air carriers serve as specified in subsection (b).

(b) COVERED AIRPORTS.—The study required by subsection (a) shall cover, at a minimum, one large hub airport, one medium hub airport and one small hub airport, as those terms are defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than July 1, 2017, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report setting forth the results of the study required by subsection (a), including such recommendations as the Administrator considers appropriate regarding the need for the Administration to prescribe conspicuity standards as described in subsection (a).

SA 3783. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT UNDER CERTAIN FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS TO BUY GOODS PRODUCED IN UNITED STATES.

Subparagraph (A) of section 50101(d)(3) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) the cost of components and subcomponents produced in the United States—

''(i) for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, is more than 60 percent of the cost of all components of the facility or equipment;

''(ii) for fiscal years 2019 and 2020, is more than 65 percent of the cost of all components of the facility or equipment; and

''(iii) for fiscal year 2021 and each fiscal year thereafter, is more than 70 percent of the cost of the facility or equipment; and''.

SA 3784. Mr. PERDUE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike subtitle A of title I and insert the following:

Subtitle A—Funding of FAA Programs

SEC. 1001. AIRPORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND NOISE COMPATIBILITY PLANNING AND PROGRAMS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Section 48103(a) is amended by striking ''section 47505(a)(2), and carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c) $3,350,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 and $2,652,083,333 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''section 47505(a)(2), carrying out noise compatibility programs under section 47504(c), for an airport cooperative research program under section 44511, for Airports Technology-Safety research, and Airports Technology-Efficiency research, $3,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2016 and $3,750,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018''.

(b) OBLIGATIONAL AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2018''.

SEC. 1002. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) through (5) and inserting the following:

''(1) $2,855,241,025 for fiscal year 2016.

''(2) $2,862,020,524 for fiscal year 2017.

''(3) $2,901,601,229 for fiscal year 2018.''.

SEC. 1003. FAA OPERATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106(k)(1) is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (E) and inserting the following:

''(A) $9,910,009,314 for fiscal year 2016;

''(B) $10,025,361,111 for fiscal year 2017; and

''(C) $10,103,780,622 for fiscal year 2018.''.

(b) AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES.—Section 106(k)(2) is amended by striking ''for fiscal years 2012 through 2015'' each place it appears and inserting ''for fiscal years 2016 through 2018''.

(c) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER FUNDS.—Section 106(k)(3) is amended by striking ''2012 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''2016 through 2018''.

SEC. 1004. FAA RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''44511-44513'' and inserting ''44512-44513''; and

(ii) by striking ''and, for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015, under subsection (g)'';

(B) in paragraph (8), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following:

''(9) $166,000,000 for fiscal year 2016;

''(10) $169,000,000 for fiscal year 2017; and

''(11) $171,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (3).

SEC. 1005. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

(a) AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND GUARANTEE.—Section 48114(a)(1)(A) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The total budget resources made available from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund each fiscal year under sections 48101, 48102, 48103, and 106(k)—

''(i) shall in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2018, be equal to the sum of—

''(I) 90 percent of the estimated level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for that fiscal year; and

''(II) the actual level of receipts plus interest credited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year minus the total amount made available for obligation from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for the second preceding fiscal year; and

''(ii) may be used only for the aviation investment programs listed in subsection (b)(1).''.

(b) ENFORCEMENT OF GUARANTEES.—Section 48114(c)(2) is amended by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2018''.

SEC. 1006. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) MARSHALL ISLANDS, MICRONESIA, AND PALAU.—Section 47115(j) is amended by striking ''2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,'' and inserting ''2018''.

(b) EXTENSION OF COMPATIBLE LAND USE PLANNING AND PROJECTS BY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 47141(f) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2018''.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT ON PARTICIPATION IN FAA PROGRAMS BY DISADVANTAGED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2018, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation shall submit to Congress a report on the number of new small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including those owned by veterans, that participated in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act.

(2) NEW SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a new small business concern is a small business concern that did not participate in the programs and activities described in paragraph (1) in a previous fiscal year.

(3) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(A) a list of the top 25 and bottom 25 large and medium hub airports in terms of providing opportunities for small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals to participate in the programs and activities funded using the amounts made available under this Act;

(B) the results of an assessment, to be conducted by the Inspector General, on the reasons why the top airports have been successful in providing such opportunities; and

(C) recommendations to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and Congress on methods for other airports to achieve results similar to those of the top airports.

(d) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORT PROPERTIES.—Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking ''July 15, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2018''.

SA 3785. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KAINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 238, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 2507. USE OF FEDERAL FACILITIES FOR AVIATION TESTING.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Wallops Flight Facility is an important Federal research and test site that supports the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (referred to in this section as ''NASA'' and other Federal and non-Federal entities through the conduct of hazardous rocket and aviation-based missions, including the launch and recovery of experimental space vehicles and aircraft being developed for NASA, the Department of Defense, and private industry.

(2) The designation of restricted airspace provides the Wallops Flight Facility with critical capability to safely conduct the missions described in paragraph (1) by protecting public and private aircraft from the hazards associated with such missions.

(3) Although Wallops Flight Facility has been working with the Federal Aviation Administration to extend its restricted airspace in order to meet the national needs of its programs for more than 5 years, and has been in a formal application process for more than 2 years, Federal Aviation Administration officials have not yet approved such an extension.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the public interest to make full use of Federal facilities, including facilities operated by NASA, to support aviation testing and operations;

(2) Federal regulations governing the use of restricted airspace to support the activities described in paragraph (1) should be continually reviewed to ensure that such regulations support such activities; and

(3) it is imperative that updates and changes sought by Federal agencies to support hazardous rocket and aviation-based missions are evaluated and resolved by the Federal Aviation Administration as expeditiously as possible.

(c) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, after considering the interagency and public comments received over the course of the review described in subsection (a)(3), shall issue a rule regarding the requested extension of restricted airspace surrounding Wallops Flight Facility.

SA 3786. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 2154, add the following:

(d) Savings Clause.—Nothing in this section may be construed as prohibiting the Administrator from authorizing an owner of a fixed site facility to operate an aircraft, including an unmanned aircraft system, over, under, or within a specified distance from that fixed site facility.

SA 3787. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DIVISION A—ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This division may be cited as the ''Economic Freedom Zones Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this division is as follows:

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this division:

(1) CITY.—The term ''city'' means any unit of general local government that is classified

as a municipality by the United States Census Bureau, or is a town or township as determined jointly by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary.

(2) COUNTY.—The term ''county'' means any unit of local general government that is classified as a county by the United States Census Bureau.

(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means a municipality or a zip code.

(4) MUNICIPALITY.—The term ''municipality'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(40) of title 11, United States Code.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Treasury.

(6) ZIP CODE.—The term ''zip code'' means any area or region associated with or covered by a United States Postal zip code of not less than 5 digits.

TITLE I—PROHIBITION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BAILOUTS

SEC. 101. PROHIBITION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BAILOUTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''credit rating'' has the meaning given that term in section 3(a)(60) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(60));

(2) the term ''credit rating agency'' has the meaning given that term in section 3(a)(61) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(61));

(3) the term ''Federal assistance'' means the use of any advances from the Federal Reserve credit facility or discount window that is not part of a program or facility with broad-based eligibility under section 13(3)(A) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 343(3)(A)), Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance, or guarantees for the purpose of—

(A) making a loan to, or purchasing any interest or debt obligation of, a municipality;

(B) purchasing the assets of a municipality;

(C) guaranteeing a loan or debt issuance of a municipality; or

(D) entering into an assistance arrangement, including a grant program, with an eligible entity;

(4) the term ''insolvent'' means, with respect to an eligible entity, a financial condition such that the eligible entity—

(A) has any debt that has been given a credit rating lower than a ''B'' by a nationally recognized statistical rating organization or a credit rating agency;

(B) is not paying its debts as they become due, unless such debts are the subject of a bona fide dispute; or

(C) is unable to pay its debts as they become due; and

(5) the term ''nationally recognized statistical rating organization'' has the meaning given that term in section 3(a)(62) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(62)).

(b) PROHIBITION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BAILOUTS.—

(1) PROHIBITION OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal assistance may be provided to an eligible entity (other than the assistance provided for in this division for an area that is designated as an Economic Free Zone).

(2) PROHIBITION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO BANKRUPT OR INSOLVENT ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Except as provided in paragraph (1), the Federal Government may not provide financial assistance—

(A) to a municipality that is a debtor under chapter 9 of title 11, United States Code; or

(B) to a municipality that is insolvent.

TITLE II—DESIGNATION OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES (EFZ)

SEC. 201. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE STATUS.

(a) DESIGNATION OF MUNICIPALITIES AS ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that is a municipality may be designated by the Secretary as an Economic Freedom Zone if the municipality—

(A) meets the requirements under section 109(c) of title 11, United States Code;

(B) is at risk of insolvency, as determined under paragraph (2);

(C) has been subject to receivership by the State within the last 3 years;

(D) has been a debtor under chapter 9 of title 11, United States Code within the last 3 years; or

(E) has been subject to a financial advisory board, emergency manager, or similar entity that—

(i) has arisen from the legislative or executive authority of the State; and

(ii) exercises significant financial control over the finances of the entity within the last 3 years.

(2) AT RISK OF INSOLVENCY.—A municipality is at risk of insolvency if—

(A) an independent actuarial firm that has been engaged by the municipality and that does not have a conflict of interest with the municipality, including any previous relationship with the municipality, as determined by the Secretary—

(i) determines that the municipality is insolvent (as defined in section 101(a)(4) of title 11, United States Code); and

(ii) submits its analysis regarding the insolvency of the municipality to the Secretary; and

(B) the Secretary has reviewed and approved the determination of insolvency by the actuarial firm.

(b) DESIGNATION OF COUNTIES, CITIES, AND ZIP CODES AS ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may be designated by the Secretary as an Economic Freedom Zone if the eligible entity—

(A) is a county or city that—

(i) is located in a non-metropolitan statistical area (as defined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget); and

(ii) meets the requirements under paragraph (2); or

(B) is a zip code that meets the requirements under paragraph (2).

(2) LOW ECONOMIC AND HIGH POVERTY AREA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall be eligible for designation as an Economic Freedom Zone under paragraph (1) if the eligible entity is designated by the Secretary as a low economic or high poverty area under subparagraph (B).

(B) DESIGNATION AS LOW ECONOMIC AND HIGH POVERTY AREA.—The Secretary, after reviewing supporting data as determined appropriate, shall designate an eligible entity as a low economic or high poverty area if—

(i) the State or local government with jurisdiction over the eligible entity certifies that—

(I) the eligible entity is one of pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress;

(II) the average rate of unemployment within such eligible entity during the most recent 3-month period for which data is available is at least 1.5 times the national unemployment rate for the period involved;

(III) during the most recent 3-month period, at least 30 percent of the residents of the eligible entity have incomes below the national poverty level; or

(IV) at least 70 percent of the residents of the eligible entity have incomes below 80 percent of the median income of households within the jurisdiction of the local government (as determined in the same manner as under section 119(b)(2) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974); and

(ii) the Secretary determines that such a designation is appropriate.

(c) REFUSAL TO GRANT STATUS.—The Secretary may refuse to designate an eligible entity as an Economic Freedom Zone if the Secretary determines that any requirement under this division, including any requirement under subsection (a)(2), has not been satisfied.

SEC. 202. APPLICATION AND DURATION OF DESIGNATION.

(a) APPLICATION.—The Secretary shall develop procedures to enable an eligible entity to submit to the Secretary an application for designation as an Economic Freedom Zone under this title.

(b) DURATION.—The designation by the Secretary of an eligible entity as a Economic Freedom Zone shall be for a period of 10 years.

TITLE III—FEDERAL TAX INCENTIVES

SEC. 301. TAX INCENTIVES RELATED TO ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subchapter:

''Subchapter Z—Economic Freedom Zones

''PART I—TAX INCENTIVES

''SEC. 1400V–1. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE INDIVIDUAL FLAT TAX.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any individual whose principal residence (within the meaning of section 121) is located in an Economic Freedom Zone for the taxable year, in lieu of the tax imposed by section 1, there shall be imposed a tax equal to 5 percent of the taxable income of such taxpayer. For purposes of this title, the tax imposed by the preceding sentence shall be treated as a tax imposed by section 1.

''(b) JOINT RETURNS.—In the case of a joint return under section 6013, subsection (a) shall apply so long as either spouse has a principal residence (within the meaning of section 121) in an Economic Freedom Zone for the taxable year.

''(c) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX NOT TO APPLY.—The tax imposed by section 55 shall not apply to any taxpayer to whom subsection (a) applies.

''SEC. 1400V–2. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE CORPORATE FLAT TAX.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any corporation located in an Economic Freedom Zone for the taxable year, in lieu of the tax imposed by section 11, there shall be imposed a tax equal to 5 percent of the taxable income of such corporation. For purposes of this title, the tax imposed by the preceding sentence shall be treated as a tax imposed by section 11.

''(b) LIMITATION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to any corporation for any taxable

year if the adjusted gross income of such corporation for such taxable year exceeds $500,000,000.

''(c) LOCATED.—For purposes of this section, a corporation shall be considered to be located in an Economic Freedom Zone if—

''(1) not less than 10 percent of the total gross income of such corporation is derived from the active conduct of a trade or business within an Economic Freedom Zone, or

''(2) at least 25 percent of the employees of such corporation are residents of an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(d) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX NOT TO APPLY.—The tax imposed by section 55 shall not apply to any taxpayer to whom subsection (a) applies.

''SEC. 1400V–3. ZERO PERCENT CAPITAL GAINS RATE.

''(a) EXCLUSION.—Gross income shall not include qualified capital gain from the sale or exchange of—

''(1) any Economic Freedom Zone asset held for more than 5 years, or

''(2) any real property located in an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(b) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE ASSET.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone asset' means—

''(A) any Economic Freedom Zone business stock,

''(B) any Economic Freedom Zone partnership interest, and

''(C) any Economic Freedom Zone business property.

''(2) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESS STOCK.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone business stock' means any stock in a domestic corporation if—

''(i) such stock is acquired by the taxpayer, before the date on which such corporation no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones, at its original issue (directly or through an underwriter) solely in exchange for cash,

''(ii) as of the time such stock was issued, such corporation was an Economic Freedom Zone business (or, in the case of a new corporation, such corporation was being organized for purposes of being an Economic Freedom Zone business), and

''(iii) during substantially all of the taxpayer's holding period for such stock, such corporation qualified as an Economic Freedom Zone business.

''(B) REDEMPTIONS.—A rule similar to the rule of section 1202(c)(3) shall apply for purposes of this paragraph.

''(3) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE PARTNERSHIP INTEREST.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone partnership interest' means any capital or profits interest in a domestic partnership if—

''(A) such interest is acquired by the taxpayer, before the date on which such partnership no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones, from the partnership solely in exchange for cash,

''(B) as of the time such interest was acquired, such partnership was an Economic Freedom Zone business (or, in the case of a new partnership, such partnership was being organized for purposes of being an Economic Freedom Zone business), and

''(C) during substantially all of the taxpayer's holding period for such interest, such partnership qualified as an Economic Freedom Zone business.

A rule similar to the rule of paragraph (2)(B) shall apply for purposes of this paragraph.

''(4) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESS PROPERTY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone business property' means tangible property if—

''(i) such property was acquired by the taxpayer by purchase (as defined in section 179(d)(2)) after the date on such taxpayer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business and before the date on which such taxpayer no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones,

''(ii) the original use of such property in the Economic Freedom Zone commences with the taxpayer, and

''(iii) during substantially all of the taxpayer's holding period for such property, substantially all of the use of such property was in an Economic Freedom Zone business of the taxpayer.

''(B) SPECIAL RULE FOR BUILDINGS WHICH ARE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The requirements of clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall be treated as met with respect to—

''(I) property which is substantially improved by the taxpayer before the date on which such taxpayer no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones, and

''(II) any land on which such property is located.

''(ii) SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT.—For purposes of clause (i), property shall be treated as substantially improved by the taxpayer only if, during any 24-month period beginning after the date on which the taxpayer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business additions to basis with respect to such property in the hands of the taxpayer exceed the greater of—

''(I) an amount equal to the adjusted basis of such property at the beginning of such 24-month period in the hands of the taxpayer, or

''(II) $5,000.

''(5) TREATMENT OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE TERMINATION.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the termination of the designation of the Economic Freedom Zone shall be disregarded for purposes of determining whether any property is an Economic Freedom Zone asset.

''(6) TREATMENT OF SUBSEQUENT PURCHASERS, ETC.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone asset' includes any property which would be an Economic Freedom Zone asset but for paragraph (2)(A)(i), (3)(A), or (4)(A)(i) or (ii) in the hands of the taxpayer if such property was an Economic Freedom Zone asset in the hands of a prior holder.

''(7) 5-YEAR SAFE HARBOR.—If any property ceases to be an Economic Freedom Zone asset by reason of paragraph (2)(A)(iii), (3)(C), or (4)(A)(iii) after the 5-year period beginning on the date the taxpayer acquired such property, such property shall continue to be treated as meeting the requirements of such paragraph; except that the amount of gain to which subsection (a) applies on any sale or exchange of such property shall not exceed the amount which would be qualified capital gain had such property been sold on the date of such cessation.

''(c) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESS.—For purposes of this section, the term 'Economic Freedom Zone business' means any enterprise zone business (as defined in section 1397C), determined—

''(1) after the application of section 1400(e),

''(2) by substituting '80 percent' for '50 percent' in subsections (b)(2) and (c)(1) of section 1397C, and

''(3) by treating only areas that are Economic Freedom Zones as an empowerment zone or enterprise community.

''(d) OTHER DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) QUALIFIED CAPITAL GAIN.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the term 'qualified capital gain' means any gain recognized on the sale or exchange of—

''(A) a capital asset, or

''(B) property used in the trade or business (as defined in section 1231(b)).

''(2) CERTAIN GAIN NOT QUALIFIED.—The term 'qualified capital gain' shall not include any gain attributable to periods before the date on which the a business qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business or after the date that is 4 years after the date on which such business no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones.

''(3) CERTAIN GAIN NOT QUALIFIED.—The term 'qualified capital gain' shall not include any gain which would be treated as ordinary income under section 1245 or under section 1250 if section 1250 applied to all depreciation rather than the additional depreciation.

''(4) INTANGIBLES NOT INTEGRAL PART OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESS.—In the case of gain described in subsection (a)(1), the term 'qualified capital gain' shall not include any gain which is attributable to an intangible asset which is not an integral part of an Economic Freedom Zone business.

''(5) RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS.—The term 'qualified capital gain' shall not include any gain attributable, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, to a transaction with a related person. For purposes of this paragraph, persons are related to each other if such persons are described in section 267(b) or 707(b)(1).

''(e) SALES AND EXCHANGES OF INTERESTS IN PARTNERSHIPS AND S CORPORATIONS WHICH ARE ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESSES.—In the case of the sale or exchange of an interest in a partnership, or of stock in an S corporation, which was an Economic Freedom Zone business during substantially all of the period the taxpayer held such interest or stock, the amount of qualified capital gain shall be determined without regard to—

''(1) any gain which is attributable to an intangible asset which is not an integral part of an Economic Freedom Zone business, and

''(2) any gain attributable to periods before the date on which the a business qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business or after the date that is 4 years after the date on which such business no longer qualifies as an Economic Freedom Zone business due to the lapse of 1 or more Economic Freedom Zones.

''SEC. 1400V–4. REDUCED PAYROLL TAXES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) EMPLOYEES.—The rate of tax under 3101(a) (including for purposes of determining the applicable percentage under sections 3201(a) and 3211(a)(1)) shall be 4.2 percent for any remuneration received during any period in which the individual's principal residence (within the meaning of section 121) is located in an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(2) EMPLOYERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The rate of tax under section 3111(a) (including for purposes of determining the applicable percentage under sections 3221(a)) shall be 4.2 percent with respect to remuneration paid for qualified services during any period in which the employer is located in an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(B) QUALIFIED SERVICES.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified services' means services performed—

''(i) in a trade or business of a qualified employer, or

''(ii) in the case of a qualified employer exempt from tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, in furtherance of the activities related to the purpose or function constituting the basis of the employer's exemption under section 501 of such Code.

''(C) LOCATION OF EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this paragraph, the location of an employer shall be determined in the same manner as under section 1400V–2(c).

''(3) SELF-EMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.—The rate of tax under section 1401(a) shall be 8.40 percent any taxable year in which such individual was located (determined under section 1400V–2(c) as if such individual were a corporation) in an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(b) TRANSFERS OF FUNDS.—-

''(1) TRANSFERS TO FEDERAL OLD-AGE AND SURVIVORS INSURANCE TRUST FUND.—There are hereby appropriated to the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund established under section 201 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401) amounts equal to the reduction in revenues to the Treasury by reason of the application of subsection (a). Amounts appropriated by the preceding sentence shall be transferred from the general fund at such times and in such manner as to replicate to the extent possible the transfers which would have occurred to such Trust Fund had such amendments not been enacted.

''(2) TRANSFERS TO SOCIAL SECURITY EQUIVALENT BENEFIT ACCOUNT.—There are hereby appropriated to the Social Security Equivalent Benefit Account established under section 15A(a) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231n–1(a)) amounts equal to the reduction in revenues to the Treasury by reason of the application of paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a). Amounts appropriated by the preceding sentence shall be transferred from the general fund at such times and in such manner as to replicate to the extent possible the transfers which would have occurred to such Account had such amendments not been enacted.

''(3) COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL LAWS.—For purposes of applying any provision of Federal law other than the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, the rate of tax in effect under section 3101(a) shall be determined without regard to the reduction in such rate under this section.

''SEC. 1400V–5. INCREASE IN EXPENSING UNDER SECTION 179.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an Economic Freedom Zone business, for purposes of section 179—

''(1) the limitation under section 179(b)(1) shall be increased by the lesser of—

''(A) 200 percent of the amount in effect under such section (determined without regard to this section), or

''(B) the cost of section 179 property which is Economic Freedom Zone business property placed in service during the taxable year, and

''(2) the amount taken into account under section 179(b)(2) with respect to any section 179 property which is Economic Freedom Zone business property shall be 50 percent of the cost thereof.

''(b) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE BUSINESS PROPERTY.—For purposes of this section, the term 'Economic Freedom Zone business property' has the meaning given such term under section 1400V–3(b)(4), except that for purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii) thereof, if property is sold and leased back by the taxpayer within 3 months after the date such property was originally placed in service, such property shall be treated as originally placed in service not earlier than the date on which such property is used under the leaseback.

''(c) RECAPTURE.—Rules similar to the rules under section 179(d)(10) shall apply with respect to any qualified zone property which ceases to be used in an empowerment zone by an enterprise zone business.

''PART II—DEFINITIONS

''Sec. 1400V–6. Economic Freedom Zone.

''SEC. 1400V–6. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE.

''For purposes of this subchapter, the term 'Economic Freedom Zone' means any area which is an Economic Freedom Zone under title II of the Economic Freedom Zone Act.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of subchapters for chapter 1 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to subchapter Y the following new item:

''SUBCHAPTER Z—ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONES''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE IV—FEDERAL REGULATORY REDUCTIONS

SEC. 401. SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

(a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.—For each area designated as an Economic Freedom Zone under this division, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall not enforce, with respect to that Economic Freedom Zone, and the Economic Freedom Zone shall be exempt from compliance with—

(1) part D of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7501 et seq.) (including any regulations promulgated under that part);

(2) section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342);

(3) sections 139, 168, 169, 326, and 327 of title 23, United States Code;

(4) section 304 of title 49, United States Code; and

(5) sections 1315 through 1320 of Public Law 112–141 (126 Stat. 549).

(b) DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.—

(1) WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS.—For each area designated as an Economic Freedom Zone under this division, the Secretary of the Interior shall not enforce, with respect to that Economic Freedom Zone, and the Economic Freedom Zone shall be exempt from compliance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.).

(2) NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS.—For the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which an area is removed from designation as an Economic Freedom Zone, any National Heritage Area located within that Economic Freedom Zone shall not be considered to be a National Heritage Area and any applicable Federal law (including regulations) relating to that National Heritage Area shall not apply.

TITLE V—EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

SEC. 501. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart A of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 25D the following new section:

''SEC. 25E. CREDIT FOR QUALIFIED ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPENSES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year an amount equal to the qualified elementary and secondary education expenses of an eligible student.

''(b) LIMITATION.—The amount taken into account under subsection (a) with respect to any student for any taxable year shall not exceed $5,000.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) QUALIFIED ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPENSES.—The term 'qualified elementary and secondary education expenses' has the meaning given such term under section 530(b)(3).

''(2) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term 'eligible student' means any student who—

''(A) is enrolled in, or attends, any public, private, or religious school (as defined in section 530(b)(3)(B)), and

''(B) whose principal residence (within the meaning of section 123) is located in an Economic Freedom Zone.

''(3) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone' means any area which is an Economic Freedom Zone under title II of the Economic Freedom Zone Act.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart A of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 25D the following new item:

''Sec. 25E. Credit for qualified elementary and secondary education expenses.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to expenditures made in taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. SCHOOL CHOICE THROUGH PORTABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 2 of part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6331 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 1128. SCHOOL CHOICE THROUGH PORTABILITY.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sections 1124, 1124A, and 1125 and any other provision of law, and to the extent permitted under State law, a State educational agency may allocate grant funds under this subpart among the local educational agencies in the State based on the formula described in paragraph (2).

''(2) FORMULA.—A State educational agency may allocate grant funds under this subpart for a fiscal year among the local educational agencies in the State in proportion to the number of eligible children enrolled in public schools served by the local educational agency and enrolled in State-accredited private schools within the local educational agency's geographic jurisdiction, for the most recent fiscal year for which satisfactory data are available, compared to the number of such children in all such local educational agencies for that fiscal year.

''(b) ELIGIBLE CHILD.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term 'eligible child' means a child—

''(A) from a family with an income below the poverty level, on the basis of the most recent satisfactory data published by the Department of Commerce; and

''(B) who resides in an Economic Freedom Zone as designated under title II of the Economic Freedom Zones Act of 2016 .

''(2) CRITERIA OF POVERTY.—In determining the families with incomes below the poverty level for the purposes of paragraph (2), a State educational agency shall use the criteria of poverty used by the Census Bureau

in compiling the most recent decennial census.

''(3) IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN.—On an annual basis, on a date to be determined by the State educational agency, each local educational agency that receives grant funding in accordance with subsection (a) shall inform the State educational agency of the number of eligible children enrolled in public schools served by the local educational agency and enrolled in State-accredited private schools within the local educational agency's geographic jurisdiction.

''(c) DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS.—Each local educational agency that receives grant funding under subsection (a) shall distribute such funds to the public schools served by the local educational agency and State-accredited private schools with the local educational agency's geographic jurisdiction—

''(1) based on the number of eligible children enrolled in such schools; and

''(2) in the manner that would, in the absence of such Federal funds, supplement the funds made available from the non-Federal resources for the education of pupils participating in programs under this part, and not to supplant such funds.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1127 the following:

''Sec. 1128. School choice through portability.''.

SEC. 503. SPECIAL ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE VISAS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ABANDONED; DILAPIDATED.—The terms ''abandoned'' and ''dilapidated'' shall be defined by the States in accordance with the provisions of this division.

(2) FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT.—The term ''full-time employment'' means employment in a position that requires at least 35 hours of service per week at any time, regardless of who fills the position.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to facilitate increased investment and enhanced human capital in Economic Freedom Zones through the issuance of special regional visas.

(c) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, may issue Special Economic Freedom Zone Visas, in a number determined by the Governor of each State, in consultation with local officials in regions designated by the Secretary of Treasury as Economic Freedom Zones, to authorize qualified aliens to enter the United States for the purpose of—

(1) engaging in a new commercial enterprise (including a limited partnership)—

(A) in which such alien has invested, or is actively in the process of investing, capital in an amount not less than the amount specified in subsection (d); and

(B) which will benefit the region designated as an Economic Freedom Zone by creating full-time employment of not fewer than 5 United States citizens, aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or other immigrants lawfully authorized to be employed in the United States (excluding the alien and the alien's immediate family);

(2) engaging in the purchase and renovation of dilapidated or abandoned properties or residences (as determined by State and local officials) in which such alien has invested, or is actively in the process of investing, in the ownership of such properties or residences; or

(3) residing and working in an Economic Freedom Zone.

(d) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—A visa issued to an alien under this section shall expire on the later of—

(1) the date on which the relevant Economic Freedom Zone loses such designation; or

(2) the date that is 5 years after the date on which such visa was issued to such alien.

(e) CAPITAL AND EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) NEW COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES.—Except as otherwise provided under this section, the minimum amount of capital required to comply with subsection (c)(1)(A) shall be $50,000.

(2) RENOVATION OF DILAPIDATED OR ABANDONED PROPERTIES.—An alien is not in compliance with subsection (c)(2) unless the alien—

(A) purchases a dilapidated or abandoned property in an Economic Freedom Zone; and

(B) not later than 18 months after such purchase, invests not less than $25,000 to rebuild, rehabilitate, or repurpose the property.

(3) VERIFICATION.—A visa issued under subsection (c) shall not remain in effect for more than 2 years unless the Secretary of Homeland Security has verified that the alien has complied with the requirements described in subsection (c).

(4) EDUCATION AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS.—An alien is not in compliance with subsection (c)(3) unless the alien possesses—

(A) a bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) or an advanced degree;

(B) a degree or specialty certification that—

(i) is required for the job the alien will be performing; and

(ii) is specific to an industry or job that is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with the specialty certification;

(C)(i) the knowledge required to perform the duties of the job the alien will be performing; and

(ii) the nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that such knowledge is usually associated with attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree; or

(D) a skill or talent that would benefit the Economic Freedom Zone.

(f) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATION.—An alien who has been issued a visa under this section is not permitted to live or work outside of an Economic Freedom Zone.

(2) RESCISSION.—A visa issued under this section shall be rescinded if the visa holder resides or works outside of an Economic Freedom Zone or otherwise fails to comply with the provisions of this section.

(3) OTHER VISAS.—An alien who has been issued a visa under this section may apply for any other visa for which the alien is eligible in order to pursue employment outside of an Economic Freedom Zone.

(g) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may adjust the status of an alien who has been issued a visa under this section to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, without numerical limitation, if the alien—

(1) has fully complied with the requirements set forth in this section for at least 5 years;

(2) submits a completed application to the Secretary; and

(3) is not inadmissible to the United States based on any of the factors set forth in section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)).

SEC. 504. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE EDUCATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part VIII of subchapter F of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 530A. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE EDUCATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this section, an Economic Freedom Zone educational savings account shall be treated for purposes of this title in the same manner as a Coverdell education savings account.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE EDUCATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone educational savings account' means a trust created or organized in the United States exclusively for the purpose of paying the qualified education expenses (as defined in section 530(b)(2)) of an individual who is the designated beneficiary of the trust (and designated as an Economic Freedom Zone educational saving account at the time created or organized) and who is a qualified individual at the time such trust is established, but only if the written governing instrument creating the trust meets the following requirements:

''(A) No contribution will be accepted—

''(i) unless it is in cash,

''(ii) after the date on which such beneficiary attains age 25, or

''(iii) except in the case of rollover contributions, if such contribution would result in aggregate contributions for the taxable year exceeding $10,000.

''(B) No contribution shall be accepted at any time in which the designated beneficiary is not a qualified individual.

''(C) The trust meets the requirements of subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E) of section 530(b)(1).

The age limitations in subparagraphs (A)(ii), subparagraph (E) of section 530(b)(1), and paragraphs (5) and (6) of section 530(d), shall not apply to any designated beneficiary with special needs (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary).

''(2) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'qualified individual' means any individual whose principal residence (within the meaning of section 121) is located in an Economic Freedom Zone (as defined in section 1400V–6).

''(c) DEDUCTION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be allowed as a deduction under part VII of subchapter B of this chapter an amount equal to the aggregate amount of contributions made by the taxpayer to any Economic Freedom Zone educational savings account during the taxable year.

''(2) LIMITATION.—The amount of the deduction allowed under paragraph (1) for any taxpayer for any taxable year shall not exceed $40,000.

''(3) NO DEDUCTION FOR ROLLOVER CONTRIBUTIONS.—No deduction shall be allowed under paragraph (1) for any rollover contribution described in section 530(d)(5).

''(d) OTHER RULES.—

''(1) NO INCOME LIMIT.—In the case of an Economic Freedom Zone educational savings account, subsection (c) of section 530 shall not apply.

''(2) CHANGE IN BENEFICIARIES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (6) of section 530(b), a change in the beneficiary of an Economic Freedom Zone education savings account shall be treated as a distribution unless the new beneficiary is a qualified individual.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for part VIII of subchapter F of

chapter 1 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 530A. Economic Freedom Zone educational savings accounts.''.

TITLE VI—COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE AND REBUILDING

SEC. 601. NONAPPLICATION OF DAVIS-BACON.

The wage rate requirements of subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Davis-Bacon Act''), shall not apply with respect to any area designated as an Economic Freedom Zone under this division.

SEC. 602. ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE CHARITABLE TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 170 is amended by redesignating subsection (p) as subsection (q) and by inserting after subsection (o) the following new subsection:

''(o) ELECTION TO TREAT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE CHARITIES AS A CREDIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual, at the election of the taxpayer, so much of the deduction allowed under subsection (a) (determined without regard to this subsection) which is attributable to Economic Freedom Zone charitable contributions—

''(A) shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year, and

''(B) shall not be allowed as a deduction for such taxable year under subsection (a).

Any amount allowable as a credit under this subsection shall be treated as a credit allowed under subpart A of part IV of subchapter A for purposes of this title.

''(2) AMOUNT ATTRIBUTABLE TO ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of paragraph (1)—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which the total charitable contributions of a taxpayer for a taxable year exceed the contribution base, the amount of Economic Freedom Zone charitable contributions taken into account under paragraph (1) shall be the amount which bears the same ratio to the total charitable contributions made by the taxpayer during such taxable year as the amount of the deduction allowed under subsection (a) (determined without regard to this subsection and after application of subsection (b)) bears to the total charitable contributions made by the taxpayer for such taxable year.

''(B) CARRYOVERS.—In the case of any contribution carried from a preceding taxable year under subsection (d), such amount shall be treated as attributable to an Economic Freedom Zone charitable contribution in the amount that bears the same ratio to the total amount carried from preceding taxable years under subsection (d) as the amount of Economic Freedom Zone charitable contributions not allowed as a deduction under subsection (a) (other than by reason of this subsection) for the preceding 5 taxable year bears to total amount carried from preceding taxable years under subsection (d).

''(3) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone charitable contribution' means any contribution to a corporation, trust, or community chest fund, or foundation described in subsection (c)(2), but only if—

''(A) such entity is created or organized exclusively for—

''(i) religious purposes,

''(ii) educational purposes, or

''(iii) any of the following charitable purposes: providing educational scholarships, providing shelters for homeless individuals, or setting up or maintaining food banks,

''(B) the primary mission of such entity is serving individuals in an Economic Freedom Zone,

''(C) the entity maintains accountability to residents of such Economic Freedom Zone through their representation on any governing board of the entity or any advisory board to the entity, and

''(D) the entity is certified by the Secretary for purposes of this subsection.

Such term shall not include any contribution made to an entity described in the preceding sentence after the date in which the designation of the Economic Freedom Zone serviced by such entity lapses.

''(4) ECONOMIC FREEDOM ZONE.—The term 'Economic Freedom Zone' means any area which is an Economic Freedom Zone under title II of the Economic Freedom Zone Act.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VII—STATE AND COMMUNITY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

SEC. 701. SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.

It is the sense of the Senate that State and local governments should review and adopt the following policy recommendations:

(1) PENSION REFORM.—State and local governments should—

(A) implement reforms to address any fiscal shortfall in public pension funding, including utilizing accrual accounting methods, such as those reforms undertaken by the private sector pension funds; and

(B) restructure and renegotiate any public pension fund that is deemed to be insolvent or underfunded, including adopting defined contribution retirement systems.

(2) TAXES.—State and local governments should reduce jurisdictional tax rates below the national average in order to help facilitate capital investment and economic growth, particularly in combination with the provisions of this division.

(3) EDUCATION.—State and local governments should adopt school choice options to provide children and parents more educational choices, particularly in impoverished areas.

(4) COMMUNITIES.—State and local governments should adopt right-to-work laws to allow more competitiveness and more flexibility for businesses to expand.

(5) REGULATIONS.—State and local governments should streamline the regulatory burden on families and businesses, including streamlining the opportunities for occupational licensing.

(6) ABANDONED STRUCTURES.—State and local governments should consider the following options to reduce or fix areas with abandoned properties or residences:

(A) In the case of foreclosures, tax notifications should be sent to both the lien holder (if different than the homeowner) and the homeowner.

(B) Where State constitutions permit, property tax abatement or credits should be provided for individuals who purchase or invest in abandoned or dilapidated properties.

(C) Non-profit or charity demolition entities should be permitted or encouraged to help remove abandoned properties.

(D) Government or municipality fees and penalties should be limited, and be proportional to the outstanding tax amount and the ability to pay.

(E) The sale of tax liens to third parties should be reviewed, and where available, should prohibit the selling of tax liens below a certain threshold (for example the prohibition of the sale of tax liens to third parties under $1,000).

SA 3788. Mr. INHOFE (for Mr. CASEY) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1493, to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 19, line 16, strike ''and advance''.

On page 20, line 6, insert after ''research institutions'' the following: '', and participants in the international art and cultural property market''.

On page 20, line 8, strike ''and advance''.

On page 22, line 9, insert after ''2602)'' the following: '', including the requirements under subsection (a)(3) of that section''.

On page 26, line 25, strike ''and''.

On page 27, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

(E) actions undertaken to promote the legitimate commercial and non-commercial exchange and movement of cultural property; and

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AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examining the Role of Environmental Policies on Access to Energy and Economic Opportunity.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Dear Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Do No Harm: Ending Sexual Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''America's Insatiable Demand for Drugs.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The Distortion of EBG–5 Targeted Employment Areas: Time to End the Abuse.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 2:15 p.m., in room S–219 of the Capitol.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 13, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that LCDR Erik Phelps, a Navy legislative fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Dan Pedraza of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTECT AND PRESERVE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 360, H.R. 1493.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1493) to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act''.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the President should establish an interagency coordinating committee to coordinate and advance the efforts of the executive branch to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk from political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters. Such committee should—

(1) be chaired by a Department of State employee of Assistant Secretary rank or higher, concurrent with that employee's other duties;

(2) include representatives of the Smithsonian Institution and Federal agencies with responsibility for the preservation and protection of international cultural property;

(3) consult with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including the United States Committee of the Blue Shield, museums, educational institutions, and research institutions on efforts to protect and preserve international cultural property;

(4) coordinate and advance core United States interests in—

(A) protecting and preserving international cultural property;

(B) preventing and disrupting looting and illegal trade and trafficking in international cultural property, particularly exchanges that provide revenue to terrorist and criminal organizations;

(C) protecting sites of cultural and archaeological significance; and

(D) providing for the lawful exchange of international cultural property.

SEC. 3. EMERGENCY PROTECTION FOR SYRIAN CULTURAL PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall exercise the authority of the President under section 304 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2603) to impose import restrictions set forth in section 307 of that Act (19 U.S.C. 2606) with respect to any archaeological or ethnological material of Syria—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) without regard to whether Syria is a State Party (as defined in section 302 of that Act (19 U.S.C. 2601)); and

(3) notwithstanding—

(A) the requirement of subsection (b) of section 304 of that Act (19 U.S.C. 2603(b)) that an emergency condition (as defined in subsection (a) of that section) applies; and

(B) the limitations under subsection (c) of that section.

(b) ANNUAL DETERMINATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION.—

(1) DETERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not less often than annually, determine whether at least 1 of the conditions specified in subparagraph (B) is met, and shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of such determination.

(B) CONDITIONS.—The conditions referred to in subparagraph (A) are the following:

(i) The Government of Syria is incapable, at the time a determination under such subparagraph is made, of fulfilling the requirements to request an agreement under section 303 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2602).

(ii) It would be against the United States national interest to enter into such an agreement.

(2) TERMINATION OF RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the import restrictions referred to in subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date on which the President determines that neither of the conditions specified in paragraph (1)(B) are met.

(B) REQUEST FOR TERMINATION.—If Syria requests to enter into an agreement with the United States pursuant to section 303 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2602) on or after the date on which the President determines that neither of the conditions specified in paragraph (1)(B) are met, the import restrictions referred to in subsection (a) shall terminate on the earlier of—

(i) the date that is 3 years after the date on which Syria makes such a request; or

(ii) the date on which the United States and Syria enter into such an agreement.

(c) WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the import restrictions referred to in subsection (a) for specified archaeological and ethnological material of Syria if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the conditions described in paragraph (2) are met.

(2) CONDITIONS.—The conditions referred to in paragraph (1) are the following:

(A)(i) The owner or lawful custodian of the specified archaeological or ethnological material of Syria has requested that such material be temporarily located in the United States for protection purposes; or

(ii) if no owner or lawful custodian can reasonably be identified, the President determines that, for purposes of protecting and preserving such material, the material should be temporarily located in the United States.

(B) Such material shall be returned to the owner or lawful custodian when requested by such owner or lawful custodian.

(C) There is no credible evidence that granting a waiver under this subsection will contribute to illegal trafficking in archaeological or ethnological material of Syria or financing of criminal or terrorist activities.

(3) ACTION.—If the President grants a waiver under this subsection, the specified archaeological or ethnological material of Syria that is the subject of such waiver shall be placed in the temporary custody of the United States Government or in the temporary custody of a cultural or educational institution within the United States for the purpose of protection, restoration, conservation, study, or exhibition, without profit.

(4) IMMUNITY FROM SEIZURE.—Any archaeological or ethnological material that enters the United States pursuant to a waiver granted under this section shall have immunity from seizure under Public Law 89–259 (22 U.S.C. 2459). All provisions of Public Law 89–259 shall apply to such material as if immunity from seizure had been granted under that Public Law.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Finance of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(2) ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR ETHNOLOGICAL MATERIAL OF SYRIA.—The term ''archaeological or ethnological material of Syria'' means cultural property (as defined in section 302 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2601)) that is unlawfully removed from Syria on or after March 15, 2011.

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the next 6 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the efforts of the executive branch, during the 12-month period preceding the submission of the report, to protect and preserve international cultural property, including—

(1) whether an interagency coordinating committee as described in section 2 has been established and, if such a committee has been established, a description of the activities undertaken by such committee, including a list of the entities participating in such activities;

(2) a description of measures undertaken pursuant to relevant statutes, including—

(A) actions to implement and enforce section 3 of this Act and section 3002 of the Emergency Protection for Iraqi Cultural Antiquities Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–429; 118 Stat. 2599), including measures to dismantle international networks that traffic illegally in cultural property;

(B) a description of any requests for a waiver under section 3(c) of this Act and, for each such request, whether a waiver was granted;

(C) a list of the statutes and regulations employed in criminal, civil, and civil forfeiture actions to prevent illegal trade and trafficking in cultural property; and

(D) actions undertaken to ensure the consistent and effective application of law in cases relating to illegal trade and trafficking in cultural property; and

(3) actions undertaken in fulfillment of international agreements on cultural property protection, including the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, done at The Hague May 14, 1954.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Casey amendment be agreed to; the committee-reported amendment, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3788) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 19, line 16, strike ''and advance''.

On page 20, line 6, insert after ''research institutions'' the following: '', and participants in the international art and cultural property market''.

On page 20, line 8, strike ''and advance''.

On page 22, line 9, insert after ''2602)'' the following: '', including the requirements under subsection (a)(3) of that section''.

On page 26, line 25, strike ''and''.

On page 27, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

(E) actions undertaken to promote the legitimate commercial and non-commercial exchange and movement of cultural property; and

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 1493), as amended, was passed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 401, S. Res. 388.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 388) supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble, as follows:

(Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic.)

(Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic.)

Whereas, in March 2016, there are more than 3,640,000,000 women in the world;

Whereas women around the world—

(1) have fundamental rights;

(2) participate in the political, social, and economic lives of their communities;

(3) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families;

(4) contribute substantially to economic growth and the prevention and resolution of conflict; and

(5) as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in the advancement of food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas, on July 28, 2015, in Mandela Hall at the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the President told individuals in Africa—

(1) ''if you want your country to grow and succeed, you have to empower your women. And if you want to empower more women, America will be your partner''; and

(2) ''girls cannot go to school and grow up not knowing how to read or write—that denies the world future women engineers, future women doctors, future women business owners, future women presidents—that sets us all back'';

Whereas 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, where 189 countries committed to integrating gender equality into each dimension of society;

Whereas 2016 will mark the 5-year anniversary of the establishment of the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, which includes a comprehensive set of commitments by the United States to advance the meaningful participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war or peace;

Whereas the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security states that, ''Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peace-building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their experiences considered, and their voices heard.'';

Whereas there are 58 national action plans around the world, and there are 15 national action plans known to be in development;

Whereas at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism in February 2015, leaders from more than 60 countries, multilateral bodies, civil society, and private sector organizations agreed to a comprehensive action agenda against violent extremism that—

(1) highlights the importance of the inclusion of women in countering the threat of violent extremism; and

(2) notes that ''women are partners in prevention and response, as well as agents of change'';

Whereas women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts, despite the proven success of women in conflict-affected regions in—

(1) moderating violent extremism;

(2) countering terrorism;

(3) resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation; and

(4) stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security—

(A) services;

(B) institutions; and

(C) venues for decisionmaking;

Whereas according to the United Nations, peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women's groups play an influential role in the negotiation process;

Whereas according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the security forces;

Whereas, on August 30, 2015, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom highlighted, ''our goal must be to build societies in which sexual violence is treated—legally and by every institution of authority—as the serious and wholly intolerable crime that it is. We have seen global campaigns and calls to action draw attention to this issue and mobilize governments and organizations to act. But transformation requires the active participation of men and women everywhere. We must settle for nothing less than a united world saying no to sexual violence and yes to justice, fairness and peace.'';

Whereas according to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (referred to in this preamble as ''UNICEF''), in 2014—

(1) 700,000,000 women or girls had been married before the age of 18; and

(2) 250,000,000 women or girls had been married before the age of 15;

Whereas, on October 11, 2013, the President strongly condemned the practice of child marriage;

Whereas according to UNICEF—

(1) approximately ¼ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are victims of physical violence; and

(2) it is estimated that 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas according to the 2012 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled the ''Global Report on Trafficking in Persons''—

(1) adult women account for between 55 and 60 percent of all known trafficking victims worldwide; and

(2) adult women and girls account for approximately 75 percent of all known trafficking victims worldwide;

Whereas women in conflict zones are subjected to physical or sexual violence, including rape, other forms of sexual violence, and human trafficking;

Whereas 603,000,000 women live in countries in which domestic violence is not criminalized;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, the President announced the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, the first interagency strategy to address gender-based violence around the world;

Whereas, in December 2015, the Department of State released a report on the implementation of the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally that states, ''Addressing GBV is intimately tied to a range of global efforts that address gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, whether in peacetime or in the midst of conflict. This includes addressing GBV as part of efforts to raise the status of adolescent girls and through women's economic empowerment activities.'';

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve—

(1) strong and lasting economic growth; and

(2) political and social stability;

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, ⅔ of the 775,000,000 illiterate individuals in the world are female;

Whereas according to the World Bank Group, 150,000,000 children currently enrolled in school will drop out before completing primary school, not less than 100,000,000 of whom are girls;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, in comparison with uneducated women, educated women are—

(1) less likely to marry as children; and

(2) more likely to have healthier families;

Whereas the goal of the United Nations Millennium Project to eliminate gender disparity in primary education was reached in most countries by 2015, but more work remains to achieve gender equality in primary education worldwide;

Whereas in September 2015 world leaders rededicated themselves to ending discrimination against women and girls and advancing equality for women worldwide;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women have access to fewer income earning opportunities and are more likely to manage the household or engage in agricultural work than men, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by—

(1) natural disasters; or

(2) long term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas according to the World Bank Group, women own or partially own more than ⅓ of small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, and 40 percent of the global workforce is female, but female entrepreneurs and employers have disproportionately less access to capital and other financial services than men;

Whereas according to the United Nations, women earn less than men globally;

Whereas despite the achievements of individual female leaders—

(1) women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in—

(A) high-level positions; and

(B) national and local legislatures and governments; and

(2) according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 22 percent of national parliamentarians and 17.7 percent of government ministers;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, during the period beginning in 1990 and ending in 2015, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 44 percent, but approximately 830 women die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization—

(1) suicide is the leading cause of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19; and

(2) complications from pregnancy or childbirth is the second-leading cause of death for those girls;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that approximately ½ of—

(1) refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals are women; and

(2) the 59,500,000 displaced individuals in the world are women;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women; and

(2) to afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas, on October 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai became the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate for her work promoting the access of girls to education; and

Whereas March 8, 2016, is recognized as International Women's Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

(A) economic growth;

(B) sustainable democracy; and

(C) inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders and civil society leaders, that have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community;

(5) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the resolution be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 388), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 419, S. Res. 420, S. Res. 421, S. Res. 422, S. Res. 423, and S. Res. 424.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolutions by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 419) congratulating the University of North Dakota men's hockey team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association division I men's hockey championship.

A resolution (S. Res. 420) congratulating the 2016 national champion Augustana Vikings for their win in the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II Men's Basketball Tournament.

A resolution (S. Res. 421) congratulating the University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team for winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I title.

A resolution (S. Res. 422) supporting the mission and goals of 2016 ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week,'' which include increasing public awareness of the rights, needs, concerns of, and services available to assist victims and survivors of crime in the United States.

A resolution (S. Res. 423) congratulating the University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Team on winning the 2016 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Ice Hockey Championship.

A resolution (S. Res. 424) supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RESOLUTIONS AT THE DESK

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following House concurrent resolutions, which are at the desk: H. Con. Res. 115, H. Con. Res. 117, and H. Con. Res. 120.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolutions by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 115) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I.

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 117) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 120) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolutions en bloc.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolutions be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolutions were agreed to.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2016

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 14; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:30 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 14, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INCORPORATED MU XI OMEGA CHAPTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a group of women who have shown what can be done through hard work, dedication and a desire to serve their community, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated Mu Xi Omega Chapter. The Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated Mu Xi Omega Chapter has served the Warren County community through informational meetings, social and civic engagement.

Known throughout the world for its programs of service, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Incorporated chartered the Mu Xi Omega Chapter as a beacon of service to the Vicksburg community on December 17, 1978 at Bethel A.M.E. Church. The Chapter has remained an active part of the community through its membership. Members can be found working on every level in the church, community, and other civic and professional arenas.

Since 1988, the Chapter's signature program has hosted reading workshops and book distributions through a partnership with Reading is Fundamental. Additionally, the Mu Xi Omega Chapter hosts other community service projects on health and wellness. The members sponsor the Mu XI Omega Pearls Girl's Club as well as the Biennial Beautillion Presentation for young men. They also partner with organizations such as the American Cancer Society, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, the American Diabetes Association, and the American Heart Association in addressing the needs of Warren County and supporting the Launching New Dimensions of Service platform. Mu XI Omega supports the sorority's national program through its many collaborative efforts with organizations in fulfillment of AKA Global Impact Days.

On August 1, 2015 the Mu Xi Omega Chapter along with International President, Ms. Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson and South Eastern Regional Direction, Mrs. Mary B. Conner paid tribute to the only two national presidents that hailed from the State of Mississippi by unveiling a Marker in their honor. Both Bobbie Beatrix Scott and Ida L. Jackson hometown was the River City of Vicksburg. While serving in the capacity of National President they helped to expand AKA's current national program while establishing new programs to continue to effect social change on a national level. Jackson and Scott courageously led Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. during a time when women were considered inferior to men and certainly not intellectually equipped or sufficiently astute in business to run a major corporation. But these women defied the odds and helped to catapult the organization into even greater national prominence, allowing the voices of thousands of African American women to be heard on the national stage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Mu Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. for its dedication to remaining a vital entity of public service in the Vicksburg Warren community.

TRIBUTE TO PETER COWNIE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Peter Cownie for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As Executive Director of the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation, Peter continues to work hard to improve the offerings and support for one of our state's main attractions, the Iowa State Fair. His dedication to improving and growing the state fair is a true testament to his passion for Iowa. Not only is Peter dedicated to his role with the State Fair but he also advocates on the behalf of his constituents as a state representative. He works tirelessly to speak for those who can't speak for themselves, and to move the state forward for an even better, more prosperous future for the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Peter in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Peter on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING ANDY CREWS FOR BEING NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR BY THE GREATER MANCHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Mr. Andy Crews for being named Citizen of the Year by the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Andy's impact on the Queen City is immeasurable. During his time with the AutoFair Automotive Group he has personally lent public and financial support to numerous organizations such as New Horizons, the Manchester Boys & Girls Club, the Manchester Animal Shelter, Veterans Count and of course the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce. This involvement, in addition to the time he spends working with both high school and college students teaching valuable life lessons, exemplifies his commitment to education and generous spirit.

Andy's input has always been greatly valued. His service to his country as a member of the United States Marine Corps and his service to his community serves as a great example for others to get involved and stay engaged in assisting those in need of a helping hand.

It is with great pleasure that I recognize Andy for all that he's done to improve the lives of people throughout the Granite State, and wish him the best on all of his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UKRAINIAN AMERICAN YOUTH ASSOCIATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th Anniversary of The Ukrainian American Youth Association, located in Whippany, Morris County, New Jersey.

In 1925, in Kyiv, Ukraine, the Ukrainian Youth Association was formed. At the time, Ukraine was under Russian Communist oppression. The goal of the organization was to continue Ukrainian national and cultural identity and start a struggle against the Russian Communist effort to carry out a genocide of the people of the Ukrainian nation. From 1929–1930, the majority of the organization's members were repressed, their commanders were arrested, confined in Soviet Gulags and in the end, murdered.

By the end of World War II, many Ukrainians were living in displaced person camps in Germany. The people noticed the need to start the organization again, so that the displaced Ukrainian youth army might benefit from its programs. Once again, they wanted to continue to promote the national and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people living outside Ukraine and to protest against Russian Communism. In 1946, in Augsburg, Germany, the first branch of a revived Ukrainian Youth Association was officially formed.

In 1991, Ukraine gained its independence and branches of the Youth Association were formed across the territory of the new democratic and independent Ukraine. After the first branch of the Ukrainian Youth Association was formed, other branches formed in Europe, North and South America and Australia. In 1991, one branch, located in Whippany, New Jersey was formed.

Today, the Ukrainian Youth Association is filled with energetic youth trying to learn more about the principles of democracy and emphasizing the importance of the rights of individuals and the rights of nations in order to develop and continue their individual and national spirituality.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the members of the Ukrainian Youth Association of Whippany, New Jersey for all of their service to the community.

HONORING MS. LAURA JOSIEPHINE TOWNER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this month and all this month I rise to give honor to a member of my district whom most people don't know but need to know. So today, I rise to honor Ms. Laura Josiephine Towner of Pace, MS.

Ms. Towner was born on July 2, 1923, to Willie and Ada Towner. She was born south of Pace, MS, as the third child of three children born out of that union. She was affectionately called ''Nina'' by her father but the love between mother and daughter was unparalleled. Ms. Towner was educated in the colored school in Pace, MS. She later furthered her education through Coahoma Junior College and Jackson State College.

Life shrinks and expands according to one's drive and ambition. Ms. Towner taught school for a few years; however, knowing that her sister and brother were running a club and earning more money than she was at the time, $50.00 per month, she widened her scope to include a club of her own. Life was great and her place earned the reputation as the place to be in Pace. Her move to open a club proved to be prosperous and opened up many doors to growth.

A woman is like a full circle because within her is the power to create, nurture, transform, and re-adjust when necessary. Ms. Towner was married three times and divorced just as many. She is the mother of four children: Auwilda, Herby, Sonya, and Monroe. She never broke stride in her pursuit of life and prosperity. To her, family meant everything, it was her mother, sister and brother who stepped in and helped her with her children while she pressed forward as a night club owner, a beautician, and a farmer. Those professions were more than adequate income, thus allowing her to provide for her children. When she became a grandmother, Ms. Towner remembered the help she had and therefore it was her turn to help. She stepped in and helped her children with their children when necessary. Her grandchildren include: Carin and Myrick (Auwilda); Kevin, Chanay, and Barry (Herbye); Gared and Meagan (Sonya); and Aldrich, Lisa, Amara, and Tanji (Monroe). Ms. Towner is now the great grandmother to twelve great grandchildren. She made sure Auwilda, Herbye, Sonya, and Monroe went to college and sometimes made contributions to her grandchildren's college education.

Just watch, all of you men and women, and see what a woman can do when she is determined. Ms. Towner's children were never without food or clothing. She fed both adults and children, many from the community, friends, acquaintances, and even a stranger or two. Oftentimes, men without wives went to her for a good southern meal because she was known for her cooking. Ms. Towner extended credit to many of the residents of Pace by allowing them to purchase items from her store and club on their promise to pay. And when someone did not pay, her understanding and big heart would not refuse them more credit. She would smile, only remembering how good God has been to her and therefore she could not refuse. Much of the early economic stability of Pace is attributed to her. She was mother and father to her own and many others in the community.

Ms. Laura J. Towner is a prominent member of Elbethel Missionary Baptist Church. Elbethel MB Church is home to many members of her family, both in life and after life. From 1973 to 1988 she was the City Clerk of Pace, performing her job with high integrity and standards. Her lifetime presence and service in Pace has won the hearts of many people from different races, black, white, and others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Laura Josiephine Towner of the Mississippi Second Congressional District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Tuesday, April 12, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on roll call votes 139 and 140.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL MICHAEL AMARAL

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Colonel Michael L. Amaral on his retirement from the United States Army after 30 years of service to our country. An esteemed and respected member of the Army's Medical Service Corps, Colonel Amaral most recently served as the Deputy Commander for Administration at Fort Bliss' William Beaumont Medical Center. In this capacity, he managed the day-to-day operations of a facility comprised of over 3,700 staff members and over 72,000 beneficiaries. He also played an integral role in strengthening the relationship between Fort Bliss and the El Paso community.

Colonel Amaral's distinguished career began as a platoon leader with the 54th Support Battalion in Germany, and included assignments with the 44th Medical Brigade at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the Walter Reed Army Medical Center; the TRICARE Regional Office in Rosslyn, Virginia; and within the Army's Training and Doctrine Command. During this time, he deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

As Colonel Amaral embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that he may recall, with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment, the outstanding contributions he has made to the William Beaumont Army Medical Center and to the United States Army. I would like to send him my best wishes for continued success in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on March 23, 2016, I traveled to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to attend the funeral of my dear friend, John Sullivan, who lost his battle with cancer. For this reason, I missed rollcall vote Number 136 through 138 on the floor of the House of Representatives. Had I been present, I would have voted yea, nay, yea, respectively.

TRIBUTE TO ALEX DUONG

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Alex Duong for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify

a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As a marketing and communications specialist at the Mediacom Communications Corporation, Alex has been given the opportunity to pursue his passion, marketing. His willingness to exceed expectations and dedication to customer service are big reasons why he was given this honor. Not only has he worked tirelessly in his professional life, but Alex has dedicated his time to organizations like the Des Moines Public Library Foundation board of directors, the Greater Des Moines Young Professionals Connection, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Central Iowa. His emphasis on civic duty is a true testament to his character.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Alex in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Alex on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

WELCOME ANNIBEL FRANCES SCHUERFELD

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Deputy Staff Director for the House Armed Services Committee, Jenness Bergeron Simler and her husband, Gary Warren Schuerfeld, on the birth of their new baby girl. Annibel Frances ''B.B.'' Schuerfeld who was born at 11:24 a.m. on Monday, June 29, 2015, at Palmetto Baptist Hospital in Columbia, South Carolina. She weighed eight pounds and two ounces and measured 20 and ½ inches long. I have no doubt her talented parents will be dedicated to her well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate her brother, Taggart McRae Schuerfeld, and grandparents, Shellie Ann Kenna Simler of Tucson, Arizona, and Pierre Bergeron Simler of Litchfield, Connecticut. Congratulations to her entire family as they welcome their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

HONORING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JERSEY BATTERED WOMEN'S SERVICE

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr Speaker, I rise today to honor the Jersey Battered Women's Service located in Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey as it celebrates its 40th Anniversary.

The Jersey Battered Women's Service, or JBWS, began as a hotline for victims of domestic violence. However, after the murders of two callers by their husbands, the small group of female pioneers responsible for the original hotline recognized the dire need for a greater service for domestic violence victims in New Jersey. In 1978, the Jersey Battered Women's Shelter opened its doors to those requiring refuge from violence at home. Today, it operates as a full-service, private, not-for-profit domestic violence agency.

The Jersey Battered Women's Service is a multi-faceted operation, focused not just on providing protection to survivors, but also on helping these individuals rebuild and restart their lives. JBWS is heavily involved in raising awareness for domestic violence, specifically through providing education services on the consequences of domestic violence and how it can be prevented. The organization is notable for its domestic violence advocacy efforts and its mission to improve the rights of survivors. The shelter aims to empower the women who seek its safety, transforming them from victims to survivors. Ultimately, the goal of the Jersey Battered Women's Service is to create a community culture that refuses to tolerate partner and family violence of any sort.

Alongside staff, the over 120 Jersey Battered Women's Service volunteers dedicate their time and energy to combating domestic violence. Services JBWS offers include legal assistance, victim services and shelter, counseling for friends and family members of survivors, batterer's intervention, child services and protection, and teen dating abuse protection and prevention services. These services, and the efforts of volunteers, have been crucial in helping survivors and their families rise above the abuse.

The 40th Anniversary of the Jersey Battered Women's Service is marked by the grand opening of the Morris Family Justice Center. This comprehensive center combines various organizations to provide counseling, protection, legal and immigration assistance, and children's services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, all conveniently in one location.

For forty years, the Jersey Battered Women's Shelter has provided protection and support for survivors of domestic violence. The organization has made incredible strides in increasing domestic violence awareness and strengthening education about relationship and familial violence. I commend the Jersey Battered Women's Service for the remarkable contributions they have made to New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring the Jersey Battered Women's Service as the organization celebrates its 40th Anniversary.

HONORING LAWANDA W. PARKS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mrs. LaWanda W. Parks, who served as the Executive Assistant to the Network Director of the South Central VA Health Care Network, an integrated system of 10 VA medical centers providing a full range of specialty, tertiary, mental health, and long term care in an eight-state region. As a member of the Network's Executive Leadership Team, Mrs. Parks was the Network's liaison to VA Central Office in Washington, DC, served as the Network Management Support Officer and provided oversight for VISN administrative operations.

Mrs. Parks joined the VA 17 years ago as an Administrative Resident at the New Orleans VA Medical Center and has held positions of progressive responsibility at the local and National levels before returning to her home state of Mississippi as the Executive Assistant to the Network Director in 2007.

Mrs. Parks is a 2010 graduate of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Health Care Leadership Institute and a 2012 graduate of the VHA Executive Career Field program. She is a mentor for the Network's Advance Leadership Development Institute and has served on a number of national workgroups and committees. Mrs. Parks is also a member of the American College of Health Care Executives and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. From August 2010–October 2010, Mrs. Parks served as the interim Assistant Medical Center Director of the Birmingham, Alabama, VAMC.

A native of Magnolia, Mississippi, Mrs. Parks holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from Tougaloo College and a master's degree in Health Care Administration from the University of Alabama-Birmingham. She and her husband, Mr. Michael Parks have one son, Ezekiel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. LaWanda W. Parks for her dedication to serving others.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL ''BUD'' ALAN AYRES

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Daniel ''Bud'' Alan Ayres, 53, of Poland, OH who passed away on Wednesday March 30, 2016. Daniel was born on March 28, 1963 in Belleville, Illinois and was a veteran of the United States Army where he served in Korea and Washington, DC as a Military Police Officer.

Together with his family, and throughout his 11 year military career, Daniel was stationed

in many locations throughout the U.S. and in Germany. After September 11, 2001, he joined Homeland Security as an Air Marshal.

To Daniel, there was no such thing as a stranger—only a friend that he had yet to meet. His passion for family, friendships, Texas style BBQ, Alabama & Patriots football, togetherness and fun, will live on in everyone who knew and loved him.

Daniel will be deeply missed by his family. He leaves behind his loving wife of 28 years, Kimberly Ann of Poland. They raised four children, Joshua Alan, Dustin Alan, Chance Alan, and Grace Ann. He leaves one brother, Steven (Linda) Ayres of Beeville, Texas; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Patsy and Ricky Smith of Austin, Texas; sister-in-law Sherri (David) Fossati of Houston, Texas; and a niece, nephew and many close friends, all of whom adored him.

Daniel will be greatly missed by his family and the Poland community. He has lived a long and prosperous life and will be remembered for his service.

A TRIBUTE TO NOLA CARTMILL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nola Cartmill for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As a shareholder and attorney at Belin McCormick P.C., Nola works hard to provide her clients with top of the line legal services. Her passion stems from the support she has received from her mentors throughout her life. Her willingness to serve others and give back to her community is one of the main reasons she was given this award. Nola volunteers her time as a board member of Children and Families of Iowa where she works tirelessly to show those who have lost all hope that there are people out there who will work with you to get you back on your feet and on a path to success.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Nola in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Nola on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING NEIL KORNZE, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor Director Kornze for his great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of ''pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with Director Kornze to further our mutual goal of preserving our nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

CELEBRATING THE CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the City of San Buenaventura as it celebrates 150 years of incorporation. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Los Padres National Forest, the City of San Buenaventura is known for its breathtaking ocean views and expansive rolling hills and truly lives up to its namesake as the ''City of Good Fortune.''

The City of San Buenaventura has a long history and archaeological discoveries in the area suggest that humans have populated the region for at least 10,000–12,000 years. Founded in 1782, the San Buenaventura Mission served as the heart of this small coastal community and the city was incorporated on April 2, 1866. From the beginning, Ventura has been a place of commerce, starting with the indigenous Chumash, who were fine artisans and adept travelers by canoes, naming it Shisholop or ''port on the coast'' for their lucrative trade activities. While living in Shisholop Village, which is now downtown Ventura, the local indigenous Chumash people thrived through their trade of shell bead money and chert.

In 1873, the community's visionary leaders boldly stepped up to establish Ventura County, carved from Santa Barbara, with the City of San Buenaventura as the county helm. As development boomed in the 1900s, the region flourished with agricultural operations and oil production.

According to local lore, the city's name was abbreviated to Ventura to accommodate the dimensions of a sign at the local railroad station. Today, Ventura has continued its steady growth and boasts over 100,000 residents. Throughout history, Ventura has remained an ideal locale for residents, businesses, and visitors as a quintessential California coastal community often cited as one of the most desirable places to live in the United States.

With the historic Two Trees overlooking the city, Ventura has miles of pristine beaches, making it one of the most renowned destinations for surfing. Ventura is home to the iconic Ventura Pier and the Ventura Harbor, a commercial harbor gateway to the Channel Islands National Park. With a thriving downtown cultural district, many musicians come through to play at the Majestic Ventura Theater and festivals regularly occur at Plaza Park. Ventura is also known as the host of the annual Ventura County Fair, ''a county fair with ocean air.''

As we commemorate the city's 150th anniversary, I would like to commend the City of San Buenaventura and its residents, past and present, on their success of reaching this milestone. I offer my sincerest congratulations during this sesquicentennial celebration and look forward to many more years of growth and prosperity.

HONORING BARBARA J. POWERS OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Barbara J. Powers on her May 31, 2016 retirement upon 30 years of Federal Civilian Service to the United States of America.

Mrs. Powers' career has culminated as the Executive Support Specialist to the Commanding General, United States Army Medical

Research and Material Command. Mrs. Powers served in the United States Air Force from March 1977 to March 1981, throughout which she performed duty at Andrews Air Force Base, Carlisle Barracks, the U.S. Department of Energy and at Fort Detrick, where she's served for the last 16 years.

Since the beginning of her career, Mrs. Powers performed with zeal, professionalism and tireless dedication to duty—the standard by which all civil servants should be measured.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I'm proud and humbled to congratulate Barbara J. Powers on her retirement after 30 years of service to the United States of America.

HONORING LULA FRIAR

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Ms. Lula Friar.

Ms. Lula Friar is a retired educator with 30 years of experience teaching in the classroom. She taught at Goodman-Pickens Elementary School in Pickens, Mississippi. She used her passion for teaching the little ones to successfully prepare second-graders for their academic journey until she retired in 2008. In 2004, she was recognized as the Teacher of the Year by the Holmes County School District.

Ms. Friar is currently employed by the Community Students Learning Center (CSLC) and has shown herself to be a valuable resource and asset to CSLC. Over the last five years, she has served as the HIPPY Coordinator for CSLC's Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), an early childhood literacy evidence-based program for 3- to 5-year-olds that teaches lessons in homes and works with families to support parents as their child's primary teacher.

In addition to her role as a HIPPY Coordinator, she also utilizes her teaching experience to support other educational enrichment programs and services available at CSLC such as the After School Program, where she has served for five years. She also works with the CSLC Summer Youth Enrichment Program, where she has provided her leadership and teaching expertise for the last 12 years. Although she is no longer in the school system, Ms. Friar continues to keep her state teaching license renewed. CSLC is grateful to have a certified teacher working with its children.

Education is only a part of Friar's service at CSLC. Her primary position is Housing Advocate under the CSLC Housing Programs in which she assists the center in coordinating affordable housing and rehab housing services for low income families. Friar takes pride in helping children and their families secure better living conditions.

When she is not working at CSLC she is an active member at her church, Lebanon Missionary Baptist Church in Lexington where she has served on the Board of Trustees for the past ten years, Vice-President of the Lebanon Inspiration Choir, President of the Lebanon Senior Choir, and also works with the youth department. Over the past 15 years, Lula has also helped with the Holmes County Central High School Marching Band. In her spare time, Lula also enjoys spending quality time with her family and grandkids.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Lula Friar for her dedication and support to the Holmes County Community.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 2

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Centennial Anniversary of the Boy Scout Troop 2, located in West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey.

In January 1916, a group of seven boys were registered into The Boy Scouts of America. Today, they are known as the Boy Scout Troop 2 of West Orange. They were originally sponsored by the Men's Guild of the First Methodist Church at High and Ridge with The Reverend Karl K. Quimby as their first Scoutmaster. Together they promised to do their duty to God and country, to help other people, to keep physically strong, morally straight and mentally awake. Originally the program was tailored for outdoor activities and nature studies. However, today it is more expansive in its interests and is learning about technology. Over the past one-hundred years, about 1,750 boys have participated and nearly sixty of those boys have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.

The role of the Troops Scoutmaster has always been a major factor in the longevity and success of Troop 2. One Scoutmaster that had particular impact was William K. Rust during the Second World War. Due to the war taking a lot of young men away from the town, not many were left to keep the troop alive. Without Bill, Troop 2 may have been ended.

A large part in why Troop 2 has been successful over the years is due to their credo, ''Scouting is Outing.'' The ''Patrol Leaders Council'' of the senior scouts plan monthly short-term camping trips and a week long summer camping trip at Camp Wakpominee. Along with these trips, they have also enjoyed overnight bike hikes and canoe trips on the Upper Delaware River, White Water rafting on the Lehigh River, ski trips and week-long excursions to Washington, DC.

Troop 2 also has a long history of service in their community. To name a few of the projects they have been involved in: the sale of war bonds during World War I, the cultivation of Victory Gardens, the collection of scrap metals during both World War I and II, the distribution of informational tracts such as air raid posters and get out to vote, and their latest service project, ''Scouting for Food,'' the collection of food for the needy.

For their active participation and achievements, Troop 2 has won many awards including: The President Roosevelt Award in 1934, permanent possession of the Klondike Derby trophy in 1962, numerous first prize at camporees, distinguished troop awards at summer camp, and represented the Orange Mountain Council at the New York World's Fair. Each year, at summer camp, they have been awarded the Troop Excellence Award.

Many of the boys who worked their way through the ranks were molded into responsible adults who continue to uphold the ideals of scouting in their present occupations such as engineers, lawyers, teachers and doctors. Troop 2 has offered their boys moral training and preparations in the tests of life.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the members of the Boy Scout Troop 2 of West Orange, New Jersey for all of their service to the community, and in congratulating them and their scout leaders on their Centennial Anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO MEGAN GRANDGEORGE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Megan Grandgeorge for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the co-owner of Le Jardin restaurant and director of marketing and public relations for Variety—the Children's Charity, Megan certainly stays busy. Her drive and passion for her restaurant and Variety is matched only by her love of Des Moines. At Variety, Megan has worked tirelessly to promote their message as well as increase awareness for the children of Iowa who are underprivileged, at-risk, or have a mental illness. Believe it or not, Megan would still like to find time to dedicate herself to several other community organizations.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Megan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Megan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE EAST COAST SIKH FREEDOM RALLY

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Sikh Coordination Committee of the East Coast and its East Coast Sikh Freedom Rally, taking place here in Washington DC. On April 9, hundreds of Sikhs from around the country came to our nation's capital to promote justice for Sikhs around the world.

As the co-chairman of the American Sikh Congressional Caucus, I speak with the Sikh community regularly about injustices occurring around the world. American Sikhs have contributed to the strength and diversity of the United States for more than 130 years. They play an active role in our local communities and are a strong part of our economy.

Whether it's equal opportunity in the U.S. Armed Forces, fair treatment for travelers or religious freedom in the workplace, Sikhs are still facing challenges. The American Sikh Congressional Caucus is working to address some of these issues, and I commend those who will come together in Washington to make their voices heard to their government and fellow citizens.

Mr. Speaker, events like the East Coast Sikh Freedom Rally will help Americans and people around the world better understand the issues facing the Sikh community. I thank the organization and its leaders for their dedication to this cause.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,064,879,099,682.52. We've added $8,599,349,440,294.10 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. BLANCHE BAUDHUIN'S SERVICE TO THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Blanche Baudhuin of Green Bay, Wisconsin, who has been an American Red Cross volunteer for almost 40 years. Still active at an amazing one hundred years young, Blanche is almost certainly the oldest Red Cross volunteer in the United States.

Over the past few years, Blanche has frequently been the first person donors see when they arrive at Green Bay's Blood Donation Center on Deckner Avenue. Knowing full well that giving blood can be a nerve-wracking experience, especially for first-timers, Blanche is a constant source of comfort and mirth, always willing to offer reassurance, a smile, and maybe a cookie or two to those who donate. In addition to making the rounds at the Center, Blanche also works tirelessly to promote blood drives at churches and other locations throughout Northeast Wisconsin.

In the lead-up to her 100th birthday last month, Blanche's wish was for 100 people to donate at a blood drive hosted at the First Lutheran Church in Allouez. Her birthday wish came true . . . and then some: an incredible 114 donors showed up.

Thank you, Blanche, for your extraordinary service to a life-saving cause, and keep up the great work.

TRIBUTE TO JANET AIRIS

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative LOWEY, rise today to recognize and pay tribute to Janet Airis on her retirement after 32 years of distinguished service to the Congress with the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

Janet started in the Scorekeeping Unit at CBO in the waning days of 1983, soon after graduating from Wellesley College. She was first hired to maintain the unit's database for tracking the status of enacted legislation and over the next 16 years worked as the lead analyst responsible for scoring appropriations legislation for five of the thirteen Appropriations Committee subcommittees.

In 2000, after demonstrating her acumen as a proficient analyst, Janet made the smooth transition to Unit Chief and took on the responsibility of overseeing all of the work of CBO's Scorekeeping Unit. Janet has served the Congress diligently by overseeing the unit's analyses of the President's budget requests; the estimates of every appropriation bill taken through each Chamber; the publication of the annual Unauthorized Appropriations and Expiring Authorizations report; and countless other informal requests for information on budgetary matters related to matters under Congressional consideration.

In addition to her management responsibilities, Janet has directly supported the Congress's fiscal bookkeeping by serving as the lead analyst for the Legislative Branch appropriations bill.

Congressional staff and CBO colleagues have come to depend on Janet for her ready expertise, her diligence, and her attention to detail. She has provided this institution with insightful guidance and analysis through several major reforms to budgetary processes, dozens of budget resolutions, creation of new government agencies and departments, and the reorganization of our committee structures.

Constant through all that change has been Janet Airis' dedication to her work at the Congressional Budget Office. She has been the steady hand of the Scorekeeping Unit, generous with her time and knowledge, and vital to the smooth functioning of CBO's Budget Analysis Division.

Janet's retirement constitutes a profound loss of institutional memory to both CBO and the Congress—nobody has ever worked in the Scorekeeping Unit as long as she has. Her presence won't easily be replaced and will be sorely missed.

HONORING YOUNTVILLE WOMEN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor 28 women veterans who served our country honorably during World War II. The Yountville Women Veterans Club today celebrates these brave veterans at a ceremony in Yountville, California.

Their varied contributions to the war effort include working as nurses in France and Germany, as Aviation Services Marines, and at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. When our nation mobilized to confront the aggression and abuses of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, these women bravely volunteered their services to support our country's war efforts.

More than 350,000 American women volunteered to serve their country during the war, and served in five branches: the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAACs, later renamed the Women's Army Corps, or WACs), the Navy Women's Reserve (WAVES), the Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARS), and the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs).

The 28 women honored today are Penni Anderson, Mildred Bliss, Jane Boote, Rita Bowers, Barbra Bregoff, Cathy Britt, Bernice Bryan, Margaret Clotworthy, Shirley Coen, Mary Grissette, Dorothy Henry, Merrice Hoppe, Helen Huntington, Eva Jacques, Janice Klein, Betty McGee, Della Miller-Kenny, Ellie Neilsen, Willa Olivolo, Elizabeth Rosensweig, Paula Ross, Barbara Salinas, Pat Salyer, Pat Smallwood, Kay Tallman, Hope Vandeventer, Dottie Ward, and Theresa Williams.

Mr. Speaker, these 28 women courageously served our country through one of the most challenging and pivotal wars in American history. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor them here today.

CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF GRACE COUNSELING CENTER

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 30th anniversary of Grace Counseling Center located in Madison, Morris County, New Jersey.

Grace Counseling Center is devoted to providing guidance to those who need to improve their way of handling life's challenges. The Center also provides service to couples and families who wish to better understand each other's needs and feelings.

Established in 1984, the Center is an independent, nonprofit, interfaith facility where they tend to the needs of their patients. Originally founded by members of the Grace Episcopal Church, they have since become an independent, non-profit counseling center which serves the entire community. Their staff consists of pastoral counselors, psychiatrists and psychologists, all of whom are professionally trained and certified in their respective disciplines.

Additionally, they are supportive of community education programs and administer lectures and workshops during the year. On request, unique programs can be arranged for local churches, synagogues, schools and community and service organizations. One upcoming event, Technology, Social Media, and our Kids, is designed to help parents understand the technology their children are using and have a discussion on the challenges we face with communication due to technology. This goal of this event is to help parents understand their children more, so that they can strengthen their close interpersonal relationship.

As concerns or needs develop, the Center offers programs which address individual issues such as bereavement, unemployment, separation and divorce. These services are usually free or minimally priced and offered to the community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the members and supporters of the Grace Counseling Center of Madison, New Jersey for all of their service to the community, and in congratulating them on their 30th anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO JOSH EHLEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Josh Ehlen for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Josh serves as an account executive at the Des Moines based insurance company Reynolds & Reynolds. He has displayed a dedication and passion for providing high quality customer service each and every day. Josh's dedication at the office has also spilled over to his life outside of work. He has volunteered his time to organizations like Variety—The Children's Charity, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Booster Pak, and the Des Moines Ambassadors Club to name a few. Josh is an excellent example of all things that make Iowa such a great place to build a career and a family.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Josh in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Josh on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING TEAM BROADCASTING WGNL–WGNG FM–104.3—FM–106.3

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Team Broadcasting, Inc. WGNL 104.3 FM.

WGNL is a 50,000 watts FM Station, which is located in Greenwood, Mississippi. It is in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. The Delta is one of the areas that is popular for the birth of the Blues. WGNL 104.3 FM broadcasts a vast variety of music. It is Urban Adult Contemporary mixed with Oldies and Blues. One of the highest rated shows on WGNL is the 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. all day Saturday Blues. This show includes a mixture of traditional Blues. For example, some of the artists featured include: Muddy Waters and Howlin Wolf. There are many more contemporary Blues artist such as: Tyrone Davis, Johnnie Taylor, and many more. With the diverse format, this is what makes WGNL 104.3 FM number one in the Mississippi Delta.

The sister station WGNG 106.3 FM is 25,000 watts. WGNG has attracted listeners because of its ability to reach ages from 12–54. This is due to the blend of R&B HIP HOP. WGNG has come into holding its own and it reaches a number of people in the Mississippi Delta.

WGNL–WGNG gets a great response from their advertisers. They should not be overlooked by sponsors. WGNL and WGNG combined covers over one-third of thirty counties in the Mississippi Counties in Northern Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the number one radio station in the Mississippi Delta, WGNL–WGNG for its dedication in serving the Mississippi Delta and giving back to the African American community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RED ROSE TRANSIT AUTHORITY (RRTA)

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA), a public transit organization in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

On April 1, 1976, RRTA began operations to provide public transportation services in Lancaster City and County. The mission of RRTA is to provide high quality transportation services. RRTA operates nearly 20 bus and trolley routes throughout the city and county. The transit agency operates Red Rose Access, a door to door transportation rideshare program for seniors and people with disabilities at a discounted fare.

Transit systems like this one provide an invaluable service to our communities, helping middle class families commute to and from work every day and helping seniors visit their doctors, grocery stores and other services.

Mr. Speaker, the Red Rose Transit Authority is an important public transportation system for the residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and we are grateful for the service of its employees.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TERRY O'SULLIVAN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Terence J. O'Sullivan, 86, who passed away on Thursday March 31, 2016 after a courageous battle with cancer. Terry was born in 1930 in Colma, California to Irish immigrant parents.

He enlisted in the U.S. Marines and served in the Korean War, from where he was honorably discharged in 1952. During the conflict, he participated in the Inchon Landing and the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, one of the bloodiest engagements of the war.

Terry worked in the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local Union 261 in San Francisco in 1947, at the age of 17. He quickly rose through the ranks, taking on many leadership roles before being appointed LIUNA General Secretary-Treasurer, the second-highest elected office in the union, in 1968. For more than six decades, Terry was a major force in his union, which represents nearly half a million workers in construction, health care, the public sector, and the federal government. He dedicated his life to fighting for workers' rights, and for social and economic justice. Terry was a lifelong advocate of training, retirement security, and health benefits for the proud men and women of LIUNA. Through his entire career, he worked passionately and tirelessly on behalf of LIUNA, its members, and their families.

Terry will be deeply missed by his family. He leaves behind his loving wife, Lenora, of 62 years. They raised three children, Kevin, Kathleen Finnerty (Shawn), and Terry, who is the current general president of LIUNA. He leaves one brother, Brendan (Diane); five grandchildren; and many other family members.

Losses like these are never easy, but we can all take solace in the fact that Terry led a long and fulfilling life. He will live on in the memory of his beautiful family.

RECOGNIZING DON KNABE

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a colleague and friend, Los Angeles County Supervisor for the Fourth District Don Knabe, who is retiring after over thirty-four years of service to the county. Mr. Knabe has worked tirelessly for our community and he is finishing his career with a long list of accomplishments. While it would be impossible to list them all, I would like to highlight just a few successes that will continue to benefit our county for years to come.

Over his time as Supervisor, Mr. Knabe has become a national leader in protecting children. He established a Safe Surrender Program to care for surrendered infants in Los Angeles County while also championing a scholarship fund to help these children as they grow up. He launched a campaign to spread awareness about child sex trafficking, making it become a County priority, and testified on the matter before Congress.

Supervisor Knabe is also passionate about the arts. His enthusiasm led to the establishment of several youth programs that bring visual art, dance, music, and theater programs to children across the district. Thanks to his efforts, Los Angeles County children are able to experience the rich benefit of exposure to the fine arts from a young age.

Beyond those projects, the Supervisor continues to lead the fight to protect our precious Southern California environment. Mr. Knabe led 19 separate projects to lower pollution and improve water quality. He also supported the development of innovative technologies to turn trash into energy and fuel instead of dumping it into landfills. The air we breathe and the water we drink in Los Angeles County has literally improved thanks to his efforts.

I have had the pleasure of working with Supervisor Knabe on several occasions throughout my time in Congress. A navy veteran, Mr. Knabe has been a strong supporter for Veterans Resource fairs and Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day events. I have always been able to rely on his support, whether it was for the Congressional Art Competition or for an Annual Senior Fair in my district.

Supervisor Knabe will leave an indelible mark on Los Angeles County when he retires at the end of this term. I am forever thankful for the work Mr. Knabe accomplished, and I thank him for his tireless efforts on behalf of the people of Los Angeles County. He will truly be missed.

HONORING JIM RIDLEY

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, the city of Nashville lost one of its finest citizens last week. Nashville Scene editor and Middle Tennessee native Jim Ridley was a true talent—an exceptionally gifted journalist and critic, a gracious and humble leader and a champion for our great city. Just as much as he was known in Music City and beyond for his matchless wit and intelligence, he was known for his generous spirit, his earnestness and his enormous heart.

Jim was widely respected for his work with the Scene, where he was a writer and editor for well over two decades—nearly since the publication's inception—and that respect brought him accolades and offers alike. But he never wanted to leave his beloved alt-weekly newspaper, or his beloved town.

Jim's passion for music and film is what drove our arts community to greater heights. His honesty and diligence shone a light for his fellow journalists and the city's leaders. His kindness, patience, guidance and love for his friends and family continue to set an example for what it means to be a truly good person, a truly good Nashvillian. Jim Ridley made our city better, and it will not be the same without him.

TRIBUTE TO JAYME FRY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jayme Fry for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As First Vice President of West Bank, Jayme works tirelessly to build relationships with clients that will lead to continued business and growth within the company. She has been dedicated to improving her skills within the banking industry so that one day she can achieve the goals she has set for herself. Not only is Jayme a dedicated employee but she is also passionate about creating awareness for the ever increasing need for mental health services among young people in our state. Specifically, she dedicates her time and talents to Orchard Place, a Des Moines based non-profit that specializes in mental health services for children.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jayme in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jayme on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING MILDRETTE N. WHITE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Mildrette White, who is a remarkable Educator and Public Servant.

Born July 15, 1948, the second oldest of five children born to J. W. and Cora V. Netter in the small Delta town of Rosedale, MS. Mildrette attended elementary, junior high and high school in the West Bolivar County School District where her extracurricular activities included basketball, band, track and cheerleading. Because of her successful performance in track and the efforts of her high school coach, Willie McCoy, she was invited by the track coach at Tennessee State University in Nashville, TN, to participate in his summer training camp for high school girls during the summer of her junior and senior year of high school in hopes of getting a track scholarship. At that time, Tennessee State was the nearest University to her that had a women track program. None of the Colleges and Universities in Mississippi had women track programs. After she was rejected, basically because of her height and being from Mississippi, she thought her track career and her chance to go to college was over. The coach preferred taller girls and didn't particularly care for girls from Mississippi because of previous unpleasant experiences.

Mildrette later realized that being turned down by the coach was a blessing in disguise. The disappointment of not getting the scholarship she thought she deserved made her more determined to go to college because she did not want to spend the rest of her life chopping and picking cotton. Mildrette was also able to take the skills and knowledge gained and come back to Mississippi and open the doors for other young girls to get a track scholarship to go to college, and still be blessed with what God had for her. Little did she know then, that she would become the first and only African American to represent the state of Mississippi in the Olympics, who attended a Historical Black College or University.

After graduating from high school in May, 1967, because of her faith in God, a positive attitude and help from a few people who believed in her, Mildrette entered Alcorn State University in the fall as a freshman on a Work

Study Program where she was assigned to work in the gym. Growing up in the Mississippi Delta in the sixties wasn't easy and she was determined to get an education to make a better life for herself, her family and become a productive citizen in society.

Alcorn's men track coach took a chance and gave Mildrette the opportunity to prove herself. She finally earned a track scholarship by training and traveling with the men's track team to other states and competing in individual events only. During the process she qualified for the 1968 Nationals and Olympic trials. That was the beginning of a long and successful collegiate track career. She received numerous accolades, honors and awards to include: three time All-SWAC and All NAIA; AAU International Track Team that competed in Norway and Poland; U.S. Olympic Track and Field team (68,72); Gold medal winner, 4X100 meter relay, Mexico City Summer Olympics (68); U.S. European Track and Field Tour; Held the third best 100-meter time in the world (68) and selected Female of the year, 100% Wrong Club of Atlanta (69).

The experience, education, exposure and extensive travel, (nationally and internationally) received while attending Alcorn, prepared Mildrette to be successful in her careers as an athlete, classroom teacher, track coach and athletic director. After graduating from Alcorn in May, 1972 with honors and a Bachelor of Science degree in Health and Physical Education, Mildrette began a twenty-eight year teaching and coaching career in the state of Mississippi. Some of the honors and accomplishments achieved were: Delta Valley Conference Coach of the year five times; U.S. Southeast Region High School Coach of the year (79); Six District Titles; two South State Titles; Two Big Eight Eastern Zone Titles; and District Five Coach of the Year (88). During her coaching career, a number of Mildrette athletes were able to earn track scholarships to go to college.

Other educational accomplishments include: Master of Science-Health Physical Education, Athletic Administration/Coaching and Biological Science Alcorn State University (1981), Continuing Education and Secondary Administration/Supervision courses (1997–2000) Delta State University.

During her Athletic, Teaching and Coaching careers, other honors received include: Alcorn State Hall of Honors (1992), SWAC Hall of Fame (1995), Alcorn State Athletic Hall of Fame (1996), Rosedale-West Bolivar High School Hall of Fame (1998), Bob Hayes Track Hall of Fame (2001), Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame (2003), and Clarksdale/Coahoma Sports Hall of Fame (2013).

After retiring from teaching and coaching in 2002, Mildrette served as Athletic Director of the Tutwiler Community Education Center for six years. A key part of the mission was to make a difference in the community in which they served. Some of the organizations and community involvements she currently participates in are: President of the Mass Choir and Hospitality Ministry of the Greater Pleasant Grove Church, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Alcorn State University National Alumni, ASU Athletic Club, Montgomery-Carroll-Grenada County ASU Alumni Chapter, Grenada Smile Team, Grenada Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership Committee member and the Finch-Henry Job Corps Center Community Relations Council.

Mildrette is the mother of two children and is the grandmother of two. She is currently married to her college sweetheart, Willie White. After thirty-eight years of separation, they reconnected in 2006 and married in 2008. In addition to enjoying their retirement, traveling and spending time with the grandchildren, Mildrette and husband are still busy giving back to the community in their current hometown of Grenada, Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an Educator and Public Servant, Ms. Mildrette White, for her dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

CELEBRATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DENVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT LADIES AUXILIARY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 80th Anniversary of the Denville Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary located in Morris County, New Jersey.

The Ladies Auxiliary emerged in 1936 as the result of the continued expansion of the Denville Volunteer Fire Department, which was originally conceived and founded in 1926. Since its creation, the Ladies Auxiliary has served a crucial role in assisting the Denville Volunteer Fire Department in its mission to protect and serve citizens of Denville and surrounding communities.

The original role of the women was to provide refreshments to firefighters at the scene. However, one of the Ladies Auxiliary's most important contributions to the developing department was their dedication to fundraising. The women hosted raffles, parties, and even canvassed door-to-door in an effort to help the department pay for equipment and improvements.

A particular incident in the 1980s is a testament to the importance of the Ladies Auxiliary in serving not just the department, but the citizens they swore to protect. The department had recently rescued several dozen motorists trapped on the highway during a vicious snowstorm, and opted to house them at one of the department member's houses. The Ladies Auxiliary fed and cared for these individuals over the two-day period where they were housed, and nursed back to health.

The Ladies Auxiliary is a critical facet of the central department, and the time and dedication of these women is an invaluable resource to Denville's ability to serve the entire township. The department undoubtedly appreciates the energy female members of the community have invested in the Ladies Auxiliary and the department itself.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Denville Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary as they celebrate 80 years of unwavering and unselfish service.

RECOGNIZING ROGER RAICHE

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Roger Raiche for his distinguished environmental stewardship. Since 1981, Mr. Raiche has dedicated his time to researching and preserving the unique ecological zone and natural landscape of The Cedars in Sonoma County.

In the 1980s, Mr. Raiche was the first scientist to bring the importance of The Cedars to the attention of the Bureau of Land Management. His research and documentation of the rare plants and ecology of the site were an important step in establishing it as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and led to the discovery of several new plant species found nowhere else on Earth. Many institutions have been provided access to these important lands through his hospitality and volunteer work.

Over the last 35 years, Mr. Raiche has led efforts to preserve additional parts of The Cedars. He has invested his personal resources to protecting the 500-acre Main Canyon parcel and volunteered his time to build trails, guide tours, and work towards public acquisition. Mr. Raiche personally reactivated a science program on these lands that had been inaccessible for 30 years and which had been the site of some very early and important work on geology and plate tectonics.

During his involvement at The Cedars, Roger Raiche has made an invaluable contribution to the natural history of California and the preservation of the unique environment of The Cedars, and it is fitting to recognize this legacy.

HONORING CLACKAMAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KURT SCHRADER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Clackamas Community College (CCC) as it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Founded in 1966, with 93 part-time students taking classes at Gladstone High School and 600 more added by the end of the first school year, CCC has since grown to serving over 35,000 students across three distinct campuses and two extension sites. Throughout its development, CCC has remained committed to its values, a student-centered focus, and a collective decision-making process that drives its mission.

Since 1966, students have become accustomed to a dedicated faculty and a friendly atmosphere focused on their personal growth. CCC provides a unique learning experience whether a student attends to complete a transfer degree to a four-year public university at an affordable cost, wants to take Community Education classes, is seeking an Adult High School Diploma, or is at the school to pursue

a degree or certificate in one of the more than 80 career and technical programs offered. These include the expanding fields of renewable energy, medical assistance and digital multimedia communication. For the past 50 years, the college has prided itself on equipping students with the relevant job training and skills to apply toward real world, high-demand careers and family wage jobs.

In the last 50 years, thanks to the strong leadership of its current and past presidents and Boards of Education and an open, collaborative spirit behind its decisions, CCC has thrived. In preparation for ringing in 50 years of service, the Board launched the Imagine Clackamas project, a two-year community engagement process designed to identify what the community valued and needed from the college in the present and into the future. The resulting bond measure is enabling CCC to make great strides toward meeting those needs by updating and expanding classrooms and labs and by modernizing equipment. With this energy and momentum at 50 years, I am excited to discover what goals and heights the college will reach in the next half century.

I am honored to be the representative of Clackamas Community College and I congratulate the college on its 50th anniversary.

IN MEMORY OF MR. DON WARKENTIN

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Don Warkentin, former President of West Hills College Lemoore, who sadly passed away on February 1, 2016.

Mr. Warkentin was born in Reedley, California on November 15, 1946 to Vern and Doris Warkentin. After his graduation from Reedley High School, he went on to study at Reedley College and later California State University, Chico. At the outbreak of the Vietnam War, Mr. Warkentin enlisted as a Lieutenant in the United States Army and eventually rose to the rank of Captain, receiving two Purple Hearts in the process. After his service to our country, he married the love of his life, Betty. Together, they had two children, Brooke and Steven.

Mr. Warkentin's long career in education began in 1973 when he accepted a position as a biology teacher for Lemoore High School. Mr. Warkentin also served as a football and baseball coach, athletic director, and principal of the continuation school for adults wishing to complete their education. In 1986, he began work as an Associate Dean at West Hills College Kings County Center, known today as West Hills College Lemoore, and his commitment to the institution continued until his retirement, just months prior to his passing.

Under his stewardship, West Hills College Lemoore moved to its own campus in 2002 and saw student enrollment grow from 700 to more than 4,500 students. Additionally, Mr. Warkentin was responsible for several expansion projects including the new student center and the Golden Eagle Arena.

In 2004, Mr. Warkentin's career culminated with his promotion to President of West Hills College Lemoore, a position which he held until December 2015. Mr. Warkentin's dedication to the field of education was without question and West Hills College Lemoore stands today as a memorial to his strength of character and work ethic.

Mr. Warkentin's commitment to our community was not exclusive to West Hills College Lemoore, but included his active membership in the Lemoore Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, and the Kings County Economic Development Corporation. With his passing our community has lost a great leader and his dedication to the Central Valley deserves our recognition and gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life and achievements of President Emeritus Don Warkentin. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Betty and their two children, Brooke and Steven, during this difficult time.

GRAND OPENING OF THE CONSUMERS ENERGY INNOVATION CENTER

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the grand opening of the Consumers Energy Innovation Center.

Located in downtown Jackson, Michigan, the center will be home to Consumers Energy employees, CP Federal Credit Union, the Heat and Warmth Fund and the Anchor Initiative headquarters.

This initiative is an effort to promote Jackson's downtown area as a vibrant place to live, work, and innovate. Consumers Energy and CP Federal Credit Union are among the more than 20 area employers that have committed to the revitalization program.

The building will feature a floor that is dedicated to community growth and will serve as a collaborative space available to the building's tenants. This will allow further collaboration between Consumers Energy and The Heat and Warmth Fund on the development of energy assistance options for Michigan residents in need.

Consumers Energy—headquartered in Jackson—has demonstrated a commitment to its hometown by investing resources into the positive transformation of the city.

On April 15, this innovative hub will open its doors for the first time. The building, which had previously stood vacant for over 10 years, will now serve as a center filled with new ideas and state-of-the-art tools to support economic expansion.

I applaud Consumers Energy for its continued commitment to our community and congratulate them on the opening of the new Innovation Center. I look forward to the solutions, discoveries, and positive impact that will undoubtedly result from this investment.

TRIBUTE TO JAN GLENDENING

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jan Glendening for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Iowa state director for the Nature Conservancy, Jan has been dedicated to finding solutions for some of Iowa's most important issues revolving around land and water preservation. She is dedicated to educating Iowans on the importance of taking care of our lands as well as finding solutions to the issues we face today. Jan also dedicates her time and talents to Iowa's Water and Land Legacy Executive Committee that works to build resources for the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Her commitment to preserving our lands and leaving them better off for our future generations is a true testament to her Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING KALEIDOSCOPE OF LEARNING PRESCHOOL AND AFTER SCHOOL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable school, Kaleidoscope of Learning Preschool and After School of Byram, Mississippi, and the great leadership it is under.

Patrina Robinson Dace is a native of Georgetown, Mississippi. She is the seventh of eighth children (four girls and four boys) born to Mr. L.J. and Mrs. Lula Lewis Robinson. She attended: Brushy Creek Headstart; Crystal Springs Elementary; Crystal Springs Junior High; and Crystal Springs High School.

She graduated from Crystal Springs High School in May of 1984 with honors. Patrina participated in numerous activities and received numerous accolades while in high school which included: Student Council Reporter, Vice-President of Student Council, Beta Club Member, Yearbook Staff and Editor, Junior Homecoming Maid, Captain of the Cheerleading Team, Honor Student, and Most Beautiful.

Patrina received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Jackson State University in 1991 with Magna Cum Laude. She completed a Master of Science in Teaching from Jackson State University in 1994 in General Science Education. In 2008, Patrina received her CDA from the Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program with endorsements in Infants and Toddlers and Preschool Education.

Patrina is married to Dr. Glen W. Dace II, of Meridian, Mississippi. They are the proud parents of three daughters: Racolesha (30), Ramanda (22), Glendolyn (17); a son-in-law, Frederick; and two grandchildren: Kennedy and Kyler. The Dace family resides in Terry, Mississippi, and attends New Horizon International Church in Jackson, Mississippi. Patrina has served her church family for seventeen years and has been a deaconess for eleven years.

Patrina's faith in Christ and desire to know Him has created a passion for serving others. She is active in the community and is a member of: Jackson Chamber of Commerce, Minority Business Owner, Byram Business Association, Mississippi Early Childhood Association and Southern Early Childhood.

In August of 2003, Glen and Patrina opened Kaleidoscope of Learning Preschool and After School in Byram, Mississippi with a license capacity of 49. Four years later, they decided to build a new facility to accommodate the increasing demand for childcare in the Byram area. The vision was clear, but much work was still to be done. They worked full time professional jobs with a desire to open a new center. In June 2007 Glen and Patrina's hard work and diligence paid off, and a brand new facility was built with a license capacity of 150. This business adventure was a major accomplishment for them.

Prior to becoming a fulltime employee at Kaleidoscope of Learning in April 2008, Patrina served as Director of Environmental Microbiology for the Mississippi State Department of Public Health Laboratory. She worked as a Laboratory Technologist for 11 years and a Division Director for 4 years. Patrina's certifications included: Laboratory Evaluation Officer by FDA and Laboratory Certification Officer by EPA. She worked fifteen years for the Mississippi Department of Health and eight years in the Jackson Public School System. On December 31, 2013, after serving 25 years in the Public Employee Retirement System of the State of Mississippi, she retired at the age of forty-six.

Patrina is currently a full time owner, operator, and director at Kaleidoscope of Learning Preschool and After School. She provides many years of business development and management experience to the Kaleidoscope of Learning family. Patrina is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations, account management, hiring, budgeting, payroll, inventory, classroom management, and administrative duties.

Patrina is an advocate for childcare in Mississippi. She feels that every community should have affordable full-childcare service for any social or ethnic groups. Patrina's strong investment in Kaleidoscope initially began because she had to transport her own children from the suburbs to the city every day. Patrina, one day, decided that instead of making the families in her community drive for quality care, she would be the one to step up and provide it. It made good business sense as it also opened up many doors to be able to minister to families, by providing a loving, caring, and Christian environment to children, while their parents are away at work. Since opening in 2003, many of our students have shown to perform at the top of their class. The first children to start at Kaleidoscope are in high school now and are expected to graduate high school in 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Kaleidoscope of Learning and After School for its dedication to serving our great state of Mississippi.

HONORING COMMONWEAL

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Commonweal, a nonprofit in Marin County, California, in honor of their 40th anniversary. By serving our community in innumerable ways, from offering a healing space for people living with illnesses to providing educational opportunities to advocating for juvenile justice reform, Commonweal has had a unique and far-reaching influence across many issues and areas for a generation.

Founded in 1976 by Michael Lerner, Carolyn Brown, and Burr Heneman, Commonweal was envisioned as a healing space to serve people and the planet. From the beginning, their partnership with the National Park Service has helped supply an appropriate backdrop—a scenic 60-acre site just south of the Point Reyes National Seashore—for the compassionate, attentive work done by the dedicated staff and Commonweal community over the years.

Commonweal's efforts have touched countless lives within three broad areas of focus. Their health and healing programing includes week-long retreats for people with cancer and yoga therapy classes. Their efforts to support the arts and education include classes for teachers and students to better integrate creative thinking into school curriculum. Finally, their advocacy for the environment and justice incorporates work on health effects of environmental factors and research on juvenile justice laws. Their work is multifaceted and extensive, and has left a lasting, positive impact that can be felt throughout our community.

For four decades, Commonweal has been a beloved, wide-reaching organization, and they have contributed significantly to West Marin's culture and character. It is therefore appropriate that we honor them today for their ongoing work and congratulate them on their anniversary celebration.

CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEE COLLEGE DEBATE TEAM

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of the Mendoza Debate Society at Lee College, in Baytown, Texas. On April 4, 2016, the Debate Team won their third consecutive Community College National Championship in the International Public Debate Association (IPDA) National Championship Tournament.

Led by Director of Forensics, Joe Ganakos, the Mendoza Debate Society has become the top-ranked IPDA debate program in Texas for 2015–2016. The debaters achieved this incredible success through their unmatched work ethic and countless hours of practice. I extend my congratulations to all the members of the Mendoza Debate Society, captained by Kyle Diamond and Rigo Ruiz—and I wish them all continued success in their future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING ANDREW JONES ON BECOMING A McDONALD'S ALL AMERICAN

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Andrew Jones of Irving, Texas, on being named to the 2016 McDonald's All American basketball roster. This is a tremendous honor from the basketball community as it pits the best high school players in the country against one another in an exhibition game. Mr. Jones also participated in the three-point competition and Legends and Stars Shootout as the players display their shooting ability and point guard play.

The requirements to become a McDonald's All American are extensive as you must consistently be a consensus Top 20 player in the national rankings, and earn enough votes from the selection committee. Andrew was one of 24 high school senior basketball players selected to join this elite group of young men as the best in the country from over 100,000 players nationwide. Andrew has been consistently rated as one of the best guards in the 2016 class with his ability to create plays and soft touch around the rim. Mr. Jones' following has only grown as his tremendous improvement has been highlighted over the past year in his spring and summer performances in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). He brings great pride to the basketball community of Texas.

Andrew has a natural gift for the game of basketball as his court vision and slashing capabilities creates scoring opportunities and

proves to be a nightmare for opposing teams. Andrew will only improve at the collegiate level as his basketball gift continues to attract admirers and people who look up to him including young fans that need positive role models in their lives.

While Andrew continues to receive praise from scouts and people close to him, he has kept his roots in mind as he has committed to playing college basketball at home for the University of Texas (UT). At UT he will continue to display his exemplary skills and pride for the great state of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Andrew Jones on his hard work and athletic accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 139, I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

HONORING THE 250TH BIRTHDAY OF COLLIN MCKINNEY

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 250th birthday of Collin McKinney, a Texas patriot, statesman, and hero. Mr. McKinney was a drafter and signer of the Texas Constitution and is the namesake of Collin County and the city of McKinney. His courage of conviction and love of Texas fundamentally shaped our state's history and our nation. Mr. McKinney was born to Scottish immigrant parents on April 17, 1766, in New Jersey. Years later he moved to Kentucky before settling in our great state of Texas. Mr. McKinney was a man of faith and boldly preached the gospel message of love and redemption.

Mr. McKinney and four other individuals were drafted by Judge Richard Ellis at the convention meeting at Old Washington-on-the-Brazos to write a declaration of separation from Mexico. Today, we know this document bearing Collin McKinney's signature as the Texas Declaration of Independence. He later went on to serve the Red River District in the First, Second, and Fourth Congresses of the Republic of Texas.

Author Samuel Houston Dixon wrote in his book ''The Men Who Made Texas Free'' that ''Mr. McKinney was a man of most admirable character. He possessed a spirit of progressiveness which dominated his life. No one of that group of pioneers exercised a more wholesome influence over those with whom he came in contact than Mr. McKinney. He lived a life worthy of emulation and was held in high esteem.''

In 1846 he settled near the Grayson-Collin county line which would become his final resting place and later bear his name. In 1936 the Texas Centennial Commission had his house moved to Finch Park in McKinney. Mr. McKinney lived under eight different governments in his life. He was born a subject of King George III, became a citizen of the Colonial Government of the 13 Colonies, then the United States, Mexico, the Provisional Government established by the Texans in 1835, the Texas Republic until annexation, the United States again, and then the Southern Confederacy.

Mr. McKinney's life of public service and dedication to the cause of freedom should inspire each of us. I am proud to honor this statesman and encourage every Texan to study his life so that we may continue his legacy.

HONORING DR. ROLANDO D. HERTS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Black Professional, Dr. Rolando D. Herts, a resident of Cleveland, Mississippi.

Dr. Rolando D. Herts is the Director of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi. The Delta Center serves as the management entity for the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area, a partnership between the people of the Mississippi Delta and the National Park Service designed to promote understanding of the Delta's cultural heritage through education, tourism, and economic development. The Delta Center also oversees the International Delta Blues Project, a three-tiered initiative featuring an International Conference on the Blues, the development of an academic blues studies program, and a Blues Leadership Incubator for entrepreneurship and economic development, which aligns with Delta State University's goal of becoming a destination for blues education with GRAMMY Museum Mississippi.

Previously, Dr. Herts was Associate Director with the Office of University-Community Partnerships (OUCP) at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. In this capacity, he helped to advance a learning organization model that integrates university-community partnership development, campus and community event planning and management, and campus and visitor information functions. During his tenure with Office of University-Community Partnerships, Dr. Herts collaborated with an array of local, regional, and state entities—including the Greater Newark Convention and Visitors Bureau, Brick City Development Corporation, New Jersey Department of Travel and Tourism, the City of Newark, the Rutgers Center for Latino Arts and Culture, WBGO 88.3 Jazz FM radio, and the Newark Literacy Campaign—to help promote the university and the surrounding community and region as distinctive educational destinations. As a Leadership Newark Fellow, he was presented the Berkowitz Distinguished Service Award for his commitment to the Greater Newark community.

Prior to working at Rutgers, Dr. Herts was a faculty member with the Fanning Institute, a public service unit at the University of Georgia where he was selected to participate in the Emerging Engagement Scholars Workshop of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium. He also served as program director of INSPIRE/TRIO Student Support Services, a top-funded federal retention and graduation program for first-generation college students at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. In addition, he completed a two-year teaching commitment with Teach For America in the Mississippi Delta region where he taught second grade at Carver Elementary School. He was awarded a ''Certificate of Appreciation for Excellence in Teaching'' from the Indianola Association of Educators.

Dr. Herts holds a Ph.D. Degree in Planning and Public Policy from Rutgers Graduate School-New Brunswick and the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. His dissertation From Outreach to Engaged Placemaking: Understanding Public Land-Grant University Involvement with Tourism Planning and Development examines university-community tourism engagement as a destination promotion and economic development strategy. His reflective essay, ''Sacred Ground, Traveling Light: Personal Reflections on University-Community Tourism Engagement,'' won the prize for Best Treatise in Impressions, Ruminations, Treatises: Essays on Intersectionality, Praxis, and the Educational Arena, a collection published by the Institute For Recruitment of Teachers, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. Dr. Herts also holds a M.Phil. Degree in Planning and Public Policy from Rutgers, an M.A. Degree in Social Science from the University of Chicago, and a B.A. Degree in English from Morehouse College. His interests include university-community engagement and partnership development, community-based tourism planning, place branding/marketing, community and regional development, and interorganizational collaboration. He is a member of the Rotary Club of Cleveland, Mississippi, which is an affiliate of Rotary International, a worldwide network of business and professional leaders dedicated to humanitarian service.

Education, community engagement, public service and cultural heritage development have been prominent themes in Dr. Herts' family. His father, Dr. George E. Herts, earned a Doctorate in Educational Administration from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champagne, became the first African-American Superintendent of schools in the Arkansas Delta community of Eudora, and subsequently completed 30 years of service at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in various leadership capacities, including Dean of the School of Education and Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies. His mother, Dr. Ruth Simmons-Herts, earned a doctorate in Educational Administration at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and served for several years as a public school central office administrator in Little Rock, Arkansas, and as Assistant Dean of the School of Education and the Director of Performance Based Education at Langston University in Oklahoma. For over 25 years,

she has served in local, regional, and national leadership roles as a member of The Links, Incorporated, an international service organization of African-American women. She also was a member of the Rotary Club of Little Rock, the oldest and largest civic organization in Arkansas, and served on several community boards including the Arkansas Arts Center and Black Community Developers, Inc., which brought the internationally-renowned Morehouse College Glee Club to Little Rock for the first time in the singing organization's history during the younger Dr. Herts' tenure as tour manager of the Glee Club and as baritone member of the Morehouse College Quartet.

Dr. Herts is dedicated to building upon the exemplary legacy of service established by his predecessors. His great uncle, Harrison Douglass, was a contemporary of Booker T. Washington during his undergraduate years at Tuskegee University during the early 20th century, and studied and worked in agricultural extension at Iowa State University. He taught at Tuskegee, Grambling, and Southern universities and established Douglass High School for African Americans in his northern Louisiana hometown. Dr. Herts acknowledges Harrison Douglass, as well as his grandparents Mr. Archie and Leola Simmons and Mr. Hermon and Shelley Herts, as key sources of inspiration for his parents and himself as they completed higher levels of education and committed their lives to serving communities of diversity. Dr. Herts is promoting and preserving this family tradition by encouraging the next generation to learn about and celebrate their heritage. In particular, he is dedicated to sharing heritage-based educational opportunities with his sisters, nieces, and nephew.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing black professional and community landscape innovator.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NUTLEY HIGH SCHOOL CREW PROGRAM

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Nutley High School Crew Program.

The Nutley High School Crew team first began rowing on the Passaic River in 1942. Founded by Coach Bill Bennet, the crew program has provided a productive and competitive outlet for Nutley students for the past 75 years. Although the program initially was available only to male students, the early 1980s saw the introduction of a women's crew program. Since then, both the men's and women's teams have been dominant forces in high school crew, with athletes competing against some of the best teams in the United States and Canada.

Graduates of the Nutley program have gone on to have successful athletic and academic careers, with many continuing to row at some of the top college programs in the country. The industrious nature and sense of teamwork fostered by the Nutley program in its athletes are easily translatable in a variety of settings. These athletes utilize the skills developed within the program throughout their post-high school careers.

Nutley rowers are notable for the high academic performance levels they have maintained alongside their athletic achievements. The intensity of training and racing schedules in no way impedes academic performance, but rather assists in forming well-rounded, athletic students.

Nutley High School Crew alumni and their children often return to the program to continue its tradition of cultivating strong rowers and even stronger leaders. Whether coaching or rowing, these individuals are important community figures and contribute substantially to the Township of Nutley.

Over the years, both the Nutley Board of Education and the Nutley Crew Boosters have been incredibly supportive of the program. Without their contributions, the program would be unable to maintain its strength.

For 75 years, the Nutley High School Crew team has been a staple of the Nutley community, allowing student athletes to compete and contribute. Their contributions are invaluable in making Nutley a dynamic, involved township.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring the Nutley High School Crew program as they celebrate their 75th Anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO RYAN JENSEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ryan Jensen for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As Vice President of CBRE/Hubbell Commercial, Ryan continuously works hard to be one of the best, most recognized leaders within the real estate investment industry. He works tirelessly to provide accurate, high quality investment information for his clients and will take that expertise to start a new real estate investment platform later this year. Ryan is also passionate about giving back to his community and serves on the board of directors for Variety—The Children's Charity.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ryan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ryan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

RECOGNIZING PROFESSOR DONNA J. BON OF PENN STATE ALTOONA FOR HER ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Professor Donna J. Bon, of Penn State Altoona, for her commitment to bolstering the entrepreneurial spirit within Penn State Altoona and the Sheetz Fellows Program.

Founded by Steve and Nancy Sheetz to instill leadership and an entrepreneurial mindset in students studying business at Penn State Altoona, the Sheetz Fellows Program continues to make a positive impact in the lives of the committed Penn State Altoona student participants. While the generosity of the Sheetz family is worth highlighting, I believe Professor Bon also deserves appreciation for her role in making the program a continued success. As the Executive Director of the Sheetz Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence, Professor Bon has been instrumental in executing the program's important mission of teaching and mentoring students to be tomorrow's key decision-makers and to impart in them a strong sense of servant leadership.

On behalf of the 9th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, I want to thank Professor Bon for her commitment to these high ideals and recognize her success in pursuing them. Thanks to her and her colleagues at Penn State Altoona, our community will continue to benefit from the actions and ideas of an ambitious student body.

STATEMENTS GIVEN AT ''RESTORE THE VOTE: A CONGRESSIONAL FORUM ON THE CURRENT STATE OF VOTING RIGHTS IN AMERICA''

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, the statements found below were given during an event titled—Restore the Vote: A Congressional Forum on the Current State of Voting Rights in America. The forum was held on Saturday, March 5, 2016 in the Birmingham City Council Chambers located at Birmingham City Hall. The forum provided elected officials, community leaders, scholars, and the general public the opportunity to examine modern-day voting rights as well as discuss the current challenges and barriers facing equal access to

the ballot box. Discussions also focused on how community leaders and average American citizens can galvanize support around ensuring every American is able to exercise their constitutionally protected right to vote.

The forum was hosted by Congresswoman TERRI A. SEWELL, and included special guests Rep. JOHN LEWIS, Rep. JIM CLYBURN, Rep. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, Rep. SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Rep. BARBARA LEE, Rep. HANK JOHNSON, Rep. KAREN BASS, Rep. MARC VEASEY, and Rep. STACEY PLASKETT, Birmingham Mayor William Bell, and Birmingham City Council President Johnathan Austin. The panelists included Jefferson County Clerk of Court Anne Marie Adams, President of Southern Poverty Law Center Richard Cohen, Metro Birmingham Branch NAACP President Hezekiah Jackson the IV, Calera, Alabama City Councilman Ernest Montgomery, and President of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies Spencer Overton.

STATEMENT OF COUNCILMAN ERNEST MONTGOMERY, THE CITY OF CALERA'S 2008 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

My name is Ernest Montgomery and I am a City Councilman, representing District 2 in the City of Calera Alabama. Our City is a beautiful small city, strategically located in the south-central part of Shelby County. We had a population of 11,800 residents according to the 2010 census, but I believe thousands more today. Between the 2000 to 2010 census, our city was title as being the fastest growing city (percentage wise), in the State of Alabama.

This rapid growth is what led our City Leaders to have our district lines redrawn. The results of these new lines eliminated the sole minority-majority district in the city. Changing it's minority voting percentages from about 69 percent down to about 28 percent.

After submitting these changes to the Department Of Justice for pre-clearance, they were rejected because the DOJ said it clearly disadvantage the African American Community. The City was in an election year and was order not to hold it election with these new changes by the DOJ. Yet the City Mayor chose to continue on with the municipal election.

In this election I lost my seat in my district, but learned two days later that the Department of Justice had filed a lawsuit against the city. Outrage was mounting because the African American Community said they had no chance of electing a candidate of their choice.

Changes were made to the city's plans after meeting in Washington, DC with the DOJ and pre-clearance were granted. A new municipal election was held in 2009, resulting in me winning my seat again. I know without a doubt this would not have happened if the VRA, (especially the pre-clearance section), didn't protect the most vulnerable.

STATEMENT OF J. RICHARD COHEN, PRESIDENT, SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Good afternoon. The fact that we must be here talking about voting rights 51 years after Congress passed the Voting Rights Act is a national disgrace, one that dishonors the many who fought for the precious right to vote and the millions who were disenfranchised for decades in our country because of their race. It particularly dishonors the brave Americans who sacrificed their lives so that everyone, regardless of race, creed or color, could have a voice in our democracy—people like Jimmie Lee Jackson, Viola Liuzzo, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner.

A year ago at this time, we were celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. And, of course, we will observe the 51 anniversary in two days. We all know that the events of that fateful day and the subsequent completion of the march to Montgomery led to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, perhaps the crowning achievement of the civil rights movement—one that drove the final nail into the coffin of Jim Crow.

Forty-one years later, in 2006, when it reauthorized Section 4, Congress remarked on the tremendous progress that had been made under the Act to address first-generation barriers to voting—like literacy tests and poll taxes—that kept many minority voters from casting ballots.

At the same time, Congress noted that vestiges of discrimination continued in the states covered by the original Act in the form of second-generation barriers that diluted the voting strength of African Americans and other minorities. These included such practices as gerrymandering, at-large voting and the use of multimember legislative districts.

Today, 10 years later, we still have those second-generation barriers. For example, the Alabama legislature in 2012 passed a redistricting plan that packed black voters into legislative districts, thereby reducing their influence in other districts. In 2015, the United States Supreme Court ruled that there was strong evidence the lawmakers had engaged in racial gerrymandering and that the state had used the wrong legal standard to draw the districts. The case is pending before the district court.

But second-generation barriers are not the only problem today. Tragically, we're once again fighting the battle to remove first-generation barriers that suppress the votes of minorities—a battle that was fought 50 years ago.

Many have been implemented since the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the preclearance requirement of the Voting Rights Act in its Shelby decision. The passage of the laws restricting voting rights has, in fact, accelerated since Shelby.

Here in Alabama, the legislature passed a law in 2011 that requires voters to produce one of seven kinds of photo IDs. But, even though preclearance by the Justice Department was still required under the Voting Rights Act at the time, the state did not submit it for review. Instead, it waited two years.

Then, on June 26, 2013, the very next day after the Supreme Court relieved Alabama and other states of their preclearance obligations, the state announced it would begin to enforce the law. The Alabama Secretary of State's office has estimated that at least 280,000 registered voters—disproportionately minority voters—lack the type of photo IDs required to vote.

It's questionable whether Alabama's photo ID law would have been precleared by the Justice Department under the Voting Rights Act. It can, of course, still be challenged in federal court—and, indeed, it is being challenged. But blocking the law is much more difficult in a lawsuit, because the burden of proof is on the plaintiffs to show discriminatory intent or effect. Prior to Shelby, the burden of proof was on states like Alabama—which have long histories of discrimination against African Americans—to show that any new law would not have a retrogressive or racially discriminatory impact.

To add insult to injury, Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley last year reduced the operating hours of the state offices in 27 largely poor, rural counties where residents can obtain the IDs they need to meet the requirements of the photo ID law. African Americans make up a larger share of the population in those counties than in other parts of the state, where the office hours were not curtailed.

Rather than move toward same-day registration, the Alabama Legislature has moved further from it since Shelby. Despite the fact that for many years voters were allowed to register 10 days in advance of an election—and despite technological advances—in 2014 the legislature extended the period to 14 days. Since then, there have been legislative attempts to extend it even further—to 30 days.

Alabama, of course, is not alone in enacting racially discriminatory voting laws. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 33 states now have some form of voter ID law in effect. And, according to the Brennan Center for Justice, 21 states have enacted new restrictions since the 2010 mid-term elections. Sixteen have new voting restrictions in place for the first time in a presidential election. In addition, 27 states have attempted to purge their voting rolls since Shelby, leading to numerous lawsuits claiming these purges targeted minority voters.

Also, some states are now pushing to make voters prove their citizenship when registering. A recent decision by the federal Election Assistance Commission has allowed Alabama, Georgia and Kansas to require documentation of citizenship for anyone registering to vote. This creates an undue burden for many—particularly minorities, young people, the elderly and the poor—who may lack easy access to their birth certificate, passport, naturalization certificate or other proof.

At the center of these efforts is Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, who doubles as counsel for a nativist extremist organization called the Federation for American Immigration Reform. Kobach was the architect of the notorious anti-immigrant law in Arizona known as SB 1070—a discriminatory law that was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court. Kobach was also behind an even more draconian, anti-immigrant law in Alabama, HB 57, which was also dismantled by the courts.

The cumulative impact of all of these efforts to suppress the vote is that millions of Americans—minorities, the elderly, the disabled and others—will be disenfranchised, their voices silenced.

And that is, of course, the goal of these laws. The movement to restrict the vote, as we all know, has nothing to do with combating ''voter fraud,'' which is, essentially, nonexistent in our country.

Here in Alabama, our secretary of state, John Merrill, has characterized voting as a ''privilege.'' And I think that statement, in some ways, reveals a certain mindset that we are facing. We would never call our First Amendment freedoms of speech and religion privileges. We would never call our right to bear arms a privilege. We would certainly never call it a privilege to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. Privileges are something to be earned or granted. They can be taken away. The rights guaranteed under our Constitution cannot. We firmly support Congressional efforts to restore the federal preclearance requirement that was stripped from the Voting Rights Act in

Shelby. But we know that restoring the Voting Rights Act will not resolve all of the problems. Our country's needs broader reform. We need a new vision for voting to bring the system into the 21st century.

The election process in the United States is a relic of the 18th and 19th centuries—an era when only white male property owners were allowed to vote and when Congress was more concerned about the time it took to travel to polling stations on horse than two-hour lines at the polls. The current system makes sense in the context of the 1850s, but it ignores the technology and the complexities of life and work in today's world. The reason we vote on Tuesday illustrates the point.

In 1845, Congress determined that Tuesday was the best day to hold elections because Saturday was a workday for farmers, Sunday the Sabbath, and Wednesday was a market day. Tuesday gave voters a full day to travel by horse to the county polling station.

Not only are Tuesdays now a workday for most Americans, but having only a 12–hour window to vote completely ignores today's work schedules, childcare needs, and other features of modern life. This system particularly disadvantages lower-income people who are more likely to work for hourly wages, who often cannot afford to miss work, or who may not be allowed to leave their job.

For a country that prides itself on our democracy—a country that has sacrificed thousands of our brave young men and women in the fields of war in defense of our democratic values—this is simply not acceptable. We can and must do better.

For starters, we must restore the preclearance requirement that was shredded in Shelby. The political machinations of the last few years have laid bare the unfortunate reality that certain powerful forces will use whatever means are at their disposal—however anti-democratic—to retain power.

We also must roll back the many new state laws that silence the voices of millions of eligible voters. And, we must modernize our antiquated elections system in ways that make sense for the world we live in today—in ways that will bring many more people, not fewer, to the ballot box and result in government that is truly of the people, by the people and for the people.

As the Declaration of Independence says, governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. It does not say ''some'' of the governed. We must ensure that everyone has a voice. The future of our great democracy depends on it.

STATEMENT OF SPENCER OVERTON, PRESIDENT, JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES, PROFESSOR OF LAW, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

I am President of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, an organization that was created due to the events of Bloody Sunday and the Voting Rights Act that followed. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 enfranchised hundreds of thousands of black voters, these black voters elected hundreds of new black elected officials, and in 1970 the Joint Center was founded to support these black elected officials. Today, the Joint Center focuses on providing innovative research, ideas, and support to leading elected officials of color nationwide. I am also a tenured Professor of Law at The George Washington University Law School. I regularly teach a voting law course, and in previous years I have taught courses on civil rights and the law of democracy generally.

I. Background: Shelby County and Congressional Efforts To Update the Act

A. Shelby County v. Holder

In Shelby County, the Court held unconstitutional the Section 4(b) coverage formula that determined which jurisdictions must comply with the preclearance requirements of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Section 5 requires federal preclearance of changes affecting voting in ''covered'' jurisdictions before the changes are implemented. Section 4(b) as originally adopted and updated provided formulas that identified as ''covered'' jurisdictions with a voting test or device and less than 50 percent voter registration or turnout in the 1964, 1968, or 1972 general Presidential elections.

In Shelby County, the Court stated ''a departure from the fundamental principle of equal sovereignty requires a showing that a statute's disparate geographic coverage is sufficiently related to the problem that it targets,'' and that ''current burdens . . . must be justified by current needs.'' The Court believed that in the past the 4(b) coverage formula based on tests and low turnout from 1964, 1968, and 1972 elections was ''sufficiently related to the problem,''—that it was ''rational in both practice and theory,'' ''reflected those jurisdictions uniquely characterized by voting discrimination,'' and ''link[ed] coverage to the devices used to effectuate discrimination.'' The Court observed that ''[t]he formula looked to cause (discriminatory tests) and effect (low voter registration and turnout), and tailored the remedy (preclearance) to those jurisdictions exhibiting both.''

In contrast, the Court believed that the coverage formula based on 1964, 1968, and 1972 turnout and tests was not tailored to address discrimination today. The Court noted that Congress altered the coverage formula in 1970 (adding counties in California, New Hampshire, and New York), and 1975 (adding the States of Alaska, Arizona, and Texas, and several counties in six other states), but not in 1982 or 2006. Specifically, the Court stated:

''Coverage today is based on decades-old data and eradicated practices. The formula captures States by reference to literacy tests and low voter registration and turnout in the 1960s and early 1970s. But such tests have been banned nationwide for over 40 years. And voter registration and turnout numbers in the covered States have risen dramatically in the years since.''

The Court did not believe that the record Congress amassed in 2006 establishing vote dilution and other discriminatory practices was tied to text of a coverage formula based on turnout, registration rates, and tests from the 1960s and 1970s.

The Court explicitly limited its holding to the 4(b) coverage formula based on election data from the 1960s and 70s, and stated that ''Congress may draft another formula based on current conditions.'' While the Court observed that states generally regulate state and local elections and that federal preclearance is ''extraordinary,'' the Court did not find the Section 5 preclearance process unconstitutional. Instead, it explicitly recognized that ''voting discrimination still exists,'' that ''any racial discrimination in voting is too much,'' and that Congress has the power to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment to prevent voting discrimination.

B. 2014 and 2015 Congressional Efforts To Update the Voting Rights Act

Since Shelby County, legislation has been submitted to update the Voting Rights Act—the Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014 and the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015. Both bills: 1) tie preclearance to recent instances of discrimination; 2) allow judges to order ''bail in'' preclearance coverage as a remedy for a voting rights violation even in the absence of intentional discrimination; 3) attempt to deter bad activity by requiring that jurisdictions nationwide provide notice of certain election changes; and 4) make it easier for plaintiffs to obtain a preliminary injunction to block potentially discriminatory election rules before they are used in an election and harm voters.

There are, however, significant differences. Generally, the 2014 Amendment Act basis preclearance coverage on jurisdictions with significant voting rights violations over the prior 15 years, while the 2015 Amendment Act focuses on violations over the prior 25 years. Thus, while the 2014 Amendment Act subjected only Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to preclearance when introduced, the 2015 Advancement Act applied preclearance to those states plus Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. The 2014 Amendment Act exempts voter identification from violations that justify the expansion of preclearance, whereas the 2015 Advancement Act provides no such voter identification exemptions.

The 2015 Advancement Act also contains provisions that do not appear in the 2014 Amendment Act. For example, the 2015 Advancement Act requires preclearance nationwide for ''known practices'' historically used to discriminate against voters of color, such as: 1) voter qualifications that make it more difficult to register or vote (e.g., ID or proof of citizenship documentation); 2) redistricting, annexations, polling place changes, and other changes to methods of elections (e.g., moving to at-large elections) in areas that are racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse; and 3) reductions in language assistance. The 2015 Advancement Act also includes Native American and Alaska Native voting protections that ensure ballot translation, registration opportunities on and off Indian reservations, and annual consultation with the Department of Justice.

II. The Need To Update the Voting Rights Act

A. Litigation Inadequate Substitute for Loss of Preclearance

While the holding in Shelby County was limited to invalidating the coverage formula, the decision has a significant impact. It effectively suspends Section 5 preclearance in all jurisdictions other than the handful currently subject to a Section 3(c) ''bail in'' court order,

Litigation Not Comprehensive: Preclearance was comprehensive—it deterred jurisdictions from adopting many unfair election rules because officials knew every decision would be reviewed. In contrast, litigation requires that plaintiffs have the information and resources to bring a claim, and therefore litigation misses a lot of under-the-radar manipulation.

Litigation More Expensive: Preclearance also put the burden to show a change was fair on jurisdictions—which enhanced efficiencies because jurisdictions generally have better access to information about the purpose and effect of their proposed election law changes. Litigation shifts the burden to affected citizens—who must employ experts and lawyers who fish for information during drawn-out discovery processes.

Significant Voting Discrimination Persists: Too many political operatives in previously covered jurisdictions continue to

maintain power by unfairly manipulating voting rules based on how voters look or speak. Congress determined as much during the last reauthorization, and such discrimination has occurred since that time in various jurisdictions like Nueces County, Texas, While the Court in Shelby County invalidated the coverage formula because it was based on data from the 1960s and 1970s, the Court acknowledged that ''voting discrimination still exists'' and that ''any racial discrimination in voting is too much.''

B. Joint Center Report: 50 Years of the Voting Rights Act

In 2015, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies published 50 Years of the Voting Rights Act:

The State of Race in Politics. The 46-page report established that while the Voting Rights Act increased turnout by voters of color, citizen voting age population turnout rates among Latinos and Asian Americans trail African-American turnout by 10–15 percentage points and white turnout by 15–20 points. The report also found that racially polarized voting persists, and in some contexts is growing. Race is the most significant factor in urban local elections, and more decisive than income, education, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, and political ideology. The 38 point racial gap exceeds even the 33 point gap between Democratic and Republican voters.

III. Conclusion

In the last 51 years the United States has made significant progress on voting rights. Unfortunately, after Shelby County v. Holder political operatives have more opportunity to unfairly manipulate election rules based on race. The Court in Shelby County stated that the purpose of the Fifteenth Amendment is ''to ensure a better future,'' but the future will be worse if Congress fails to act.

Fortunately, Congress has the power to prevent discrimination and update the Voting Rights Act. An updated Voting Rights Act will help not just voters of color, but our nation as a whole. Protecting voting rights provides legitimacy to our nation's efforts to promote democracy and prevent corruption around the world. We all agree that racial discrimination in voting is wrong, and Congress should update the Voting Rights Act to ensure voting is free, fair, and accessible for all Americans.

RECOGNIZING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR LANCE LEHR

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Command Sergeant Major Lance Lehr on his retirement from the United States Army after 30 years of service to our country. An esteemed and respected member of the Armor and Cavalry community, Command Sergeant Major Lehr most recently served as the Command Sergeant Major of the 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss. In this role, he served a community of over 30,000 active duty servicemembers and 47,000 family members. He also played an integral role in strengthening the relationship between Fort Bliss and the El Paso community.

Command Sergeant Major Lehr's distinguished career includes assignments across the United States, Germany, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. He has served as a Scout driver, gunner, and Vehicle Commander; Scout Platoon Sergeant; Operations Sergeant; First Sergeant; and Operations Sergeant Major at the battalion and brigade level. He also had the extremely rare privilege of serving as a Command Sergeant Major for three different battalions; the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Cavalry Division; and the National Training Center and Fort Irwin. His deployments include Bosnia-Herzegovina, as part of Operation Joint Guard, and Iraq, as part of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Operation Spartan Shield.

As Command Sergeant Major Lehr embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that he may recall, with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment, the outstanding contributions he has made to the Fort Bliss and El Paso communities and to the United States Army. I would like to send him my best wishes for continued success in his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLE EMANU-EL OF WEST ESSEX

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Temple Emanu-El of West Essex, located in Livingston, Essex County, New Jersey as it celebrates its 60th Anniversary.

The Temple Emanu-El of West Essex was established in 1955 in response to growing demand for a Reform Jewish service within Livingston. Originally composed of eleven families, the congregation quickly expanded after the first year to include fifty-six families and has continued to grow throughout the years. By 1962, the congregation completed work on the physical sanctuary, replacing an old hot-dog stand off of Northfield Road with the Temple Emanu-El of West Essex. The building is an architectural landmark within Livingston. The design reflects an artistic interpretation of the Israelites' Tent of Meeting in the desert wilderness.

Since its creation, the Temple Emanu-El of West Essex has been an active participant in both the local and global community. The congregation established the Social Action Committee in 1964, and with the pioneering efforts of Rabbi Peter Kasdan, often stood at the forefront of many social justice campaigns. Beginning with the Temple Emanu-El of West Essex, Rabbi Kasdan organized a nationwide Jewish Reform boycott of grapes in support of United Farm Workers. Other issues of focus included Soviet Jewry, Ethiopian Jewry, and Vietnamese Boat People. More recently, the organization has focused on reform rights in Israel, Darfur, LGBT rights, and raising awareness for Jewish genetic diseases.

The Temple Emanu-El of West Essex has expanded to include an Early Childhood Center, as well as a Holocaust Remembrance Center opened in 2004. Currently, Rabbi Greg Litcofsky leads the congregation. The Temple Emanu-El promotes inclusivity within the Jewish faith by welcoming not only Jews of all backgrounds, but also those of interfaith families and Jews-by-Choice. This community provides a strong support network for members, working to fulfill religious, cultural and social needs. From a religious school to a softball league, the Temple of Emanu-El of West Essex is more than just a religious institution, but a powerful, multi-faceted spiritual community within Livingston.

In 2007, the Union for Reform Jews Congregation recognized the Temple of Emanu-El with an Honorable Mention for the Learner's Award for Adult Education. Many individual members of the Temple have gone on to receive the Union for Reform Jews' Keva Award for at least one hundred hours of Jewish study.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and celebrating the Temple of Emanu-El of West Essex for its sixty years of serving as a community staple, paving the way on many social justice reform issues, and providing a religious and cultural sanctuary for its active members.

HONORING MRS. SARAH DAILEY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this month and all this month I rise to give honor to a member of my district whom most people don't know but need to know. So today, I rise to honor Mrs. Sarah Dailey of Charleston, Mississippi located in Tallahatchie County, Mississippi.

Humble and Challenging Beginnings: Sarah was born a couple of years before the Great Depression and has to her credit the skill of survival and the will to give and gain in all aspects of human life. Her mother passed away when she and her siblings were still too young to care for themselves, so all of them to some degree had to grow up sooner than expected. Her oldest brother was the first to grow up fast by assisting their father by helping provide for the family. The family relocated from the Valley Road, which is south of the town of Charleston to North Creek Road. There Sarah would not only grow up but it became the place where she reared her own family.

''It takes a village to raise a family'' was the code of the old days. Since the family was being led by Sarah's father and brother, the older women in the community took Sarah and her sisters under their wings, teaching them those things that women must know and do like managing the home, cleaning the house, protecting each other as mothers do and personal care as a woman.

She was very intelligent and therefore school work came easy. She excelled in all her subjects, with many awards, plaques, and certificates of recognition to support. Education was not a giving back during her day of growing up so when the opportunity came along it was treasured because it was seen as

the way to a better future. By the time she was old enough to be on her own, her father remarried and moved to St. Louis, MO, taking her younger sibling with him. But Sarah and the older sibling stayed on in Charleston to chart their own future using what they had learned from those around them about adult responsibilities.

A Woman: Sarah met and married Mr. Walter Luther Dailey to become Mrs. Sarah Dailey. The couple made their home and raised their children on the family land, owned by her father and mother. Her motherly instincts and caring not only provided for her family but she became the caring provider for other family members. Mrs. Dailey, remembering her own personal feelings about growing up without her mother, put her personal goals on hold to be a mother to many.

Mrs. Dailey eventually went to work after her children began school. She worked for the Charleston Clinic in Charleston, MS where she remained employed for twenty years until an accident forced her to stop working. Mrs. Dailey also became active in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. She was a quiet, but a strong woman who was steadfast on making a difference. She supported her children when the East Tallahatchie School District was integrated. It was during this same time that her children along with other children involved in the movement were bused off to Parchman where some of the children were kept for almost a month.

A historian by hobby and interest: Mrs. Daily became the go to person when someone wanted to know something about civil rights activities in Tallahatchie County in the 1960s. She has been interviewed by people as far away as London, England and has traveled with college professors and authors as they gathered information for books they were publishing.

Mrs. Dailey continues to participate in community related activities and is always eager to support efforts that enhance Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. She is still an active member of the NAACP, having joined in the 1960s, nearly fifty years ago. Tallahatchie County and her children can be proud to be connected to this historian and unsung hero.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring, Mrs. Sarah Dailey, of the Mississippi Second Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO CLINT DUDLEY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Clint Dudley for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As Owner of Shade Tree Auto LLC and Snowtel Mowtel Inc. Clint has worked hard to make a positive impact on his community and become a successful small business owner. His work ethic, drive, and dedication to civic duty have made him a leader within his community. As a member of the Grimes Home Base Iowa Committee, Clint is dedicated to making Grimes a city where veterans can turn for employment and a place to build their families. He also hopes to start a program that teaches young people the values of skilled labor and how to pursue a career they can be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Clint in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Clint on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING THE SIERRA CLUB, REDWOOD CHAPTER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative GARAMENDI and Representative HUFFMAN, rise to recognize and honor the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club for its great contribution to the designation of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen, and sportsmen will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. It has been a privilege working with the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club to further our mutual goal of preserving our Nation's great open spaces, and we look forward to collaborating in the future.

CONGRATULATING JIM CUNNINGHAM FOR BEING INDUCTED INTO THE MINOR PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Jim Cunningham, of Connellsville, PA, on being inducted into the Minor Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Born in Connellsville, PA, Jim grew up excelling in athletics. In fact, during his time at Connellsville High School, he managed to win 10 varsity letters, competing in Track and Field, Basketball, Swimming, and Football. As a result of his outstanding performance, Jim was selected all-county in Basketball and Football two years in a row, and received many offers from colleges and universities to play football.

As a means of encouraging Jim to attend the University of Pittsburgh, the school arranged to help his mother out with a heart operation she desperately needed. Thanks to this kind gesture and Jim's talent and dedication, he went on to a successful collegiate football career at Pitt that subsequently got him drafted by the Washington Redskins in the 3rd round in 1961. Following three seasons with the Redskins, Jim eventually returned home to pursue his dream of teaching. However, it wasn't long until Jim returned to the gridiron, this time playing for the Wheeling Ironmen, of the Continental Football League, for five seasons.

Jim eventually retired from teaching in 1997. In addition to his athletic accomplishments, Jim remains grateful for his three children and six grandchildren, as well as his wife, Norma.

It is my pleasure to highlight Jim's impressive football career and also the hardworking approach his multiple careers illustrate. I wish him and his family the best going forward.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES M. COATES

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of James M. Coates, 86, who

passed away with his family by his side on Monday, April 11, 2016. He was reunited on this day with his wife Velma on what would have been their 63rd wedding anniversary. James was born on February 5, 1930 in Niles, Ohio, a son of James and Isabella Brutz Coates.

James was a 1949 graduate of Niles McKinley High School, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Niles, and a United States Army Veteran of The Korean War. James was married to Velma D'Annunzio on April 11th, 1953. He enjoyed spending time with his family and attending his children's and grandchildren's sporting events. During his lifetime, James started 1-Minute Car Wash in 1959; now Coates Car Care, Inc. James excelled in customer service. James was one of the founders of The Mahoning Valley Chapter of The National Sports Hall of Fame and was named Man of The Year in 2001. He was actively involved with The Oblate Sisters of The Sacred Heart, The Ohio Car Wash Association, The Private Industry Council, The Warren General Hospital Foundation, The Elks, and The Loyal Order of Moose.

He will be deeply missed by his children; his son James Coates, Jr., and his wife and their five daughters, Roselyn Cera and her husband Robin, Isabelle Santisi, Angela Stabile and her husband Robert, Amy Limongi and her husband Richard, and Jamie Williams, two brothers, Michael Coates and Marty Coates, two sisters, Anna Mae Massullo and Marian Mitolo, and fifteen grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his wife, a daughter Linda Livi, and a sister Isabelle Marcovecchio.

James will be honored for his military service by The Girard Veterans Council Honor Guard. James led a fulfilling life as a soldier, a husband and father, and beyond. He will live in the memory of both his loving family but also his wonderful community.

CELEBRATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DENVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th Anniversary of the Denville Volunteer Fire Department located in the Township of Denville in Morris County, New Jersey.

The Denville Volunteer Fire Department first emerged in June 6, 1926 in response to a dire need in Denville for a fire-fighting organization. The Department is a result of the tireless efforts and generous donations of its founding members, most notably Robert G. Ellsworth. The organization fought its first fire on August 11, 1926, responding to and successfully stopping a roof fire.

In March of 1927, volunteer laborers finished work on Denville's first firehouse, transforming the garage of one of its members into an operational department home. By 1935 and following a gift of land by the Denville Board of Education, the Denville Fire Department was able to establish its own building outside of the garage. Construction of the Union Hill Firehouse was completed in early 1958, and following another gift of land by the Denville Board of Education, the department was able to construct the Valley View Firehouse.

After a decade and a half of successful growth, the Denville Volunteer Fire Department established a First Aid Department in 1940. Over the following years, the Department would evolve and expand to meet the ever increasing needs of the Denville community. Private donations and government funding have been crucial in financing these projects.

By the 1970s, the department boasted a membership of more than 100 with five fire engines in service at three firehouses. With their ever-growing group, new construction began on a new facility for the Main Street Fire Station in 1973. By the fall of 1974, their completed home was open, and is their current home today. Continuing in their growth, the department established the Junior Fire Auxiliary in 1983.

Over the last twenty years, the fire department has continued to expand. Every year, they answer approximately 500 fire and 1,000 first aid calls and assist nearby departments as they respond to calls in neighboring communities.

In the summer, they hold the annual Denville Firemen's Carnival which brings Denville and surrounding communities together for lots of food and fun. Other events the department is involved in include the Halloween Parade, Santa Run, Rotary Street Festival, and St. Francis Fall Festival. The Denville Volunteer Fire Department is a consistent supporter of community activities and forging strong neighborhood networks.

The past and present members of the Denville Volunteer Fire Department have gone above and beyond their call of duty. From their dedication to the safety of their community, to raising funds to maintain each fire house, their unwavering and resilient efforts are truly commendable. Without the sacrifices of these men and women, the safety and quality of life within the Denville community would easily deteriorate.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring Denville Fire Department for its 90th celebration of service to the township and surrounding communities.

HONORING MR. ROGER GIVENS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Roger Givens.

Roger Givens was born and raised in the Sunflower County town, Rome, Mississippi. He is the seventh of eight children of the late Freddie and Lillie Davis Givens, Sr. Mr. Givens is 67 years old. He is currently employed with MINACT, Inc. as the Business & Community Liaison at the Finch-Henry Job Corps Center in Batesville, Mississippi, partially named after one of his mentors, the late civil rights leader, Dr. Aaron E. Henry and Governor Cliff Finch.

Givens accepted his current position after a distinguished career with the Mississippi Employment Security Commission (now Mississippi Department of Employment Security). He retired from the Commission in 2004 as the first African-American State Director of the Employment Service Division.

Givens is currently serving in numerous local, state and regional organization positions, continuing his life long practice of serving his community. He is recognized amongst his family, his colleagues, and his community as a man of service and passion to help those in need and improve his community. Givens and his wife of ten years are now residents of Grenada, Mississippi. He is the father of three daughters and grandfather of seven. He is a member and Deacon of the Greater Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Gore Springs, Mississippi.

Givens attended and graduated from Hunter High School in Drew, Mississippi. After high school he attended and graduated from Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale, Mississippi. He continued his education at Jackson State University receiving his Bachelor of Science degree in 1969. Immediately after receiving his degree, Givens assisted his parents in accomplishing a long time goal of moving off a Sunflower County plantation to Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Because of the Coahoma Community College president's knowledge of Givens and three other siblings, Givens' father was given a job at Coahoma Community College by the president upon a request by Givens and his older brother. While assisting his parents complete the move, Givens was hired as a Counselor by the Mississippi Employment Security Commission in Clarksdale. Being married to his hometown girlfriend while in college, Givens also assisted his mother-in-law and five in-laws move off the same Sunflower County plantation to Clarksdale.

Givens left the Mississippi Employment Security Commission after four months to teach in the Clarksdale Public School system. Since the school district was desegregated in the middle of the year, Givens was not immediately offered a contract for the next year because the school district was required to seek a balance of white-black teachers. He returned to the Employment Commission for the summer and committed to stay after a full time position was offered.

After only one year in Clarksdale, Givens' mother-in-law passed and he and his wife accepted the responsibility of caring for the five in-laws left without parents. The in-laws, along with Givens three daughters, remained in the household together until each completed high school or moved on to join the workforce or military.

After three years in Clarksdale, Givens lost his father to a heart attack. Givens committed to remaining in Clarksdale to be near his mother. Also, his work in the community, to include the Head Start program and the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was well under way and close ties had been developed with many local officials. The community involvement and encouragement from local officials,

including Dr. Aaron Henry, resulted in Givens becoming active in state, regional and national advocacy groups for Head Start. He served several terms as President of the Mississippi Head Start Parents Association and was a founding member and two terms President of the National Head Start Parents Association.

After working in a non-status position with the Employment Security Commission for approximately three (3) years, in 1972 Givens became the first African-American to receive a permanent status position in the Clarksdale office. In 1975 he was selected to enter the agency's Counseling Masters Program at Mississippi State University. The same year he was promoted and selected to start and be Coordinator of the Employment Security Commission's Ex-Offender Placement Program based at the Mississippi State Penitentiary. He received his Masters degree in Counseling from Mississippi State University in 1978.

In 1980, Givens became the first African-American to be appointed the State Monitor Advocate/Complaint Specialist. He relocated his family to Jackson to work in the Employment Security Commission's headquarters.

In 1986, Givens was appointed the Manager of the Greenwood Employment Office, the first African-American to manage an office in the Mississippi delta. Within months of relocating his family from Jackson to Greenwood, Givens' family started receiving telephone threats from callers identified as the KKK advising him to leave the city because the position of manager was for whites. Acts of violence and damage to his home were committed in the following weeks. The threats and violence ended after an investigation by the local law enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During the same year Givens' co-workers elected him the first African-American to be president of the Mississippi Chapter of the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP). During his term as president, the Chapter improved in employee participation and service to members, obtaining an international ranking of number 6, the highest in Chapter history. During his five years as the Greenwood Employment Office Manager, Givens was deeply involved in community organizations as the Chamber of Commerce and the Greenwood Voters League.

In 1991, Givens was appointed the Employment Security Commission Area Supervisor for the Mississippi delta, the first African-American in the state to hold an Area Supervisor position. Partially, because of Givens commitment to staff development and equal opportunity, the minority office managers in the delta increased from 0 out of 9 to 6 out of 9 during his tenure as Area Supervisor. After a reorganization of the Employment Service Division in 1996, Givens supervisory responsibility was expanded to include all of north Mississippi.

Givens was appointed State Director of the Mississippi Employment Security Commission Employment Service Division in 2001. During his tenure in the position, he continued his commitment to staff development, teamwork, customer service and equal opportunity. This resulted in broad support within the Employment Service Division and a noticeable increase in minorities in management positions throughout the state.

In 2005, after retiring from the state, Givens was hired by MINACT, INC., a minority owned company based in Jackson, Mississippi, upon the recommendation of a senior MINACT official, who was a former Head Start employee aware of Givens years of community involvement and career with the state. Givens considered it a blessing to be in a position to use the experience and knowledge from his life long career and community service to help the Finch-Henry Job Corps Center accomplish the mission of preparing youth and young adults for the workforce and life in general.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Roger Givens for his dedication to this great state.

TRIBUTE TO BRIANNE FITZGERALD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brianne Fitzgerald for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the marketing and communication director at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa Brianne has utilized her expertise in the marketing field to raise awareness of the message Big Brother and Big Sisters is trying to bring to the community. She works tirelessly to provide resources to those who need them most, so that they too have the opportunity to become successful. Her dedication and passion for serving others and strengthening the Des Moines community is a true testament to her character and it has not gone unnoticed.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Brianne in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Brianne on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 14, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 19

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Vincent K. Brooks, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea.

SH–216

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine understanding the role of sanctions under the Iran Deal.

SD–538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine challenges and opportunities for oil and gas development in different price environments.

SD–366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD–406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine preventing drug trafficking through international mail.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine ensuring accountability for crime survivors, focusing on assessing the Crime Victims Fund after three decades.

SD–226

1 p.m.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine anticipating and preventing deadly attacks on European Jewish communities.

CHOB–210

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine cybersecurity and United States Cyber

Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SVC–217

APRIL 20

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD–124

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security
To hold hearings to examine the state of the United States maritime industry, focusing on stakeholder perspectives.

SR–253

Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine new approaches and innovative technologies to improve water supply.

SD–406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the administrative state, focusing on an examination of Federal rulemaking.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Inga S. Bernstein, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, Stephanie A. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, Suzanne Mitchell, and Scott L. Palk, both to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, and Ronald G. Russell, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for Defense innovation and research.

SD–192

Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine restoring stability to government operations.

SD–608

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Rules and Administration
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Carla D. Hayden, of Maryland, to be Librarian of Congress.

SR–301

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the current state of research, diagnosis, and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

SR–222

Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine our complex tax code and the economy.

SD–562

APRIL 21

9:15 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

SD–342

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

SH–216

10 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety
To hold hearings to examine enabling advanced reactors, including S. 2795, to modernize the regulation of nuclear energy.

SD–406

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
To hold hearings to examine S. 1167, to modify the boundaries of the Pole Creek Wilderness, the Owyhee River Wilderness, and the North Fork Owyhee Wilderness and to authorize the continued use of motorized vehicles for livestock monitoring, herding, and grazing in certain wilderness areas in the State of Idaho, S. 1423, to designate certain Federal lands in California as wilderness, S. 1510, to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, S. 1699, to designate certain land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service in the State of Oregon as wilderness and national recreation areas and to make additional wild and scenic river designations in the State of Oregon, S. 1777, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain or replace certain facilities and structures for commercial recreation services at Smith Gulch in Idaho, S. 2018, to convey, without consideration, the reversionary interests of the United States in and to certain non-Federal land in Glennallen, Alaska, S. 2223, to transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain Bureau of Land Management land from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for inclusion in the Black Hills National Cemetery, S. 2379, to provide for the unencumbering of title to non-Federal land owned by the city of Tucson, Arizona, for purposes of economic development by conveyance of the Federal reversionary interest to the City, and S. 2383, to withdraw certain Bureau of Land Management land in the State of Utah from all forms of public appropriation, to provide for the shared management of the withdrawn land by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Air Force to facilitate enhanced weapons testing and pilot training, enhance public safety, and provide for continued public access to the withdrawn land, to provide for the exchange of certain Federal land and State land.

SD–366

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on ''Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands.''

SD–628

MAY 9

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–232A

MAY 10

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SR–232A

11 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SD–G50

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

SD–G50

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SD–G50

5:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–232A

MAY 11

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

MAY 12

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

MAY 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.
SR–222

SENATE—*Thursday, April 14, 2016*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, You are hidden from our sight, but we feel Your presence. Incline our spirits to seek You, our minds to know You, and our hearts to love You. Forgive us when we fail to hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Bless our lawmakers. Join them in heart, mind, and soul to do their best for the common good. Keep them so dedicated to Your purposes that they will do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.

Lord, into Your hands we commit our Nation and world.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, a bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Thad Cochran, Bill Cassidy, Roy Blunt, Mark Kirk, Thom Tillis, James Lankford, Cory Gardner, Orrin G. Hatch, John Thune, Johnny Isakson, Lisa Murkowski, James M. Inhofe, Susan M. Collins, Lamar Alexander, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate is closer to passing the most comprehensive aviation security reforms in years, and I hope we will do so today. This important legislation will bolster security for travelers and look out for consumers' interests.

Here is how it will help improve security: by improving vetting and inspections of airport employees to deter terrorist attacks; by expanding security measures and prescreening zones, which are often vulnerable; by shoring up security for international flights coming into our airports; and by improving preparation for everything from cyber security attacks to active shooter scenarios to outbreaks of communicable diseases.

This legislation will also benefit consumers by requiring airlines to offer refunds for lost or delayed bags, by providing more information on things like seat availability, and by improving travel for passengers with disabilities. It accomplishes this without increasing taxes or fees on passengers and without imposing heavyhanded regulations that diminish choice for travelers.

This important FAA reauthorization and airport security legislation is the result of strong leadership by Senator THUNE, the chair of the Commerce Committee, and Senator AYOTTE, the chair of the Aviation Subcommittee, as well as their Democratic counterparts, Senators NELSON and CANTWELL. They worked diligently across party lines, listened to their colleagues' ideas, and never stopped working for legislation both sides could support.

In the Commerce Committee, nearly 60 amendments were accepted from both sides, and the bill passed by voice vote. On the floor, more than a dozen amendments were accepted from both sides, and I am optimistic that we will soon pass it here on a bipartisan basis. I appreciate the efforts of the bill managers to work through amendments and move the bill forward.

This important FAA reauthorization and airport security legislation was bipartisan from the start. It shows why returning to regular order is so important. It is another example of what can be achieved in this Republican-led Senate—a Senate we put back to work for the American people.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Mr. President, thanks to an agreement reached last night, the Senate is now poised to pass broad, bipartisan energy legislation too. We have an agreement to take the Energy Policy Modernization Act back up, consider even more amendments, and then take a final vote on it.

I was encouraged to see the Democratic leader yesterday agreeing that this is important legislation. It will support more American jobs, more American growth, and more American energy independence, and we will finish our work soon.

Passage of this bill will represent the culmination of more than a year's worth of hard work, countless listening sessions and oversight hearings, numerous amendment votes and debate hours, and impressive reserves of determination from both the chair, Senator MURKOWSKI, and the ranking member, Senator CANTWELL.

Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator CANTWELL never gave up. Even when passage of this bill seemed impossible, they never stopped pushing for it. I have been impressed by their efforts just as I have been impressed with what this broad bipartisan energy bill can achieve for our country.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ENERGY AND FAA BILLS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I agree with the Republican leader that the energy bill is a good bill. As I said yesterday, it is just 3 years behind time. We have tried many times to move forward on it, but filibusters took place by the Republicans, and we were unable to get it done.

He is right that Senator CANTWELL and Senator MURKOWSKI never gave up and they worked through lots of problems. I wish we could have taken care of Flint in the process. That held things up for a little while but not long, and we are still looking at ways to take care of the people of Flint who have been really damaged by bad government.

So we are glad that Flint will come up in the near future, and we think we have ways of getting that done. Maybe we will see it in the appropriations bills that we are doing.

Energy is good, and I am glad we got it done. Now, we have allowed this to move forward. We have not been blocking the bill. We agreed, even though the bill is long overdue, and we are not going to treat people the way we were treated. So we are glad that is done.

On the FAA bill, I am glad we are going to get something done. As we know, we missed an opportunity to take care of a lot of people who are desperate for help. People in the State of Nevada—geothermal—they need help. Fuel cells, biomass, and other energy initiatives were left out. By inadvertence in the drafting of the bill, they were left out. The Republican leader said he will take care of that, and I am confident that he will. It is a longer wait for people, and it makes it difficult for people to hang on to their businesses. I know that his job is hard. He has told me and he has told Leader PELOSI that he will get this done this year. So we are looking forward to that.

PASSING A BUDGET RESOLUTION AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, tomorrow is April 15. Under the Congressional Budget Act, that is the day by which Congress is supposed to have completed a budget resolution.

This Republican Congress will not meet tomorrow's deadline. We have known that for some time. By all indications, they have no intention of doing anything to pass a budget resolution any time soon.

As the Republican leader told reporters earlier this week, in the absence of a budget resolution, Republicans will simply use the top-line spending numbers that we agreed upon last year. Here is what he said:

> We're waiting to see if the House is able to do a budget. In the meantime I've already announced, and I'll announce again today that we're going to move to appropriations next week, probably starting with energy and water, and we'll mark these bills to the top line that we agreed to in the agreement last year.

As we know, just a minute ago, he filed cloture on the energy and water bill.

If this statement he made sounds familiar, it should, because that is what we did when we were in the majority. We used the top line numbers in the Murray-Ryan budget agreement as a basis for spending bills. Republicans will begin that same process today as the appropriations process gets under way with the first full committee markup of the year.

But how did Republicans react when we did the same thing? They were falling all over themselves—speech after speech—to criticize us. They had charts and graphs and anything to focus on there being no budget. They came out endlessly to taunt us with over-the-top rhetoric. They shed crocodile tears by the bucket. They even threatened to withhold Members' pay as punishment. There was legislation produced to that effect, but it was all for show.

Republicans promised voters that, once in power, they would pass a budget each and every year. That is what the Republican leader promised in 2012, saying:

> I don't think the law says, ''Pass a budget unless it's hard,'' so I think there's no question that we would take up our responsibility. . . . We will be passing a budget. . . . Every year.

That was the Republican pledge: Give us the majority, and we will pass a budget every year.

Well, it is pretty clear that they are going to break that promise.

This is just the latest example of the Republicans refusing to meet their commitments—refusing to do their jobs—even according to their own terms.

It is just like the refusal to consider Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland. We have years and years' worth of statements from the Republican leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee in which they said unequivocally that it is the Senate's duty to consider the President's Supreme Court nominees. I have read their quotes on this floor endlessly.

These statements go back decades. The Republican leader wrote papers in law school demanding the Senate give Supreme Court nominees all due consideration. Well, all due consideration is not refusing to meet with a man, not holding hearings, and not allowing a vote.

But now that he, the Republican leader, is in a position to do something about that article he wrote in law school and the other statements that have been made by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, he won't give Merrick Garland a hearing or a vote. He won't even meet with him, even though the chairman of the Judiciary Committee met with him in secret, not in his office but in the private dining room downstairs, and then went out the back door, described as stumbling over chairs to vacate the premises.

So, basically, what I ask is this: Where are all the Republican Senators who came to the floor to bash Democrats for the lack of a budget resolution? They have gone silent. I am just asking: When are the Republicans going to do their job?

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor wishing to speak, so I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

> McConnell (for Thune/Nelson) amendment No. 3679, in the nature of a substitute.
>
> Thune amendment No. 3680 (to amendment No. 3679), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The senior Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support the motion to end debate so the Senate can vote and pass the pro-security and pro-consumer provisions within the bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016.

For the past 2 weeks on the Senate floor and earlier at the Commerce Committee, we have engaged in a constructive and open process to consider amendments making important changes to this legislation that sets aviation policies for our country. On the Senate floor we added 19 amendments, 10 from Democrats and 9 from Republican Senators, and at the Commerce Committee we approved 57 amendments, 34 from Democrats and 23 from Republicans. A number of these amendments were substantial, including the vast majority of the aviation security provisions within the legislation.

We have also agreed to set aside discussions on certain issues for now so we could continue to have a bill with broad bipartisan support. On some policy issues where there was disagreement, we found the will of the Senate through negotiation and votes. Our debate has been constructive, and I value the process by which we have allowed Senators to make their mark on this bill.

After 2 weeks of consideration, it is now time to conclude our work on the bipartisan legislation I introduced along with my friend, the ranking member from Florida, Senator BILL NELSON, and our Aviation Subcommittee leaders, KELLY AYOTTE and MARIA CANTWELL.

The bill we can vote on today has been described in the Washington Post as ''one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation.''

Even more important, this bill includes strong, new security measures that address the threat that ISIS and other terrorist groups pose to airline passengers. It is a comprehensive bill addressing needs in cyber security, the aircraft design approval process, undue regulatory burdens on noncommercial

pilots, airport infrastructure, rural air service, lithium battery safety, mental health screening for pilots, communicable disease preparedness, drone safety, and many other important issues. This bill helps the public that relies on our air transportation system, and we shouldn't let them down.

A vote yes on the motion to end debate allows us to move forward and to get these reforms going forward by agreeing to ultimately vote on them and to vote on passage of this bill.

Again, I thank all who are involved. Senator NELSON and I started this process months ago. I think we had somewhere on the order of seven hearings, full committee and subcommittee, in debating and helping shape the bill. It was a very constructive process as we went through the markup, where we incorporated the suggestions and good ideas that came from many Members of our committee. We tried to continue that process on the floor of the Senate, and we have been successful in adding some amendments that strengthen the bill. I wish we could add more. I hope we can still reach agreement. There are still negotiations underway for another package of 25 or 30 amendments that we would like to get added to this bill if we can get the level of cooperation that is necessary to accomplish that.

In the end, we need to pass this. It is important for the American people. It is a piece of legislation that needs to get voted on in the Senate, hopefully on to the House, and eventually on the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from South Dakota. He has been a real friend and a champion in being able to work together in the best traditions of the Senate in trying to craft—and I think we have successfully—a bipartisan piece of legislation that continues, as the Senator has quoted from one of the papers, to advance the FAA in a way that we should be sensitive to the needs of the flying public.

It is also this Senator's hope that where we have disagreements on just a few amendments, that after we have a big vote invoking cloture so we can move on with the bill, that a package of 30-some amendments—noncontroversial, bipartisan—would then be allowed to be adopted by unanimous consent, and then it is possible that we could move on to the final passage early this afternoon. That is this Senator's hope.

Let me underscore what the Senator has already said. There are a lot of challenges in how we conduct ourselves in the airspace of this country. There are a lot of important things that we have to do, such as modernizing the air traffic control system, the next generation of technology in moving us efficiently, and in the process it has to be safe.

Therefore, as we see new kinds of challenges because of technology—for example, unmanned aerial vehicles, drones—we have to approach that with great caution and make sure we know what we are doing so the flying public is safe.

I hope we get a big vote on this motion for cloture.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 3679.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Roger F. Wicker, Roy Blunt, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, James Lankford, John Thune, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, James M. Inhofe, Jerry Moran, Kelly Ayotte.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 3679, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. MCCONNELL, to H.R. 636, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Corker	Hirono
Ayotte	Cornyn	Hoeven
Baldwin	Cotton	Inhofe
Barrasso	Crapo	Isakson
Bennet	Daines	Johnson
Blumenthal	Donnelly	Kaine
Blunt	Durbin	King
Booker	Enzi	Kirk
Boozman	Ernst	Klobuchar
Brown	Feinstein	Lankford
Burr	Fischer	Leahy
Cantwell	Flake	Manchin
Capito	Franken	Markey
Cardin	Gardner	McCain
Carper	Gillibrand	McCaskill
Casey	Graham	McConnell
Cassidy	Grassley	Menendez
Coats	Hatch	Merkley
Cochran	Heinrich	Mikulski
Collins	Heitkamp	Moran
Coons	Heller	Murkowski
Murphy	Sasse	Tillis
Murray	Schatz	Toomey
Nelson	Schumer	Udall
Paul	Scott	Vitter
Perdue	Sessions	Warner
Peters	Shaheen	Warren
Reed	Shelby	Whitehouse
Reid	Stabenow	Wicker
Risch	Sullivan	Wyden
Roberts	Tester	
Rounds	Thune	

NAYS—4

Boxer	Portman
Lee	Rubio

NOT VOTING—2

Cruz	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 4.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 627

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, America was horrified 2 years ago as the scandal at the VA unfolded. We heard about veterans dying while they were waiting for care. Meanwhile, we discovered that VA employees manipulated appointment wait lists to hide the fact that the VA couldn't provide the care our veterans needed in a timely fashion.

The denial of earned care is always tragic, but it is inexcusable when the denial is driven by bureaucratic tampering and falsifications. Cooking the books was one bureaucratic offense, but not holding accountable those responsible is an additional bureaucratic failure, and one that continues to haunt our system.

These weren't just a few scattered incidents either. The VA inspector general investigated 73 VA facilities across the country and found problems in 51 of them, ranging from rule violations to outright fraud. These reports demonstrate that inappropriate scheduling practices were systematic at the VA.

This map shows how widespread the wait-list rule violations and manipulations have been. The inspector general's office found out how our veterans were treated when they called up looking for care. The information the VA gave was manipulated to make it seem as though the VA was doing much better than it was. We literally know that veterans died while waiting for care. That is shameful, and we owe it to those who served this Nation to serve them. They earned this by defending us and our freedoms.

Unfortunately, one of those 51 cases was the VA medical center in my home State of New Hampshire.

A New Hampshire newspaper summarizes the inspector general's report as follows:

Staff at the Manchester VA Medical Center manipulated appointment dates and refused to schedule referrals beyond 14 days in some speciality departments, all to make it appear patients were being seen quickly.

One report also shows that top officials at the Manchester VA discouraged the use of electronic waiting lists.

Another shows extremely long waits at the facility's Pain Clinic, where one patient waited an average of seven to eight months for injection treatments.

The reports show a near obsession with keeping numbers down when it comes to the length of time that veterans had to wait for appointments, which is one of the ways bonuses for hospital officials were determined.

Bonuses were determined by how you performed on the scheduling and whether you were actually meeting the needs of our veterans on time. Yet we know they were manipulating wait lists across the country to show that they were, in fact, serving our veterans when they were not.

Last week I met with the current Manchester VA medical center director to discuss the findings of the inspector general's report. Even though it didn't occur under her leadership, these findings are serious and must be dealt with appropriately. While I was encouraged to hear of the steps the director has taken to address the scheduling misconduct, I will be closely following the medical center's practices and performance.

We cannot let this happen again. Part of not letting it happen again is what brings me to the floor today. I will make sure we aren't incentivizing misconduct and allowing wrongdoers to get away with it, whether it is the wait-list manipulations or misconduct.

Unfortunately, the wait-list scandal isn't the only scandal at the VA. There is a common theme with all these scandals: Those committing misconduct are getting bonuses—yes, bonuses. Those involved in wrongdoing are getting checks paid by the American taxpayer. That is unacceptable, and that is why I introduced bipartisan legislation to improve accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs by requiring the VA Secretary to claw back bonuses paid to VA employees who were involved in serious misconduct or felonies. It would also require the VA to retain a copy of any reprimand or admonishment given to an employee by the Department which would then be in that employee's permanent record. Keeping that information in someone's employment record seems like common sense, but we have to pass this bill in order to do that. Amazingly, the Secretary of the VA doesn't currently have the authority to claw back bonuses even if, as with the wait list, the perpetrator's misconduct led to a bigger bonus check. That is unacceptable. We cannot reward those who commit fraud and misconduct by doling out taxpayer dollars.

A recent report noted that in 2014 the VA paid out $140 million in bonuses. Nearly half of the VA's employees got bonuses. More importantly, we know that individuals who were implicated in an array of scandals also received bonuses. For example, the director of the Phoenix VA hospital who was fired for her misconduct got a $9,000 bonus. The VA senior managers who improperly leveraged their positions to get hundreds of thousands of dollars in relocation funds to move to new facilities, along with a bump in pay—even though they were committing misrepresentations and fraud—got bonuses. A VA employee who recently pleaded the Fifth Amendment before a congressional committee got a bonus. Executives overseeing the $1 billion-over-budget VA medical center construction project in Colorado got bonuses. A doctor implicated in overprescribing opioids at the Tomah VA facility called ''Candy Land,'' where veterans were harmed—bonus.

We can't let these bonuses keep going to wrongdoers. It will just continue the erosion of trust of our veterans, who have done so much to defend this Nation and our freedom. That is why we need to pass this bill. The VA Secretary must be active in pursuing the disciplinary actions against VA employees guilty of misconduct so they aren't getting bonuses and taking away resources that could go to help our veterans. Without my legislation, the VA Secretary does not have the authority right now to go after a bonus, even if the bonus is given to a wrongdoer, to claw that money back.

This bill passed out of committee by a voice vote. The records retention provisions in this bill passed out of the House of Representatives by voice vote. Let's put this authority into law so that those who break the law don't get bonuses. That is why I am standing on the floor today asking for unanimous consent to pass this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 240, S. 627. I further ask that the Ayotte and Brown amendments be agreed to; the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; the title amendment be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I agree with much of what the Senator from New Hampshire said, and that is that our veterans deserve to have the highest quality care by the Veterans Administration. Those employees at the Veterans Administration who have not carried out their responsibility should be disciplined, and when there are adverse findings, there should be consequences to them. So I agree with much of what she has said.

However, let us be mindful that the overwhelming number of Federal workers, including those at the Veterans Administration, are hard-working public servants, asked to do more with less resources. They have been through freezes, furloughs, government shutdowns, sequestration—you name it.

I understand that the Veterans' Affairs Committee is considering more comprehensive legislation, as they should. As my colleague from New Hampshire has mentioned, this deals with one aspect of those who have adverse findings in regard to their ability to get bonuses or the reprimand on their record.

Here is my problem. If we use a unanimous consent request, there is no opportunity for amendment, and there is no opportunity for debate. When I finish my comments, I am going to ask that the Senator amend her unanimous consent request to include an amendment that I wish to offer. Let me explain what it does.

Yes, we want to hold the employee accountable—those who have not carried out the public trust in which there are adverse findings. But there also has to be accountability for the supervisors, for those who should be managing the agency so that we don't have employees doing what they did.

Managers need to have tools. They need to be able to manage their employees. They need to be able to determine how their employees are handled if we are going to hold them accountable, and I want to hold the supervisors accountable. So my amendment would allow the supervisor to determine the length of the suspension of the bonus that the individual could receive.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If I could just ask Members to take their conversations out of the Senate Chamber.

Mr. CARDIN. I appreciate that, and I thank the Presiding Officer very much. I thought I was getting an agreement here.

So to continue, it could be longer than the 5 years that is in the bill of the Senator from New Hampshire, but it would be the manager or supervisor who would determine the length of the suspension of the right to receive the bonus, so that the manager has the tools in order to manage the workforce and we can hold the supervisor accountable.

The second amendment is similar, as it relates to the reprimand being retained in the records. It allows the manager to have the discretion as to the length of time.

The bill that the Senator from New Hampshire is recommending is a hard 5-year period, and it doesn't give the manager the ability to use these tools as ways to advance service to our veterans.

The bottom line here is service to our veterans. That is the bottom line—that they get the services they deserve.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senator modify her request so that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 240, S. 627;

that in lieu of the committee-reported substitute and title amendments, that the Cardin substitute amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; that the Cardin title amendment be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

That would carry out the modifications that I said, giving the manager the ability to impose either a shorter or longer period of time than the bill of the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from New Hampshire so modify her request?

Ms. AYOTTE. No, I do not.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. CARDIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I certainly thank the Senator from Maryland. I agree, and I believe there are many hard-working Federal employees. The reason that I have been fighting for this bill in particular is, No. 1, to make sure that those who commit misconduct are held accountable. No. 2, I actually want to make sure that we aren't sending the wrong message to the people who are working hard and doing their jobs. When they see someone else who has committed misconduct by literally manipulating wait lists get a bonus, that actually demoralizes the good, hard-working employees who are doing their jobs and serving veterans.

So this is about making sure that the people who actually do a good job get recognized. But when you give a bonus to someone who has committed misconduct, you not only obviously undermine our system—thinking about the veterans who have served our Nation with so much courage and done so much for us—not only do we corrode their trust, but I think we corrode the trust of the workforce that is doing really great work every day, and I want to thank those who are doing the good work on our behalf. I have had a chance to meet many of them.

I want to address the point of the Senator from Maryland about giving managers authority. I wish to point out that the problem we have here is that this is rampant—absolutely rampant. If we look at what happened with the director of the Phoenix VA who lost her job—fired for misconduct—where literally wait lists were manipulated and veterans died, she got a $9,000 bonus. So who are we going to leave discretion to here? Many of the managers, I know, need to manage the facilities, which is important. But when it comes to the bonus issue, we literally would be putting, for example in the Phoenix situation, the individual who gets fired for overseeing all of this in charge of whether and how long other people's bonuses are clawed back. I would also say that this has been rampant, unfortunately, about management, and not just of the director of the Phoenix VA but the other examples I gave, including the VA senior managers who improperly leveraged their positions to get hundreds of thousands of dollars in relocation funds. So, in other words, they were misappropriating taxpayer dollars. They got bonuses too. They are managers.

We have executives overseeing the huge cost overrun in the Colorado VA who got bonuses. We have many examples. If we put this at the discretion of how long this is going to go in place instead of putting a logical time period in place, which my bill does, then we are going to keep perpetuating the same situation where the discretion makes it so it doesn't happen. That worries me, because, unfortunately, we have a pattern here that needs to be addressed.

Second, I would just say that, as we look at even the ability to retain records, most employers do have standard recordkeeping in terms of if you receive a reprimand or an admonishment and how long that is retained. So if we just leave that completely loosey-goosey discretion among managers, where we have already established some of them have been part of this misconduct, then I fear there really will be no accountability and these provisions will not have the teeth in them that they should.

Let me just say that this bill that we have been working on, that did pass out of committee, is something that I have been working on and negotiating for months, working and taking people's concerns into account. It does ensure that, before any employee is subject to having the bonus clawed back, they do have the opportunity for due process. So that is built into this to challenge the underlying claims made against them. But if we put this all into a discretionary basis, then we are just going to be in the same situation that we are right now and not have the teeth that we need in this commonsense measure.

I talked to some of my constituents about this issue, and they can't believe that we actually have to pass a law to say that if you got a bonus and you committed misconduct—in fact, one of the reasons you got the bonus is because of the misconduct, because you manipulated the wait list—yes, you can give that money back, and you shouldn't be receiving a bonus. It is kind of shocking that this isn't just common sense. But right now the VA Secretary does not have this authority.

Our veterans deserve better. This is plain common sense. I am disappointed that the modification that was sought on the floor would weaken this commonsense bill. I am going to continue to fight for more accountability in our VA. But let's have some common sense in all of this. We shouldn't be rewarding our employees who are committing misconduct for the very conduct that they are committing and that unfortunately is harming our veterans who have done so much for this Nation.

I am the granddaughter of a World War II veteran. My husband is an Iraq veteran. I have had the privilege in my job of meeting so many of our veterans, both current Active-Duty military and those who have served in conflicts going back to World War II. There is no greater example of patriotism and what makes our country great than our veterans. Really, if we think about what has happened in our VA and how shameful it is, this is something that we need to make sure we get right once and for all for those who have defended this Nation and who really show us what it means to be an American.

So I am going to continue to fight for such a commonsense piece of legislation, but I hope my colleagues will join me in this so that we can make sure that the VA performs its mission, which is to give our veterans the best care they can receive and that they certainly have earned defending our great Nation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I appreciate the hard work Senator AYOTTE has put into her bill and her willingness to work across the aisle with the ranking member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and Senator BROWN. Since I objected to her unanimous consent request and she objected to my counteroffer, I would like to take a few moments to outline my concerns about her bill and explain why I offered a complete substitute amendment that reflects those concerns and an amendment to change the title.

At the outset, I want to make it clear that I do not condone malfeasance by any Federal executive or employee. The well-documented problems at the Veterans Administration, VA, are particularly troubling because they harmed the men and women who have defended our Nation—and their families. That is unacceptable.

There is an old proverb, ''You can fix the blame or you can fix the problem.'' Actually, VA Secretary Robert McDonald, his leadership team, and the VA rank-and-file are doing both.

To that end, I would encourage my colleagues to read the December 9, 2015, testimony of Sloan D. Gibson, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In the context of patient access and scheduling data manipulation concerns that came to light at the Phoenix VA Medical Center, Deputy Secretary Gibson reported that, as of October 2015,

VA completed 97 percent of appointments within 30 days of the clinically indicated or veteran's preferred date; 91 percent within 14 days; 87 percent within 7 days; and 24 percent on the same day. VA's average wait time for completed primary care appointments is 4 days; specialty care is 5 days; and mental health care is 3 days.

The Veterans Benefits Administration, VBA, completed 1.4 million claims in fiscal year 2015, nearly 67,000 more than the previous year and the highest completion rate in VA history. Fiscal year 2015 marked the 6th year in a row of more than 1 million claims.

VBA reduced its claims backlog 88 percent from a peak of 610,000 in March 2013 to a historic low of 75,122 and reduced inventory 58 percent from a peak of 884,000 in July 2012 to 369,328, 28 percent lower than fiscal year 2014.

The average number of days a veteran is waiting for a claims decision, pending, is 91 days, a 191-day reduction from a peak of 282 days in March 2013 and the lowest average number of days pending in the 21st century. VBA's average days to complete is now 129 days—a 60-day reduction from fiscal year 2014. So VA is improving its services to veterans. That is fixing the problem.

Now, what about VA supervisors and employees who engaged in misbehavior or wrongdoing? There is a popular misconception that you can't get rid of Federal workers. In fact, in fiscal year 2015, 2,348 VA employees were removed, terminated during probation, or retired or resigned with a removal action pending. Over 1,800 of these individuals—or more than 75 percent—were fired. To be clear, these numbers pertain to the entire Department for all infractions and are not limited to the wait list problem.

It is a mistake just to focus on those numbers. As Secretary McDonald and Deputy Secretary Gibson wrote in the January 21, 2016, Wall Street Journal, ''You can't fire your way to excellence.'' But the point here is that punishments have been and are being meted out; people have had their careers ended. That is fixing the blame.

I will briefly outline my concerns with S. 627, even as reported and as it would be modified by the Ayotte and Brown amendments.

First, the bill deprives the Secretary of the discretionary authority needed to manage and discipline the VA workforce appropriately.

Second, the bill establishes new precedents for punishing Federal workers that haven't been thoroughly vetted and may have harmful unintended consequences.

Third the bill has two major components. The first deals with bonuses; the second deals with employees' personnel records and reprimands and admonishments. The second component was added at mark-up and was not a subject considered when the Veterans Affairs Committee held its hearing on bonuses on May 13, 2015. The Republican leader talks about the need to restore regular order. There ought to be a hearing regarding the second component. And fairness dictates that a witness from a Federal employee union, such as the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents many VA workers, should be invited to testify.

As Senators BLUMENTHAL, MURRAY, SANDERS, BROWN, TESTER, and HIRONO stated in their Minority Views in Senate Report 114–148:

> Besides the substantive issues with the provision that we have identified, section 2 of S. 627 was derived from S. 1496, a bill that has not been considered in a legislative hearing. For a significant and controversial provision like section 2 of S. 627, the Committee should have held a legislative hearing to give all Members the opportunity to hear from witnesses and fully understand the consequences of this provision.

I am not objecting simply to object. I would like to work with the junior Senator from New Hampshire to see if we can find common ground, and that is why I sent a substitute amendment and title change amendment, which needs to be done separately, to the desk, and asked her to modify her consent request to reflect these two amendments.

Let me explain exactly what I am proposing. The unanimous consent that has been hot-lined consists of three elements. The first is S. 627 as reported. The second is an Ayotte amendment modifying provisions of that bill dealing with bonuses. The third is a Brown amendment modifying provisions of that bill dealing with reprimands and admonishments.

What I have done is to combine all three elements into a single substitute and modify it to restore to the Secretary some managerial discretion, which I feel is essential for someone charged with running a department the size of a Fortune Six company.

As reported, the title of the bill is ''To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to revoke bonuses paid to employees involved in electronic wait list manipulations, and for other purposes''.

While the wait list problem may have spawned this bill, that title is inaccurate. The bill has no such limitations implied by that title; it applies Department-wide for any offense.

So I propose a simple amendment changing the title to read: ''To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup inappropriate bonuses paid to or on behalf of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.''

Section 1 of S. 627 as reported and as further modified by the Ayotte amendment prohibits the Secretary from awarding bonuses for 5 years to any employee who is the subject of an ''adverse finding.'' My substitute amendment changes that provision to give the Secretary discretion to withhold future bonuses ''until such date as the Secretary considers appropriate.''

Now, my language theoretically empowers the Secretary to withhold bonuses for more than 5 years. The point here is to provide the Secretary with the flexibility needed to manage, discipline, and incentivize 340,000 people in an appropriate fashion. I wonder if there is any Senator who has managed a workforce as large as the VA's and, if so, would have preferred surrendering his or her discretion to make personnel decisions as he or she thought necessary.

Section 1 of S. 627 as reported and further modified by the Ayotte amendment of the bill states in part that:

> The Secretary may base an adverse finding . . . on an investigation by, determination of, or information provided by the Inspector General of the Department or another senior ethics official of the Department or the Comptroller General of the United States . . .

I believe the Secretary must base an adverse finding on an independent determination. As I have stated, I fully support increasing accountability at the VA—and that includes making sure that a VA employee does not receive a bonus while engaging in misconduct.

Senator AYOTTE's bill, however, does not require the Secretary to base an adverse finding on the determination of an independent decisionmaker. My amendment would cure this defect and set appropriate limits by requiring the Secretary to base an adverse finding on an independent determination. By doing so, it would ensure that bonus bans are not arbitrary.

Section 1 of S. 627 as reported and further modified by the Ayotte amendment requires the Secretary to recoup bonuses paid to employees if they are subsequently subject to an adverse finding with respect to the years during which the bonuses were awarded.

Furthermore, section 1 requires VA employees to certify that they will repay any bonus received during a year in which an adverse finding may subsequently be made.

These provisions raise many unanswered questions, including how such actions would be treated with respect to determining Federal and State tax liabilities. But I have left these provisions unchanged.

Section 1 of S. 627 as reported and further modified by the Ayotte amendment states that ''The Secretary may promulgate such rules as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out this section.''

Considering the unprecedented nature of the sanctions in section 1, I believe it is imperative that the Secretary engage in a formal rulemaking to allow all interested parties the opportunity to weigh in with their concerns and suggestions.

S. 627 is characterized as a legislative response to a specific management crisis at the VA. Yet it sets several new precedents and penalties that will be applied in a much broader context. As such, I believe it would be appropriate to sunset the bill after 3 years to encourage Congress to revisit whether it is an appropriate legislative remedy to the ''wait list'' problem at the VA and whether the bill is causing any adverse unintended consequences.

My original proposal to the junior Senator from New Hampshire included two sunset provisions, for section 1 and for section 2, which I will discuss momentarily. Senator AYOTTE objected to the sunset provisions, so I have removed them from my substitute amendment at the desk.

Section 2 of S. 627 as reported and further modified by the Brown amendment requires the Secretary to retain reprimands and/or admonishments in the personnel records of affected employees for a minimum of 5 years. While this is a significant improvement over the original provision, which was to retain such actions permanently, it is still problematic.

First, as I mentioned previously, this provision was added after the Veterans Affairs Committee conducted its hearing and, consequently, hasn't been sufficiently considered.

Furthermore, Active-Duty personnel can request that reprimands be removed from their military personnel records jackets, MPRJs, at any time, and reprimands can only remain in the MPRJ for a maximum of 3 years.

One in three VA employees is a veteran. Should someone have fewer rights to clear his or her personnel record as a civilian than he or she had while serving on Active Duty?

Section 2 of the bill is unlikely to increase accountability at the VA. However well intentioned the provision may be, it is much more likely to cause significant increases in taxpayer-funded litigation costs because the VA will no longer be able to resolve routine personnel disputes through Clear Record Settlement Agreements, CRAs. The Merit Systems Protection Board, MSPB, reported in 2013 that 95 percent of agency representatives resolved disputes using Negotiated Settlement Agreements, NSAs, and 89 percent of these agreements involved CRAs.

Quoting again from the Minority Views I referred to previously:

In testimony before the House Committee of Veterans' Affairs, VA noted that it is the standard practice across the Federal government, including the Department of Defense, for letters of reprimand and/or admonishment to be retained on a time-limited basis. According to VA, making letters of reprimand or admonishment permanent would prevent VA managers from ''settling workplace grievances with employees with terms that would limit the amount of time these documents remain in the employee's permanent record,'' and it would restrict VA managers from removing these documents as a ''term of settlement.'' Both of these tools are frequently used by VA managers to ''resolve complaints before they go into costly and high-risk'' litigation. These tools also allow VA managers to promote good performance of employees ''because they are usually conditioned upon no further misconduct of the type that initially led to the reprimand or admonishment.''

Given all of these problems with section 2, even as it has been significantly improved by the amendment offered by the senior Senator from Ohio, I come back to the basic proposition that the Secretary must have sufficient discretion when it comes to managing the VA workforce. My amendment gives the Secretary that discretion by allowing, not mandating, that reprimands and/or admonishments may be retained for 5 years. Note that this still represents a significant departure from current practices government-wide. And, as I mentioned a moment ago, I originally proposed sunsetting section 2 after 3 years, but I removed that provision from the current version of the substitute amendment.

I sincerely believe these changes are reasonable and improve S. 627, and I hope the junior Senator from New Hampshire will ultimately agree.

To reiterate, no one condones what happened at the VA. But it is important to acknowledge that accountability is being restored and the miscreants are being punished.

As Secretary McDonald and Deputy Secretary Gibson wrote in the Wall Street Journal:

You can't fire your way to excellence. You have to inspire the people you keep to do better, and you have to recruit and inspire new talent. You can't do either by capriciously punishing people on the basis of unsubstantiated rumors, complaints or media reports . . . Neither we nor anyone else can accomplish the VA's mission of caring for veterans by depriving VA employees of basic fairness. To do right by veterans, we must do right by VA employees. We will do right by both, whatever the consequences.

I am privileged to represent 130,000 civilian federal workers, including members of the Senior Executive Service, SES; other senior managers; and rank-and-file employees who work in Maryland. Tens of thousands more live in Maryland or live and work in Maryland. Nearly 20 percent of these individuals have already served our Nation in uniform. Overwhelmingly, these individuals are hard-working, dedicated, and patriotic Americans who perform critical missions under difficult circumstances. In the last 5 years, civilian Federal workers have ''contributed'' $182 billion to deficit reduction. They have endured a 3-year pay freeze. They lost $1 billion in pay due to furloughs related to sequestration. They have been forced during government shutdowns to stay home against their will or to work without being paid on time. And they have been victimized by data breaches that have compromised their most sensitive personal information—some of which the Washington Post reported on January 31, 2016, has literally been provided to the Islamic State terrorist group.

While we can and will disagree on the proper size and scope of the Federal Government, I would hope we can all agree that we want the ''best and brightest'' to perform critical missions such as providing our veterans with the care they have earned so valiantly. This is especially true with regard to the senior executives entrusted with managing large workforces and multi-billion dollar budgets.

Depriving or diminishing due process rights at the VA already has caused the number of applicants over the past 3 years for both title 5 SES positions and title 38 equivalent positions to decline significantly.

With respect to VA title 5 SES positions, in fiscal year 2013, there were 8,721 applicants. In fiscal year 2014, that number dropped to 6,908. In fiscal year 2015, it dropped even further to 6,317.

With respect to VA title 38 SES equivalent employees, in fiscal year 2013, there were 1,020 applicants. In fiscal year 2014, that number dropped to 432. In fiscal year 2015, it dropped even further to 228.

One might argue that these declines represent the ''winnowing out'' of unqualified or underqualified applicants.

I would argue it is just as likely, if not more so, that these declines represent the winnowing out of highly qualified applicants who could have helped to restore greater accountability and better service at the VA, but were discouraged from applying because the deck is being stacked against them.

We all want our veterans to receive the best care possible. So I reiterate my sincere desire to work with the junior Senator from New Hampshire. As I said at the outset of my remarks, I appreciate the hard work Senator AYOTTE has put into her bill and her willingness to work across the aisle with the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and Senator BROWN.

Rather than simply leaving the matter here, I would note that the Department of Veterans Affairs has identified several Senate bills that provide the agency with the authority and tools it needs to address what the VA calls ''breakthrough priorities'' such as: improving the veterans' experience; improving access to health care; improving community care; developing a simplified appeals process; and reducing homelessness among veterans.

As I understand it, there is an effort underway in the Veterans' Affairs Committee to develop comprehensive legislation that helps the VA to meet these priorities while also addressing accountability and internal staffing

issues. I think it makes sense to work on a comprehensive reform and accountability package bill rather than trying to pass individual bills in a piecemeal fashion, and I look forward to working with the junior Senator from New Hampshire and every other Senator concerned about our veterans to accomplish this objective in the weeks and months ahead.

Ms. AYOTTE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, just a little while ago there was an overwhelming vote to proceed with the FAA bill, the Federal Aviation Administration bill, a very important bill. I know how hard the managers have worked on it—the chairman, the ranking member—and I have a tremendous amount of respect for them. I voted no. Only four of us voted no. It is rare that I do that, and I felt it was important to explain why.

We have in our Nation an amazing system of transportation, and we always have to stay on top of it to make it safer and safer. There is one thing we know without a doubt. We know it intuitively, but we also know it because the National Transportation Safety Board has told us that the No. 1 problem they face in terms of safety is fatigue.

We all know how it is. All of us, regardless of what we do for a living, know how it feels when we are utterly exhausted. We are not making the same decisions we would make. We can't carry them out the way we otherwise would. It is not rocket science. It is sleep science. We know about it because the experts have told us, and the NTSB has told us.

I will show a picture of two planes. They look exactly alike. As our kids say, one of these things is not like the other. Here is a cargo plane and passenger jet. They are the same size. They fly over the same skies. They have pilots whom we trust, whom we count on.

Today, because of special interest pressure, there is a different set of rest rules. The passenger plane pilot can only fly up to 9 hours a day because—rightly so, with all of that responsibility—that pilot has to get rest. The cargo plane pilot flies the same exact plane. That pilot can be on duty up to 16 hours a day before he or she is guaranteed adequate rest.

I know the Presiding Officer has worked very hard in recent months, and I know the energy it took to go out and do what he did. I know what it was like when I was running for the Senate so many times—thank you, California—with almost 40 million people in the State, how hard it was, how much rest was needed to be sharp so we could think. In our work if we make a mistake, it only hurts us, but when a pilot makes a mistake, it can hurt a much larger community because the cargo plane is flying over the same homes as the passenger jet. How does it make sense to say one can be on duty up to 16 hours and the other cannot, especially when the National Transportation Safety Board has said pilot fatigue is one of the biggest problems we are facing today.

Now one might ask: Can you prove that it is a problem? Yes, I am going to prove it to you. I am going to show a graphic of a conversation that took place between two cargo pilots, the pilot and copilot. This was 2013, and they were over Alabama. These are excerpts from the grave. This is dramatic. It isn't me trying to persuade the Presiding Officer. These are the pilots.

Pilot 1: I mean, I don't get that. You know it should be one level of safety for everybody.

Pilot 2: It makes no sense at all.

Pilot 1: No it doesn't at all.

Pilot 2: And to be honest, it should be across the board. To be honest in my opinion whether you are flying passengers or cargo . . . if you're flying this time of day . . . the, you know, fatigue is definitely. . . .

Pilot 1: Yeah . . . yeah . . . yeah. . . .

Pilot 2: When my alarm went off, I mean, I'm thinkin', I'm so tired.

Pilot 2: I know.

Look what happened to that plane within hours of that conversation. Look what happened to that plane. This shows what happened, and the pilots are dead.

After the flight recorder was released and this conversation was out, I thought for sure this administration would do the right thing. They did the wrong thing, and the Senate did the wrong thing. This isn't partisan.

We have the Obama administration, which I agree with, and today I heard some amazing news on jobs. I am just saying on this they haven't been right. There ought to be no disparity between a pilot who is flying a passenger jet and a pilot who is flying a cargo jet. The pilots are telling us this. The pilots who are telling us this are not selfish. In fact, many of them are the pilots of passenger jets such as Southwest Airlines—8,000 of them. There are 8,000 of them supporting the Boxer-Klobuchar amendment.

I can't get a vote. That is why I voted no along with three other colleagues who had their reasons. This was my reason. How do we do a bill like this and not address the No. 1 safety issue facing us? I don't get it.

If you don't believe me, fair enough, because I am not a pilot. I admit it. I just trust pilots. What is your choice? You walk on a plane, the pilot is in charge of the aircraft, and you know that pilot wants to land safely. You know that pilot wants to go home to his or her family. You know that pilot has your best interests at heart. Sometimes I am in a rush, and I get on a plane and the pilot says: You know what. We are not going to take off right now because I know there is something wrong in one of the monitors here. It could be nothing, but I put safety first.

Everyone in the plane says: Oh, no. We are going to be late. They get out their cell phones and they call their loved ones, but we know the pilots know what they are talking about. We trust them. I trust them so much I wrote with then-Senator Smith the guns-in-the-cockpit law for pilots. The NRA thinks I am the worst of the worst, but I said I trust pilots. They should have a chance if there is a terrorist on board. I trust them. Why doesn't this administration trust them? Because of special interests that make billions a year—billions.

It is going to cost us a tiny bit more, and it is a tiny bit more. What price would we put on our kids? There is none, for goodness' sake. If it cost a few cents more to ship a package so a pilot doesn't have to fly 16 hours, isn't that the right thing to do?

I will close with a quote from Sully Sullenberger. I think we all remember Sully. Before we show that, let's remind people who he is. We have another chart that shows him. Sully Sullenberger was the ''Hero of the Hudson.'' We remember how he landed his plane in the Hudson River, how he saved all the passengers on that plane and his crew. He is so famous now, he goes all over the world.

He came to the press conference I had with Senator KLOBUCHAR, because she and I are working on this amendment as well as Senator CANTWELL. His words were inspiring because he did not kid around. He said: ''Fatigue is a killer.'' Fatigue is a killer.

You don't have to say any more. If you know fatigue is a killer, then don't say passenger pilots can fly 9 hours but cargo pilots can fly 16. Here is what Sullenberger said when we first introduced our legislation, the Safe Skies Act: ''You wouldn't want your surgeon operating on you after only five hours sleep, or your passenger pilot flying the airplane after only five hours sleep, and you certainly wouldn't want a cargo pilot flying a large plane over your house at 3 a.m. on five hours sleep trying to find the airport and land.''

Sully said at the press conference that had he been suffering from fatigue on that fateful day that he safely landed that plane in the waters of the Hudson River, if he was suffering from fatigue, he said he never could have done it.

So I can't get a vote on my amendment. It is so simple, even a 6-year-old

can understand it. You don't have disparity when you have the same responsibility. You are traveling in the same skies, and a cargo plane can crash into a house or another plane carrying passengers.

I am so disappointed in this administration that they have not done the right thing on this. I am so disappointed in the U.S. Senate that they blocked a vote on this because the special interests don't want to charge 2 or 3 or 4 cents more on their packages. If it is to save lives of our people, this is what I call a classic no-brainer.

So I am here today to explain my vote to my constituents—why I voted no for an FAA bill that otherwise is a good bill. But I want just to make a statement that it is ridiculous not to give me an up-or-down vote. They tied it to other issues that are poison pills: immigration issues, gun issues. Come on. This is the biggest problem—fatigue.

Can't we just get an up-or-down vote on it? I am going to try to do that at every chance I get. Now I am working on a modified amendment to see if we can get it into a package. I don't know whether we can or not. But I want to say to the pilots out there who may be listening to this debate: A lot of us here have your backs.

We are not going to forget about this issue just because the FAA bill is moving forward. We are not going to forget about you. We are not going to forget about what it means when you are fatigued. We are not going to forget about the two pilots who, through the recorder, told us before they crashed that they were exhausted. They addressed the issue of the disparity. We are going to be fighting on this.

If we can't get it done here, maybe some brave soul in the House will do it, and it will wind up in the bill. If we can't get it done legislatively, we are going to try to get it done through the FAA regular order of their rules. Where is the FAA on this? I want to say: FAA, you turned your back on too many safety measures that the NTSB, which is in charge of our safety, has recommended.

It took years to get some simple things done. So while we are working to get a modified amendment—which is not going to be the be-all and the end-all; it just moves us a little bit forward—I just want to send a message that it is rare that I vote no—one of four. It does not happen often.

I view this as a moral issue. I view this as a moral issue for those pilots that are on duty up to 16 hours straight in the middle of the night, where, as Sully Sullenberger said, their circadian rhythms are off, and they are not at the top of their game. They are flying over the airspace of the American people.

I thank the presiding officer so much for his attention. I live to fight another day, another hour, another minute on this.

I want the pilots to know and the flying public to know and everyone to know they should engage in this issue. There is no disparity between people who do the same work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act, to talk about the importance of passing this legislation for Colorado and, indeed, the Nation. I commend Chairman THUNE, our colleague from South Dakota, Ranking Member NELSON, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator CANTWELL for their work in crafting this very important piece of legislation.

It is an economic driver, certainly a national security issue, and a number of issues that we are able to address in this legislation of great importance to Colorado and the country. Our Nation's airspace is clearly one of the most important economic drivers that we have. It is important in the movement of passengers and cargo, along with the many other users of airspace, whether it be for agriculture or unmanned aerial systems.

The economic importance of aviation in Colorado cannot be stated enough when it comes to tourism. In 2014 alone, 71.3 million visitors came to Colorado, with $18.6 billion in economic impact for the State, according to the Colorado Tourism Office. That tourism results in well over 100,000 jobs throughout the State of Colorado.

Many of those 71 million tourists came through Denver International Airport, the nation's fifth busiest and largest commercial airport. In 2014 alone, more than 50 million people passed through Denver International Airport, a State with a population of about 5.5 million—50 million people passing through the fifth busiest airport, with some of these passengers continuing on to one of Colorado's additional 13 commercial airports or 60 general aviation airports.

The economic impact that airports and aviation have throughout the State is absolutely incredible. When you take in the multiplier effect, nearly 300,000 jobs are a result of aviation in Colorado—a payroll of about $12.6 billion in Colorado, with the multiplier effect, for an economic output of about $36.7 billion.

In fact, there is one airport, which is the premier business airport of the United States, Centennial Airport in Colorado, surrounded by 23 different business parks, with about 6,000 different businesses surrounding this airport in those 23 different business parks. This airport, those 6,000 businesses, and the 23 business parks around the airport account for nearly 27 percent of Colorado's total gross domestic product.

Think about that. One airport, one business airport, and the businesses that surround it account for nearly 27 percent of Colorado's economy. So whether it is skiing or snowboarding or visiting one of our great national parks, enjoying the outdoors, hiking, camping, fishing, or visiting one of our world-class cities, it is not easily achievable without well-run, maintained, and secured airspace.

These airports connect cities like Denver, CO, to Durango, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and smaller cities; rural communities like the city I live in, Lamar and Yuma; and to the rest of the country. They help businesses reach beyond the borders of our State. Maintaining our airport infrastructure then becomes one of the most critical functions we can perform.

Communities in Colorado and across the country continue to push their airport infrastructure improvements, betterments, to help realize the full potential, the economic potential, to access that airspace and the access that airspace indeed brings. That is why I am glad to talk about this legislation and the many achievements we were able to accomplish and the provisions I was able to secure and include in the bill to help improve that airport infrastructure, including improvements to the Airport Improvement Program, or AIP, and a study with recommendations on upgrading and improving the Nation's airport infrastructure.

Additionally, I am pleased that this bill includes language that I pushed to help allow improvements to Pena Boulevard, the prime access road to connecting Denver International Airport with the rest of Colorado. If you have been to Denver International Airport and you have driven to downtown Denver, you have driven on Pena Boulevard.

This bill will address the needs, the infrastructure, and the improvements that are needed to make sure that Pena Boulevard remains an efficient, safe roadway to the Nation's fifth busiest airport. It will allow DIA the flexibility it needs and the clarity to ensure the primary access road that Pena Boulevard represents is capable of handling the traffic that comes with increased use of the airport.

The bill also includes language that builds on a successful pilot program for virtual towers and ensures that those towers will be eligible for AIP funding, Airport Improvement Program funding, once certified by the FAA.

It is important because these virtual towers, such as the one at the Fort Collins-Loveland airport area, will allow small- and medium-sized airports to offer commercial service in an economically viable and sustainable way. Northern Colorado really is the gateway to Colorado's energy hub, the gateway to Colorado's biotech, bioscience, and engineering research university hub. By allowing this virtual tower in northern Colorado at the Fort Collins-Loveland airport, we can help expand the opportunity to reach that area for businesses that wish to locate there, for customers who wish to fly into the area, and also for those businesses that are already there to expand, to have further reach around the country and the world.

Another central responsibility of the FAA is to ensure that the airspace is being safely managed while allowing the industries that are dependent on aviation to thrive. I think this legislation, after months and months of work, really does strike that appropriate balance. I was proud to support amendments during consideration of the bill that I believe will help ensure that the Transportation Security Administration, law enforcement agencies, and security personnel have the resources they need to provide for the safety of the traveling public.

I believe more could and should be done, however. That is why I filed on the floor an amendment to the bill which will improve TSA's operations at our airports by creating a testing location to help TSA and airports to work hand in hand to develop future screening technologies and passenger screening methods to ensure we are able to keep passengers and airports safe.

If you look at the needs that we have at airports, there is the combination of coming into an airport and checking in at an airport gate or kiosk. Most people use their iPhone or their smartphone to have their digital printout of a ticket. They don't even go to a kiosk anymore; they just go straight to the security line. But as we have seen, we need to have an increase in security from curb to gate.

It is not just a security concern where people may be gathering around the screening or people may be getting in and out of cars or lining up at the desk; it is an overall curb-to-gate security approach that we need. That is what my amendment will accomplish. So I look forward to continuing to work with Senator THUNE and the Commerce Committee on a path forward for this amendment because it is critically important that we address additional security measures to prevent violence like the recent terrorist attack in Brussels from happening and occurring at our airports.

To remind people, the attack in Brussels did not happen on an airplane; it happened outside where passengers were gathering. So if we can address this curb-to-gate security, alleviate the slowdowns and the spots that make it more difficult for efficiency at the airport to get through security—this amendment can help do that—we can avoid danger to the public from those who wish to do our people harm.

The bill includes important certification reforms that will improve the processing of new aircraft designs and modifications at the FAA. This is important because we had an agricultural aviator, a crop duster, in Colorado who was trying to get his plane certified. This is a spray plane. He was trying to get this plane certified, but what he found out was that, first, the FAA was taking a very, very long time to certify his crop duster, to give him the permission to use this plane to spray crops.

After they said they found his application, he ended up in a queue, a line behind United Airlines, behind Frontier Airlines. So, basically, this crop duster in southeastern Colorado had a very small plane, not a passenger plane by any means. He was put in line with a 747, a 757, and a 767. That is nonsense. It doesn't make any sense, and we were able to address those certification challenges in this bill.

A couple of years ago I requested the inspector general at the FAA to look at what was happening in the Rocky Mountain regional facility in Denver. They pointed to a number of challenges that region had in terms of its management, in terms of its process, and in certification in other areas. We were able to include the suggestions and the changes that the inspector general's report identified in this legislation in the FAA today.

Finally, the legislation, of course, makes key strides in the future of our aviation industry by addressing unmanned aerial systems. We have a number of great areas in Colorado where we can test and where we can certify, and, of course, the need is great—from agriculture to our ski resorts to wildfires. Think about what we can accomplish in the future with unmanned aerial assistance.

I thank the leadership. I thank Senator THUNE, our colleague from South Dakota for the leadership he provided. I thank the Presiding Officer for the work the Presiding Officer has done to make this legislation a success.

With that, I urge support for the legislation. I conclude my remarks on the FAA bill asking Members to support the bill.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I compliment the Senator from Colorado for his active participation in shaping this bill. Obviously, he is a very active member of our Commerce Committee and cares deeply and passionately about these issues. He was very involved in the issues that he addressed in his remarks and that were incorporated into this. They were simply and purely a credit to his persistence and hard work. They do make this bill much stronger. I appreciate his good work making that possible.

I wish to say again what I had mentioned earlier today, and that is, as Senator NELSON and I put this bill together, it was done in regular order. We had on the order of seven hearings—either subcommittee or full committee—where we took testimony and tried to assemble the best ideas. We worked together with members of the committee, including the Presiding Officer, in shaping a bill that we brought to a markup—getting it to the markup and through the markup. We adopted 57 amendments—34 Democratic amendments and 23 Republican amendments—before it came to the floor. After coming to the floor last week, we have had 19 amendments that have been added. We have another 30 or thereabouts that have been cleared, if we could get objections withdrawn so that those amendments could get cleared. But we have some other amendments of Members who would like to get votes.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up and reported by number: Sessions No. 3591; Paul No. 3693, as modified; and Rubio No. 3722; further, that there be 45 minutes of debate concurrently on the amendments, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold required for adoption of the amendments, and that no second-degree amendments be in order prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I so admire the managers of this bill. I really do. As a former chairman and ranking member now, I know how hard this is, but this is not a balanced request.

I would just say that I have spoken on the safety of pilot fatigue so many times. I won't reiterate that here. I feel strongly that I want a vote. I know others on our side do as well. I don't think this is balanced. So, sadly, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, in the same spirit of the chairman of the committee, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be

called up and reported by number: Boxer No. 3489 and Markey No. 3467; further, that there be 45 minutes of debate to run concurrently on the amendments, equally divided in the usual form; and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold required for adoption of the amendments; and that no second-degree amendments be in order prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. I would simply say that we have worked to try to get the amendment from the Senator from California a vote. We have tried to get the other amendment referenced by the Senator from Florida, Senator MARKEY's amendment, a vote. But we have Members on our side who also want votes, and the other side is objecting to those votes. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, as you may have heard a moment ago, one of the amendments that is being objected to from our end is an amendment that I have filed, and I will describe it briefly.

I wish to first describe the issue I am trying to address.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article entitled ''U.S. welfare flows to Cuba'' from October 1, 2015.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Sun Sentinel, Oct. 1, 2015]

U.S. WELFARE FLOWS TO CUBA

(By Sally Kestin, Megan O'Matz and John Maines with Tracey Eaton in Cuba)

THEY'RE TAKING BENEFITS FROM THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER TO SUBSIDIZE THEIR LIFE IN ANOTHER COUNTRY

Cuban immigrants are cashing in on U.S. welfare and returning to the island, making a mockery of the decades-old premise that they are refugees fleeing persecution at home.

Some stay for months at a time—and the U.S. government keeps paying.

Cubans' unique access to food stamps, disability money and other welfare is meant to help them build new lives in America. Yet these days, it's helping some finance their lives on the communist island.

America's open-ended generosity has grown into an entitlement that exceeds $680 million a year and is exploited with ease. No agency tracks the scope of the abuse, but a Sun Sentinel investigation found evidence suggesting it is widespread.

Fed-up Floridians are reporting their neighbors and relatives for accepting government aid while shuttling back and forth to the island, selling goods in Cuba, and leaving their benefit cards in the U.S. for others to use while they are away.

Some don't come back at all. The U.S. has continued to deposit welfare checks for as long as two years after the recipients moved back to Cuba for good, federal officials confirmed.

Regulations prohibit welfare recipients from collecting or using U.S. benefits in another country. But on the streets of Hialeah, the first stop for many new arrivals, shopkeepers like Miguel Veloso hear about it all the time.

Veloso, a barber who has been in the U.S. three years, said recent immigrants on welfare talk of spending considerable time in Cuba—six months there, two months here. ''You come and go before benefits expire,'' he said.

State Rep. Manny Diaz Jr. of Hialeah hears it too, from constituents in his heavily Cuban-American district, who tell of flaunting their aid money on visits to the island. The money, he said ''is definitely not to be used . . . to go have a great old time back in the country that was supposed to be oppressing you.''

The sense of entitlement is so ingrained that Cubans routinely complained to their local congressman about the challenge of accessing U.S. aid—from Cuba.

''A family member would come into our office and say another family member isn't receiving his benefits,'' said Javier Correoso, aide to former Miami Rep. David Rivera. ''We'd say, 'Where is he?' They'd say, 'He's in Cuba and isn't coming back for six months.' ''

''They're taking benefits from the American taxpayer to subsidize their life in another country.

One woman told Miami immigration attorney Grisel Ybarra that her grandmother and two great aunts came to Florida, got approved for benefits, opened bank accounts and returned to Cuba. Month after month, the woman cashed their government checks—about $2,400 each time—sending half to the women in Cuba and keeping the rest.

When a welfare agency questioned the elderly ladies whereabouts this summer, the woman turned to Ybarra, a Cuban American. She told Ybarra her grandmother refused to come back, saying: ''With the money you sent me, I bought a home and am really happy in Cuba.''

Cubans on the island, Ybarra said, have a name for U.S. aid.

They call it ''la ayuda.'' The help.

SPECIAL STATUS ABUSED

Increasing openness and travel between the two countries have made the welfare entitlement harder to justify and easier to abuse. But few charges have been brought, and Congress and the Obama Administration have failed to address the problem even as the United States moves toward détente with Cuba.

Cubans' extraordinary access to U.S. welfare rests on two pillars of special treatment: the ease with which they are admitted to the country, and America's generosity in granting them public support.

Cubans are allowed into the U.S. even if they arrive without permission and are quickly granted permanent residency under the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act. They're assumed to be refugees without having to prove persecution.

They're immediately eligible for welfare, food stamps, Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income or SSI, cash assistance for impoverished seniors and disabled younger people.

Most other immigrants are barred from collecting aid for their first five years. Those here illegally are not eligible at all.

The Sun Sentinel analyzed state and federal data to determine the annual cost of taxpayer support for Cuban immigrants: at least $680 million. In Florida alone, costs for welfare, food stamps and refugee cash have increased 23 percent from 2011 through 2014.

Not all Cubans receive government help. Those arriving on visas are ineligible, and some rely on family support. And many who receive aid do so for just a short time until they settle in, as the U.S. intended. Cubans over time have become one of the most successful immigrant groups in America.

''They come to the U.S. to work and make a living for their family,'' said Jose Alvarez, a Cuba native and city commissioner in Kissimmee. ''I don't believe that they come thinking the government will support them.''

But some take advantage of the easy money—and then go back and forth to Cuba.

A public housing tenant in Hialeah, who was receiving food stamps and SSI payments for a disabled son, frequently traveled to Cuba to sell food there, records show. She admitted to a city housing investigator in 2012 that she ''makes $700 in two months just in the sales to Cuba.''

Another man receiving food stamps admitted to state officials ''that he was living in Cuba much of 2015.''

A recent arrival with a chronic illness got Medicaid coverage and turned to attorney David Batchelder of Miami to help him get SSI as well. But the man was ''going back and forth to Cuba'' so much that Batchelder eventually dropped the case. ''It was just another benefit he was applying for.''

Concerns about Cubans exploiting the aid are especially troubling to exiles who came to this country decades ago and built new lives and careers here.

Dr. Noel Fernandez recalls the assistance his family received from friends and the U.S. government when they immigrated 20 years ago, help that enabled him to find work as a landscaper, learn English and complete his medical studies. Now medical director of Citrus Health Network in Hialeah, Fernandez sees Cuban immigrants collecting benefits and going back, including three elderly patients who recently left the U.S. for good.

''They got Medicaid, they got everything, and they returned to Cuba,'' he said. ''I see people that said they were refugees [from] Cuba and they return the next year.''

State officials have received complaints about Cubans collecting aid while repeatedly going to Cuba or working as mules ferrying cash and goods, a common way of financing travel to the island.

Another way of paying for the trips: cheating. Like other welfare recipients, some Cubans work under the table or put assets in others' names to appear poor enough to meet the programs' income limits, according to records and interviews. Some married couples qualify for more money as single people by concealing marriages performed in Cuba, where the U.S. can't access records.

''Stop the fraud please!'' one person urged in a complaint to the state. Another pleaded with authorities to check airport departure records for a woman suspected of hiding income. ''It would show how many times she has traveled to Cuba.''

Florida officials typically dismissed the complaints for lack of information, because names didn't match their records or because the allegations didn't involve violations of eligibility rules. Travel abroad is not expressly prohibited, but benefits are supposed to be used for basic necessities within the U.S.

''Our congressional folks should be looking at this,'' said Miami-Dade County Commissioner Esteban Bovo Jr., a Cuban American. ''There could be millions and millions of dollars in fraud going on here.''

MONEY TO CUBA

Accessing benefits from Cuba typically requires a U.S. bank account and a willing relative or friend stateside. Food stamps and welfare are issued monthly through a debit-type card, and SSI payments are deposited into a bank account or onto a MasterCard.

A joint account holder with a PIN number can withdraw the money and wire it to Cuba. Another option: entrust the money to a friend traveling to Cuba.

Roberto Pizano of Tampa, a political prisoner in Cuba for 18 years, said he worked two jobs when he arrived in the U.S. in 1979 and never accepted government help. He now sees immigrants ''abusing the system.''

''I know people who come to the U.S., apply for SSI and never worked in the USA,'' he said. They ''move back to Cuba and are living off of the hard-earned taxpayer dollars.''

He said family friend Gilberto Reyno got disability money from the U.S. and renovated a house in Cuba. The Sun Sentinel found Reyna living in that house in Camaguey, Cuba. He said he was no longer receiving disability, but Pizano and another person familiar with the situation said the payments continue to be deposited into a U.S. bank account. The Social Security Administration would not comment, citing privacy concerns, but is investigating.

Federal investigators have found the same scenario in other cases.

A 2012 complaint alleged a 75-year-old woman had moved to Camaguey two years earlier and a relative was withdrawing her SSI money from a bank account and sending it to her. Social Security stopped payments, but not before nearly $16,000 had been deposited into her account.

Another recipient went to Cuba on vacation and stayed, leaving his debit card with a relative. Social Security continued his SSI payments for another six months—$4,000 total—before an anonymous caller reported he had gone back to Cuba.

One woman reportedly moved to Cuba in 2010 and died three years later, while still receiving SSI and food stamps, according to a 2014 tip to Florida welfare fraud investigators. A state official couldn't find her at her Hialeah home, cut off the food stamps and alerted the federal government.

Former congressman Rivera tried to curb abuses with a bill that would have revoked the legal status of Cubans who returned to the island before they became citizens.

''Public assistance is meant to help Cuban refugees settle in the U.S.,'' Mauricio Claver-Carone of Cuba Democracy Advocates testified in a 2012 hearing on the bill. ''However, many non-refugee Cubans currently use these benefits, which can average more than $1,000 per month, to immediately travel back to the island, where the average income is $20 per month, and comfortably reside there for months at a time on the taxpayer's dime.''

Rivera recently told the Sun Sentinel that he interviewed welfare workers, Cubans in Miami and passengers waiting for charter flights to Havana. He said he found overwhelming evidence of benefits money going back, especially after the U.S. eased travel restrictions in 2009.

The back and forth undermines the rationale that Cubans are refugees fleeing an oppressive government, Rivera said. And when they return for visits, they boast of the money that's available in the U.S., he said. ''They all say, 'It's great. I got free housing. I got free food. I get my medicine.' ''

Five Cubans interviewed by the Sun Sentinel in Havana said they were aware of the assistance and knew of Cubans who had gone to America and quickly began sending money back. Two said they believed it was U.S. government aid.

''I don't think it's correct, but everyone does it for the well-being of their family,'' said one woman, Susana, who declined to give her last name.

Outside welfare offices in Hialeah, the Sun Sentinel found Cuban immigrants who had arrived as recently as three days earlier, applying for benefits. They said family and friends told them about the aid before they left Cuba.

''Back in the '60s, when you came in, they told you the factory that was hiring,'' said Nidia Diaz of Miami, a former bail bondswoman who was born in Cuba. ''Now, they tell you the closest Department of Children and Families [office] so you can go and apply.''

CROOKS COLLECT IN CUBA

Miami bail bondswoman Barbara Pozo said many of her Cuban clients talk openly about living in Cuba and collecting monthly disability checks, courtesy of U.S. taxpayers.

''They just come here to pick up the money,'' Pozo said. ''They pretend they're disabled. They just pretend they're crazy.''

SSI payments, for those who cannot work due to mental or physical disabilities, go up to $733 a month for an individual. Most other new immigrants are ineligible until they become U.S. citizens.

Some Cubans try to build a case for SSI by claiming trauma from their life under an oppressive government or the 90-mile crossing to Florida.

Diaz, the former bondswoman, said she has heard Cuban clients talk about qualifying: '' 'Tell them that you have emotional problems. How did you get these problems? Well, trying to get here from Cuba.' ''

Antonio Comin collected disability while organizing missions to smuggle Cubans to Florida, including one launched from a house in the Keys, federal prosecutors said. Comin claimed he rented the home to celebrate his birthday—after receiving his government check.

Casimiro Martinez was receiving a monthly check for a mental disability—but his mind was sound enough to launder more than $1 million stolen from Medicare. Martinez was arrested at Miami International Airport after returning from a trip to Cuba.

Government disability programs are vulnerable to fraud, particularly SSI, with applicants faking or exaggerating symptoms. Some view SSI as ''money waiting to be taken,'' said John Webb, a federal prosecutor in Tennessee who has handled fraud cases.

While benefits are supposed to be suspended for recipients who leave the United States for more than 30 days, the government relies on people to self-report those absences, and federal audits have found widespread violations.

The government could significantly reduce abuses by matching international travel records to SSI payments, auditors have recommended since 2003. The Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security are still trying to work out a data sharing agreement—12 years later.

Jose Caragol, a Hialeah city councilman and Havana native, said aid for Cubans ''was meant to assist those who were persecuted and want a new life. The bleeding has to stop.''

Mr. RUBIO. I will not read the whole article. But I am going to paraphrase from it.

By the way, as to the Democratic amendments that have been proposed and on which the Senator from California has just made a presentation regarding travel issues and pilot hours—she referred to the fact I have traveled extensively over the last year—they are issues I am actually very sympathetic toward. Perhaps we can work together to get her a vote on that amendment, because I think that is a legitimate issue.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you.

Mr. RUBIO. Let me now talk about the one I want to talk about. This is how the article begins. I talked about yesterday.

Let me back up and explain what people are facing. Today, if an immigrant enters the United States from another country legally and comes here on a green card, with 5-year residency, they cannot receive Federal benefits. If you immigrate to the United States from any country in the world with an immigrant visa legally—not illegal immigration, as illegal immigrants do not qualify for Federal benefits—a legal immigrant to the United States does not qualify for any Federal benefits. There is an exception in the law, however, and that is if you happen to be someone who comes from Cuba without a visa.

There is a law called the Cuban Adjustment Act. When the Cuban Adjustment Act was passed during the Cold War, it was passed so that Cubans who came to the United States fleeing communist oppression were immediately admitted to the United States. In essence, that is why there is really no such thing as an illegal immigrant from Cuba. If a Cuban makes it to the shores of the United States, they become legal in this country, and a year and a day after they have arrived, they are allowed to apply for a green card. But unlike any immigrant from any part of the world, they are allowed to receive Federal benefits because they are automatically presumed to be refugees. That is a status that I am not trying to change in terms of the Cuban Adjustment Act. I have said that I am open to that being examined, but I am not trying to change that law in my amendment.

I do want to discuss why we should automatically assume at this point that anyone who comes from Cuba is a political refugee. The reason why that now is in doubt is because many of the people who are coming from Cuba, supposedly as refugees seeking to flee oppression, are traveling back to Cuba 15, 20, 30 times a year.

There are people being oppressed politically in Cuba, absolutely. It is one of the reasons why I think the President's policies toward Cuba have been

misguided, because they refuse to see that even after this opening to Cuba, the political situation on the island has deteriorated. It has gotten worse, not better. There are absolutely people from Cuba who are coming here as refugees. But we also cannot ignore the fact that many of the people coming from Cuba no longer are coming here for political reasons. The evidence is that shortly after they arrive, they are going back to Cuba 15, 20, 30 times a year. You do not normally travel back to a place where you are fleeing from oppression, much less repeatedly over an extended period of time.

So as a result, we now have a law that basically says that if you come from Cuba, you are automatically entitled to a full platform of Federal benefits.

This is how the article begins:

Cuban immigrants are cashing in on U.S. welfare and returning to the island, making a mockery of the decades-old premise that they are refugees fleeing persecution at home. . . .

Cubans' unique access to food stamps, disability money, and other welfare is meant to help them build new lives in America. Yet these days, it's helping some finance their lives on the communist island.

America's open-ended generosity has grown into an entitlement that exceeds $680 million a year and is exploited with ease. No agency tracks the scope of this abuse, but a Sun Sentinel investigation found evidence suggesting it is widespread.

Fed-up Floridians—

Where a lot of these Cubans are moving to—

are reporting their neighbors and their relatives for accepting government aid while shuttling back and forth to the island, selling goods in Cuba and leaving their benefit cards in the U.S. for others to use while they are away.

Some do not even come back at all. The U.S. has continued to deposit welfare checks for as long as two years after the recipients moved back to Cuba for good.

It goes on to talk about several people. For example there is a shopkeeper in Hialeah, FL, where a lot of these folks are coming and moving. He says he hears about it all the time. He is a barber. He has been in the United States for 3 years, and he said:

Recent immigrants on welfare talk of spending considerable time in Cuba—six months there, two months here. ''You come and go before benefits expire.''

The article goes on:

The sense of entitlement is so ingrained that Cubans are now routinely complaining to the local Congressman about the challenge of accessing U.S. aid—from Cuba.

What they are complaining about is that they are coming into the office. This is what a former aide to a former Congressman from Miami said: A family member would come into our office and say a family member isn't receiving his benefits. They would ask: Where is he? And they would say: He is in Cuba, and he isn't coming back for 6 months.

This is unreal. There are people coming into congressional offices complaining: We are having trouble getting access to our benefits. You ask them why, and they say it is because the person who gets the benefits is not in America; he is in Cuba and he can't get access to his benefits from Cuba.

One woman told Miami immigration attorney Grisel Ybarra that her grandmother and two great aunts came to Florida, got approved for benefits, opened bank accounts and returned to Cuba. Month after month, the woman cashed their government checks—about $2,400 each time—sending half to the women in Cuba and keeping the rest.

They kept for themselves a 50 percent commission.

When a welfare agency questioned the elderly ladies' whereabouts this summer, the woman turned to Ybarra, a Cuban American. She told Ybarra her grandmother refused to come back, saying: ''With the money you sent me, I bought a home and I am really happy in Cuba.''

That means your money—the American taxpayers' money.

Ybarra went on to say that the Cubans on the island have a name for this U.S. aid. It is called ''la ayuda,'' which means the help.

Cubans are allowed into the U.S. even if they arrive without permission and are quickly granted permanent residency. . . .

As I said earlier, under the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, they are automatically assumed to be refugees without having to prove it.

They are immediately eligible for welfare, for food stamps, for Medicaid, and for supplemental social security, or SSI, and also cash assistance for impoverished seniors and for disabled young people.

But let's be frank, not all Cubans receive government aid. For example, if you come to the United States from Cuba on a visa—because there is a visa lottery and every year the government awards visas to people living in Cuba—you do not qualify for these benefits.

If, however, you arrive in the United States on a raft or if you fly on an airplane to Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, or Mexico and cross the U.S. border—as is now increasingly happening—then you do qualify for these benefits I have just outlined. So let's be frank, not everyone who is coming from Cuba is doing this. There are people coming from Cuba who are fleeing persecution, but many are taking advantage of the easy money, and then they are going back and forth to Cuba.

I will give you some examples cited in this article:

A public housing tenant in Hialeah, who was receiving food stamps and SSI payments for a disabled son, frequently traveled to Cuba to sell food there, records showed. She admitted to a city housing investigator in 2012 that she ''makes $700 in two months just in the sales to Cuba.''

And $700 a month is a lot of money in Cuba.

How does this work? They take the food stamp card. They go to the grocery store. They load up a van with canned goods. They travel back to Cuba. They just got that food with your taxpayer money. They travel back to Cuba with duffel bags full of canned goods, and they sell it in Cuba for a profit—$700 over a 2-month period.

Another man receiving food stamps admitted to State officials ''that he was living in Cuba for much of 2015.''

A recent arrival with a chronic illness got Medicaid coverage and turned to [his] attorney . . . of Miami to help him get SSI as well. But the man was ''going back and forth to Cuba'' so much that Batchelder eventually dropped the case. ''It was just another benefit he was applying for.''

This, of course, concerns people who came to the United States as exiles and are now watching this happen. There is a doctor whose name is Noel Fernandez, and he recalls when his family arrived here from Cuba that the U.S. Government helped them a little. When they immigrated here 20 years ago, he was helped to find work as a landscaper, he was helped to learn English, and he was helped to complete his medical studies. Today he is the medical director of Citrus Health Network in Hialeah.

Fernandez sees Cuban immigrants collecting benefits and then going back, including three elderly patients who recently left the United States for good.

''They got Medicaid, they got everything, and they returned to Cuba,'' he said. ''I see people that said they were refugees [from] Cuba and they return the next year.''

That is his quote.

State officials—

In my home State of Florida—

have received complaints about Cubans collecting aid while repeatedly going to Cuba or working as mules ferrying cash and goods, which is a common way of financing travel to the island.

How that works is, people know you are traveling to Cuba, and they have relatives they want to get money to or clothes to or whatever, and so they pay you. They actually pay you. They give you money and they say: Will you take this with you on your trip to Cuba and deliver it to the people we are trying to get it to? That is why they call them a mule. Well, from the money you get paid to take these things back to Cuba, that is how you pay for your plane ticket.

Another way of paying for these trips, by the way, is cheating. According to the Sentinel article:

Like other welfare recipients, some Cubans work under the table or put their assets in others' names to appear poor enough to meet the programs' income limits, according to records and interviews. Some married couples qualify for more money as single people.

Many of our welfare programs actually give you more money if you are not married because you don't have to combine your incomes. So because they were married in Cuba, they simply conceal the fact that they are married because the United States can't access

those records. That is another way of cheating.

Now look, ''accessing benefits from [someone who is in] Cuba typically requires a U.S. bank account and a willing relative or friend stateside.'' By the way, that is just for now because as part of this opening to Cuba, the Obama administration is going to make it easier for there to be banking transactions with Cuba. So what we are facing here, my friends, is that in a very short period of time—once banking becomes regularized with American banks—they will not even need to rely on their relatives in order to get this stuff. All they are going to need is an ATM or debit card or a credit card secured to that account, and you—the American taxpayer—will deposit the welfare check, the SSI, into their bank account, and they will then be conducting transactions or withdrawing the cash from Cuba directly.

So they will not even need a relative to do it, but right now they still need that. ''Food stamps and welfare are issued monthly to a debit-type card and SSI payments are deposited into a bank account or onto a MasterCard.'' And soon they will be able to use that in Cuba. Then what you need is ''a joint account holder with a PIN number who can withdraw the money and wire it to you in Cuba.''

Another option is just to entrust the money to a friend who is traveling to Cuba.

Roberto Pizano of Tampa, a political prisoner in Cuba for 18 years, said he worked two jobs when he arrived in the U.S. in 1979 and never accepted government help. He now sees immigrants ''abusing the system.''

He says he has a ''family friend,'' and this family friend got ''disability money from the U.S.'' and with the disability money he ''renovated a house in Cuba.'' The Sun Sentinel found this man. His name is Gilberto Reyno. You know where they found him? They found him living in Camaguey, Cuba. Quoting from the article:

The Sun Sentinel found Reyno living in that house in Camaguey, Cuba. He said he was no longer receiving disability, but Pizano and another person familiar with the situation said the payments continue to be deposited into a U.S. bank account.

Here is another example that Federal investigators found, according to the article:

A 2012 complaint alleged a 75-year-old woman had moved to Camaguey two years earlier and a relative was withdrawing her SSI money from a bank account and sending it to her. Social Security stopped payments, but not before nearly $16,000 had been deposited into her account.

Another recipient went to Cuba on vacation and then stayed, leaving his debit card with a relative. Social Security continued his SSI payments for another six months—$4,000 total—before an anonymous caller reported he had gone back to Cuba.

One woman reportedly moved to Cuba in 2010 and died three years later, while still receiving SSI and food stamps, according to a 2014 tip to Florida welfare fraud investigators.

Five Cubans interviewed by the Sun Sentinel in Havana said they were aware of the assistance and knew of Cubans who had gone to America and quickly began sending money back. Two said they believed it was U.S. government aid.

That means this is now spreading through word-of-mouth. So you live in Cuba, you know someone who left for the United States, they qualified for these benefits, and they start coming back and bringing the money with them or sending it back to their relatives, and word gets around. That is why it is not a surprise to read in this article:

Outside welfare offices in Hialeah, the Sun Sentinel found Cuban immigrants who had arrived as recently as three days earlier, applying for benefits. They said family and friends told them about the aid before they left Cuba.

''Back in the '60s, when you came in, they told you the factory that was hiring,'' said Nidia Diaz of Miami, a former bail bondswoman who was born in Cuba. ''Now they tell you the closest Department of Children and Families [office] so you can go and apply.''

This is a quote from another bail bondswoman:

Miami bail bondswoman Barbara Pozo said many of her Cuban clients talk openly about living in Cuba and collecting monthly disability checks, courtesy of U.S. taxpayers.

''They just come here to pick up the money,'' Pozo said. ''They pretend they're disabled. They just pretend they're crazy.''

SSI payments, for those who cannot work due to mental or physical disabilities, go up to $733 a month for an individual. Most other new immigrants are ineligible until they become U.S. citizens.

Some Cubans try to build a case for SSI by claiming trauma from their life under an oppressive government or the 90-mile crossing to Florida.

Diaz, the former bondswoman, said she has heard Cuban clients talk about qualifying: ''Tell them that you have emotional problems. How did you get these problems? Well, trying to get here from Cuba.''

Here is one that should really gall everybody, though these are all bad stories.

Antonio Comin collected disability while organizing missions to smuggle Cubans to Florida, including one he launched from a house in the Keys, Federal prosecutors said. Comin claimed he rented the home to celebrate his birthday—after receiving his government check.

Casimiro Martinez was receiving a monthly check for a mental disability—but his mind was sound enough to launder more than $1 million stolen from Medicare. Martinez was arrested at Miami International Airport after returning from a trip to Cuba.

While benefits are supposed to be suspended for recipients who leave the United States for more than 30 days, the government relies on people to self-report those absences, and Federal audits have found widespread violations.

So the only way you can find that someone is actually doing this is they have to call and say: Hey, by the way, I am now living in Cuba, and I am still collecting my checks. Well, that ain't gonna happen. This is an outrage.

Listen, my parents came from Cuba. I live in a community where Cuban exiles are a plurality of the people who live there. So no one can say this is an anti-immigrant thing or a mean-spirited thing. We have the support of every elected Cuban American Member of the House for this idea.

I myself come from a Cuban American family. This is an outrage. It is happening right underneath our noses. Who can be for this? Let me rephrase it. Who can be against doing something about this? We are talking about close to $700 million a year of American taxpayer money that could be spent right now to deal with the Zika virus issue that we are facing, for example. Instead, this money is being abused. It is being stolen.

So one would think: Wow, that is a commonsense thing; right? People here in the gallery, people at home—if anyone is actually watching C-span—would say: That is common sense. They will do something about it. Yet I can't get a vote on this amendment. I cannot get the Senate to vote on an amendment to stop this practice.

Here is the only thing I am asking. I am asking that if you come from Cuba, you have to prove you are a refugee. Prove that to us. I am not even saying we are not going to let you in. I am just saying that if you come from Cuba using the Cuban Adjustment Act, prove that you have been persecuted in Cuba. That is not hard to do. You were in jail; you were beaten. We know who the people are who are being persecuted. All I am saying is prove that you are a refugee, and then you will qualify for the benefits because we help refugees. But, apparently, that is too much to ask.

Here is the thing. Everybody here comes up to me and says: I am for your amendment. I support what you are trying to do. Great. Why can't we vote on it? We can't vote on it because if we give you your amendment, then we have to give the other side their amendments. And let me just tell you guys that this is why people are so sick of politics.

I don't want to get too much into the weeds on this, but suffice it to say I have spent from April 13 of 2015 through very recently traveling all over this country on another endeavor, and one of the things you hear from people is that they are just angry. They are just fed up. They think: Nobody whom we elect, whom we vote for, whom we send to Washington—nothing ever changes or happens. It doesn't matter. You can vote Republican, you can vote Democrat, or you can vote for a vegetarian. It doesn't matter whom you vote for. Nothing happens. These people don't do anything.

They are right. I have just come here today and laid this out. No one can

argue against what I have just said—no one. I challenge any Member of this Senate to come here now—I will give the rest of the time I have apportioned to me—and tell me why changing this is a bad idea. But I can't even get a vote on an amendment to change this.

The excuses are long: Oh, we can't do it because we don't want to open the tax portion of the bill because then other people will want their amendments. This is crazy. This is nuts. We can't solve problems. We can't solve something as clear and simple as that. We can't even get a vote. If you want to vote against what I am proposing, vote against it. We can't even get a vote on an amendment like this. It makes no sense.

This is not a small issue. We are talking $700 million. This is not an issue of national coverage. It is not in the news every day. This is not controversial. This is bipartisan. The chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, a Congresswoman from Florida, is a cosponsor of this bill in the House. So this is not partisan. It is not about getting anyone elected to anything. I am not running for anything. This is about doing what is right.

This is about being able to go back to my home community and say to people: This abuse has been addressed. But if I go home tonight or tomorrow to Florida and I run into somebody at the grocery store, I can't explain to them with a straight face why the Senate will not give me a vote on this because it makes no sense. If I came to you and said: They are stealing $700 million a year from you, and here is a very simple way to stop it, you would say: Let's do it. We have to do it. But here they are saying: We can't do it. And no one will tell you why we can't do it, except for some procedural internal Senate thing.

This is ridiculous. This is why people are angry. This is why people are so upset. This is why people have taken on this attitude to get rid of everyone. And I have to tell you, it is hard to blame them after seeing what is happening here now. This is total and complete outrage.

There is another amendment being debated, by the way, by Senator SESSIONS. It is another one of the amendments that was denied a vote. It has to do with the entry-exit tracking system, which basically means that when you come into the United States with a visa—you get a visa to visit the United States for 90 days as a tourist. You want to go to Washington, you want to go to Disney World, you want to go to New York City, and you have 60 to 90 days to visit the United States. When you arrive, we check you in. But we never check you out. So we never know when or if someone has left.

As a result, today, of the 12 or 13 or 14 million people who are here illegally, about 40 percent or so of them are people who have overstayed their visas. They didn't cross the border illegally. They came on an airplane, and they overstayed their visa.

Everyone says they are in favor of a system that tracks entries and exits so we can crack down on these overstayed visas. Everyone says they are in favor of it. In 2013, the Senate passed a controversial immigration reform bill that I was a part of and we helped craft, and an entry-exit tracking system was part of that bill.

Everyone—Democrat, Republican, liberal, conservative—says they are in favor of doing that. But you can't get a vote on an amendment dealing with it. Again, it makes no sense. This place can't solve anything, and this is ridiculous.

So what happens when you don't solve things for a long time? The problems stack up. The problems stack up and people lose confidence. People lose faith.

Look, I understand this process. I know everyone is not always going to get everything. You are not going to achieve everything you want when you get involved in these issues, but these are commonsense issues. An entry-exit tracking system—of course that makes sense.

By the way, you have to do that on the FAA bill. You have to because that has to do with airports where most of the entry-exits are happening. This issue is drafted to this bill because this bill has a piece of it that deals with the Tax Code and finance. A moment ago, the chairman said we had a lot of debate. They had an open amendment process on the FAA bill, but there is a finance component to this bill that was not offered until it got here. That is what my amendment is drafted on, so I couldn't have offered this in a committee.

I think people come to Washington and watch this process; they hear me explain this thing. They are wondering, there has to be a catch, right? What is the other side of the argument? There is no other side of the argument. There is none. There is none.

Why should you, the people watching, the people here, why should anybody, why should the American taxpayer be giving money to people who don't live here to build houses in another country? That is what is happening right underneath our noses. Forget about passing it. You can't even get a vote on it, for reasons no one can explain.

Do you want to know why people are upset and frustrated with the political process? This is a small but important example of why people are so frustrated. I hope this will change. I hope it will change. I hope it will change on this bill because I don't think you can explain with a straight face why something like this can't pass or why something like this can't even get a vote on it. This makes absolutely no sense, but this is what is happening here every single day on a routine basis. When I say ''here,'' I mean in Washington. The result is, people start to scratch their heads and say: You know what. It doesn't matter whom we elect, nothing changes. That explains a lot about the frustrations that are going on in this country. I hope that will change.

HONORING ASSAULT BRIGADE 2506

Madam President, I want to talk about another topic briefly. It is also related to Cuba but on a much different note. It has to do with the Bay of Pigs, which is something that happened a while back. April 17 will mark the anniversary of a significant event in history. It is an event that many in our government over the years have been eager to forget and is often cited as a blemish on our history, but I beg to differ in some ways. The result wasn't what we wanted, but we have a lot to be proud of. I think it has become increasingly important to remember.

Fifty-five years ago this Sunday, on April 17, 1961, there were 1,500 brave volunteers who embarked upon a mission to liberate Cuba from Fidel Castro's oppressive grip. This force was primarily made up of Cuban exiles, but they were a diverse group from all backgrounds within Cuban society.

They knew they would be badly outnumbered and they would face extraordinary odds. Yet these men stormed the beaches of Playa Giron at the Bay of Pigs. They did it for what at the time was their country, Cuba. They did it for their families. They did it for freedom itself. Over the next 4 days, nearly 100 members of the Brigada de Asalto—Assault Brigade 2506—lost their lives—nearly 100 members. Included in that number were four American pilots and five others who were executed. The majority were captured and imprisoned for many months and years and in inhumane conditions.

Though the Bay of Pigs invasion failed, it was a triumph of courage for the brave Cuban exiles at the mission's helm, and it serves as a reminder of an era when the U.S. Government actually embraced America's role as the watchman on the walls of freedom.

Since taking power those many years ago, the anti-American Castro regime has never relented in its attempts to undermine our security and suppress its own people. More than 1 million Cubans have voted with their feet, fleeing the island in search of political freedom or better economic conditions—we just discussed that a moment ago—often coming to the United States.

Many of these refugees are my neighbors, my friends, and constituents. My own parents left Cuba several years before Castro took over, but their lives were nonetheless marred by his rule as well. The relationships with family and friends and access to their homeland were abruptly severed.

For the nearly 1,500 Cuban exiles who made up the Assault Brigade 2506, Fidel Castro was not the leader of their country. He was what he has always been—a thief and an imposter. They knew liberty was a God-given right, and they needed to do all in their power to reclaim it.

Their story says as much about their own resilience as it does about America. The very building I stand in, and the proud body I am a Member of, would not exist were it not for men like them over 150 years before.

America's Declaration of Independence says of mankind's inalienable rights that ''whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government.''

Those who undertook the Bay of Pigs invasion fought for their country, not against it. Their cause was a humanitarian cause, a noble cause, in many ways, an American cause. Many of those who were captured and eventually released and exiled to the United States came with nothing—not a penny—and in many cases no English skills. They went to work and embraced America's blessings, but they never forgot their homeland.

Some made it their life's work to promote the cause of a free Cuba. Others went to work on a different endeavor to provide for their families but dedicated countless hours as faithful volunteers of the cause. Many of the former members of the Brigade 2506 would take up arms for the United States, serving in our Armed Forces with the same bravery and distinction they showed at the Bay of Pigs. In doing so, they served as teachers to an entire community.

For example, today in Miami a Brigade 2506 monument and museum now exists as much to commemorate these heroes as they do to educate others. Far from being forgotten, the example of these brave men has inspired others to carry on their work. Their legacy lives, and it lives on among those of us who follow in their footsteps by making their cause of a free Cuba our cause.

Today the spirit of those who paid the ultimate price is alive and well in the brigade's Veterans Association and continues to stand firmly against the Castro brothers' dictatorship. Their spirit is also alive inside Cuba, represented by all those who stand up to the repressive regime and its beatings, detentions, and suppressions of speech. A strong dissident movement within the island refuses to be silenced, demanding change and the right of every human being to be free.

Sadly, this administration has betrayed that spirit of dissension by treating the Castro government as if it were democratically elected. The President's actions have only motivated the dictatorship to increase in its very nature, but as long as the spirit of the brigade lives on, the dream of a free Cuba will never die.

Following the Bay of Pigs invasion, in December of 1962, President Kennedy delivered a speech in Miami honoring those who fought. Accepting an honor from them in return, he accepted the flag of their brigade. President Kennedy said: ''I can assure you that this flag will be returned to this brigade in a free Havana.''

That assurance was not made by a man but by a nation. It came with no expiration date. I believe we as Americans owe it to the fearless men who fought at the Bay of Pigs to ensure that their flag, which last touched the shores of Cuba 55 years ago this week, is one day returned to a free Havana and that everything that flag represents—freedom, sacrifice, the dreams of the Cuban people—remains the cause of the United States.

To the veterans of Assault Brigade 2506, thank you for your service and God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I thank Senator RUBIO for his comments and his heartfelt expressions. It is important, and his amendment is very commonsensical. It deals with a very real abuse that I know he and many Cuban Americans understand to be an abuse and want to see ended. This would be a good opportunity for us to pass it, and I understand Senator RUBIO's frustrations that we seem to be unable to fix problems around this body.

That is my feeling this afternoon, too—this frustration that we are not able to finally take action on things like the entry-exit visa system and complete it, as we promised to do for years. We get very close, but we don't get there. I thank Senator RUBIO for his excellent leadership on this issue and support for the amendment that I have worked on. I think it is very reasonable and an appropriate amendment. It gives plenty of opportunity for us to carry out the necessary program in a reasonable way.

The amendment I submitted will ensure the implementation of the statutorily required biometric exit system. It has been in law for a long time. It was first set in law in 1996—20 years ago. There were at least eight or more times where we mandated this legislation. The first one was in 1996. These requirements were basically ignored. They were eventually modified and then the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, occurred.

Congress responded to that by demanding the government implement this entry-exit system when we passed the PATRIOT Act to provide greater security for America. It stated that an entry-exit data system should be fully implemented for airports, seaports, land border ports of entry ''with all deliberate speed and as expeditiously as practical.'' That was in 2001.

If you remember what happened after 9/11, we had a 9/11 Commission—and it was a bipartisan Commission—and that Commission was charged with a serious responsibility of analyzing our immigration system, analyzing our public safety system, our intelligence system, and all kinds of problems that made us more vulnerable than we need to be. One of their recommendations was that we have a system when you come into America on a visa, you clock yourself in—like many workplaces have—and you clock yourself out when you leave the country and your time on your visa expires. Then the United States would know who would come and who had exited.

Of course, we also know, if you recall back to that day, a number of the 9/11 attackers who killed 3,000 Americans came on visas lawfully. Several of them overstayed with the visas they had. So this was the response.

We have the capability of doing this. We have had the capability for many years, and it has not happened. Ten years after 2001, the 9/11 attack, the 9/11 Commissioners met again. The purpose of their meeting was to ascertain how much of what they had recommended had actually been accomplished by the U.S. Government. One of the very first things they noted was the failure to complete the exit system. This is why it has become such a big issue.

In 2002 we passed a law that further moved forward with the system. It required the government to install biometric readers and scanners at all ports of entry of the United States. In fact, we have a system to collect biometric information from individuals who wish to enter the country, but oddly we don't have the exit system. Why is it so much harder to have a system to allow you to document your exit than it is to document your entry? This is a serious problem.

Subsequently, and consistent with the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, which mandated the entry-exit system be complete and be biometrically based. That is different from biographic. In a biographically-based system, you give your Social Security number and name and they check to see if somebody has a warrant out for your arrest or if you should be on a no-fly list or if you are connected with terrorism or organized crime or drug-dealing gangs or whatever is in our systems. You can just give a false name. That is not a very secure system at all.

What the 9/11 Commission correctly concluded was, if you used a biometric

system where they read your fingerprints, somebody couldn't come in and say they are John Jones and they are really Ralph Smith, who has a warrant out for his arrest for terrorism somewhere. That is the kind of thing this system was designed to do and can be done.

Despite the relatively successful implementation of a biometric entry system, the Department has largely failed to implement the requirements. To date, the Department of Homeland Security has only implemented a handful of pilot programs. It is not hard to do. Yet they have been dragging their feet for years now. However, there are some promising developments on this system. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 created a dedicated source of money for implementation of the biometric exit. It has been estimated that this will result in approximately $1 billion in funds that will be used solely for the implementation of the biometric exit system. That is already in law and required to be a part of our legal and immigration system.

Yet, even with this source of funding, hurdles remain to the implementation this system. My amendment will remove one of the biggest remaining hurdles to the implementation of the system. It simply states that no funds from this Federal aviation bill, which funds airports, runways, safety systems, and all of those different systems, can be expended ''for the physical modification of any existing air navigation facility that is a port of entry or construction of a new air navigation facility intended to be a port of entry, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security certifies that the owner or sponsor of the facility has agreed to a plan that guarantees the installation and implementation of the [biometric exit system] at such facility not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Act.'' In other words, it gives them 2 years. They have to reach an agreement to actually take steps to fix this problem.

I modified my amendment in an attempt to address some concerns that were raised by the airlines by explicitly referring to the $1 billion appropriated for this system. We received positive feedback from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which has to deal with this every day. My amendment also has been endorsed by the Border Patrol Union. They know this is a loophole in our system, a gaping hole in our security. They want to see it completed, and it is long overdue.

The amendment allows the U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers and each airport that serves as a port of entry to create a solution that works specifically for the needs of the CBP and the limitations of each individual airport. It does require, however, that the parties agree to a plan that guarantees the system will be installed and implemented.

The suggestions we have had in response as to the kind of language critics and objectors would like to see—it never has an end date. They say, well, you can begin a pilot project or you can do this, that, and the other, but they never give a date as to when it should actually be completed.

Colleagues, this system can be made to work. In my opinion, it can be implemented in every airport in 6 months. We have companies that have this kind of system that is used all over the place, and even Disney World and Disneyland use a fingerprint system. It is on our cell phones. This is the kind of thing that is really no problem to make happen, but we lack the will and determination to see it through, and we let people who don't like it—special interest groups—push back, and as a result, it somehow never gets completed.

In fact, Homeland Security, airports, and airlines have already had a generous amount of time in which to get this completed. It could be done quickly.

One manufacturer said: We should host a special products day. You should just have a day out here. People think it can't be done. Have a day and ask all the manufacturers around the country to bring forth their equipment that is being used in businesses and places all over the country, such as nuclear plants, and set them up and let us show you what we can do with it.

Another company said: You don't even have to touch a screen. You can wave your hand in front of the screen, and it will read your fingerprints.

These are proven products, and the prices are low and falling and at the most basic level. If Apple and Samsung can put it on their phones, we can certainly do it at the airports.

The special interests also say it will take up a lot of space. It will not take up a lot of space. Police officers have these kinds of fingerprint-reading systems in their automobiles. When they arrest somebody for a crime and want to know if there is a warrant for that person's arrest somewhere around the country, they ask that person to put their hand on the screen. The computer reads it and runs the fingerprint against the National Crime Information Center records. If it says bingo, there is a warrant for his arrest for murder, robbery, or drug dealing, they can detain that person.

CBP can work with larger airports with international terminals and install physical equipment at their international departure gates. It is only the international departure gates. CBP—Customs and Border Patrol—can work with smaller airports and even deploy handheld systems similar to the ones that are in cars at the gates that handle international flights. Ultimately, all passengers exiting the United States need to do is place their hands on a simple screen—or with some devices, just wave their hands at it—and it will biometrically identify the passenger as truly the one shown on the flight documents as exiting the United States.

You can come here with a false document. Terrorists work on these things all the time. Terrorists use false identification. We know there are systems out there making them by the thousands and tens of thousands. But if your fingerprint doesn't match the fingerprint of the person whose name you are using and it turns out to match somebody who is on a terrorist watch list, then you can stop it and create safety. If a person puts out their hand and there is a hit because the person boarding the plane is on a no-fly list, the passenger can be denied boarding or removed from the plane before it takes off, and their baggage can be removed from the plane before it takes off.

Importantly, the United States will have a unified, automatically produced list of people who departed when their visa said they should depart and a list of people who did not depart when their visa expired.

By the way, colleagues, several years ago the Congressional Budget Office found that 40-plus percent of people illegally in America came by visa. They came legally; they just did not leave. They said that number is increasing. I believe it is increasing rather rapidly, and we are going to see more of it in the future. If you don't have a system to identify people who overstay their lawful entry, then you do not have a lawful system of immigration. It is just that simple.

For a host of reasons, this system should be based on fingerprints.

The former Secretary of Homeland Security and former Governor of Pennsylvania, Secretary Ridge, set up this system some time ago. When I talked to him about it, I told him as a former prosecutor that it needed to be based on the fingerprint system. Some people had other ideas about it, such as eye or facial recognition. These things can technically be done, but they can't run a check on somebody who committed murder somewhere and has a warrant out for their arrest and is fleeing the United States, because our basic law enforcement system only has certain data of people who are wanted for criminal activity. You need to use the fingerprint. It has been proven, it works, and it is used in every criminal justice system in the United States.

When he left office after going round and round about this subject, Secretary Ridge said: I have one bit of advice for my successors, and that is, use the fingerprint. I believe he was totally correct, and it still remains the only real system that will work.

Let's also be aware that numerous countries across the world—including

New Zealand, Singapore, and Hong Kong—have been using biometric systems for years. This is nothing new. Others do it, and we can do it too.

Ending this failure has bipartisan support. My subcommittee, the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, held a hearing on January 20 of this year entitled—I thought it was a pretty good title—''Why is the biometric exit tracking system still not in place?'' That is a pretty good question. Well, during the hearing, we got promises from government officials, but there was no commitment that they would actually complete the system. They said: Oh, we are doing pilot projects. We are considering this and working on it. Well, they have been working on it for 20 years. We had our members who were there—all three Democratic members who were at that subcommittee hearing said they favor this. There is no real opposition to it.

Just a few weeks after the hearing, Secretary Johnson of Homeland Security made public statements directing DHS to begin implementation of the system at our airports by 2018. To begin implementation when? In 2018. There was no promise that it would be completed, and there was no assurance that they were going to make the system a reality. This is at least an acknowledgement that it is needed, but we need a completion date.

It is these kinds of lulling comments that we have heard for years that have resulted in no action. If people in the Senate would like to know why the American people are not happy with the performance of Congress, this is a very good example. Congress promises to fix the problem, even claims we voted for and passed laws to fix a problem, and then it stands by while two decades go by and nothing happens. Why? Well, their special interests speak up. We have lobbyists sending out letters telling Members to oppose the Sessions amendment.

It is time for us to represent the national interest. The time for the special interests is over on this subject. Congress has spoken repeatedly. The American people are getting tired of this. I am getting tired of this. Who runs this place? Elected representatives or some high-paid lobbyist somewhere? They have been dragging this out and fighting it tenaciously with every effort they have had for years, and it has not happened and America is at risk because of it. Airports and airlines are happy to get Federal assistance whenever they can. They better be trying to cooperate and make their airlines even safer than they are today.

It is time to fulfill the promise and commitment we made to the American people. How much longer can this go on? We promised the American people a system that will demonstrably improve our national security. We voted for it time and again. We have bipartisan support for it. If we can get a vote on this amendment, we will see a huge bipartisan majority vote for it. I don't know who would vote against it. But we don't get to vote, and as a result nothing happens for years.

This was noted by the former Commissioners on the 9/11 Commission in a report issued in 2014:

> Without exit-tracking, our government does not know when a foreign visitor admitted to the United States on a temporary basis has overstayed his or her admission. Had this system been in place on 9/11, we would have had a better chance of detecting the plotters before they struck.

That is why it is important. We have long known that visa overstays pose a serious national security risk. A number of the hijackers on September 11 overstayed their visas. The number of visa overstays implicated in terrorism since that date is certainly a significant number.

A new poll came out earlier this year that indicates that three out of four Americans not only want the Obama administration to find those aliens who overstay their visas but to also deport them.

Why not? They came here for a limited period of time. We have a law that says they can stay for a certain amount of time. It is not that hard to get a visa to the United States, but shouldn't they leave when their visa is up? Do they just get to stay here and take a job, perhaps from an unemployed American citizen?

The same poll indicates that 68 percent of Americans consider visa overstays as a ''serious national security risk'' and 31 percent consider visa overstays as a ''very serious'' national security risk. There is no doubt as to why.

The risk to our national security is too high for us to maintain the status quo. We must fulfill this promise. We must do everything we can to implement the system. I hope that some way, somehow, before this bill goes to final passage—dealing with airports and public safety issues—we fix this problem. Why not? I don't know a single person who opposes it, but we couldn't get the amendment up; we couldn't make it pending. The Democrats objected to it. Now we have an objection to having a vote on it before final passage of the legislation.

So I am frustrated. I have been pushing this for years. Even the Gang of 8 bill had it in there. So this is not something that I think is in any way unreasonable. It is time to bring it to a conclusion. I urge my colleagues: Let's figure out a way to make this happen.

I appreciate Senator THUNE, who is managing the bill. He is definitely for it and wants to see it happen. But right now we have objections from the Democratic side, and we don't seem to be able to get it through.

I urge my colleagues to reevaluate and approve passage of this amendment that should have virtually unanimous support in the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the opening on the Supreme Court. Today I am going to focus my remarks on how important filling the current vacancy on the Supreme Court is for our system of governance.

When our Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution, they envisioned a system of governance upheld by three branches of government. The Federalist Papers outline this balance of power in detail. In Federalist Paper No. 51, James Madison spoke about the importance of checks and balances among three branches of government. As Madison stated: ''It is . . . evident that the members of each department should be as little dependent as possible on those of the others.'' I don't think we always refer to ourselves as members of a department, but what he meant by this is that there are three departments in our government—the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch. In Federalist Papers 78 and 80, Alexander Hamilton wrote about the important role of the Federal judiciary in particular. The writings of the Founders make clear that our democracy only works when all three branches are functioning.

In recent years, gridlock has hobbled the ability of the legislative branch to function. Although we have made some progress in starting to turn that around with the passage of the recent Transportation bill, the Education bill, and the budget, we also have had some very difficult times—fiscal cliff, the government shutdown. We cannot take that dysfunction to the third—as was called by James Madison—department of government, which is the judiciary. We cannot have a Supreme Court that doesn't function, which is exactly what is happening as some continue to obstruct the process, when all we want is a hearing.

We have already witnessed the Court split evenly without a ninth Justice to break the tie this year. These types of decisions can prevent the Court from responding to pressing issues in a timely fashion. In some decisions where there has been a 4-to-4 split, the result is effectively the same as if the Supreme Court never heard the case to begin with.

What if there was an emergency case like we had with Bush v. Gore? Again, do we want a 4-to-4 split in a case like that? Justice Kagan has said the current Justices on the Court are doing everything they can to avoid a 4-to-4 split, but that is not how it should work. Often these types of decisions provide less guidance to States, offering them less legal certainty.

Last week I held a meeting of the Steering and Outreach Committee, where I heard firsthand about what a serious issue this is for State and local governments. You have patchwork decisions across the country with perhaps 2 years that will go by before you have a High Court of the land that can decide which case and which decision rules when there is a split in the circuit. You can't continue to have a split on the Court.

As the former chief prosecutor from Minnesota's largest county, I know from my own experience how important it is to have an ultimate arbiter to settle the law of the land. Cases challenging critical laws are now before the Supreme Court. We want those laws to rise or fall because the Supreme Court has decided the issue—not because of a 4-to-4 split, not because they were unable to do their job.

More split decisions are not the only risks we are facing. The current vacancy on the Supreme Court also has implications for the number of cases the Court is able to take in the first place.

In March of last year, the U.S. Supreme Court granted certiorari—that means they took the case—in eight cases. This year, it only did so for two cases. The current situation is compromising the integrity of our judiciary. If we allow the Supreme Court to become a casualty of the polarization in our politics, if we let politics impede the Court from having another Justice and from doing its job, people will lose confidence in the Court.

That is what sets our country apart. When you talk to companies across the world that want to invest in different countries, they look at the fact that we have a functioning judiciary.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 18, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Thune amendment No. 3680 be agreed to; the substitute amendment, as amended, No. 3679, be agreed to; and the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, again I say to my colleagues that we made a lot of good headway on the FAA reauthorization bill. Throughout the day today—as we did quite late last night—we have attempted to negotiate a path forward to adopt more amendments. We have a package of amendments that have been cleared. A number of our colleagues wanted votes on their amendments, but there have been objections on both sides of the aisle which prevented us from getting to a final resolution.

This morning we adopted cloture on the substitute with a very big vote, but we still have to have a cloture vote on Monday on the underlying bill, which will occur at 5:30 p.m. So I am here to inform my colleagues that there will be no further rollcall votes during today's session of the Senate and we will proceed with the cloture vote on the underlying bill at 5:30 p.m. on Monday. Shortly after that vote, I hope to get to final passage on the FAA reauthorization so we can move on to other business in the Senate.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

(The remarks of Mr. KING pertaining to the introduction of S. 2800 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I also want to address a second issue while I have the floor, and that is a conversation I had yesterday with Judge Merrick Garland. We had an opportunity to talk in my office for about 45 minutes to an hour. We talked about a wide range of topics: the limits on the President's Executive authority, how the Court should provide oversight to regulatory agencies, the Second Amendment, the role of stare decisis respect for precedence, general judicial philosophy. We talked about a number of issues, and I wanted to share with the Senate some observations from that meeting.

No. 1, the first thing I thought of last night after reflecting upon this conversation is that I used to be in the judge-appointing business. As Governor of Maine, I probably appointed 10 or 15 judges over my 8-year term, maybe more. I don't have a specific number, but I do recall the process which brought prospective judges in by a judicial selection committee, and then I would consider their qualifications and interview them in much the same way I did yesterday.

I always look for the same qualities: first, high intellect; knowledge of the law; nonpomposity—as a young lawyer, I didn't like pompous judges, and I don't like people who uphold themselves, particularly when they are in positions of authority, so a kind of modest demeanor; finally, a temperament whereby they can apply the law and make decisions without any discernible political or ideological bent. Indeed, as I thought back on the conversation I had with Judge Garland yesterday, I realized that he exactly fit that criteria. Were he an applicant or a candidate for the supreme court in the State of Maine and if I were the Governor, he would be the kind of guy I was looking for.

The other thing I reflected on as I was thinking about the conversation is that I wish the people of America had been looking over my shoulder and had heard the conversation, the questions, heard his answers, studied his body language and how he approached these questions, how his mind works, how he thinks.

I thought about the fact that many of us are having these meetings with the judge over these weeks, Members from both parties, and what we are doing is kind of a slow-motion hearing without the public being able to watch what is going on. I think that is where we are missing the boat on this nomination.

I fully understand the discretion every Senator has to make their own decision on whether this is a nomination that should go forward, but we are denying the American people the opportunity to participate in this process by not having a hearing and allowing them to see and hear and meet Judge Garland. I don't understand that.

Well, I guess I do understand the politics, and I will talk about that in a minute, but I don't understand why we are shutting the people out of this process, because if there was a hearing, it would probably go on for hours, there would be dozens of questions, the Senators could ask all the questions

they wanted, and the public and the Senators would be able to observe this man and get a feel for who he is, what he would bring to this job, and the kind of person he is.

I have not made a final decision. If and when he is brought to the floor for a vote, I haven't yet decided how I will vote, although based upon my meeting yesterday and my knowledge of his prior judicial experience and his reputation, I am inclined to say yes. But I want to have a hearing. I want to see how he does in that hot seat where he is asked difficult questions by our colleagues. I want to see the reaction not only of the Senators but of the people of America as they have a chance to meet Judge Garland.

One of the things that concerns me about this process—and ironically Chief Justice Roberts commented on this just a few months ago, before the death of Justice Scalia—is the politicization of the Supreme Court. I am not naive, and I realize the Supreme Court makes important fundamental decisions. It is an important part of our governmental structure and makes far-reaching decisions that have effects on many people across the country. But I am afraid that today we have gotten to the point where the Supreme Court is treated as almost like a third branch of Congress. It is another political body. Instead of being elected by the people, it is being elected by the Senators, and we are arguing about who gets to elect this so-called swing vote and which way the Court is going to be.

The Supreme Court should not be a political body, period. It should be a body made up of people—my impression of Judge Garland—who are servants of the law, who are students of the law, who are moderate and temperate.

I walked out of our meeting and I thought, this guy is a conservative with a small ''c.'' He is a modest man with a deep knowledge of the law and a razor-sharp intellect but no political or ideological agenda that I could discern. I suspect that if and when—I believe it will ultimately be when—he is confirmed, he will turn into a Justice who will vote on one side of issues sometimes and make certain people happy and others unhappy at other times. I think he is going to be a straight-down-the-middle judge who calls it as he sees it, and I think that is exactly what we need on the Supreme Court today.

The other quality he has demonstrated as chief judge of the circuit court is the ability to bring consensus. By all reports of people who have worked with him—judges, people who have known him—he is a consensus builder. He is not a flamboyant, strong, charismatic kind of guy, but he brings people together. He marshals the court. He works toward unanimity. He is not a dissenter. He is not a firebrand. He is principled, but he is a consensus builder, and we definitely need that.

Five-to-four decisions, whichever way they go, in the long run are not good for the country, in my view, because they divide us and illegitimize the Court as a judicial arbiter of the Constitution as opposed to another political branch of our government.

So I believe what we should be doing is fulfilling our constitutional responsibility—not to vote yes, necessarily. The Constitution does not say the President shall nominate and we shall approve—but to consider and to advise and consent. That involves the simple matter of a hearing and would include the American people in the process.

There is a lot of discussion here of ''let's hear from the American people.'' The way to hear from the American people is to have hearings, let them watch, let them take the measure of this person, and let us know how they think we should carry forth our constitutional responsibility in this case.

He appears to be—from what I know so far—an extraordinary candidate, not ideological, not partisan. I have no idea of his partisan background. I did not even ask him. It occurred to me afterward that perhaps I should have, but I didn't. I know he has worked in the Justice Department. He has been a prosecutor. He has been a private attorney, and he has been a very well respected judge.

I think he is a judge's judge, a lawyer's lawyer. That is the kind of person I think we need on the Court in this day and age. So I hope we can find a way to move to hearings, to allow the American people to participate in this process, to watch the process unfold, to get to know the judge. Let's get to know him better and then make our decision so we can carry out our constitutional responsibility to advise and consent.

That, I believe, is what we owe the Constitution and what we owe the people of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

ISIS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss briefly the fight against ISIS and the sources of its financial support. As the administration accelerates the coalition military campaign against ISIS, I believe the administration must continue to intensify efforts to dismantle the financial networks that support this vicious terrorist organization.

We know that ISIS operates like a criminal syndicate and profits from the illicit sale of oil, antiquities, and other items through the black market, all while extorting civilians it has under its control. ISIS uses this funding to conduct terror attacks and control territory in both Iraq and Syria. They use it to buy more weapons, ammunition, and components for improvised explosive devices, which we know by the acronym IEDs.

They also use this funding to pay for salaries for fighters and to develop propaganda materials to spread their hateful ideology. Already, we have seen evidence that both U.S. and coalition efforts against their financial networks, including airstrikes on oil trucks and cash storage sites, have had a meaningful impact on their finances—the finances of ISIS.

There is evidence that ISIS has had to reduce the salaries they pay their fighters in recent months. That is good news. I believe that if we can cut off their money, we can significantly diminish their ability to operate. Members of Congress should support this effort in any way we can.

Recently, during the month of February, I traveled to four countries to focus on part of this effort. I visited Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar to press the foreign leaders in those countries, especially the last three, to accelerate the fight against terrorist financiers and facilitators.

Much more remains to be done to cut off the financing that ISIS receives. A recent report by the Culture Under Threat Task Force describes ISIS as ''industrial, methodical, and strictly controlled from the highest levels of the organization's leadership.'' This report further indicates the analysts' warning that ISIS may try to increase its antiquities trafficking activity as other revenue streams such as oil sales are, in fact, cut off.

So we have to be on guard for this and take action against it. I sponsored the Senate version of the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act of 2015. This is a bill that would restrict the importation into the United States of antiquities smuggled out of Syria since the beginning of the conflict. It also expresses the sense of Congress that the administration should better coordinate among the many agencies with expertise in counterterrorism finance and cultural heritage protection so there is better coordination within the administration. That is the aim of the legislation.

This bill also sends a strong signal that the United States will not be a market for this illicit activity that only benefits terrorists and especially ISIS. It also will not be a market that funds any terrorist group that leads to the destruction of cultural heritage. So I want to thank Senators PERDUE, GRASSLEY, COONS, and PETERS for their cosponsorship of this important legislation.

I am pleased that the Senate passed the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act. It passed just last night. It is urgent that we send this bill to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to urge swift passage of the bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016 currently pending on the Senate floor.

This legislation supports U.S. jobs and promotes competition while increasing safety in the national aerospace system. In the wake of the tragic attacks in Brussels, the bill includes a number of important airport security reforms.

We are proposing to invest in our Nation's airports by authorizing a $400 million increase for the Airport Improvement Program, which airports across the Nation rely on to modernize their infrastructure. We are also seeking to preserve the Federal Contract Tower Program, which supports general aviation safety, commercial airports, law enforcement, and emergency medical operations.

Michigan is a large State, and our rural airports keep smaller communities across the Upper Peninsula and Northern Michigan competitive and connected. Maintaining the Essential Air Service Program supports airports that Michiganders rely on, such as the Alpena County Regional Airport, Muskegon County Airport, and Delta County Airport.

This bill also advances responsible usage of unmanned aircraft systems—known more commonly as UAS or drones—by addressing safety and privacy issues, enhancing enforcement against irresponsible usage, and creating new opportunities for research, development, and the testing of these innovative technologies.

I thank my colleagues—Commerce Committee Chairman JOHN THUNE and Ranking Member BILL NELSON—for working with me during the committee markup process to include a provision that grew out of bipartisan legislation I authored with Senator MORAN of Kansas—the Higher Education UAS Modernization Act. This important legislation will clear the way for our Nation's students and educators to use UAS technology for research, education, and job training. This will keep our research universities, workforce, and manufacturers on the cutting edge of global competitiveness as they develop the UAS of the future that will drive our economy forward. Our brightest minds will have the ability to design, to refine, and to fly UAS so they can advance these technologies to help prepare our country for safe, widespread integration of UAS into the National Airspace System. This will support job creation across the income spectrum as our Nation's workforce will be able to get the training they need to operate these systems both safely and efficiently.

This legislation has the support of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, the Association of American Universities, and dozens of other colleges and universities across this country.

In addition to advancing the next generation of civilian drone development, the reauthorization being considered also supports and protects the ability of our Air National Guard to safely and effectively operate remotely piloted aircraft, or RPAs.

I worked to include legislation that helps Air National Guard units across this country maintain their operations, including the Michigan Air National Guard's 110th Attack Wing in Battle Creek, MI, which I had the privilege of visiting earlier this month. The 110th has two critical missions: operating MQ–9 Reaper RPAs and a Cyber Operations Squadron.

Michigan is proud to host these cutting-edge, high-tech military operations that securely and effectively operate aircraft located thousands of miles away supporting our troops that are deployed overseas. Our troops have a high demand for remotely piloted aircraft, which conduct intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations as well as offensive strike operations.

The Air Force is working hard to meet the demand for RPAs from commanders in theater and has already increased incentive pay for RPA pilots and doubled pilot class sizes to keep up with the demand.

Air National Guard units based in the United States but flying aircraft which could be anywhere else in the world add additional capacity to meet our global security needs. These are sensitive operations requiring very specific infrastructure that the Air National Guard has invested in at bases all across the country.

As certain Air National Guard units operating at civilian airports, like Battle Creek, transition from manned missions to remotely piloted aircraft missions, they are concerned the airport where they lease their base could be forced to either raise their rent or risk losing eligibility for much needed FAA grants. I worked with my colleagues—Senators COTTON and ERNST—on legislation to prevent this unfair and unnecessary choice for Battle Creek and other airports across the country. I am proud this provision has been included in the legislation we are considering today, which will prevent the FAA from denying grant funding on the basis that an airport renews a low-cost lease with a military unit, regardless of whether that unit operates aircraft physically stationed at the airport.

While I understand the FAA's interest in ensuring that airports receive a fair rate for the space they lease, I am glad this legislation will clarify that military units, including the National Guard, can continue to receive nominal leases. If an airport and a military unit agree to renew a low-cost lease, they should be able to proceed without concern the FAA will revoke the airport's grant authority.

The communities that host our military bases are proud of their role in national defense.

These airports shouldn't have to choose between continuing to host a military tenant and maintaining eligibility for grants that can improve the safety and efficiency of local airport operations.

Again, I want to applaud Leader MCCONNELL, Leader REID, Chairman THUNE, and Ranking Member NELSON for their work on this important bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage early next week.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, it may not look like it now, but we are actually making great progress in moving forward with a critical piece of legislation that would reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration and, in the process, make flying safer and more efficient for all of our citizens. Members across the aisle have worked together on this legislation, and I know we will have an important vote at 5:30 p.m. on Monday and hopefully be able to process some of the amendments that have been agreed upon by the managers of the bill, which are a part of the managers' package.

CALLING FOR APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL COUNSEL

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I want to turn to a topic that has concerned me a lot over the last year and troubles me more each day, and that is the use by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of an unsecured private email server while serving as our Nation's top diplomat. We have known

about her private email server for a while now and the great lengths she has gone to avoid compliance with some pretty important laws that Congress has passed and that have been signed into law by the President of the United States.

I believe transparency in government is very important in terms of building public confidence for what we are actually doing. That is why even when I was at the State level as Texas Attorney General, I was an avid supporter of open records and open meetings legislation so the public had access and saw their right to know honored.

Here in Congress, since I have gotten here, I have been working closely with my ideological opposite, Senator PAT LEAHY from Vermont, with him on the left end of the spectrum and me on the right end of the spectrum, but both agreeing that the public's right to know is so important when it comes to self-government and what the public doesn't know can hurt them. That is why when Lyndon Johnson signed the Freedom of Information Act into law, it passed with such broad support, and it continues to enjoy that kind of broad support today. It applies the principle of transparency and accountability, and in the process, it helps build confidence for what Congress is doing on the people's behalf.

It is pretty clear that Secretary Clinton sought to evade those important laws by setting up this private email server.

I know most people are familiar with the dot-com domains that we use perhaps at your home or my home, and we have the dot-gov domain, which is used by government agencies and the like. But then there is a dot-mil, which is used by the Department of Defense and is a classified system. There is actually another system that operates independently which carries the most sensitive classified information circulated by our intelligence community around the world.

Those are important distinctions because those don't necessarily talk to each other. In fact, they are not connected to the Internet. The classified intelligence system server is not connected to the military classified system or to the dot-gov system and certainly not to the dot-com or the private email server.

I have not heard another example of anybody who has been quite so careless—to use the President's term—or reckless—to use my term—with how private email servers are used to conduct official business. There is a lot of risk associated with that.

We know the former Secretary of State did delete tens of thousands of emails that were once on the server. In other words, she hadn't turned those over to the State Department to vet and determine whether they complied with court orders requiring the State Department to produce emails that were producible under the Freedom of Information Act. She just deleted them.

We know that her emails contained classified information, some at very high levels of government classification. As many of our Nation's top security experts will tell you, it is likely that our adversaries had easy access to and monitored Secretary Clinton's unsecured server, as well as the sensitive communications that were contained on it.

As Secretary of State, you are a member of the President's Cabinet. You are operating at the highest levels of classification with very sensitive information, and it is simply irresponsible to subject that information to the efforts by our Nation's adversaries to capture and read it and use it to their advantage.

All of this should concern all of us. I am not just talking about the political ramifications. This is not primarily about politics. But Secretary Clinton's actions were such an extreme breach of the Nation's confidence, and they potentially gave away extremely sensitive information that put our national security in jeopardy, not to mention the lives of those who serve our country in the intelligence community and whose very identity may have been revealed by this very sensitive classified information.

This is not a trivial matter. We need to treat this seriously, and the facts must be pursued in a thorough, impartial investigation. I know most people don't really believe there is such a thing as an impartial investigation here in Washington, DC, but there is a category of counsel that has been created by Congress to provide some measure of independence from the Department of Justice. That is called a special counsel. It is up to the Attorney General herself whether to appoint the special counsel when she recognizes that there is an apparent conflict of interest or at least an appearance of partiality that ought to be dealt with by the appointment of a special counsel.

Given the unprecedented nature of this case and the unavoidable conflicts of interest, I strongly believe there is no other appropriate action for Attorney General Loretta Lynch to take than to appoint a special counsel in this case to get to the bottom of it, to follow the facts to wherever they may lead, and to make sure the law is applied impartially and fairly wherever those may fall.

The American people were reminded of the need for a special counsel last weekend when, once again, President Obama opined publicly about the investigation. In an interview on Sunday, President Obama dismissed the email scandal by splitting hairs about how the government classifies information. According to the President—get this—''there's classified, and then there's classified'' information.

He was attempting to draw meaningless distinctions between levels of classification, suggesting that release or exposure of some classified information was OK as long as it wasn't the ''classified'' information, which supposedly he would say should be kept from our Nation's adversaries and kept confidential.

President Obama, in other words, was trying to indicate that even though classified information was on Secretary Clinton's private server, he somehow divined that it was not so sensitive that it would put our country in jeopardy.

First of all, we know that some of Secretary Clinton's emails were classified even beyond confidential, to the secret and top secret special access program levels—some of the highest levels of classification. Second, the President's comments have to be confusing to many public servants around the country, who, as part of their daily work, handle classified information and the way they do it when they are issued a national security clearance or sign a nondisclosure agreement. According to the President, it must be OK to expose some classified information to public view but not others. I can guess that people who work in that world must be somewhat confused and perplexed by the President's statement.

To dismissively talk about the different levels of classification is not only wrong but, frankly, it is insulting to Americans who work tirelessly on a daily basis to protect our national security and, in particular, to those who go to great lengths to properly and carefully handle classified information, even when it isn't particularly convenient.

But perhaps worse, the President was opining publicly on the results of an ongoing criminal investigation over which it turns out he knows absolutely nothing—at least if you believe the key players in that investigation. Although he claims to adhere to a strict line between himself and the investigation, President Obama repeatedly suggests his desired outcome and acts as if he is Secretary Clinton's front line of defense.

Here is President Obama in the same interview. He said that he ''continues to believe that [Secretary Clinton] has not jeopardized America's national security.''

How in the world could the President possibly know that if, in fact, there is a strict line between himself and the investigation?

Attorney General Lynch has testified and stated in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee—and FBI Director Comey has likewise testified—that there has been no reporting to the White House about the results of the

ongoing investigation. Everybody understands that would be improper, but somehow the President suggests it is all OK and that he knows, when, in fact, he doesn't know.

How could the President possibly know that, especially when—as the President made clear last Sunday—he has not been ''sorting through each and every aspect'' of the issue? By the President's own admission, he doesn't talk to the Attorney General or the FBI Director about ongoing investigations, and he certainly isn't conducting it, so he wouldn't have personal knowledge. Under no circumstance is this kind of commentary by the President OK. There is simply no way to read this without running a serious risk of trying to influence the outcome of the investigation, which everybody should recognize would be completely improper. The President has done this before and so has his spokesman, the White House Press Secretary. Time and again the White House has projected its desired outcome in this investigation to the public and, worse, to those people conducting it. As I said, it is completely inappropriate, but don't just take it from me.

As I mentioned a moment ago, last month the Judiciary Committee heard testimony from Attorney General Loretta Lynch. I conveyed to her at the time the need for a special counsel to investigate the case. At the hearing, Attorney General Lynch testified that it was her hope that everyone, including the White House, would stay silent when it comes to commenting on an ongoing investigation by the FBI.

I couldn't agree with her more. The responsible thing for the President to do would be to say nothing, particularly if he knows nothing about the content of an ongoing criminal investigation. I wish the President would take the advice of his lawyer, the Attorney General of the United States, and respect her prerogative as the Nation's chief law enforcement officer and the reputation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Director Comey made it clear that the FBI does not care for politics. It doesn't play politics. In fact, the credibility and integrity of the FBI depends upon their not playing politics. So why is the President playing politics with law enforcement?

Well, the threat of a President influencing an ongoing investigation intentionally or otherwise is not something we must just accept. What we need is an investigation that is as independent as possible.

I hope the Attorney General, in light of the President's comments and his attempt to influence the investigation—I can think of no other reason he would say what he did—reconsiders her refusal to appoint a special counsel in this case. At the very least, I hope the President quits talking about a subject he knows nothing about, which is what the investigation is revealing, and let the Justice Department do its job without feeling the pressure that apparently the White House is attempting to impose on the FBI and the Department of Justice.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I am here today to talk about the Zika virus, which we have been hearing a lot about in the news lately. It is a virus that first began to appear—well, obviously it has been around for a long time, but we began to see it in the news lately with regard to its implications in Brazil and Latin America. But it has now found its way here to the United States, and there has been a lot of discussion about it.

As the Presiding Officer knows, the President has requested $1.9 billion to deal with it. There are a lot of different things we need to do to address it. There has been a little bit of a squabble in the Congress about whether we should be spending that much money on it.

So one of the things I argued for—and it has happened—is that we should take some of the money that was set aside for Ebola when the Ebola crisis was going on—it was about $500 million of that that had been unspent. I argued that before we go to the $1.9 billion, there was $500 million immediately available. Let's assign that to be used. The President has agreed to do that. But there is still a shortfall on this issue. It does need to be addressed. I hope we can find a way to address it.

Obviously my political differences with the policies of the White House are well known and established, but this is an issue where I believe and I hope they will be supportive of this request.

To be abundantly clear, it is not just about throwing money at it. We have to make sure the money is being spent on the right things. This is not just saying ''Here is $1.9 billion'' and throwing the money at Zika; you want to make sure, No. 1, it is all being spent on dealing with the virus. Oftentimes in this place, when money is assigned for a catastrophe or a disaster or anything like this, a breakout of a disease, suddenly you see all kinds of other ideas and programs attached to it that have nothing to do with the primary reason the money is being spent. So we want to make sure, No. 1, that if there is $1.9 billion that is going to be spent on this, that all of it is spent on this and not on some other thing.

The second is, we want to make sure the money is being spent on the right things. What are the right things? Well, we have discussed those over the last few days. One of the most important things that need to happen long term is the money necessary for basic research to incentivize the vaccine. There is a belief that they can pretty quickly get to a vaccine that will protect people from this. That is important.

I think there needs to be thought put into the testing. Today, testing for the Zika virus is less than reliable. There is not a commercially available test. For example, in Florida, if you want to be tested for Zika, it has to be through the State department of health. You cannot go down to Quest Laboratory or one of the providers of lab tests and get it. There is not a commercially available test. So that has to be improved as well.

Those are the sorts of things I hope the money will be geared towards. This is why it is so important. I don't want us to take our eyes off of this because if this issue really takes off on us here in the United States, we don't want to say that we knew it was happening but we ignored it and did nothing about it.

On Monday of this week, there was a Reuter's report in which U.S. officials warned that the Zika virus is ''scarier'' than they initially thought. The Zika virus is now present in about 30 States. And by the way, there are hundreds of thousands of infections that could appear in the territory of Puerto Rico.

Here is a quote from the Deputy Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

> Everything we look at with this virus seems to be a bit scarier than we initially thought. And so while we absolutely hope we don't see widespread local transmission in the Continental United States, we need the States to be ready for that.

As of now, from my understanding, there has only been one case of transmission in the continental United States. That happens to be in Polk County, FL. But there are dozens in the territory of Puerto Rico. So this is deeply concerning.

The other thing they found is that the mosquito species that primarily transmits the virus is present in about 30 States rather than 12, as previously thought. So that, too, indicates that this could be a very serious issue that could find itself in places outside of the tropical climates to which we once thought it was limited.

On Wednesday, the Centers for Disease Control—this was last Wednesday—the CDC said that it is now clear that Zika definitely causes severe birth defects. Confirming the worst fears of many pregnant women in the United

States and Latin America, U.S. health officials said Wednesday that there is no longer any doubt that the Zika virus causes babies to be born with abnormally small heads and other severe brain defects.

This is something that now—looking at what has happened in Brazil and other parts of the country, there is now real concern about what this can mean for pregnant women and the ability to transmit that to their unborn child. The effects of it are devastating.

Initially it was thought that the Zika virus is very dangerous if you contract it in the first trimester but that after that the risk is no longer as grave. But on Thursday of this week, we got the news—this was reported in USA TODAY—that the Zika virus may, in fact, affect babies even in the later stages of pregnancy. The Zika virus may pose a threat to women and their fetuses even in the later stages of pregnancy, according to a study published online Wednesday in the BMG, which was formerly known as the British Medical Journal.

Doctors initially suspected that Zika infections, which are largely spread by mosquitoes, would be most harmful to fetuses in the first trimester or the first 3 months of a 9-month pregnancy. In this study, however, 23 percent of the mothers of babies with microcephaly were infected with Zika in the second trimester. Two mothers were infected in the sixth month of pregnancy. None were infected in the third trimester.

The babies in the study had problems that went far beyond simply small heads. The brain damage seen in the study was ''extremely severe, indicating a poor prognosis,'' according to the study.

The authors of the report have now expanded the study to a total of 130 babies with microcephaly. Several infants have had epileptic seizures within 3 to 5 months after birth. The extent of the brain damage seen in the babies in the study, which was captured in MRI images, was ''stunning,'' according to James Bale, Jr., a professor of pediatric neurology at the University of Utah School of Medicine. This is the quote: ''This is a really remarkable degree of damage.'' Babies with this condition have severe microcephaly, extra scalp skin, intellectual disabilities, and prominent occipital bone, which is located at the back of the head, according to the CDC.

By the way, these fetal brain disruptions we have talked about are normally extremely rare. A 2001 review in a medical journal identified only 20 cases, according to the CDC. So this is something we are looking at that does not normally happen as a normal risk, but it is clearly being exacerbated by the Zika virus. In fact, in MRI images published by the BMG study, one baby appears to have a very small, even nonexistent brain. Judging by the damage on the MRI, the baby in that image is likely to have severe cognitive impairment and may be unable to learn to walk or talk.

So that is why the same day I sent a letter to the Centers for Disease Control. I sent a letter to them regarding the Zika testing backlog.

On April 8, I hosted a briefing in Miami—a week ago tomorrow. Some State health departments, local health departments, and county government officials were represented. I included health officers from Puerto Rico. I publicly, as I said at the time, offered my support for the President's emergency supplemental funding request.

While I heard there were many obstacles that we face in fighting Zika, one aspect I heard about repeatedly was the distressing length of time it takes for diagnostic tests to be completed. I have subsequently seen media reports of pregnant women who have waited up to a month for the CDC to complete their diagnostic tests for the Zika virus while fearful mothers anxiously waited to know their child's fate.

Of course, we are still waiting for the supplemental request to be passed, and I hope we can do that quickly. There really is no reason to wait on this.

But until Congress approves the request, I urge the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to use whatever steps are necessary to dedicate currently available resources to clearing its current backlog of Zika diagnostic tests and to prioritize these tests for women who are pregnant.

I believe these essential steps will help us not only to ease mothers' minds who test negative for the virus but also to provide critical care for a child whose mother tests positive for the Zika virus. We know that screening for microcephaly should happen early and often, and receiving the results of a diagnostic test is the first step in that process. The CDC should have the capability to provide those services immediately to those who are waiting.

Ultimately, it is my hope that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will approve a commercial Zika diagnostic test in the near future so that these tests are more broadly available.

One more thing that was reported on Wednesday was that the House GOP is readying a Zika funding plan. House leaders are working on approving more funding by the end of this year. Once again, I encourage them to do so in light of the circumstances we now face.

I am not saying this is going to be an outbreak of crisis proportions, but I am saying that for a family that is potentially impacted by this, it will be a crisis. I am saying that it is important for these testing kits to be available—not only for the expectant mothers or potentially pregnant but also for men because, as we know, the Zika virus can also be transmitted sexually, as it was in the transmission that occurred in Polk County, FL.

Beyond it, I hope that in this funding request we don't wait until the end of the year. The summer months are coming, and these are the months where the spread of these mosquitoes—the two strains of the two types of species of mosquitoes that carry the virus—are going to be prevalent in many parts of the country. It is the time of year when many people find themselves outdoors exposed to these mosquitoes.

I hope the funding request can be in place and that we don't wait until the end of the year to deal with this. It shouldn't take this long. Look, I believe in limited government, but I do believe one of the obligations of a limited Federal Government is to protect our people from dangers, whether they be foreign enemies or the risk of disease outbreak.

I hope we will move forward on this endeavor because it is important. It is a proper function of government. We shouldn't be sitting here 6 months from now regretting that we didn't act sooner. I hope we will move promptly and quickly both in the House and then in the Senate to address this issue.

I also wish to say that I don't want to forget about Puerto Rico. Oftentimes people forget that Puerto Rico is the United States. The people who live there are U.S. citizens.

There is already a severe outbreak when it comes to Puerto Rico. They are already facing this crisis. So it is important. If this were one of the 50 States, they would have a Senator on the floor right now, maybe two, arguing on behalf of them. Obviously, Puerto Rico doesn't have a Senator elected from the island.

I stand here today on their behalf to argue that this is an important issue that needs to be addressed for the sake of our country, but most immediately for the sake of the territory of Puerto Rico. I hope we will move quickly to confront this issue and to solve it.

I close by saying one more thing. While government has an important role to play, ultimately we have a responsibility. If you are traveling to parts of this world where you might be exposed to the virus, you have an obligation to get tested to ensure that you are not going to be transmitting this to your partner.

As I argued last week at my press conference, if you are going to be outdoors, you have an obligation to use mosquito repellant to protect yourself and your family from being exposed to this, just the same way you would wear sunscreen. It is important for us more this summer than any other.

It is not only Zika that mosquitoes transmit. They transmit all kinds of other very serious illnesses. There is a level of personal responsibility here. We talked about people not allowing bodies of water, whether it is

undrained pools or puddles of water in your backyard. These mosquitoes can grow in water containers as small as the cap of a bottle of water. They don't need a lot of water in order to reproduce and grow. So there are things we need to do in our own lives to take personal responsibility for dealing with the Zika virus.

But there is a proper role for government, and I hope we will play it. We have an obligation to hold the government responsible to ensure that the money that is appropriated is just being spent on Zika and is being spent appropriately on things that work. We should be working with our local and State partners to ensure that we are funding the programs that work and need to be funded. But I think we need to get it done. I hope we can get it done here rather quickly because the summer is upon us. I don't think we want to be halfway through the summer and wake up to the news that hundreds and hundreds of Americans in multiple States have been infected and we did nothing. We will have to explain that to our constituents, and I am not sure we are going to have a good explanation if we don't have it.

With that, I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REFORMING THE H–1B VISA PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to speak about H–1B visas, often called the high-skilled immigration visa. Every year, the U.S. Government issues 85,000 new H–1B visas, including 20,000 for workers with advanced degrees. This is in addition to hundreds of thousands of foreign workers already in the United States on H–1B visas.

Beginning on April 1, employers can submit petitions for new H–1B visas. Every year, within a few days, the government announces that it has received many more petitions for visas than the number of visas available.

The government then conducts a random lottery to decide which employers will receive the visas. Every year this leads to a hue and cry from our business community about the need to increase the annual cap for H–1B visas.

Like clockwork, this process played out last week, just as it does every year. Let's take a look at what happened.

When most people think of H–1B visas, they think of big tech companies like Microsoft, Google, and Apple hiring top-notch computer engineers, paying them top dollar to come in from overseas.

But here is the reality. In fact, the top recipients of H–1B visas are foreign companies that use loopholes in the law to displace qualified American workers and send American jobs offshore.

In 2013, outsourcing firms received more than 50 percent of the annual H–1B visa cap. Think about that. Over half of these H–1B visas, designed to bring skilled foreign workers into the United States, are being given to foreign outsourcing companies.

It sounds wrong; doesn't it?

In 2014, 15 of the top 20 H–1B employers used the H–1B visa primarily to offshore American jobs; that is, to take Americans, put them out of work, and have foreign workers take their jobs. These 15 firms gobbled up over 190,000 new H–1B visas over 10 years.

This is how it works. Foreign outsourcing companies import thousands of foreign guest workers using H–1B visas. These companies then cut deals with American companies to outsource American jobs and to move them offshore. The United States keeps them in the United States but with these foreign workers. The U.S. company gives their American workers notice that they will be fired. But before the American workers are laid off—listen to this—the American workers are forced to train the foreign guest workers who are going to take over their jobs.

After they are trained, the outsourcing company returns the foreign workers to their home country where—guess what—they compete with the United States.

Most of these foreign outsourcing companies are from India: Infosys, Tata, and Wipro. You may not recognize those names, but they are making billions of dollars using the H–1B visa to outsource American jobs and displace American workers.

A high-ranking Indian Government official even called the H–1B visa ''the outsourcing visa.'' The International Herald Tribune investigated these Indian companies, and this is what they concluded: ''Rather than building a thriving community of experts and innovators in the United States, the Indian firms seek to funnel work—and expertise—away from the country.''

Congress intended the H–1B program to allow an employer to hire a skilled foreign worker in a specialized occupation when the American employer couldn't find an American worker with those skills and abilities.

We didn't create this program for foreign outsourcing firms to exploit the program and to bring foreign workers to our country to be trained by talented American workers in order to see their jobs shipped away.

So let's take an example. In the last year alone, media reports have documented the replacement of hundreds of American workers by these foreign outsourcing companies. Let me give an example close to home. Abbott Labs of Illinois, headquartered near Chicago, signed a contract for information technology services with Wipro, one of the largest foreign outsourcing companies based in India and one of the top users of the H–1B visa program.

Here is how it worked: Approximately 150 U.S. employees at Abbott Labs in Illinois are going to lose their jobs. The workers being laid off have stellar experience—many of them have been at Abbott for years. They have the credentials, the performance reviews, and some have amazing work records spanning decades at Abbott Labs. I know from recent conversations with Abbott Labs employees that this layoff is taking its toll on the morale of their remaining workforce.

When I heard about these plans, I wrote to Miles White, the CEO of Abbott Labs. I urged him to reconsider this plan and to keep his American workers who have worked so hard for Abbott Labs for years. Well, I am sorry to report he responded to my letter and confirmed his company's plans to terminate these American workers.

I am very concerned about Abbott Labs because they have required the employees who are losing their jobs and being laid off to sign away their right to sue or even disparage the company if they want to receive any severance pay. As a result of this agreement, Congress and the American people are unable to hear directly from the employees who are affected by this decision at Abbott Labs—employees who are losing their jobs to Wipro, an Indian company that specializes in outsourcing American jobs. Abbot employees have told my staff they were concerned that even if they spoke with our office about what was happening at Abbott Labs, they could be placed in jeopardy.

Other companies that have signed contracts with foreign outsourcing companies to replace American workers have also forced their employees to sign these nondisparagement agreements. So we are in the dark about the human impact of these outsourcing arrangements on the Americans losing their jobs. What we do know is this: 150 skilled and experienced American workers will lose their jobs and have had to sign an agreement that they will not say anything negative about their current employer. If they do not comply with that, they do not get their severance pay.

I sent a follow-up letter to Mr. White today about the gag order he has forced on his employees. We should be able to hear firsthand from workers who are losing their jobs because of outsourcing as to just exactly what is happening to them.

Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY and I first introduced bipartisan legislation to reform the H–1B visa program in 2007—almost a decade ago. Our bill would end these abuses and protect American and foreign workers from exploitation. The outsourcing companies are worried about our legislation. For a long time, CHUCK GRASSLEY and DICK DURBIN were on the front page of a lot of Indian newspapers. Listen to the corporate jargon Wipro uses to talk about our bill:

With the growth of offshore outsourcing receiving increasing political and media attention, there have been concerted efforts to enact new legislation to restrict offshore outsourcing. This may adversely impact our ability to do business in these jurisdictions and could adversely affect our revenues and operating profitability.

Let me be clear. My first obligation as a U.S. Senator is to protect American workers. If that adversely affects the profits of a foreign company that specializes in outsourcing American jobs, so be it.

In 2013 I joined the Gang of 8—Democrats and Republicans—and we put together a comprehensive immigration reform bill. Corporate interests fought hard to protect these H–1B visas, but we successfully included several important changes to the program in the bill. Let me give an example. Under current law, employers are permitted to pay H–1B visa holders substandard wages, which creates an incentive to fire Americans and hire foreign workers.

The vice president of Tata, out of India, one of the leading foreign outsourcing firms, candidly acknowledged they use H–1B visas to undercut American workers. Here is what he said:

Our wage per employee is 20–25 percent lesser than U.S. wage for a similar employee. . . . The issue is that of getting workers in the U.S. on wages far lower than local wage.

He was pretty candid about it. The object is to put Americans out of work and to charge less than what the Americans are being paid. So I wrote a provision in the 2013 comprehensive immigration reform bill that discouraged employers from hiring foreign workers as a source of cheap labor by doubling the minimum wage of H–1B employees, and employers of large numbers of H–1B visa holders would be required to pay, at a minimum, the average wage paid to an American. That is why the chief executive of Tata in India said our bill would have been ''very tough'' on outsourcing companies. So be it.

The Senate passed that bill on this floor 68 to 32. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives refused to even call the bill. They wouldn't debate it or call it for a vote.

Now, the two leading Republican Presidential candidates, Donald Trump and the junior Senator from Texas, have jumped on the bandwagon. They want to reform the H–1B program. Unfortunately, their track records call into question their real commitment. Mr. Trump owns companies that have sought to import at least 1,000 temporary guest workers while turning away hundreds of American workers. In 2013, when the Judiciary Committee considered the comprehensive immigration reform bill, Senator CRUZ of Texas offered an amendment to increase—increase—the annual cap for H–1B visas to 325,000 per year—almost four times the current number.

Nonetheless, if they have changed their mind out on the campaign trail, we welcome that change of heart and welcome them to this debate. We must reform the H–1B visa program and fix other parts of our broken immigration system to protect American and immigrant workers. The solution is still comprehensive immigration reform. The time for action is now. Congress has avoided its responsibility for far too long.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WORKING WITH OUR ALLIES

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I wish to spend a few minutes talking about our allies across the globe, and I am doing so because they are important to our national security. That seems to be an obvious statement, but our allies seem to be getting a bit of a bipartisan short shrift of late. I come to the floor of the Senate to talk about how important they are to our Nation, to our citizens. It is bipartisan, as I mentioned.

As many of us have read, on the campaign trail Presidential candidate Donald Trump has been critical of NATO, has been critical of our Asia-Pacific allies. Meanwhile—and in many ways it hasn't gotten the news it deserves because it is a sitting President—in a recent article in The Atlantic by Jeffrey Goldberg entitled ''The Obama Doctrine,'' President Obama himself is dismissive of many U.S. allies around the world.

I thought it was important to talk a little bit about our allies and how important they are to U.S. security and to expanding American influence globally.

Let's start with Mr. Trump. He has called NATO—which, by the way, happens to be one of the most successful alliances in the history of the world—an alliance that is ''obsolete'' and ''too expensive.'' About the members of the 28-nation alliance, he said: ''Either they pay up, including for past deficiencies, or they have to get out. And if it breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO.'' Oh, well. So much for the world's most successful alliance.

However, contrary to public perception, the United States does not pay for a majority of NATO's spending. We pay about 22 percent of NATO's common-funded budgets and programs for all of NATO—about 22 percent.

The Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, was here last week, and he informed me and many of my colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee that most NATO countries have stopped their decline in defense spending and have recommitted to NATO's goal of 2 percent of their GDP toward defense spending. That is important—working on the finances, reversing this trend. But here is the key point: It is not just about finances. Over 1,000 non-U.S. NATO troops have been killed in action in Afghanistan coming to our defense after 9/11, going after the terrorists who killed over 3,000 Americans on 9/11. Over 1,000 of our NATO allies have paid the ultimate price. You can't put a price tag on that. Thousands more have been wounded. Some sacrifices can't be measured in just dollars.

Based on his comments, Mr. Trump also does not seem to fully comprehend how the presence of American troops in the Asia-Pacific has been the linchpin of security and prosperity in the region for more than 70 years. Today our allies in the Asia-Pacific are substantially increasing their financial and military commitments in that region. Let me give a few examples.

Under Prime Minister Abe's leadership, Japan has amended its Constitution to do much more militarily in terms of being able to work with us and even defend U.S. forces in the region. As we are looking to rebalance and reposition U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific over the next several years, the estimates from Pacific Command are that is going to cost about $37 billion, repositioning U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific. It is a very important part of our strategy. It is a strategy, by the way, that—the President talks about the rebalance, which I think is smart, in the Asia-Pacific. Of that $37 billion for our forces and the military construction that is going to take place with this rebalance, about $30 billion will be paid by Japan and Korea. That is certainly paying their way.

Let me give a couple of examples. Camp Humphreys—that is an Army base in Korea—we are moving a lot of forces there, doing a lot of military construction there, and it is going to cost about $11 billion. Ninety-one percent of that is going to be paid by Korea—for U.S. military forces.

In Guam—U.S. territory where we are repositioning marines and other critical military assets in the Asia-Pacific—Japan is paying $3 billion for

that repositioning on U.S. territory. It is the first time ever. A foreign country is paying for military construction on our territory.

The bottom line is that there is no doubt that our allies around the world, particularly in Europe, need to do more in terms of defense spending. Many people have spoken on this. Former Secretary Gates—very well respected—raises this in his recent bio. But it is simply erroneous to suggest that America would be better off without NATO or without our Asia-Pacific allies and alliances. Yes, they need to spend more, but there is a big difference saying we don't need our allies.

Let me say that we should all understand that Mr. Trump, Donald Trump—he is a candidate. He is certainly not an expert on national security affairs. And his views certainly reflect the frustrations that many Americans and many Members of Congress have about allies who are not spending as much on defense. Of course we know this often happens during elections. We have seen that. It is an outgrowth of frustrations.

But what is unprecedented is for a sitting President to be dismissive and even disdainful of our most important allies in a publication read by millions. To do so is not only unpresidential, it threatens to undermine ongoing U.S. national security interests.

I want to talk a little bit about The Atlantic article that I mentioned earlier, written by Jeffrey Goldberg. Mr. Goldberg, who had enormous access to the President for I think well over a year—traveled with him all over on Air Force One, had numerous interviews—in his article, he takes us on a trip across the globe through the eyes of President Obama. I would encourage all of my colleagues in this body to read that article.

As I mentioned, Mr. Goldberg has significant access to the President, but the tour across the world leaves us no doubt that the President not only views himself as the smartest man in the room, he is the smartest man in the world. In Mr. Goldberg's words, President Obama ''has found world leadership wanting: global partners who often lack the vision and the will to spend political capital in pursuit of broad, progressive goals, and adversaries who are not, in his mind, as rational as he is.''

The President assesses the very strengths and weaknesses of our allies. In his view, only German Chancellor Angela Merkel measures up. There is a whole list of leaders from countries that are allies of the United States and are mentioned in this article. The President calls the President of a critical NATO country a ''failure,'' and he is openly disapproving of the leadership role of Britain and France and openly complaining that neither did their part with regard to Libya, where the Obama administration famously, or infamously, announced it was leading from behind.

The jabs and the stories in the Goldberg piece at other leaders, such as the leaders of Jordan, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, are gratuitous. These might be appropriate for later in the President's memoirs, as he is writing his memoirs talking about world leaders and where they measure up and where they are weak, but not while he is still the President. He still has work to do for our country.

The President even trains his fire on American leaders, members of the foreign policy establishment, and even GEN Lloyd Austin, the well-respected and recently retired commander of U.S. Central Command. There is a big section in there about how the President viewed Ronald Reagan's leadership and shortcomings in foreign affairs. Everybody seems to be lacking in the President's eyes.

It is not just individuals, it is the way we, as a Nation, supposedly conduct our foreign policy. By the President's own account, he has been a bulwark against American hubris, self-righteousness—his words—in foreign affairs. Let me repeat that. His view is that he has been a bulwark against our hubris and our self-righteousness in foreign affairs.

As the Presiding Officer knows, whether it is Alaska or West Virginia, most Americans understand another more historically accurate narrative of our role in foreign affairs throughout the world. It is not one of hubris, but one of sacrifice, commitment, and courage in defending freedom for hundreds of millions of people across the globe. That has been the role of the United States, and for decades, especially since World War II, there has been a bipartisan, long-term effort by truly some of the smartest people in American foreign policy who were ''present at the creation,'' and beyond—as Dean Acheson said in his autobiography—into deepening our relationship with other countries and, as part of doing that, establishing the forward presence of U.S. military power around the world. These were some of America's best minds—Marshall, Acheson, George Shultz.

Why did they do this? Because forging these alliances ultimately not only advances the goal of freedom and a more peaceful and prosperous world, but it also helps ensure that American influence and power remain preeminent and, most importantly, that our citizens remain safe.

In assessing our significant international challenges right now, one central truth stands out: Many of our enemies and potential adversaries and rivals are ally poor while the United States is ally rich. Think of countries like Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and terrorist groups like ISIS. They have very few allies. Very few other countries are running to them right now. Then think about our allies throughout the world. It is time to recognize and double down on this uniquely American comparative advantage in foreign affairs. We are ally rich. Our rivals are ally poor. We need to take advantage of it. Yet the Obama administration seems to have ignored it.

Indeed, Secretary of State John Kerry has spent more time wooing adversaries like Iran and Russia than doing the hard work of deepening the bonds of trust with our allies. Coupled with the President's remarks in the Atlantic, his missives directed at friends make it seem as if they are actually repelling allies, not working with them and building up trust. This, of course, is a mistake.

Like many in this body, I have had the opportunity to serve my country in different capacities, trying to work to advance the national security of our Nation. I have had the opportunity to see the positive results of the carefully woven fabric of decades of bipartisan American diplomacy, military engagement, and leadership throughout the world. Without American leaders who understand history and the important role our allies play in America's security and prosperity, the fabric of our alliances put together over decades threatens to unravel. If that happens, the world is going to become a much more dangerous place.

Our Founding Fathers provided the Senate with significant responsibility in terms of foreign affairs, and I am hopeful that every Member of this body will redouble their efforts to reach out and to work with our allies so we don't continue this trend where leaders currently in the White House, or perhaps potential occupants of the White House, view our allies as a burden when in reality they are a key component of our security and prosperity, and we need to continue to work with them.

I yield the floor.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the formal establishment of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, ROTC, at its birthplace, Norwich University in Vermont. Thanks to the vision of Alden Partridge and Norwich University, we now enjoy the benefits of this century-old program that has commissioned more than half a million ensigns and second lieutenants since its inception.

Years before many of his peers, Alden Partridge saw the potential of the citizen soldier. He created Norwich University as a place to educate future generations in a variety of academic fields separate from, but also essential to, the military and to the civic participation synonymous with today's

Norwich University. Over the years, the value of the ideals promoted at Norwich University have remained clear to me. Today these proven ideals can be found at institutions of higher education through ROTC programs in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

Without question, the country benefits from this diversity of experience. The U.S. service academies create high-quality, professional officers, and I am proud to nominate Vermonters to them every year. Our military, however, cannot rely on leadership that comes solely from a handful of institutions, however excellent they are. For 100 years, ROTC has guaranteed an officer corps that better reflects the diversity of America.

Few schools can boast a history as long, rich, and relevant as Norwich University. Always forward thinking, in 1974, Norwich became one of the first military colleges in the Nation to admit women, beginning yet another proud chapter in its history. Today the school ranks among the top institutions for education in the realm of cyber security, an essential professional discipline nurtured early on largely because of the forethought of Norwich University personnel. I am confident this trend of success will continue.

The faculty and staff at Norwich help produce highly motivated, well-trained graduates who are simply eager to serve. Their role as educators and mentors creates connections that last throughout the military and civilian careers of graduates and, in turn, fosters a powerful alumni connection that brings even more experience and wisdom to the next generation of students.

Vermonters take great pride in their educational institutions, and Norwich University is no exception. Students arrive from around the Nation to study in both corps of cadets and traditional capacities. They develop essential academic and professional skills often while simultaneously fulfilling ROTC obligations that prepare them for future military service. Norwich, like the 274 other institutions supporting ROTC programs, demands and develops excellence in its commissioning-track student body.

I would like to recognize Norwich University, the birthplace of the ROTC, for its role in initiating a program that has enjoyed a century of success. I am confident that Alden Partridge's dream will continue to be realized at colleges and universities throughout the Nation as future generations of ROTC officers are produced and charged with the task of ensuring our Nation's success.

SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SESSION ON INNOVATION AGENDA

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my remarks at the Senate Health Committee's third executive session on its biomedical innovation agenda be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SESSION ON INNOVATION AGENDA

This is our third and final markup of legislation that is part of our innovation, or ''cures,'' agenda—that is, our effort to take advantage of this exciting time in science and enable safe treatments, drugs, and devices to reach patients more quickly.

Today's markup completes action on about 50 bipartisan proposals this committee has been working on for more than a year—with 10 hearings, five staff working groups that have held more than 100 meetings. When we are finished today, these proposals will together form a companion to 21st Century Cures Act, which passed the House 344–77 last year, and a vehicle for the president's Precision Medicine Initiative and Cancer Moonshot.

If we succeed, this will be the most important bill signed into law this year.

Why do I say that?

Here's one reason: 6-year-old Californian Rylie Rahall, diagnosed with a genetic disorder called Ataxia-Telangiectasia or A–T, so rare—according to NIH—that it affects between 1 out of 40,000 and 1 out of 100,000.

A bill we're voting on today will support the president's Precision Medicine Initiative to map 1 million genomes to help researchers tailor treatments to genetic variations and find cures for diseases, including rare diseases like A–T, and help children like Rylie.

Rylie's mom, Erica, says:

''At the time Rylie was diagnosed, I felt more helpless than hopeful. . . . There are no drugs. There is no cure. There is nothing to stop this disease and nothing you can do to save your child. . . . Five years later all of that is changing. There is more research than ever happening. We are closer than ever to clinical trials . . . Hopeful.''

Here's another reason:

In a floor speech in 2013, Senator Isakson talked about battling a superbug, an infection that runs out of control and resists treatment by common antibiotics. We are voting today on a bill by senators Hatch and Bennet to shorten the development of treatments for superbugs.

And another reason: A 2012 bill sponsored by Senators Burr, Bennet, and Hatch to expedite the FDA review process for breakthrough drugs has been very successful, leading to 118 drugs designated as breakthrough, including 39 approvals, including the first drug ever to actually cure some forms of Cystic Fibrosis. This committee passed similar legislation in March for breakthrough devices.

One more reason: we've heard from doctors that they spend half their time on paperwork, and from patients who lug boxes of medical records from appointment to appointment. This committee unanimously passed legislation to reduce the documentation burden and improve the flow of information so doctors can spend more time with patients, and patients can have easier access to their health information.

This committee has passed—by voice vote or with overwhelming support—14 bills made up of 30 bipartisan proposals; bills that will mean better pacemakers for Americans with heart conditions, better rehabilitation for stroke victims, more young researchers entering the medical field, and better access for doctors to their patients' medical records.

By the time we finish today, 16 of this committee's 22 members will have sponsored one of these bills. Some have sponsored several.

Today we are voting on five bills:

A bill by Senator Murray and myself to help the FDA and the NIH attract and retain top talent, which Dr. Collins and Dr. Califf say is their top priority.

The bill by Sens. Hatch and Bennet to shorten the development time for superbug treatments.

The bill by Senator Murray and myself to support the president's Precision Medicine Initiative, to map 1 million genomes and make the information available to researchers who will share their research.

A bill by Senator Collins, Kirk, Baldwin, Murray, and myself that requires NIH to submit a strategic plan to Congress; and ensures that scientists are including women and minorities in their research.

A bill by Senator Murray and myself to allow NIH researchers to spend more time finding lifesaving treatments and cures and less time on paperwork.

I look forward to moving these bills to the floor.

Senator Murray and I are making progress on an ''NIH Innovation Fund'' to provide a one-time funding surge for NIH priorities including: Precision Medicine, Cancer Moonshot, the Brain Initiative, Young Investigator Corps, and Big Biothink Awards.

With its 21st Century Cures Act, the House voted 344 to 77 to provide $8.8 billion in paid-for mandatory funding to support such NIH priorities. We continue working on finding an amount that the House will agree to and the president will sign that we can responsibly pay for in a bipartisan way. We have consulted with Senator Hatch, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. I discussed it with Senator Wyden in a meeting with Secretary Burwell. And I've talked with a number of committee members. I hope we'll be able to share an agreement with committee members soon.

I would like to take the proposals we've passed here, along with a bipartisan agreement on the NIH Innovation Fund with Senator Murray, and put them in Senator McConnell's hands as the Senate's contribution to a 21 Century Cures Act.

We'll have an opportunity for more debate on the floor, including:

On a proposal by Senators Kirk, Manchin, and Collins to create a first-time conditional approval for regenerative medicine treatments.

Improving monitoring of medical devices. Senator Murray strongly urged this and it is a top priority for Dr. Califf.

The issue of lab developed tests, which are vitally important to get right to ensure precision medicine and cancer moonshot are a success.

Last year, the most important bill signed into law fixed No Child Left Behind and affected 50 million children in 100,000 schools.

This year, I believe the most important bill will take advantage of this exciting time in science to improve the health of virtually every American.

The House of Representatives has done its job by a margin of 344 to 77.

The president has proposed his initiatives.

I'm hopeful we can take this to the Senate floor, conference with the House, and send a bill to the president.

Sometimes we get caught up in bill numbers and sections, but as we finish our work,

we ought to focus on people, like Rylie Rahall, or on Douglas Oliver, a Nashville resident who as recently as August was legally blind due to an incurable form of macular degeneration, but who, after participating in a clinical trial where doctors injected stem cells from his hip into his eye, now has perfect enough vision to read about what we're doing here in the HELP committee and sends us emails about his experience to help improve our work.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, this week we commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which began this past Sunday and concludes this Saturday, April 16, 2016. For the over 20 million people in the United States who become crime victims each year, this week offers an opportunity for Congress, the Department of Justice, as well as State and local law enforcement, communities, and service providers across the country to publicly proclaim our support for crime victims and survivors.

The physical, emotional, and psychological impact that crime causes for the victims and their loved ones can prove devastating. Crime wreaks havoc on our communities. Given these hardships, we must do all we can to support and protect survivors by holding their perpetrators accountable and ensuring that all victims are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. We can accomplish this aim, at least in part, by recognizing the critical position that victims hold within the criminal justice process.

The theme for this year's National Crime Victims' Rights Week is ''Serving Victims; Building Trust; Restoring Hope.'' In keeping with that spirit, I want to recognize and thank the countless professional and volunteer victim advocates and service providers. Your dedication and commitment to our moms and dads, brothers and sisters, and daughters and sons, often during their time of greatest need, is truly profound. Thank you, thank you, for being that solid ground and strong shoulder supporting our fellow Americans as they fight for justice and to once again become whole.

To the millions of victims and survivors, you are not alone, and you have not been silenced. We hear you and pledge to do all we can to support you through your recovery. As the Senate Judiciary Committee continues to combat the scourge of crime through legislation and oversight, we will continue to both acknowledge and honor the needs and rights of victims and survivors.

HOW TRADE MADE AMERICA GREAT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, it was while a Yale undergraduate that Fred Smith received a C-plus for his paper outlining a plan to buy large airplanes that would carry packages overnight. This plan a few years later became Federal Express, now FedEx, a global courier delivery services company with nearly $50 billion in revenues and more than 340,000 employees. FedEx has become a leading worldwide economic indicator all by itself and one of our country's great success stories. Mr. Smith not only founded the company, but today still is CEO and Chairman.

Fred Smith's address should be required reading on all college campuses, as well as for all others who may have forgotten the remarkable contribution trade has made to prosperity not only for our country, but for hundreds of millions worldwide. There is no doubt that globalization and technology have improved living conditions in our country, but they have also bred uncertainty and sometimes fear. For many Americans, the cheaper goods we buy from overseas and the salaries we make from selling goods overseas come with dislocations that make it harder for Americans to find jobs and provide for their families.

Added to that are actions by some of our trading partners—Japan in the 1980s and China more recently—that abuse the trade relationship and turn free trade into unfair trade. Nevertheless, before we turn our backs on or significantly change our national policy of encouraging freer trade with other countries, we would be wise to read Mr. Smith's account of the benefits of trade to the average American family during the last 50 years—and also to be reminded of the devastation that restrictions on trade caused during the 1930s when those restrictions helped lead to the Great Depression.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article by Fred Smith from the Wall Street Journal.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Mar. 25, 2016]

HOW TRADE MADE AMERICA GREAT

(By Frederick W. Smith)

During our years at Yale, the world was a different place. Foreign travel was exotic, expensive and rare among the population as a whole. While some young Americans had been abroad, by far most Americans had not—and those who did go abroad most likely traveled by sea rather than air. In the early 1960s, flying over the oceans was mainly for the affluent.

Long-distance telephone calls were expensive, international calls prohibitively so. From furniture to TVs and appliances, and especially automobiles, American brands dominated consumer spending in this country. We had just a glimpse of the world to come with the proliferating iconic Volkswagen Beetles and the amazingly small Sony portable transistor radios.

These imported products in the U.S. represented a global political vision that predated World War II. In the early 1930s, President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull believed in liberalized trade as a path to world peace and cooperation. With strong administration support, Congress in 1934 passed the Trade Agreement Act, which allowed Hull to negotiate reciprocal trade treaties with numerous countries, lowering tariffs and stimulating trade.

This liberalization reversed the epitome of U.S. protectionism, the disastrous Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930, which contributed to a staggering 66% decline in world trade between 1929 and 1934. Integral to Hull's vision was the 1947 General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which was signed by 23 countries and committed the U.S. to steadily liberalizing world trade. A central pillar of American postwar policy was enticing producers from around the world with access to the giant U.S. market.

The devastation of Europe and Japan and the emergence of Cold War adversaries provided even greater impetus to the opening of American markets, under the protection of the U.S. Navy and the umbrella of various global alliances like NATO. In April 1966 Malcolm McLean launched his first international Sea-Land container operation between New York and Rotterdam. McLean's shipping-container revolution cut the cost of seaborne trade by a factor of 50 versus loose-cargo stevedoring.

That same month, Juan Trippe (Yale '21) at Pan Am ordered 25 revolutionary jumbo 747 widebody Boeing airplanes equipped with equally leading-edge Pratt & Whitney high-bypass fanjets. When the passenger version of the 747 entered service in 1969, it was two-and-a-half times bigger than the Boeing 707 that had pioneered jet travel. The jumbo jet cut overseas travel costs by 70%.

The 747's hump allowed a freighter version to load cargo through a nose door under the cockpit and into the cavernous fuselage. Because of the cargo-carrying 747F, costs for trans-Pacific airfreight were dramatically reduced, a major factor in the extraordinary GDP growth of the Asian ''tiger'' economies of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan beginning in the 1970s. Electronics and other high-tech/high-value-added goods from these emerging markets could be distributed and sold in the U.S. and Europe in a few days—an amazing development.

During the 1970s and 1980s, while container ships and planes became increasingly efficient with each successive model, newly developed fiber-optic cables (patented in 1966) began running underseas, connecting the world at the speed of light, lowering voice and data-communication costs by orders of magnitude. Financial markets became globally integrated and transactions multiplied at an astounding rate.

The U.S. opened its markets to former World War II foes, and Germany and Japan as a result became economic titans. Successive administrations mostly ignored Japan's overt mercantilism and growing trade surplus, given the need for American military bases throughout the country. Eventually exchange rates and domestic political pressure pushed Japanese car makers to set up production plants in the U.S., mostly in the South. Electronics manufacturers such as Panasonic, Sony and Hitachi became worldwide giants on the back of exports from Japan to America and then almost everywhere as global trade steadily expanded.

Parallel to the technological progress of transportation and telecommunications was a remarkable series of congressional actions and GATT agreements that substantially liberalized transport and trade regulations.

During the Carter administration, inspired by extensive academic research and the example of ultra-low-fare intrastate airlines in Texas and California compared with high-cost national carriers, many Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike pushed for federal economic deregulation of transportation. The Republican mantra was ''free market''; Democrats sought ''consumer benefit'' by lowering the price of travel and goods for the masses.

As a result, legislation was enacted for air cargo (1977), passenger air services (1978), interstate truck and rail transportation (1980), and the federal pre-emption of intrastate trucking in 1994. Both the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) and the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), the air and surface economic regulators, were abolished, in 1985 and 1995 respectively.

In the 10 years following the Staggers Act of 1980 that substantially deregulated railroads, the perennially loss-making rail industry was able to halve the rates charged to customers while restoring financial stability. Surface-transport deregulation also spawned an entire new industry of flexible truckload common carriers to meet the needs of emerging ''big box'' distribution and retailing models such as Wal-Mart and Target. Revolutionary production systems, based on just-in-time supply and fast-cycle manufacturing, were made possible only because of the deregulation of trucking.

From 1977 to 1994, a century's worth of heavy regulation of transportation rates, routes and services that had begun with the railroads was cast aside, with profound effects on the U.S. economy. By the beginning of the 21st century, overall logistics costs were reduced from 16% of GDP during the 1970s to under 9%, thereby making possible substantial increases in government social spending resulting from the Medicare and Medicaid legislation in the 1960s.

On the global-trade front, the GATT framework of 1947 had been ''temporary,'' as Congress refused to approve the International Trade Organization envisioned by the participants at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference that established the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Even so, under GATT there were seven successive negotiating ''rounds'' and agreements until the World Trade Organization (WTO), a modernized International Trade Organization, was finally established in Geneva in 1994.

The GATT/WTO did not cover sea trade, given the traditionally liberal rules regarding shipping except within national regulated waters. Thus unimpeded, containership lines of many registrations proliferated, facilitating the astonishing growth in maritime business and the development of megaports in Asia, Europe and the U.S.

International aviation was likewise a separate regime, but as agreed by 54 nations at the Chicago convention of 1944, international flying was for decades tightly controlled by governments through a labyrinth of bilateral treaties (4,000 at present) that limited competition and regulated rates and services.

Beginning in 1992, however, the U.S. and the Netherlands enacted the first of many Open Skies agreements, which have grown now to 117, including a multilateral treaty with 28 European countries. Passenger airlines opened scores of new routes. New air-cargo and door-to-door express services were also initiated.

Together, these regulatory changes and transport innovations made possible the fantastic growth of travel and trade, which grew two-and-a-half times the rate of world GDP for a quarter-century.

From less than $50 billion in total trade in 1966, the U.S. now imports and exports over $4 trillion annually in goods and services. Container ships have grown from carrying a few hundred boxes on each trip to the new Triple-E behemoths that transport over 18,000 containers called TEUs, or 20-foot-equivalent units. The cost is 1/500th of the shipping rates per pound of the early 1960s. The profusion of agricultural products from the ''Green Revolution'' pioneered by Norman Borlaug, combined with ever more efficient shipping, has resulted in massive amounts of grain traded around the world, something unimaginable to farmers 50 years ago. American railroads were integral to the growth in the nation's maritime trade by moving containers from Pacific ports to the mega markets in the East.

All of these factors have created a global trade market that exceeds $15 trillion annually. Now, the Panama Canal is being widened, which will permit, beginning later this year, massive container ships to cross the Pacific and unload directly into improved Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Coast ports, further reducing the cost of Asia-U.S. trade.

Handling the enormous increase in financial transactions was made possible by a fantastic increase in computer-processing power. The emergence of the Internet in 1994 has allowed the ubiquitous offering of millions of products for fast delivery from anywhere in the world to anyone with a desktop computer . . . then a PC . . . then a tablet . . . and now a smartphone. Languages are translated; products can be instantly, visually displayed; and orders effortlessly entered. The capabilities are unprecedented in the history of commerce.

Three other factors central to the development of these enormous global commercial systems have occurred since 1966: The evolution of a vast world-wide oil market; the integration of the economies of the U.S., Mexico and Canada with the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) of 1994; and the emergence of China as a great commercial power.

The oil cartel known as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries overplayed its hand in the 1970s when, for economic and political reasons, OPEC embargoed shipments to the U.S. Market forces finally sorted out oil supply and demand in America after President Reagan in 1981 dismantled the vestiges of government regulation in the industry. Oil has hardly been immune to the vagaries of any commodities market, but the U.S.—thanks to the technological breakthrough of hydraulic fracturing—is the world's largest producer of natural gas and is on track this decade to surpass Saudi Arabia and Russia as the world's largest oil producer.

True to the central tenet of FDR and Secretary of State Hull that liberalizing trade is inherently beneficial, the U.S. led the effort for China to join the WTO in 2000. Beginning with the Nixon-to-China rapprochement, the industrialization of America's Cold War enemy has lifted more people—hundreds of millions—out of poverty, faster, than ever in history. From the late 1980s and accelerating after the WTO accession, efficient Chinese manufacturing, especially technology-based goods, has rewarded Western consumers with low-cost products that have substantially improved standards of living. Americans and Europeans don't need to be affluent to afford cellphones, digital TVs, furniture and appliances.

China, however, has followed Japan's mercantilistic practices, which have led to a $300 billion trade surplus with the U.S., thanks to state support of Chinese industry and restrictions on foreign competitors. These policies have created a strong political backlash in the U.S., which made the recent congressional renewal of Trade Promotion Authority—which allows the president to negotiate trade treaties and was for years a routine process—extremely difficult.

Today, given low growth in most of the world, rising wages in China and petroleum costs declining because of U.S. fracking technology, the trajectory of the world's commerce is somewhat uncertain.

Trade and global GDP are now growing roughly at parity. Following the 2008 financial crisis, protectionism has shown a troubling popularity in many countries, including the U.S. Stringent new security regulations have also slowed goods crossing many borders.

The Nafta pact has clearly been an economic success. Over the past 20 years, U.S. trade with Mexico and Canada has risen to $1.2 trillion in 2014, from $737 billion. While the immigration issue often gets erroneously conflated with Nafta, the economic numbers tell a clear story. Moreover, some production is now moving back to North America from Asia, given lower transport costs, faster delivery, the increase in Chinese production expenses, easier customs clearance, and the more balanced nature of Nafta trade compared with the massive U.S. deficit with Asia—particularly China and Japan.

Once again, in its own messy, unpredictable political fashion, the U.S.—after a hiatus during the first Obama administration—is pushing for further trade liberalization, with initiatives such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the Trade in Services Agreement. The WTO likewise continues to push for a new Trade Facilitation Agreement dealing with security and customs issues; the WTO Information Technology Agreement; and a new overall worldwide trade agreement—the so-called Doha Round negotiations. These efforts by many nations under the WTO show continued commitment to further global integration despite the well-publicized difficulties in doing so.

More than three billion people are now connected to the Internet. Billions more have aspirations for a better life and are likely to come online as global consumers. The odds are good, therefore, that today's remarkable transport systems and technologies will continue to improve and facilitate an even larger global economy as individual trade is becoming almost ''frictionless.''

History shows that trade made easy, affordable and fast—political obstacles notwithstanding—always begets more trade, more jobs, more prosperity. From clipper ships to the computer age, despite economic cycles, conflict and shifting demographics, humans have demonstrated an innate desire to travel and trade. Given this, the future is unlikely to diverge from the arc of the past.

74TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DOOLITTLE RAID

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I would like to recognize the 74th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid.

Following Japan's deliberate attack on Naval Station Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States was looking for a way to retaliate and

boost morale. General Henry Arnold, the chief of the Army Air Corps, and U.S. Navy ADM Ernest King, the Navy Chief of Operations, were tasked with organizing a raid on mainland Japan that would act as the United States' return salvo. They needed an extraordinary airman and leader to execute the raid, and they found one in Army Air Corps Lieutenant Colonel James ''Jimmy'' Doolittle, a well-respected pilot who they believed could inspire his fellow airmen as they carried out this dangerous mission.

Doolittle immediately began selecting crew members for the mission, eventually recruiting 80 flyers who would later be nicknamed the Doolittle Raiders. The Raiders volunteered without knowing any specifics of the mission, but they trusted Doolittle enough that they were willing to follow him anyway.

The geographic isolation of the Japanese mainland posed numerous logistical challenges while planning the raid. Doolittle decided to use B–25 bombers launched from the U.S.S. *Hornet*, which would be positioned about 500 miles away from Japan. The B–25 bombers were an inspired choice, as they were mid-range bombers that were not normally launched from the decks of aircraft carriers and had limited fuel reserves. Despite these risks and the unprecedented nature of the raid, the Raiders began their mission.

On April 18, 1942, the task force was spotted by the Japanese, nearly 200 miles from the planned launch point. All 16 B–25 bombers were able to launch from the deck of the U.S.S. *Hornet*, but they lacked the time or fuel necessary to enter into formation, necessitating individual strikes that caused only minor military and industrial damage to Japan. All but one of the B–25 bombers made crash landings or had their crews bail out. The remaining plane made an emergency landing in Russia, and the crew was interned. Eight soldiers were captured by the Japanese in China, three of whom were executed. Still, the Doolittle Raid was the first successful attack on the Japanese mainland in over 700 years, and it shook the confidence of their military.

The Doolittle Raid changed the course of the war, and the courage and bravery of the Doolittle Raiders is inspiring, even after 74 years. Three of the squadrons that participated in the Doolittle Raid, the 34th, 37th, and 432nd squadrons, are now stationed in Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City, SD. I am proud to have squadrons with such a historic legacy stationed in my State, and I know that the example of the Doolittle Raiders will continue to inspire airmen everywhere.

PACIFIC TSUNAMI MUSEUM COMMEMORATION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1946 TSUNAMI IN HAWAII

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the 1946 tsunami disaster in Hawaii. Early on the morning of April 1, 1946, an undersea 8.1-magnitude earthquake off the Alaskan coast triggered a tragic event 5 hours and 2,400 miles away. Travelling at nearly 500 miles per hour, a succession of tsunami waves hit the Hawaiian Islands around breakfast time, devastating downtown Hilo on Hawaii Island and killing 96 people. Across the Hawaiian island chain, 159 people lost their lives to the tsunami.

In response to this disaster, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration established the Tsunami Warning System in 1948. Despite the system's proven effectiveness during two subsequent but minor tsunami events, another massive tsunami wave on May 23, 1960, took the lives of 61 Hilo residents. Many of the victims failed to take the warnings seriously or returned to their homes before the danger had passed. Another contributing factor was uninformed city planning that allowed residents to rebuild homes and businesses in tsunami risk zones. Shinmachi, a district in downtown Hilo rebuilt after the 1946 tsunami, was destroyed again by the 1960 tsunami.

While sobering, these tragedies are critical teaching opportunities. Decades after the disasters at Hilo, Dr. Walter Dudley and Jeanne Branch Johnston, a tsunami researcher and a tsunami survivor, respectively, envisioned a place where the public could remember and learn from these tragedies. Without sustained collective memory of the risk posed by tsunamis and complementary public outreach, they believed the tremendous progress in tsunami research and warning systems in the last half century would not prevent future disasters. After all, an unheeded warning is no warning at all.

Since opening its doors in 1994, the Pacific Tsunami Museum, PTM, in Hilo has demonstrated its ability to catalyze public engagement with tsunami risk. Museum exhibits include the history of tsunamis in Hawaii and how past events have shaped the community and impacted long-range planning. The museum places strong emphasis on the human component of the tsunami story, the resiliency of a community that survived the disasters and also pays tribute to the victims. PTM also features exhibits on major tsunami events around the globe and frequently collaborates with sister institutions as far away as Sri Lanka. As part of its public outreach efforts, the museum has developed tsunami curricula and evacuation plans for schools, created publications on tsunami safety, and presented workshops and lectures on the issue both in Hawaii and abroad.

April is Tsunami Awareness Month in Hawaii. On April 16, PTM will host a special open house commemorating the 70th anniversary of the 1946 tsunami. This event seeks to promote awareness of tsunami risk, educate the public on appropriate responses to a tsunami warning, and honor the victims of Hilo's tsunami disasters.

The need to continually cultivate community resilience to tsunami events inspired me to push for stronger Federal support for essential detection, forecast, warning, research, and preparedness programs. My colleagues, Senators MARIA CANTWELL of Washington and DAN SULLIVAN of Alaska, and I introduced the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2015. If signed into law, this bill would reinforce and amplify the great work being done by PTM.

I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the tragic loss of life at Hilo in 1946 and 1960 and commending the Pacific Tsunami Museum for its tireless work to keep the public safe from tsunamis.

REMEMBERING CLIFF YOUNG

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to remember a former Nevada Supreme Court justice, Congressman, and State senator, C. Clifton ''Cliff'' Young, a true Nevada statesman and dedicated public servant. I send my condolences and prayers to his wife, four children, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren during this difficult time. Although he will be sorely missed, his legendary influence throughout the Silver State will continue on.

Justice Young was born in 1922 in Lovelock and earned his degree from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1943. He later served in the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II, earning the rank of major. As one of our Nation's servicemembers, he made exceptional sacrifices for our country and deserves our deepest gratitude. His service to his country, as well as his bravery and dedication to his family and community, earn him a place in history among the many outstanding men and women who have contributed to our Nation and the Silver State.

Following his time in the U.S. Army, Justice Young earned his law degree from Harvard Law School. In 1952, he was elected to represent the State of Nevada in the U.S. Congress, where he served two terms. From 1966 to 1980, Justice Young continued his public service as a State Senator in the Nevada State Senate. He then served for 18 years on the Nevada Supreme Court, where he served as chief justice twice, and retired in 2002. Throughout his tenure, Justice Young was inducted into the Nevada Legislature's Hall of Fame and was honored with the Federal courthouse in Reno being named after

him. With his passing, Nevada lost a great man who is immortalized for his service to our Nation and the Nevada community. I extend my deepest gratitude for all of his work on behalf of our State. His years of service will be remembered for generations to come.

For over half a century, Justice Young demonstrated only the highest level of excellence and dedication while serving in the U.S. Congress, Nevada State Senate, and on the Nevada Supreme Court. Our State is fortunate to have had a public servant of such commitment and unwavering devotion, and I am deeply appreciative of his hard work and invaluable contributions to our State. Today, I join citizens across the Silver State in celebrating the life of an upstanding Nevadan, Justice Cliff Young.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GREG THAYER

● Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I wish to recognize Greg Thayer, CEO of Montana Milling, Inc., who was named the 2016 Montana Small Business Administration's Small Business Person of the Year. Montana Milling is a family-owned business that specializes in providing quality agricultural products to its customers. They are the No. 1 buyer of organic grains produced in Montana. The cleaning system and the milling process that they employ ensures that their products meet the highest quality standards.

Montana Milling under Greg's leadership epitomizes the Montana way of doing business, which is evident by their motto ''Quality and service is our commitment . . . We guarantee it.'' I believe it is this dedication to customer service that led to Greg's selection as being chosen as Small Business Person for the Year. This award is a great testament to Greg's commitment to provide the best possible service to not only his producers, but for over 200 customers throughout the United States and Canada.

It is truly an honor to recognize Greg for this achievement.●

TRIBUTE TO SHIRLEY BECK AND DALE SIEGFORD

● Mr. DAINES. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the owners of a great candy shop in the eastern part of Montana. Shirley Beck and Dale Siegford have owned and operated the Sweet Palace located in Philipsburg, MT, since 1998, contributing to many Montanans' sweet tooth.

Shirley, a wife of a rancher, mother of three, and a former special education teacher, started selling Montana jewelry at the Gem Mountain Shop in 1988. Shirley had a great aptitude for assisting the customers in their search for the perfect piece of sapphire jewelry.

Dale, a Missoula, MT, native, began digging for Montana sapphires on Gem Mountain in 1987. Dale became an expert in the art of heat treatment, enhancing the colors of the Montana sapphires, especially pink and yellow.

Together at Gem Mountain, they became a great team and moved on to opening their own shop, the Sapphire Gallery, in 1992. The Sapphire Gallery became a flourishing business and inspired the duo to open the Sweet Palace right next door, the start of a great business partnership, prompting Shirley and Dale to open another store.

It is impressive that two people can go from making jewelry to making candy in our great State. Philipsburg is a beautiful town near the Sapphire Mountains, and through their businesses, they make it even greater.

Thank you, Shirley and Dale, for helping keep Montana alive.●

TRIBUTE TO STACIE MATHEWSON

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize an individual who has gone above and beyond in her endeavors to help fellow Nevadans and Americans across the country, Stacie Mathewson. This ambitious Nevadan founded the Stacie Mathewson Foundation and Transforming Youth Recovery, which promote drug addiction awareness, recovery, prevention, and education throughout our State and country. Her work is truly invaluable to Nevada, helping to break the cycle of drug abuse within our community.

Mrs. Mathewson's unwavering dedication to transform youth recovery began in 2011 when she founded the Stacie Mathewson Foundation, an organization committed to improving addiction recovery and prevention, while eradicating the social stigma involved with substance disorder. In that same year, the foundation helped fund the Nevada Recovery and Prevention Program at the University of Nevada, Reno, UNR. The on-campus program has implemented various recovery groups, in addition to providing supportive gathering places for students who choose sobriety. Mrs. Mathewson also spearheaded the creation of a national sobriety program for college campuses, which has been successful at 150 colleges and universities across the country.

Mrs. Mathewson's work has also more narrowly focused on helping the youth in our great State. In May of 2015, the Youth Offender Drug Court was established, working to provide an alternative treatment for those in need. With help from Transforming Youth Recovery, the Josh Montoya House was created and serves as a facility for the Washoe County Youth Offender Drug Court in order to provide young men who are combating drug addiction with comprehensive residential and outpatient treatment care.

Mrs. Mathewson has focused on growing early prevention within the local community as well. On February 1, 2016, Mrs. Mathewson announced Transforming Youth Recovery's commitment to launching an innovative research program, Doors to Recovery, for students from kindergarten through 12th grade in the Washoe County School District. The program aims to create a comprehensive prevention and intervention program, as well as recovery support services for students and families. Mrs. Mathewson stands as a role model, demonstrating genuine concern and understanding of others who are in need. I am thankful to have her working as an ally to address this national epidemic.

Today I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Mrs. Mathewson for all of her hard work in bringing greater awareness to drug addiction and in transforming youth recovery in the State of Nevada and across the Nation. I am honored to call her a fellow Nevadan and a friend, and I wish her all of the best of luck as she continues in her endeavors with the Stacie Mathewson Foundation.●

RECOGNIZING TRIANGLE COOPERATIVE SERVICE COMPANY

● Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, today I wish to highlight the 100-year history of the Triangle Cooperative Service Company of Enid, OK. This year, 2016, is their 100th year in business in Oklahoma, and I am pleased to highlight them on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Triangle Cooperative Service Company was founded in 1916 by 20 local Oklahoma cooperatives to ensure rural Oklahomans could get their grain products to market at a fair price via rail. Soon, they grew their business to support Oklahomans in other ways, including helping conduct grain audits and by providing accounting services.

In 1929, it was decided that Triangle Cooperative Service Company would continue to offer member services to the local cooperatives, while a separate entity would be the official Grain Sales Agency for both Oklahoma and Texas. During the 1930s and the 1940s, a large number of grain facilities and cotton gins were built throughout Oklahoma. These new facilities created an increased demand for insurance to protect Oklahoma's farming communities from drought, natural disasters, and other severe weather events. In 1932, TCSC Insurance Agency was formed and molded the future of the Triangle organization. The Triangle Insurance Company was chartered on January 3, 1992, officially becoming a licensed property and casualty insurance company within the State of Oklahoma.

In 1996, the memberships of Triangle Cooperative Service Company and Producers Exchange Cooperative voted to merge the two cooperatives. This decision to merge marked the beginning of Triangle's expansion. Today, Triangle Cooperative Service Company has grown to 125 employees and over 300 members throughout 20 Midwestern States, continuing to spread its proud tradition of quality service.

In addition to the insurance agency and insurance company, Triangle Cooperative Service Company offers its member cooperatives employee group benefits, HR solutions and safety, and compliance management. Today, the Triangle Cooperative Service Company is cooperatively owned and governed by a board of directors and Mr. John Berg serves as president and CEO.

I am pleased to highlight the history and journey of the Triangle Cooperative Service Company as part of their 100-year history today.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:37 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3586. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve border and maritime security coordination in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4403. An act to authorize the development of open-source software based on certain systems of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to facilitate the vetting of travelers against terrorist watchlists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4482. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to prepare a southwest border threat analysis, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4509. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to clarify membership of State planning committees or urban area working groups for the Homeland Security Grant Program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4549. An act to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:44 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 483. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

S. 2512. An act to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3586. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve border and maritime security coordination in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4403. An act to authorize the development of open-source software based on certain systems of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to facilitate the vetting of travelers against terrorist watchlists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 4482. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to prepare a southwest border threat analysis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4509. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to clarify membership of State planning committees or urban area working groups for the Homeland Security Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4549. An act to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, April 14, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 483. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

S. 2512. An act to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 2804. An original bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–236).

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2390. A bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2613. A bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 2614. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Clare E. Connors, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. REID, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2799. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a voluntary patient registry to collect data on cancer incidence among firefighters; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. KING, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2800. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide an exclusion from income for student loan forgiveness for students who have died or become disabled; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2801. A bill for the relief of Malachy McAllister, Nicola McAllister, and Sean Ryan McAllister; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2802. A bill to provide adequate protections for gun owners; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. 2803. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to deposit certain funds into the general fund of the Treasury in accordance with provisions of Federal law with regard to the Patient Protection

and Affordable Care Act's Transitional Reinsurance Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 2804. An original bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2805. A bill to modify the boundary of Voyageurs National Park in the State of Minnesota, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 425. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 426. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should support and protect the right of women working in developing countries to safe workplaces, free from gender-based violence, reprisals, and intimidation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DAINES, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 427. A resolution designating April 2016 as ''Financial Literacy Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. Res. 428. A resolution congratulating the 2016 national champions, the University of South Dakota Coyotes, for winning the 2016 Women's National Invitation Tournament; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PERDUE (for himself and Mr. CARPER):

S. Res. 429. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of April 11 through April 15, 2016, as ''National Assistant Principals Week''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 430. A resolution supporting the designation of April 20, 2016, as ''Cheyenne Mountain Day''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 71

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 71, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 256

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 256, a bill to amend the definition of ''homeless person'' under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth, and for other purposes.

S. 746

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 746, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 996

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 996, a bill to facilitate nationwide availability of volunteer income tax assistance for low-income and underserved populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1462

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1462, a bill to improve the safety of oil shipments by rail and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1715

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1715, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims.

S. 2002

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2002, a bill to strengthen our mental health system and improve public safety.

S. 2279

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2279, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to increase efficiency in the recruitment and hiring by the Department of Veterans Affairs of health care workers that are undergoing separation from the Armed Forces, to create uniform credentialing standards for certain health care professionals of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2292

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2292, a bill to reform laws relating to small public housing agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2390, a bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2441

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2441, a bill to provide that certain Cuban entrants are ineligible to receive refugee assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2469

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2469, a bill to repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2548

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2548, a bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 2566

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Washington

(Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2566, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide sexual assault survivors with certain rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2613

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2613, a bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

S. 2614

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2614, a bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

S. 2725

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2725, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2746

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2746, a bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes.

S. 2749

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2749, a bill to provide an exception from the reduced flat rate per diem for long-term temporary duty under Joint Travel Regulations for civilian employees of naval shipyards traveling for direct labor in support of off-yard work, and for other purposes.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes.

S. 2755

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2755, a bill to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty.

S. 2782

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2782, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pediatric subspecialists in the National Health Service Corps program, and for other purposes.

S. 2790

At the request of Mr. VITTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2790, a bill to provide requirements for the appropriate Federal banking agencies when requesting or ordering a depository institution to terminate a specific customer account, to provide for additional requirements related to subpoenas issued under the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 383, a resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation.

S. RES. 422

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 422, a resolution supporting the mission and goals of 2016 ''National Crime Victims' Rights Week'', which include increasing public awareness of the rights, needs, concerns of, and services available to assist victims and survivors of crime in the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 3511

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3511 intended to be proposed to H.R. 636, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. KING, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2800. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide an exclusion from income for student loan forgiveness for students who have died or become disabled; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about a bill that I am introducing today, along with Senator COONS and Senator PORTMAN, called the Stop Taxing Death and Disability Act. It is a bill that responds to a tragic and unintended and frankly unsupportable policy—an inadvertent policy, I believe—of our government. Senator COONS has been a great leader on this, and I also wish to express my appreciation to Senator PORTMAN for joining.

Not long after I was elected, I was contacted by Donald and Nora Brennen, a couple from Topsham, ME, which is just across the river from my hometown of Brunswick. They are both retired Navy veterans, and they experienced a tragedy in their lives that has inadvertently entangled them with the Internal Revenue Service in a way that I think makes no sense.

Their son Keegan had graduated cum laude from the New Hampshire Institute of Art. He had taken on Federal and private loans in order to enable himself to get his education. He had a bright future. Unfortunately, barely 6 months after he graduated, he passed away suddenly from a non-traumatic brain aneurysm—a tragic loss which I think any of us as parents can only dimly appreciate or understand or empathize with. It is so unthinkable to lose a child in this way that it is just hard to conceive of.

The Federal Government has recognized this kind of situation and forgives the student loan indebtedness of students who pass away in this situation. The Federal Government gets that part right. Congress has already directed the Department of Education to forgive outstanding balances for borrowers who pass away, as well as those funds borrowed by parents on behalf of a child who passes away. The same forgiveness provision, by the way, is also permitted for borrowers who suffer total and permanent disabilities that are certified by the Social Security Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs. So far, so good.

While the Federal Government solved that part of the problem, it inadvertently created another by recognizing that the Tax Code generally treats forgiven student debt as income in the year it is discharged. Because of this, this family in Maine who lost their son was suddenly—overnight—faced with a $24,000 tax bill and a $6,000 tax bill from the State of Maine because of its conformance with the Federal law.

In other words, you lose a child. The loans are forgiven, but the forgiveness is treated as taxable income, and suddenly, in the midst of your grief, you are faced with paying an enormous—one big tax bill on the entire amount of the loan being forgiven.

In this case, the Brennens couldn't possibly pay this in one instance, and it makes no sense from the point of view of policy. It is the opposite of compassion. It is literally adding insult to tragic injury.

Since 2012 when they lost their son, the Brennens have struggled to make ends meet. They had to go into their 401(k). They had to make some kind of arrangement with the IRS, and now they are in the process of paying this enormous tax off.

This family in Maine is not alone in facing this burden. My office has heard from other constituents in our State, and our research indicates that there are at least several thousand across the country who are facing a tax bill in the midst of the most tragic and difficult circumstances. This just isn't right. It is something we should fix.

As I said, the Department of Education does have it right, and they are working on this, but until this unresolved tax issue is resolved, they can't move forward with an efficient way to provide these discharges.

The bill we are introducing today with Senator COONS and Senator PORTMAN, the Stop Taxing Death and Disability Act, is a commonsense, compassionate, and sensible response to this tragic event. If we are going to forgive the student loan debt, which makes total sense and has been the law for some time, to then turn around and say that loan forgiveness is itself taxable—so in the midst of your grief, you are presented with a massive tax bill—just isn't right. It is not fair, it is not right, it is not compassionate, and it isn't consistent with the earlier decision that has been made to discharge these loans under these tragic circumstances. I think it is time for Congress to add the death and disability exemption to the Tax Code.

I thank Don and Nora Brennen for sharing this story with me—it can't be an easy story to share—and for their service to this country in the U.S. Navy and their commitment to doing the right thing for their family.

I hope and believe we can find it in our wisdom here and in our hearts to act on this bill to be sure that other families in America in the midst of their grief do not have to face this tragic situation.

Again, I thank Senator COONS and Senator PORTMAN for joining me in this bipartisan effort to right a wrong, to correct a mistake, to act in the best principles of this institution, to act on behalf of this small group but important group who suffered loss, to act to relieve this burden that should never have been in place in the first place.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 425—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 425

Whereas the week of April 4, 2016, through April 10, 2016, was National Public Health Week;

Whereas the theme for National Public Health Week in 2016 was ''Healthiest Nation 2030'', with the goal of making the United States the healthiest nation in one generation;

Whereas public health organizations use National Public Health Week to educate the public, policymakers, and public health professionals on issues that are important to improving the health of the people of the United States;

Whereas the value of a strong public health system is in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the places in which we all live, learn, work, and play;

Whereas there is a significant difference in the health status of people living in the healthiest States compared to people living in the least healthy States, such as rates of obesity, poor mental health, and infectious disease;

Whereas public health professionals help communities prevent, prepare for, withstand, and recover from the impact of a full range of health threats, including disease outbreaks such as the Zika virus, natural disasters, and disasters caused by human activity;

Whereas public health professionals collaborate with partners that are not in the health sector, such as city planners, transportation officials, education officials, and private sector businesses, recognizing that other sectors have an important influence on health;

Whereas according to the National Academy of Medicine, despite being one of the wealthiest nations in the world, the United States ranks below many other economically prosperous and developing countries with respect to measures of health, including life expectancy, infant mortality rates, low birth weight rates, and the rate of drug-related deaths, which for overdose deaths involving opioids has increased by 200 percent since 2000;

Whereas studies show that small strategic investments in prevention can result in significant savings in health care costs;

Whereas each 10-percent increase in local public health spending contributes to a 6.9-percent decrease in infant deaths, a 3.2-percent decrease in deaths related to cardiovascular disease, a 1.4-percent decrease in deaths due to diabetes, and a 1.1-percent decrease in cancer-related deaths;

Whereas in communities across the country, more people are changing the way they care for their health by avoiding tobacco use, eating more healthfully, becoming more physically active, and preventing unintentional injuries at home and in the workplace;

Whereas despite having a high infant mortality rate as compared to other economically prosperous and developing countries and a death rate that varies greatly among States, overall the United States is making steady progress, with the infant mortality rate reaching a historic low in 2014, with 5.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births;

Whereas the percentage of adults in the United States who smoke cigarettes, the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, decreased from 20.9 percent in 2005 to 16.8 percent in 2014; and

Whereas efforts to adequately support public health and prevention can continue to transform a health system focused on treating illness to a health system focused on preventing disease and promoting wellness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week;

(2) recognizes the efforts of public health professionals, the Federal Government, States, Indian tribes, municipalities, local communities, and individuals in preventing disease and injury;

(3) recognizes the role of public health in improving the health of individuals in the United States;

(4) encourages increased efforts and resources to improve the health of people in the United States to create the healthiest nation in one generation through—

(A) greater opportunities to improve community health and prevent disease and injury; and

(B) strengthening the public health system in the United States; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to learn about the role of the public health system in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 426—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD SUPPORT AND PROTECT THE RIGHT OF WOMEN WORKING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO SAFE WORKPLACES, FREE FROM GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, REPRISALS, AND INTIMIDATION

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 426

Whereas women in developing countries who join the industrial workforce suffer from, or become increasingly vulnerable to, economic violence, including forced overtime, wage theft, abusive short term contracts, discrimination, sexual harassment, and violence at work;

Whereas women typically make up the majority of the workforce in industries in which the rights of workers have been restricted, including—

(1) export manufacturing (including the global apparel industry); and

(2) other export sectors (including the cut flowers and fresh produce industries);

Whereas sexual violence is often used by a male manager as a means of intimidation or punishment when a female worker makes a mistake, fails to meet a production target, asks for leave, or arrives late to work;

Whereas women are particularly vulnerable to violence and intimidation at work due to—

(1) the frequently disproportionate number of male managers;

(2) the lack of policing and reporting of sexual harassment; and

(3) common cultural norms that assert male dominance and place disproportionate pressure on women to maintain their income and support their children and elders;

Whereas a survey of female garment industry workers in Bangladesh revealed that—

(1) nearly ⅓ of respondents had been a recipient of an unwelcome sexual overture, inappropriate touching, or a threat of being forced to undress; and

(2) nearly ½ of respondents had been beaten or struck in the face by a supervisor;

Whereas some of the most deadly accidents in industrial history have occurred in export processing industries in which female workers predominate, including—

(1) the fire at Ali Enterprises in Pakistan in 2012, the deadliest apparel factory fire in history, in which the lives of 259 workers were lost; and

(2) the collapse of the Rana Plaza building in 2013, in which the lives of 1,134 Bangladeshi workers were lost and 2,500 more workers were injured, the majority of whom were women;

Whereas these and other industrial accidents have occurred in facilities that were monitored and certified as safe and decent workplaces by private, voluntary corporate social responsibility initiatives invested in by global brands from the United States and Europe;

Whereas female workers are often knowingly exposed to dangerous and life-threatening machinery or toxic substances that are no longer used in developed nations due to their reproductive or general health effects, without even simple safety measures like gloves or face masks; and

Whereas research shows that—

(1) workers who are well-informed about health and safety facilitate safer workplaces; and

(2) legal protections that allow elected labor union representatives of workers to raise safety and other concerns without fear of reprisals are essential for worker safety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States should—

(1) support policies that create safe and decent jobs in developing countries, which are critical to ensuring peaceful and sustainable economic growth and development in a globalized world;

(2) support policies that reduce gender-based violence, and other forms of discrimination, at work, and that improve the ability of women workers to speak out in defense of their rights without fear of reprisals;

(3) encourage the development of an International Labour Conference Convention to address gender-based violence at work;

(4) promote labor rights in trade agreements and enforce the right of women and other workers to join a labor union to defend their other rights and safety;

(5) use diplomatic means and international aid—

(A) to end violence against women in the workplace; and

(B) to empower women and other workers to participate fully in their economies and to protect their safety; and

(6) encourage United States companies with international supply chains, and Federal agencies involved in procurement, to increase transparency and accountability in order to ensure that products are produced in workplaces that—

(A) work aggressively to end gender-based workplace violence; and

(B) respect the rights of women workers.

SENATE RESOLUTION 427—DESIGNATING APRIL 2016 AS ''FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH''

Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DAINES, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 427

Whereas according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (referred to in this preamble as the ''FDIC''), at least 27.7 percent of households in the United States, or nearly 34,400,000 households with approximately 67,600,000 adults, are unbanked or underbanked and therefore have not had an opportunity to access savings, lending, and other basic financial services;

Whereas according to the FDIC, approximately 30 percent of banks reported in 2011 that consumers lacked an understanding of the financial products and services banks offered;

Whereas according to the 2015 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey final report of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling—

(1) approximately 41 percent of adults in the United States gave themselves a grade of ''C'', ''D'', or ''F'' on their knowledge of personal finance;

(2) 75 percent of adults in the United States acknowledged that they could benefit from additional advice and answers to everyday financial questions from a professional;

(3) 24 percent of adults in the United States, or approximately 56,300,000 individuals, admitted to not paying bills on time;

(4) 1 in 3 households reported carrying credit card debt from month to month;

(5) only 39 percent of adults in the United States reported keeping close track of their spending, a percentage that held steady since 2007; and

(6) 13 percent of adults in the United States identified not having enough ''rainy day'' savings for an emergency, and 15 percent of adults in the United States identified not having enough money set aside for retirement, as the most worrisome area of personal finance;

Whereas the 2015 Retirement Confidence Survey conducted by the Employee Benefit Research Institute found that 24 percent of workers were ''not at all confident'' that they had enough money to retire;

Whereas according to the statistical release of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the fourth quarter of 2015 entitled ''Financial Accounts of the United States: Flow of Funds, Balance Sheets, and Integrated Macroeconomic Accounts'', outstanding household debt in the United States was $14,200,000,000,000 at the end of the fourth quarter of 2015;

Whereas according to the 2016 Survey of the States: Economic and Personal Finance Education in Our Nation's Schools, a biennial report by the Council for Economic Education—

(1) only 20 States require students to take an economics course as a high school graduation requirement; and

(2) only 17 States require students to take a personal finance course as a high school graduation requirement, either independently or as part of an economics course;

Whereas according to the Gallup-HOPE Index, only 52 percent of students in the United States have money in a bank or credit union account;

Whereas expanding access to the safe, mainstream financial system will provide individuals with less expensive and more secure options for managing finances and building wealth;

Whereas quality personal financial education is essential to ensure that individuals are prepared—

(1) to manage money, credit, and debt; and

(2) to become responsible workers, heads of household, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens;

Whereas increased financial literacy empowers individuals to make wise financial decisions and reduces the confusion caused by an increasingly complex economy;

Whereas a greater understanding of, and familiarity with, financial markets and institutions will lead to increased economic activity and growth; and

Whereas, in 2003, Congress—

(1) determined that coordinating Federal financial literacy efforts and formulating a national strategy is important; and

(2) in light of that determination, passed the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9701 et seq.), establishing the Financial Literacy and Education Commission: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2016 as ''Financial Literacy Month'' to raise public awareness about—

(A) the importance of personal financial education in the United States; and

(B) the serious consequences that may result from a lack of understanding about personal finances; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the people of the United States to observe Financial Literacy Month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 428—CONGRATULATING THE 2016 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS, THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COYOTES, FOR WINNING THE 2016 WOMEN'S NATIONAL INVITATION TOURNAMENT

Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 428

Whereas, on April 2, 2016, the University of South Dakota Coyotes defeated the Florida Gulf Coast University Eagles by a score of 71 to 65 in the final game of the Women's National Invitation Tournament (referred to in this preamble as the ''WNIT'') in Vermillion, South Dakota;

Whereas this is the first national title for the University of South Dakota Coyotes since the transition of the University of South Dakota to Division I athletics;

Whereas the Dakota Dome of the University of South Dakota, soon to be replaced with a new complex, hosted its final basketball game before a crowd of 7,415 fans;

Whereas the University of South Dakota Coyotes shot 71.4 percent from beyond the 3-point line and 54 percent overall from the field in their 34-point win in the semifinal of the WNIT;

Whereas senior guard Nicole Seekamp was named most valuable player of the WNIT and averaged 14 points per game throughout the WNIT;

Whereas seniors Tia Hemiller and Nicole Seekamp were each named to the WNIT all-tournament team;

Whereas the 2015–16 season was the fourth season for head coach Amy Williams, during which she won her first national title;

Whereas the University of South Dakota Coyotes finished the 2015–16 season with a record of 32–6; and

Whereas the presence of 5 seniors and 4 juniors on the roster of the University of South Dakota Coyotes represents the commitment of the seniors and juniors to the University of South Dakota and its work to enshrine the ideal of the student-athlete into the ethos of the University of South Dakota: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and honors the University of South Dakota women's basketball team and its loyal fans on the performance of the team in the 2016 Women's National Invitation Tournament; and

(2) recognizes and commends the hard work, dedication, determination, and commitment to excellence of the players, parents, families, coaches, and managers of the University of South Dakota women's basketball team.

SENATE RESOLUTION 429—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF APRIL 11 THROUGH APRIL 15, 2016, AS ''NATIONAL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS WEEK''

Mr. PERDUE (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 429

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) have designated the week of April 11 through April 15, 2016, as ''National Assistant Principals Week'';

Whereas an assistant principal, as a member of the school administration, interacts with many sectors of the school community, including support staff, instructional staff, students, and parents;

Whereas assistant principals are responsible for establishing a positive learning environment and building strong relationships between school and community;

Whereas assistant principals play a pivotal role in the instructional leadership of their schools by supervising student instruction, mentoring teachers, recognizing the achievements of staff, encouraging collaboration among staff, ensuring the implementation of best practices, monitoring student achievement and progress, facilitating and modeling data-driven decision-making to inform instruction, and guiding the direction of targeted intervention and school improvement;

Whereas the day-to-day logistical operations of schools require assistant principals to monitor and address facility needs, attendance, transportation issues, and scheduling challenges, as well as supervise extra- and co-curricular events;

Whereas assistant principals are entrusted with maintaining an inviting, safe, and orderly school environment that supports the growth and achievement of each and every student by nurturing positive peer relationships, recognizing student achievement, mediating conflicts, analyzing behavior patterns, providing interventions, and, when necessary, taking disciplinary actions;

Whereas since its establishment in 2004, the NASSP National Assistant Principal of the Year Program recognizes outstanding middle and high school assistant principals who demonstrate success in leadership, curriculum, and personalization; and

Whereas the week of April 11 through April 15, 2016, is an appropriate week to designate as National Assistant Principals Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 11 through April 15, 2016, as ''National Assistant Principals Week'';

(2) honors the contributions of assistant principals to the success of students in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Assistant Principals Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role played by assistant principals in school leadership and ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education.

SENATE RESOLUTION 430—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 20, 2016, AS ''CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN DAY''

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 430

Whereas, since 1966, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station (in this preamble referred to as ''Cheyenne Mountain'') in Colorado Springs, Colorado, has been a synergistic hub for tracking security threats worldwide, serving as an essential component to the defense of North America and to global security;

Whereas countless space and ground sensor data collections are synthesized at Cheyenne Mountain, providing vital information for the key threat assessments needed to ensure the safety and security of millions of people throughout North America;

Whereas the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado, provides operational support and infrastructure sustainability;

Whereas the 721st Mission Support Group at Cheyenne Mountain provides dedicated daily sustainment to more than 13 mission partners performing the national security mission inside of the Cheyenne Mountain Complex;

Whereas, every day, more than 1,000 military and civilian personnel of the United States and Canada, residing in Colorado and working at Cheyenne Mountain, are ever vigilant in ensuring the collective common defense of North America;

Whereas Cheyenne Mountain is—

(1) a valuable national security asset;

(2) seen as one of the greatest engineering marvels of its time; and

(3) relevant both now and in the future;

Whereas Colorado is proud to be a nexus of capabilities that provide for the defense of North America, which is critical to global security not only today but also in the future; and

Whereas April 20, 2016, is the 50th anniversary of Cheyenne Mountain achieving full operational capability and would be an appropriate date to designate as ''Cheyenne Mountain Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 20, 2016, as ''Cheyenne Mountain Day'';

(2) recognizes the strategic importance of Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station to the defense of North America; and

(3) commends the efforts of the 21st Space Wing, the 721st Mission Support Group, and the 1,000 military and civilian personnel of the United States and Canada working at the Cheyenne Mountain Complex to support the collective common defense of North America.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3789. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3725 submitted by Mr. FLAKE and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3790. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3557 submitted by Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3791. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3568 submitted by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3464 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3792. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3754 submitted by Mr. HATCH and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3793. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3794. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3795. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3796. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3797. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment

SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3789. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3725 submitted by Mr. FLAKE and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

(d) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL CRIMINALS EXTRADITED.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has extradited or otherwise rendered to the United States all individuals in Cuba who are sought by the Department of Justice for crimes committed in the United States, including—

(1) General Ruben Martinez Puente, Colonel Lorenzo Alberto Perez-Perez, and Colonel Francisco Perez-Perez; and

(2) fugitive hijackers residing in Cuba, including Charlie Hill.

(e) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR CONFISCATED PROPERTY.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has—

(1) returned to all United States citizens, and entities for which United States citizens have an ownership interest of 50 percent or more, property confiscated from those citizens and entities by the Government of Cuba on or after January 1, 1959; or

(2) provided equitable compensation to those citizens and entities for such confiscated property.

(f) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR JUDGMENTS IN UNITED STATES.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has provided compensation to resolve all outstanding judgments against the Government of Cuba issued by a court in the United States.

SA 3790. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3557 submitted by Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

(d) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL CRIMINALS EXTRADITED.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has extradited or otherwise rendered to the United States all individuals in Cuba who are sought by the Department of Justice for crimes committed in the United States, including—

(1) General Ruben Martinez Puente, Colonel Lorenzo Alberto Perez-Perez, and Colonel Francisco Perez-Perez; and

(2) fugitive hijackers residing in Cuba, including Charlie Hill.

(e) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR CONFISCATED PROPERTY.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has—

(1) returned to all United States citizens, and entities for which United States citizens have an ownership interest of 50 percent or more, property confiscated from those citizens and entities by the Government of Cuba on or after January 1, 1959; or

(2) provided equitable compensation to those citizens and entities for such confiscated property.

(f) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR JUDGMENTS IN UNITED STATES.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has provided compensation to resolve all outstanding judgments against the Government of Cuba issued by a court in the United States.

SA 3791. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3568 submitted by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3464 proposed by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

(f) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL CRIMINALS EXTRADITED.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has extradited or otherwise rendered to the United States all individuals in Cuba who are sought by the Department of Justice for crimes committed in the United States, including—

(1) General Ruben Martinez Puente, Colonel Lorenzo Alberto Perez-Perez, and Colonel Francisco Perez-Perez; and

(2) fugitive hijackers residing in Cuba, including Charlie Hill.

(g) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR CONFISCATED PROPERTY.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has—

(1) returned to all United States citizens, and entities for which United States citizens have an ownership interest of 50 percent or more, property confiscated from those citizens and entities by the Government of Cuba on or after January 1, 1959; or

(2) provided equitable compensation to those citizens and entities for such confiscated property.

(h) LIMITATION ON EFFECT UNTIL COMPENSATION PROVIDED FOR JUDGMENTS IN UNITED STATES.—This section shall not apply until the President certifies to Congress that the Government of Cuba has provided compensation to resolve all outstanding judgments against the Government of Cuba issued by a court in the United States.

SA 3792. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3754 submitted by Mr. HATCH and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 5033. AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL SLOT EXEMPTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the provisions of section 5032 of this Act and notwithstanding sections 49104(a)(5), 49109, and 41714 of title 49, United States Code, not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, by order, grant exemptions from the requirements of subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to enable air carriers to operate limited frequencies and aircraft on routes between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and airports located beyond the perimeter restriction.

(b) BEYOND-PERIMETER OPERATIONS.—The Secretary shall make available, upon request, not more than 2 exemptions made available under subsection (a) to each air carrier that—

(1) sells flights in its own name;

(2) has daily scheduled service at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(3) commits, in using such an exemption—

(A) to discontinue the use of a slot for service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and a large hub airport within the perimeter restriction and to operate, in place of such service, service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and a medium hub airport or small hub airport located beyond the perimeter restriction that has no daily nonstop air service to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport as of the date of the enactment of this Act;

(B) to operate an aircraft, not to include a multi-aisle or wide body aircraft, with equal or lesser passenger capacity when compared to the aircraft used on service discontinued under subparagraph (A); and

(C) to file a notice of intent with the Secretary to inform the Secretary of any change in circumstances concerning the use of the exemption that specifies the airport to be served using the exemption, the type of aircraft to be used, and the slot the carrier is discontinuing under subparagraph (A).

(c) AIR CARRIER DISCRETION.—Except with respect to the requirements of subsection (b), an air carrier that receives an exemption under subsection (a) shall have sole discretion concerning the use of the exemption, including the selection of the initial airport and any subsequent airports to be served.

(d) RETURN OF WITHIN-PERIMETER SLOTS.—An air carrier shall be entitled to the return by the Secretary of a slot for flights within the perimeter restriction if the use of an exemption made available to the air carrier under subsection (a) is discontinued.

(e) PROHIBITION AGAINST TRANSFERS.—In accordance with section 41714(j) of title 49, United States Code, an exemption granted under subsection (a) to an air carrier may not be bought, sold, leased, or otherwise transferred by the air carrier.

SA 3793. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 1215 and insert the following:

SEC. 1215. REPORT ON NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall submit to Congress a report—

(1) assessing the feasibility and advisability of a pilot program to support non-Federal acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors;

(2) evaluating if—

(A) acquisition and installation of qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors improve safety or capacity in the National Airspace System; and

(B) the non-movement area surveillance surface display systems and sensors are supplemental to existing movement area systems and sensors at the selected airports established under other programs administered by the Administrator; and

(3) making recommendations with respect to the content of the pilot program described in paragraph (1), including with respect to procurement procedures and the possibility of establishing data exchange processes to allow airport participation in the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Collaborative Decision Making process and fusion of the non-movement surveillance data with the Administration's movement area systems.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) NON-MOVEMENT AREA.—The term ''non-movement area'' is the portion of the airfield surface that is not under the control of air traffic control.

(2) NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term ''non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors'' is a non-Federal surveillance system that uses on-airport sensors that track vehicles or aircraft that are equipped with transponders in the non-movement area.

(3) QUALIFYING NON-MOVEMENT AREA SURVEILLANCE SURFACE DISPLAY SYSTEM AND SENSORS.—The term ''qualifying non-movement area surveillance surface display system and sensors'' is a non-movement area surveillance surface display system that—

(A) provides the required transmit and receive data formats consistent with the National Airspace System architecture at the appropriate service delivery point;

(B) is on-airport; and

(C) is airport operated.

SA 3794. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 59, strike line 18 and all that follows through page 60, line 2, and insert the following:

(c) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the consensus identification standards, and the Administrator shall issue legislative recommendations for codifying such standards.

SA 3795. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 131, strike lines 11 through 19, and insert the following:

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination whether to grant or deny an application for a designation, the Administrator shall consider—

(i) aviation safety;

(ii) personal safety of the uninvolved public;

(iii) national security; and

(iv) homeland security.

SA 3796. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2303 and insert the following:

SEC. 2303. AIRCRAFT TRACKING AND FLIGHT DATA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall assess current performance standards and submit to Congress recommendations for revising the standards to improve near-term and long-term aircraft tracking and flight data recovery, including retrieval, access, and protection of such data after an incident or accident.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In assessing the performance standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider—

(1) various methods for improving detection and retrieval of flight data, including—

(A) low frequency underwater locating devices; and

(B) extended battery life for underwater locating devices;

(2) automatic deployable flight recorders;

(3) triggered transmission of flight data, and other satellite-based solutions;

(4) distress-mode tracking; and

(5) protections against disabling flight recorder systems.

(c) COORDINATION.—In assessing the possibility of revising performance standards under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consult with international regulatory authorities and the International Civil Aviation Organization to assess how to ensure that any new international standard for aircraft tracking and flight data recovery is consistent with a performance based approach and is implemented in a globally harmonized manner.

SA 3797. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3464 submitted by Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 3109 and insert the following:

SEC. 3109. REFUNDS FOR DELAYED BAGGAGE.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit recommendations to Congress with respect to the feasibility and advisability of requiring a covered air carrier to promptly provide an automatic refund to a passenger in the amount of any applicable ancillary fees paid if the covered air carrier has charged the passenger an ancillary fee for checked baggage but the covered air carrier fails to deliver the checked baggage to the passenger not later than 6 to 12 hours after the arrival of a domestic flight or 12 to 24 hours after the arrival of an international flight.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SR–328A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 10:45 a.m., in the President's Room of the Capitol.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 9 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Federal Perspective on the State of Our Nation's Biodefense.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 2 p.m, in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment and Economic Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 14, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining the Current Trends and Changes in Fixed-Income Markets.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NEVADA NATIVE NATIONS LAND ACT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 377, S. 1436

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1436) to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Nevada Native Nations Land Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

In this Act, the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR CERTAIN INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE FORT MCDERMITT PAIUTE AND SHOSHONE TRIBE.—

(1) DEFINITION OF MAP.—In this subsection, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation Expansion Act'', dated February 21, 2013, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 19,094 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management as generally depicted on the map as ''Reservation Expansion Lands''.

(b) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE SHOSHONE PAIUTE TRIBES.—

(1) DEFINITION OF MAP.—In this subsection, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Mountain City Administrative Site Proposed Acquisition'', dated July 29, 2013, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights and paragraph (4), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 82 acres of land administered by the Forest Service as generally depicted on the map as ''Proposed Acquisition Site''.

(4) CONDITION ON CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under paragraph (2) shall be subject to the reservation of an easement on the conveyed land for a road to provide access to adjacent National Forest System land for use by the Forest Service for administrative purposes.

(5) FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture (acting through the Chief of the Forest Service) shall convey to the Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation any existing facilities or improvements to the land described in paragraph (3).

(c) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE SUMMIT LAKE PAIUTE TRIBE.—

(1) DEFINITION OF MAP.—In this section, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Summit Lake Indian Reservation Conveyance'', dated February 28, 2013, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 941 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management as generally depicted on the map as ''Reservation Conveyance Lands''.

(d) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE RENO-SPARKS INDIAN COLONY.—

(1) DEFINITION OF MAP.—In this subsection, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Expansion'', dated June 11, 2014, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 13,434 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management as generally depicted on the map as ''RSIC Amended Boundary''.

(e) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE PYRAMID LAKE PAIUTE TRIBE.—

(1) MAP.—In this subsection, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation Expansion'', dated April 13, 2015, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 6,357 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management as generally depicted on the map as ''Reservation Expansion Lands''.

(f) CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE DUCKWATER SHOSHONE TRIBE.—

(1) MAP.—In this subsection, the term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Duckwater Reservation Expansion'', dated October 15, 2015, and on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) CONVEYANCE OF LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in paragraph (3)—

(A) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe; and

(B) shall be part of the reservation of the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (2) is the approximately 31,229 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management as generally depicted on the map as ''Reservation Expansion Lands''.

(g) REVOCATION OF PUBLIC LAND ORDERS.—Any public land order that withdraws any portion of land conveyed to an Indian tribe under this section shall be revoked to the extent necessary to permit the conveyance of the land.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) SURVEY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete a survey of the boundary lines to establish the boundaries of the land taken into trust for each Indian tribe under section 3.

(b) USE OF TRUST LAND.—

(1) GAMING.—Land taken into trust under section 3 shall not be eligible, or considered to have been taken into trust, for class II gaming or class III gaming (as those terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2703)).

(2) THINNING; LANDSCAPE RESTORATION.—With respect to the land taken into trust under section 3, the Secretary, in consultation and coordination with the applicable Indian tribe, may carry out any fuel reduction and other landscape restoration activities, including restoration of sage grouse habitat, on the land that is beneficial to the Indian tribe and the Bureau of Land Management.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1436), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL POW/MIA REMEMBRANCE ACT OF 2015

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1670, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1670) to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1670) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

HONORING RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY, AS RUTGERS CELEBRATES ITS 250TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 311.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 311) honoring Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, as Rutgers celebrates its 250th anniversary.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 311) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of November 9, 2015, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 427, S. Res. 428, S. Res. 429, and S. Res. 430.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDER FOR INTERVENING DAY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Friday, April 15, count as the intervening day with respect to the cloture motion on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2028.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2016

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, April 18; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2016, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:11 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 18, 2016, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. LORI J. ROBINSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JON T. THOMAS

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. STEPHEN M. TWITTY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOHN G. ROSSI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. ROBERT B. BROWN

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. CHARLES G. CHIAROTTI
BRIG. GEN. DAVID W. COFFMAN
BRIG. GEN. PAUL J. KENNEDY
BRIG. GEN. JOAQUIN F. MALAVET
BRIG. GEN. LORETTA E. REYNOLDS
BRIG. GEN. RUSSELL A. SANBORN
BRIG. GEN. GEORGE W. SMITH, JR.
BRIG. GEN. MARK R. WISE
BRIG. GEN. DANIEL D. YOO

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR OPERATIONS, A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. CHARLES W. RAY

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JONATHAN M. LETSINGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

LLOYD TRAVIS A. ARNOLD
SALLY A. BAKER
MICHAEL W. BEST
JARED T. BRADLEY
CAMERON C. CARTIER
CHARLES H. CHESNUT III
CURTIS C. COPELAND
JEFFREY D. DELLAVOLPE
DANIEL R. FARBER
BENJAMIN T. FEENEY
GEOFFREY C. GARST
WILLIAM G. GENSHEIMER
JESSICA C. HAYES
PETER C. HSU
JUSTIN J. KOENIG
DANN J. LAUDERMILCH
KAREN J. LEE
THOMAS J. MEREDITH
DANIEL MILMO
REINALDO MORALES
KERRA MURRAY
RACHAEL L. NEMCIC
SOHIL M. PATEL
CRAIG S. POSTER
LAURA K. RANDOLPH
JOSE R. REYES III
ISAMI SAKAI
SANDIPANI M. SANDILYA
JOHN A. SHANER
CHRISTI L. SHERMAN
MATTHEW T. SMITH
STEPHANIE M. STREIT
EMILY L. STURGILL
COREY M. TEAGARDEN
CASEY T. TURNER
DAVID J. VARGAS
HEATHER J. WERTH
BRENT J. WILKERSON
STUART S. WINKLER

MARIA V. ZILINSKI
KEVIN R. ZIMMERMAN
KONSTANTINA ZUBER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

KRISTIE L. PARTIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

AIMEE D. SAFFORD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

TRACEY A. GOSSER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant colonel

TODD R. HOWELL

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

PHILLIP W. NEAL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624:

To be colonel

KODJO S. KNOXLIMBACKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

LORI R. SCHANHALS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DREW R. CONOVER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

BRADLEY D. OSTERMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

FRANCISCO J. LOPEZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

MONICA J. MILTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

TIMOTHY D. AIKEN
MATTHEW R. SARACCO
BRENT D. TROUT
JAMES R. WEAKLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

GEORGE A. ROLLINS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MCARTHUR WALKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

TIMOTHY D. COVINGTON
JOHNSON C. GOURD, JR.
GREGORY P. JOUBERT
ERIC A. KENNEDY

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

DONALD E. SPEIGHTS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

TIMOTHY M. DUNN
DAVID M. FILLIS
MARK L. HENSON
JOSEPH D. KASNY
TIMOTHY P. MCALLISTER
RYAN M. MCCORMICK
KENNETH D. NASH
PEGGYTARA M. STOLYAROVA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

SUZANNE M. LESKO
CHARLES E. SUMMERS II

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

ANDREW F. ULAK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

KENNETH N. GRAVES
MARK M. MEADE
BILLY B. OSBORNE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

STEVE R. PARADELA
JOSHUA J. RUSSELL
REESE K. ZOMAR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

CHARLES M. BROWN
JOHN E. BYINGTON
KEVIN G. CRUMLISH
JOSEPH L. CUBBA
JOHN E. DAVIS
ERIC L. DENIS
THOMAS E. FOUTS
CHRISTOPHER D. ISAKSON
KEVIN A. JANKOWSKI
CRAIG M. LAWLESS
ANNE H. LOCKHART
HEATH L. MARCUS
KATHERINE S. MUELLER
KATHLEEN A. POWELL
DEREK S. REVERON
JAMES E. TOCZKO
EDWARD D. WHISTON
KARL W. WICK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

ROBERT K. BAER
JOHN L. MORRIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

BRIAN S. ANDERTON
DAVID N. BARNES
THEODORE J. BEATTY
KYLE D. BRADY
JEFFREY A. BUTCHER
JOHN D. CARLSON
JOSEPH A. CARNELL
ARTHUR M. CASTIGLIA
ELLIOTT I. I. CLEMENCE
RUSSELL J. COOLMAN
SUZANNE L. DALTON
CRAIG S. DERANANIAN
DAVID B. DIAMOND
STEPHAN R. DUPOURQUE
MARK J. EARLY
DAVID J. FAEHNLE
KEITH D. FERNANDEZ
TODD C. FINK
MICHAEL G. FRIEBE
THOMAS G. FRIEDER
WILLIAM S. GARRETT III
JOHN A. GREENE
KAREN M. GRIFFITH
ROBERT L. GUERIN
MARK L. HARRISON
DARRYL L. HOWELL
BRADLEY C. JEFFERIES
JEFFREY A. JURGEMEYER
JAMES M. KATIN
CRAIG S. KUJAWA
ALLEN C. KUNKLE
CHRISTOPHER D. MACMILLAN
RICHARD A. MALONEY
JAMES W. MASON
ALBERT A. MATT
MICHAEL S. MATTIS
ERIC D. MCCARTY
RICHARD K. MCHUGH
PATRICIA L. MELSEN
ANTHONY H. MILLER
BRIAN R. MILLER
JAMES R. MILLER
ANTHONY P. NELIPOVICH
SARAH A. NOLIN
CHRISTIAN A. ORTEGO
ROGER J. OUIMET
PETER G. PATTERSON
DINIS L. PIMENTEL
JONATHAN C. PUSKAS
EYRAN E. RICHARDS
TODD H. ROMNEY
CRAIG RUBIN
JOHN D. SACCOMANDO
ANDREW J. SCHREINER
KYLE D. SCHUMAN
MICHAEL E. SHARP
ANTHONY C. SMITH, SR.
BRYON T. SMITH
EDWIN A. SMITH
WILLIAM D. STROMBERG
JOHN F. SWEETER, JR.
BRETT E. TITTLE
OSCAR J. TOLEDO
ROBERT TREMAYNE
MICHAEL R. VANPOOTS
KENNETH E. WAGENHAUSER
DEAN E. WENCE
SAMUEL S. WEST
CARL V. WIGHOLM
JAMES T. WORTHINGTON III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

CHRISTOPHER J. R. DEMCHAK
BILLY D. FRANKLIN II
LUKE A. FROST
MATTHEW T. HART
DANIEL S. LAYTON
DOUGLAS J. MUNZ
WAYNE D. OETINGER
WILLIAM PILCHER
SEAN M. RICH
ANTHONY F. SCARPINO, JR.
CHAN H. SHIN
JASON E. SMALL
KATE M. STANDIFER
STEVEN R. THOMPSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

JANETTE B. JOSE
GARY S. LEFEBVRE
MICHAEL J. SCHWERIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

ERIC R. JOHNSON
GLEN J. OLOUGHLIN
JULIET A. PERKINS
ANDREW R. WOOD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

JAREMA M. DIDOSZAK
SHEILA JENKINS
BRANDON J. LARSON
WILLIAM L. ROTH
RICHARD D. SUSSMAN
RICHARD M. SZCEPANSKI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

CONRADO G. DUNGCA, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

ALEXANDER L. PEABODY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

JASON G. GOFF

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

LUIS A. BENCOMO

THE JUDICIARY

BETH M. ANDRUS, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON, VICE ROBERT S. LASNIK, RETIRED.

J. MICHAEL DIAZ, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON, VICE JAMES L. ROBART, RETIRING.

KATHLEEN M. O'SULLIVAN, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON, VICE MARSHA J. PECHMAN, RETIRED.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MARIANO J. BEILLARD, OF FLORIDA
ANTHONY J. GILBERT, OF ALASKA
ALICIA ISOM HERNANDEZ, OF CALIFORNIA
JESS K. PAULSON, OF OREGON
CHRISTOPHER D. RIKER, OF MARYLAND
WILLIAM G. VERZANI, OF NEBRASKA

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

NATHAN SEIFERT, OF UTAH
YURI ARTHUR, OF CALIFORNIA
THOMAS HANSON, OF CALIFORNIA
JEFFREY JUSTICE, OF NORTH CAROLINA

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RACHEL KREISSL, OF FLORIDA
OLGA FORD, OF VIRGINIA
DEVIN RAMBO, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JOSHUA BURKE, OF ILLINOIS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Thursday, April 14, 2016*

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 14, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable REID J. RIBBLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

SEAN'S RUN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GIBSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Sean Patrick French and the tremendous community organization that was started to honor his life on its 15th anniversary.

Sean was an amazing kid, a friend to all, a community volunteer, honor roll student, and a record-breaking athlete at Chatham High School. His father has described him as someone who ''never walked anywhere.'' His mother has told a story about him running laps at age 8.

At Chatham High School, he was a standout, both athletically and as a member of the school community. But tragically, at age 17, he lost his life as a passenger in a drunk driving crash on New Year's Day in 2002.

Days after Sean's death, the Chatham High School community rallied around his family and organized a 100-person strong run from the high school to the memorial on Route 203. His family and friends, some of whom are with us in the gallery today, use this inspiration to preserve Sean's legacy. They asked themselves: What can we do as a community to help kids make better choices? And Sean's Run was born. This year, 2016, marks the 15th anniversary of Sean's Run and what has now expanded into a weekend-long series of events.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as a member of this local community, Sean's Run has made a difference in our county and across the region. And as the father of three teenagers, I am personally grateful for the work of Sean's Run and what it has done to prevent similar tragedies and educate our community on the horrors of drinking and driving.

Sean's Run has worked to prevent underage drinking, impaired driving, and for increased seatbelt use by teenagers. It has helped kids think about making smart decisions and the tragic consequences that can result when they don't.

Sean's Run has grown each year—up to over 1,500 people in 2015—and the organization has become much more than an annual community 5K fundraiser and memorial. They regularly contribute to youth groups and community events to support anti-underage drinking and impaired driving programs and do pre-prom awareness events.

Sean's Run has also dedicated portions of the weekend to honor others lost in the community, including Meghan's Mile, a mile-and-a-half youth race for children ages 12 and under. Meghan's Mile is named in honor of a friend of Sean's, Meghan Kraham, who helped found Sean's Run at age 16, but lost her life to cancer on August 18, 2007.

Since 2002, Sean's Run has awarded almost $200,000 in grant and scholarship money. And since 2010, when I retired from the Army and returned to Columbia County, I have had the privilege to run in this 5K honoring Sean Patrick French.

This year's event will pay tribute to Sean and others through bike races, the 5K, Meghan's Mile, a prevention expo, seatbelt education, and the presentation of the Love of Running, Section II Good Sport, and Sean Patrick French Memorial Scholarships.

I am proud of the entire Sean's Run organization and the steps they have taken to prevent further tragedies such as this. Sean was a strong, smart, and caring young man whose legacy lives on through this organization every spring and throughout the year.

It is my honor to host some of Sean's family and friends today, including Sean's parents, Mark and Cathy, and his brother Eric. To them, I say thank you. Thank you for turning this tragedy into something that helps our community, and please know that you have made a difference in the lives of so many families in our country and across New York State. I look forward to, once again, honoring your son's memory by participating in Sean's Run next weekend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would like to remind Members that the rules do not allow referencing occupants of the gallery.

MARIJUANA DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we struggle to deal with the epidemic of opioid addiction and thousands of deaths from overdose, it is ironic that later this afternoon I will be part of a debate at the Brookings Institution about whether or not marijuana should continue to be a Schedule I controlled substance because, according to the statute, it has no medical value and a high potential for abuse.

Well, as part of the national drug reform movement, this much is clear: marijuana is less addictive, by far, than tobacco, alcohol, and cocaine. Indeed, the percentage of people who become addicted is less than 9 percent, as opposed to alcohol, cocaine, and tobacco, which is much, much higher.

It carries this designation of Schedule I despite the fact that millions of people have used marijuana and there has never been a single documented case of an overdose death.

As to medical value, it has repeatedly been confirmed. The New England Journal of Medicine did a survey in 2013 of practitioners who overwhelmingly supported the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. It has been endorsed by 15 State medical associations, the Epilepsy Foundation, and the American Nurses Association. People who have looked at it objectively agree that there is a huge potential for benefit. And that, most compellingly, is borne out by thousands of years of human existence.

It is used by well over a million Americans in 40 States to deal with things like PTSD and chronic pain. It is well known that it helps deal with

the debilitating effects of chemotherapy for cancer: nausea and the loss of appetite. Indeed, we are having families move across the country to be able to get legal access to medical marijuana in States like Colorado because it is the only remedy that they have been able to get to give relief to their infant children who suffer a debilitating type of epileptic seizures, torturing their babies, and it works for them.

Well, in the 1970s Richard Nixon rejected the advice of his own handpicked Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse and decided to make this the centerpiece of his war on drugs. A trillion dollars later and after millions of lives being affected, we are on the verge of a national effort to right this wrong. We are going to see State after State voting to follow Oregon, Colorado, Washington, and Alaska in adult legalization.

It is time for Congress and the administration to reassess the flawed principle of making marijuana a Schedule I controlled drug, with all the resulting harms and none of the benefits. It is past time for action.

HONORING STANLEY G. TATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable individual and one of my oldest and dearest friends, Mr. Stanley Tate.

A Miami-Dade County native, Stanley Tate has successfully served many roles in his long life, including businessman, civic leader, and public servant.

From a young age, Stanley was ambitious and understood the importance of a solid education. He enrolled in the University of Florida, where he earned a bachelor's degree, followed by a graduate degree from Columbia University.

Stanley quickly proved himself to be an intelligent, capable, and resourceful individual who was willing to work hard to accomplish his goals.

Not long after school, Stanley founded a general contracting firm, building private homes and apartment buildings. As a young and driven newcomer to the industry, Stanley quickly became well known and respected for his quality work.

Never one to limit himself, Stanley continuously expanded upon his continued success, starting several other individual firms and entities that focused on consulting and investments, as well as commercial development, including office buildings, shopping centers, and restaurants.

While Stanley was focused on managing his companies, he also made it a point to be very involved in public service, both locally and on a national level. He served with the city council of Bay Harbor Islands in several capacities, including mayor and assistant mayor for 20 years. He was also on the board of directors of the Florida League of Cities and is a former chairman of the Housing Resource Team for Metro-Dade County.

Due to his vast knowledge and expertise, Stanley has served as a witness and testified before committees in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate regarding housing and banking issues.

In addition, he was appointed by President George Herbert Walker Bush to be the chairman of the National Advisory Board of the Resolution Trust Corporation, and was then nominated by President Clinton to be the president of the RTC.

One of Stanley's strongest positions is one I share. It is the belief that every family should be provided a way to save for their child's higher education. His vision became a reality with the Florida Prepaid College Plan. His tenure as the program's chairman for the first 18 years was marked by his absolute dedication and selfless devotion to maintaining the program's viability.

In recognition of Stanley's efforts, then-Governor Jeb Bush signed House Bill 263 into law on June 26, 2006, renaming the program the Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program.

For all of these efforts and many more, Stanley Tate has been the recipient of numerous civic awards related to his work. This includes the Youth Law Center's Unsung Hero Award, the College Savings Plan USA Network's Distinguished Service Award, the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust's Arête Award, and was selected as one of the Twelve Good Men of 2004 by the Ronald McDonald House.

As a man of strong Jewish faith, Stanley has always been quite active in the Miami Jewish community and a strong and early supporter of the Democratic Jewish State of Israel.

Mr. Tate served as chairman of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, and he has been heavily involved in the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, since its early beginnings.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his life, Stanley Tate has always made it a point to give back to others by sharing his time, his knowledge, and his passions. So today I ask my congressional colleagues to join me in honoring Stanley Tate and thank him for all he has done for our south Florida community, for our State, and for our Nation as a whole.

God bless you, Stanley Tate. May you have many good years to come.

□ 1015

PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, as we were reminded yesterday by the Speaker of the House, Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, and the Constitution explicitly gives Congress the power to ''make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and other property belonging to the U.S.''

Treating Puerto Rico as property is just what is being proposed by the Republicans in addressing the Puerto Rico debt crisis. My friend here, King George of England, would be very proud.

I will say, the Governor of Puerto Rico has been working hard to help move a bill forward. He and his staff have been honest and tireless brokers, trying to resolve a crisis decades in the making. He should be commended.

But what the Governor and the people of Puerto Rico need are the same protections that any U.S. citizen has when their local government is in crisis and bondholders are circling and demanding payments. Puerto Rico needs the ability to restructure her debt so that the bondholders get something instead of nothing on their investment, the local government is not crippled, and the people are not faced with the collapse of their basic services.

Congress, the colonial power, took away the ability to declare bankruptcy, so that was never an option—a move worthy of King George himself.

Yes, in the bill the Republicans put forward, there is a restructuring of Puerto Rico's debt. There is even a temporary stay of the debt payments for a short period of time. But at what cost?

As I understand it, the debt restructuring for Puerto Rico would only take place if two-thirds of the bondholders on Wall Street approve. So Wall Street fat cats can literally veto what Republicans are proposing. On Wall Street, the fat cats know their Maseratis and yachts are safe, even if Puerto Rican schoolbuses, hospitals, and roads fall into further disrepair. They will live like kings, just like my buddy here, King George. They even bragged about it at the hearing yesterday, saying that the market ''responded positively'' when the Republican bill was introduced, because it signaled that Republicans have Wall Street's back, protecting the profits of the hedge funds.

I simply do not see things in the Republican bill that justify relinquishing what little sovereignty Puerto Rico has left to an unelected Federal control board. It is a new level of colonial rule on top of what Washington already has, what Washington already misuses, what Washington usually rather ignores. King George of England would

be pleased that, even after 250 years, the U.S. Congress, this Congress, created to replace his tyrannical rule, has so fully embraced colonialism for its distant territories.

As Speaker RYAN said yesterday, the fact that Puerto Rico's government is ''ceding its authority to the Financial Control Board is a huge, but necessary, move that will ensure Puerto Rico will learn fiscal discipline from a board of experts.''

Oh, yes, those poor islanders, those uncivilized Puerto Ricans, will see how it is done up close and personal.

The board will have the power to reduce the minimum wage, block overtime rules, block laws, regulations, and government contracts approved by the island's democratically elected government. It can overrule the legislature and the Governor if it does not like the budget, and it can fast-track energy projects at the expense of the environment.

Does that sound familiar to you, Your Highness, King George?

Get this: Congress can impose a control board on Puerto Rico that can hire whomever they want, at whatever salary they want, and the people of Puerto Rico have to pay to for it—period, punto—100 percent. The control board is paid for by those it controls. If that is not colonialism, I don't know what is. It is so good, King George here would be jealous.

As if to add insult to injury, the bill addresses Vieques, the island off the coast of Puerto Rico that the U.S. Navy bombed for decades. It turns over the land with no conditions.

Now, I am all for the people of Puerto Rico having control of the lands of Puerto Rico; but in the current crisis, without protection, we all know what is going to happen. Hotels, restaurants, and businesses seeking to profit will be looking for bargain prices and will be out to profiteer, just like the pirates who used to control those waters.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Puerto Rico want jobs and an economy that allows them to live on the island and thrive; but so far, all the Republican majority has offered is more colonial oversight, more austerity, and more misery.

I once again say this Congress should reject the King George approach and free Puerto Rico so that its hard-working people can build the island. We should put them—yes, the people—above all other creditors, bondholders, and profit seekers. That ought to be our priority. The schoolchildren, the elderly, the working men and women, the police on the beat, they need us to stand up for them as human beings, and I call on my colleagues to join me in doing just that.

CONGRATULATING LOCAL SCHOOLS ON NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC MERCHANTS RECOGNITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate staff and students at several schools in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District following their recognition from the National Association of Music Merchants, better known as NAMM.

Now, I am a big proponent of the importance of quality music education in our schools. I am very proud of what we accomplished with the repeal of No Child Left Behind and its replacement with the Every Student Succeeds Act, which really recognizes the importance of those programs such as music education.

In fact, my son is a middle school music teacher in New Jersey. We saw firsthand in our family that experience for all three of our sons. Being involved and being impacted by music education has really helped them with their creativity skills, helped them in so many different ways. Certainly, exposure to a quality music education for my youngest son, Kale, motivated him to pursue further education in music education. He did that with his undergraduate degree and is now a middle school music teacher in New Jersey, and making such a difference in the lives of the kids that he has the responsibility to teach and to influence. We are very proud of Kale, who, just this year, was selected as Teacher of the Year because of his contributions in music education and, specifically, in the lives of kids.

I am so proud that the efforts of the Moshannon Valley School District and State College Area School District have led to their recognition by NAMM as Best Communities for Music Education, drawing attention to their support and to their commitment for music education. In fact, these two districts are among only 476 to receive this distinction nationwide—out of America's more than 13,000 school districts.

In addition, I want to mention the DuBois Area Middle School, which received NAMM's SupportMusic Merit Award, which is given to individual schools which have shown a strong commitment to the value of music education. This school is among only 118 in the Nation to be honored.

Music education is vital to the education of children across the Nation and is essential to helping them become well-rounded adults. I commend the staff, the students, and the parents in each of these communities for placing music in such high regard.

PUERTO RICO IS LEFT IN LIMBO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico who, once again, are left in limbo as Republican leaders in Congress fail to act. As jobs are lost and young workers continue to leave the island, Republican leaders have, not once, but twice, canceled plans to take up legislation in the House Natural Resources Committee this week.

As a member of this committee and a Latino, I continue to be outraged by the majority's inability to govern and respond to the humanitarian crisis on the island. Republicans will keep playing politics and use the urgency of time to force a bill that will turn out to be significantly worse for the Puerto Rican people, all while asking my Democratic colleagues for their support.

This is unacceptable. I will not vote for any deal that fundamentally misses the mark when it comes to long-term, meaningful progress, including addressing wide health disparities in Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, Puerto Rico cannot afford to risk its future at the hands of Republicans, and we cannot afford to leave behind millions of American citizens who call the island home. Mr. Speaker, we need a bill.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN JAMES JOSEPH BOYLE III

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Captain James Joseph Boyle III, who, sadly, passed away from pancreatic cancer earlier this month at the age of 73.

Captain Boyle served on my Veterans Advisory Board and was instrumental in helping advocate for veterans in Lake County, Illinois, and around our country. I am so proud to have had him as a friend and an adviser.

A resident of Libertyville, Illinois, for 34 years, Captain Boyle is remembered as being a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

Captain Boyle graduated from Loyola University in Chicago before serving in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968. As an artillery Officer, he commanded both a Marine rifle company and a Marine artillery battery at different points in his tour. For his time in Vietnam, Captain Boyle received a Bronze Star Medal, an honor well-deserved. Even long after his own service ended, Captain Boyle never stopped caring for his fellow marines. He was an active member in the Marine Corps League of Lake County.

It is because of veterans like Captain Boyle that we are able to live free from tyranny today. He is an American hero and will be greatly missed.

REMEMBERING CORPORAL RICHARD VANA

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today in remembrance of Corporal Richard Vana, a member of our Greatest Generation and a veteran of the United States Marine Corps.

Corporal Vana, sadly, passed away earlier this month at the age of 92, having lived a long life, with public service at its core.

Serving during World War II, Corporal Vana was a member of the Marine Raiders and fought in the Battle of Okinawa for 99 straight days. It was during this battle that Corporal Vana and another marine rescued a wounded soldier, taking him to shelter. Without the heroic work of both men, the marine surely would have died from his injuries. Corporal Vana's outstanding service to our country did not go unnoticed, as he was awarded two Purple Hearts.

Upon returning home after the war, Corporal Vana operated a Community cab, and was a founding parishioner of St. Stephen's Church.

A family man, Corporal Vana was a loving husband and father, finding joy in his 28 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Corporal Vana's passing is a loss not only to his friends and family, but to our community and our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers are with this brave soldier's family and friends during this trying time.

HONORING MUNDELEIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR COMPLETION OF DOORS PROGRAM

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor students at Mundelein High School for completing the Doors of Opportunity Relevant to Students, or DOORS, program.

DOORS works to help prepare students for future careers by bringing real-world skills into the classroom. Since its start in 2014, DOORS has helped train students in resume writing, interviewing, and other skills.

This year, 75 high school seniors had the opportunity to partake in mock interviews, attend career cells, and work as interns for local businesses and organizations. I was proud to be one of the many organizations to partake in this program by hosting interns in my congressional office.

Education is a fundamental building block of our Nation, and it is important that we encourage our students in every way possible. These students have taken the initiative to prepare for their future, and I have no doubt that they will be successful in whatever they put their mind to.

□ 1030

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Saturday is Emancipation Day in the District of Columbia. It marks the day, April 16, 1862, when 3,100 slaves in the District of Columbia led the way to freedom, securing their freedom 9 months before the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves nationwide.

Isn't it ironic that, because Emancipation Day comes on a Saturday, the American people are going to have 3 extra days to file your income taxes?

Even though it is not a national holiday, it is a very special day for those of us who live in the District of Columbia because we are trying to get our full rights, the same rights as every other American.

While I vote in committee representing the people of the District of Columbia, I cannot vote on this floor. Others can vote on this floor on matters affecting my district and my district only, yet the District has more residents than two States and as many residents as about seven States in the United States. We outnumber Vermont and Wyoming.

There on this poster you see the District, Vermont, and Wyoming, yet Vermont, Wyoming, and every other State in the United States have two Senators and at least one Representative.

About seven States have one Representative who votes on this House floor. I do not vote on this House floor. The people I represent have earned every single right that every other American has.

Here on this poster are D.C.'s casualties in the major 20th-century wars, where the District of Columbia outpaced many States in casualties during those wars: World War I, more casualties than three States; World War II, more casualties than four States; the Korean war, more casualties than eight States; and the Vietnam war, more casualties than ten States.

These are American citizens who went to war for their country, died without a vote, did not come home, and their relatives today still do not have the vote on this House floor and have no vote in the Senate of the United States.

The largest irony of all, however, is shown on this poster. The people I represent here in the Nation's Capital pay more taxes per capita—more—than any residents of any State in the United States. They pay the highest taxes—$12,000 per person—and there are almost 700,000 people here. Who pays the lowest taxes in the United States per capita? It turns out to be Mississippi.

But wherever they come from, American citizens pay fewer taxes, less in taxes, than the people who live in their Nation's Capital, even though the people who live in the Nation's Capital live in a city that is among the oldest American cities, whose citizens still do not have their full rights as American citizens.

This is in violation of a treaty the United States signed in 1992, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The United States has been found to be in violation of that treaty because the U.S. does not give the residents of the District of Columbia the same rights as other Americans.

Ours is the only capital city in the world where those who live in their capital do not have the same rights as others, yet, as you saw in the District's casualties, this city has given and then given again.

The District wants to become the 51st State of the United States of America. That is the only way we can keep the Congress from interfering in our local affairs.

The District has to bring its own local budget to the Congress. We raise $7 billion in the District of Columbia. Our budget has to come here for the Congress to sign off so that we can spend our own money. What kind of autocracy is this?

Of course, what is most frustrating to us is that most Americans think that we who live in your Nation's Capital have the same rights as every other American. After all, they see me on the House floor and they see me vote in committee.

The greatest frustration, of course, to us is that most Americans do not know we do not have the same rights as they, and they would not countenance for a moment that there are in our country any Americans who are treated as unequal citizens.

THANKING SHARRA FINLEY FOR SERVING CENTRAL WASHINGTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express the gratitude of the people of central Washington State for the dedicated public service of Sharra Finley, who until last week served as my district director for Washington's Fourth Congressional District.

Sharra has a long history of serving the people of the State of Washington. For the last 10 years, Sharra worked for me also as a professional staffer for my office in the Washington State legislature and then as a professional staffer during my tenure as the director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Sharra's efforts have been dedicated to assisting central Washington's constituents and keeping their concerns front and center.

On a personal note, there is simply not enough time to recount the number of stories, many filled with laughter and some with tears, which might encapsulate the last 10 years of working with Sharra Finley. Suffice it to say that she will be missed.

I am grateful for Sharra's hard work, for her sense of humor, and for her friendship. I look forward to her next steps as someone who is dedicated to her community and to her family, her husband Ellery, her daughters Emma and Abby, and her son Lane.

Congratulations to Sharra Finley on a job well done.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless abundantly the Members of this people's House. During this season of new growth, may Your redemptive power help them to see new ways to productive service, fresh approaches to understanding each other, especially those across the aisle, and renewed commitment to solving the problems facing our Nation.

May they, and may we all, be transformed by Your grace and better reflect the sense of wonder, even joy, at the opportunities to serve that are ever before us.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GIBBS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

A SEVEN-PAGE PLAN WILL NOT WORK

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last month, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency testified that ISIL-Daesh will attempt mass murder within the United States. Sadly, despite these many threats, the President has failed to take ISIL seriously, dismissing them as the ''JV team'' and describing them as ''contained.''

It took an act of Congress to compel the President to submit a plan to defeat ISIL and violent extremists. Over a month after the February deadline, his plan of a pathetic seven pages was released. This is not a serious plan to protect American families, eliminating terrorist safe havens.

This is not a real plan because it does not directly reference radical Islam or jihad once. It is not a real plan because it only outlines past activities. It clarifies the President's legacy of failure.

Sadly, it is clear that this does not provide a path to defeat ISIL and mass murderers. While I have confidence in our servicemembers and military leaders, they deserve a clear mission. Seven pages is not sufficient, as American families are at risk of attack.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

GOLDMAN SACHS SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ITS ACTIONS

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the Justice Department reached a settlement with Goldman Sachs, where Goldman Sachs is paying $5 billion as a result of selling bad mortgages to good people.

I want to ask the question a Vermont banker asked me: Why isn't anybody going to jail?

What they did is put together mortgages that were designed to fail, and then they sold them to police officers, to teachers, to folks who have pension funds, with trust that Goldman Sachs was working for them.

So the banker's question from Vermont—why didn't anyone go to jail?—that is the question.

There is a second question: Why are the taxpayers paying over half of this settlement? It is tax deductible. The $5 billion settlement, $2.4 billion civil penalty Goldman pays, but the rest of it, about $2.6 billion, is deductible.

And why should the taxpayers be on the hook for the misconduct, intentional misconduct, cruel misconduct, unnecessary misconduct?

Taxpayers should not be paying a cent, and the people accountable should be going to jail.

SUPPORTING THE GREAT STRIDES MIAMI 2016 TO CURE CYSTIC FIBROSIS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support Great Strides Miami 2016 and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Cystic fibrosis is a tragic, genetic disease that can cause a buildup of thick mucous in the lungs and other organs, leading to frequent infections and organ failure.

This coming Sunday, April 17, at 9 a.m., I urge my fellow south Floridians to participate in the 5K walk at historic Virginia Key Beach, located in my congressional district, to raise awareness for the need for a cure to this terrible disease.

Delaney Jade Binker, right here, what a beautiful child. Delaney Jade Binker, seen here with her loving grandmother, Bonnee, is just one of some 30,000 Americans who desperately deserve more effective treatments and a cure.

Please consider taking a few hours of your weekend to walk at Great Strides Miami to help Delaney and so many others add more tomorrows to their precious young lives.

TAX DAY AND NO CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is tax day, April 15. It is also the day that, by law, the U.S. Congress is supposed to introduce a budget.

Mr. Speaker, the sad truth is that the Republican House leadership is failing to meet even this most basic responsibility. Despite Speaker RYAN's promise months ago to return this House to regular order and restore the American people's faith that this body is working to address the needs of everyday Americans, House Republicans cannot even bring themselves to agree on a budget for us to vote on.

Hardworking American families deserve a Congress that invests in the future, protects their safety, and creates

a level playing field for them and their children to succeed. Hardworking Americans deserve a Congress that will address the growing threat of the Zika virus, which we now know is becoming more of a threat and causes birth defects. We need to address it.

Democrats will continue to press for a budget that creates jobs, raises the paychecks of the American people, and keeps them safe, while reducing the budget in a balanced and responsible way.

RECOGNIZING FOR-BOTS ROBOTICS TEAM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, I visited Forbush Elementary School in East Bend, North Carolina. While I was there, I had a chance to meet with the impressive students who are a part of the For-BOTS robotics team.

Although Forbush Elementary has only had a robotics team for 2 years, its students are already racking up awards. The For-BOTS team was named the grand champion of Yadkin County's First Lego League Robotics Tournament.

The team also placed first in the Robot Table Performance and Project Presentation categories in a regional tournament in Boone. Additionally, the For-BOTS placed first in Robot Programming in the North Carolina first Lego League Tournament, and they claimed a second place award in Robot Table Performance.

It is always a pleasure to visit Yadkin County Schools and witness the great things happening in classrooms across the county. It is clear the teachers and the administrators at Forbush Elementary are providing an educational experience that equips students for success.

SUPPORT THE TREAT ACT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, in 2014, 28,000 Americans died from an overdose of opioid drugs, an annual total that has quadrupled since 1999. In Erie County, 11 people die per week from suspected opioid overdoses. Yet one in nine Americans with substance abuse problems—less than one in nine—are currently receiving treatment for their disorder. One cause is a cap that limits the number of patients a doctor can treat with opioid treatment medications such as Suboxone.

I have introduced legislation to raise these caps and expand prescribing authority to physician assistants and nurse practitioners, which is especially important in medically underserved communities. When treatment was approved for use in France without patient caps, the opioid overdose debt rate declined by 85 percent in 5 years.

I urge my colleagues to support the TREAT Act, to give professionals the tools they need to treat addiction and our families new hope for recovery.

WATER RESOURCES

(Mr. GIBBS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, this week I spoke to a group of civil engineers, local water utility managers, and others involved in the water infrastructure industry at their 2016 Water Week Conference.

While roads and bridges and airports and train tracks get a lot of attention, water infrastructure is just as critical to the health of our Nation's economy. Water transportation is the safest and most fuel-efficient, least polluting, and least expensive means of moving goods.

The public and private sectors must work together to deliver safe and affordable water to millions of Americans every day.

In 2014, we wrote a landmark Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which was signed into law. It reformed the way the Army Corps of Engineers studies and completes their projects; it shortened the nearly endless study and environmental review process; and, most importantly, it included no earmarks.

Our economy cannot afford to see the locks and dams of our Nation's inland waterways system fail, preventing cargo from reaching its destination. Our agriculture and energy industries depend on open and secure water transportation systems, and we hope to accomplish that in WRRDA 2016.

FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, there are more than 200,000 Filipino and Filipino American soldiers who responded to President Roosevelt's call to duty. They fought under our American flag during World War II.

These loyal and courageous soldiers suffered, fought, and gave up their lives alongside their American counterparts throughout the war; yet decades have gone by, and they are still waiting for their service to be recognized.

I have introduced H.R. 2737, legislation that is strongly supported by Members of both parties and in both Chambers, to award these deserving veterans the Congressional Gold Medal so that our country can show our appreciation and recognize them for their dedicated service and sacrifice in defeating the Imperial Japanese Army.

Today there are just 18,000 of these Filipino World War II veterans who are still alive. Time is of the essence. We cannot afford to wait. I urge my colleagues to quickly pass this legislation so that these courageous men may be honored while they are still among us.

NATIONAL CORNBREAD FESTIVAL

(Mr. DESJARLAIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th annual National Cornbread Festival, which takes place in my hometown of South Pittsburg, Tennessee. This yearly event brings thousands of folks from around the country to experience the culture of southeast Tennessee.

South Pittsburg is also the home of the iconic American company Lodge Manufacturing, a major sponsor of the Cornbread Festival.

Growing up, almost all of us can remember a Lodge Cast Iron skillet playing a prominent role in home-cooked meals. The memories contained in those skillets and the family time with our loved ones are some of the most cherished.

Lodge truly embodies the spirit of American manufacturing and ingenuity. While the trend is for most companies to sell to large companies and move overseas, Lodge has continued to operate in Tennessee since 1896. In fact, many of my constituents have worked at Lodge Manufacturing for their entire lives, just like their parents and grandparents.

I appreciate Lodge Manufacturing for working to keep those American dreams alive, and I want to thank all those who play a role in hosting the National Cornbread Festival.

□ 1215

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, like many Americans, I spent last weekend struggling through my taxes, and I would like to know, like other Americans, that that money is going to be used in a responsible way and that we are going to move toward fiscal stability around here.

I am the lead Democratic sponsor of Mr. GOODLATTE's constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget. In my opinion, the only way you are going to get Congress to get serious is to have a constitutional requirement that the budget be balanced and that the President submit to Congress a balanced budget.

You can't pretend you are going to do it just by cutting the heck out of everything. It has to include revenues,

has to close tax loopholes and overseas tax havens and a whole bunch of other things that are leading to revenue losses.

So I am introducing an improved amendment over and above that from Representative GOODLATTE which deals with a few concerns I have about that one.

This one clearly protects Social Security and Medicare. This one clearly closes a loophole that we can't have off-budget spending for military operations. We must have a declaration of war if you are going to exceed a balanced budget. It would require the budget be balanced within 5 fiscal years of passing this.

We have been kicking this can down the road. It is not a can anymore. It is a mountain of debt that we are giving to our kids. We have got to get serious about solving this.

RECOGNIZING MORTON PLANT HOSPITAL

(Mr. JOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Morton Plant Hospital, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

In 1912, Mr. Morton Plant was vacationing in Pinellas County, Florida, when his son, Henry, was seriously injured. He quickly realized the closest medical care was a day's drive, so he offered the community a $100,000 endowment to open a local hospital. On January 1, 1916, the Morton F. Plant Endowed Hospital opened with 20 beds and 5 bassinets.

In the decades to come, Morton Plant Hospital would emerge at the forefront of cardiovascular health, orthopedics, neuroscience, emergency care, and neonatal health.

It has been awarded the baby-friendly hospital status by the United Nations Children's Fund. It has also been recognized by the Florida Hospital Association as the innovation of the year in patient care. Most notably, it is the only hospital in the United States to be awarded for 13 consecutive years the Top 100 Hospitals designation by Thomson Reuters.

Morton Plant was created out of a community effort, and the hospital continues to serve the Pinellas County community. I congratulate them on 100 years of service, and I offer the sincere gratitude of our Pinellas County community for Morton Plant's tireless work on behalf of patients and families.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, at 3:30 p.m., I am hosting a public discussion at the Community College of Rhode Island Lincoln campus to highlight financial aid opportunities for students and the work we need to do in Congress to address the crisis of student debt.

Our young people are drowning in student debt. It is projected that 65 percent of the job openings by 2020 will require postsecondary education or training beyond high school, so this will become even more urgent.

The cost of education in a 4-year university has increased 250 percent since 1979, while real wages have stayed about the same.

Compared to 1979, students pay $26,000 more per year for a private university and $11,000 more each year at a public university. The average Rhode Island college student has over $31,000 in student loan debt, the fourth highest in the country.

We need to guarantee young people that they can graduate from college debt free. We need to allow students to refinance existing debt at lower rates, and we need to increase Pell grants and other investments in higher education. This needs to be a national priority. We need to do it now. Our future depends on it.

CONGRATULATING JUSTIN DEETS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to serve, along with my colleague from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), as co-chair of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus.

In that role, I am always excited to learn of students in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District who are excelling in their preparation for careers in growing technical education fields.

Today I want to congratulate Justin Deets, a student at Oil City High School who also studies welding at the Venango County Technology Center.

Last December Justin won first place in the annual Pittsburgh Section of the American Welding Society Competition.

On March 29, Justin was awarded $100 for this accomplishment, a new welding helmet, jacket and gloves, along with a week at the Lincoln Electric Welding School and qualification in x-ray welding.

This is quite an achievement, which will undoubtedly open new doors for Justin. I wish him the best of success in his future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, career and technical education training transforms lives. America needs a robust reauthorization of the Perkins Act.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROCESS FAILS NATION

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is April 15, the deadline for passing a budget. It is clear that the Republicans are going to miss it. From the start, this process has been a travesty.

Before President Obama even released his budget, Republicans announced that they would refuse to hold a hearing on it. They rejected the President's budget out of hand even before it was printed, a move unprecedented in this modern era.

Then they passed out of committee a budget that would end the Medicare guarantee, take healthcare coverage away from 20 million Americans who received it under the Affordable Care Act, and make deep cuts that harm children, students, seniors, and hardworking Americans.

Then the Tea Party wing of the GOP insisted on walking away from the bipartisan budget agreement inked just last fall.

So that brings us to today. My Republican colleagues don't seem to have a budget or a plan to move forward. The process has collapsed.

I urge my colleagues to start over and to work with Democrats to craft a budget that invests in our future and meets the challenges facing our Nation.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Volunteer Week to thank all of our Nation's unsung heroes: the millions of volunteers helping our communities throughout the Nation.

This Monday we kicked off the week with our first annual Heroes Among Us event to recognize some incredible people in my district who go above and beyond to make a difference in our community.

This week and every week it is important that we honor and thank these individuals for their selflessness and recognize the tremendous impact that their collective actions have on others.

Thank you to all those who helped nominate the well-deserved award winners of our Heroes Among Us event and thank you to all the volunteers and unsung heroes of Florida's 12th Congressional District and throughout the Nation. Keep up the great work. Happy National Volunteer Week.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROCESS

(Mrs. LOWEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, dire needs across this great Nation demand Congress' attention: Zika virus, the crisis in Flint, the opioid epidemic, not to mention the ongoing needs for education, infrastructure, jobs, and security. Yet, Republicans will miss tomorrow's statutory deadline to pass a budget.

The majority's ''Road to Ruin'' budget would devastate good jobs, end the Medicare guarantee, and increase poverty. Even this was not cruel enough for the most extreme voices in the Republican Conference who demand cuts that will hurt hardworking American families.

The majority's internal dysfunction is preventing Congress from investing in job creation, economic growth, and help for the American public.

My friends, it is time to end the games, address the dire challenges we face today, and invest in a brighter future for tomorrow.

REMEMBERING JEAN HAMILTON ALDRICH

(Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in memory of Jean Hamilton Aldrich, who passed away on March 23, 2016, at the age of 96.

Mrs. Aldrich was married to the University of California-Irvine's founding chancellor, Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr. Together they witnessed Irvine evolve into the hub for business and technology it has become today, all centered around one of the Nation's top research universities. Their work played a tremendous role in this transformation.

But Mrs. Aldrich's public service reached far beyond the university. She participated in health and arts projects throughout Orange County and served on boards for a home for the developmentally disabled and South Coast Repertory, a professional theater company in Costa Mesa.

She will long be remembered for her infectious laughter, her ability to keep her composure in high-pressure situations, and her service to the Irvine community.

Mrs. Aldrich leaves behind a rich legacy. She is survived by 3 children, 7 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren.

We join them in mourning the loss of Mrs. Aldrich, who was truly a leader in our community.

GOP FAILURE TO ADOPT A BUDGET

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with good news and bad news for the American people.

The good news is that, after months of infighting, my Republican colleagues in the House and Senate have found something they all agree upon. The bad news is what they all have agreed upon is to stop doing their jobs.

In the Senate, Judge Merrick Garland, who is widely recognized as a brilliant and fair legal mind, cannot get the courtesy of a hearing or a vote. In the House, the majority is not fulfilling its legal requirement to adopt a budget for the coming year.

As one prominent Republican once wrote in the Wall Street Journal: Failing to pass a budget is ''a historic failure to fulfill one of the most basic responsibilities of governing.''

That was Speaker RYAN in 2011.

HONORING NICHOLAS BROWN AND MICHAEL THARP

(Mr. WESTERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two heroes from the Fourth Congressional District of Arkansas. Nicholas Brown of Hot Springs and Michael Tharp of Hope were awarded the American Ambulance Association Stars of Life awards this week.

These men are both veterans who served their Nation with valor before returning home to Arkansas and joining the private sector.

But their sense of duty brought them back to public service, with both men now working as emergency medical services professionals. They are first responders saving lives in their hometowns every day.

I congratulate Nicholas and Michael on this award and thank them for their service.

APRIL 15 BUDGET RESOLUTION DEADLINE

(Mr. CONNOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the deadline by which Congress is supposed to have enacted its annual budget resolution.

As a former member of the Budget Committee, I take that responsibility very seriously, and I know the Speaker, the former chairman of that committee, does as well. So it saddens me that the House majority is now abdicating that responsibility.

I come from local government where we had to work on a bipartisan basis to adopt and balance budgets every year. Yet, rather than work with Democrats to advance a budget resolution that reflects the spending levels of the hard-fought 2-year bipartisan budget agreement adopted just 5 months ago, House Republicans have decided not to pass a resolution at all because some in their caucus want to undo that bipartisan agreement.

Budgets are values-based documents, but they don't have to represent just one set of values. They can be inclusive and should represent the broad diversity of the interests of the people we represent.

Working together, we can demonstrate the power of government to spur economic growth, provide for national security, and meet the needs of our people.

Mr. Speaker, one only has to look at the growing costs of the Zika virus, the opioid addiction problem, and the Flint water crisis to realize the cost of doing nothing.

JOE MACALUSO SPILLS THE BEANS ON LOUISIANA HOTSPOTS

(Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, Louisiana is known as the Sportsmen's Paradise. We don't have snow skiing, we don't have rock climbing, and we don't have white-water kayaking in Louisiana, but we do have our bayous, we have our alligators, and we have our oysters.

We are America's foreign country, Mr. Speaker. We are the top wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl. We are one of the top recreational fishing destinations in the Nation.

For over four decades, Joe Macaluso has been writing for the Morning Advocate, spilling the beans on our secret fishing holes, our lures, and our hunting hotspots.

Joe has been translating what is known, again, as America's foreign country to our visitors and residents alike. He has received national awards for coverage of legendary Grambling University Coach Eddie Robinson.

He has received awards for his coverage of fisheries devastation following Hurricane Andrew in 1992. He has received a lifetime achievement award from Louisiana Outdoor Writers Association, Coastal Conservation Association, and the Louisiana Wildlife Federation. He was recently inducted in the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I am not a good hunter and am not a good fisherman. But, with Joe ''Mac,'' he made it easy because he was always spilling the beans. He will be sorely missed.

□ 1230

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 14, 2016 at 9:22 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H. Con. Res. 115.

That the Senate passed without amendment H. Con. Res. 117.

That the Senate passed without amendment H. Con. Res. 120.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1493.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PERMISSION TO POSTPONE ADOPTION OF AMENDMENT NO. 1 ON H.R. 3791

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the question of adopting amendment No. 1 on H.R. 3791 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule XX.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

RAISING CONSOLIDATED ASSETS THRESHOLD UNDER SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 671, I call up the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 671, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3791

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CHANGES REQUIRED TO SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT ON ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL AND MANAGERIAL FACTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Before the end of the 6-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall revise the Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement on Assessment of Financial and Managerial Factors (12 C.F.R. part 225—appendix C) to raise the consolidated asset threshold under such policy statement from $1,000,000,000 (as adjusted by Public Law 113–250) to $5,000,000,000.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subparagraph (C) of section 171(b)(5) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5371(b)(5)) is amended to read as follows:

''(C) any bank holding company or savings and loan holding company that is subject to the application of the Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement on Assessment of Financial and Managerial Factors of the Board of Governors (12 C.F.R. part 225—appendix C).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After 1 hour of debate on the bill, it shall be in order to consider the amendment printed in part B of House Report 114–489, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered read and shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3791, which is a much-needed regulatory relief bill and economic growth bill, sponsored by an outstanding, energetic, and inspirational freshman on our committee, the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE).

As we look at the state of our economy today, we know one thing is for certain, Mr. Speaker, and that is that the economy is still not working for millions of working Americans. The economy is underperforming dramatically by any historic standard.

Given how far the economy fell from the Washington induced real estate bubble burst of 2008, history shows us that we should have had faster growth than normal during a rapid rebound phase. But it didn't happen, Mr. Speaker. There hasn't been a single year where economic growth has even reached 3 percent.

One published report on this failure noted:

There is no parallel for this since the end of World War II, maybe not since the beginning of the Republic.

Last quarter's GDP growth of only 1 percent just punctuates the matter again for working families that find themselves working harder for less. They have seen their paycheck shrink by more than $1,600. No wonder 72 percent of all Americans believe the country is still in a recession, because they are living that reality every day. For them, the recession never ended.

I don't need polls telling me, Mr. Speaker, that the economy is not working for working families because virtually every day I receive emails or letters like these:

Carla from Mesquite, Texas, in my district writes:

We are struggling to make ends meet. My husband had temporary work for 3 months. The last 2 years, he has been looking for work and not finding any.

Michael from the town of Forney in my district back in east Texas writes:

I hear on the news how the economy is improving and I see Wall Street making money. Average folks like me are not seeing any economic improvement.

The painful truth is that the Washington hypercontrolled economy, again, is failing low- to moderate-income Americans. They simply want a fair shot, a fair shot at economic opportunity and financial security.

Perhaps nowhere—nowhere—is the hyperregulation of Washington being felt more than when it comes to the customers of Main Street community banks. These banks are being buried under an avalanche of red tape, which is increasing costs for those customers, restricting their choices, and harming their personal finances.

Let's just look at a few examples, Mr. Speaker. Credit card rates have risen drastically, making them unaffordable and unavailable for a number of would-be borrowers. Federal regulations now on auto loans could hit some borrowers hard with a nearly $600 increase in interest payments on a $25,000 loan over a 4-year period.

Small business lines of credit have been cut back dramatically. And incredibly, the incredible regulatory burden placed on home buyers has now complicated the buying process and has led to fewer community banks offering home mortgages.

The fact is all of these higher costs are being felt at the same time that paychecks and savings are stagnant for working families. It just compounds the problem. The sheer weight, volume, and complexity of all of these regulations is killing prospects for new jobs, killing opportunities to spur economic growth, and it is harming working Americans. It is killing their ability to achieve financial independence through their home mortgages, through their auto loans, through their credit card loans, and through their small business lines of credit.

So it is on their behalf and on behalf of the Carlas and the Michaels of

America, and millions of others like them, that we are here to pass a very simple, but very helpful, bill. It is a commonsense piece of legislation.

The bill, again, sponsored by the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE), will make it easier for our small hometown community banks to raise capital so that capital, this very same capital, can be turned around and turned into local jobs and economic growth on Main Street.

We know that passing this bill will immediately—immediately—benefit more than 400 community banks all across America. Not big banks, Mr. Speaker, not Wall Street banks, but community banks. Those are the banks, historically, that focus their attention on the needs of our local families, our small businesses, and our farmers.

As a matter of fact, passage of this bill is a longstanding goal of the Independent Community Bankers of America. At the end of the day, we shouldn't pass this bill simply because it is good for community banks. We should pass this bill because it is good for their customers—the people who benefit from the loans and services that our community banks provide, the people who will work at the jobs, the people who will help create this stronger economic growth.

Wouldn't it be nice to hear for a change that community banks are once again hiring new loan officers to serve their communities as opposed to more regulatory compliance officers to serve their Washington masters?

That is how you help capitalize more small businesses and help families pay their bills, plan for the future, and achieve the dream of financial independence.

I, again, applaud the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE) for her leadership for fighting tenaciously for working families in her district and all across America.

I urge all Members to support and adopt H.R. 3791.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are now considering a bill that not only could put our community banks at risk, but strikes at the heart of why compromise in Congress can be so challenging.

H.R. 3791 would direct the Federal Reserve to raise the asset threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, allowing small banks and private equity firms to take on additional debt for mergers and acquisitions. The threshold would be increased to $5 billion in consolidated assets from $1 billion. Let me stress that this would be 5 times as much as the current threshold and 10 times as much as the initial level that was in place before a bipartisan compromise was enacted last Congress.

The small bank holding company policy statement is important because it allows small institutions, like community banks and minority-owned depositories, to access additional debt so they can continue serving their communities. However, it is important that this threshold is carefully calibrated so it cannot be abused by speculative investors.

If the threshold is raised too high, it will have the opposite of the intended impact. It will lead to mergers and acquisitions, riskier banking activities, and a reduction in banking services and credit availability to rural, low-income, minority, and underserved communities.

Indeed, Democrats and Republicans on the Financial Services Committee worked together just a little over a year ago to provide relief to almost 5,000 community banks by doubling the asset threshold under the policy statement to the current level of $1 billion from $500 million in assets. We did so after working closely with regulators and determining that $1 billion was the most appropriate threshold to help community banks grow without making them targets for mergers and acquisitions. At $1 billion, the policy statement covers 89 percent of banks in the country, providing relief to the vast majority of community banks and minority-owned depository institutions.

I am trying very hard to understand why my colleagues are reneging on that compromise and undermining the careful, considerate policy that we enacted. The administration has threatened to veto this measure because of the potential danger to our smaller banks and to the communities they serve. They have called this bill an unnecessary and risky change because we know what will happen if the Federal Reserve has to make this change.

For one, raising the threshold would have a serious impact on the consolidation of community banks. The majority purports to be concerned with consolidation in the banking industry and the disappearance of community banks.

This bill will all but ensure that larger banks and investors come in and purchase smaller banks and then cut branches in the communities that need them the most. We have already seen this happen with banks across the country, both large and small, that have been forced to shut down hundreds of branches because investors and shareholders demand higher and higher returns.

I supported the change we made last year to $1 billion because it would help ensure that small community banks are able to continue serving their communities. That is the point of the small bank holding company policy statement. We must help our communities retain access to local banks that know the specific needs of their consumers and small businesses.

This bill would do the opposite. Even those that did survive wouldn't be able to provide the same personalized service because of their size. I am particularly concerned about how this would impact our underserved communities.

Another problem with this legislation is that it would allow banks with as much as $5 billion in assets to operate under lower standards and less oversight by regulators. Many community banks failed during the 2008 financial crisis because they became overleveraged. Certainly, if a bank makes bad decisions in the amount of risk they take on, then it is appropriate to let it fail, but the failure of any bank, and especially a bank with up to $5 billion in assets, has a tremendous impact on the community it serves and on the Deposit Insurance Fund.

At the end of the day, more bank failures will increase premiums for all the banks protected by the Deposit Insurance Fund. We cannot allow reckless behavior that benefits investors and bank shareholders at the expense of small banks and the communities they serve.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3791 is not a small change. It is a risky move that threatens both bipartisanship and these already polarizing times, as well as the safety and soundness of our community banks and the customers they serve.

□ 1245

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''no'' on this bill. Mr. Speaker and Members, allow me to reiterate the point. We worked very hard in reaching across the aisle, in making compromise, in making commitments to each other, and in agreeing that we would raise the asset limit from $500 million to $1 billion. We had that agreement, and before the ink was dry on the deal, here we have a bill that says: So, we really didn't mean it. We want to raise it to $5 billion. Ha, ha, ha.

People wonder why we don't compromise more, why we can't get together more, why we can't understand what is in the best interests of all of our constituents, to put aside our differences, and work on behalf of those people we say we care about. The other side claims it cares about community banks. Then why would it renege on this agreement? If it cares about community banks, why would it put them in the position of being bought up by private equity firms and special money interests, which only want to find a way to make more money and more profit by closing down branches and firing people? That is what they do. When these private equity firms come in, they borrow a lot of money in order to make these kinds of purchases. Then guess what? They have to take the money back. So guess who are the victims of this kind of agreement? They

are the small banks and the constituents.

While my chairman—a gentleman whom I like very much and get along with very well—opens with statements that have nothing to do with this bill and while he talks about the plight of those in our communities who are suffering, let me tell you why they are suffering not only in his community but in communities across this country. It is because in 2008, we had a subprime meltdown and a crisis that was created by these kinds of reckless public policy attempts. We discovered that, because of all of the exotic products and all of the recklessness of some of the big banks and others, we put our people at risk, and we put our constituents at risk. Guess what? They lost their homes. Many of them are homeless and are on the streets now. Many of them cannot afford the rents that have risen because of the crisis that we have come out of.

If you really want to help small banks and community banks and if you really want to help your constituents, you will not be for a bill like this one. This only puts them at risk. I ask my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to say, number one, I find it incredible that the ranking member would say that this is going to harm community banks, which kind of begs the question: Why are they all for it? We already have their endorsements.

If the gentlewoman is concerned about big banks gobbling up small banks, then maybe it is time to repeal Dodd-Frank since the big banks have gotten bigger and since the small banks have become fewer, and the small banks tell us that it is Dodd-Frank that is killing them. This is a bill that will help small banks survive. They will merge together as opposed to disappear from our rural communities.

With respect to increasing risk, I would urge the ranking member to read the Fed's policy statement, which reads that the Board may, in its discretion, exclude any small bank company regardless of asset size. So that takes care of that issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE), the author of the bill.

Mrs. LOVE. I thank Chairman HENSARLING for his support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, economic freedom and personal freedom run hand in hand. In order to enjoy our personal freedom, Americans need access to credit as individuals, on behalf of their families, and in their businesses. That is why I am so proud to have introduced this bill.

H.R. 3791 is a very simple bill to help small banks and savings and loan companies get access to the capital they need so as to make credit available in their communities.

These small banking institutions are critical to the people and the communities in which they reside. They support the credit needs of families, of small businesses, of farmers, and of entrepreneurs. A community bank is often the principal lending source for many people whether they are purchasing a home, starting a new business, or purchasing a vehicle. In many counties around the Nation, a community bank is the only banking presence that residents have.

When these community banking institutions are overwhelmed with regulations and mandates, many of which are meant for larger institutions, it is the hardworking middle-income and low-income families in those communities who suffer the most. Mr. Speaker, it is about people. Community banks give people the credit they need to pursue their dreams—to buy a home, to start a business. In fact, proximity to a community bank increases the chances that new small businesses will be approved for loans and will have the chance to succeed.

By raising the consolidated asset threshold under the Federal Reserve's small bank holding company policy statement from $1 billion to $5 billion in assets, over 400 additional small bank and thrift holding companies will qualify for coverage under the policy statement and, therefore, will be exempt from certain regulatory and capital guidelines.

These capital standards were originally established for larger institutions and disproportionately harm small holding companies. Many holding companies that are above the current threshold face challenges with regard to capital formation just when regulators are demanding higher capital levels. These exemptions provided in the policy statement make it easier for small holding companies to raise capital and issue debt. This bill is about making sure regulations fit the size of the institution.

Mr. Speaker, a similar effort was passed into law during the last Congress under suspension in the House and by unanimous consent in the Senate. That bill raised the threshold from $500 million, where it has been since 1996, to $1 billion. That legislation also extended the exemption to savings and loan holding companies. While we are glad that we were able to achieve that increase which helped, roughly, 500 small bank and thrift holding companies, we would like to extend those benefits further. H.R. 3791 would bring more than 400 additional small institutions within the scope of the policy statement.

One success story that we have already seen from the previous increase was an instance in which 35 bank holding companies pooled their resources to issue debt under the policy statement. That debt was then downstreamed to the respective banks, where the capital was then used to make loans in the communities they serve, illustrating the great multiplier effect that the policy statement can produce. H.R. 3791 seeks to extend that flexibility and success to a greater number of small institutions and the communities they serve.

Opponents of this increase have alleged that changing the regulatory threshold would put communities and the Deposit Insurance Fund at higher risk, but the policy statement contains several safeguards that are designed to ensure that small bank holding companies that operate with the higher levels of debt permitted by the policy statement do not present an undue risk to the safety and soundness of their subsidiary banks.

Mr. Speaker, to sum this up, this bill is not about supporting banks. It is about supporting families, communities, and small businesses. It is about making sure that a small-business owner, like my constituent Jennifer Jones, has access to the credit she needs to expand her early childhood academy, where she teaches children to read before they reach kindergarten. It is about families who are sitting around their kitchen tables and are imagining the possibilities of renovating or of improving their homes. It is about that entrepreneur who is starting a restaurant and being her own boss. It is about the thousands of new jobs that will be created in those communities as a result.

The raising of the threshold received widespread bipartisan support in the last Congress, and I hope that the people will receive equal support this time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank very much the ranking member for yielding and for her leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3791.

I would like to note the Statement of Administration Policy on this bill, which reads that the bill ''amounts to an unnecessary and risky change.'' I am disappointed that we are even considering this bill, because I thought that we had reached a thoughtful compromise—a good faith compromise—on this issue last year.

Last Congress, we came together in a bipartisan way to increase the threshold for small banks that want to make acquisitions of other banks or financial companies and that want to finance these acquisitions based—and dependent to some extent—on debt. The Fed used to prohibit banks with more than

$500 million from using debt to finance these purchases, but in recognizing that this threshold was out of date, we worked together to raise the threshold to $1 billion last Congress. I was proud of that deal, and I thought it reflected a good faith compromise in the Financial Services Committee.

Now, less than a year later, our colleagues in the majority, apparently, want to change the deal. They want to raise the threshold from $1 billion to $5 billion—a 500 percent increase over the deal that we just struck a year ago. A $5 billion bank is, needless to say, significantly larger than a $1 billion bank, and a $5 billion bank likely engages in a much broader range of activities than does a simple $1 billion community bank.

Raising the threshold to this level would actually facilitate more consolidation among community banks. Banks at the high end of the $5 billion level would take on more debt, buy smaller banks, which would, thereby, lead to the deterioration of community bank branches in the neighborhoods that we represent, and it would also lead to fewer jobs as they then seek to slim down operations.

The current policy statement already covers 89 percent of the banks in the country. Eighty-nine percent of the banks are covered by the deal we struck last year, so raising this level further is not warranted. It is risky. It is unnecessary. The Statement of Administration Policy says that it will be recommending a veto from the President of the United States. It is unnecessary; it is unwarranted; and it reverses a spirited compromise and good policy.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the chairman of the Financial Services Committee's Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, today, the House will consider H.R. 3791, legislation to raise the consolidated asset threshold under the Federal Reserve's small bank holding company policy statement.

To say that the current regulatory environment presents challenges for small financial institutions would be a drastic understatement. Today, regulators require more and more from community-based institutions in terms of both regulatory oversight and capital requirements. Mrs. LOVE's bill seeks to alleviate some of the pressures that are facing our community banks.

Small bank and thrift holding companies confront unique challenges with regard to capital formation, which is of particular concern at a time when regulators are demanding more capital. In understanding these challenges, the Fed has recognized that small banks have limited access to equity financing.

The Federal Reserve's small bank holding company policy statement gives relief from certain capital guidelines and requirements, making it easier for a community bank to raise capital and issue debt and to make acquisitions and form new banks and thrift holding companies.

□ 1300

Our Nation's smallest banks have faced significant recession, consolidation, and an alarming number of bank failures. By increasing the threshold in the Fed's policy statement from $1 billion to $5 billion, we have the opportunity to help an additional 400 true community banks.

I know that the last speaker was concerned about 89 percent of the banks being already under this policy, but we are talking about 400 more communities that we can help to be able to have access to a regular stream of credit, rather than have to have increased costs and also bear restricted services from those banks.

H.R. 3791 will go a long way in ensuring that our Nation's smallest institutions are able to grow stronger and continue to serve their communities.

I want to thank Mrs. LOVE for her leadership on this issue. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 18 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 16½ minutes remaining.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker and Members, my friends on the opposite side of the aisle, who have brought this bill to the floor, claim they care about community banks, even when we know this bill will just result in more consolidation among small financial institutions.

Just yesterday the Republicans repealed the mechanism by which we would wind down systemically important firms. This puts us back to the days of September 2008, when our largest financial institutions could not only threaten the entire economy, but also the stability of our community banks.

Remember that when Wall Street banks cratered our mortgage system, they devastated the entire economy in ways that damaged not just workers and borrowers, but also small financial institutions.

Republicans, likewise, later today will repeal the independent funding for the Financial Stability Oversight Council, our regulator expressly charged with examining the largest, most interconnected, most complex, Wall Street firms.

Again, the Republicans want the biggest players to escape scrutiny, thereby threatening our smaller community institutions.

Republicans also have failed to put forward credible housing finance reform. Recall that in 2013 the chairman brought up his PATH Act, which would have all but excluded small banks and credit unions from the secondary market, especially handing the keys to our mortgage markets over to the largest Wall Street banks.

By eliminating Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, community financial institutions across the country would have had mortgage lending come to a halt.

Finally, remember that Republicans are willing to hold our government hostage over favors that help the largest banks and only expose our community financial institutions to more risk.

We need not go too far back to remember the 2014 fight over the government spending bill, where Republicans were willing to risk a government shutdown in order to repeal Dodd-Frank's swaps pushout rule, which would have required our largest banks to separate their riskier derivatives activity from the accounts holding depositors' money.

Let us be clear. My chairman has said over and over again, and never fails to remind us, that he hates Dodd-Frank. He wants to get rid of Dodd-Frank reforms. He said he would do anything to get rid of Dodd-Frank and the reforms that were put in place by the Congress of the United States and signed by the President.

He forgets what happened in 2008. He forgets the meltdown. He forgets the risk. He forgets about the almost depression that we found ourselves in.

He does not want to strengthen the hand of regulators. He does not believe that our regulators should have on their agenda consumer protection.

That is why, in all of this struggle, whether it is talking about the small banks or—you should hear him on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. He hates that Bureau, and he wants to dismantle that Bureau because they do not want regulations, really, for the biggest banks in this country.

Oftentimes, what they are doing is they are benefiting the big banks, but they are making it look as if they are benefiting the smaller banks. So we have to push back very hard on these attempts.

Moving from $1 billion to $5 billion is an absolute unraveling of our agreement. It is wrong to work so hard with the opposite side of the aisle and come to an agreement, only to have them renege on it.

But, in the final analysis, it is because they would rather put their influence and their time in on what amounts to helping the big banks and not the small banks and forget about what this does to our communities.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT).

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and, also, my good friend Congresswoman LOVE. She actually has become a very valuable member of the Financial Services Committee.

I appreciate this bill. We have to talk through something because there is something here that is just bordering on—you know, we are passing each other in the night here. That makes absolutely no sense.

Dodd-Frank: I accept some folks bathe in love for it, but it has made the big, money-center banks bigger. So a bill comes along that says there is this concentration—if you believe it is a concentration of risk—because these banks are growing bigger and bigger and bigger. And one of the big reasons they are growing bigger is because they can amortize the regulatory risk over a much bigger book of business.

The money-center banks are $2 trillion institutions. We are talking about a $5 billion step-up here. The small banks, which we are losing one a day, cannot cover these costs. Their regulatory costs on a much smaller book of business is putting them out of that business.

So if you want to make the big banks smaller, you can try to regulate them more. But they have demonstrated that actually is their competitive edge in the world right now. What you need to do is compete them out of their hugeness, if that is a word.

If you care about competition, if you want to stay with your rhetoric that, hey, we need to deal with these big banks and we need to keep regulating them, then create a market where other banks can start to take parts of their market share because the big banks have a different cost of money.

They have this ability to take this huge regulatory environment—sometimes five different agencies that have some level of prudential coverage—and amortize it over a book that is $2 trillion.

How about giving smaller institutions a chance to start taking some of their market share? That is what Mrs. LOVE's bill does.

It starts to say—and we are still talking something that is tiny in the banking world—let these holding companies get up to $5 billion. Let them actually start having a fighting chance to take some of this regulatory burden that has been shoved down their throats and start to amortize it over a little bit larger book. Because if you leave it at the smaller institutions, they cannot compete.

If you want to make the big banks smaller, create an environment where they face competition. This is a classic argument around here. Do you believe that you make the world safer by layer and layer and layer of regulation? Well, that worked great in 2008, didn't it?

We are going to file our paperwork and maybe next quarter some regulator will look at it and maybe the next 6 months someone will write a letter about it. Or do you want an environment where there is so much competition out there that there is lots of optionality in the financial markets? That is what we are looking for here.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, it is a fairly simple argument. If you want a competitive, robust financial market in our banking world, where institutions have the ability to survive because of the crushing costs that Dodd-Frank has created. This is a simple, simple bill. It is just a chip off the iceberg that is Dodd-Frank.

Think about it in a way that this is the first step to try to create more competition to those big banks that I hear the left rail on day after day. This is a good piece of legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on both sides, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 13 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 13½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire, also, whether the other side has any more speakers?

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, we have no more speakers.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), the chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time. I also want to commend the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE) for an outstanding piece of legislation.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3791. Sometimes we get up here and we talk about things in a technical way. And let me just explain to you what this good piece of legislation does.

Unfortunately, over the last few years, we have lost over 1,000 community banks in our country. In fact, we are losing them at the rate of about one a day right now.

That is important to my district because I am from the 19th Congressional District, which is a relatively rural district. I have a lot of small communities that have community banks in there. Some of them have been in business 75 or 100 years.

Unfortunately, in this environment, because of all of the regulations coming out of Dodd-Frank, many of these financial institutions are no longer viable on a standalone basis.

What is the alternative? Well, the alternative for those small banks is to search for someone to purchase them so that that bank can remain in that community.

In Texas, for example, this bill would allow 44 small bank holding companies to be able to help absorb some of those smaller banks.

Why is that important? Because in many of those communities, that little community bank is really one of the last corporate citizens standing there. They are the ones that sponsor the scoreboard for Friday night football, which is kind of big in Texas. They are the ones that support the chamber of commerce.

So what the Federal Reserve recognized is that, normally, they don't allow debt to be used as the transaction for larger holding companies, but they realized going out and getting capital for these small purchases is difficult.

So what the Federal Reserve has said is: Well, we are going to allow them to use up to 75 percent of the purchase price that can be debt.

Now, this does nothing about the safety and soundness. In other words, the holding companies that are purchasing these still have to maintain the appropriate capital ratios and all of those other things.

So this in no way affects the health of the banking industry, but it does facilitate the ability to make sure that these small community banks are able to stay in the communities they are in by being purchased by an entity that is a little bit larger that can amortize that cost.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 3791 and support community banks.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman LOVE stands with Main Street. Main-Street-based community banks are why we are on the floor today, because they are at the heart of helping our families start new restaurants, get consumer financing, finance our farmers.

I come from a very rural state, Arkansas, and 70 percent of the agricultural production loans in this country are made by our locally owned community banks.

Making it easier for them to raise capital makes it easier for our consumers and businesses to get the credit they need. For every dollar raised in capital at our banks, $10 can be put into lending into our communities. And small bank holding companies

have less access to equity financing than their larger counterparts. It has always been that way. So this effort makes complete common sense, to allow small bank and thrift holding companies to expand their capital base in an easier and more directed manner.

Dodd-Frank made it harder to raise capital because of the changes in the law about trust preferred securities and other ways that many, many small banks raised capital. So this policy statement change that Mrs. LOVE proposes is well-timed.

□ 1315

There is bipartisan support for raising this threshold to $5 billion, notwithstanding the comments heard in today's floor conversation. Senator BROWN, Democrat in the Senate, with Mr. VITTER in the Senate last Congress, proposed $5 billion as the appropriate level for this effort.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, concerning the ranking member's comments about raising the threshold on carte blanche relief under the policy statement that might lead to unsafe conditions, that is, in my view, not correct, Mr. Speaker, as there are numerous other restrictions and criteria that continue to apply, and the Federal Reserve retains the right to impose capital standards if it determines it necessary to protect the safety and soundness of the institutions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HILL. This bill is about Main Street and economic growth, and it surprises me as just a Member of Congress that our President, President Obama, would issue a veto message on this bill.

This bill is about economic growth, and I applaud my good friend from Utah's efforts at championing this bill. I urge my colleagues to support its commonsense design and measure.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to set the record straight. I have in my hand a statement from United States Senator SHERROD BROWN. It is a statement on House Bill to Alter Federal Reserve Small Bank Holding Policy Statement. U.S. Senator SHERROD BROWN, ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, issued the following statement today on legislation—that is this legislation, H.R. 3791—that would increase the asset threshold for the Federal Reserve small bank holding company policy statement: ''I understand that proponents of H.R. 3791 have mentioned a similar provision that I included in a larger bill in 2013 as somehow relevant to the current debate before the House of Representatives. It might be relevant if the House was also engaged in a real effort to address too big to fail, and it might be relevant if time had stood still. But since 2014, Congress and regulators have provided significant regulatory relief to community banks and raised the threshold of the small bank holding company policy statement to $1 billion. Raising the threshold to $1 billion was where Congress, regulators, and stakeholders could find broad bipartisan consensus on this issue, and I support that. I do not believe we should take further action to raise the threshold, and it is wrong to suggest otherwise.''

So, ladies and gentlemen on the opposite side of the aisle, don't use SHERROD BROWN's name one more time because this statement puts that to rest. He is not in support of raising this threshold to $5 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. GUINTA).

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman. I rise in support of the gentlewoman from Utah's bill that would allow more small bank holding companies to raise the necessary capital to better serve not only their customers, but their communities.

H.R. 3791 would raise the consolidated asset threshold from the Federal Reserve small banking holding company policy statement from $1 billion to $5 billion. By simply raising this asset threshold, more institutions would be able to qualify for coverage under the policy statement and be exempt from the ongoing burdensome regulatory guidelines.

My home State of New Hampshire is chock-full of community banks and community-based financial institutions, and having a higher threshold would help more community banks in my State and others across the country meet their higher capital requirements under Basel III.

I appreciate this commonsense approach that the gentlewoman from Utah is taking, and I appreciate her leadership because just in my State, we have had a 20 percent reduction of community banks. That means the average individual who is looking for an additional loan, whether it is personal or to start a new business, they can't get access to that capital. That is hurting the very people that the other side tries to claim to support.

Just last week I heard about a woman who recently was divorced, had two kids, and is a nurse. She was looking for a mortgage to start her new life again. She was denied because of these burdensome regulations. That should not be the intent in this country. We should be able to help those individuals who are trying to succeed, create a better life, give their children opportunity. H.R. 3791 does just that.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the bill. I, again, thank the gentlewoman from Utah for her leadership.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO).

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, while the financial crisis certainly showed that targeted regulations were needed to protect our financial system, it also showed that the real threats to the system did not come from community banks and other small financial institutions. Yet, because of high compliance costs and a fiendish complexity of the Dodd-Frank law, which all too often fails to recognize the lower risks posed by these institutions, they have been put at a disadvantage.

This bill is part of the effort by the House to institute targeted reforms and ensure that we are not holding back small, stable institutions that millions of individuals and small businesses trust.

H.R. 3791 is a well-targeted bill that will make it easier for small bank holding companies to raise capital and provide needed regulatory relief by raising the consolidated asset threshold for small bank holding companies. In doing so, this bill will benefit local economies and improve the health of the American economy as a whole.

At the same time, the bill contains important safeguards to ensure that the financial system isn't put at greater risk. In short, this bill is exactly the kind of measured approach that Congress should take to protect homeowners and investors while also ensuring that we have a vibrant, well-functioning financial sector.

I would like to thank Representative LOVE for her work on this bill and Chairman HENSARLING for his hard work and leadership. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

On Tuesday in the Committee on Rules, I reminded Members that I came to the Committee on Financial Services—it was known as the Banking Committee back then—in the wake of the savings and loan crisis. One of the biggest lessons I took away from that time was that we must be precise when we mandate changes to bank safety and soundness rules, even when our intent is to help community financial institutions.

Congress' intent may have been to help savings and loans serve their communities, but by not being measured and considered in its actions, Congress transformed the savings and loan industry into one that serves speculative investments and irresponsible CEOs.

That recklessness led to a banking crisis that brought down more than a

thousand institutions, cost taxpayers more than $120 billion, and robbed many communities of access to affordable banking products.

As I have said, it is important that the small bank holding company policy statement threshold is carefully calibrated so it cannot be abused by speculative investors. If the threshold is raised too high, it will have the opposite of the intended impact. It will lead to mergers and acquisitions, riskier banking activities, and a reduction in banking services and credit availability to rural, low-income, minority, and underserved communities.

That is why 2 years ago I worked diligently with my Republican counterparts to pass a bill that raised the threshold to $1 billion in assets, providing additional funding resources to 89 percent of the banks in the United States. That was smart, bipartisan legislating, a decision that we came to after consulting the regulators, researching the industry, and carefully considering the ramifications of the proposal.

In addition to that bill on the small bank holding company policy statement, I and my fellow Democrats in both the House and the Senate also introduced comprehensive legislation that would reduce compliance costs at community banks. We introduced this legislation, which included carefully targeted reforms that would allow small banks to thrive rather than encouraging consolidation, as this bill would do.

Our support for small institutions is also why my fellow Democrats and I have been supportive of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which has used SMART data analysis to thoughtfully calibrate their rules for the needs of small banks.

We often forget that in the run-up to the crisis, many small banks were pushed out of the lending business by unregulated, nonbank lenders. The CFPB has now created an even playing field, and small banks and credit unions are a bigger share of the mortgage market now than they have been in years.

Carefully considered reforms provide relief to community banks without creating unintended consequences in a complex financial system with many players. Unfortunately, the legislation before us today would, as my friends across the aisle say over and over again, hurt the people it is trying to help.

After we worked in good faith with Republicans to come up with a smart, targeted reform, we are now attempting to use this issue as a political wedge. It is exactly that kind of thinking that set the groundwork for the savings and loan crisis and left thousands of communities without access to banking services.

I would urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, ever since the Dodd-Frank law was passed, none of the promises that were made have been kept. It didn't end too big to fail. Big banks have gotten bigger. Small banks have gotten fewer. Working Americans continue to fall behind. They have seen their paychecks either remain stagnant or shrink. They have certainly seen their bank accounts shrink.

After Dodd-Frank, we have seen free checking at banks cut in half. Since other financial laws of the Obama administration have been passed, we have seen 15 percent fewer credit card offerings, and on average, many of them have increased by 2 percentage points in cost, hurting working Americans who need access to credit.

For purposes of the debate today, Mr. Speaker, what is undeniable is that we are losing a community financial institution a day in America. As we lose those financial institutions, we are also losing the hopes and dreams and financial security of millions of our fellow countrymen, particularly those who live in rural areas, like huge portions of the Fifth District of Texas that I have the honor of representing in Congress.

I keep on hearing the ranking member talk about a ''deal,'' something from the last Congress. The last time I read my Constitution, there is nothing to say that because one Congress acted on a matter, another Congress can't act on a matter. And, indeed, I am not sure we have any more urgent matter in the House Committee on Financial Services than to save community banking.

It is urgent, almost bordering on a crisis, Mr. Speaker, the loss of these banks. Small business lines of credit have been hampered, small business, the job engine of America, fueling our entrepreneurs, fueling new businesses, fueling the American Dream.

So I was happy that we passed a number of bipartisan regulatory relief provisions in this Congress. Now, regrettably, many of them were opposed by the ranking member. So I hear the rhetoric in helping community banks, and yet she opposed H.R. 766, Financial Institution Customer Protection Act supported by community banks; H.R. 1210, Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act supported by community banks; H.R. 1266, Financial Product Safety Commission Act of 2015 supported by community banks; H.R. 1408, the Mortgage Servicing Asset Capital Requirements Act, supported by community banks; and the list goes on and on.

So I think the proof is kind of in the voting card, Mr. Speaker. It is Members of this side of the aisle, especially, that are consistent in trying to help our community banks, our rural communities.

□ 1330

So right now they are all, again, Mr. Speaker, suffering from the sheer weight, volume, load, complexity, and cost of this massive Washington takeover of our banking system—the micromanagement, the control by Washington.

Again, that is the primary reason we are losing a community financial institution a day. And let me tell you, they are not going to get bought up by JPMorgan. JPMorgan is not coming to Jacksonville, Texas. Goldman Sachs isn't coming to Forney, Texas.

If we don't allow these smaller banks to consolidate, we will lose them. That is the choice, Mr. Speaker. Are we going to lose our community banks in rural America?

And again, if the other side of the aisle would want to repeal their number one threat—Dodd-Frank—maybe this bill from the gentlewoman from Utah wouldn't be necessary. But it is necessary. It is an urgent situation that we deal with today.

So I want to urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 3791. It is modest. It will help at least 400 community banks. Four hundred community banks will be helped. It will help them, hopefully, not only survive, but to thrive, so that they can fuel and finance the American Dream through better home mortgages, through better auto loans, through better small business lines of credit.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from Utah for her hard work, for her leadership. And, again, I urge all my colleagues to vote for H.R. 3791.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 15, strike the period and insert the following: ''for bank holding companies and savings and loan holding companies which have submitted to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System a credible plan to expand access to banking accounts and services, consumer and small business credit products, and bank branches in rural, low-income, minority, and otherwise underserved communities, which has been made available to the public via the holding company's website and submitted to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 671, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues have put this bill forward under a simple proposition: small- and mid-size banks need the ability to provide more lending opportunities to best serve their depositors and their communities. I agree with that premise. Access to credit is crucial to economic development, rebuilding our economy, and creating jobs.

Banks and deposit institutions are vital to creating economic opportunity. From small business loans, farm loans, and mortgage loans, to a simple checking account, access to banking services is essential for all Americans.

I firmly believe that allowing banks to access additional capital is a good idea, and good policy, so long as those banks are using those funds to lend in a fair and responsible manner to those people and entities that need it most.

My amendment is simple. It merely adds a clause at the end of the bill stating that the increase to a level of $5 billion in assets will only apply to lenders who serve rural, minority, low-income, and otherwise underserved communities. These lenders will be required to have a clear and credible plan to expand access to banking services in those communities, and submit their plan to the Federal Reserve and to Congress.

Let me put it this way, Mr. Speaker. Suppose a very common scenario: a high school student has a part-time job after school and receives a little money each week from her parents to round out her spending cash. Suppose that student asked her parent to increase her allowance by 500 percent. She says she needs it because with school obligations, she will be working less and won't have enough money to both fill her car with gas, go to the movies, or out to dinner with friends.

Would a reasonable parent simply start handing over five times as much money as they used to? Or would they ask their daughter a few questions, making sure that the money is truly being spent on a productive thing?

The student may be completely right—a 500 percent increase may be justified—and they may have nothing but good intentions with the additional money.

But what is the harm in asking? What is the harm in making sure? It is what a responsible authority would do.

My Republican colleagues say this bill is needed to allow banks to lend—to spur economic growth and ensure banks are able to serve their customers.

What is the harm in making sure that lending goes to those creditworthy businesses and individuals who need it most?

If we want to encourage expansion of access to credit, let's make sure it goes to where it will do the most good: a mortgage loan for a single mom working hard to achieve her vision of the American Dream; a business loan for a small manufacturing company looking to open a new facility in an urban community that hasn't seen new jobs in years or decades; a farm loan for a small family farm so they can continue operations and raise the grain and produce what will feed the world.

My district is urban, suburban, and rural. So I have farmers, I have people from the city, and I have suburbanites. And I see the need in all of those communities.

My amendment simply states: the threshold increase will apply to you if you promise to responsibly lend to those who qualify and need it most and where it will do the most good, and to report to the Fed and Congress about how you plan on going about it. No regulations, just a simple justification.

Mr. Speaker, all creditworthy borrowers deserve fair access to the funds our banks have available to lend. Expanding lending opportunities and ensuring lenders can access capital to create more jobs and economic growth is something we all should be able to support. I simply want to ensure that when doing so, banks are responsible and provide credit broadly and fairly, including to the communities where it will do the most good.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I claim time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, at best, this amendment is duplicative. Under section 3 of the Bank Holding Company Act, the Federal Reserve already requires all companies seeking to acquire a bank to submit an application describing how that acquisition would ''meet the convenience and needs'' of the target bank's community. Listing ''any significant changes in services or products'' and discussing ''the programs, products, and activities that would meet the existing or anticipated needs of its community under the applicable criteria of the Community Reinvestment Act, including the needs of low- and moderate-income geographies or individuals.''

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as our community banks continue to close, as they continue to suffer under the weight of the load, they don't need duplicative law. And my fear is that it is not actually duplicative. This is one more report, one additional report they are going to have to file in addition to the hundreds of other reports and paperwork that they have to fill out, one more cost that, at best, is duplicative. But the amendment is vague.

What does it mean to have a plan deemed credible? What is credible?

So here we are as a United States Congress, under the gentlewoman's amendment, yielding more of our article I authority to the Federal Reserve. The amendment lacks procedural safeguard. It doesn't provide for a public comment on the submitted plan. It doesn't allow the company to appeal an arbitrary determination. It does not permit a company posting a plan on its Web site to necessarily redact trade secrets or personally identifiable information.

Mr. Speaker, we just need to reject this amendment. It absolutely undercuts what the gentlewoman from Utah is doing.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering, if this is duplicative, why are banks closing in these communities? If there are some concerns, why not work with me instead of rejecting this amendment? If it is duplicative, then why can't we add it and see how we can make things better? I still get a lot of concerns that people who need loans in various communities that I serve still don't get them.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I would just like to point out that here is a Democrat on this side of the aisle who is offering to the Republican side to support the idea that you would raise the asset level for these small banks if only you would support minority banks, if only you would have a plan for CRA, if only you would do the right thing, if you care about the constituents, and they are rejecting it.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 3 minutes remaining. The time of the gentlewoman from Illinois has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE), the author of H.R. 3791.

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say, while I have much respect for my colleague on the other side of the aisle, I am opposed to the amendment.

Let me reiterate again what this does. I understand that the other side of the aisle believes that we have already helped our community banks by raising the threshold from $500 million

to $1 billion. However, we don't want to help our communities any longer or anymore?

This, again, would give access and the ability for 400 small banks to help their community. And I don't want you to think about this as 400 small banks. Please think of this as how many thousands of people these small banks are going to be able to help—people who are going to receive access to credit that they need in order to achieve their dreams.

It is time for us in Washington to stop giving people exactly what they need to stay exactly where they are and start giving them the opportunities to go beyond, to go to the middle class and beyond, if they choose; to have the opportunities to be as ordinary or extraordinary as they choose to be.

This is going to help many people from all walks of life in all sorts of communities. And that is why I believe that we in Congress should do our job and give as many people access to this credit so that they can help their families.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, I just want to thank the gentlewoman from Utah for her leadership. She has made such a great impact on our Financial Services Committee.

Again, I am not sure we have a more urgent matter on our committee—we have many important matters—but when you are losing a financial institution a day in America, and thus losing the hopes and dreams of millions who count on the community financial institutions to help buy their homes, fund their cars, capitalize their small businesses, it is an urgent matter. This is an important underlying bill that will grant relief to an additional 400 community banks to survive and, hopefully, go beyond surviving to actually thriving.

As ever well-intended as the amendment is from the gentlewoman on the other side of the aisle, it puts one more stumbling block in front of these community banks who are just withering on the vine, who are struggling.

Again, it is, at best, duplicative. Everything the ranking member brought up theoretically is already addressed in section 3 of the Bank Holding Company Act.

Why would you have to turn in essentially two different versions of a similar report?

More paperwork burden. At some point, it is the straw that breaks the camel's back, which absolutely breaks the back of community banking.

So it is time to reject the amendment. It is time for all Members to support H.R. 3791.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill and on the amendment by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, and the order of the House of today, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1345

FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL REFORM ACT

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 671, I call up the bill (H.R. 3340) to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 671, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services, printed in the bill, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3340

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act''.

SEC. 2. FUNDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 155 of the Financial Stability Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5345) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''be immediately available to the Office'' and inserting ''be available to the Office, as provided for in appropriation Acts'';

(B) by striking paragraph (2); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2); and

(2) in subsection (d), by amending the heading to read as follows: ''ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE.—''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1, 2016.

SEC. 3. QUARTERLY REPORTING.

Section 153 of the Financial Stability Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5343) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) QUARTERLY REPORTING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the end of each quarter, the Office shall submit reports on the Office's activities to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The reports required under paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) the obligations made during the previous quarter by object class, office, and activity;

''(B) the estimated obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year by object class, office, and activity;

''(C) the number of full-time equivalents within the Office during the previous quarter;

''(D) the estimated number of full-time equivalents within each office for the remainder of the fiscal year; and

''(E) actions taken to achieve the goals, objectives, and performance measures of the Office.

''(3) TESTIMONY.—At the request of any committee specified under paragraph (1), the Office shall make officials available to testify on the contents of the reports required under paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 4. PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD.

Section 153(c) of the Financial Stability Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5343(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT PERIOD.—The Office shall provide for a public notice and comment period of not less than 90 days before issuing any proposed report, rule, or regulation.

''(4) ADDITIONAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (3), the requirements under section 553 of title 5, United States Code, shall apply to a proposed report of the Office to the same extent as such requirements apply to a proposed rule of the Office.

''(B) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN REPORTS.—This paragraph and paragraph (3) shall not apply to a report required under subsection (g)(1) or section 154(d)(1).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After 1 hour of debate, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in part A of House Report 114–489, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered read and shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act, and I

would like to thank our colleague who authored this legislation, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER). He is certainly one of the hardest working and most thoughtful freshmen that we have on the House Financial Services Committee.

As the American people know all too well, Mr. Speaker, over years—not years, decades, in fact—Congress has ceded far too much power to unaccountable bureaucrats, Article I ceding power to Article II. At the same time, it has provided many unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats with access to money with no accountability for how that money is spent.

The Financial Stability Oversight Council, or FSOC, as it is known by its acronym, typifies this misguided yielding of power to the unaccountable and unelected.

Last month there was, however, a small victory for those who are alarmed by this ever-encroaching Federal Government and the shadow financial regulatory system that FSOC is a part of and that operates with little transparency or accountability to the American people. I speak of the recent judicial ruling that struck down FSOC's designation of MetLife as a too-big-to-fail financial institution. FSOC's decision was found to be ''unreasonable'' and the result of a ''fatally flawed process.''

Well, Mr. Speaker, the American people can achieve yet another victory today, another step in restoring the rule of law in checks and balances, by reining in an administrative state run amok, by passing the important bill that is in front of us now. FSOC is clearly one of the most powerful Federal entities to ever exist and, unfortunately, also one of the least transparent and least accountable.

First, the Council's power is concentrated in the hands of one political party, the one that happens to control the White House. All but one of FSOC's members is the Presidentially appointed head of a Federal agency, but, interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the agencies themselves are not members, thus denying bipartisan representation. The structure clearly injects partisan politics into the regulatory process; it erodes agency independence; and it undermines accountability.

Furthermore, FSOC's budget is not subject to congressional approval, removing yet another vital check and balance of its immense power over our economy and over our people.

FSOC has earned bipartisan condemnation for its lack of transparency. Two-thirds of its proceedings are conducted in private. Minutes of those meetings are devoid of any useful, substantive information on what was discussed.

Even Dennis Kelleher, the CEO of the left-leaning Better Markets, has said ''FSOC's proceedings make the Politburo look open by comparison. At the few open meetings they have, they snap their fingers, and it's over, and it is all scripted. They treat their information as if it were state secrets.''

FSOC typifies not only the shadow regulatory system but, also, the unfair Washington system that Americans have come to fear and loathe: powerful government administrators, secretive government meetings, arbitrary rules, and unchecked power to punish and reward. Thus, oversight and reform are paramount, and that is why the gentleman from Minnesota drafted H.R. 3340.

The legislation before us would bring much-needed accountability and transparency to two very powerful agencies birthed by the Dodd-Frank Act: the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research.

Currently, these two agencies are funded by assessments on financial institutions, money that ultimately comes out of the pockets of their customers. These funds flow directly from financial institutions into the Office of Financial Research coffers and are available immediately to be spent by both the Office of Financial Research and the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

H.R. 3340 is a very simple, commonsense bill. Instead of allowing unaccountable bureaucrats to set their own budgets, the bill places these two agencies on the budget review viewed by the United States Congress, the elected representatives of we, the people. It says the Council and the Office should be funded through the normal, transparent congressional appropriations process to ensure accountability and transparency.

Is it too much to ask that these two powerful government agencies actually be subject to congressional oversight and budget approval? This should be the rule for a growing number of Federal bureaucracies that are tossed into the alphabet soup of Washington regulators who have more power than ever over the financial decisions and the American Dream of our hardworking fellow citizens.

Unfortunately, I have to pose this question often to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: How much more congressional authority do we wish to outsource to regulatory agencies? Why did people run for Congress if they didn't want to legislate? Why did they run for Congress if they didn't want to engage in oversight?

Oversight is a fundamental congressional responsibility, and that includes budget oversight—most importantly, it includes budget oversight.

Mr. Speaker, sooner or later the shoe is going to be on the other foot. Sooner or later the White House will be in different hands. Sooner or later Congress will be in different hands, so this should not be a partisan issue. This is about Article I of the Constitution. All Members on both sides of the aisle should care passionately about this issue, to hold agencies accountable for their spending, because we are not just writing legislation for one Congress or one administration.

The bare minimum level of accountability to the elected representatives of we, the people, is to have Congress control the power of the purse. It is part of our quintessential and essential oversight responsibilities, regardless of who sits in the Oval Office or who resides in the Speaker's chair. If we are going to do our job, that means Congress must exercise its Article I responsibilities, and H.R. 3340 will help us do just that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 3340, which would impede the important work of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, commonly referred to as FSOC, and the Office of Financial Research, referred to as OFR, by subjecting their funding to the congressional appropriations process.

This bill would also hamstring the OFR's ability to conduct impartial research by requiring the Office to solicit public comment before issuing any report, rule, or regulation.

Just in case people don't understand who FSOC is, it includes the Federal Reserve, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the National Credit Union Association, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, and independent members with insurance expertise, chaired by the Treasury Secretary.

What you have is every representation from all of these oversight and regulatory agencies coming together, working together in the best interests of this country, identifying risk and where that risk is and what to do about it. But the changes that are now being suggested or being made in this bill will have serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act created FSOC to oversee and prevent threats to our financial markets, and the OFR was established to support FSOC's critical work with analytical research. Dodd-Frank specifically empowered both agencies with independent budgets, the same way our other banking regulators, like the Federal Reserve, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, operate. The FSOC and OFR are funded outside of appropriations, through fees on large financial institutions. They

were meant to be funded by the institutions they oversee and be shielded from congressional politics.

Republicans say they want accountability by overseeing regulators' budgets, but what they really want is control, so they can eliminate funding for these agencies altogether. This bill would prevent efforts to properly mitigate systemic risk, to the detriment of the entire economy; and in this Congress, it would subject the agencies to the uncertainty caused by the dysfunctional, failed Republican budget process.

All we have to do is look at the struggles facing the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. They continue to be underfunded, despite dramatic changes in the markets. It is a struggle every year to secure adequate resources to supervise complex institutions to the benefit of industries, but at dramatic cost to our economy.

Understandably, the administration opposes this bill, and the President's senior advisers would recommend a veto. The administration specifically says that subjecting these bodies to congressional appropriations would hinder their independence and would limit their ability to monitor and address threats to financial stability.

In addition, this bill would interfere with OFR's work.

Republicans also say they want transparency and cost-benefit analysis with regard to OFR's activities, but what they really want is to give industry a leg up on our regulators. In addition, by requiring the OFR to tell the industry what it is studying, the bill would corrupt OFR's findings and could have a chilling effect on its important work.

For similar reasons, I also will be urging my colleagues to oppose an amendment by Mr. ROYCE that we will consider later on today that requires detailed disclosure of the OFR's research agenda and practices. This is not the norm of any research organization and would severely limit OFR's ability to conduct rigorous, impartial analyses.

Our regulators need to act with certainty, impartiality, and position resources to conduct robust oversight of our financial markets so that we can properly detect and deter systemic risk. Unfortunately, this bill will be a step back in that effort, not forward, and it is further evidence that Republicans seek to dismantle Dodd-Frank and the improvements we have made in our financial markets, one bill at a time.

I am going to urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER), the sponsor of H.R. 3340.

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. I thank my colleague from Texas, Chairman HENSARLING.

Mr. Speaker, I am a believer in a transparent and accountable government; and if a Federal institution is failing to meet these fundamental criteria, Congress needs to act.

Unfortunately, the Financial Stability Oversight Council, more commonly known in Washingtonspeak as the FSOC, and the Office of Financial Research, more commonly called the OFR, currently operate in the shadows, outside of congressional oversight and the democratic process.

□ 1400

This has led to nonsensical and heavy-handed abuse by the government of numerous financial companies that had absolutely nothing to do with causing the 2008 financial crisis.

While I strongly believe that those who created the crisis must be punished, I can't stand by while businesses that had nothing to do with the crisis are being unjustly burdened with new regulations that force American consumers to pay higher prices for essential financial products like home mortgages and student, auto, and business loans.

That is why I have introduced the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act. Not only will the bill reduce mandatory spending by $1.3 billion over the next 10 years, it will make the FSOC and OFR accountable to the American people through their elected representatives.

Over the years, Congress has given much of its power to unelected bureaucrats. This legislation returns the constitutional power of the purse back to Congress by subjecting FSOC and the OFR to the appropriations process.

As you know, FSOC is authorized to identify risks to the financial stability of the United States. This authority allows the FSOC to designate nonbank institutions as systemically important financial institutions, or SIFIs, which, in turn, increases supervision and regulation of these firms by the Federal Government.

The Office of Financial Research was created to provide the research and analysis necessary for the FSOC to carry out this statutory mandate.

In a classic Washington fox-guarding-the-henhouse scenario, the FSOC and OFR are currently funded through taxes or assessments, as we prefer to call them, that they collect from the very SIFIs they designate.

These unelected bureaucrats then set their own budgets without any oversight or approval by Congress. Is it any surprise that the FSOC budget is already five times larger today than it was in 2010.

Senator Dodd and Representative Frank both have acknowledged that they never intended that insurance companies be designated as nonbank SIFIs.

Despite the stated intent by the authors of the Wall Street Reform Act, FSOC has already designated three insurance companies as nonbank SIFIs.

Unfortunately, further complicating the problem, FSOC has failed to create a viable off-ramp for designated companies and has not shared with Congress how they make these designations in the first place.

OFR has received its fair share of criticism, too. In 2013, their asset manager report wasn't only condemned by the industry, but the Federal Government Securities and Exchange Commission also expressed concerns.

According to a Reuters report, the SEC was concerned that the people who conducted the study at OFR ''lacked a fundamental understanding of the fund industry itself'' and ''the Treasury's research arm failed to take a number of the SEC's critical feedback into account.'' Thus, the SEC created its own comment period for the report.

Better Markets, a group that regularly advocates for increased government regulation, actually criticized the OFR for the inexplicably and indefensibly poor quality of the work presented in the report.

Despite all of this and the fact that Congressman Frank has also condemned the idea of designating asset managers, many fear the FSOC will move next with an asset manager SIFI designation.

For these reasons, I believe it is absolutely critical that we pass the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

It is crucial for the FSOC and OFR to be more transparent and accountable to the American people. Subjecting these entities to the congressional oversight process, enhancing OFR quarterly reporting requirements and allowing Americans to weigh in on OFR rules and regulations gives Congress the tools it needs to provide the proper oversight of FSOC and OFR.

Now, some may argue that Congress should just trust these bureaucracies. But our Constitution makes it abundantly clear that Congress and Congress alone has the power of the purse. And like one of our great leaders once reminded us: ''Trust, but verify.''

I want to thank Chairman HENSARLING for his leadership on this issue. I urge all of my colleagues to support the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS from California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WATERS.

Mr. Speaker, this is a strange day. I almost feel like we are existing in parallel universes. On the one hand,

today—today—is the deadline for the Rules Committee to meet to structure debate on a budget resolution. But it is clear by now that there will be no floor consideration of a resolution today or tomorrow or the day after or very possibly ever.

Instead, the headlines in Capitol Hill news publication after publication are all about how the appropriations process has descended into ''chaos.'' ''Chaos.'' So we have that on the one hand.

Then on the other hand we have a bill on the floor that subjects the Financial Stability Oversight Council to that very same chaotic appropriations process.

On the one hand, the appropriations process is in chaos. On the other hand, this bill moves valuable, critical, and important economic regulators into that same chaotic appropriations process. Have you ever heard the expression: Does the left hand know what the right hand is doing?

When the majority talks about putting agencies in the appropriations process, I hear a lot of high-minded talk and rhetoric—and appropriately so—about the Constitution and our Founding Fathers.

How would Alexander Hamilton have funded the FSOC? Frankly, I think it is great to ask those questions. I ask myself those questions every day.

Everyone who takes the oath of office and has the privilege to stand here ought to keep grasping for the answers to those questions. And how appropriate this week.

Yesterday was Thomas Jefferson's birthday. So I was going back and rereading something about him, his philosophies and contributions. Absolutely. We should all do that.

But we also have a responsibility to stay anchored in reality, to lay down laws for the country and the Congress we have—the Congress we have—not the country and Congress we all wish we had.

We live in an era of huge, complex financial markets, and we have learned again and again and again that those markets fail, sometimes wiping out $13 trillion in net worth in this country in a month. That is devastating. Somebody has to be looking at the whole system and working to shore up its weaknesses.

We live in an era of a broken appropriations process. It is chaotic. Today's Congress is not Madison's perfect vision.

Regardless of the ideals of article I of the Constitution, the reality today is that moving an agency into a chaotic appropriations process is to subject that agency to that very same chaos, to uncertain funding, to the risk of shutdown and backroom deals.

So let's find a budget resolution, fix the appropriations process, and then maybe, just maybe, we can talk about moving agencies into the appropriations process.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I will wrap up quickly. I thank the ranking member for the time.

But, for now, my friends, ladies and gentlemen, FSOC is too important. The risk of financial crisis is too great. Have we not learned that lesson, what happens?

To subject the only crisis prevention regulator to the dangers of a chaotic appropriations process—and that is what we have, it cannot be denied—is the last thing we can do.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) who is chairman of our Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act introduced by my good friend, Representative TOM EMMER, from Minnesota.

This is an important part. When I go back home and people hear about a bill that has been passed or new regulations that come out and they have a question about that—and particularly, I guess, under this administration, we have heard a lot of people say: What are you all going to do about that new rule that the administration pulled up? You all have the power of the purse. Why don't you do something about that?

The Founders were very clear about having different branches of government. One of the things that creates a lot of consternation for a lot of people is that they see some of these agencies created in Dodd-Frank, like the Financial Stability Oversight Council, FSOC, which has no accountability to anybody.

They operate in an unaccountable and not very transparent way, and they have a huge amount of impact on markets. In fact, when they determined that MetLife was systemically important, a Federal judge the other day said that they reached that conclusion inappropriately, that they weren't transparent, they weren't open, and that they didn't actually follow their own rules in determining this entity being systemically important.

So why in the world would we not want them to be accountable to the taxpayers? Because, ultimately, all of this money, Mr. Speaker, belongs to the American taxpayers and they are expecting this Congress to review the actions of many of these agencies.

I am amused at my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. They kept talking about how important many of these entities are and what a great job they are doing, yet they are not willing to allow them to be accountable and to come forth and make a case why they should be spending the money they are spending or why they are taking the actions that they are taking.

Talking about Mr. Jefferson, this is not the government that our Founders intended. In fact, they were really reluctant to form a Federal Government, to give a centralized government any power.

But they did ultimately determine that there would be some good about that, primarily for the common defense. I don't think they intended to create agencies that had no accountability.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, how soon we forget. If the movie ''The Big Short'' made you mad—and I hope you have seen that movie—then what the Republican House leadership is proposing today should make you furious.

After the financial crash in 2009, we acted. The Congress acted. We understood that we didn't have a wholistic picture of the risk across the financial markets before the crash.

So we made a decision to create the Financial Stability Oversight Council, FSOC, as they call it, to police these too-big-to-fail companies and to rein in the risks in our largest financial institutions.

Now some of the biggest banks want the oversight to stop so they can bring back their risky, anything-goes casino banking practices, the exact practices that tanked the housing market and destroyed retirement savings for millions of Americans in the 2008 Wall Street collapse.

This bill, H.R. 3340, pushed by Republicans and their big bank patrons, will neuter this important oversight body, blindfolding our government again and making another economic meltdown more likely.

I feel as though every couple of weeks the Republicans here in the House are giving us another memory test. They bring a bill up that tests whether we remember that just 7 years ago our financial markets crashed because of risky behavior on Wall Street.

I remember that that happened. Democrats remember that that happened. The American people remember that that happened. Apparently, the Republicans in Congress do not remember that.

But we are going to keep passing this memory test and pushing back against these kinds of efforts to water down the Dodd-Frank reforms.

Let me ask this, Mr. Speaker: How many of your constituents—I know

none of mine—have asked to gut the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to strip critical oversight of our Nation's largest financial institutions, and to make another financial crash likely? Nobody is asking for that.

Americans deserve better. They see day in and day out a Congress out of step with their priorities, and they want change. In fact, right now thousands of Americans are engaging in direct action on the Capitol Grounds asking for campaign finance reform and restoration of voting rights. Instead of voting once again to support the big banks and Wall Street, we should be listening to them and taking action to restore their voice in politics.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to push back against congressional amnesia and to oppose this bill.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), the chairman of our Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises Subcommittee.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time. I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for putting forth a piece of legislation that will shine the light of day on some of Dodd-Frank's most secretive creations.

We often hear our friends from the other side of the aisle and regulators talking about their concerns over the so-called shadow banking system.

The FSOC and its members have used this sinister term on multiple occasions to strike fear in the hearts of the public in order to advance, basically, their growth-strangling regulatory regime.

But the real threat is not from shadow banking. The real threat comes from the shadow regulatory system that basically operates outside of our system of checks and balances with absolutely no accountability to the public and with little or no input from the Congress to conduct our proper oversight. You see, the FSOC and the OFR are the embodiment of this shadow system.

For years now, the FSOC has continuously denied our committee's simple request for some information about how it operates and about its proceedings. Really, all we know about these meetings are a few sentences that it drops into their press releases.

Meanwhile, even though the OFR embarrassed itself with its asset manager report that was issued back in 2013, that office basically still operates largely outside of the public eye.

So it is time to shine the light of day on both of these bodies, Mr. Speaker, particularly in light of the recent invalidation of MetLife's too-big-to-fail designation by FSOC.

□ 1415

The underlying legislation would restore Congress' Article I authority by putting Congress back in charge of funding both FSOC and OFR, by requiring OFR to submit regular reports to Congress that the American public can see.

It is time to stop letting bureaucrats in this town run wild, let's put Congress back in charge, and let's put back the checks and balances for these troubling agencies.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), the ranking member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank her for her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose H.R. 3340, a bill that would cause severe damage to the integrity of the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research. It is through these entities that the Dodd-Frank Act identifies risks in our financial systems and guards against another financial crisis.

FSOC and OFR have been intentionally placed outside political pressure. They make our financial system safer and protect the American people from a future financial crisis. However, the bill we are debating today would cripple FSOC and OFR by subjecting them to unnecessary political influence, putting our financial system at risk.

My colleagues across the aisle would have us believe that FSOC and OFR have free rein to set and approve their own budgets, and are, therefore, agencies that have run amok. FSOC's budget is approved by a majority vote of its members. FSOC does not have unchecked budget authority. FSOC's budget is similar to, and modeled after, the FDIC's budget mode.

The FDIC also sets its own budget. It has time and time again acted to protect the American people from financial collapse while setting a reasonable and prudent budget.

No one is calling on Congress to rein in the FDIC. The bill is nothing more than an attempt by the majority to undo the progress made by Dodd-Frank and to eliminate the ability of FSOC to act on behalf of the American people by cutting its funding.

As I listened to my colleague from Maryland a few minutes ago talk about the folks who are right outside this Capitol, complaining about Citizens United, people want to know that they have power. These people are very upset. They want to know that their democracy is not being taken away from them.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and against all bills that seek to roll back our progress in making the financial system safer.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 14½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker, I do not support the creation of FSOC and OFR and do not think that 10 unelected agency heads should be able to have such influence over the U.S. financial system. But H.R. 3340 doesn't even curtail any of FSOC's or OFR's powers. It simply provides greater accountability by making their budget subject to the annual Congressional appropriations process.

Strengthening congressional oversight would force FSOC and OFR to address questions and concerns from both sides of the aisle. Requiring OFR to report quarterly to Congress and provide the standard public notice and comment period before issuing any report or regulation is just common sense. In fact, it would ultimately serve the public interest to provide transparency and diverse perspectives on issues affecting the financial services industry.

The FSOC has the authority to declare large companies as ''systematically important financial institutions'' and then subject them to a new, costly regulatory regime that is designed for banks. I have serious concerns about their power, but this bill wouldn't even change that. It would only provide desperately needed transparency and accountability to the SIFI designation process, which was recently described by a Federal judge as ''fatally flawed'' and ''arbitrary and capricious.''

2008 demonstrated that we need effective regulation of our financial system, but regulators need to be held accountable for their decisions, especially given the impact they have on the competitiveness of U.S. companies.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. EMMER for his legislation.

I strongly urge the adoption and passage of this legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My friends on the opposite side of the aisle keep talking about accountability and what Congress' responsibility is and what the Constitution says we should do. But I find it very interesting, while they are claiming that OFR and FSOC should be given more oversight, they don't seem to really want to exercise the responsibility to do that.

Republicans claim that only when OFR and FSOC are subject to the annual appropriations process, will these two entities be accountable to Congress.

However, how many times has the Financial Services Committee requested the director of the Office of Financial Research to testify?

Only one time.

Section 153 of the Dodd-Frank Act requires that the OFR director testify before our committee annually, and yet, OFR Director Berner has only been invited to testify once in the last 4 years—the only time being in March of 2013. That means for more than 3 years, our committee, under Republican leadership, has shirked its duties to oversee the OFR. Any Member who has met Director Berner can attest that he has always stated his eagerness to update Congress on what OFR is doing.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not some valiant attempt to hold FSOC and OFR accountable, no. This bill is yet another attack on a Dodd-Frank financial reform by Republicans, who never supported financial reform in the very first place.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3340, the so-called Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

This bill represents another example of death by a thousand cuts from our friends on the other side of the aisle. It is another Republican attack on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

After the catastrophe of the financial crisis and the near collapse of our banking system, Republicans are, once again, jeopardizing the stability of our financial system.

How many times will Republicans waste taxpayer dollars with these partisan and dangerous attacks on the independence of our financial regulators?

Dodd-Frank created the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research to bring independent regulators together to monitor risk across our banking system and address threats to the American economy. Prior to the creation of FSOC, no single entity was accountable for monitoring our Nation's financial stability—none. It was a mishmash, disparate mess. Dodd-Frank filled that void.

Similarly, OFR works to support consumers by conducting critical research on our financial system and whether our regulatory systems are, in fact, working.

Of course, if we don't invite the person who is the head of the Office to actually testify in front of the Financial Services Committee, how would we know?

Dodd-Frank ensured that important regulators like FSOC and OFR have the independence they need to protect consumers outside of the political turmoil of Congress. My House Democratic colleagues are serious about reining in our Nation's largest financial institutions, while my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are playing political games at the expense of American consumers.

I refuse to stand idly by and allow Dodd-Frank to be gutted and weakened. If this terrible bill got to his desk, President Obama wouldn't sign it. He would never allow it to become law. Nevertheless, congressional Republicans continue to waste taxpayers' time and money with this legislation that would peel back Dodd-Frank and hurt American consumers.

House Republicans need to instead focus on our Nation's most pressing problems: public health crises like the Zika virus, which has ravaged my home State of Florida; the ongoing debt situation in Puerto Rico; and keeping Speaker RYAN's promises to the American people that this body would pass a budget.

Our Nation's working families are keeping their fiscal houses in order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from Florida an additional 1 minute.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. We need to make sure that we hold Speaker RYAN's feet to the fire and make sure that he keeps his promise to the American people that this body will pass a budget, which we have yet to do.

Our Nation's working families are working hard to keep their fiscal house in order. It is long past time for the House Republicans to do the same, while also making sure that we protect American consumers.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is how we got into the worst economic crisis and nearly crashed the banking system in the first place. If we leave policymaking to the Republicans who are in the majority here, they would take us back to a time when we had a Wild West of regulation that left consumers twisting in the wind and banks to be able to make any decision they wanted and run over consumers all across America. We saw how well that worked out in 2008.

Now we have come through the worst economic crisis we have ever had since the Great Depression—73 straight months of job growth in the private sector. We need to continue that progress, not go backward.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN).

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for bringing this very important issue to the House floor.

I am pleased to stand up in support of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

I want to congratulate Congressman TOM EMMER of Minnesota for his tireless work on this bill to come up with a commonsense piece of regulation that helps create jobs in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to set the RECORD straight. There are some folks in this Chamber who continue to blame the economic problems we have had over these past years specifically on the financial services industry. Well, let's be honest here. There were D.C. regulators here in this town who put tremendous pressure on the banks to lend money at zero percent down and zero percent interest to folks who they knew could not afford these loans. When they were unable to repay these loans, the real estate market collapsed and brought the economy with it.

Mr. Speaker, every business in America, every industry, should be fairly and predictably regulated. However, when the regulations are so intense and so complicated and so smothering that it kills jobs, then it is our responsibility to make sure that we give our small businesses in this country relief.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here for a little over a year and I realize there is a fourth branch of government. Now, we all know what the Constitution says. It is that Congress, the legislative branch, creates the laws. The administrative branch, the White House, implements the laws that we create. If there is a question, then we get the referee involved, the courts. However, there is a fourth branch of government that is unconstitutional. It is called the professional regulator.

Now, what has happened over the course of these past years is that the administrative branch wants to send directions to their regulators to put more and more pressure on our business community that creates jobs and gives our families opportunities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Maine an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. POLIQUIN. One of those agencies is the Financial Stability Oversight Council. Mr. Speaker, this organization has tremendous power on our economy to regulate financial institutions that pose no risk to the economy, like credit unions in northern Maine and small community banks in northern Maine that did not cause the problems that we have had over these past years.

However, all I am asking and all this bill does is make sure that the Financial Stability Oversight Council's operations are funded by the people's representatives. Mr. Speaker, we in Congress have the opportunity to fund that operation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Maine an additional 10 seconds.

□ 1430

Mr. POLIQUIN. We only want to make sure that there is enough time

for public comment. I ask everybody to support this bill. It is a great bill, and it keeps money flowing through the economy for our small businesses and job creators.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

Mr. TIPTON. I thank the chairman.

I thank my colleague from Minnesota, Representative EMMER, for offering this piece of legislation that is under consideration today.

Mr. Speaker, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act places the FSOC and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process and will require the Office of Financial Research to submit activity reports to Congress. Bringing FSOC under the appropriations process ensures greater accountability for a council that has continuously failed to fully disclose its SIFI designation methodology and that has yet to provide concrete guidelines for designated entities to lose their SIFI status.

Most importantly, this legislation will bring much-needed transparency to the Council. FSOC is intended to be a forum for discussion and analysis of financial regulator issues, but, unfortunately, the Council has continually failed to address the consolidation and failure of our Main Street banks. On its own, a single community bank failure will not pose a systemic risk to the financial system. However, losing these small banks at an accelerating pace is a clear warning signal that the financial system is not healthy, and losing community banks as a whole certainly qualifies as systemically risky.

Instead of closed-door deliberations, the Council, which is made up of financial regulators who have been acknowledging this exact problem, should be working to address this pressing issue in a transparent manner before it is too late. This legislation is a logical next step in reforming the Financial Stability Oversight Council to ensure that it actually addresses threats to our financial system.

I am happy to lend my support to this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to support this commonsense measure.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his efforts on this legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on both sides, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 8¼ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from California has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I begin my remarks with just a clarification of the argument of my friends on the other side of the aisle. Their argument is essentially this: that Federal regulators—banking regulators—cannot do their jobs if their funding is somehow held accountable to the American people. This argument ignores some important facts.

While Dodd-Frank may well have been intended to protect consumers and end Big Government bailouts, FSOC's authority to arbitrarily designate nonbank financial institutions as systemically important undermines the original intent of the law. In fact, just last month, a U.S. court rescinded MetLife's SIFI designation. The opinion called FSOC's determination process ''fatally flawed,'' and it called the insurer's designation ''capricious and arbitrary.'' Again, those are not my words, those are a Federal judge's words. In effect, the judge confirmed what House Republicans have been saying for years—that the FSOC is out of control and requires additional congressional oversight.

That is why I support this commonsense and, frankly, modest legislation, which subjects FSOC and the Office of Financial Research to the annual appropriations process and common practice reporting requirements.

We all want to hold financial providers accountable to their customers. It is also Congress' responsibility to hold our government accountable to the American people. This bill helps make that happen, and we should all be able to agree to that.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to take a moment and talk about why we created the FSOC and the OFR in the very first place since my Republican colleagues seem to think that more regulatory cooperation and the overseeing of our financial system is such a bad thing.

Simply put, we created FSOC to look across regulatory silos and detect, prevent, and mitigate systemic risk in the U.S. financial system so that we would never again be caught off guard when major financial firms, like AIG, fail.

Recall that AIG created an entire business model that was designed to avoid regulation, which sent its major operations and risky credit default swaps to the London-based unit, AIG Financial Products, which, in turn, was guaranteed by the U.S. parent company. What is more, AIG was allowed to select as a regulator the Office of Thrift Supervision, OTS.

According to the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission, which is the FCIC, the OTS failed to effectively exercise its authority over AIG and its affiliates. It lacked the capability to supervise an institution of the size and complexity of AIG's. It did not recognize the risk inherent in AIG's sales of credit default swaps, and it did not understand its responsibility to oversee the entire company, including AIG Financial Products.

As we all know, this regulatory arbitrage ultimately spelled failure for AIG because its enormous sales of credit default swaps were made without putting up initial collateral, setting aside capital reserves, or hedging its exposure—a profound failure in corporate governance, particularly in its risk management practices.

In having just witnessed the takeover of Merrill Lynch by Bank of America and the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers a mere 24 hours before, the U.S. Government stepped in and committed more than $180 billion to ensure that AIG's collapse didn't bring down the rest of the financial system to which it was so interconnected. From there, the Bush administration requested the authority to bail out the big banks.

When the dust began to settle, Democrats in Congress worked to come up with a solution to eliminate this regulatory arbitrage and encourage our financial regulators to communicate with one another. Of course, the commonsense solution was to create a council on which each of our financial regulators had a voice and could meet to consider gaps between the agencies' interconnectedness within the financial sector. This council would also hold each regulator accountable to how the regulators as a whole were mitigating systemic risk to our economy.

To help inform and support the council, we created the Office of Financial Research to research and report on potential systemic risk to our economy. Dodd-Frank ensured that the council of the OFR and that Congress would all be focused on emerging threats to our economy and would never be caught unawares by another AIG. H.R. 3340, however, undermines these reforms, and it should be opposed.

Mr. Speaker and Members, many of the Members on the opposite side of the aisle are talking about our oversight responsibility, but they don't even exercise oversight responsibility or get the regulators in and have a real discussion with them about how it all works. AIG was complicated. None of the Members of Congress really understood how it operated, how it was formed, how it was set up, and what it was doing. We have learned our lesson from AIG, and I hope that the Members of this Congress will not forget it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT).

Mr. TROTT. I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak in support of the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is just one more step in our continued effort to rein in out-of-control regulatory bodies that are products of the Dodd-Frank Act. FSOC and the Office of Financial Research, which are both products of Dodd-Frank, have the power to obtain sensitive information and are tasked with the mission of monitoring the financial stability of the United States.

With such a broad mandate and vast authority, it is appalling that these bodies are not subject to the congressional appropriations process and must satisfy only minimal reporting requirements. OFR states that its job is to shine light in the dark corners of the financial system, but it operates in the dark corners, itself, as it spends funds that have been obtained from fees on an ever-expanding workforce and budget, all outside of the appropriations process and all outside of the eyes of our citizens.

The people of this great Nation deserve a transparent Federal Government that answers to them. Some here today have suggested that, in this bill, we want to put a blindfold on—stop oversight and ignore a future financial crisis. We have a blindfold on now. We are all in the dark. We don't want to stop oversight. We just want to exercise our responsibilities under Article I of the Constitution.

Some here today have suggested that Congress is no longer capable of exercising its Article I powers and that, therefore, FSOC must be independent of the appropriations process. To them, I ask: Why should Washington bureaucrats have more power over the financial decisions of the American people than their elected Representatives?

This legislation is a commonsense solution, and I urge its passage.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Under Democratic leadership, our country has made tremendous strides in creating jobs, in growing the economy, and in stabilizing the housing market since the depths of the 2008 recession. This was despite significant headwinds from both overseas crises and Republican intransigence. Instrumental to our achievements is the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which has bolstered our Nation's financial stability and has brought accountability to the entire system.

Among its many accomplishments, such as protecting consumers from predatory practices, Dodd-Frank sought to address the excessive risk taking by the largest and most complex financial institutions by creating the Financial Stability Oversight Council—that is FSOC—and the Office of Financial Research, OFR. These two agencies were charged with looking at the big picture and identifying cracks in the system that could cause a breakdown in our economy. They oversee all aspects of the financial system and our largest institutions that can cause systemic risk.

FSOC works to identify and to address systemic risk posed by large, complex companies and activities before they threaten the stability of the economy. It provides for the cooperation and information sharing between agencies in order to research and correct threats before they become crises. OFR helps to provide the necessary tools to FSOC by collecting and analyzing data on the health of our financial markets and by conducting research on potential sources of financial instability. It flags emerging threats and shares that information with other regulators so that they can intervene before a crisis occurs.

Together, these two agencies have addressed the devastating, widespread failures in supervision and regulation that brought our economy to its knees in 2008. They fill the regulatory gaps to make sure that no institution, however powerful, can circumvent our rules and regulations.

This crucial work is supported by a majority of Americans—Republicans and Democrats—who favor Dodd-Frank and the reforms it has implemented. Yet, instead of recognizing the importance of these institutions and the interests of the American public, House Republicans are undermining our regulators' efforts to the benefit of the industries that are lining their own pockets. I am troubled by the amnesia that plagues my colleagues about the causes of the 2008 financial crisis and why Wall Street reform was so critical.

We created FSOC and OFR because our fractured regulatory system allowed firms to skirt the rules of the road. This behavior left millions homeless and unemployed, and it plunged us into the worst recession since the Great Depression. What is worse is that hundreds of communities across the country are still struggling to recover.

□ 1445

By cutting off FSOC and OFR's independent funding streams, H.R. 3340 will subject the agencies to the volatility of the congressional appropriations process and the same funding uncertainty faced by the SEC and the FCFTC.

Make no mistake. The bill before us today is part of a concerted effort by House Republicans to impede the progress of financial reform.

Yesterday Republicans passed a bill in committee to repeal the only mechanism to unwind a megabank without destabilizing the economy as well as a bill to eliminate funding for the bureau tasked with protecting consumers from predatory loans.

Earlier today and for much of this month, committee Republicans will depose public servants at the CFPB, Treasury, and FSOC, despite agencies providing thousands of pages of documents at the Republicans' request. Soon I expect my chairman to bring up bills repealing the rest of our reform.

Democrats in the House are all too familiar with these attacks. Are we not? Republicans have proposed $6 trillion in cuts to initiatives like Medicare, Medicaid, and food stamps. They have prevented us from debating America's sacred right to vote. Most Republicans voted against upholding the full faith and credit of our Nation's debt. I could go on and on and on.

So, to my colleagues, we have pulled the cover off of them, and we are pointing out to you in no uncertain terms how they are singularly focused on killing Dodd-Frank reforms.

They are not exercising their oversight responsibility. They are determined that they are going to have their way, and they have it under the banner of overregulation.

Well, that old argument is tired, ladies and gentlemen. Overregulation every time they want to do something for the big banks, et cetera.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this coordinated attack and vote ''no'' on this harmful bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

It has been a fascinating debate on a very, very simple bill. H.R. 3340 from the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) does one very simple thing.

It says two Federal agencies—the Office of Financial Research and the Financial Stability Oversight Council—have to go through the budgeted appropriations process. It says nothing more. It says nothing less.

Right now these agencies write their own budget. They can write a budget for $100 million. They can write a budget for $500 million. They can write a budget for $10 billion.

Legally, they can write a budget for trillions of dollars. They can take money away from we, the people, and there is absolutely nothing Congress can do.

Mr. Speaker, every Member of Congress who has come here has raised their hand and, in their oath of office, they solemnly swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. I wonder how many Members reflect upon that solemn oath.

Because Article I, section 9, clause 7, of the Constitution says: ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . .''

Yet, theoretically, what has happened here is this power of the purse, a

critical power of Article I of the Constitution, has been outsourced to Article II.

It is fascinating, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure there is a more solemn responsibility of the Federal Government than to provide for the common defense.

Yet, we don't allow the Pentagon to write their own budget. It has to go through the elected representatives of we, the people.

The Justice Department: We don't allow them to write their own budget. It has to go through the elected representatives of we, the people.

Even the Office of the President: The President is not allowed to write his own budget. It has to go through the appropriations process of the elected representatives of we, the people.

So we have two incredibly important and powerful Federal agencies that get to write their own budget. They get to take money away from hardworking Americans to essentially do what they please. This is not Article I of the Constitution.

Madison, in Federalist 47—I may not have the quote down perfectly—essentially said that the common notion of legislative, executive, and judicial power in one hand is the absolute definition of tyranny.

So we have in a Federal agency the FSOC, part of this shadow regulatory system that the American people have come to loathe, that has the ability to designate financial firms too big to fail and then allow them to be bailed out with taxpayer funds, to be functionally micromanaged by Federal agencies, essentially, a Federal takeover of the banking system so there can be a political allocation of credit, which is what led to the economic crisis in the first place: politicizing credit, mandating, forcing, suggesting, cajoling financial institutions to loan money to people to buy homes they couldn't afford to keep. Think Fannie. Think Freddie.

So we believe on this side of the aisle, regardless of which party is in power in Congress, regardless of which party is in power in the White House, that Federal agencies ought to be funded through Article I of the Constitution and be accountable to we, the people. It is that simple.

So the ranking member says: Well, we can't hold them to the volatility and uncertainty of this congressional appropriations process. Funny, the Pentagon is. Funny, the President is. Funny, the FBI is.

You know, if you don't like democracy, maybe it is the worst form of government, save every other form of government, but it is our form of government. And our Constitution is the bedrock of our freedom and our prosperity, and these out-of-control agencies ought to be accountable and they ought to be transparent to we, the people.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER), H.R. 3340, and bring accountability and transparency and fidelity to the Constitution back to this institution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. ROYCE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF FINANCIAL RESEARCH.

Section 153 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5343), as amended by section 3, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) ADDITIONAL DUTIES.—

''(1) ANNUAL WORK PLAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall, after a period of 60 days for public notice and comment, annually publish a detailed work plan concerning the priorities of the Office for the upcoming fiscal year.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The work plan shall include the following:

''(i) A unique alphanumeric identifier and detailed description of any report, study, working paper, grant, guidance, data collection, or request for information that is expected to be in progress during, or scheduled to begin in, the upcoming fiscal year.

''(ii) For each item listed under clause (i), a target date for any significant actions related to such item, including the target date—

''(I) for the release of a report, study, or working paper;

''(II) for, and topics of, a meeting of a working paper group and each solicitation of applications for grants; and

''(III) for the issuance of guidance, data collections, or requests for information.

''(iii) A list of all technical and professional advisory committees that is expected to be convened in the upcoming fiscal year pursuant to section 152(h).

''(iv) The name and professional affiliations of each individual who served during the previous fiscal year as an academic or professional fellow pursuant to section 152(i).

''(v) A detailed description of the progress made by primary financial regulatory agencies in adopting a unique alphanumeric system to identify legally distinct entities that engage in financial transactions (commonly known as a 'Legal Entity Identifier'), including a list of regulations requiring the use of such a system and actions taken to ensure the adoption of such a system by primary financial regulatory agencies.

''(2) PUBLIC REPORTS.—

''(A) CONSULTATION.—In preparing any public report with respect to a specified entity, class of entities, or financial product or service, the Director shall consult with any Federal department or agency with expertise in regulating the entity, class of entities, or financial product or service.

''(B) REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—A public report described in subparagraph (A) shall include—

''(i) an explanation of any changes made as a result of a consultation under this subparagraph and, with respect to any changes suggested in such consultation that were not made, the reasons that the Director did not incorporate such changes; and

''(ii) information on the date, time, and nature of such consultation.

''(C) NOTICE AND COMMENT.—Before issuing any public report described in subparagraph (A), the Director shall provide a period of 90 days for public notice and comment on the report.

''(3) CYBERSECURITY PLAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall develop and implement a cybersecurity plan that uses appropriate safeguards that are adequate to protect the integrity and confidentiality of the data in the possession of the Office.

''(B) GAO REVIEW.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall annually audit the cybersecurity plan and its implementation described in subparagraph (A).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 671, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this amendment to the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act, which mirrors bipartisan legislation I have authored, the Office of Financial Research Accountability Act.

A more open, collaborative, and cyber-secure Office of Financial Research would be better positioned to achieve its stated mission of promoting financial stability. So, basically, this amendment gets the Office of Financial Research on track with a few simple, reasonable reforms. There are three of them.

First, it requires the OFR to submit an annual work plan that details the Office's upcoming work while making it available for public notice and comment.

Second, it requires the Office to coordinate with financial regulators and agencies that have subject matter experience as it prepares public reports.

Third, it also tasks the Office, which handles immense amounts of sensitive financial data, with formulating a cybersecurity plan.

So this amendment strengthens the Office of Financial Research's ability to ensure a transparent, efficient, and stable financial system for the American people, the core objective of the Office.

I thank Mr. EMMER of Minnesota for his work on this important issue. I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support both my amendment and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Royce amendment, which the Financial Services Committee considered last November as H.R. 3738. The amendment is yet further evidence of the Republican plan to kill Dodd-Frank with a thousand cuts.

If adopted, the Office of Financial Research would have to disclose its research agenda at the beginning of each year, potentially alarming markets, just as the underlying bill, the Royce amendment, would mean that any study of the OFR would become corrupted.

Our market actors would see that the OFR, an office that makes recommendations to the Financial Stability Oversight Council about systemic risks, was concerned about a particular topic.

In response, those actors would begin to change their behavior even if the OFR might later conclude that there was never any risks to our economy.

In addition, this amendment would require OFR to go into great detail when disclosing what it plans to study, something that is not done by any other research organization.

Finally, I am troubled by the amendment's provisions requiring the OFR to disclose its consultations. Internal consultations and deliberations are explicitly excluded by the Freedom of Information Act and for good reason. Individuals would not likely participate in OFR studies if their offline, candid remarks were made part of the public record.

Will this prevent industry lobbyists and trade associations from commenting? Of course not. They will continue earning their keep, and the amendment gives them even more opportunities.

Why would independent researchers, academics, and scientists want to weigh in on a public fight? This amendment, the underlying bill, and many of the other Republican initiatives we have seen this year all share the same goal. They are aimed at undoing all of the progress the Obama administration and Democrats have made in the last 8 years.

How many times are we going to find ways to kill financial reform? How many times are we going to vote to kill job-creating agencies, like the Export-Import Bank? How many times are we going to vote to get rid of ObamaCare and the health insurance of millions of Americans?

There is important work to be done, passing a budget, for one, ending homelessness in America, funding the administration's requests to help combat the Zika virus, helping Puerto Rico to restructure their crippling debt so that the island can grow and prosper and create jobs.

When are Republicans going to hear the cries of everyday Americans?

I encourage Members to support their constituents by continuing to fight for these issues and oppose Republican attempts like this to simply roll back Democrat reform.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the Royce amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by my good friend from California.

The Office of Financial Research, the OFR, is an important entity, but its work so far has been very, very disappointing.

It is so disappointing that a landmark study by OFR on asset management has been publicly criticized by a member of FSOC, the SEC, who took the unusual step of opening its own comment period on the report.

We must make sure that OFR's research is done in the right way with a strategic plan and that OFR consults with experts and gives proper public notice and involvement.

We don't want the Financial Stability Oversight Council, the FSOC, one of the most critical and sensitive creations in Dodd-Frank, relying on offhand work criticized publicly by institutions across this city and country.

Further, their data collection requirements and responsibilities bring concern to all of our citizens. As we have seen with the IRS, the OPM, the CFPB, and now the OFR, rising concern over the importance of cybersecurity and data protection are noted in this act and are an important part of Mr. ROYCE's amendment.

□ 1500

Many of our Federal agencies are the root cause of cyber breach and loss of privacy, and we don't want to see that extended here.

I support the amendment and the bill, and I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER).

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague from California, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Congressman ED ROYCE, for offering his amendment to the FSOC Reform Act.

As we have seen time and time again, our government needs to improve security procedures in order to protect the privacy of the American people and integrity for business. The burden, Mr. Speaker, is on the Federal Government to provide a plan and to be transparent about what it does with the information it collects.

This amendment accomplishes both of these goals at the Office of Financial Research. By mandating OFR to submit an annual work plan and allow for public notice and comment, the American people will have a greater voice in shaping the objectives of OFR. Perhaps most importantly, requiring Federal regulators to collaborate on data security will make the personal and financial information of all Americans more secure.

Again, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE for offering this amendment. I urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about what this proposal does and does not do. Nothing in this amendment says that the Office of Financial Research must amend their work product because of public comments provided to them. The amendment here simply ensures that the public gets a chance to comment.

I have asked eight—eight—FSOC members about their potential opposition to this idea. Not a single one has raised an objection to this. As to any rhetoric in opposition to this amendment, a lot of it has centered on the potential of opening up the Office of Financial Research to inappropriate influence. Nothing could be further from reality.

Inappropriate influence is what happens when you labor long with little or no transparency, not when you provides more sunlight. What this amendment does is provides that transparency. It provides that sunlight by opening that up.

There has been considerable, warranted criticism from those across the ideological spectrum about the quality of the OFR's research. We are taking a step today to improve the Office of Financial Research's research practices, something integral to FSOC reform as the Council makes designation decisions founded on the Office's work.

Regulators making decisions on financial stability should do so with their eyes wide open. A more transparent, collaborative, and cyber secure Office of Financial Research accomplishes that end. For that reason, I urge Members from both sides of the aisle to support this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended, and on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Moore moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3340 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. ____ Upon enactment of this Act it shall be in order to consider in the House of Representatives the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 125) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the concurrent resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and on any amendment thereto to adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget; and (2) one motion to recommit.

Ms. MOORE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wisconsin?

Mr. HENSARLING. I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, today is April 14, and, by law, Congress must enact a budget resolution by tomorrow, April 15. I repeat, Mr. Speaker: by law, Congress must enact a budget resolution by April 15. That is tomorrow.

After months and months and months of the majority promising regular order, the Republican House leadership has failed to meet this most basic measure of responsibility of bringing a budget to the floor. So today, Mr. Speaker, my motion to recommit will help out my Republican colleagues with their responsibilities to this body.

In my motion to recommit, I am offering up the Republican budget that was passed out of committee last month to allow my colleagues the ability to vote on their own budget and also to allow us to offer our alternatives.

To refresh your memory, Mr. Speaker, the GOP budget resolution ends the Medicare guarantee, makes $6.5 trillion in drastic cuts, increases poverty, and erodes the economic security of all Americans.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as awful as Democrats think that this budget is, the Tea Party faction of the House GOP is demanding that we make even more draconian cuts and even deeper cuts, and they ought to have the right, as well, to offer their alternative on the floor.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. I don't support this Republican budget, but I am offering this motion to recommit because, again, we cannot offer our alternative unless this budget is processed on this floor.

The Republicans are abandoning their promise to restore regular order because they can't agree on a worse product, but hardworking families deserve a Congress that invests in their future, protects their safety, and creates a level playing field for them and their children to succeed.

You know what they always say, Mr. Speaker: the majority gets its way, and the minority gets its say. Let's get to the ''have its say'' part.

We are going to continue as Democrats to press for a budget that creates jobs, opportunities, and raises paychecks for the American people while reducing the deficit in a balanced and responsible way, Mr. Speaker.

But, again, since the Republicans can't seem to get their act together by bringing their budget to the floor, my motion to recommit would bring that product to the floor. So that is why I am offering this motion to recommit today, and I would urge my colleagues to support it.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I insist on my point of order because the instruction contains matter in the jurisdiction of a committee to which the bill was not referred, thus violating clause 7 of rule XVI, which requires an amendment to be germane to the measure being amended. Committee jurisdiction is a central test of germaneness, and I am afraid I must insist on my point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Are there other Members who wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I would just mention that I think it is germane because tomorrow is April 15.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no other Member wishing to be heard on the point of order, the Chair is prepared to rule.

The gentleman from Texas makes a point of order that the instructions proposed in the motion to recommit offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin are not germane.

Clause 7 of rule XVI—the germaneness rule—provides that no proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of amendment.

One of the central tenets of the germaneness rule is that an amendment may not introduce matter within the jurisdiction of a committee not represented in the pending measure.

The bill, H.R. 3340, as amended, addresses funding and other matters relating to the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research, which are matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Financial Services.

The instructions in the motion to recommit propose an amendment consisting of a special order of business of the House, which is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Rules.

As the Chair ruled in similar proceedings on October 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14, 2013, the instructions in the motion to recommit are not germane because they are not within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Financial Services.

Accordingly, the motion to recommit is not germane. The point of order is sustained, and the motion is not in order.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the appeal on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, and the order of the House of today, this 15-minute vote on the motion to table will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if arising without further proceedings in recommittal; adoption of amendment No. 1 to H.R. 3791; the motion to recommit H.R. 3791, if ordered; and passage of H.R. 3791, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 239, nays 176, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 145]

YEAS—239

Abraham	Bucshon	Dent
Aderholt	Burgess	DeSantis
Amash	Byrne	DesJarlais
Amodei	Calvert	Diaz-Balart
Babin	Carter (GA)	Dold
Barletta	Carter (TX)	Donovan
Barr	Chabot	Duffy
Barton	Chaffetz	Duncan (TN)
Benishek	Clawson (FL)	Ellmers (NC)
Bilirakis	Coffman	Emmer (MN)
Bishop (MI)	Cole	Farenthold
Bishop (UT)	Collins (GA)	Fincher
Black	Collins (NY)	Fitzpatrick
Blackburn	Comstock	Fleischmann
Blum	Conaway	Fleming
Bost	Cook	Flores
Boustany	Costello (PA)	Forbes
Brady (TX)	Cramer	Fortenberry
Brat	Crawford	Foxx
Bridenstine	Crenshaw	Franks (AZ)
Brooks (AL)	Culberson	Frelinghuysen
Brooks (IN)	Curbelo (FL)	Garrett
Buchanan	Davis, Rodney	Gibbs
Buck	Denham	Gibson

Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—176

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Allen
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Delaney
Duncan (SC)
Engel
Fattah
Lieu, Ted
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Nadler
Payne
Poe (TX)
Sewell (AL)
Simpson
Tonko
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

□ 1532

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Messrs. RANGEL, LARSEN of Washington, and JOHNSON of Georgia changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 145, I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 239, nays 179, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 146]

YEAS—239

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (MO)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—179

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind

Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Delaney
Duncan (SC)
Engel
Fattah
Lieu, Ted
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
McMorris Rodgers
Nadler
Payne
Poe (TX)
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Tonko
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1539

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 146, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote 146, the vote on final passage of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

RAISING CONSOLIDATED ASSETS THRESHOLD UNDER SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the adoption of amendment No. 1 on the bill (H.R. 3791) to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes, offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the adoption of the amendment.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 165, nays 253, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 147]

YEAS—165

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—253

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Becerra
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Conyers
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Hinojosa
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Waters, Maxine
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—15

Delaney
Duncan (SC)
Engel
Fattah
Lieu, Ted
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Nadler
Payne
Pelosi
Poe (TX)
Ruppersberger
Simpson
Tonko
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1545

Mr. CONYERS changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. MOORE. I am opposed.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Moore moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3791 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. ___ Upon enactment of this Act it shall be in order to consider in the House of Representatives the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 125) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2017 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2018 through 2026. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the concurrent resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and on any amendment thereto to adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget; and (2) one motion to recommit.

Mr. HENSARLING (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, today is April 14. Tomorrow, by law, our budget resolution is due to be passed on the floor of the House.

Now, we have heard a great deal from the majority about the need to return to regular order, and regular order would require us to pass this bill either today or by tomorrow. So since that bill is not before us, my motion to recommit would give us an opportunity to vote on the Republican budget resolution that was passed out of our committee just last month.

Now, I just want to refresh your memory, Mr. Speaker. The GOP budget resolution ends the Medicare guarantee, makes $6.5 trillion in drastic cuts, increases poverty, and erodes the economic security of all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, as awful as this is, there is a faction over there among the Tea Party Republicans who want the opportunity to make it even worse than it is. But they can't submit their awful, worse bill, just like Democrats can't offer their alternative bill, until we get the Republican budget on the floor.

So by Republicans abandoning their promise to return us to regular order and to pass a budget, it is ridiculous for us to be passing these bills. Mr. Speaker, how can we talk about subjecting FSOC, for example, to the appropriations process? We can't really do these appropriations bills without a budget.

Hardworking families deserve to see where we stand on these budgets, and Democrats want to have our say. I get it. The majority gets its way, but the minority gets its say. Let's get on to the ''gets its say'' part.

Mr. Speaker, you guys can't get your act together. My motion to recommit would put that budget on the floor right now, and Republicans would have the opportunity to pass their bill, and then we have the opportunity to offer up our alternative.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I insist on my point of order because the instruction contains matter in the jurisdiction of a committee to which the bill was not referred, thus violating clause 7 of rule XVI which requires an amendment to be germane to the measure being amended. Committee jurisdiction is a central test of germaneness, and I must insist on my point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Are there other Members who wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

The gentleman from Texas makes a point of order that the instructions proposed in the motion to recommit offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin are not germane.

The bill, H.R. 3791, addresses a Federal Reserve System policy statement relating to small bank holding companies, which is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Financial Services.

The instructions in the motion to recommit propose an amendment consisting of a special order of business of the House, which is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Rules.

For the reasons stated by the Chair earlier today, the motion to recommit is not germane. The point of order is sustained. The motion is not in order.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the appeal on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute on the motion to table will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if arising without further proceedings in recommittal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 241, noes 177, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 148]

AYES—241

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—177

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)

Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Delaney
Duncan (SC)
Engel
Fattah
Lieu, Ted
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Nadler
Payne
Pelosi
Poe (TX)
Simpson
Tonko
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1610

Mr. SCALISE and Ms. FOXX changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 247, nays 171, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 149]

YEAS—247

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—171

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Delaney
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Fattah
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Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Nadler
Payne
Pelosi
Poe (TX)
Simpson
Tonko
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KELLY of Mississippi) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1617

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, on April 14, 2016, I was absent and was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 145—''Yea.''

Rollcall No. 146—''Yea.''

Rollcall No. 147—''Nay.''

Rollcall No. 148—''Yea.''

Rollcall No. 149—''Yea.''

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THE CHIBOK SCHOOLGIRLS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we stand to remember the nearly 300 Chibok girls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram on April 14, 2014—2 years ago—from their school in Nigeria.

Mr. Speaker, Boko Haram has no regard for human life, and it is wreaking havoc on the citizens of northern Nigeria. As Boko Haram commits acts of genocide that will take generations to recover from, the world stays silent. Their daily horrors include killing Christians, killing Muslims who do not agree with them, beheading and slaughtering boys, kidnapping and raping women and girls, selling them as sex slaves, and using them as suicide bombers. Human trafficking is their specialty. Boko Haram believes that Western education is sin.

We will never forget the schoolgirls. We will never forget the Chibok girls. We will tweet, wear red, and we look for them no matter how long it takes. We will never give up until we find them.

Let us bow our heads in a moment of silence.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT A BIG WIN FOR SENIORS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to applaud the bipartisan efforts to support our seniors through the passage of the Older Americans Act, legislation that I have supported. Our seniors have spent their lives working hard, raising their families, and giving back to their communities. The Older Americans Act shows what we can do when we work together.

The bill improves services for seniors, especially those with the greatest social and economic needs. For example, it provides funding for the popular Meals on Wheels program. The bill saves taxpayers money by preventing very costly hospital readmissions and by helping senior citizens stay in their homes and communities. It also supports programs to prevent the abuse and neglect of senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the Older Americans Act is a big, bipartisan win for our Nation's seniors. I encourage the President to sign the bill as soon as it hits his desk.

FIND THE CHIBOK GIRLS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in the dark of night on this very day 2 years ago, young girls at the early ages of 11 to 17 were in nightgowns, preparing for sleep, and were getting ready for the exams that would open the doors of opportunity, as they were told by their Nigerian parents. One daughter had rushed back to the school from a weekend trip because her father said: You shouldn't be home. You must go and take your exam.

That night, terrorists came and rounded them up and threatened them and took them into the dark of the Nigerian bush in Borno State, upwards of Abuja. They have now been gone for 2 years, the Chibok girls.

I stood alongside FREDERICA WILSON and LOIS FRANKEL when we went to Nigeria within weeks of their kidnapping. Boko Haram, which is now ISIL, and ISIL, which is now Boko Haram—the most dangerous terrorist group in the world—will come to the shores of America if we are not vigilant to find them and quash them.

We must find the Chibok girls. They deserve our constant refrain and study to realize that it is terrorists who took them. We must bring the terrorists down and find the Chibok girls to take them to their families.

NATIONAL RETIREMENT PLANNING WEEK

(Mr. ROE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize April 11 through 15 as National Retirement Planning Week.

Saving for retirement is one of the most important steps that Americans can take to build a better future for themselves and their children. Unfortunately, too often, saving for retirement remains a distant goal that is put off in exchange for more immediate needs. A GAO report released last year found that, among households with those aged 55 and older, roughly 29 percent have no retirement savings or a defined benefit plan. With this in mind, it must be a national priority for us to communicate the importance of retirement planning. By encouraging more Americans to adequately prepare for their retirement years, we can significantly enhance retirement security in the United States.

Recognizing this week as National Retirement Planning Week is an important step in helping to raise awareness of this need, and I commend the members of the National Retirement Planning Coalition for their efforts in educating Americans about the importance of retirement planning.

I wish you all the best as you continue this valued campaign.

TRINIDAD GARZA HIGH SCHOOL RECEIVES ACT AWARD

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Trinidad Garza Early College High School, in Dallas, for receiving the 2016 ACT High School Exemplar in College and Career Readiness Award.

Since 2013, the annual ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign has recognized participating high schools and community colleges for their outstanding efforts in education. The prestigious award is presented to only one school per State that demonstrates exceptional efforts in preparing students for college and career readiness. Given Trinidad Garza's commitment to preparing students for success in higher education and the workforce, this accolade is well-deserved. The award also celebrates individual students within participating schools for their outstanding progress on their ACT scores, such as Trinidad Garza seniors Paola Soto, Ivan Gonzales, Barry Levine, and Lizbeth Garcia.

I am extremely proud of Trinidad Garza Early College High School for representing the State of Texas and the 33rd Congressional District.

You are an example of what a dedicated group of educators can accomplish when it is committed to empowering its students.

Once again, congratulations to everyone at Trinidad Garza Early College High School, and keep up the good work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF MIKE BOUCHARD

(Mr. BISHOP of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share the outstanding accomplishments of Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard, who was recently awarded the esteemed Ferris E. Lucas Award of 2016 for Sheriff of the Year from the National Sheriffs' Association.

As a lifelong resident of Oakland County, I can tell you that our sheriff's department is well-known around the country because of the outstanding work by Sheriff Bouchard and his world-class team of dedicated deputies. He is the kind of leader all families want to keep their families safe. I have known Mike Bouchard for many years, and I know that, every day, he looks forward to going to work to serve the men and women of our local communities, and he does an outstanding job of it in utilizing his professionalism and compassion for people.

In serving Oakland County for over 17 years, Mike Bouchard was selected among a field of more than 3,000 sheriffs for this prestigious award, and I

can tell you he absolutely deserves it. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have such a selfless, all-around good guy keeping the families in my district safe.

Thank you, Mike, for your commitment to the people you protect and to the entire community. We are grateful for your service.

EQUAL PAY DAY

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, we recognize Equal Pay Day—a somber reminder of the intolerably wide wage gulf that still exists between men and women. This is not just a ''woman's issue.'' It affects every working family throughout our economy from top to bottom.

The average woman in America today makes 79 cents for every dollar a man makes—even less for women of color. That disparity, when spread across the course of a woman's working life, can deprive her and her family of over $430,000, which is nearly $11,000 annually. Nobody can afford such dispossession, especially families who are already struggling to survive.

The gender pay gap will not fix itself without there being immediate congressional action. We already have a bill that is designed to right this wrong—the Paycheck Fairness Act—which is cosponsored by every single House Democrat.

Mr. Speaker, I implore my colleagues to enact it so that all American women can at least know they are worth equal pay for equal work.

□ 1630

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON and Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE for their leadership on continuing to ensure that we don't forget about the 276 young women who were stolen from their families 2 years ago.

I traveled to Nigeria with Congresswoman WILSON and Congresswoman JACKSON LEE right after the kidnapping in order to see what kind of efforts were being made to get them back.

This kidnapping received international attention for a short time and then, like the girls, it disappeared. We are standing here exactly 2 years later while the Chibok girls, who we call ''our girls,'' remain hidden and subject to unimaginable crimes.

Boko Haram, the deadliest terrorist organization in the world, wants to silence these girls. I stand here with my colleagues to give ''our girls'' a stronger voice than the terrorists and more power than fear.

I want the Chibok girls to know that they are our daughters and we will not give up until they are returned.

KEEP THE PENSION PROMISES ACT AND PENSION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

(Mr. RYAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak for 1 minute on the Central States Pension Fund, which right now, because of its demise, is going to gut the pensions of thousands and thousands of workers in Ohio, over 4,000 in my district alone.

I want to thank MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio for spearheading this legislation in which we ask the wealthiest people in the country, those who are trading art, to help us raise the $29 billion we need to put back into this pension fund.

We have senior citizens who have spent 30 or 40 years as Teamsters or Machinists, working their rear ends off, earning a pension, saying: We don't want the money now—as they negotiated contracts—you take this wage that we could have and you save it for later, but we want it back.

This bill, these pieces of legislation, help to restore some respect and dignity for those workers in Ohio and across the country.

I ask my colleagues to help us with the Keep the Pension Promises Act and the Pension Accountability Act. People need to be respected, and these pensions need to be secured.

THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized by you to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

I come to the floor here today with an issue that I think is important that America have a dialogue on the topic, and some of that is going on. It is going on in the Presidential races across the country and in the coffee shops and at work, at play, at church, and around the country in the things that we do.

But when a moment in history comes along that shocked a lot of us to the core—and that was the abrupt and unexpected loss of Justice Antonin Scalia, a person whom I got to know. I would like to say that I called him a friend. He was a person whose personality I enjoyed a lot, his robust sense of humor, his acerbic wit in the way that he conveyed his messages, especially when he wrote the dissenting opinions for the Supreme Court. He found himself occasionally in the minority, but I think he was almost always right in those constitutional decisions.

When Justice Scalia wrote those minority opinions, he realized that—and he just thought in advance—that the students in law school would have to read the dissenting opinions as well as the majority opinions.

So he made sure when he wrote especially his dissenting opinions that they were engaging, they were entertaining, they were provocative, and they were challenging. It caused the law school students to read those and remember the points that Justice Scalia had made.

That is a legacy of the 30 years of Justice Scalia that will live within the annals of the history of the United States of America, especially those who are studying constitutional law and those that are in law school.

The constitutional law students around America too seldom are taught constitutional law out of the Constitution itself. We have a President of the United States who spent 10 years as an adjunct professor teaching constitutional law at the University of Chicago.

I have met with a good number of the students that he taught. The ones that I met with, at least, said that, whenever they laid out a conservative principle and made a constitutional argument based upon those conservative principles, that then-adjunct professor Barack Obama would always turn that around to the activist side, to move the needle hard to the left.

It is my position—and I believe it is also the position of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the House and especially the chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate—that the Constitution must be read and interpreted to mean what it says. It would mean precisely the text of the Constitution as it was understood to mean at the time of ratification.

The Constitution itself, Mr. Speaker, is the equivalent of—and I would say literally is—an intergenerational contractual guarantee from one generation of Americans to the next, to the next, to the next.

Our Founding Fathers understood that, and they so carefully crafted this Constitution. The language in it reflects their convictions and their guarantee to each generation.

If it were to be anything else, if it were to be a living and breathing document, as too many of our Justices on the Supreme Court and far too many on our Federal bench today, that 40

percent or so that will have been appointed by Barack Obama by the end of his term—those Justices, by and large, don't believe what I've just said, Mr. Speaker.

They generally believe that the text of the Constitution is something that they can massage, that they can manipulate, that they can interpret and reinterpret to mean that which they would want it to mean if it were written by them today.

Of course, the words wouldn't be the same, but the ideology that grows from many of these precedent decisions shows that and is proof of it.

If anyone wonders, Mr. Speaker, I would take them back to the Court last June 24 and 25. On one day, the Supreme Court concluded that they could rewrite law. On the next day, the Supreme Court concluded that they could create not just new rights in the Constitution, but create a command in the Constitution.

Now, I hope to return to that topic in a little bit, Mr. Speaker.

What we have in front of us is this: The loss of Justice Scalia leaves an empty seat on the Supreme Court. It is an intellectual hole, not just a voting hole. But it is an intellectual hole left by the towering legal intellect of Justice Scalia.

In times throughout history—there are conflicting reports—one can make the political argument and one can make the traditional argument as to whether a President should be able to make an appointment to the Supreme Court and have that appointment ratified and confirmed by the United States Senate.

Under these circumstances that we have today—this is an election year, and the loss of Justice Scalia and the creation of that empty seat on the Supreme Court has brought about a nomination for the Supreme Court that has been produced by President Barack Obama, even though the majority party in the Senate, concurring with Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL from Kentucky, as well as the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator CHARLES GRASSLEY, have said: We are not going to take up a nominee and we are not going to have hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

That means that we won't have a debate on the floor of the Senate for confirmation because they believe—and it is their prerogative to do so—they believe that the next Justice on the Supreme Court should be a reflection of the voice of the people who will go to the polls this coming November and an elected President of the United States who more accurately reflects the will of the people rather than a President who is a lameduck President.

I agree with Senator GRASSLEY and I agree with Majority Leader Senator MCCONNELL that this is a decision that is too big to be made by people who are on the way out the door. The President is on the way out the door. There are Members of the Senate that are on their way out the door.

We need the fresh faces that have the freshest support of the American people making these decisions, particularly the next President of the United States.

Now, predictably, when an argument like this comes up, each side seeks to gain a political advantage. Yes, this is a political decision. It is a political decision that needs to be based on the foundation, however, of the Constitution and the text of the Constitution and the understanding of the Constitution to mean what it says and mean what it was interpreted to mean at the time that it was ratified.

Our Founding Fathers gave us a means to amend the Constitution. So they didn't intend our Constitution to be a living, breathing document, as the people on the left say.

They intended it to be fixed in place, an intergenerational contractual guarantee, so that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren and each succeeding generation can count on this Constitution meaning what it says.

I have watched it distorted. I have watched it usurped by decisions made in our Federal courts and by our Supreme Court and a people and a public that will honor those decisions because they are made by the judges, not because they are constitutionally grounded decisions.

So this appointment that comes before the Supreme Court—first, I will go to this. In our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, Article II, section 2—the authority of the executive branch of government must be here somewhere.

Article II, section 2: This is the text we are working with, Mr. Speaker. This is the language that governs the nomination, the advice, the consent, and the appointment to the Supreme Court in this fashion.

I will read this verbatim from Article II, section 2:

''He''—meaning the President of the United States—this is executive branch authority—''He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to . . . nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . judges of the Supreme Court . . .''

Now, he shall have power to nominate and, by and with the advice and consent, appoint judges of the Supreme Court. That is power to nominate and appoint by and with the consent, Mr. Speaker.

So the language here is clear, ''by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.'' The advice and consent of the Senate is determined by the Senate. The consent of the Senate is the confirmation vote.

The advice would be that the President is to go to the Senate and say: I have got an appointment here to the Supreme Court. You all know that. Do you have some names you would like to offer? What is your counsel here? Look at the makeup of the Court. What is missing? Who do we have on the bench today? How are they contributing? What kind of job are they doing in ruling upon the supreme law of the land, the Constitution itself, and the text of the statutes that Congress has passed that go before the Court for evaluation as to their constitutionality?

I will go further than to suggest, Mr. Speaker. I will assert that we have a Court today that too often reaches outside its bounds. And if I had a criticism of Justice Scalia, it would be his deeper respect for stare decisis that I happen to see in a Justice such as Clarence Thomas.

But when a decision is made by the Court, there has been essentially a consent of the Court to accept that decision, to build on it, rather than to go back and reevaluate afresh, anew from the text of the Constitution.

I think we need to go back and refresh anew and take a look at the text of the Constitution with each decision of the Supreme Court with less deference to stare decisis.

□ 1645

The activists on the Court, on the other hand, are the exact opposite. They want to build these leftward precedents along the way so that, in the end, the Constitution would be obliterated.

That is the direction that President Obama has gone. It is the direction he seeks to go. I would submit that I don't expect that he is going to be able to make an appointment to the Supreme Court that would reflect a Justice on the bench whose interpretation of the Constitution would be to the text and the original understanding and meaning of it, but, instead, activist judges. That is the history that he has produced.

I have not evaluated Judge Garland. I don't have a comment on his work except that this is not the time to confirm an appointment for Barack Obama and let him shape this Court for the next generation or so. If we get this wrong, Mr. Speaker, we lose our Constitution for the next generation.

No matter how astute our Presidents have been, no matter how deeply they have been committed to the Constitution itself, we have still seen that, even under Ronald Reagan, he got about half of his appointments to the Court right.

We need a President coming around the pike that gets every one of them right. I wouldn't be happy and satisfied until all nine of the Justices on the Court reflected that they are traditionalists, that they are textualists, that

they are originalists in the Constitution, and that the judges that are coming up on the Federal bench would also meet that same standard.

I am not in the United States Senate. We don't have a vote on the confirmation of appointments to our Federal courts over here in the House. I do serve on the Committee on the Judiciary, and this is the end of the 14th year that I have done that, Mr. Speaker.

And so the voice of time and observation and reading and consideration and experience, especially as a member of the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice of the House Committee on the Judiciary, yes, I have deep convictions on this issue and considerable experience and knowledge base on it.

I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that this House of Representatives evaluate the arguments that I am making here and the arguments that Senator GRASSLEY is making on the other side of the rotunda, and these arguments say we take an oath. This will be my argument.

Mr. Speaker, we all take an oath here to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. So do the Justices of the Supreme Court take that oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. The President of the United States takes an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. These are serious oaths.

When you stand up before God and country and say ''so help me God,'' you better mean it. That means that the Constitution isn't a malleable document. When you take an oath to support and defend it, that doesn't mean you can take an oath to support and defend the Constitution as, let's say, amended by a Supreme Court.

I would support and defend a Constitution amended constitutionally only. The Supreme Court Justices are the last people on the planet that ought to be engaged in amending the Constitution of the United States.

But if I could take you back to those dates I mentioned—June 24, June 25, 2015—June 24, if you want to look at the calendar, is going to be a Thursday. That was the date that the decision came out on ObamaCare. That was King v. Burwell.

That decision, Mr. Speaker, a majority opinion written by the Chief Justice, boiled down to this: Congress passed a law in two different components. I call it ObamaCare. They called it the Affordable Care Act.

I have said that George Washington could not utter those words in referencing that legislation because it is not affordable and George Washington could not tell a lie. But it was actually the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

That long lingo threw people off. So they boiled it down to the Affordable Care Act. We boiled it down to ObamaCare. ObamaCare is far more descriptive than the Affordable Care Act and far more honest.

But that legislation came in two packages. It was passed by hook, by crook, by legislative shenanigan, and that wasn't just me saying that. There was at least one Democrat here on the floor who used the term ''legislative shenanigan'' in reference to the passage of ObamaCare.

It was passed in that fashion. Yet, when it began to be implemented, they wrote thousands of pages of regulations that could not have been imagined at the time that that bill passed the floor here.

There was a massive amount of arm twisting and leverage like this country has never seen. We had tens of thousands of people that surrounded this Capitol and pleaded: Keep your hands off of our health insurance. Keep your hands off of our health care. They wanted their freedom.

The people who came here understood this, that the most sovereign thing that we have is our own soul. And the Federal Government hasn't figured out how to tax it, how to nationalize it, how to take it away from us.

We are in control of our eternal salvation—that is our soul—and we manage that. Each one of us manages it. But the second most sovereign thing we have is our health, our skin, and everything inside it.

Yet, this Congress, House and Senate, together with the President of the United States—on March 23, 2010, he signed into law the combination of the two bills that became ObamaCare that I said were passed by hook, crook, and legislative shenanigan and have their own constitutional problems.

I would argue the Supreme Court at least twice has ruled outside the Constitution in order to get ObamaCare implemented, and one of those was the State exchanges.

The statutory authority for the States to establish insurance exchanges under the auspices of the State exists within ObamaCare, but the language that empowers the States to do so does not include the Federal Government. The Federal Government did not have the constitutional authority to establish exchanges, and it needed the language.

If the Obama administration had been astute, they may well have written into ObamaCare legislation three words, ''or Federal Government,'' so that the States or Federal Government would have the legal authority to establish the exchanges.

The Federal Government went ahead and established exchanges within the multiple States that refused to do so, and the Supreme Court's job is to read the text of the language and rule on the text of the language and the law.

But, yet, in a 5–4 decision of the Supreme Court written by the Chief Justice, they decided that, if the Congress really might have at that time passed legislation with the language in it that would have said ''or Federal Government,'' that they would just go ahead and interpret that it really means: Well, okay. It was an oversight on the part of Congress.

They might have slipped that in there if they had just known that they needed to write it in there. But it was maybe an oversight by staff in the middle of the night because, after all, the then-Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, said we have to pass this legislation in order to find out what is in it.

Well, she didn't say we had to pass it to find out what wasn't in it. But what wasn't in it was the authority for the Federal Government to go into the States and intervene and establish their own exchanges within the States. But this Obama administration did that with the people's tax dollars, and I will say in violation of the law.

When it was appealed to the Supreme Court to assert just that, the Supreme Court ruled, well, it would have been better for the policy, in their judgment, if the language had been in there, ''or Federal Government.''

But it wasn't in there. So they deemed it in. That is a legislative decision made by a 5–4 decision of the Supreme Court that came down on us June 24, 2015. That is appalling to me.

I am aghast at the idea that a Supreme Court could be ruling upon the supreme law of the land and come down with a decision that they are now the legislative body to completely alter legislation that was the due decision of, I think, an erroneous decision, but a majority decision of the United States Congress.

Now, in any other world, in any other time, in any other kind of a decision that would come down, a Supreme Court could, should, has, and would justly send it back to Congress with this directive: We can't find in here the language you may have wanted to pass. If you want this language in this bill, Article I says all legislative authority is vested in the Congress of the United States.

So the only right choice for a Supreme Court faced with this kind of a decision was to not remand it back to a lower court for a decision, essentially and, I will say, virtually, remand it to Congress and say to Congress: If you want to have federally established exchanges within the States, you have to pass a law that says so.

That is not what they did. They decided that they could change the law over at the Supreme Court building.

Now, if that can be done, if the Supreme Court of the United States can take on the trappings of a legislature and become a super legislature—and, by the way, they are appointed for life, for life.

So there is no consequence for people who can't be voted out of office. You can't even replace them for the duration of their life.

But they made the decision that they were the super legislature, and 5–4, under King v. Burwell, they put three words de facto, three words into the ObamaCare legislation, ''or Federal Government.''

Now, I am barely up off the floor from reading this on that Thursday, June 24, 2015, and, as the Sun comes up on me on the following morning, I am contemplating: What do we do about this? How does Congress react? What should the public messages be in one part?

At 9:00 in the morning in Iowa, 10:00 D.C. time, I am rolling into St. Anne's Catholic Church in Logan, Iowa, to do an event there with a visiting priest and with the parish there at St. Anne's in Logan, Iowa.

And who merged together—at the same time we pulled in and parked essentially simultaneously—was the vehicle of former Senator Rick Santorum, one of the leading constitutionalists in this country, one of the strongest people in defense of life and defense of marriage and defense of the Constitution that we have seen—and I will say within a generation—with deep convictions, a clear understanding, and a very articulate voice.

As we got out of our vehicles, each of us had been listening to the news report of the decision that came down from the Supreme Court that day. That was a decision on marriage. I pronounce it Obergefell decision.

But that decision on marriage that came down on Friday, June 25, 2015, where the Supreme Court—I mentioned in the earliest part of my conversation, Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court would legislate from the bench, and the Supreme Court not only created what would be a new right from the bench, but they created—they manufactured out of thin air a command, a command to every State in the Union.

That command that they created without any constitutional basis whatsoever was to the States this: If you are to have civil marriage in your State, it shall include same-sex marriage on equal standing with a man and a woman joined together in matrimony. No matter what your State laws, no matter what your State constitutions say, we usurp it from the Supreme Court with an edict, a directive, a command, that you shall conduct same-sex marriages on equal standing and you shall recognize same-sex marriages from other States with reciprocity as well.

Now, this is not a decision that could have been made by the United States Congress and not had it challenged. And I would say the Congress does not have the authority to impose same-sex marriage on the rest of the country.

If we had had the audacity to make such a decision in the House and the Senate and signed by the President, somebody would take that to the Supreme Court and say: Show me the enumerated power that Congress has to regulate marriage in such a fashion.

I would argue that we don't have that constitutional authority, but I would submit that the States do have. The States under the Ninth and Tenth Amendment do have the authority.

If they decide to establish same-sex marriage in their State legislatures and they can get their Governor to sign the legislation or override a veto, any one or any combination of or all of the States could pass a same-sex marriage law, I would respect that as a constitutional decision made by we, the people, whether it is we, the people of Iowa, or we, the people of another State, or all other States, for that matter, but not the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker.

The Supreme Court of the United States didn't just manufacture a right, they created a command to the States, and that is constitutionally offensive to me to read a decision like that.

By the way, I had a preview of it because the State Supreme Court in Iowa did just that in about 2009 and some of us dug down into that decision. That was about a 63- or 64-page decision, and it was an appalling, sloppy piece of legal work that was written with, I believe, a conclusion. And then they had to go through a lot of legalistic and mental and logical contortions to get to their conclusion.

I would invite anybody to read that decision. I believe that an objective reading of that decision brings them down with the same characterization that I would have.

I want judges who read the Constitution and literally interpret the Constitution. And the judges who understand, as Justice Scalia did, that when he makes a decision based on the Constitution and the letter of the law—if he is uncomfortable with the policy decision that emerges with that, that tells him that he can be very comfortable with the constitutionality of the decision that he has made because, on policy, he disagrees, but he knows that he is not there to determine policy.

He is there, as Justice Roberts said in his confirmation accurately, I think, to call the balls and the strikes, not to be the one that is a player in that arena.

□ 1700

So we have Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, the man who is standing in the gap and a man who is the chairman of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee who has the control over the agenda of that committee and decides whether there will be hearings before the Judiciary Committee on this appointment of the President or whether there will not be—and he has said in conjunction with Majority Leader MCCONNELL, that there will not be hearings in the Judiciary Committee. And CHUCK GRASSLEY is right, MITCH MCCONNELL is right.

This argument gets cast back and forth—and it will be cast back and forth—and the amperage of this will go up and up and up between now and the election. They will turn that into a political football.

For me, I say: Take CHUCK GRASSLEY's word to the bank and we are done talking about it. But they want the political leverage. So they will be pressuring CHUCK GRASSLEY.

Mr. Speaker, here is a little bit of what is going on. Here is my public position on the issue. And it had to do with a press conference where I said, ''There is no reason to have that hearing. The simple answer to it is this: It's inconceivable that he''—President Obama—''would nominate someone to the Supreme Court who believes in the Constitution. If we're going to save our Constitution, we can't have an Obama nominee on the court.''

Mr. Speaker, that is maybe a blunt statement, but I have watched the history and the pattern of Barack Obama and appointments that he has made to the court. There is no question that they are liberal, leftist activists who want to come down with decisions that are more in the direction of the leadership of the ideology on the left and with very little deference to the Founding Fathers and anchored to the text of the Constitution.

And I have given what the Constitution says about nominations by advice and consent. Again, the President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint.'' In other words, the President can't make an appointment to the Supreme Court unless he has the advice and consent of the Senate.

Now, advice could be fairly loosely interpreted, but consent is a different story. That takes a vote to do that—judges to the Supreme Court. That means the President nominates, the Senate can provide the advice before the nomination—that would be the best—and perhaps some advice after. But the consent of the Senate is required or there won't be a seat in the Supreme Court that is filled by Barack Obama.

Now, I point out also that there is nothing in this Constitution that says that there has to be nine Justices on the Supreme Court. This is where the House could actually weigh in on this, if we decide to do this. The Constitution of the United States requires that the Congress establish a Supreme Court. And then it is up to our discretion as to what other Federal court we might want to establish.

Mr. Speaker, I actually had this debate with Justice Scalia. One of the

things I enjoyed about him was little banters along the way and how these arguments came out. And I made the point to him that the Constitution only requires that the Congress establish a Supreme Court, not all the other Federal courts. So we could—Congress—abolish all of the Federal districts that are there. We could say there will be no Federal courts. It will all be handled through the Supreme Court itself. That is not a practical application, but it is from a constitutional perspective.

Then I said to Justice Scalia that we could eliminate all the Federal courts except the Supreme Court. And over time, we could reduce the Supreme Court. There is no requirement that the Supreme Court have nine Justices or seven or five or three. We could reduce the Supreme Court of the United States down to the Chief Justice. There is no requirement that we build or fund a building or heat it or wire it for electronics or anything. There is no requirement that we have staff for any of the Supreme Court. The Congress could crank all the Federal courts down to just the Supreme Court, reduce the Supreme Court down to just the Chief Justice at his own card table, with candle, no staff, and no facility.

That is the argument I made to Justice Scalia. Some of this I do for entertainment value because he always was an engaging fellow to have these conversations with.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you ever heard this point made to him before, but Justice Scalia's response to it was: I would argue that there is a requirement that there be three Justices on the Supreme Court; otherwise, there is no reason to have a Chief Justice.

I thought that was a pretty astute response, Mr. Speaker. But my response to that was: we have always had too many chiefs and not enough Indians.

So we had a little fun with that and moved on, but that is the leverage that the House and the Senate has together. There is not a requirement that there be a ninth Justice on the Supreme Court. I am comfortable with that and supportive of that, but I want to fill that seat with someone that reflects the values of Justice Scalia and perhaps one that will reflect even more closely the values of Justice Thomas, in particular.

And there are a number of other Justices that I admire on the Supreme Court, but another activist on the Supreme Court is not what this country needs. This country needs to have a constitutionalist, an originalist, a textualist on the Supreme Court that will reflect the meaning of this Constitution at its time of ratification.

And that is why our Founders gave us a means to amend the Constitution. They didn't intend for the Supreme Court to be taking on the trappings of a super legislature and legislating on one day by adding words to ObamaCare, and then the very next day create the new command in the Constitution that the State shall conduct same-sex marriages and honor same-sex marriages in other States. That is over the top. That is beyond the pale.

If you can imagine what our Founding Fathers would say, how about the signers of the Declaration of Independence?

If we could bring them to life today and walk them out here into Statuary Hall and say: take a look at this painting up here where you are all signing this Declaration of Independence. Or better yet, go over to the Archives, where they pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor, and you can still see John Hancock's signature there almost as clearly as the day that he may well have signed that.

What would those Founding Fathers say if they knew that within a 24-hour window or maybe a 25-hour window, the Supreme Court of the United States said, We are going to confer national health insurance on everybody in America, and the Congress didn't write the law right, so we wrote it for them; and then the next day, same-sex marriage?

You wouldn't find a single Founding Father that would agree with either one of those decisions, Mr. Speaker. We are on the cusp of making an appointment to the Supreme Court that would feed this back to us and do more and more and more.

How do you possibly teach the Constitution to young people? How do you teach civics to young people if the Constitution itself is moving in such a way that no one can predict what would happen?

I am very pleased to see that I am joined by another constitutionalist out of the State of Florida, who is a clear thinker and has a good understanding. I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO), my friend and a doctor.

Mr. YOHO. I would like to thank my colleague for those kind words.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a quick moment to add to the important work that Mr. KING is doing and to thank my colleague for yielding me the time and for his continued leadership in the fight to ensure the dignity of the Supreme Court so that it is not undermined by the nomination and subsequent appointment of a Justice whose judicial ideologies run counter to the Founders' constitutional principles, as you have spoken so eloquently about.

The United States of America, the great American experiment, is an experiment that has surpassed centuries of speculation and persisted through the Civil War, an experiment that survived two World Wars and continues to stand as a beacon of hope to nations across the globe, an experiment made possible because of the foresight of our Founding Fathers—and it had to have some divine intervention because men just aren't that smart, so there was wisdom—who recognized the necessity to establish a government ruled by a series of laws they felt were so essential to ensure equal opportunity—not equal outcome, but equal opportunity—in the pursuit of prosperity and happiness to all citizens.

These documents—the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights—I have right here. I want people to look at this. This is the entire Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. I think if you look at it, we will all agree it is not an epic in volume. Even my colleague across the aisle recognizes that.

It is not an epic in volume, but yet it is an epic in the ideology of what America stands for. And it stands for opportunity. And if you put work behind that, it becomes the American Dream, your American Dream. The very fabric of this country is our core value, our founding principles, and the Constitution that preserves this.

And that is the very document that gives people on the left the voice of dissension, as it does people on the right. And if we lose this—these principles—we lose that very argument, the very thing that made America great.

And I ask you: Are those ideologies Republican or Democrat, conservative, liberal, White, Black, or any other adjective you want to throw in there?

And I would venture to say that you would all say no, they are American ideologies. That is why this discussion is so important.

The United States is facing an unprecedented attack by activist justices in both the lower and upper courts. If leaders were to yield to the demands of President Obama or any other executive in the future, and nominate any individual who does not have a true, tried, and tested conservative record on constitutional issues, the ensuing Supreme Court opinions could be detrimental to constitutional law for years, if not decades, to come. And I would surmise that if we cross that bridge and go beyond the constitutional principles of this country, what America is, what it has been in the past, and what we hope it to be in the future may be lost in the history of time.

While I fully understand the importance of having a full Bench and all nine Justices available to hear some of the most critical cases of our time, it should not be done at the expense of our Constitution. That is a document we all should revere. We all should stand up and protect it. After all, don't we all give an oath to uphold that sacred document?

As American culture has ebbed and flowed—and it will continue to—morphing into what it is today, it was these founding documents that fostered an environment where the voice of the few, not just the many, could be heard.

And that is the beauty of our country: a constitutional Republic. So many people want to refer to it as a democracy. A democracy is majority rule. A democracy is mob rule. And as Ben Franklin was often quoted:

Democracy is the same as two wolves and a sheep deciding what to have for lunch.

As we know, in that story, the sheep always loses. So that is why it is so important, because a constitutional Republic protects the rights of the minority, of all people.

American culture, as I said, has ebbed and flowed over the period of time and it is morphing and will continue to morph. They have allowed for the people to dictate change, not a man who likes to remind the American people that he believes he can rewrite our history and, through the use of his phone and a pen, direct executive agencies to act with disregard to the voice of the people. A pen and a phone are not a replacement for the legislative body. And it is the Senate's chore to pick that person.

Take, for example, a vital case about to be argued before the Supreme Court next week: United States v. Texas. To some, this may seem like a simple anti-immigration or, in some cases, a pro-immigration case. But at its core, it is not about whether or not you are anti- or pro-immigration. It is about whether or not the Supreme Court will allow the executive branch to circumvent Congress and legislate from the Oval Office rather than through Capitol Hill, the way it was intended by our Founders.

I believe the Constitution is clear on this issue, but I also believe any Justice who does not have a deep appreciation for the Constitution, as the late Justice Scalia did, would disagree with me. Therein lies the danger: any Justice who is willing to tip the scale in the balance of power in favor of a runaway Presidential office.

And it is not just this administration. It could be any in the future. And that is why this is so important. This crosses party lines. It is a political ideology that I would argue threatens the very fabric of the foundation and the founding of our Nation.

Congress cannot allow itself to cave and settle for a Justice that would be complacent in the destruction of the Constitution and ultimately the destruction of the great American experiment.

□ 1715

I challenge the President to get serious with this nomination and put forth the name of a Justice that will uphold the constitutional principles and not legislate from the bench.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues in the Senate to hold steadfast and not allow themselves to be persuaded by public opinion, public pressure, and by those who will try to pressure them to vote for any nominee who will do the American legacy and the American people an injustice by undermining the Constitution from the highest court in this great Nation.

This discussion is so important. The very fabric of this discussion and the very basis of this discussion is about the preservation of this institution. That is what this is about.

If you look at a timeline of human history and you look at the American experiment, it is but a dot on that period of time, but it has created the greatest country in the world. The reason that has been allowed is because of the Constitution.

Again, those ideologies aren't Republican; they are not Democrat. They are American ideologies so that we will all benefit. And we all have a hand to preserve those. We can have our differences, but this is one thing we shouldn't differ on, and this is for the posterity of all Americans: conservatives, liberals, White, Black, anybody else.

This is something we stand strong on, and I appreciate the gentleman from Iowa, my colleague and mentor, Mr. KING, for bringing this up. I thank you for continuing the fight and bringing this out to the American people. This is important.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time and thanking very much the gentleman from Florida for the compliments and the input here, too.

I learned something in this discussion and listening to Mr. YOHO from Florida, and that is, when he spoke of divine intervention in our Constitution, the answer required divine intervention because men just aren't that smart.

I hadn't heard that expression in this town or anyplace. That explains it in a lot of ways. I have long said that I believe that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are written with divine guidance.

I choose those terms because the Bible was written with divine intervention and divine inspiration. That is up here. Divine guidance is just a little click below that. I don't want to claim Biblical standards, but it is really close. We would not have this country if it were not for God's guidance of our Founding Fathers, and so I tuned my ear to that.

I would say also, whose advice should the Senators listen to on the other side?

Well, they should listen to TED YOHO's advice. I hope they are listening to my advice, Mr. Speaker. But those on the Republican side of the aisle, they are pretty solid.

I want to publicly and personally thank my friend, whom I appreciate and respect a lot, JERRY MORAN, who has been in a difficult place in Kansas. He is a terrific friend, and I served with him here in the House of Representatives. His position is shored up in opposition to having hearings in the Judiciary Committee and trying to move this. I think the reconsideration that he has done is a good thing, and I hope the people of Kansas understand and appreciate JERRY MORAN in the fashion that I do as well.

I would suggest that maybe JERRY MORAN and some of the Democrat Senators, in particular, may have been listening to this advice, Mr. Speaker. This would be advice from the Vice President himself, JOE BIDEN, advice that he gave on June 25, 1992. So it has sustained the test of time in this fashion. It is called the Biden Rule. Quote, from Vice President JOE BIDEN:

It is my view that if a Supreme Court Justice resigns tomorrow, or within the next several weeks, or resigns at the end of the summer, President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not—repeats it—and not name a nominee until after the November election is completed.

That is JOE BIDEN, and, at that time, he was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mr. Speaker. Again, that was June 25, 1992. We are only a couple of months away in proportion to that in this period of time.

So if our friends over on the Senate side are not listening to the Vice President, I would suggest they might listen to the Senate minority leader, HARRY REID, the former majority leader in the Senate.

This is HARRY REID's statement made in 2005. You will note that this was back when George W. Bush was President. HARRY REID, minority leader today in the Senate:

The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is very different than saying every nominee receives a vote . . . The Senate is not a rubber stamp for the executive branch.

That is HARRY REID, 2005.

Both of those gentlemen, I would say today, would argue against their previous arguments. I am reinforcing their arguments today on the floor of the House of Representatives.

We are not finished, Mr. Speaker. Who is another strong, influential voice over there in the Senate Judiciary Committee?

Senator SCHUMER of New York. He wanted to block the Bush nominees, and here is what he had to say. He said:

We should not confirm any Bush nominee to the Supreme Court except in extraordinary circumstances.

Senator SCHUMER cited ideological reasons for the delay, and I begin another quote:

They must prove by actions, not words, that they are in the mainstream, rather than we have to prove that they are not.

Well, there is a statement of ambiguity for you, Mr. Speaker, requiring

an appointment to the Supreme Court to prove that they are in the mainstream.

What is the mainstream? That would be what CHUCK SCHUMER would define as the mainstream, depending upon whether or not he supported the candidate that was speaking to present themselves to be in the mainstream.

I would argue that mainstream is not a requirement for an appointment to the Supreme Court. The requirements for the appointment to the Supreme Court are determined by the discretion and the judgment of the confirming Senators over on the other side of this Capitol Building, and they should be obligated to only confirm Justices who interpret the Constitution to mean what it says.

To mean what it says. Is that too much to ask? Why, then, do we have a Constitution if it can't mean what it says?

Senator SCHUMER wasn't done, however. He argued again in 2007:

We should reverse the presumption of confirmation. The Supreme Court is dangerously out of balance. We cannot afford to see Justice Stevens replaced by another Roberts, or a Justice Ginsburg by another Alito.

That was 2007.

Well, I think the Supreme Court is dangerously out of balance precisely because of the Justices that Senator SCHUMER supports and because there are not enough Justices on the Supreme Court that he has opposed, because I believe that the Justices need to reflect and protect the text and the original understanding of the Constitution.

Every Founding Father believed that as well when they went to their grave; and they would be rolling over in it if they saw a Supreme Court that was writing law on one day, manufacturing commands the next day, and now hearing an argument that the President of the United States has a right to his appointment to the Supreme Court, no matter what kind of activist he might serve up, that is going to visit upon the American people, for at least the next generation, decisions that usurp the authority of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate and commandeer the legislative authority away from Article I and commandeer some kind of authority to manufacture commands, as they did last June.

Then, we are not done yet. In case this argument isn't strong enough at this point, Mr. Speaker, here is another.

The very individual that made the appointment to the Supreme Court, that would be then-Senator Barack Obama, now President Obama, he filibustered the Alito appointment—the Alito nomination. Excuse me.

Here is what then-Senator Obama argued in 2006. Well, they say this now. This is his spokesman today: ''President Obama regrets filibustering the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito in 2006''—this is from his top spokesman who said, just a week or so ago, ''though he maintains that the Republican opposition to his effort to replace Justice Antonin Scalia is unprecedented.''

No, the President of the United States' opposition to Justice Alito was unprecedented, not the opposition created here by Chairman GRASSLEY or Majority Leader MCCONNELL and almost every Republican over there in the United States Senate; and I don't know any Republicans in the House who think they ought to move this appointment now.

So, here are some other positions along the way, Mr. Speaker, regarding Senator GRASSLEY's comments. Senator GRASSLEY made some strong positions on the floor of the Senate a little over a week ago, and they were published in Politico, as I recall, where it would be this. The Supreme Court has weighed in on this nomination, and that would be Chief Justice Roberts has intervened and made comments in this way: that before Scalia had passed away, he argued that the confirmation process is not functioning very well, that it has gotten too political.

I was very proud of Senator GRASSLEY when he stepped up on the floor of the Senate and rebutted that argument and he made the case that, no, the confirmation process in the United States Senate has gotten political precisely because the Court itself is making political decisions rather than decisions based upon the law and the supreme law of the land, the Constitution.

So when you see political decisions come out of the Court—and those decisions, I have described some of them; there are many others—that means that the confirmation process itself is political.

And when I sat before the Supreme Court and heard the oral arguments before the Court—and I hope to do that again next week—I was amazed. I expected that I would hear profound constitutional arguments before the United States Supreme Court. I mean, I grew up, I guess, naively believing that those were the arguments made before that Court. I think the Warren Court had already turned that thing in the other direction, and I didn't realize it.

But when I first sat before the United States Supreme Court and listened for those arguments, thinking it was going to be an amazing educational experience for me, what I found was there weren't any profound constitutional arguments made. Those arguments, instead, were being made to the swing Justice on the Court to try to get to that individual's heart, because they understood the various proclivities in the thinking and the rationale that might come. They went back and looked at the lives, the lifestyle, the history of the Justices and wondered what moves their heart rather than what moves their rationale. We should only have Justices whose rationale is moved by constitutional arguments before the Court.

Let's see. Who else do I have?

President Obama, who made the argument that he wants appointments to the Supreme Court who have—what is the word?—compassion, empathy. President Obama's word is ''empathy.''

We are not looking for empathy on the Supreme Court. We are looking for Justices that can rule on the letter and the text and the original meaning and understanding of the Constitution, and the letter and text of the law here in Congress that we passed.

And, yes, they can take into consideration congressional intent, but they can't amend the language. If the language says one thing, they don't get to add words to it. They should ship it back over here and tell us what they have interpreted that it said, and then the Congress can decide whether or not we want to act.

We take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. That doesn't mean we are bound by a decision of the Supreme Court that turns the Constitution on its head.

So this fight that is going on in the Supreme Court with the nomination to the Court now is one that will turn the destiny of the United States of America.

Depending on who ends up as the next President of the United States, I have every confidence that Senator GRASSLEY holds his ground, that there will not be hearings before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee, that the Senate prerogative will prevail, and that the people will go to the polls in November and elect a President. Part of that decision will be: Will that President make the right appointment to the Supreme Court?

In the meantime, CHUCK GRASSLEY, the man who is now the chairman of the committee, stands in the gap in the same way that Leonidas stood against Xerxes at the Battle of Thermopylae when he led the 300 to stand in that gap and face 300,000 Persians. He is holding his ground. He is holding his ground nobly. He is holding it with conviction. He is holding it with determination. And we need to stand with him, beside him, and behind him in every way that we can and understand that this is a political assault that is going at him.

We should reward him for his convictions by electing a President who will make that appointment to the Supreme Court who reflects the will of the people. And the will of the people, I trust, will still want to see an appointment to the Supreme Court of a Justice who would stand up and say this Constitution means what it says.

The text of this Constitution has to mean what it says, and it has to be interpreted to mean that which it was

understood to mean at the time of its ratification. And if you don't like what it does for our policy, then get to work and amend the Constitution. That is why that provision is there. That is why we have the amendments to the Constitution today.

So I thank Senator GRASSLEY for his strong stand. I thank MITCH MCCONNELL for his leadership in the Senate. I thank everyone over there who holds their ground, and everyone here in this Congress who takes an oath to support and defend the Constitution and means it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1730

FORCED ARBITRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials related to the subject of this Special Order, which is forced arbitration

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it has been very thought-provoking to listen to the comments and observations of my good friend, STEVE KING from Iowa, and my other good friend, Representative TED YOHO from Florida.

It is always good to hear the impressions of laypersons about the law. I say that not in a condescending way because I know that my good friend, STEVE KING, is a successful businessman, construction, and he knows all about the business, and my friend, TED YOHO, is an esteemed doctor of veterinary medicine.

So being a lawyer myself by training, it is good for me to hear the impressions and observations of laypersons. I say that in a noncondescending way. So I thank the gentleman from Iowa, Representative KING, for holding it down for us for that last hour.

The preamble to the U.S. Constitution, which is the introductory statement setting forth the general principles of our American government, reads: ''We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.''

I want to just put a bookmark right where it says ''establish Justice.'' It says that right after it says ''in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice.''

So justice was something that was foremost in the minds of the Framers of our Constitution who, I believe, just as STEVE KING said, were divinely inspired in their deliberations and their decisionmaking in terms of our Constitution.

They were focused on the delivery of justice. They realized that justice was key. With that ideal, they established in Article III a court system, the judicial power and the framework for the court system. The judiciary, of course, is a coequal branch of government.

The courts, since the inception of this country, have served as a check and a balance on the excesses of the other branches of government while at the same time dispensing justice to individuals who are found to have violated the law or who have been aggrieved by the misconduct of someone else and, so, they come to court seeking justice. So justice is the business of the court system, and the court system's business is to render justice.

Now what is that word, justice? What does it mean? It is the maintenance or administration of what is just by law, as by judicial or other proceedings, in a court. Justice is the judgment of persons or causes by a judicial process to administer justice in a community. That is what justice is all about, and that is what courts do.

People bring to the court of justice their causes of action so that they can receive justice in the courts. The courts are set up with a set of procedures, rules, as to how you proceed in court. And then there are substantive laws upon which the court looks to the precedent that has been set and decides cases brought to it in accordance with those precedents.

Sometimes it must make new precedent, it must make new law, and it is done in accordance with the constitutional principles that have been laid out by our Framers. So this legal system has worked well. This legal system of trial by jury has worked very well.

In addition to maintaining order through the criminal laws, the civil laws have enabled people to achieve justice when they have been wronged, including wronged by corporations.

Companies don't like being brought to the bar of justice to be held accountable for wrongdoing. We know that corporations are powerful entities. They have more money than the average person. They are more powerful.

So the way to equalize the power of just an individual against a corporation that he or she has accused of wrongdoing—the equalizing factor has always been the jury system, a jury of one's peers.

That is what people have relied upon to address grievances, particularly with powers that are more powerful than they. They know that a jury of their peers is a mechanism whereby the truth can be found and that justice can be rendered.

So going to court and having a jury trial when a person is aggrieved is a part of the fundamental fabric of this Nation. That is how we have done business for so long.

It used to be before we had TV and radio that people would go down to the town square where the courthouse was always located and they would take the afternoon and they would go into the courtroom. They would have a calendar. They would know what cases were being heard.

It was a published calendar, and everybody knew that a certain lawyer would be in town to try a case. They would make their schedule such that they could go down and see that proceeding. It would be an open court. Nobody would be excluded. Everybody would know in advance what was going to happen.

You could sit there and watch the adversary process take place. You would see a judge seated, such as the Speaker is seated in this Chamber. That would be the person who would decide what laws were applicable. The jury would be to his or her left or right, and the judge would instruct them on the law.

After they have heard all of the evidence from the attorneys in that adversary process, the judge would instruct the jury on the law and charge the jury to find the facts in its own wisdom and apply justice.

The plaintiff would either win or lose, and the people would be in the courtroom watching the proceedings. And then, whatever happened everyone would have to live with.

Sometimes the plaintiff won. Sometimes the defense won. That is the way that it has always been in this country up until pretty recently.

Over the last 30 years or so, we have had an erosion of that process. The rich and powerful corporations have conspired to find ways that they can avoid being held accountable for the misdoings that they would be charged with committing by a regular person.

Let's face it, ladies and gentlemen. Corporations are just like people. People do wrong and, when they do wrong, you have to have some way of making them do right, of making it right. That is what the courts have always been for.

These corporations have gotten so powerful that they have come up with a way of privatizing the justice system. They have come up with a dispute resolution mechanism, which is not inherently bad, but it is being forced on people. That is the dispute resolution process known as arbitration.

Arbitration is a great alternative dispute resolution process when it is decided upon by the parties after a dispute has arisen.

But to bind a party to have to resolve a dispute in the arbitration setting as opposed to being able to exercise your Seventh Constitutional Amendment right to a jury trial and binding yourself, to have to go through an arbitration process, this is the scheme that has been hatched by the corporate interests who don't want to be held accountable in court.

So what they have done is inserted these forced arbitration clauses into agreements that they have with consumers.

So any kind of consumer agreement, for the most part nowadays, has a forced arbitration clause in it which requires that, in the event a dispute arises, the parties will settle that dispute not in a court of law, but in an arbitration proceeding.

Now, arbitration proceedings, unlike the courthouse, are done in private. There is no calendar that is published, and the people are not invited to come in. It is a secret proceeding.

It is a proceeding where, instead of having a judge trained in the law, you have got the possibility of having a layperson deciding the case. And that layperson may not be impartial.

That person may be making their living from getting referrals from the corporations to decide the arbitration cases that come before them. So it is an unfair process. It is a secret process.

The rules of procedure that are followed and required in a court are not required in an arbitration process nor are the substantive laws upon which cases are decided on precedent.

There is no requirement that the substantive law be used by the arbitrator in making the decision. Of course, there is no jury trial. There is no trial by a jury of one's peers.

So it is a very unfair setting, and it produces results that favor the corporations. This is what we are here to talk about today, this unfair, privatized secret system of justice that deprives people of having their day in court.

It is unaccountable. It is unaccountable to anyone other than to the corporate bosses that refer the cases to them. It is very unfair to the consumer, to the little guy.

So having said all of that, I yield to the gentleman from the State of Pennsylvania, MATT CARTWRIGHT, my friend, a distinguished trial attorney himself and, also, a member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in this Congress, the ranking member of the Health Care, Benefits, and Administrative Rules Subcommittee and, also, a member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

□ 1745

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding to me and for laying out the problem.

I rise proudly to remind my colleagues in this Chamber that what—as Representative TED YOHO of Florida just mentioned—what is in the Constitution really, really matters. In fact, I credit TED YOHO for carrying the Constitution with him at all times. I know that he says what is particularly dear to him in the Constitution is the Bill of Rights—those first 10 Amendments to the Constitution.

And Representative JOHNSON alluded to it earlier, it is the Seventh Amendment that we are talking about right now. If you are scoring at home, the Seventh Amendment is the thing that gives you the right to a jury trial in a civil case. And I'll quote it: ''In suits at common law . . . the right of trial by jury shall be preserved . . .''

It is a short sentence, it is unambiguous, it is easy to understand, and it is something that makes us Americans—that we can go to court and have our disputes settled by a jury trial. It is one of the things that has made this Nation great. It is one of the things that we went to war over in the American War of Independence because the British king was trying to take that right away from us. In suits of common law, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved.

But I am here to say, Mr. Speaker, that there have been attacks on the Seventh Amendment. As Mr. JOHNSON pointed out so deftly, it is in the last 25 or 30 years that these attacks have come to a crescendo. Even in the Supreme Court of the United States now, they are getting so squishy on the Seventh Amendment that they think it is all right—it is a case called Concepcion from about 5 years ago—it is all right for corporations to have you enter into contracts that do away with your Seventh Amendment right to a jury trial in the event of a dispute. This is called a pre-dispute forced arbitration clause. It rears its ugly head in all sorts of ways to hurt workers and consumers and homeowners and Americans of every stripe.

Now, what is wrong with this?

What is wrong—and, again, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia alluded to this. The main problem is that it is a secret system of justice. It is not out in the open. He is right. America has a tradition of open court systems, trials that you can go watch, proceedings of justice that are open and transparent and open to the sunlight so that sneaky things don't happen, things that they would be embarrassed to tell you about don't happen. That is the purifying aspect of sunlight overall, and that is why we treasure our justice system here in the United States.

It is the opposite when you talk about forced arbitrations. You are talking about arbitrators who have been selected by who knows who. Certainly not elected, certainly not appointed by elected officials. Accountable to no one. No one.

Is that really who you want deciding your case when you have a dispute?

Absolutely not.

Mr. Speaker, there is something even more insidious about these forced arbitration clauses, and that is this. It does away with any possibility of a class action.

Now, why do we care about that?

The ordinary American consumer may never get into a class action or know about one or care about one. But here is what happens.

If, for example, your credit card company—when you signed up for your credit card, you signed a boilerplate agreement. There is no way you read through that whole thing, but there was a forced arbitration clause in there. It says, in any dispute between us and the consumer, the dispute shall be decided by an arbitration.

What that means is that they can do anything they want to you. They can say, this month, in honor of it being April, we are going to charge everybody $45 for no reason. Forty-five dollars goes on your bill. If you don't pay it, they start dunning you and hurting your credit record. They can do that just for fun.

What are you going to do? Are you going to go to court over it?

No. You are going to join a class action because nobody can afford to hire a lawyer where $45 is the amount in controversy. That is why we have class actions, so the corporations don't get away with that monkey business.

In forced arbitration clauses, that precludes any possibility of going to court and, thereby, it precludes any possibility of a class action. That means a lot of wrong can happen in this country at the hands of unaccountable corporations. They can get away with it because there is no chance of a class action.

Well, I am here to raise my voice in support of something Mr. JOHNSON from Georgia has done. He has written something called the Arbitration Fairness Act, which remedies much of what I am talking about.

I am also here to stand up and add my voice in support of things that the administration has done: executive orders, either already done or in the works, in the Department of Education to combat forced arbitrations against for-profit universities; in the Department of Defense to combat actions of predatory lenders against our armed service men and women and our veterans; executive orders in the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to combat arbitration clauses such as the one I discussed about a credit card company; executive orders by the CMS, Center for Medicare Services, to combat abuses in arbitration clauses in nursing homes so that you wouldn't be able to bring a court case against a nursing home because you signed on the dotted line when you put mom or

dad in the home so no matter what they do to mom or dad, you can't go to court, you have to go to arbitration. CMS is working on an executive order to curb that abuse.

An executive order in the Department of Labor to enforce rules and laws about safe work places and fair pay to prevent these forced arbitration clauses from taking these cases out of the sunlight and into the dark back rooms of the arbitrations where goodness knows what is going to happen, and it is probably not justice.

We have a statue of Thomas Jefferson right outside these chambers, Mr. Speaker. Thomas Jefferson said: ''I consider trial by jury as the only anchor yet imagined by man, by which a government can be held to the principles of its Constitution.''

We need to honor those words of Thomas Jefferson, we need to honor the Seventh Amendment, we need to support Mr. JOHNSON in his Arbitration Fairness Act, and we need to support the administration with executive orders fighting these unfair and nontransparent mandatory forced arbitration clauses.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative CARTWRIGHT.

It is amazing that when you are standing across the yard with the fence in between you and your neighbor and you are telling your neighbor about that great day of fishing that you had and you are telling him about this fish that was that long, you can do as much lying about the length of that fish—sometimes you didn't even catch a fish—and it is okay to lie to your neighbor.

But it is different when you go downtown and go to the courthouse because at the courthouse you are going to testify, you are testifying under oath, subject to being held accountable for perjury if you lie.

But it is amazing that in a forced arbitration proceeding, there is absolutely no requirement that you be administered, or that a witness be administered an oath before they are allowed to testify. So, therefore, in an arbitration proceeding, the lever of perjury to force someone to tell the truth is not there and it hurts the pursuit of justice.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CARTWRIGHT for his testimony and his statements today.

I would point out that last year, the New York Times published an exhaustive and in-depth investigative series that pulled back the curtain and catalogued the immense harms of forced arbitration. In part 1 of the series, which was entitled ''Arbitration Everywhere, Stacking the Deck of Justice,'' the Times explored the rise and dramatic spread of forced arbitration clauses, their impact on American workers, consumers, and on patients. This investigation found that corporations crippled the consumer challenges across a wide swath of harmful practices simply by banning class action litigation.

Furthermore, once corporations have blocked individuals from going to court as a class, the investigation found that most people simply dropped their claims entirely.

Why?

Because the amount in controversy was so small that it was not cost effective to hire a lawyer to go to court to recover such a small amount. The net result is that the corporate wrongdoers have escaped being held accountable because of these forced arbitration clauses, which equates to a ban on participating in class action litigation and, in some of those clauses, they had the words in there about class actions being bought.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ), my friend, who serves on the Ways and Means Committee. She is a former labor lawyer. She has had an interest in this issue of arbitration, forced arbitration, for a couple of sessions of Congress. She has introduced legislation that would outlaw forced arbitration agreements in nursing home contracts—you know, where we go to take our loved ones who have to be committed to a nursing home and we have no choice but to sign the contract which has the arbitration clause in it because all of the other nursing homes have the arbitration clause in them as well. Representative SÁNCHEZ has filed legislation that would get at that very unfair process.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON.

I rise today to join Mr. JOHNSON and Mr. CARTWRIGHT in bringing attention to the very unfair and deplorable practice of forcing people into arbitration.

In practice, what this consists of is generally those with more power, meaning very wealthy corporations, including confusing but legally binding language buried in the fine print of contracts, contracts that pretty much purveyed every aspect of our lives. This creates this insidious process in which people, in order to get a credit card or a cell phone or to put a loved one into a nursing home, have to accept the terms of this contract without really knowing what they are buying into.

I want to start by saying that the concept of arbitration is a great one. I strongly support the principles of arbitration and the arbitration process because arbitration can do many good things. It can clear court dockets, it can help provide a more swift resolution to a problem, and it can also reduce legal fees. Those are the benefits of a fair arbitration process. In many ways arbitration can be a great thing.

But—and this is the thing—people think that arbitration is this wonderful process. But what they don't realize is that buried in that fine print in forced arbitration, there can also be terms that limit the evidence that you can introduce. If you are forced into arbitration, there can be limits on the damages that you can claim. It can exclude your ability to request a jury trial. And mandatory binding arbitration has to be entered willingly by both parties, not just the party with the greater economic power. But, in fact, they know that they hold that leverage over the average consumer so they put this kind of limiting language into these arbitration clauses all the time.

Many retailers, banks, and online services have forced arbitration clauses written into their contracts. These arbitration agreements can be forced on vulnerable parties who have little knowledge about what they are signing or what it means to sign away those rights. Frankly, most consumers have little or no choice in the matter because the contracts are ''take it or leave it.''

□ 1800

Why does this hit so close to home?

My father has Alzheimer's, and at a certain point, he could not care for himself anymore, so we had to investigate nursing homes that could provide the kind of around-the-clock care that was required for him that my brothers and sisters and I simply could not.

Sadly, in the nursing home arena, this is where, oftentimes, mandatory—forced—arbitration clauses are buried in these contracts for the admission of your loved one. Loved ones who cannot care for somebody who is physically ill or frail, again, have no real choice in the matter. They need to find facilities to care for their loved ones because they, simply, cannot do it on their own.

That is why, in Congresses past, I introduced the Fairness in Nursing Home Arbitration Act. That legislation would make predispute mandatory arbitration clauses in long-term care contracts unenforceable, and it would restore residents and their families their full legal rights. What the legislation would do is say that you cannot force arbitration onto families who, in an emotional time and in a medical crisis, are looking for care for their loved ones. You cannot force them to sign something that they don't agree with or even understand. My bill would have allowed families and residents to have maintained their peace of mind as they looked for the best long-term care facilities for their loved ones.

For desperate families who are unable to provide the adequate care at home, the need for an immediate placement for their loved ones makes these contracts, basically, take it or leave it, which gives them no choice at all in the matter. Families who are in the

midst of these painful decisions to place a parent or a loved one in a nursing home rarely have the time or the wherewithal to fully and thoughtfully consider what it is they are signing when they sign a contract that contains a mandatory arbitration clause. They are not in a position to adequately determine what agreeing to such a clause will mean for their loved ones should the unthinkable happen.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, CMS, is slowly working to include some of my bill's provisions through the regulatory process, but much work still remains in this area. In September of last year, Democrats sent a letter to CMS and called for a final rule that will ensure that nursing home residents will only enter into arbitration agreements on a voluntary and enforced basis after a dispute arises, not before.

We need commonsense solutions to forced arbitration agreements, solutions that would protect the average consumer, who is unfamiliar with the concept of arbitration and is not trained in the law. Many people may not even be aware of the rights they are signing away at a time when they are least prepared to make important decisions. As Members of Congress, we are called on to serve our constituents and to protect them from flagrant violations of their rights. We should be doing more to protect vulnerable families from these forced arbitration policies.

I thank my colleague, Mr. JOHNSON, for being such a strong voice on this issue.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman from California.

Next, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas, my good friend SHEILA JACKSON LEE, a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and the ranking member on the Crime Subcommittee. She is also a member of the Homeland Security Committee. She is a lawyer and a former judge.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership, along with Mr. CONYERS, and for the introduction of a very important initiative, H.R. 4899.

Mr. Speaker, many would think, particularly as we have watched the mediation and arbitration process grow as a newly developed practice amongst lawyers and one that businesses and others have seemed to adopt, that that was, in fact, helping consumers by allowing the concept of arbitration to be able to be utilized, thereby, allegedly, lowering the costs of litigation.

In a 2010 survey, 27 percent of employers, covering over 36 million employees—or one-third of the nonunion workforce—reported that they required the forced arbitration of employment disputes. The practice of forced arbitration is widespread and damaging. For example, the ability to obtain key evidence that is necessary to prove one's case is often restricted or eliminated in arbitration proceedings, and it can be nearly impossible to appeal adverse decisions by arbitrators.

We know that, in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, there is a right to a trial by jury, a jury of one's peers. Therefore, it is a sacred right. This new practice had been projected as helping the victim: oh, it will be a low-cost procedure; you will get an immediate decision; you won't have the stress of litigation; you might not even have to hire a lawyer. But, as indicated, the ability to obtain key evidence that is necessary to prove one's case is often restricted or eliminated in arbitration proceedings, and it can be nearly impossible to appeal adverse decisions by arbitrators.

I was one of the first Members to bring attention to this issue when I prevailed upon the late Chairman Hyde to authorize the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative and Commercial Law, when I was the ranking member, to hold a hearing on that matter involving Carl Poston and the NFL Players Association, with Gene Upshaw, then executive director, in the LaVar Arrington case. You may recall the LaVar Arrington case as being of the former Washington Redskins football player who was forced into arbitration in order to resolve a contract dispute.

Forced arbitration of State and Federal employment discrimination laws is also harmful to women workers. In 2015, nearly 64,000 discrimination claims were filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under title VII, and more than 41 percent of those charges were for sex-based discrimination. Sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, remains a persistent problem for women in the workplace. Nearly 83 percent of sexual harassment charges that are filed with the EEOC are filed by women. Just imagine that mandatory arbitration of claims under State or Federal family and medical leave laws could have a disproportionate impact on women as well.

I am pleased that this legislation was introduced, because it is a legislative initiative to restore rights. The bill is rightly named the Restoring Statutory Rights Act. It is also, I believe, the restoration of constitutional rights. Let me quickly tell you of the case of Stephanie Sutherland, which illustrates the difficulties of this forced arbitration.

Stephanie was hired by her company to work as a staff assistant. Her work involved relatively routine, low-level clerical work for which she was paid a fixed salary of $55,000. She routinely worked 45 to 50 hours per week, but because she was classified by her employer as exempt from overtime, she did not receive any additional compensation. By the time Ms. Sutherland was terminated in 2009, she had worked 151 hours of overtime for which she should have been paid $1,867 had the Fair Labor Standards Act and the New York State labor laws been observed. She filed a class action lawsuit and sought to recover overtime for her work in excess of 40 hours a week and for other current and former nonlicensed staff—one or two staff employees of the firm—who worked overtime.

When Ms. Sutherland was hired, she was given an offer letter that also provided, if an employment-related dispute arises between you and the firm, it will be subject to mandatory mediation. That was what the company attempted to do—enforce mandatory mediation. In her lawsuit, she attempted to enforce her rights because the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act had a provision to expressly permit lawsuits for minimum wage. To this end, the lower court was sympathetic to Ms. Sutherland's arguments. However, the United States Court of Appeals reversed, relying on the 2013 Supreme Court case.

Therefore, we do have a conflict in the issue of dealing with arbitration that is forced. This is the core of why this legislation is so very important. I believe that, if parties agree to engage in mediation and arbitration, Mr. Speaker, so be it; but if you choose to use the court system that is designed by the Constitution as one of the three branches of government that all Americans should have access to, I will make the argument that you should not be forced into arbitration or mediation.

I believe Mr. JOHNSON—and I look forward to joining him on his legislation—along with Mr. CONYERS, is really lifting up the Constitution to ensure that every citizen has access to the courts of this land to help decide their issues of conflict and to choose the forum which they desire to use. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I look forward to working with him on this very crucial constitutional issue.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues of the Congressional Progressive Caucus to discuss the critical importance of an impartial and fair justice system, corporate accountability, consumer and employee protection, as well as the importance of enforcing laws on the books.

I would like to thank Congressman HANK JOHNSON (D–GA) for his leadership in putting forth this Special Order.

The practice of forced arbitration is widespread and damaging.

In a 2010 survey, 27 percent of employers—covering over 36 million employees, or one-third of the non-union workforce—reported that they required forced arbitration of employment disputes.

Although arbitration can be a valid and effective method of dispute resolution when both parties voluntarily agree to arbitrate, forced arbitration clauses that limit an employee's legal

rights in a non-negotiable contract are abusive and erode employees' traditional legal safeguards.

For example, the ability to obtain key evidence necessary to prove one's case is often restricted or eliminated in arbitration proceedings, and it can be nearly impossible to appeal adverse decisions by arbitrators.

I was one of the first Members to bring attention to this issue when I prevailed upon Chairman Hyde to authorize the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative and Commercial Law to hold a hearing on that matter involving Carl Poston and the NFL Players Association (Gene Uphsaw, Executive Director) in the LeVar Arrington case.

You may recall LeVar Arrington as the former Washington Redskins football player who was forced into arbitration in order to resolve a contract dispute.

Forced arbitration of state and federal employment discrimination laws is especially harmful to women workers.

In 2015, nearly 64,000 discrimination claims were filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under Title VII, and more than 41 percent of those charges were for sex-based discrimination.

Sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, remains a persistent problem for women in the workplace.

Nearly 83 percent of sexual harassment charges filed with the EEOC are filed by women.

In a national survey by ABC News and the Washington Post, one in four women reported experiencing sexual harassment, compared to one in ten men.

Mandatory arbitration of claims under state or federal family and medical leave laws could have a disproportionate impact on women as well.

Nearly 56 percent of employees who took time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family illness, or to care for a new child under the FMLA in 2012 were women.

If my colleagues fail to take necessary action, mandatory arbitration will continue to be a barrier to justice for workers.

I am pleased by the action of Mr. CONYERS and Mr. JOHNSON for their leadership on Tuesday, Equal Pay Day, for introducing a very important piece of legislation that will address these inequities, (H.R. 4899) the Restoring Statutory Rights Act, which I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of.

The Restoring Statutory Rights Act would ensure that when Congress or the states have established rights and protections for individuals, including protection against wage discrimination, that they are able to enforce these rights in court.

This bill amends the Federal Arbitration Act to prohibit mandatory pre-dispute, commonly known as ''forced,'' arbitration agreements for claims rising under federal or state statute, the U.S. Constitution, or a state constitution.

The bill would further require that a court determines whether an agreement is unconscionable, legally invalid, or otherwise unenforceable as a matter of contract law or public policy.

Under current law, parties may resolve statutory claims, including claims rising under anti-discrimination statutes, through forced arbitration instead of the justice system.

This important legislation is a critical step in eliminating longstanding and unacceptable discrimination and barriers imposed on women and minority.

It should be noted that forced arbitration is a private system controlled by corporations to prevent corporate accountability.

Buried in the fine print of countless employment, cell phone, credit card, retirement, and nursing home contracts, forced arbitration eliminates Americans' access to the courts, tipping the scales of justice in favor of corporate wrongdoers.

When corporations force arbitration on individuals using nonnegotiable and many times unnoticed contract terms, it becomes an abusive weapon.

Forced arbitration means giving up the most fundamental legal protection: the right to equal justice under the law.

For decades, we have fought hard for dozens of laws that protect against discrimination based on age, sex, religion, race, disability, and unequal pay for equal work, such as the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Pay Act But these laws are meaningless if unenforceable in court.

It's time to close the arbitration loophole that gives employers and businesses the right to ignore civil rights and consumer protection laws.

Although states have tried to address this problem through their consumer protection laws, the courts have interpreted the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA) to trump state laws leaving consumers very little recourse.

Arbitration can be a fair and effective method of dispute resolution when parties voluntarily agree to arbitrate.

When the choice of arbitration is post-dispute—and therefore understandable and voluntary—it is a fair process that parties choose willingly.

I call upon my colleagues to come together and pass legislation that would reinstate workers' ability to enforce their rights in a court of law and protect the rights of women and minorities.

More than 20% of employees are covered by mandatory arbitration clauses.

Tens of millions of consumers use consumer financial products or services that are subject to pre-dispute arbitration clauses.

Federal court statistics show that 17,977 labor claims and 35,965 civil rights claims were filed in 2012.

National Arbitration Forum (NAF) arbitrators ruled in favor of consumers in less than 0.2% of all cases (30 out of 18,075) heard.

These 30 victories only occurred in hearings where a consumer brought claims against a business; when companies brought claims against consumers, they were successful in hearings 100% of the time. The employee win rate after arbitration was 21.4%, which is lower than employee win rates reported in employment litigation trials (36.4% in federal court and 43.8% in state court).

In cases won by employees, the median award amount was $36,500 and the mean was $109,858, both of which are substantially lower than award amounts reported in employment litigation ($384,223 for federal court litigation and $595,594 in state court litigation.)

A 2015 study of federal court employment discrimination litigation by Theodore Eisenberg found that the employee win rate has dipped in recent years to an average of only 29.7 percent.

At the same time, another 2015 study found that the employee win rate in employment arbitration had also dipped in recent years, to an average of only 19.1%; similar dip in employee win rates has occurred in state courts.

58% settlement rate in federal court employment-discrimination litigation.

While recent research on mandatory arbitration found a 63% settlement rate across all employment cases in that forum.

In court, summary judgment motions were filed in 77% of the court cases, while summary judgment motions were raised in 48% of arbitrations.

The win rate was 32% lower in mandatory arbitration than in litigation.

Plaintiffs' overall economic outcomes are on average 6.1 times better in federal court than in mandatory arbitration ($143,497 versus $23,548) and 13.9 times better in state court than in mandatory arbitration ($328,008 versus $23,548).

21.1% of employment cases in mandatory arbitration are brought by employees without legal counsel.

Damages from arbitration are 16% of the average damages from federal court litigation and a mere 7% of the average damages in state court—thus lawyers are reluctant to take cases that are subject to mandatory arbitration.

Whereas on average plaintiffs' attorneys accepted 15.8% of potential cases involving employees who could go to litigation, they accepted about half as many, 8.1% of the potential cases of employees covered by mandatory arbitration.

The first time an employer appeared before an arbitrator, the employee had a 17.9% chance of winning, but after the employer had four cases before the same arbitrator the employee's chance of winning dropped to 15.3%, and after 25 cases before the same arbitrator the employee's chance of winning dropped to only 4.5%.

The study results provide strong evidence of a repeat employer effect in which employee win rates and award amounts are significantly lower where the employer is involved in multiple arbitration cases where the same arbitrator is involved in more than one case with the same employer, a finding supporting some of the fairness criticisms directed at mandatory employment arbitration.

In the credit card market, larger bank issuers are more likely to include arbitration clauses than smaller bank issuers and credit unions. As a result, while less than 16% of issuers include such clauses in their consumer credit card contracts, just over 50% of credit card loans outstanding are subject to forced arbitration clauses.

In the checking account market, which is less concentrated than the credit card market, around 8% of banks, covering 44% of insured deposits, include arbitration clauses in their checking account contracts.

40% of the arbitration filings involved a dispute over the amount of debt a consumer allegedly owed to a company, with no additional affirmative claim by either party. In another 29% of the filings, consumers disputed alleged

debts, but also brought affirmative claims against companies.

The average disputed debt amount was nearly $16,000. The median was roughly $11,000. Across all six product markets, about eight cases a year involved disputed debts of $1,000 or less.

Overall, consumers were represented by counsel in roughly 60% of the cases, though there were some variations by product. Companies almost always had counsel.

Of the 1,060 arbitration cases filed in 2010 and 2011, so far as we could determine, arbitrators issued decisions in just under 33%.

In approximately 25%, the record reflects that the parties reached a settlement. The remaining cases ended in an unknown manner or were technically pending but dormant as of early 2013.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her tremendous, informative presentation, which is all based constitutionally as the great lawyer that she is.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts, JOE KENNEDY, who is an esteemed member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank Congressman JOHNSON. I am honored to be here with the gentleman, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

I thank, of course, Ranking Member CONYERS, who has for so long been a guiding light in our party on issues of justice.

Congressman, you and Mr. CONYERS together have been this Chamber's champions on civil rights and equality in our justice system. You are, once again, leading the fight as we call for reforms to an unjust and unequal arbitration system. I am grateful, and I thank you for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, at the foundation of our democracy is one simple promise: no matter who you are or where you come from or what you have done, you will be seen as equal before the law.

Thomas Jefferson, himself, wrote centuries ago:

The most sacred duties of government is to do equal and impartial justice to all citizens.

Forced arbitration, Mr. Speaker, is an affront to that duty—a manipulation of the justice system that tips our scales in the direction of influence, money, and power. It removes even the slightest veneer of fair treatment in cases ranging from sexual harassment and discrimination to loss of housing and shelter, to neglect and abuse inside substance abuse treatment centers and retirement homes.

When a plaintiff sits at an arbitration table across from a powerful corporation to challenge a fraudulent charge or to question its practices, the protections that we have spent centuries instilling in our justice system get washed away. There is no judge, no jury, no avenue for appeal. There is no justice at that table.

At the very moment you need to access our courtrooms most, you find yourself locked out, diverted to a room outside the scope of our judicial system and beyond the bounds of our laws. Without your choice or sometimes even knowledge, forced arbitration transforms a level playing field into an uphill climb. At that point, most Americans turn around; but for the few who muster the will or the resources to continue their cases, there is no guarantee to counsel, forcing them to face off against some of the most experienced legal minds in our country completely on their own.

The Arbitration Fairness Act would help remedy this profound shortcoming in our justice system and ensure that equal access to legal protection doesn't come along with a price tag. Mr. Speaker, that is one of the most fundamental promises we make in our country. I am grateful to Mr. JOHNSON for his leadership on the issue.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his wise words.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I congratulate the writers of The New York Times' exposé, a three-part series on forced arbitration. The second part of the series examined the secretive nature of forced arbitration, and the third part of that series talked about the forced arbitration in the context of binding persons to arbitrate secular claims in religious tribunals, applying religious law.

□ 1815

I would strongly encourage those who are interested in this subject to look to The New York Times article because it gives you a good understanding of where we are as far as forced arbitration is concerned. I applaud the reporters for their groundbreaking work in writing that series and producing it.

Jessica Silver-Greenberg, Michael Corkery, and Robert Gebeloff have done yeoman's work. They have exposed a threat to the justice system that shakes the tenets of our very democracy to its core. They deserve the highest commendation that I can give them, and that is just simply a shoutout from the well of the House.

I understand that the Pulitzer Prizes for journalism will be announced this coming Monday. If I could nominate this series, I would certainly do so. I certainly support their nomination for that award.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), my good friend, the former mayor of Providence, Rhode Island, a lawyer in his own right, a member of the Judiciary Committee upon which I also serve and, also, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I want to particularly thank the gentleman for his extraordinary leadership on this very important issue of forced arbitration, which is denying many, many Americans the right to have their grievances heard.

I want to thank both Mr. JOHNSON and Mr. CONYERS for not only the legislation, but for continuing to raise this issue.

As many of my colleagues have said, forced arbitration denies individuals the most basic right to have their grievances heard fairly. No court, no lawyer, no judicial proceedings, all the things that we have over many centuries recognized as essential to the fair and impartial resolution of disputes.

But there is an area that I want to speak about in particular where forced arbitration, I think, is particularly damaging and particularly unfair.

In the coming weeks, I will introduce legislation that will protect the rights of our troops to pursue justice in our courts. My legislation will simply clarify the original intent of the Uniformed Services Employment Rights Act of 1994, also known as USERRA, and allow veterans and servicemembers to have their claims heard in court.

This legislation was intended to protect the men and women of the Armed Forces from losing their jobs as a result of their service to our country. It specifically prohibits employment discrimination due to military service and guarantees benefits and reemployment rights to those who leave their civilian jobs to serve.

However, these rights have rapidly eroded in recent years. Employers are requiring their employees to sign forced arbitration agreements barring access to justice for servicemembers. As my colleagues have discussed this evening, these agreements are often heavily tilted toward the parties who insist upon them.

In mandatory arbitration, the employers can select the arbitrator and the location of the forum, and the avenues for appeal are entirely closed off. In many instances, these clauses are imposed by employers without the knowledge or consent of their employees.

While USERRA explicitly prohibits any agreement that limits any right or benefit provided under the statute, some Federal courts have misinterpreted the law to exclude procedural rights.

As a result, many of the 1.3 million brave men and women who serve in our military may return to civilian life without their jobs and without the ability to fully assert their rights in the courts.

This includes servicemembers like Javier Rivera, an Army Reservist who was deployed for 6 months only to learn that his job had been filled in his absence. Despite 900 job openings, his former employer claimed that he could not find a single open position for him upon his return.

Under these circumstances, USERRA should have provided some relief. At the bare minimum, it should have guaranteed him the opportunity to have his claim heard in a fair, objective forum. However, because of a forced arbitration clause in his contract, he had no access to the courts at all.

Denying our servicemembers and veterans this essential right directly conflicts with the intent of USERRA. By limiting their access to legal recourse, it represents a direct affront to all who serve in our military.

Our troops face many potential threats in service to our country. The last thing they should be concerned about is whether they will be able to keep their job.

A Nation that asks young men and women to defend this country with their lives should protect them from losing their livelihoods when they come home.

So I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to help preserve access to justice for our servicemembers and veterans and to recognize this is just one very powerful example of what the real damage and the gross unfairness of forced arbitration clauses do to millions of Americans.

I thank Mr. JOHNSON again for yielding, for his extraordinary leadership on this issue, and for his fight to ensure that all Americans have access to the courts and fair resolutions of their grievances.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as this Special Order has powerfully documented, forced arbitration isn't open, isn't just, and isn't fair. Simply put, forced arbitration clauses have become an exculpatory mechanism to rig the justice system.

Arbitrators don't have to be lawyers. Their decisions are practically irreversible. There is no record kept of the proceedings upon which you could appeal. There isn't even a requirement that witness testimony be given under oath.

As The New York Times investigative series illustrated, arbitration can even take place in the offices of the party representing the defendant.

There is also overwhelming evidence that forced arbitration creates an unaccountable system of winners and losers through what is called a repeat player advantage process that favors corporations over one-time participants, such as individual workers and consumers.

An analysis of employment arbitrations found that workers' odds of winning were significantly diminished in forced arbitration.

In 2012, the Center for Responsible Lending likewise reported that companies with more cases before arbitrators get consistently better results from these same arbitrators. Why? Because they are the ones who refer cases to the arbitrators.

The arbitrators want to eat. They know that, if they rule against whoever is referring the cases to them, then that is going to cut short their ability to feed themselves.

And so they rule in favor of the hand that is feeding them, and that is arbitrators, who are not even required to be lawyers and who have a perverse incentive to favor the repeat business over the consumers or the worker that they will never see again.

I am particularly alarmed by the growing number of companies that hide forced arbitration clauses outside of the four corners of the document.

For example, General Mills included a forced arbitration clause in its privacy policy that bound any consumer who downloaded the company's coupons or participated in its promotions.

Under its new terms, consumers also waived the right to a trial simply by liking the company's page on Facebook or mentioning the company on Twitter. Can you imagine giving up your Seventh Amendment jury trial right on Facebook?

It has become an increasingly common practice to use gotcha tactics to deceive consumers and employees by providing so-called notice of binding arbitration in brochures, email and memoranda, job application forms, signs outside of restaurants binding you—if you set foot in there and consume, binding you to forced arbitration, in-store application kiosks, employee training programs, contests and games associated with company promotions. People have to watch out. Even on the side of a cereal box you can waive your right to a jury trial.

Just imagine a child finding glass in their cereal, but because the company prohibited class action litigation through forced arbitration, the child's parents would have to individually not go to court, but go to an arbitrator to have their claim adjudicated.

What if it affected several thousand children? That same forced arbitration clause would prevent class litigation to ensure that our children's food is safe to eat.

These are actual cases where someone potentially lost their right to hold a company accountable for unlawful conduct in a public courtroom. In all of these cases, we are not even talking about an agreement with a dotted line.

I am reminded of Justice Kagan's dissent in American Express v. Italian Colors where she observed that the Federal Arbitration Act was never meant to be a mechanism easily made to block the vindication of meritorious Federal claims and insulate wrongdoers from liability.

The tides are turning. Americans are beginning to fight to restore their right to a jury trial. Policymakers are using every tool available to fix our laws so that corporations can no longer escape public accountability.

I thank my colleagues for their participation in this Special Order. Before I close, I want to also thank the Congressional Progressive Caucus for their tireless work to advance a progressive agenda of equality and opportunity for all.

I will close with this observation. The American people would fight back if someone came into their home and said: We are going to take away your Second Amendment right to bear firearms. They would fight.

But when corporations take away their Seventh Amendment right to a jury trial, they remain mum, but not for much longer.

People are standing up. People are tired. They are desiring change. They are angry and realize that they have been taken advantage of.

They want to level the playing field, and that is exactly what the legislation that we have introduced in this Congress will accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, during the congressional debates on arbitration more than 90 years ago, witnesses testified about the benefit of resolving disputes without judicial intervention. They noted, for example, that when arbitration is properly used, it can help parties avoid the uncertainty, delay, and costs of protracted litigation. Their testimony ultimately led Congress to pass the Federal Arbitration Act of 1925, which empowered courts to enforce arbitration agreements.

As the use of pre-dispute forced arbitration agreements—especially with respect to consumer transactions and employment agreements—has proliferated in recent years, however, it is clear that arbitration is not always beneficial to all parties and it may, in fact, eviscerate the protection of critical federal consumer and civil rights statutes. It is also apparent that the secrecy of arbitration awards can be used to hide awareness of wrongdoing by businesses. And, there are serious concerns about whether some arbitrators are indeed neutral.

The New York Times, in an excellent three-part series of investigative articles on the use of forced arbitration agreements published last year, reported that ''clauses buried in tens of millions of contracts have deprived Americans of one of their most fundamental constitutional rights: their day in court.'' Based on its exhaustive investigation of court records and hundreds of interviews with lawyers, judges, arbitrators, corporate executives, and plaintiffs, the Times found that arbitration practices are often closed, fail to adhere to rules of evidence or even substantive law, and are nearly impossible to appeal. The arbitration provisions that prohibit class actions, as the Times reports, are viewed by state judges as virtual 'get out of jail free' cards ''because it is nearly impossible for one individual to take on a corporation with vast resources.'' By privatizing the justice system, arbitration ''bears little resemblance to court'' and has become an ''alternate system of justice'' for businesses precisely because it tends to favor them, according to the Times.

Nothwithstanding these concerns, the use of pre-dispute forced arbitration clauses has become virtually ubiquitous. They appear in credit card agreements, car rental agreements, and employee handbooks. They even appear in nursing home agreements when they are signed ''at the time of admission only because the resident or family member does not even notice or understand the arbitration clause, or sign[ed] . . . out of fear that otherwise the admission will be jeopardized,'' according to the National Senior Citizens Law Center.

Pre-dispute mandatory arbitration agreements do not offer any option to reject. Once signed, these agreements force consumers and employees to irretrievably waive their right to judicial redress for harms they have suffered, prevent them from availing themselves of any class action remedy, and deny them the right to otherwise obtain justice under applicable state and federal law.

As a result, millions of consumers and employees across our Nation are legally bound by forced arbitration clauses in contracts with little or no ability to negotiate them.

Accordingly, it is time for Congress to reconsider the value of pre-dispute mandatory arbitration agreements. We must restore integrity to the arbitration process and limit the enforceability of mandatory arbitration clauses that provide no opportunity for consumers and employees to opt-out.

Congress should not restrict the rights and options of consumers and employees to resolve disputes Rather, arbitration should be one option among many to resolve disputes. Legislation that protects consumers and employees is a common-sense solution for all Americans.

For example, H.R. 2087, the ''Arbitration Fairness Act,'' is an excellent measure that was introduced by my colleague, Representative HENRY C. ''HANK'' JOHNSON, JR. This bill would make pre-dispute arbitration agreements unenforceable in employee, consumer, civil rights, and antitrust disputes. Importantly, H.R. 2087 would leave arbitration in effect when it is truly voluntary: after a dispute arises.

Similarly, H.R. 4899, the ''Restore Statutory Rights Act,'' which was also introduced by Mr. JOHNSON earlier this week, would ensure that the rights and protections established by Congress or the states are enforceable in court.

These bills would help restore balance and fairness to contractual agreements by allowing consumers, employees, franchisees, residents of long-term care facilities, and others to opt for arbitration, rather than have arbitration imposed on them as a pre-condition. Such measures would help ensure a fairer arbitration process because the terms of arbitration.

Congress must do more to protect the right of consumers and employees to have access to the courts. Americans should not be forced to lose this precious right as a result of one-sided, pre-dispute mandatory arbitration agreements.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of American consumers who are too often denied access to justice and forced into arbitration by contracts they were unable to negotiate fairly.

The Federal Arbitration Act was enacted to resolve disputes among businesses of equal standing; not to restrict consumer access to our courts. The horrific distortion of this law has allowed certain actors to tip the scale in their favor and create an uneven playing field in the pursuit of justice.

It is our responsibility to guarantee every American equal access to justice and protect the public from unfair and pernicious business practices. For this reason, I strongly support my colleague, Representative HANK JOHNSON's bill, the Arbitration Fairness Act. This bill would require that agreements to arbitrate employment, consumer, civil rights or anti-trust disputes be made only after the dispute has arisen. Consumers can only properly evaluate their options, and make a truly voluntary choice, after a dispute has arisen. Arbitration undeniably serves an important role in our legal system, but its use must be a choice, and not a mandate resulting from a one-sided contract.

Americans deserve to choose whether court, arbitration, mediation, or any other method of dispute resolution works best for them. I urge my colleagues to join me in guaranteeing all Americans this meaningful choice by cosponsoring the Arbitration Fairness Act.

HOLDING THE IRS ACCOUNTABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, tax day is fast approaching. If you, as a taxpayer, get audited and the IRS subpoenas documents from you, do you think you could destroy them and say: The heck with it? Could you lie to the IRS when they are asking you about your taxes and investigating you?

If somehow you unintentionally provided false information to the IRS, could you decline to correct the record once you found out that what you told them was not true? If you had a duty to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena, could you just fail to take basic efforts to comply?

I think every taxpayer in America instinctively knows that they would never be able to get away with the conduct I just outlined.

So I think the question that we here in this body have to answer is: Should the IRS be able to get away with conduct that a taxpayer would never be able to get away with? Can we really accept that the IRS gets to live under a lower standard of conduct than the taxpayers that the agency wields so much power over?

We know how this began. The IRS abused its authority. They targeted Americans based on their First Amendment beliefs. They got caught red-handed; so, Congress investigated.

Now, the Department of Justice was supposedly investigating, but that was baked in the cake from the beginning. They were not interested in this case. And, of course, they did not pursue prosecutions. Ultimately, even though Lois Lerner was held in contempt, they didn't pursue that even to the grand jury.

□ 1830

So Congress has tried to get to the truth of this, and Congress is even taking some action, like cutting funding for the IRS. Of course, when we cut funding, all they did was stop answering the phone calls. They didn't take it out of the bureaucracy. They just basically harmed the taxpayers.

So we are trying to get to the truth. We subpoena documents from the IRS, we bring in the Commissioner, John Koskinen, to testify, and we are trying to get the truth on behalf of the American people.

And yet, what has happened?

The IRS destroyed 400 backup tapes containing as many as 24,000 of Lois Lerner's emails that were under not one, but two congressional subpoenas.

Commissioner Koskinen came to the Congress and made multiple statements that are demonstrably false. He breached his duty to correct the record once it was clear that some of his statements were false, such as the fact that he said we will produce every one of her emails. Koskinen even claimed that the IRS went to great lengths to ensure that Congress was given all documents, yet the IRS failed to conduct even basic investigation, such that the inspector general found a thousand emails that were in the IRS' possession all along. It took them 2 weeks to find it.

The IRS didn't look at Lerner's BlackBerry. They didn't look in other areas which were obvious that you would want to look at.

Great lengths?

Give me a break. As Judge David Sentelle noted today in the D.C. Circuit, it is hard to find the IRS to be an agency that we can trust.

So I think the question is: What is the remedy for them frustrating the American people's inquiry into their targeting of Americans?

I have argued, along with my colleagues here, that the appropriate remedy is found in the Constitution, which provides for impeachment of civil officers.

You have an IRS Commissioner who breached multiple duties that he owed to the public, and he violated the public trust, which is what Alexander Hamilton said was kind of the touchstone for what an impeachment should be in the Federalist Papers. Impeachment is not a prosecution or a punishment. It is really a constitutional check.

I think as you listen to some of the conduct that the IRS engaged in—my colleagues will go into more of it—obviously there is a need to get the truth, but there is also a need for this institution here to stand up for itself. It is really a question of the House's self-respect.

How much longer can we, as elected officials, allow the bureaucracy to simply walk all over the Congress?

We are supposed to be the people's representatives. We are supposed to be able to do justice for them when the government is not acting appropriately.

Fear of a media backlash or that people in the beltway will say you shouldn't be doing it, that is no excuse for our failure to discharge our basic constitutional duties.

As James Madison said: ''Ambition must be made to counteract ambition.'' No government agency is above oversight and accountability by the people's representatives.

And so as it stands now, we have filed articles of impeachment that have basically been collecting dust for several months. We think they should be brought up on the Committee on the Judiciary and we should have a debate about whether this Commissioner's conduct satisfied the standards of conduct that the Founding Fathers envisioned for civil officers of the United States.

I think any taxpayer who looks at what the IRS did will instinctively say, you know, it just ain't right that they are able to get away with that when they are dealing with the Congress, but I would never be able to get away with that when I am dealing with the IRS.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN), my friend and colleague, a guy who has been really, really fearless on holding the IRS to account.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for organizing this Special Order, but more importantly, for the fight that he has waged in holding the IRS accountable and for saying to the American taxpayer, the American people, when you have individuals running an agency with the power of the Internal Revenue Service, doing what was done under Commissioner Koskinen's watch, he, in fact, should be impeached.

Let's just walk back through the story. Remember how this started. We had conservative groups around the country saying, hey, we are being harassed by the IRS for filing to get tax-exempt status, something that used to be kind of a matter-of-fact thing; we are being harassed for doing so.

So the Congress of the United States called for the inspector general to do an investigation. The inspector general does his investigation. It takes a long time. It takes about a year. They do an investigation and they find, you know what, our very own tax collection agency is, in fact, targeting citizens for their political beliefs. They find it. They find targeting took place. The inspector general of Treasury tells the Treasury officials and tells the IRS what they have discovered, and they are going to file their report the following week.

In an unprecedented move, Lois Lerner, the Friday before the report is supposed to be made public the following week, Friday, May 10, 2013, Lois Lerner does what all kinds of people do when they get caught with their hand in the cookie jar. She wants to get ahead of this story, so at a staged event, bar association event, staged question, planted question from a friend, she gets asked about the targeting and the inspector general's investigation, and she does what all kinds of people do when they get caught. She lies. She flat out lies. She tries to blame good public servants in Cincinnati. She said this was all about Cincinnati.

We all know what the evidence pointed to. It was about Washington. It was about the folks right here in the Internal Revenue Service.

The report comes out the following week. On the following Monday, 2 days later, the President of the United States and the Attorney General say this is inexcusable, and they call for a criminal investigation.

In fact, it is so bad, the President fires the then-Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. They bring in an interim Commissioner. For a long time, we have hearings and a bunch of things happen. And, of course, one of the most noteworthy things is the very lady who was at the center of the storm, who lied when she first made this public, gets brought in front of the Congress.

And what did she do?

She takes the Fifth. So when you have the central figure exercising their Fifth Amendment right, not willing to testify in public and answer the people's representatives' questions, it sort of puts a premium on getting the documents and the communications that the IRS had relative to this issue.

And so a long investigation ensues. Both a criminal investigation and a congressional investigation. Mr. Koskinen is then brought in as the Commissioner who is going to clean it all up, clean up this agency with so much power over American people's lives. He is brought in.

And guess what happens?

Everything Congressman DESANTIS just described. There are 422 backup tapes destroyed containing potentially 24,000 emails. Many of those emails most likely were Lois Lerner's emails that the American people and the Congress will never get a chance to see. They were destroyed, as Congressman DESANTIS pointed out, with three preservation orders in place. One from the IRS and the Treasury themselves. Another preservation order by the Justice Department saying preserve all documents, preserve everything. So three preservation orders, two subpoenas in place, and the Commissioner, under his watch, 422 backup tapes are destroyed containing 24,000 emails.

What does Mr. Koskinen do when he learns about problems with these tapes and problems with Ms. Lerner's hard drive?

He waits 4 months—4 months—before he tells Congress. Again, raising the obvious question—if you are a taxpayer being audited and you realize, oops, I lost some documents or I destroyed something, and you wait 4 months to tell the IRS what you did, oh, my goodness, you are in huge trouble.

But Mr. Koskinen, he is the cleanup guy, he is the President's hand-picked person, he is brought in. He thinks it is just fine that there are all these problems that he knows about.

Now, he didn't just wait 4 months and then tell us. In that time, when he first learned there were problems, he testified in front of Congress several times and didn't tell us. And then the worst thing is he provided false testimony, which, again, my colleague from Florida has pointed out. He said: Look, everything is fine.

And then finally, think about all the duties this guy, the guy brought in to clean up the mess, think about all the duties he had. A duty to preserve all the documents, particularly in light of the fact the central figure has taken the Fifth. A duty to produce them when they are asked for by the Congress. A duty to disclose to us if he couldn't preserve and produce them. A duty to testify accurately. And then, finally, a duty to correct the record if, in fact, he testified and said something that wasn't accurate. Every single duty he had, he breached. Every single one.

Here is the final point I will make. And this is why—what Congressman DESANTIS, what Congressman HICE, and what Congressman LAMBORN are going to talk about is why this is so important, why this is so critical that this individual be brought in front of Congress. And, actually, we go through the articles of impeachment, and we exercise the right that the Constitution requires us to do of a situation of this magnitude.

Why it is so important is, remember the underlying offense. This is an agency with the power and influence that the IRS has systematically and for a sustained period of time targeting Americans' most cherished rights. You think about your First Amendment liberties: freedom of the press, freedom to petition your government, freedom to assemble, freedom to practice your faith, freedom of religion, practice your faith the way you think the good Lord wants you to. But under the First Amendment, your most fundamental liberty is your right to speak.

When the Founders put together the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and that First Amendment, when they were talking about your free speech rights, what they were mostly focused on was not just any old speech, any old talk,

they were mostly focused on doing what we are doing right now, political speech, talking about politics, talking about government.

You have the right as an American citizen to speak out against your government and not be harassed for doing so. And yet, the IRS did just that. And that is why, Mr. Koskinen, that is why we filed these articles of impeachment and that is why we are asking that they move forward in the Committee on the Judiciary and we do what the American people sent us here to do.

I thank the gentleman from Florida who has done so much good work on this issue and a host of others.

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank the gentleman from Ohio. I now yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of Representative DESANTIS and Representative JORDAN in holding the Obama administration accountable.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call for the impeachment of John Koskinen, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, for high crimes and misdemeanors. This effort is needed to hold the IRS Commissioner accountable for allowing documents to be destroyed and for providing misleading statements to Congress after IRS targeted conservative organizations. I am a cosponsor—and proud to be one—of the resolution. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

As it has become abundantly clear, Commissioner Koskinen has failed the American people by stonewalling congressional investigations into the IRS targeting scandal. Conservative organizations were intentionally targeted by our Federal Government simply because they believed and expressed a message that was in opposition to the administration.

Now, while I may disagree with many on the left, I would never seek to threaten them by use of government force and coercion and take away their freedom of speech.

Moreover, what is truly disturbing about the IRS scandal is that Commissioner Koskinen has violated the public trust. As a Commissioner, he failed to comply with a congressional subpoena, failed to ensure that evidence was preserved, failed to testify truthfully, and failed to notify Congress when he learned that thousands of emails were missing.

Our constituents expect Congress to exercise oversight of this administration and to demand accountability. We know the IRS Commissioner cannot be trusted. Impeachment would help rectify this sorry situation and would go a long way toward showing the American people that we are serious about our constitutional duties.

Impeachment is the appropriate means to restore balance between the branches of government. The Framers included impeachment in the Constitution for precisely this scenario, where an executive branch official who violated the public trust will not resign and they refuse to fire him. That is exactly what should happen here. IRS Commissioner Koskinen must go.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado. I now yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we all know this time of year is when the American people are held accountable to pay their taxes. Unfortunately, the IRS—and especially its head Commissioner John Koskinen—have proven over and over and over that they cannot be trusted to hold themselves to the same standard that they hold the rest of us. It is critical that we, as Congress, as we are trying to do here this evening, that we ensure that the IRS is held accountable for its actions the same way the American people and other Federal agencies are held accountable for their actions.

House Republicans, my colleagues and I, many of us on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in particular are very familiar with Commissioner Koskinen. Under his leadership, the IRS has failed to respond to multiple subpoenas for evidence. There has been destruction of thousands of key documents, thereby really hindering the work of Oversight investigations, possibly obstructing justice.

□ 1845

John Koskinen, as has already been mentioned here just moments ago, sat before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and lied under oath multiple times, providing false and misleading testimony, which, of course, as we all know, is outright perjury.

John Koskinen's continued role as Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service—which we all know is one of those powerful Federal agencies—despite his continued attempts to deceive Congress and the American people, is nothing but the living embodiment that the IRS indeed does not play by the same rules that they demand of other Americans.

The American people are well aware that the IRS has placed itself above the law, above the rest of us. In fact, according to a recent Rasmussen poll, only about 30 percent of Americans actually trust the IRS to fairly enforce the law, which means that we have got nearly 70 percent of Americans who don't trust the IRS to abide by the law here in America. One of the most powerful agencies that we have cannot be trusted. And the American people don't trust them. This is a Federal agency that desperately needs to be set on the right track. Of course, the first step to that is eliminating the failed leadership.

So I join my colleagues on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, many of whom are here this evening. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Res. 494 to impeach Commissioner John Koskinen. This is absolutely one of our most important roles in Congress: to hold our Federal agencies and heads of these agencies accountable.

So with that mission, I appreciate the gentleman for the opportunity to speak a few moments, and I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 494 to impeach IRS Commissioner John Koskinen.

Again, I want to thank my good friend, Congressman DESANTIS, for leading this Special Order.

Mr. DESANTIS. It is my pleasure to yield to one of my friends and colleagues from the great State of Florida (Mr. YOHO), who is really a stalwart in terms of bringing accountability to government.

Mr. YOHO. I would like to thank my colleague from my neighboring district, Mr. DESANTIS.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great moment in time and I appreciate the gentleman bringing this up. This is such an important issue that we all deal with and something that every American has a vested interest in. I thank the gentleman for holding this Special Order this evening. The topic of tonight's discussion is an important one and one that demands attention by all Americans.

My district and I have never been a fan of the IRS. It is an agency that wreaks terror amongst the American people. And in a perfect world, we would eliminate it altogether, but that is not what we are here to talk about tonight. When you consider their actions over the past couple of years of targeting conservative groups and individuals seeking nonprofit status or political ideology that doesn't agree with an administration, my desire to see this agency dismantled increases tenfold.

Although the focus tonight is the conduct of IRS Commissioner John Koskinen and his failure to perform his duty to respond to lawfully issued congressional subpoenas, let us not forget that the IRS scandal began back in 2010. 2010—over 6 years ago—this started.

And do you want to know why the frustration of the American people is so high, why they say, You guys don't ever change in Washington, you never hold anybody accountable?

We see the law being blatantly broken every day. Yet we stand here neutered, afraid to do something.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we stand up and hold those people that are breaking the law accountable. I know Mr. DESANTIS' goal is to do that, his

committee's goal is to do that, and my goal is to help them accomplish that.

Many have accused Commissioner Koskinen of obscuring multiple congressional investigations into the IRS targeting of conservative groups seeking nonprofit status. Some argue that in the process of stalling and misrepresenting the facts to Congress, he has committed culpable misdemeanors.

If Commissioner Koskinen has deliberately misled the American people, Congress has the constitutional responsibility to hold him accountable to the American people.

Who else can do that?

Only this body has that power: the House of Representatives, the people's House. That is why our Founders instilled that power, that authority, that oversight with this body. The American people can't hold anybody accountable. It is us, the legislature.

And I support his impeachment. I feel that his agency completely went off the rails. And by doing so, I am proud to support JASON CHAFFETZ' House Resolution 494 asking for the impeachment of John Koskinen for high crimes and misdemeanors.

This is something that has only been used 19 times in our Nation's history: impeachment of a Federal official. Nineteen times in over 200 years. It is not something that is flagrantly used to throw people out of office because we don't agree with their political ideology. This is something that has been used very sparingly, and it is a tool that must be used when the time is right to use it. Mr. Speaker, I say the time is right. The American people want to see this done.

The resolution was introduced in October of last year, and we have yet to see it come out of the Judiciary Committee and onto the House floor. What is the holdup, is my question and that of a lot of other people.

We know the White House will not lift a finger. This White House and administration will not lift a finger to hold anyone accountable, but why hasn't our own House leadership done more to bring this resolution to the House floor? That is my question. It is the question when I go home: Why are you guys not holding people accountable? Because if we don't hold ourselves accountable and we blatantly break the law, why should not the American people do that? This is to send an example that we cannot break the law. Because if we don't follow the rule of law, why should the American people?

The American people want answers and accountability in their government. As Members of the House, we have heard their cries and worked together to hold the Obama administration accountable. It is time we bring H. Res. 494 up for a straight up-or-down vote and do the work our constituents ask of us.

Just this month I held four town hall and teletown hall meetings, and one of the topics I heard over and over again was about government accountability. We hear it a lot: government accountability and transparency. We talk about it and hear about it, but don't see it.

Again, that leads to the frustration of the American people: Why aren't elected officials ever held accountable?

We have government agencies targeting American citizens for nothing more than a political ideology, their beliefs, ignoring our demand for information and flagrantly ignoring the law. This needs to end. We cannot change our Nation for the better if we do not change how business is done in Washington. Nothing in Washington will ever change if we don't start holding officials accountable.

We need to start here. We need to start now. And I urge my colleagues to support the impeachment of John Koskinen. This is something not taken lightly. Again, I want to reiterate it has been used 19 times in over 200 years. I urge my colleagues to support the impeachment of John Koskinen and to continue to hold strong against this and future administrations that disregard the law, the Constitution, and the people of this great Nation.

Mr. DESANTIS. I appreciate my friend from Florida. Those were very well-received comments.

I would also like to just mention that Mr. PALMER from Alabama—who is serving up there—and I were discussing before he had to go up and serve in that duty—and I think it was a good point: if this were a private business and the private business had behaved this way—in the face of the IRS—the CEO would have been fired because it just would have been absolute hell for the company.

And that is one reason why the American people are so frustrated with government. There are different standards that apply for people in Washington versus the rest of the American people and the taxpayers. And that is just totally intolerable in a Republican form of government.

And I make one other point that I think sometimes gets lost. When you start talking about what are impeachable offenses, people tend to think of it in terms of criminal offenses. And while there are criminal offenses that would qualify as impeachable offenses, the two are not mutually exclusive. And, in fact, the Founders believed that the real reason you needed impeachment was for things that may not necessarily be criminal, but that were breaches of the public trust.

Joseph Story, the preeminent Supreme Court Justice, noted that:

> Impeachable offenses are aptly termed political offenses growing out of personal misconduct or gross neglect or usurpation or habitual disregard for the public interest. They must be examined upon very broad and comprehensive principles of public policy and duty.

I think that is tailor-made for this instance. Some of the false statements maybe do violate statues, but we don't have to get into that. We can simply say: Has he violated, has he shown a disregard for the public interest, has he been—even grossly negligent would be actionable—and I think that is clearly the case here.

I echo my friend from Florida that said we need to get the dust of the impeachment resolutions, we need to get it up to Judiciary and pass it out, and then let's let the House make a decision about whether that is valid or not.

Some people say: Well, the Senate may not want to do it. They will have to defend their votes then. And that is fine with me. I think most Americans want the IRS to live at least under the same standard they do. I think it should be a higher standard, given all the power they have.

I appreciate my colleagues for coming and discussing this issue. The articles have not been brought up, but we are not forgetting, many of our constituents are not forgetting, and really the time to act is now. If we don't—this is absolutely true—the IRS will have gotten away with everything. That is unacceptable.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to express my opposition to the increasing use of forced or binding arbitration. Most Americans don't even know about forced or binding arbitration until it happens to them.

Clauses are buried in the fine print of everyday contracts and, before they know it, they are unknowingly compelled to give up their legal rights. Quite honestly, if we just take into consideration human behavior—most Americans don't read the fine print even if they know they should. And let's assume that if they did, I guarantee you most don't have enough of legal background to recognize problem language when they read it.

This is concerning and dangerous when we consider that arbitration clauses are increasingly being inserted into consumer and employment contracts. This allows companies to circumvent the courts and bars people from joining together in class-action lawsuits. And class action law suits are realistically one of the few tools citizens have to fight illegal or deceitful business practices.

Applying for a credit card, using a cellphone, getting cable or Internet service and you are likely agreeing to private arbitration unknowingly. This is concerning because arbitration is heavily weighted in favor of the more powerful party. Not only does the corporation that wrote the contract set the terms of arbitration, but it also often decides on the arbitrator. Arbitrators do not have to be trained in the law, nor are they required to follow the law.

Quite simply, arbitration lacks many of the fundamental guarantees of fairness that a court provides. As a small business owner, I view binding arbitration as plainly unfair to the consumer and also unnecessary in the operation of a successful business practice. My

business currently operates successfully without engaging in the same predatory practice for consumers.

Lawyers can continually put together more sophisticatedly drafted agreements meaning courts routinely enforce such agreements. That means we have a legally enforceable culture that is reinforcing these one-sided provisions which unfairly tilt the playing field in favor of one party. This is a practice we must stop. I am here to say we must stop it. Let us stop this predatory practice on consumers and bid binding arbitration a farewell.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I stand with Representatives JOHNSON, SÁNCHEZ, and my other colleagues to discuss a well-known scourge on the rights of everyday Americans: forced arbitration clauses.

People talk about how the rules are rigged. They say the deck is stacked in favor of powerful interests. Forced arbitration clauses are a perfect example of an unfair system. Powerful corporations rig the rules to make it more difficult for people to hold companies accountable for wrong doing.

Nearly all companies add non-negotiable clauses in contracts that people are required to sign when we open a bank account, get a credit card or a cell phone or choose a financial advisor. Virtually any product and service that requires we sign a contract that includes fine-print will limit our ability to seek damages in open court.

If consumers have a complaint, we are limited to secret arbitration forums. These arbitration forums are controlled by the corporation. The corporations decide the venue and the arbitrator. Even if the arbitrator makes a terrible ruling or makes egregious errors, the ruling likely cannot be appealed or reversed. In fact, arbitrators' decisions in prior cases are not publicly available.

How did we get to this point? How is it possible that nearly all consumer and investment contracts include forced arbitration clauses? Why are consumers forced to resolve disputes after they arise in secret courts, not in the public courts?

We should look across the street. No entity has done more to expand forced arbitration clauses than the Supreme Court. Numerous anti-consumer rulings have restricted people's freedom to take a company to court.

Last year the Supreme Court ruled that DirecTV California customers could not band together to fight an early termination fee assessed by DirecTV. Instead, each customer had to file individually and use arbitration. They could not seek a class action lawsuit.

In 2013, American Express v. Italian Colors preserved the monopoly powers of American Express so it could continue to charge retailers high fees. Retailers who had sought a class action lawsuit were restricted by arbitration clauses in their contracts.

In 2011, AT&T Mobility v Concepcion had the same outcome; people who were offered a ''free cell phone'' realized they were actually charged $30. Consumers sought damages as a class but the Supreme Court ruled that the customers had to pursue their claims individually through arbitration.

As you would expect, these anti-consumer rulings were decided on ideological lines. In fact, the late Justice Antonin Scalia wrote many of these decisions which were unfair or onerous to consumers.

But we are not giving up. We are pushing back hard against these mandatory arbitration contracts.

Congress barred forced arbitration clauses in residential mortgage terms.

Military members now have the right to go to court for disputes involving many types of loans.

Small-business auto dealers can choose to go to court when locked in disputes with the big auto manufacturers. Unfortunately, most auto dealers have deprived their own customers of this benefit.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is working on a rule that could curb mandatory arbitration in consumer contracts. The CFPB could restore our ability to join our claims together to hold financial companies accountable when they break the law.

But there is still more work to do. The Securities and Exchange Commission has the authority to eliminate forced arbitration clauses that brokerage firms and financial advisors require their customers sign. But the SEC hasn't acted.

Therefore, I have sponsored legislation, the Investor Choice Act, (H.R. 1098). My bill restores the rights of investors who are simply trying to save for retirement and other life goals. The bill says investors must have access to court to seek justice if advisors and brokers, who typically have the incentive to charge outsized commissions and fees, do not act in their customers' best interests. The bill has 21 cosponsors.

I am also a proud cosponsor of the Arbitration Fairness Act, Mr. JOHNSON's bill eliminates forced arbitration for all consumer and worker disputes;

I am also a cosponsor of the Court Legal Access & Student Support (CLASS) Act. This bill bans forced arbitration and class action prohibitions from college enrollment contracts.

Minnesota's own attorney general Lori Swanson has been a leader in trying to level the playing field for all Minnesotans. She worked to stop a corrupt arbitration provider from operating its business against consumers across the country; and she has urged federal regulators to eliminate arbitration clauses from nursing home contracts.

In closing, let me say, my colleagues and I are not seeking to do away with arbitration as a way for parties to work out their problems. We just think arbitration should be voluntary not mandatory.

I simply ask ''If arbitration is so fair, why force it? Why not present it as an alleged ''fair'' option when a dispute has arisen—where both parties can consider all alternatives and agree on an appropriate forum?''

We know why: Because companies like forced arbitration clauses because they are a perfect tool to avoid liability for their actions.

If you want a fair system, if you want people to be able to accumulate wealth, then we need to stop these forced mandatory arbitration clauses in consumer and investor contracts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 30 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that Congressman TIM RYAN of Ohio and Congressman RICK NOLAN of Minnesota had scheduling conflicts. They were here earlier, and we thought this Special Order would start earlier. And I want to say thank you to both of them so very much for their strong support of the pension benefit rights of America's workers and retirees.

Tonight I rise to bring a very serious situation to the attention of the American people, a situation that demands justice. It relates to something called ERISA, or the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, passed decades ago that says when workers work and accrue benefits for retirement, those are sacrosanct. They are earned benefits and no one can cut them. ERISA promises that those retirees will receive the earned benefits that they worked so hard for.

Mr. Speaker, I want the American people to know that today I stood with thousands of America's workers out here on the lawn facing the Capitol. American retirees, their families, and supporters are here in our Nation's capital to save their hard-earned pensions that should be guaranteed under the laws of this country. They are here in Washington because Congress abandoned them. They were abandoned by the executive branch, too.

What has happened is that hundreds of thousands of American workers are getting notices in the mail. These are current beneficiaries, people who are already retired, who are getting notices that their pensions are being cut by half, by 30 percent, some as much as by 70 percent under something that passed here in the Congress called the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act.

But it didn't pass on its own, as a freestanding piece of legislation. It was stuck in a gigantic bill—we call it a must-pass bill—that, in December of 2014, if it had not been passed, the government would have shut down. The problem is most Members of Congress had no idea that was even in that bill. That section was airlifted into what was called the CR/Omnibus, the continuing resolution appropriations bill of that year. But on the section that dealt with pension rights, which had nothing to do with the appropriations process or the continuing resolution, these pension cuts were dropped in. There was no floor debate, there was no separate debate on that issue.

□ 1900

There were no amendments allowed. People, Members didn't even know what was in that section of the bill.

So that Multiemployer Pension Reform Act, they call it MPRA, was supposed to solve one crisis, and that is a shortage in the funds currently in that particular pension fund; but it placed the solution on the backs of the workers, the people who had earned those benefits themselves. Retirees who never caused the financial shortfall are going to bear the entire burden of the shortfall in that fund.

In reality, people in Ohio—just who were Ohio Teamster retirees, nearly 48,000 retirees in Ohio, the State most impacted in the union—are now getting notices that their pensions are going to be cut. Overall, there are over 270,000—a quarter million—Teamster retirees, alone, across our country who are being affected; and, of course, some of them were with us today.

Over the last year, I have heard extensively from retirees who will see their pensions dramatically reduced—dramatically reduced—if, in fact, these cuts are approved by the U.S. Treasury Department.

These Americans did everything our country asked them to do as productive citizens. They went to work. They worked for decades. They worked for companies that matched that money, and they thought they would have a secure retirement—guaranteed. The law says, under ERISA, their retirement income will be guaranteed. But now it is a promise not being kept, and they are facing a stark reality. These workers earned their benefits. No one has the right to take them away.

Imagine working for 30 years as a truck driver, where your work takes you away on long trips for weeks at a time—time away from your family, time away from your community, countless missed family gatherings and life moments you will never get back, but you are a good worker so you do it. It is a good job with good pay, a solid middle-class living, a chance to make life better for your family and children, and, with it, all the promise of a reasonable and secure retirement in later years, if you can make it, doing that hard work.

Imagine that you retire with your earned, predictable pension you have worked for your whole life. You are in your seventies, and a hastily passed government law reduces your pension from $3,500 a month to $1,400 a month—poof, just like that, through no fault of yours. You did everything you were supposed to.

This example is not the exception of what is happening to the American people; it is the rule.

Now, let me tell you, truck driving is hard work. It is debilitating on bodies, the bouncing, hopping out of that truck, many workers having to load the truck, as well as drive the truck, and then unload the truck, leaving many of these retirees disabled from work they did for 20 and 30 years.

I hear countless stories of how retirees are caring for their children, some of whom who have disabilities, supporting their own ill and aged parents, or supporting children and grandchildren with life expenses which, the last time I looked, aren't going down.

Electric bills are up. Food is up. It is not so easy to make it in retirement years. These pension cuts impact more than just the individual who earned the pension. Literally, these cuts impact millions of Americans and the communities in which they reside.

The House has continued to let these retirees down in its failure to hold even a single hearing to fully understand their financial plight. Can you imagine that? A federally guaranteed income secured, been in the law for years, now you have got hundreds of thousands of Americans impacted and Congress is dead as a doornail. They are not doing their job, even as these workers face these tremendous cuts.

Now, one of the major funds that is affected was called Central States, and it was the first fund being affected—where its workers, pension retirees, were being affected—that filed an application with the Treasury Department to restructure benefits. But that application is only the first of many funds, pension funds, that will seek cuts in the years ahead.

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation reports that 150 multiemployer plans—covering a million and a half participants—are in grave risk of insolvency. With those cuts, entire communities will feel the economic impact.

What is more shameful is this was caused, in large part, by the role played—get ready—by the large, multinational banks. Let me list three of them for you: Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, and Northern Trust. You see, the Central States Pension Fund is the only major private pension fund where all the discretionary investment decisions are made by financial firms, not our government. There was a court order from 1982 that has made the decisions for the retirees' billion-dollar fund. So the government basically turned this money over to the big banks.

Does this sound familiar?

This was the result of the Department of Labor wrestling control of the fund, back in the eighties, away from organized crime, who used funds as their own piggy bank to build parts of Las Vegas. But the real irony here is that the Teamsters' pension fund disappeared more quickly under Wall Street than it did under the mob. How about that?

Ask the retirees how they feel, and they will tell you they got their money under the mob control. And I am not arguing for mob control. I am arguing for fair treatment of pensioners in our country and getting the money they earned.

Time has not been friendly to the trucking industry, with deregulation decimating good-paying jobs in trucking companies across the country and bankruptcy laws allowing hundreds of companies to exit the fund without paying their full withdrawal liabilities.

Lots went wrong by the big shots making the decisions, but the people paying the price over this 30-year period are the workers, and that is wrong. That is wrong.

The fund was hit particularly hard by the turmoil in the markets during the dot-com bubble and then followed by the Great Recession and financial crash during 2007 and 2008. Guess what. The fund, the pension fund, lost nearly 40 percent of its assets as it appears to have been overly invested in risky assets by Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, and Northern Trust.

We are calling for a forensic audit of what happened every year with the investments of this fund and who did it, who benefited, and now, who is being asked to pay the price.

How tragic that Congress will bail out the big banks, but then they will throw millions of truck drivers and middle-class retirees who worked hard for a living under the bus—or under the truck.

Central States will tell you that these dynamics have caused the shortages, but the handwriting has been on the wall for a rather long time. While other funds diversified and recruited additional employers, something happened in this fund that is atypical. But why should the workers be blamed for what the managers and the bankers did?

Immediately after that law was passed, called MPRA, I set to work to correct the unfairness to America's workers and introduced H.R. 2844, the Keep Our Pension Promises Act. It now has nearly 50 cosponsors—50.

The idea here is—we call it KOPPA—the Keep Our Pension Promises Act would prevent these draconian cuts to the earned pensions of our workers by filling the financial gap in the fund and reinstate the ''anti-cutback'' provisions in ERISA, the bedrock of that law.

We have to keep our promises. ERISA promised that pension benefits in multiemployer plans would be cut only when a plan runs out of money; and even then, the benefit of the retirees should be the last to be cut, not the first to be cut.

No wonder that the middle class is mad at Washington. No wonder we see this Presidential race that is occurring, where there is a lot of hubbub around the country. The public is sick and tired of Washington doing this kind of thing to the American people. The public sees that this is just another broken promise by Washington and another rigged bill that went

through here by the top leaders in Congress that most Members didn't even know was in there.

The system is rigged. A Senator from the other body said that. Well, by golly, on this one, in terms of benefits of pension retirees, it sure is rigged.

There are more than a million honest Americans who, for decades and decades, worked hard. They followed the rules, and they are now getting thrown to the wind by their own government.

Imagine if Congress were to cut Social Security benefits in the same way, by two-thirds, in a retiree's monthly pension payments. There would be riots in the streets.

My colleagues, if you ever wonder why tens and tens of millions of Americans are angry, deeply disappointed, and feel betrayed by their government, look no further than this issue.

I want to say to all the Americans who drove across the country today to be with us here in Washington, to spend the money for that gasoline, to take time away from their families—frankly, some of the men and women who were there couldn't even stand up on the lawn. They had to sit along the concrete fences along the side because their bodies simply can't hold them up as they did when they were younger. We can do better than this as a country.

The bill that we are offering, H.R. 2844, basically would tax some of the assets of the most wealthy in our country and fill the gaps between now and 10 years from now so these workers wouldn't have to take these cuts. It is truly unfair to them.

It is time we operate, in this Congress, with the oversight that this institution was built upon. It is time for the committees of jurisdiction to do their job. Give these Americans, who are patriotic people—many of them are veterans. Many of them have served our country so ably in so many ways. They have been good family people. They don't need to have their benefits cut in their retirement years.

It has caused such havoc in these families, the worry alone, the blood pressures that have gone up and the heartache and the lost sleep of losing what they worked for their entire life. What is happening to them is wrong. It is not just.

It is time for the Treasury Department to deny the Central States application to cut benefits, and it is time that this Congress keep our pension promises to the American people who worked so hard, paid their taxes, helped build their families, helped build their communities, had a great work ethic, went to work every day, many of them getting up real early before the sun even rose. And now to treat them like this, in their golden years, how wrong is this?

I am so proud to rise on this floor this evening to speak on their behalf. They deserve a better day. I expect the people in this Congress and I expect the executive branch to dole out justice fairly to them and not make them the victim of the bad decisions that were made by the biggest banks in this country and by the managers of those funds that these workers dutifully paid their dues into over the years, coming out of their check every pay period. It is not right to cut their benefits. They do not deserve this.

Those funds need additional time to recover following that 2008 crash. You don't recover in 7 or 8 years, not from that kind of downfall in the economy. Why make the workers pay for the mistakes of others? It is just so wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to come down here this evening urging my colleagues to support the Keep Our Pension Promises Act, to urge them to sign onto our bill, H.R. 2844.

I say to those workers and retirees across our country who are likely listening: Keep up the faith. Keep writing your Representatives. Keep writing the U.S. Treasury Department, Mr. Ken Feinberg, who is in charge of this solution.

We want to make sure that justice prevails; and if we speak out, if we don't give up, if we make sure we stand up and talk to our Senators, talk to our Representatives, talk to all the Presidential candidates coming through our States, across our country, during this year, this Presidential year, we can impact this policy.

Both political parties should have in their platforms this year that they will be writing come this summer that the Keep Our Pension Promises Act should be passed, that we should take care of these retirees and not permit them to lose the earned benefits that they spent their lives devoted to and now, in their later years, are facing these draconian cuts.

It is so wrong. I ask for justice for these American workers. Let's do what is right for them. And I know the people listening tonight agree, and they would do the same thing if they were standing down here on this floor with me.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me to speak out this evening and to stand alongside the hardworking men and women of our country. They deserve better treatment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HOLDING THE IRS ACCOUNTABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on the comments of my dear friends' Special Order earlier by Congressman RON DESANTIS.

I know there were a number of people who spoke, but the ones I actually saw and heard—Congressman DESANTIS, a dear friend, dear friend TED YOHO, and my dear friend JIM JORDAN—did an extraordinary job of laying out why we simply have to show that this House has standards, that Congress has rules, and you can only thumb your nose so far. You can only lie and defraud and, in some ways, be incompetent before there has to be an impeachment.

And with regard to the head of the Internal Revenue Service, the case has been made very effectively in the prior Special Order. So I want to add on to that by reference to this article from the Washington Examiner entitled, ''IRS Chief:''—basically, the IRS chief is saying this; this is the headline—''Agency Encourages Illegal Immigrant Theft of Social Security Numbers to File Tax Returns.''

□ 1915

It is by Rudy Takala, dated April 12.

It says, ''The IRS is struggling to ensure that illegal immigrants are able to illegally use Social Security numbers for legitimate purposes, the agency's head told senators on Tuesday, without allowing the numbers to be used for 'bad' reasons.''

Now, that is the IRS director's reasoning. It is okay for someone illegally in the United States to be engaged in identity theft.

This is the IRS director that has presided over the massive manipulation of the Internal Revenue Service as a tool of this administration and the Democratic political party back in 2012 to prevent conservative groups, groups whose one foundational basis was the Constitution as written, groups who believed that people should follow the law.

This director's IRS targeted such people and, in some cases, kept them from getting a tax ID number and a verification that they could raise money. They kept them from participating in the 2012 election because President Obama was up for reelection, of course.

And now he has the gall to go before a Senate committee and testify that it is okay for someone illegally in this country that is involved in identity theft to use fraudulently someone else's Social Security number as long as it is not for a bad purpose.

If there has ever been a good reason to remove a department head, it certainly exists with the IRS Commissioner John Koskinen.

The article goes on and says that he made the statement in response to a question from Senator DAN COATS, a Republican from Indiana, during a session of the Senate Finance Committee about why the IRS appears to be collaborating with taxpayers who file tax returns using fraudulent information. Senator COATS said that his staff had

discovered the practice after looking into agency procedures.

This is Senator COATS being quoted: ''What we learned is that . . . the IRS continues to process tax returns with false W–2 information and issue refunds as if they were routine tax returns, and say that's not really our job. We also learned the IRS ignores notifications from the Social Security Administration that a name does not match a Social Security number, and you use your own system to determine whether a number is valid.''

He is talking about the IRS.

So if we are just talking about strictly the issue of competence and not even getting into lies, fraud, deception, violating court orders, violating congressional orders, violating his own department directives—if we are just talking about an issue of competence and the Internal Revenue Service utilizes Social Security numbers in order to determine whose tax return is being filed and processed and he has the unmitigated gall to say: Now, when the Social Security Administration that issues these numbers tells us that person is filing a tax return and the information that they have given the IRS is false, it is fraudulent, it is not their number, it is not their tax return, it is not their tax information, the head of the IRS, Mr. Koskinen, says: We don't trust the Social Security number—that is basically what he is saying—we don't trust the Social Security Administration on whether or not it is a valid Social Security number when they tell us it is clearly not a number that belongs to the person that is filing that return. We go by our own information.

Now, how in the world could the Internal Revenue Service have more valid information about a taxpayer's Social Security number than the Social Security Administration that issued the number, maintains the number, and updates their records regarding who is using that number?

Giving the benefit of the doubt, maybe it is not incompetence. Maybe it is just so much unbridled arrogance that he honestly believes that nobody can be right except his department because he is the head of it.

The article goes on: ''Asked to explain those practices, Koskinen replied, 'What happens in these situations is someone is using a Social Security number to get a job, but they're filing their tax return with their [taxpayer identification number].' 'What that means,' he said, 'is that they are undocumented aliens . . . They're paying taxes. It is in everybody's interest to have them pay the taxes they owe.'

'' 'As long as the information is being used only to fraudulently obtain jobs,' Koskinen said, 'rather than to claim false tax returns, the agency has an interest in helping them. The question is whether the Social Security number they're using to get the job has been stolen. It's not the normal identity theft situation,' he said.

''The comments came in the broader context of a hearing on cybersecurity in the agency. About 464,000 illegally obtained Social Security numbers were targeted by hackers in a February cyber breach of the agency, while information on 330,000 taxpayers was stolen in an unrelated breach last year.''

Koskinen ''added that the agency wanted to differentiate that 'bad' misuse of personal data from other uses. 'There are questions about whether there's a way we could simply advise people . . . A lot of the time those Social Security numbers are borrowed from friends and acquaintances and they know they've been used, other times they don't.' ''

So, apparently, people at the IRS, like Lois Lerner, don't mind violating the law, don't mind violating their oath, don't mind violating the very instructions for doing their jobs, and don't mind people—apparently, Koskinen doesn't—mind people that have violated the law to come into this country and have violated the law by possessing and using a stolen Social Security number without regard to whether they actually stole it themselves. No problem there as long as they are using it, apparently, to pay taxes.

What he doesn't say is that what these returns normally do—from what I can glean, they are not using fraudulent Social Security numbers to say: IRS, we want to pay more taxes into the U.S. Treasury. So just look the other way while we use a fraudulent or a stolen identity, a stolen Social Security number. Just look the other way because we are going to send you some more money.

Isn't that wonderful? What gratuity. What a wonderful spirit that someone would break our laws to come into this country, then steal somebody's Social Security number, and then be so gracious as to say: Now, I am filing my tax return because I want you to know I want to pay more taxes fraudulently in somebody else's name.

That is normally not why somebody would file a tax return at the end of the year using a stolen Social Security number.

No. Normally, you would file that to get money back from the government. You violated all kinds of laws. So why not violate one more to get a nice check back from the government?

Is it too much of a stretch to think that perhaps, if somebody will violate the laws of the United States to come into the United States, they will refuse to comply—like millions of American immigrants have that, thank God, have wanted to come into America, have made America better, have come in and followed the law—no. These want to come in illegally and use stolen Social Security numbers.

Again, is it too much to think, perhaps, if they are willing to perjure themselves using a stolen Social Security number, willing to file a fraudulent tax return that is not really theirs or the name or number on it is not theirs so that they are guilty of perjury, they are guilty of Internal Revenue fraud—is it too much to think they might just be willing to claim some exemptions and to claim some tax credits that they are not really owed so that they get a big old check back from the Federal Government?

□ 1930

I mean, why not ask for a big tax return, tax refund from your return after you have already violated so many laws of the United States? Yet the man whose oath of office should have had him rooting out stolen Social Security numbers and making sure taxpayers are not defrauding the U.S. Government, that they are not getting refunds back they are not owed, couldn't he go ahead and do that and protect Americans from identity theft? No, apparently not.

So Americans aren't protected. Their information clearly has not been adequately protected with the Internal Revenue Service under Koskinen's control. So Americans are at risk, especially if they are law-abiding and want to keep their information protected, because we have a head of the IRS that thinks it is okay if you are illegally in the country and filing fraudulent tax returns and using stolen identities, it is okay if you are simply trying to file your tax return. But, of course, how many of them really are getting refunds? That is why they are filing the fraudulent return using a stolen Social Security number.

Well, I know, having handled thousands of felony cases in Texas that came through my court and having noticed over the years that juries feel the same way, if you will lie repeatedly or break laws of moral turpitude repeatedly, isn't it just kind of fundamental that you might be willing to lie in order to get some money back? Juries thought so, repeatedly. I thought so in numerous cases.

As we know from the rules of evidence—it should also apply to life, and it should apply to government investigations—that rule is credibility is always an issue. If somebody would use a stolen Social Security number or commit perjury in filing a tax return, provide fraudulent information, they might just be willing to put in a number, too, that is also fraudulent in order to get that big check from the United States taxpayers that actually worked and didn't steal anybody's Social Security number.

Is it any wonder why the American people are so stirred up against what is perceived as an establishment involving both parties in Washington, D.C.,

when we have this kind of contempt for honesty and honor and following the law and for tax returns and tax refunds from a man that is head of the IRS that needs to be impeached and removed from office?

I applaud my friends for making the case they did. They didn't touch on this particular area, but it really brings the gavel down. As litigants often said in front of me as a judge, ''I rest my case.'' Mr. Koskinen needs to go.

Now, in talking about immigrants who have come in illegally, we have an article from CNS News, Terence Jeffrey, this month: ''Obama Claims Power to Make Illegal Immigrants Eligible for Social Security, Disability.'' The article asked the question: ''Does the President of the United States have the power to unilaterally tell millions of individuals who are violating Federal law that he will not enforce that law against them now, that they may continue to violate that law in the future, and that he will take action that makes them eligible for Federal benefit programs for which they are not currently eligible due to their unlawful status?''

I recall sitting right back there on the aisle, my friend JOE WILSON was sitting right over in the middle of this section over here, and the President was standing at this second level here, because that is where non-Members of the House have to stand to address this body if they are invited, as he was. He made statements about how his bill would not provide health insurance or healthcare provisions for people that were illegally here for abortion. My friend JOE WILSON just erupted—such a righteous man, he couldn't contain himself—and yelled out, ''You lie.''

Now, we have House rules—and I know every time I bring this up or talk about this House rule against my friends in the Parliamentarian's office, paying real close attention to make sure I don't violate the rule myself, well, they start listening very carefully. Well, they always listen carefully, but even more carefully.

But in talking hypotheticals, if a President or someone speaking officially in this House to either the House or a joint session makes a statement—and I am talking hypothetically. I am not saying the President did because I know that would violate the rule. But hypothetically, if he made a statement that is a bald-faced lie and somebody points out that it is a lie and it turns out the person that said it is a lie is 100 percent right, it makes you wonder about the propriety of the rule if the rule says somebody is lying and somebody else points it out, and the one that points it out is at fault.

We do get into some tricky issues when it comes to areas of impeachment because it is real hard to make a case for impeachment if you can't talk about somebody that is in a position of authority in the Federal Government having violated the law in order to justify the term of high crimes and misdemeanors. So it gets kind of delicate in here at times trying to figure these things out.

But regardless of whether anybody thinks the President lied or told the truth, I am not getting into that because I don't want to violate the House rule while I am trying to make my point. But here in this room, the President said basically people who are illegally here, they are not going to get the health insurance and not going to pay for abortion.

Well, we know not only is it paying for abortion, but this administration will actually go to court and come after the Little Sisters of the Poor, these precious nuns who committed their lives to helping people less fortunate, basically a vow of poverty. They don't live lavishly. Their lives, like Mother Teresa's, are intended to better other people's lives.

And this administration decides it is not the people that are violating our laws of immigration that they are going to come after, it is not people that steal Social Security numbers to use them to get refunds fraudulently from the American taxpayers, they want to litigate with the Little Sisters of the Poor. They want to litigate with Christians devoted to helping others but who believe with deeply held religious beliefs like so many of our Founders had, like the Founders of Harvard and Yale had when they required students basically to take a pledge of allegiance that the most important aspect of life is living for Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. And you go back and look at those oaths.

But not this administration. To them, it is more important to go after some precious, sacred, caring nuns who say: We will do anything, we will lay down our lives for others, but you can't ask us to take actions that will provide for abortions because we deeply religiously believe that violates our Biblically-based beliefs, so please.

No. This administration will meet them at the Supreme Court and demand these nuns give up their religious convictions, give up what they have dedicated their lives to stand for. Why? Because to them an abortion is more important.

As I am running out of time, I want to also call attention today to something that became very important to me, having visited Nigeria to visit with a couple of dozen or so moms of daughters who were kidnapped by Boko Haram, basically shedding my State Department protection so I could go 2 or 3 hours to meet with them because they wouldn't initially come into the city to do that, having prayed with them and their pastor, wept with them and a few girls that were able to escape.

It was 2 years ago tonight that 276 schoolgirls were kidnapped by radical Islamists not because they were girls on this occasion. They do believe girls are inferior. They can't bring themselves to accept what we here know: we are equal in God's eyes. In some ways, ladies are superior, but not to Boko Haram, not to radical Islamists. They are basically property. The school was not attacked because they were girls. I asked that. No, they can't stand girls. They see them as property, something to be raped and traded into sex slavery. But the reason they attacked the school is because it is a Christian school.

Having talked to leaders there, religious leaders, and learning that our administration not only has done nothing significant to help them get their girls back other than launch a campaign based on #bringbackourgirls, but we haven't given them the information they need to get the girls released. We don't have to send troops, put boots on the ground.

□ 1945

There are things we could do to help them; but according to the information we have gotten, this administration says: Well, if you want our help in getting these precious girls released, you are going to have to start to change your law and allow for gay marriage. Also, you are going to have to start paying for abortions.

As a Catholic bishop in Nigeria said: Our religious beliefs are not for sale to President Obama or to anybody else.

God bless him. God strengthen him.

Our tribute goes to those families. We need to do more to help them. Two years ago today, that horrible thing occurred.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. PAYNE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and April 15 on account of official business.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 483. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

S. 2512. An act to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 46 minutes

p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 15, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5040. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMCS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicaid Program; Deadline for Access Monitoring Review Plan Submissions [CMS-2328-F2] (RIN: 0938-AS89) received April 11, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5041. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting two reports entitled ''U.S. Assistance for Palestinian Security Forces'' and ''Benchmarks for Palestinian Security Assistance Funds'', pursuant to Public Law 113-235; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5042. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the annual report pursuant to Sec. 2(9) of the Senate's Resolution of Advice and Consent to the Treaty with the United Kingdom Concerning Defense Trade Cooperation (Treaty Doc. 110-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5043. A letter from the Special Counsel, U.S. Office of Special Counsel, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5044. A letter from the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the FY 2014 annual report on reasonably identifiable expenditures by Federal and State agencies for the conservation of endangered or threatened species, pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1544; Public Law 93-205, Sec. 18 (as added by Public Law 100-478, Sec. 1012); (102 Stat. 2314); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4785. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–494). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WALBERG:

H.R. 4936. A bill to provide assistance to small businesses; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, Small Business, Education and the Workforce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DENHAM (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 4937. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to reauthorize pipeline safety programs and enhance pipeline safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. PAULSEN, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. CRENSHAW, Ms. FOXX, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. COLE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. KILMER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. HIMES, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. POLIS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. AMODEI, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. LATTA, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. RUSH, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART):

H.R. 4938. A bill to make permanent the Internal Revenue Service Free File program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 4939. A bill to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4940. A bill to direct the Director of National Intelligence to establish an integration cell to monitor and enforce the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. COOK, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ISSA, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 4941. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the eligibility for monthly stipends paid under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program for certain members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARTON (for himself and Mr. LEWIS):

H.R. 4942. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the standard charitable mileage rate for delivery of meals to elderly, disabled, frail and at risk individuals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KIND (for himself and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas):

H.R. 4943. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat Indian tribal governments in the same manner as State governments for certain Federal tax purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4944. A bill to modify the boundary of Voyageurs National Park in the State of Minnesota, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE (for himself and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 4945. A bill to permanently secure the United States as the preeminent spacefaring nation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Intelligence (Permanent Select), Rules, Ways and Means, Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. HARDY):

H.R. 4946. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an increase in the earned income tax credit for individuals with no qualifying children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4947. A bill to establish a program to provide reinsurance for State natural catastrophe insurance programs to help the United States better prepare for and protect its citizens against the ravages of natural catastrophes, to encourage and promote mitigation and prevention for, and recovery and rebuilding from such catastrophes, and to better assist in the financial recovery from such catastrophes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. LEWIS (for himself and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H.R. 4948. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that a deduction equal to fair market value shall be allowed for charitable contributions of literary, musical, artistic, or scholarly compositions created by the donor; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4949. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exclusion from gross income for AmeriCorps educational awards; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself and Mr. PITTENGER):

H.R. 4950. A bill to establish advisory committees within the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4951. A bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to allow the importation of certain foreign-manufactured firearms components; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4952. A bill to impose a deadline by which a person whose Federal firearms license has expired, or is surrendered, or revoked, must liquidate the firearms inventory of any business subject to the license, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4953. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to limit the length of administrative leave for Federal employees to 30 days, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.J. Res. 86. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to provide for balanced budgets for the Government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (for herself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. GRANGER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. VELA, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. HONDA):

H. Res. 680. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California:

H. Res. 681. A resolution honoring women who have served, and who are currently serving, as members of the Armed Forces and recognizing the recently expanded service opportunities available to female members of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself and Mr. SHERMAN):

H. Res. 682. A resolution urging the Department of State to provide necessary equipment and training to the men and women of the Kurdish Peshmerga in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H. Res. 683. A resolution supporting and protecting the right of women working in developing countries to safe workplaces, free from gender-based violence, reprisals, and intimidation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WALBERG:

H.R. 4936.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States; the power to regulate commerce among the several states and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4937.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4938.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, which states ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes,'' and Article I, Section 7, which states ''All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.''

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 4939.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4940.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4941.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article IV, section 3 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 2 (empowering Congress to make rules and regulations respecting property belonging to the people of the United States), Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress). Furthermore, this bill amends the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331), which Congress previously enacted pursuant to similar authority.

By Mr. BARTON:

H.R. 4942.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

Section 1: ALL Legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate & House of Representatives.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 4943.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1

''All Bills for raising Revenue shall orginate in the House of Representatives''

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4944.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution provides that Congress shall have the Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE:

H.R. 4945.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: ''The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the common Defence.''

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4946.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I and the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4947.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4948.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 4949.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 4950.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to regulate commerce; as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4951.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4952.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4953.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.J. Res. 86.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 247: Ms. ADAMS.

H.R. 257: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 292: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 329: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 379: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 430: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 449: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 532: Mr. LARSEN of Washington and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 556: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 663: Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 664: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 670: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 711: Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 748: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 775: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 800: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 842: Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 940: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 953: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.
H.R. 969: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 996: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1061: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1111: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 1149: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1151: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 1174: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 1206: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 1218: Mr. TAKAI, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 1247: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 1256: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 1258: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 1288: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1301: Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 1336: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1439: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1459: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1486: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 1492: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 1538: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1586: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 1594: Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 1603: Mr. MEEHAN and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 1706: Mr. WELCH, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 1728: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 1733: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 1769: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 1775: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1779: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 1859: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 1933: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1943: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2114: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 2132: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2205: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 2221: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 2304: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2342: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 2434: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2449: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 2493: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 2519: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 2536: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2658: Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. GIBSON, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. REED, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 2694: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. BEATTY, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 2698: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 2711: Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 2726: Mr. TONKO, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 2775: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2799: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2817: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 2848: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 2850: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 2896: Mr. FORBES and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 2903: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. SALMON, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 2911: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 2939: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2948: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3007: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 3026: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 3099: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3119: Mr. RUSH and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3142: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3222: Mr. SALMON, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. ABRAHAM.
H.R. 3280: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 3308: Ms. MATSUI, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3326: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3384: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 3406: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 3441: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 3463: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 3539: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 3576: Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 3656: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3666: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 3688: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 3706: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 3722: Mr. ZELDIN.
H.R. 3808: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 3851: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 3862: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3870: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 3886: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 3892: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 3949: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 3989: Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. WALZ, Mr. CARTER of Texas, and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 4055: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 4158: Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 4160: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 4177: Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4184: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4194: Ms. NORTON, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. KEATING, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4223: Ms. NORTON and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 4247: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4296: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 4320: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 4399: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 4442: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROKITA, and Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 4447: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 4454: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 4479: Mr. WELCH and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 4480: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 4490: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4498: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 4499: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 4511: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 4515: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 4519: Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 4523: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4534: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4553: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4554: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 4592: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4603: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4611: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 4613: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4625: Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4626: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 4637: Mr. PALMER.
H.R. 4640: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. STEWART, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4653: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4662: Mr. SCALISE.
H.R. 4668: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 4681: Mr. MURPHY of Florida and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 4693: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4696: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 4710: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4715: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4730: Mr. BARR, Mr. HARDY, Mr. HUELSKAMP, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 4739: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BENISHEK, and Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 4754: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4764: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. RUSSELL.
H.R. 4766: Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 4773: Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. PERRY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. STIVERS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. SALMON, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. UPTON, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4786: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 4791: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 4814: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 4816: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. ROBY, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 4817: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4819: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4848: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 4856: Mr. COOK and Mr. BUCK.
H.R. 4864: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4869: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 4890: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 4898: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 4901: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 4904: Mr. PALMER.
H.R. 4905: Mr. HONDA and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 4907: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4912: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 4924: Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mrs. ROBY, and Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 4926: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. JONES.
H.J. Res. 11: Mrs. BLACK.
H. Con. Res. 13: Mr. CALVERT.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H. Con. Res. 88: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. SALMON.
H. Con. Res. 112: Mr. PALAZZO and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 114: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

H. Con. Res. 122: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. TAKAI.
H. Res. 14: Mr. PERRY.
H. Res. 28: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 110: Mr. SHERMAN.
H. Res. 112: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 192: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H. Res. 290: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 394: Mr. CICILLINE.
H. Res. 487: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H. Res. 617: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H. Res. 642: Mr. AMODEI.
H. Res. 661: Mr. GRAYSON and Ms. TSONGAS.
H. Res. 665: Mr. POSEY, Mr. BRAT, Mr. SANFORD, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. YOHO.
H. Res. 667: Mr. MESSER.
H. Res. 668: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. CULBERSON.
H. Res. 674: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. PITTENGER, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. KATKO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H. Res. 675: Ms. BASS, Mr. BEYER, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KATKO, and Ms. PLASKETT.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CATOR, RUMA & ASSOCIATES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Cator, Ruma & Associates for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

Cator, Ruma & Associates recently added 26 high-paying jobs to its headquarters in Lakewood—making it a perfect recipient of the Business Recognition Award which is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year.

Since 1959, Cator, Ruma & Associates has been providing consulting engineering services for institutional, commercial, industrial and medical facilities throughout Colorado and the Western Region. Currently, it has more than 90 employees and three offices in the Western Region. Recent projects include the redevelopment of Denver Union Station, the Kaiser Permanente facility in Westminster, and the Employee Pub at MillerCoors in Golden.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Cator, Ruma & Associates for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—CHANDLER GARRISON

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Chandler Garrison from Pearland, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Chandler attends Glenda Dawson High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Chandler was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Chandler and all of his hard work, and know he will make Pearland proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Chandler for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING THE THOMPSON-CLEMONS POST NUMBER 200

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi.

The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi was the first African American Post established in the State of Mississippi and came about due to the perseverance of eighteen determined Black Veterans of World War I and World War II in the Mississippi Delta.

These veterans attempted to join Keeler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post Number 29 which refused them membership. Given that this was the 1940s and Mississippi being a segregationist state, Post Number 29 could not get a majority vote of its members to allow black veterans to join their post.

The eighteen black veterans filed a petition to start a new post and presented it to the Mississippi Department of the American Legion. Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson, a black veteran, postal worker and co-worker of Mr. Author H. Ritchter, the Adjutant of post Number 29, worked to get the petition through the District. It was due to their vigorous and persistent correspondence to the District and the Mississippi Department of the American Legion that they were allowed to form a separate post if they could find a sponsor.

Keesler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post Number 29 agreed to serve as a sponsor to assist Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 in getting the temporary charter, paving the way for other charters to be granted to other black veteran's groups throughout the state of Mississippi.

Originally, the post was called the Mississippi Delta Post Number 200. Mr. L.H. Threadgill, principal of Stone Street High School, a veteran of World War II, proposed that the post be named after two former students of Stone Street High School, that were killed in action during WWII. The motion carried and the name was adopted. Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 was granted a permanent charter on July 28, 1949, becoming the first Black post in the State of Mississippi. The first Post Commander was Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson.

Mr. L.H. Threadgill and others in the community were instrumental in purchasing the property, obtaining a deed, and getting a building to establish a post headquarters where it is still located today.

The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi has a distinct track record of encouragement to veterans with issues, be they be from serving abroad; in combat situations or statewide service. Issues range from transportation to Regional Office and VA Hospital for medical disability claims, educational and skill training, housing and other activities including establishing collaborative partnerships with community organizations to provide emergency services such as utilities, homes for the homeless, counseling and assistance in understanding the myriad of services provided by the VA.

The VA community activities include sponsorship of little league baseball teams, voter education classes, veterans day celebration, adopt a school program, donations to needy families, Boys State Program and the National American Legion Oratorical Contest, where candidates sponsored by Post Number 200, have won the Mississippi State Championship four times, and three out of the past four years.

Leadership activities include a weekly live call in radio talk program aired on WGNL 104.3 FM in Greenwood, Mississippi where veterans can actually dial up and talk about issues that affect them and their community. Partnering with organizations such as the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Greenwood Voters League, Mississippi Valley State University and other community based groups that advocate for social justice.

Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 is well integrated into the fabric and culture of the Mississippi Delta and should be recognized as a Post that has the interest of our service men, their families and community at heart.

The American Legion Post Number 200 is moving forward to continue the legacy of those early veterans who honorably served their country and had the vision that through the American Legion and its core principles, they could continue to protect and build an America and Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a remarkable organization, The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200, for its dedication to serving our veterans and giving back to the African American community.

TRIBUTE TO BETH JONES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Beth Jones for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Public Benefit Manager for Delta Dental of Iowa, Beth works each and every day to make them one of the leaders in oral health in the state. She is dedicated to improving the overall image of the company through hard work and education. Beth has been passionate about serving Iowans through the Iowa Public Health Association by raising awareness that a commitment to public health can provide major benefits to communities and lead them in a positive direction. She is also dedicated to serving others through the development of the Lifelong Smiles Coalition, an organization focused on increased access to oral health care for older adults.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Beth in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Beth on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING MS. DIXIE TREBBE

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ms. Dixie Trebbe, a tireless volunteer, a fierce leader, and a passionate advocate. She has always been involved in the political process and encouraged others to participate and exercise their fundamental right to vote. Dixie is also on the American Association of University Women's National Public Policy Committee, the New Mexico NOW State Board, and the New Mexico Capital City Task Force for the AARP, and she is active with the American Legion Auxiliary and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

New Mexico's legislators know Dixie as a passionate champion of issues that face our community, and new volunteers know her as a role model. As an octogenarian, Dixie sets an example for all generations, showing us what real service is and what commitment to justice can accomplish.

Dixie will be leaving New Mexico to live with her children in Iowa, and while we are sorry to see her go, New Mexico's loss will surely be Iowa's gain. Dixie, thank you for your service.

RECOGNIZING MR. ART PING LEE FOR HIS LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR THE ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 102ND BIRTHDAY

HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize the lifetime work and achievements of Mr. Art Ping Lee who has worked tirelessly to advocate on behalf of the overseas Chinese community.

Born in Taishan County, Guangdong Province of the Republic of China, Lee immigrated to the United States in 1936 and began his advocacy work soon thereafter.

Mr. Lee is one of the Founders of the Chinese Youth Club which has served the Asian community of the Greater Washington DC area since 1939. The CYC program helps young people celebrate their cultural identity and serve the community.

Additionally, Lee was one of the founders of the National Chinese Welfare Council (NCWC) in 1957. The NCWC spearheaded successful advocacy efforts which included lifting the limitations on Chinese immigrant quotas and establishing permanent residency status and other social benefits for Chinese immigrants to the United States.

Mr. Lee, who turns 102 this year, continues to contribute to his community where he serves as an Honorary Elder of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) of Washington, DC, a Senior Advisor to the Overseas Community Affairs Council of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and an Honorary Elder to The Lee Family Association in the United States.

Mr. Art Ping Lee has led an incredible career of service and is widely respected for his work to better the lives of Chinese-Americans. He is the recipient of the Hua Kuang Medal, First Class from the government of Republic of China (Taiwan) which is the top honor for Chinese who have made special contributions in overseas Chinese affairs.

I would like to honor Mr. Art Ping Lee today and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAKE-SUMTER STATE COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the Lake-Sumter State College (LSSC) Foundation, Inc. as they celebrate their 35th anniversary on April 16, 2016.

Founded in 1980, the Lake-Sumter State College Foundation supports Lake-Sumter State College's mission of developing community through education. Since its founding, the LSSC Foundation brings together individuals, businesses, and organizations to support the Lake-Sumter State College through the funding of projects that enhance the quality of teaching and learning. These projects include classroom and athletic equipment, the library, the nursing program, the computer lab, and support for students and faculty.

The LSSC Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of leaders in our community who are dedicated to equipping students with the essential tools for fulfilling careers and empowering them to be leaders within their community. In the spirit of providing educational opportunities for our community's students, the LSSC Foundation, Inc. awards more than $500,000 in scholarships each year to help students invest in their futures. The LSSC Foundation has had a paramount impact on the lives of students, and many have benefited from its generous contributions. In the past 12 years, the LSSC Foundation has grown from $3 million in assets to more than $16 million in assets, bolstering the education and passions of future generations.

I am thankful for the Lake-Sumter State College Foundation and their tremendous contributions to our community. The future of our nation is in the hands of our young people, and the Lake-Sumter State College Foundation's investment in them cannot be over appreciated.

COMMEMORATING GEORGE WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 143, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS, ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate George Washington Lodge No. 143, Free and Accepted Masons, of Chambersburg, PA, on its 200th anniversary.

Similar to the Borough of Chambersburg, the George Washington Masonic Lodge No.143 has a history dating back nearly to our country's founding. Having been resurrected by a group of committed Masons who sent a petition to Grand Lodge for a warrant to institute George Washington Lodge No. 143, the lodge has maintained this historic presence

since 1816. A point of local pride, the lodge remains the oldest Masonic building in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Also, as many of us know, it was its association with the Free and Accepted Masons that prevented the lodge from being destroyed during the burning of Chambersburg in 1864. Having withstood that assault and standing the test of time, George Washington Lodge No. 143 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Prior to that achievement, a small addition was added to the rear of the building at the time of its 150th anniversary, in 1966.

In more ways than one, George Washington Lodge No. 143 represents the story of our country and I am proud to commemorate the 200th year of its institution.

IN RECOGNITION OF ZINGERMAN'S COMMUNITY OF BUSINESS

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Zingerman's Community of Businesses on receiving the Ann Arbor Jewish Family Services Bernstein Award. Zingerman's is an Ann Arbor institution which has become known around the world. It is an honor and privilege to recognize this renowned, successful and socially conscious business and to share with my colleagues not only the great work they have done for the Washtenaw County community and their thousands of visitors from across the country every year, but to highlight their leadership as well.

The Jewish Family Services Bernstein Award is given out each year to individuals or businesses who display exceptional local leadership in the Washtenaw County community. Zingerman's Community of Businesses are part of the fabric of the Ann Arbor area and have grown into a recognizable international name. Since its creation in 1982 by Paul Saginaw and Ari Weinzweig, Zingerman's has delivered quality food products to the people of Ann Arbor and to their thousands of patrons every year from around the world. Not only have they delivered delicious, quality products through their deli, creamery, coffee company, bakehouse, and candy factory, but they have stayed true to sourcing fresh and local ingredients. Zingerman's operates Cornman farms to produce pesticide free vegetables and free range livestock for all of their restaurants.

Not enough to provide great baked goods to their customers, they built a teaching kitchen to help instruct home bakers of all skill levels from those who have never broken an egg to the most accomplished who want to learn more. Most unique about Zingerman's is its approach to employees and the business. Since their beginning, they have always paid wages above the federal minimum wage and offered company-subsidized health care and paid time off. They care about their employees and communities. They have taken their unique culture and are teaching the ''Zingerman's experience'' to forward thinking organizations around the world, helping clients make meaningful bottom line enhancing changes in their own organizations.

Some have observed that Zingerman's is better known outside of Ann Arbor than in its community. For those that live in Washtenaw County, Zingerman's is an iconic location to buy fresh food and produce or get a great meal, but they are also known for being heavily involved in the community. To this day, there are people in Washtenaw County that struggle to afford food and many go hungry. The Zingerman's family has been dedicated to fighting hunger since 1988.

They have helped to create the Food Gatherers nonprofit food rescue program and food bank and annually the Zingerman's Community of Businesses contributes as a major corporate contributor. They also teach seminars on how to manage and develop a business so that young entrepreneurs across the country can learn from their success. This type of engagement has set a powerful example to other businesses in our area, showing that you can be successful and do the right thing, every day. Zingerman's goal in 2020 is to leave the world better than it was when they came here.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to recognize Zingerman's Community of Businesses and owners Paul Saginaw and Ari Weinzweig on receiving the Jewish Family Services Bernstein Award, for their enormous contributions to our region, and for continued success in all of their ventures.

HONORING THE CAREER OF JUDGE MARCUS D. GORDON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, Marcus D. Gordon was born on October 22, 1931, in Union, Mississippi. In 1950, he graduated from Union High School and attended East Central Community College on a football and basketball scholarship. In January 1951, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served in the Korean War. After four years of service, he returned to Mississippi and re-enrolled in East Central Community College. While attending East Central Community College, Judge Gordon continued to play on the football and basketball teams and received All-State honors.

Judge Gordon then attended the University of Mississippi and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and his law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. He was admitted to the Mississippi bar, and returned home to open a private law practice with his brother, Rex Gordon, Sr. In 1971, he was elected to be the District Attorney for the Eighth Circuit Court Judicial District. He was later appointed by Governor Cliff Finch as Circuit Court Judge for the Eighth Circuit Court Judicial District. Judge Gordon served as Circuit Court Judge until 1987.

After briefly returning to a private law firm, he was elected in 1990 to serve again as Circuit Court Judge. He served in that position until March 4, 2016, having served as a Circuit Court Judge for 38 years. During his tenure, Judge Gordon maintained a distinguished record of judicial integrity, character, service, and excellence. He was known for his fairness and high ethical standards, but also for his quick wit and astuteness when the occasion warranted a lighter moment.

Most importantly, Judge Gordon is a proud husband, father, and grandfather. He has been married to his wife, Mrs. Polly Gordon, for 60 years and together they have four children and two grandchildren. I would like to thank Judge Gordon for his dedicated service to our state and his contributions to improving the judicial system.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF MRS. ANGELINE A. ''ANGIE'' KOPKA

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of one of my most distinguished and active constituents, Mrs. Angeline A. ''Angie'' Kopka, on her 100th birthday; she is a beloved member of the Nashua community that I am proud to represent in Congress. We commemorate Angie's birthday inspiration as she is a true example of what has made the Granite State such a strong and vibrant place.

Angie is a former member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives, serving her state from 2002 until 2010. In 2012, she won re-election and returned to the State House as the oldest lawmaker in the United States, a true indicator of her dedication to public service. In addition, Angie is the founder of Kopka Real Estate, based in Nashua, New Hampshire. As a real estate agent, she served as the president of the National Women's Council of Realtors and the New Hampshire Association of Realtors. In 1991, she won the National Association of Realtors Distinguished Service Award. Angie not only had a successful career, but has enjoyed a rich personal life. She was married to her lifelong partner, John Kopka, Jr. Together, they raised two children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the 100th birthday of one of New Hampshire's most engaged citizens, Mrs. Angeline A. ''Angie'' Kopka. I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating this proud milestone in her remarkable life.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on April 13, 2016, I was unavoidably detained and missed four votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on Roll Call No. 141, ''no'' on Roll Call No. 142, ''no'' on Roll Call No. 143, and ''no'' on Roll Call No. 144.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on April 12, 2016 and missed the following votes. Had I been present I would have voted:

On Roll Call Vote 139, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 1567, the Global Food Security Act of 2016, I would have voted Yes.

On Roll Call Vote 140, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 4676, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2016, I would have voted Yes.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON'S CAMERON BURRELL SETS NCAA RECORD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cameron Burrell of Houston, Texas for setting the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) record for the 60-meter dash.

Cameron is a graduate of Ridge Point High School in Missouri City, Texas who brought his talent as a sprinter to the Cougars at the University of Houston. As a junior, Burrell ran the 60-meter dash in 6.50 seconds, setting the second fastest time in the world for 2016. In addition to this, he also qualified for the NCAA Indoor Championships. The 60-meter dash was held at Birmingham CrossPlex in Birmingham, Alabama. Cameron broke not only the University of Houston's school record, but also beat LSU Alumnus Richard Thompson's 2008 record of 6.51 seconds. We are so proud of Cameron and can't wait to see where his talent takes him.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Cameron Burrell for setting the NCAA record for the 60-meter dash. Keep up the hard work.

HONORING THE LATE RANDY NAYLOR, SR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a philanthropist, the late Randy Naylor, Sr. Mr. Naylor has shown what can be done through hard work, setting goals, and aiming high.

Randy Naylor, Sr. was born June 23, 1953, in Vicksburg, MS to George Washington and Lillian B. Naylor. He was a humble and caring man who was always in good spirit.

Randy, was a graduate of Rosa A. Temple High School Class of 1973, where he served as a Drum Major. He also attended Hinds Community College where he studied Criminal Justice.

Randy was employed with Vicksburg Warren School System as a bus driver and ISD teacher. He also worked nights at the Merchant Company as well as a security guard for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He joined the Vicksburg Police Department in 1988. Randy was the recipient of the ''Officer of the Year'' award on numerous occasions. He had extensive training in all aspects of law enforcement, criminal and juvenile investigation. In 2008, Randy was elected Constable for Warren County where he served until his death. Naylor was also a Notary Public for the state of Mississippi.

Randy volunteered his time to the Salvation Army, Kings Head Start, which he later adopted and provided clothes and books to the kids at the center. He also volunteered at the River City Rescue Mission. Randy spoke to various youth groups at churches throughout the city.

Randy also worked diligently with the city summer program, ''Street Ball'' which is now called the Randy Naylor Summer Youth Program. He secured various partnerships throughout the city for supplies for the program. Mr. Naylor's work as a Resource officer in the Vicksburg/Warren School District allowed him to develop good relationships with the youth that made his impact on the ''Street Ball'' program extremely important in the realm of community policing. Students and young people would listen to him when no other officer could get them to cooperate. Parents trusted him with their kids and criminals knew better than to cross him, all because of the relationships he built through his work in the community.

As a member of Calvary Baptist Church he served as an Usher and the president of the Layman's Ministry. He was married to Dorothy Naylor for 40 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the late Mr. Randy Naylor, Sr. for his dedication to serving our great city in the Vicksburg/Warren community.

FIRSTBANK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud FirstBank for receiving the Pioneer Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Pioneer Award is given annually to a Jefferson County company that demonstrates an ability to keep up with today's rapidly changing global economy and makes significant contributions to Jefferson County's economy.

As one of Lakewood's largest employers, FirstBank is a consumer and commercial lender that has over 115 locations in Colorado, Arizona and California and over $14 billion in assets. The company is currently adding an additional 127,000 square feet to their headquarters on West Colfax. Upon completion in 2016, the location will house 900 employees with room to expand to 1,300 employees in the coming years. The expansion will enable the company to hire about 70 additional employees over the next year.

I extend my deepest congratulations to FirstBank for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

TRIBUTE TO BROOKE MILLER AXIOTIS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brooke Miller Axiotis for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As a Civil Rights Specialist and housing investigator on the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Brooke is heavily involved in her community. She is dedicated to serving others and does so through public service. She currently serves her community on the Iowa State Board of Education, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the Junior League of Des Moines Board, as well as the Urban Ag Academy Board. She is committed to staying engaged in her community and that is a true testament to her character and Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Brooke in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Brooke on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING PAMELA STUART ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT FROM TEACHING

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Pamela Stuart, who

is retiring this year after a distinguished career as a public school teacher in Mississippi. As the Representative of the Second District of the State of Mississippi, I have the honor and privilege of getting to know some exceptional community leaders. Pamela Stuart, who originally hails from Philadelphia, Mississippi, is one of them. Pam came of age during the Civil Rights movement in Mississippi and her life was shaped by these events. Like my own calling early in my career, Pam's calling was teaching and her passion was sharing what we could learn from the past to improve the future. As a high school U.S. history teacher, Pam shaped young minds throughout her dedicated career.

I was honored to visit Pam's class at Clinton High School in 2008 and was impressed by her students' engagement in civics and in understanding how our shared history shapes our society and our vision for creating a continuously stronger and better condition for all Americans. Pam's students rank her among their most influential teachers and a lasting mentor whose contributions and commitment impacted their scholarship, their careers, and their lives as involved members of their communities.

Many of her students have gone on to become leaders in their fields in their own right. A true testament to my confidence in the products of her teaching, I hired one of her students who served on my Committee staff for more than eight years.

This month, Pamela Stuart retires from a storied career as an exceptional school teacher. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Pam for her invaluable service to her community, the state of Mississippi, and our nation. Her contributions have clearly made an enduring impact on the countless lives and minds she has helped shape.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $19,234,006,195,713.79. We've added $8,607,129,146,800.71 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING DR. HENRY C. LEE ON THE CELEBRATION OF HIS 40TH ANNIVERSARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the University of New Haven as they celebrate and pay tribute to one of our nation's great minds, Dr. Henry C. Lee. Known as the ''grandfather of forensic science,'' Dr. Lee has left an indelible mark on the field of forensic science, the University of New Haven, and our nation.

A nationally and internationally acknowledged visionary, Dr. Lee has built a distinguished reputation while creating one of the most respected forensic science programs in the country. Under his leadership, forensic studies have grown exponentially over the last forty years at the University of New Haven. What began as a small classroom equipped with only a single fingerprinting kit has blossomed into an internationally-recognized, multi-disciplined academic department with state-of-the-art technology—an Institute of Forensic Science named in his honor. Attracting students from across the globe, the Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science is training the next generation of forensic scientists and constantly advancing the field as well as the technologies and techniques used in identifying crucial evidence.

Dr. Lee's extraordinary career extends far beyond the forensic program he built at the University of New Haven. He earned his undergraduate degree in police science from Central Police College in Taiwan, a Bachelor's of Science degree in forensic science from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and then his master's degree and doctoral degree in biochemistry from New York University. He joined the Connecticut State police more than three decades ago serving as the State's first criminologist. The driving force behind the creation of the Connecticut State Police Major Crime Squad and Forensic Science Laboratory, he oversaw its expansion into one of the finest in the country. Dr. Lee also served as the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Safety from 1998 to 2000, during which time he brought the department to the forefront of technology with the development of a new radio system and the Sex Offender Registry Database.

Dr. Lee has served as a forensic expert in all fifty states as well as forty-two countries and consulted with more than 600 law enforcement agencies around the world. Here in the United States he is probably best-known for his assistance with the investigations into the high-profile cases of the deaths of JonBenet Ramsey, Nicole Brown-Simpson, and Ron Goldman, as well as the review of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. However, those are only a sample of the more than 8,000 criminal cases he has helped investigate.

Dr. Lee has authored or co-authored forty books and hundreds of articles in professional journals; taught at more than a dozen universities, law schools and medical schools; and lectured throughout the world. His innovation and leadership has been recognized with more than 20 honorary degrees, and, in 1996, he was awarded the Medal of Justice from the Justice Foundation. Today, as he marks his 40th Anniversary with the University of New Haven I am proud to join his colleagues, family, and friends, in extending my sincere congratulations to Dr. Henry C. Lee and my sincere thanks and appreciation for his innumerable contributions to higher education and the field of forensic science.

APPRECIATING SOLICITOR DONNIE MYERS

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the recent retirement announcement by 11th Judicial Circuit Solicitor Donnie Myers began an outpouring of appreciation for his dedicated service. South Carolina maintains the terminology of its English heritage by citing the position of district attorney as solicitor.

In addition to effectively protecting families from predators, he was especially prudent in recruiting young attorneys who excelled at serving the public.

He was recognized in an abbreviated editorial on March 24, 2016, in the Lexington County Chronicle and the The Dispatch-News entitled ''The end of a 40-year career in court'' by Editor Jerry Bellune:

Donald V. Myers, the nemesis of death penalty defendants, is ending a 40-year career in 11th Circuit courts.

As capital murder cases go, it has been one of the most dramatic careers in state history.

Facing a state law-mandated retirement age of 72 next year, Myers decided there's no point in seeking re-election with only 11 months left to serve.

That would force taxpayers to bear the cost of an election to fill the rest of his term, he said.

Myers' wife Vance urged him to go to law school and join her father's law practice in Gaffney.

After prosecuting cases for Attorney General Dan McLeod, an opportunity presented itself when 11th Circuit Solicitor Phil Wingard unexpectedly died.

Myers ran to serve the rest of Wingard's term and has not faced a challenger since.

Myers's life and career have been far from smooth. He and his wife had one child, Chris, although they had been told she could not bear children.

Chris had a rare health condition but that did not slow him.

He and his father were inseparable. Chris went along with his father to courtrooms around the four-county circuit.

On Valentine's Day in 2003, Chris's condition proved fatal.

It was a tragedy for their family. Friends overflowed the old Lexington County Courthouse for a memorial service.

Tragedy struck again three years later. His wife Vance, who had a law degree and was her husband's consultant on capital cases, died unexpectedly.

Myers was shattered by the loss of his son and wife in such a short period of time . . .

Myers said he looks forward to retirement, fishing and a few writing projects he has in mind.

We appreciate all he did to help victims of violent crimes.

Prominent attorneys have also joined praising his service with a letter to the editor on March 31, 2016, by Pat McWhirter entitled ''Prosecutor Donnie Myers remains one of the best,'' which reads:

I was the public defender in Lexington County for 14 years. I began shortly after Donnie Myers became solicitor, and he and I sort of grew up together in those roles.

He is an excellent solicitor, honest, forthcoming and reasonable, but tough.

He also is one of the best trial lawyers I have ever seen in a courtroom. He is, and I feel certain will remain, a legend among solicitors in this state.

He has done an outstanding job for the 11th Judicial Circuit, and we will miss him.

When we see him, we should thank him for his work. He will be hard to replace.

COMPETITIVE CARRIERS ASSOCIATION AND HANDS ON NASHVILLE DAY OF SERVICE

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a wonderful event that took place Tuesday afternoon in Nashville, Tennessee. Members of the Competitive Carriers Association (CCA), representing rural and competitive wireless carriers and their vendors and suppliers, opened CCA's Mobile Carriers Show. They did this by teaming with Hands On Nashville for a day of service at Napier Elementary School.

Seventy-five volunteers from all over the country were welcomed by Principal Watechia Lawless to help create beautiful spaces outside of the school to complement the loving community on the inside. Napier Elementary is a cornerstone in their community, serving 400 students from pre-kindergarten through the 4th grade. CCA members worked inside and outside, landscaping, renovating playground equipment, painting murals, and creating teaching resource kits, hygiene kits, and reading booklets for every child in the school.

I commend Steve Berry, CCA and their members for their work. They have set an excellent example of leadership through service. The impact they've made in this community will certainly not be forgotten and I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the efforts they put forth to make this event happen.

HONORING SUNFLOWER COUNTY FREEDOM PROJECT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable organization, Sunflower County Freedom Project.

Founded in 1998, the Sunflower County Freedom Project was started by three Teach for America teachers who saw a need for an educational program in the Mississippi Delta that would challenge and engage young people in the area. Initially, the organization was a summer program at Mississippi Delta Community College that grew into a year-round program at the University of Mississippi. In 2002, the organization purchased the LEAD Center in Sunflower, which houses all of their programs. They target students in Sunflower County to complete a six-year fellowship with the organization beginning with the summer before they begin seventh grade. The overall goal is to have 100 percent of their ''fellows'', also known as students, go on to enroll in four year colleges and universities. To this date they have met that goal.

The Freedom Project is for students in 7th–12th grade who want to discipline themselves into becoming leaders in their homes, schools and communities. The middle school students partake in Freedom Summer, which is named for and rooted in the Civil Rights history of Freedom Summer '64. The high school students can participate in ACT Camp or summer opportunities around the country including Phillips Exeter Summer Academy and Explo at Yale University.

We seek to provide students with opportunities and challenges that will allow them to grow and mature into leaders for the Mississippi Delta. Our multi-faceted approach includes rigorous academic work, arts enrichment, fitness and wellness training, educational travel and character development for every student. We travel the country, live in college dorm rooms, and camp in the wilderness to develop our students and enrich their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sunflower County Freedom Project for its dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

PREMIUM PANELS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Premium Panel for receiving a Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year. Premium Panels is a family-owned and operated metal roofing manufacturer and custom sheet metal fabricator in Arvada. The company specializes in concealed fastener standing seam metal roofing panels, wall panels and also provides aggregate panels.

In 2015, Premium Panels expanded to a 30,000 square foot facility in Arvada and has more than doubled the size of its manufacturing facility space and employment.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Premium Panels for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—MICHAEL SPORKIN

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Michael Sporkin from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Michael attends Cinco Ranch High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Michael was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Michael and all of his hard work, and know he will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Michael for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

TRIBUTE TO DYLAN LAMPE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dylan Lampe for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Manager of Administration Training and Quality Control at the Sammons Financial group, Dylan is responsible for improving the practices and training of his division. He is dedicated to providing a work environment where his co-workers can be happy and enjoy

coming to work every day. Dylan is also passionate about giving back to his community and serves on a number of boards and committees including: Winefest Des Moines, Des Moines Community Playhouse, Downtown Neighborhood Association, and Food Bank of Iowa, to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Dylan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Dylan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

BORINQUENEERS CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARD

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the privilege of participating in the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in honor of the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers. I want to once again express my most heartfelt congratulations to the Regiment on this important and long overdue recognition.

This all-volunteer Puerto Rican unit, of more than 100,000 soldiers, served in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. The Borinqueneers have been recognized with one Medal of Honor, 10 Distinguished Service Crosses, more than 250 Silver Stars, over 600 Bronze Stars, and nearly 3,000 Purple Hearts. Yesterday, they receive the highest award Congress can bestow.

Hundreds of these veterans and their families have made my district in Central Florida their home. I am honored to have been a cosponsor of the legislation that finally awarded them the Congressional Gold Medal. I am also proud to have urged the President to expedite the striking of their Medal, and in accordance with Public Law No. 113–120, a single gold medal was struck to honor the 65th Infantry Regiment.

This medal honors the lives of soldiers like Richard Acosta, a resident of my district. Originally from Arroyo, Puerto Rico, Mr. Acosta bravely fought on the front lines during the Battle of Outpost Kelly in Korea. He recounts how he almost lost his life when his rifle jammed in the middle of the battle and when he went to go inform his Lieutenant, he felt the whizzing sound of bullets that narrowly passed within inches of his head. Immediately taking cover, Mr. Acosta continued to battle without a rifle until he was able to reach his Lieutenant to get a new one.

Similarly, the Freytes-Ménendez Brothers, Celio, Erasto, and Aníbal, were among the first U.S. troops to engage the enemy when they landed in Korea. Dennis Freytes, son of Celio Freytes-Ménendez and an advocate for veterans in my district, recounts how his father, who served in World War II and Korea, survived a mortar shot that landed in a foxhole he had just left, which sadly killed four of his fellow Borinqueneers. For his heroism, Freytes-Ménendez was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Bronze Star for Valor.

I've heard countless stories of many brave Borinqueneers who did not come back home. Rafael Sanchez Saliva, whose family lives in my district, served in the 65th Infantry Regiment in Puerto Rico and later in the U.S. Army Ranger Regiment. He served two tours in Korea and was tragically killed in action by a tank mine while serving in Vietnam.

Puerto Ricans have fought for the United States as far back as the American Revolution, and continue to do so honorably to this day. Thousands have given their lives defending our values of freedom, justice, and equality, despite enduring decades of segregation and second-class treatment.

It was a privilege to have joined the Borinqueneers on a day of recognition and remembrance as our nation honored their pioneering military service, devotion to duty, and many acts of valor in the face of adversity.

HONORING LAW ENFORCEMENT

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to law enforcement men and women who have provided distinctive service to the people of Florida's 16th Congressional District.

Law enforcement is a demanding profession that requires sacrifice, courage and a dedication to serve others. Every day, brave men and women put themselves in harm's way to enforce the laws of our society and protect public safety. They deserve our gratitude and respect.

Five years ago, I established the 16th District Congressional Law Enforcement Awards, CLEA, to give special recognition to law enforcement officers, departments, or units for exceptional achievement.

This year, I will present congressional law enforcement awards to the following winners chosen by an independent panel comprised of current and retired law enforcement personnel representing a cross-section of the district's law enforcement community.

Deputy Billie Wilson of the Manatee County Sheriff's Office and Officer Kenneth Simunovic of the Bradenton Police Department will receive the Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award.

Officer Tim Matthews of the Palmetto Police Department, Officer Michael Walker of the Holmes Beach Police Department, Sergeant Demetri Konstantopoulos of the Sarasota Police Department, Sergeant Donald Kennard of the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office and Detective Jason Friday will receive the Dedication and Professionalism Award.

Lieutenant Johnny Yong of the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, Sergeant Matt Kintigh of the North Port Police Department and Trooper Barbara Ehrhart of the Florida Highway Patrol will receive the Career Service Award.

The following Members of the Sarasota Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team: Captain Kevin Stiff, Lieutenant Lori Jaress, Sergeant Michael ''Richie'' Schwieterman, Officers David Dubendorf, Matthew Kimball, Matthew Grochowski, Jonathan Misiewicz along with Case Managers Sherree Brown, Calvin Collins and Joseph Polzak will receive the Unit Citation Award.

Officer John Parisi of the North Port Police Department will receive the Preservation of Life Award.

Leaders of the Harvest House in Sarasota; Pastor Jim Minor and Executive Director Erin Minor will receive the Associate Service Award.

STOPPING RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST NATO ALLIES

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a disturbing trend that deserves increased scrutiny in the wake of Russia's growing aggression on its southern and western borders. Recently, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg met with members of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees to discuss how to counter an assertive Russia, a phenomenon he describes as ''a chief threat.''

Recent events have led some to question the relevance of the NATO alliance. Indeed, designations that NATO is obsolete have sparked an international debate about the significance of the 28-member defense alliance—one that has drawn the focus of our nation's top military leaders who have been stalwart in their defense of its importance.

Russia's aggression has also put increased pressure on our NATO ally Turkey. In recent years Turkey has witnessed aggression to its north in Crimea and Ukraine, to the south in Syria, and in Georgia to its east. This has all been part of a larger Russian strategy to put pressure on NATO's perimeter in an attempt to solidify regional control.

Turkey lies in the invaluable strategic location as the gateway between Europe and the Middle East. Now is the time for the United States to show strong support for all of our NATO allies, and especially Turkey. Vladimir Putin understands only one thing and this is strength. If we don't stand with our allies now and show strength, then Putin will continue to display regional aggression and ultimately may threaten one of our NATO allies. We must stand with our allies now, more than ever, to ensure that security in the region is maintained and U.S. interests are secured.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF TYRONE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the Tyrone Chamber of Commerce of Tyrone, Pennsylvania. The Chamber, which was started as the Tyrone Business Men's Association, today boasts 207 members and continues to grow.

Since its founding, the Tyrone Chamber has been instrumental in advancing countless infrastructure projects and backing the World Metric Standardization Act. Other achievements include introducing a higher standard of education in the borough and improving school playground equipment, train facilities, and critical surface transportation infrastructure.

Thanks to the Chamber, Tyrone was able to secure the Reliance of Manufacturing Company in 1933 and the Chicago Rivet and Machine Company in 1948. More recently, the organization has assisted with opening the branch office of the Blair County Motor Club (A.A.A.), erecting the ''Welcome to Tyrone'' signs at the entrances into Tyrone, and sponsoring the Tyrone Community Improvement Association in its efforts in the Pennsylvania State Chamber of Commerce sponsored Community Development contest. Their motto from 1916 still rings true today, as the Chamber truly does work for a ''Bigger and Better and Busier Tyrone.''

It gives me great pleasure to recognize the 100-year history and the promising future of the Tyrone Chamber of Commerce. I know that in the years ahead, they will continue to serve the community proudly and advance the commercial, industrial, agricultural and civic interests of Tyrone.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN DAVID A. CHASE, AS HE PREPARES TO RETIRE AFTER 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES NAVY AND TO OUR NATION

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the incredible service of Captain David A. Chase, as he prepares to retire after 30 years of Commissioned Service to the United States Navy and for his extraordinary dedication to duty and to the United States of America.

I have worked with Captain Chase personally over the past three years in his capacity as Director of the Navy Appropriations Matters Office (FMBE) in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller), and I would like to share some highlights of his fine career.

Captain Chase graduated from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and received his commission through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program. He also holds Masters Degrees from the Naval War College and National Defense University Eisenhower School. During his illustrious Naval career, he commanded the Mine Countermeasures Ship USS *Avenger* (MCM 1) from 1999–2001, Guided Missile Frigate USS *Vandegrift* (FFG 48) from 2004–2006 and was the Commodore of a squadron of fourteen mine warfare ships, their crews, and a command staff of 85. Highlights of his Command tours include deployments to the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, and Western Pacific, operating with *Kitty Hawk* Strike Group as part of the Japan-based Forward Deployed Naval Forces, and preparing ready and capable mine warfare ships and trained crews to support Seventh and Fifth Fleet operations.

He also served with distinction in a variety of assignments ashore: Flag Aide to Commander Naval Base San Francisco/Commander Logistics Group One; Financial Analyst on the OPNAV staff (Surface Warfare Directorate), where he was responsible for developing shipbuilding budgets; and as a Politico-Military Planner for the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Joint Staff (J5), where he developed and oversaw Theater Security Cooperation activities in Pacific Command area of operations. His efforts helped to build and strengthen America's ties with our Southeast Asian partners and allies at a critical time in our nation's history.

In his current assignment as the Director of Navy Appropriations Matters Office, during a time of significant readiness and manpower challenges, he demonstrated exceptional leadership and foresight, engaging Members of the Appropriations Committee and its staff to provide information essential to resourcing the Navy for its role as the world's dominant sea power. In an increasingly difficult budget environment, Captain Chase provided essential support in shepherding four Navy budgets through the appropriations process. He served our Navy and nation with integrity, insight and dedication. My office, the subcommittee staff, and I have found him to be a pleasure to work with and respect his professionalism.

There is a saying in the United States Navy when a person retires that ''this sailor stood the watch,'' and today, Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in saluting my friend, Captain David A. Chase, for a job well done. He has faithfully stood the watch all these years and now his watch stands relieved. To Dave, his wife Caroline, and his three children Kirsten, Evan, and Sophie, we wish them ''Fair Winds and Following Seas.''

TRIBUTE TO IZAAH JB KNOX

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Izaah JB Knox for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

Izaah serves as the Associate Executive Director at Urban Dreams as well as the Talent Acquisition Program Development Consultant at Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. He has been tirelessly dedicated throughout his career to providing the next generation of young people with opportunities that will allow them to achieve their goals and become successful. He also has served his community through his involvement in a number of boards and commissions as well as volunteering for local organizations. His willingness to serve others is a true testament to his character as well as his Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Izaah in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Izaah on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—JARED HOLLOWAY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jared Holloway from Richmond, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Jared is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Jared was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of

Jared and all of his hard work, and know he will make Richmond proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Jared for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING MRS. FLORINE LEWIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Unsung Hero, Mrs. Florine Lewis.

For some retired educators, retirement means a time to relax and take it easy. Not for longtime Holmes County, Mississippi resident, Mrs. Florine Lewis. She served the Second Congressional District as an outstanding educator for 37 years. Now retired for 15 years, she is still going like the ''Energizer Bunny.''

Mrs. Lewis continues to actively serve her community. She volunteers at the UMC Hospital of Holmes County; is active in the Holmes County Teachers Association, the Mississippi Valley State University Holmes County Alumni Chapter, and in her church, Asia Missionary Baptist Church of Lexington. She annually serves as a Spelling Bee judge for the Community Students Learning Center's Spelling Bee contest in which she has received several awards. ''I am just always willing to serve where I can and when I can,'' she said.

In addition to her busy community service, Mrs. Lewis is also the principal caregiver for her elderly mother, who lives miles away in Greenville, Miss.

The Itta Bena, Mississippi native began her teaching career at Montgomery Elementary School in Mount Bayou, Mississippi and later relocated to Holmes County where she has taught at the former Tchula Attendance Center (TAC) and the Holmes County Vocational Center. She is the widow of the late Robert Earl Lewis, who was also a principal and teacher in Holmes County. The two of them have six children who are adults in various professions such as teaching, librarian, business and engineering. During her own teaching career, Mrs. Lewis was recognized as a STAR teacher.

Former students and community members alike say that whenever they see Mrs. Lewis, she always greeted them as ''Florine Lewis.'' She just keeps on going and going and going . . . doing what she can to help others, never looking for anything in return. She is truly an unsung hero.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Florine Lewis for her dedication in serving the community.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN McKIBBIN

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a beloved resident of Southwest Washington, John McKibbin. John was a respected leader and a dedicated community member whose life made a lasting impact on our region.

Respected for his ability to bring people together, John was a lifelong servant. He began his career as a teacher at Columbia River High School and went on to serve in the Washington State House of Representatives, and then as a Clark County Commissioner. However, John's commitment to his community did not end after leaving public office. As a business leader, he continued to dedicate his time and effort to the community he so proudly represented until the end of his life.

John was a bright light in his hometown of Vancouver. He participated in numerous volunteer projects and civic organizations including Leadership Clark County, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, and the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. John's relentless energy, tireless passion, and genuine positivity spoke to how deeply he cared for his local community.

Today, I want to honor John and the legacy of leadership he leaves behind. His dedication to making life better for the people in our region, and his love for his home will endure and serve as examples to those who strive to make our community a better place to live.

I pray for peace for John's family during this difficult time.

COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Colorado Christian University (CCU) as the Economic Developer of the Year and winner of the Genesis Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Genesis Award and Economic Developer of the Year honors a private individual, elected official, city, company or organization that has contributed to economic vitality of Jefferson County. A private Christian university, CCU has an enrollment of 6,000 students and currently offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate degree programs for traditional and adult students.

Currently, CCU is in the middle of a six-year, $120 million redevelopment to increase the number of students and faculty on campus and contribute to the overall economy of Lakewood. The expansion project will increase the campus from 150,000 sq. ft. to more than 400,000 sq. ft. and will allow for up to 1,800 student enrollments.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Colorado Christian University for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the House floor to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the National Collegiate Honors Council. The NCHC, which is dedicated to achieving excellence in education in diverse subject and curriculum areas, represents over 800 colleges and universities around the country and over 800,000 honors students.

I would also like to honor Lane Community College, in my district, on their membership in the National Collegiate Honors Council. After joining the Council in 2011, the college was able to establish multiple honors classes in various disciplines in order to promote a liberal education approach. Striving to implement an honorary program displays the motivation to up the academic standards of Lane Community College and compete with other institutions. Members of this honor program conduct undergraduate research, which is later shared with the campus community and public in an academic symposium each spring. Several findings from these research studies have been used by both the college and community.

As graduates of this prestigious honor program, students from Lane Community College often receive scholarships and transfer to various institutions in order to complete their degree at a higher level of competency. These same students go on to become the future leaders of America.

Congratulations to the National Collegiate Honors Council on its 50th anniversary and to Lane Community College on their continued success in providing exceptional education opportunities for their students.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ROBERT (BOB) SIMPSON

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Robert Simpson, an outstanding labor leader who is being honored by the Chicago Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists for a life time of dedicated service and commitment to labor union development and progressive causes. Bob's career began in the City of Chicago as a Montgomery Ward Catalog House employee in 1952. In 1953, he began actively organizing employees at Montgomery Ward, served as Union Steward and became a member of the negotiating committee. His union organizing activities were interrupted by two years of

service in the U.S. Army Signal Corp. and he was sent to Germany.

In 1962, Bob was elected as Trustee of Local 743 and assigned as an organizer; in 1966 he became Director of Organizing for Local 743 and in 1972 he became Recording Secretary for Local 743. In 1972, Bob was elected President of the Chicago Chapter of the CBTU and Corresponding Secretary and Executive Council of the International Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, a title which he currently holds. In 1983, Bob was Co-Chairman of organized labor's support for Harold Washington for Mayor of Chicago, in 1984, he was elected Vice President of Local 743, in 1985 arrested in Washington, D.C., demonstrating against Apartheid in South Africa, in 1988 elected President of Teamster Local 743, the largest local in the International Teamsters representing 23,000 members.

In 1990 Bob became an International Brotherhood of Teamsters Trustee, in 1994 co-leader of the U.S. Labor Leaders Delegation to observe the first historic South African Election Affiliates. He was a National Board Member of Operation Push, Board Member of the Teamsters Black Caucus, Little City Foundation, NAACP, A. Philip Randolph Institute and Coalition of Union Women.

Bob Simpson has never missed a beat; he has served on the transition teams of Secretary of State Jim Ryan and Attorney General Roland Burris, and he was a close confidante of Congressman Charles Hayes and Mayor Harold Washington and introduced President Barack Obama to the National CBTU when he was a State Senator. Since 1952 Bob has been actively involved and engaged in any labor issue, injustice issue or wherever people needed help. He distributes food to needy families, has testified before various legislative and other public bodies, has picketed and been involved with other protest efforts such as Black Friday, Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter. Mr. Robert (Bob) Simpson has been on the Wall for Justice since 1952 and will not come down until his time on this earth is up. What a dedication, what a commitment, what a man and what a life.

HONORING CAPTAIN TIMOTHY A. BROWN

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the life and legacy of Captain Timothy A. Brown, a Merchant Marine who served in the Vietnam War and a leader in Maryland's maritime industry. Captain Brown served as International President of the Masters, Mates & Pilots for more than two decades before passing away at the age of 73 while living in Maryland.

Raised in both Ohio and Florida, Captain Brown graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 1965. He then joined the Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P), splitting his time between shipping and attending Graduate School at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was awarded two degrees in 1974.

Captain Brown's first MM&P vessel was the SS *Fruitvale Hills*, sailing as a deck cadet on the SS *Del Oro* for Delta Steamship Lines. He first sailed as master aboard the *Sealand Consumer* for Sealand Service Inc. in 1983. His last command as master was aboard the same vessel in 1991.

He then took on a leadership role with the MM&P as an insurgent candidate, later serving the organization as International President for six terms. Under his guidance, the badly-fractured organization stabilized.

Captain Brown was a passionate advocate and masterful negotiator for the MM&P membership. Thanks to tireless efforts, Captain Brown expanded and improved the healthcare plans offered to members, pensioners and their families.

Upon retiring in 2013, Captain Brown left the organization with a reputation for its professionalism and unity.

Friends describe Captain Brown as generous, thoughtful and open-hearted. He was considered a mentor and father-figure to many young mariners and MM&P staff.

While too numerous to mention in their entirety, Captain Brown's awards and accolades include the Admiral of the Ocean Seas Award and the Father Lalonde Spirit of the Seas Award. He was also admitted to the Port of New York and New Jersey's International Maritime Hall of Fame in 2009 and was named a Commodore of the U.S. Maritime by order of President Barack Obama. He was named President Emeritus of Masters, Mates & Pilots by Delegates to the 84th MM&P Convention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to acknowledge the service and dedication of Captain Timothy A. Brown to his country and the entire maritime industry. I humbly express my condolences to his friends and family and wish them peace and comfort in the days ahead.

HONORING THE BIRTHDAY OF JACQUELINE HARPER DOLD

HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish my daughter, Harper Dold, a happy birthday.

Harper turns 14 years old today. She was born in Evanston, Illinois, and since that day in 2002, has kept me, her mother Danielle, and her younger siblings, Bobby and Honor, always on our toes.

Harper was named after Rear Admiral Robert Harper Shumaker, a true American hero that served with the bravest of men, dubbed the Alcatraz Gang, during the Vietnam War. Harper was also named after her Great-Grandmother Jacqueline D'Aversa who immigrated to America from Bari, Italy when she was only 8 years old.

Harper brightens every room she walks into and makes friends with everyone she meets. She enjoys sports and plays competitive soccer and lacrosse. Harper also has many academic achievements and especially excels in her Spanish class.

I am so proud of Harper and all the things she has accomplished—and I can't wait to see what she does next. Happy Birthday, Harper.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD SNIDER

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Ed Snider. Mr. Snider, the founder and owner of the National Hockey League's Philadelphia Flyers and chairman of Comcast-Spectacor, passed away this Monday following a two-year battle with cancer.

Although he was born in Washington, Ed Snider was a true Philadelphia icon. When, in 1964, the NHL announced that they would be adding six new teams, Ed was quick to see the potential for hockey in Philadelphia. His Flyers took the ice in 1967, at first to little fanfare. However, it did not take long for Philadelphians to latch onto their new team. By the time the Flyers won back-to-back Stanley Cups in 1974 and 1975, the city's love for the game of hockey had been permanently cemented.

Ed has been the face of the Flyers for nearly 50 years, and his passion for the game is reflected in the Flyers teams that took the ice for him. From the Broad Street Bullies to the Legion of Doom line, Ed's squads always represented the tough, blue-collar nature of Philadelphia. A member of the Hockey Hall of Fame's class of 1988, Mr. Snider has also been inducted into the United States Hockey Hall of Fame, the Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame, and the Philadelphia Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

Ed's contributions to the city of Philadelphia extend far beyond the doors of the Wells Fargo Center. His Ed Snider Youth Foundation provides after-school, recreational, and supplemental educational activities for children and families in Philadelphia. Thanks to his foundation, countless underprivileged children in Philadelphia and Camden have been afforded the opportunity to learn and play hockey at no cost.

Although he won't be here to see it, Ed's legacy will be on display tonight when the Flyers come to Washington for game one of their Stanley Cup Playoffs series against the Capitals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring the life and memory of Ed Snider.

PAT'S BACKCOUNTRY BEVERAGES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Pat's Backcountry Beverages for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year. As a thriving local business, Pat's Backcountry Beverages has developed

an innovative hybrid brewing technology that creates a nearly waterless brew concentrate that contains the same flavor of a microbrew. It develops microbrew concentrates and portable beverage carbonators that are environmentally-responsible and durable for backpacking and other outdoor uses. The company specializes in microbrews but recently launched a soda line as well.

Pat's Backcountry Beverages recently expanded in Wheat Ridge into a 17,300 sq. ft. facility, allowing the company to more than double their facility size workforce to 22 employees. The company expects to grow to 30 employees in 2016 and add additional manufacturing capabilities.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Pat's Backcountry Beverages for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

TRIBUTE TO JESSICA MALDONADO

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jessica Maldonado for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Public Affairs Manager at PolicyWorks, a Des Moines based consulting firm, Jessica is dedicated to providing her clients with high quality customer service as well as an outstanding product. She works hand in hand with organizations that are working to build grassroots supports and public awareness on a number of issues. Jessica is also a dedicated member of her community. She volunteers her time to a number of organizations including the Community Connect Mentor Program as well as Variety—The Children's Charity. Her willingness to serve others is a true testament to her character and to her Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jessica in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jessica on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—DEEPSHIKHA KARNA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Deepshikha Karna from Fresno, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Deepshikha is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Deepshikha was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Deepshikha and all of her hard work, and know she will make Fresno proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Deepshikha for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING LANIER HIGH SCHOOL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lanier High School. It takes its name from the late, distinguished, William Henry Lanier, a former President of Alcorn College and the first Supervisor of Jackson Colored Public Schools.

Lanier was born a slave in Huntsville, Alabama in 1851. He attended Tougaloo College, Oberlin College and Fisk University and received his B.A. degree from Roger Williams University. He served as president of Alcorn A&M for six years. Lanier taught school in Forest, Winona, Black Hawk, Carrollton, Yazoo City and Jackson. He was principal of the Robertson School from 1912–1929.

Lanier was first organized as a junior-senior high school in 1925, providing instruction for pupils from the seventh through the twelfth grades. A new chapter was added to our history when, on February 8, 1954, they transferred from the old Lanier at 136 East Ash Street and occupied the new Lanier Junior-Senior High School building at 833 West Maple Street. On January 27, 1972, the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered that Lanier School be designated as a center for the enrollment of 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students. In 1991, 9th grade students were added to the enrollment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Lanier High School.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: ''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 139 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1567, as amended). ''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 140 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4676, as amended).

E.L. KENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAMED A 2015 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to congratulate E.L. Kent Elementary School in Carrollton, Texas, for earning the distinction of being named one of the nation's most successful schools through the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

In 1982, the Department of Education established the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program to recognize schools for their high or significantly improved achievement. The program's goal is to identify the methods of thriving American schools to inspire others to imitate their successful practices.

In September of 2015, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan named E.L. Kent Elementary School as a 2015 Blue Ribbon School. Schools selected for national honors reflect high standards and accountability to their students and community. E.L. Kent Elementary School remains committed to enhancing the quality of learning for its students. The tireless work of the school's educators and families cannot go unnoticed, along with the hard work of the students who helped earn this award.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating E.L. Kent Elementary School on its accomplishment as a National Blue Ribbon School.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been

present, on Roll Call 145, I would have voted No.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 75th anniversary of MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa Bay. With much of the world engulfed in conflict in 1939, the War Department selected Tampa to house a new military air field which would go on to become MacDill Air Force Base. With Tampa's natural and strategic location, MacDill has grown and expanded over its 75 years serving as a testament to our nation's military might and Tampa's dedication to supporting the brave men and women of the Armed Services.

Officially activated on April 16, 1941, MacDill trained World War II airmen to fly and operate bombers including the B–17 Flying Fortress and the B–26 Marauder. Throughout the Second World War, MacDill saw thousands of servicemen train to lead the force in the dangerous skies over Europe. From start to finish, MacDill played a critical role in our country's great military achievement.

After World War II, the bombers gave way to fighters when MacDill became a Tactical Air Command. The turmoil in the 1960s again highlighted the strategic importance of MacDill's location. Throughout the Vietnam War and up until the first Gulf War in 1991, Tampa became a home for the F–4 Phantoms and later F–16 Fighting Falcons. Between 1979 and 1993, about half of all F–16 fighter pilots trained at MacDill Air Force Base.

Currently, MacDill houses the 6th Air Mobility Wing and 39 Mission Teammates, including U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command. MacDill is home to more than 13,000 military and civilian personnel and about 170,000 retirees live in the Tampa area and depend on the base for many necessary services. MacDill remains a vital economic driver and a source of good paying jobs for Tampa Bay residents. MacDill extends the global reach of U.S. air power through global air refueling and airlift operations and is a mission our community embraces.

In facing our nation's ongoing and future national security challenges, I am confident that MacDill will continue to play a vital role in protecting the safety of our families and all Americans. Tampa is proud to host and I am honored to represent MacDill Air Force Base every day and today on its 75 year anniversary.

HONORING LILLIE V. DAVIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Lillie V. Thompson Davis.

Mrs. Lillie V. Thompson Davis, a life time resident of Quitman County, MS, has a strong belief in God; she is a friend to education, a retired school teacher of 42 years, and lives in Marks, MS. She has a teaching experience of more than forty-two years which include seventeen years as assistant principal, Adult Education teacher, teaching in the prison system, and in the state of Indiana. She is a graduate of Rust College Holly Springs, MS and earned a Master of Education from the University of MS Oxford, MS. She was one of the first of four teachers who taught in an integrated school system in an all white school in Marks, MS. Mrs. Davis is an advocate for education and has tutored students in reading and math without a fee, and made generous donations to an educational program. She is sustaining her teaching career as an advanced adult Sunday School teacher at her membership church in Marks, MS.

She initiated the idea to build a much needed gym for the Quitman County Middle School, by the passing of a bond issue. The first attempt to pass the bond issue failed by 23 votes in November of 2013, but because of her fervent prayers, profound determination, and help of many dedicated hard working individuals, the bond issue of four million dollars was tried a second time and passed in November, 2014. She has been a member of Quitman County School Board since 2006, and has worked untiringly trying to bring about positive changes for the boys and girls of the Quitman County School System. And also since she wanted to share her knowledge of some undocumented history of the early life of Blacks in the Delta, she wrote a book entitled ''Drifting Into Falcon.''

Mrs. Davis is the mother of three daughters: Pamela, Jamesetta and Wanda, who is deceased. She has five grandchildren: Larry, Brandon, Darnell, Steve and Ashley; and four great grandchildren: Debrisha, Marian, Lauren and Laila.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Lillie V. Davis because she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

ESSAY BY LAUREN GROVER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Lauren Grover attends Clear Springs High School in League City, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

In this past year there have been numerous significant events that have transpired and while many of them have shaped our country as a whole; I believe that there is one in particular that has changed our country by stating something that for a while has been suppressed. The Supreme Court case Obergefell vs. Hodges or as many people know it, the legalization of same sex marriage. While many people believe that it has caused the people to choose sides, I strongly believe that it has actually allowed people to come together in different ways and has slowly started to allow for more tolerance. Before this case, many people believed that implementing rules such as ''don't ask, don't tell'' would take care of awkward situations but by allowing the LGBT community to have legal marriage opportunities it will bring a new outlook for a new generation. This takes equality to the next level by allowing anyone and everyone to feel that they have the same rights as everyone else. As the younger generations become older the tolerance of the entire country will be greater. In the beginning the freedom was strictly meant for certain people which allowed for slavery and segregation which was later understood as being wrong to look down upon a person because of their skin color, then it was woman's rights which later turned into woman becoming an important role model and no longer living in a ''man's world'', and now the right to choose who will be able to love who comes into play and allowing everyone to have the same opportunities to be who they want to be. Everyone has the right to choose which path they want to travel without the fear that society will not approve of their decision. This country has had many ups and downs in the fight for freedom but the shape is becoming less strict and more accepting. Not only has the country become more tolerant but also open minded. The world is changing and the country is moving along with it. The amount of freedom given is in the hands of the people and it is their choice what happens with it.

PRESCIENT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Prescient for receiving a Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

Prescient offers a fully integrated design engineering and construction solution, including 3D virtual model system, welding robots, and CNC drilling machines allowing for industry-leading levels of material efficiency. Prescient has worked on the Colorado Christian University residence hall and the Hyatt House in Belmar.

The Business Recognition Award is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year. Prescient is well-deserving of this award for their upcoming relocation and expansion of their manufacturing operations in Arvada which will bring 250 high-paying jobs

to the county and $8.9 million in capital investment to our community. The new facility is owned, and partially occupied by the Sorin Group, which has also decided to relocate their operations and 300-plus employees to Jefferson County.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Prescient for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

TRIBUTE TO KOLBY JONES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kolby Jones for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Director of Business Development at Ecosystem Services Exchange and the owner of a new restaurant, Kolby certainly does not find himself with much spare time. He has been tirelessly dedicated to improving water quality within the state of Iowa by promoting better practices that focus on drain tile line management. Kolby is also civically engaged in his community by chairing the Polo on the Green organization that has grown in its charitable donations each of the three years he has served. His work ethic and dedication to civic engagement is a true testament to his character and Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Kolby in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kolby on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE NIGERIAN GIRLS KIDNAPPING

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, today marks two years since the terrorist group Boko Haram abducted nearly 300 Nigerian school girls from their school in the middle of the night. Most of those girls have not been seen or heard from since.

Boko Haram has abducted, imprisoned, and violated countless women and girls in Nigeria and surrounding countries.

They have displaced more than 2 million people, including 1.4 million children, who have seen their homes destroyed, their families brutally killed, their lives torn apart.

In 2014, Boko Haram was responsible for nearly seven thousand deaths, making it deadlier than any other terrorist group, including ISIS.

But amid all the horrors in the world, the media and the global community have largely remained silent about Boko Haram's brutalities.

As a member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I continue to advocate for increased attention to Boko Haram, knowing that the atrocities perpetrated by Boko Haram could very well cause further instability throughout the region and have significant implications for U.S. national security.

Earlier this year, I called for a committee hearing to explore the issues around Boko Haram. We have a moral responsibility to work toward the elimination of this terrorist group. Inaction is incompatible with our commitment to human rights.

Those who choose to ignore the ongoing atrocities committed by Boko Haram look at Africa and see instability and strife. Those of us here today look and see these kidnapped girls, and we think about what would happen to our own children if they were taken from us.

It is time for all of us to see these girls not as a burden of another nation, but as a responsibility of our own. It is time for us to help secure justice on their behalf and their safe return to their families.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN LAWSON

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Stephen Lawson, Team Leader at the Modesto Vet Center, for his nine years of outstanding service to our nation's heroes and the Modesto community. Stephen has announced that he will be retiring on April 29, 2016.

In 1969, Stephen enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served as a Corpsman. After being honorably discharged in 1973 he found his home in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, in Merced California.

After his service in the military, Stephen's first job was at the Merced College Veterans Office where he found a position working with veterans returning home and was in charge of the Outreach and Peer counseling. In this capacity, Stephen provided outstanding service to many veterans who were in need of his help and guidance.

In 1984, Stephen graduated from Fresno State University with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Psychology. He found a passion in helping his fellow veterans and furthered his career by working as a Rehabilitation Counselor at a large counseling firm.

Eventually, Stephen started Lawson Professional Counseling Corp. Under his leadership, the company grew to 50 employees and 10 offices throughout the Central Valley. On November 19, 2007, Stephen began at the Modesto Vet Center and was appointed Team Leader. Stephen always aimed to assure that veterans received the highest standard of care.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Stephen Lawson for his many years of service and outstanding contributions to the veteran community as well as our country.

TRIBUTE TO ARTHUR ROBERT SEIDLER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the remarkable Arthur ''Art'' Robert Seidler who passed away in California on Wednesday, March 30, 2016. Art was a pillar of the community in Corona, California, and he will be deeply missed.

As a child, Art moved from Chicago, Illinois, to Glen Avon in Riverside County, California. After attending Riverside Poly High School, Art enlisted in the Army Air Corps in March of 1942, where he would ultimately fly B25 Medium Range bomber planes. In a highlight of his time in military service, Art was given orders to fly a brand new B25 from San Francisco to Hawaii, where it would be outfitted for combat. Art immediately flew the new plane and buzzed the house of his girlfriend Patricia Smith, who later became his wife and mother to his three children Kurt, Trudy, and Robert.

Following his military service, Art went to college at the University of Southern California where he obtained an undergraduate degree in business and a law degree. After passing the California State Bar, Art worked for the Riverside District Attorney and later joined the Ganahl and Ganahl law firm in Corona. Eventually Art started his own law practice alongside his son, Kurt, where he practiced law for the next thirty-six years. As an active member of the Corona community, Art was a dedicated member of the Corona Elks Club on East Sixth.

The way in which Art lived his life should serve as a reminder that the power of an individual with drive, perseverance and a strong work-ethic can do great things. His dedication to his work, family, and community are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I was proud to call Art my friend and I will deeply miss him. I extend my condolences to Art's family and friends; although Art may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remains and will never be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 141, had I been present, I would have voted Yes.

RECOGNIZING RECIPIENTS OF THE IOWA RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION'S FIRST QUARTER 2016 STARS OF HOSPITALITY PROGRAM

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Matthew Rumeliote, Pam Bartholomew, Cindy Papouchis and Donna Meacham with Northwestern Steakhouse, Mason City. These four outstanding individuals are recipients of the Iowa Restaurant Association's First Quarter 2016 Stars of Hospitality Program.

The Iowa Restaurant Association's Stars of Hospitality Program celebrates individuals who have made a career in the restaurant by working at a single establishment and/or for a specific company for more than 20 years. The Program recognizes the importance of these team members to their employer, while also celebrating the professionalism they display daily.

In a meeting in my Washington, D.C. office, I was told about the perseverance and work ethic of the recipients. The stories brought a smile to my face because wherever we go, in-state, out-of-state or abroad, Iowans are well-known for their hard work and pull yourself up by your bootstraps mentality.

I am also grateful to the numerous restaurants across our state and our nation that provide varied opportunities, good-paying jobs and upward mobility for millions of Americans. The contribution these businesses make to our market and culture should be acknowledged by all and remembered by lawmakers when we craft policy that impacts the restaurant industry. Overly zealous regulation that harms hardworking business also diminishes opportunities for hardworking individuals, those like Matthew, Pam, Cindy and Donna.

Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for these individuals, businesses and the opportunity to recognize American success. In our nation, if you work hard, you can accomplish much. We need to make sure it stays that way.

REED GROUP

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Reed Group for receiving a Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year. Providing extended leave management services for public and private organizations, the company helps organizations reduce the cost, compliance risk and complexity of employee absence. Its products and services address FMLA, ADA, state and other leave laws, worker's compensation and short-term and long-term disability programs.

Currently, Reed Group employs 530 people nationwide including 442 people at its headquarters in Westminster. The ever-changing business environment means more employers are actively managing employee absence as a way to improve operations and drive better results. Because of this, Reed Group is planning to add an additional 150 employees over the next 3–5 years. During 2015, the company hired 77 employees, which included nurses, IT specialists and customer service representatives. In 2016, due to a major acquisition, the company will add another 200 employees making it the second largest extended-leave management services provider in the nation.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Reed Group for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

ESSAY BY MARSHALL FOSTER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Marshall Foster attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

This past year, President Barack Obama signed a nuclear agreement with Iranian leaders and other world leaders that would lift economic sanctions off of Iran in return for Iran's compliance concerning nuclear activities. This deal was put into place under the extremely dangerous mindset that a bad deal is better than no deal. President Obama and his administration have basically written a large check to a corrupt Iranian government, a government that funds and harbors terrorists, in return for their compliance with the rules they are already supposed to be following.

This agreement severely weakens our great country and empowers Iran. We know that Iran is a radical Islamic state and yet this deal legitimizes Iran's nuclear program. We are now allowing Iran to continue to enrich uranium, after years of insisting they cease. The deal also allows Iran to keep over 6,000 centrifuges, something that will accelerate their capability to enrich the uranium. President Obama's promise that ''if Iran cheats, the world will know it'' is an empty one. Iran has proven time and time again that they have no problem violating agreements when it proves beneficial to them. Our inspections will most likely prove to be too little, too late to stop their illegal activities. In short, the deal provides only limited and unenforceable restraints on Iran's nuclear advancements while at the same time providing them with relief of economic sanctions.

The world is watching. This deal makes the United States of America, the country who should be viewed as the greatest power in the world, look weak. We have made a deal with a country led by a man who refers to us as ''The Great Satan'' and funds the terrorist groups that call for the destruction of our nation. Iran has continually shown that they do not want to establish peaceful relations with the United States while they are fighting their ''Holy War'' against the West. We are giving power to a country who is by most seen as our most unpredictable and biggest nuclear threat. Our president and his administration have jeopardized the safety of our own country, as well as the safety of our allies. However, when being optimistic, it is possible that this display of weakness shown by the current president will show the American people that we need a stronger and smarter Commander in Chief.

HONORING JERUSALEM OUTREACH CHILD & ADULT LEARNING CENTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Jerusalem Outreach Child and Adult Learning Center in Charleston, MS. It is locally referred to as JOCI (Jerusalem Outreach Center Incorporated).

JOCI was established as a nonprofit organization in the year 2000. JOCI was one of the partners in a county wide effort to provide service to citizens living in hard to reach and underserved communities in Tallahatchie County like Paynes and Glendora. JOCI's goal is to meet the educational and health and social welfare needs of both children and adults regardless of race. Their partner Glendora Economic and Community Development Corporation (GECDCo) focused on the development needs of the communities like housing, recreation, jobs, and more.

In order to achieve the above goals JOCI hosts health fairs and provides a long list of services. The services include, but are not limited to: personal counseling, referrals to outside resources, depending on the issue; social

therapy for special needs clients; child care; after school care and services; educational classes; tutoring; and more. Since 2000, JOCI's record of achievement has attracted new partners to their effort: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute, Quality Stars, the Department of Human Services, and the Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance (TELA).

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Jerusalem Outreach Child & Adult Learning Center in Charleston, MS for their work in those hard to reach communities in Tallahatchie County, MS.

TRIBUTE TO NOREEN OTTO

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Noreen Otto for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Vice President for Government Relations at Hy-Vee, Noreen has been committed to helping stores across the Midwest be as successful as possible. Her drive to continuously learn more about her company, how it works, and how she can better serve it has led to her success. She is also a dedicated member of her community, as she serves on three separate nonprofit boards as well as recently being appointed to the Jasper County Board of Review. Her willingness to serve others and dedication to community involvement is a true testament to her Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Noreen in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Noreen on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 37TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. CHARLES J. "CHUCK" FLEISCHMANN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, on April 10th, the United States and Taiwan celebrated the 37th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). This U.S. law, passed in 1979, codifies the enduring strength of the relationship between our two great peoples.

Taiwan is one of America's oldest and most dependable partners in Asia. The U.S.-Taiwan relationship is based on our shared values and our common interest in stability and prosperity in East Asia. Taiwan is a young democracy, but its people have built a prosperous and free society with strong institutions, worthy of emulation and envy.

I would also like to highlight that U.S.-Taiwan relations have been at its best since 1979, not only demonstrated at the government-to-government level, but also in grassroot and people-to-people connection. Just take our bilateral trade for example. Seven years ago this island of 23 million people was our 15th largest export partner. Now, Taiwan has grown to become our 9th largest overall trading partner and our 7th largest destination for agricultural exports. Also, Taiwan is the 5th largest export market for Asia in my home state of Tennessee. Moreover, Taiwan participated in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program in 2012. As a result, travel for business and pleasure from Taiwan to the United States jumped 35 percent in 2013 alone. With these robust and strong connections, I am not surprised that in the past three years there were 40 state legislative chambers that passed resolutions in support of our close relationship with Taiwan. I am proud that Tennessee was one of them and has the sister-state relationship with Taiwan.

As our focus on the Asia-Pacific increases, we will maintain our commitment to TRA and continue to support Taiwan's freedom, democracy, and economic prosperity.

IN HONOR OF THE WYOMING STATE SOCIETY, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. CYNTHIA M. LUMMIS

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Wyoming State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, which will hold its one hundred and first annual conference on May 20–22, 2016 in Thermopolis, Wyoming. Nearly one hundred members will attend, including State Regent Susan Haines as well as the national organization's President General Lynn Forney Young. As part of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, the Wyoming State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution is a volunteer organization comprised of women who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution. The Wyoming State Society has eleven chapters, with some five hundred members statewide. Its mission of historic preservation, promotion of education, and encouragement of patriotic activities improves the communities in which we live. These dedicated women contribute their time and resources working with school groups and veterans all over the state. They also welcome new American citizens at naturalization ceremonies held in Wyoming.

Each chapter in the State Society has a unique connection to the local community and its history. For instance, in Thermopolis, where this year's conference will be held, the local chapter is named for Chief Washakie of the Shoshone Tribe. In 1896, Chief Washakie, along with Chief Sharp Nose of the Arapaho Tribe, sold land encompassing the local mineral hot springs to the United States government. He insisted a portion of the sale be used to create an area for public use, which resulted in the creation of Hot Springs State Park in 1897. Each year, the Washakie Chapter holds The Gift of the Waters Pageant to commemorate Chief Washakie's gift of the hot springs. It is my honor to acknowledge this and the many other contributions to society the women of the Daughters of the American Revolution have made throughout history, and continue to make today.

HONORING MEMBERS OF THE WINTERS MIDDLE SCHOOL ART CLASS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we rise to recognize and honor the members of the Winters Middle School Art Class for their contribution to the designation ceremony of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen and women and sportsmen and women will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. We'd like to recognize the students of the Winters Middle School Art Class—Madison Duarte, Cinthia Garnica, Amaya Jimenez, Yesenia Rodriguez, Montana Maggenti, Victor Ayala, Leiayla Juarez, Jozlyn Rooney, Sofia Chavez, April Quezada, Jaime Mora, Alexis Biasi, Evan Barnett, Jaxson Davis, Crystal Cortex, Samatha Salgado and Asma Nuristani—for their part in the beautiful art work displayed at the designation ceremony.

EQUAL PAY DAY 2016

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, April 12, 2016, our nation marked Equal Pay Day, a day that symbolizes when, now four months into the new year, women's wages finally catch up to what their male counterparts earned during the previous year.

On June 10th, 1963, President John F Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act, which established the principle of equal pay for equal work for women in the workforce.

Yet, sadly, more than 50 years later, women on average earn 79 cents for every dollar earned by men.

African-American women fare even worse, earning only 64 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men.

Today, families rely increasingly on women's wages to make ends meet, and with less take-home pay, women have less money to cover the everyday needs of their families.

In the spirit of Equal Pay Day 2016, I call upon Congressional Republicans to work with Democrats in getting the long-overdue Paycheck Fairness Act, H.R. 1619, enacted into law.

Mr. Speaker, When Women Succeed, America Succeeds and our economy succeeds.

MAJORITY RULE ESSAY BY NANDAN MARWAHA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Nandan Marwaha attends Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: Majority Rule.

The idea that public policy makers have to justify their actions to the general public is one that was around long before the United States of America. It seems that the best way for this justification to happen is a basic utilitarian ethic, an ends-based methodology. It states that the action that should follow is one that promotes the greatest good for the greatest number. In other words, if the majority of people benefit from, or agree with, an action it ought morally be the one that is taken. This ethic applies to the majority rule system in the United States federal government, as utilitarianism clearly serves as a basis for this system.

However, we must place side-constraints on this theory in order to help the minorities, as we cannot just dismiss the ideas of 49% of the population. As a policymaker, I would take into account the views of the minorities in order to prevent their systematic oppression. Moreover, the perspectives of the minorities bring a new viewpoint to the table, and allow for government officials to solve societal ills. Thus, if was ever to be part of the political machine, I would accept the views of the majority alongside the views of the minorities as both have an important role and carry equal weights. I would serve as a trustee, combining the different views to form a more comprehensive plan that all people can agree with. I would also push for more collaboration between the minorities and majorities in order to make a compromise that reaches everyone's needs.

Not only does the idea of majority rule affect public policy changes, but also the governmental system itself. For example, in a presidential election, the candidate who produces the most amounts of votes gains all the electoral votes from that state, a ''winner-take-all'' system. This serves as proof that the majority rule system gives too much power to the 51%. Not only that, but in the House of Representatives we see that a majority is able to control nearly all the actions of the government. We cannot simply ignore the voices of the minorities; they still play a vital role in the government.

Though majority rule has its fair share of benefits, it also has an equitable amount of flaws. However, the government obligation is to serve and please as many of its constituents as it can, so majority rule serves as the best ideal for any governmental system.

TRIBUTE TO ZACH NUNN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Zach Nunn for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As a state representative, cyber entrepreneur at SimSpace Corporation, and as a Major in the U.S. Air Force, Zach certainly finds himself with little spare time. He works tirelessly in the Iowa Legislature to promote the State of Iowa and increase economic opportunities both domestically and abroad. Zach is also dedicated to improving relationships among public and private entities so we are able to protect businesses and government from cyber threats. His dedication to the State of Iowa and our country are a true testament to his Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Zach in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Zach on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING MR. HAROLD WARD, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Unsung Hero, Mr. Harold Ward, Jr., a resident of Winstonville, Mississippi.

Harold Ward, Jr. was born and raised in the small town of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, where he graduated from John F. Kennedy Memorial High School in 1999. After graduating from high school, Harold attended Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale, Mississippi, and Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena, Mississippi. Harold is a member of Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church in Mound Bayou. He is the son of Judge Harold Ward Sr. and Patricia White-Ward; the youngest of four children: Ms. Chauncila M. Ward (deceased), Dr. Kendria Ward, and Attorney Yumekia Ward; the grandson of the late Napoleon White Sr. and Mrs. Earline J. Hill, Reverend Henry Ward and Mrs. Iola Ward.

Mr. Ward was born with sickle cell disease. At the age of 25, Harold's oldest sister, Chauncila, passed away from complications of sickle cell disease. Sickle Cell Disease is an

inherited blood disorder that affects nearly 100,000 Americans. Sickle Cell Disease causes red blood cells to form into crescent shapes like sickles that cuts off the oxygen supply to the blood causing excruciating pain. Even though Mr. Ward suffers from this debilitating disease, he does not allow it to completely make him bedridden and on his good days he does volunteer work.

Always unselfish with his time and immensely involved with community service activities in the City of Mound Bayou and the town of Winstonville, Mississippi. Mr. Ward has been a constant inspiration to others.

In 2007, he began volunteering his services at Delta Health Center in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, where he assisted nurses with triage patients, filing documents, and read Christmas stories to patients' children. He also aided in the recruitment of patients to the facility by going door to door informing people of the services available at Delta Health Center. In 2014 Mr. Ward was lead sales representative with Humana and guided qualified individuals through the sign-up process for Obamacare.

Mr. Ward reorganized the town of Winstonville Volunteer Fire Department where he currently serves as Fire Chief. He encouraged people in the community between the ages of 21–35 to volunteer their services to the town by becoming a volunteer fire fighter.

On February 22, 2015 he received an award from Chi Mu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, in recognition for his outstanding contributions and dedicated services in the field of health.

Mr. Ward compassionately volunteers with the City of Mound Bayou, serving as assistant to Mayor Darryl Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this amazing Unsung Hero.

IN HONOR OF PEARLIE S. REED

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I pay tribute to an outstanding civic leader and public servant, Pearlie S. Reed. Mr. Reed passed away on Friday, April 8, 2016. A funeral service was held on Friday, April 15, 2016 11:00 a.m. at Old St. Paul Baptist Church in West Memphis, Arkansas.

Mr. Reed was born in Heth, Arkansas and attended the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Husbandry in 1970. He later earned a master's degree in Public Administration-Finance from American University in Washington, DC, in 1980.

Mr. Reed began his career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service while he was still a college student in 1968. In the years that followed, Mr. Reed rose steadily in the Soil Conservation Service from a soil conservationist, to deputy state conservationist, to State Conservationist for Maryland from 1985–1989 and State Conservationist for California from 1989–1993. Mr. Reed then served as Associate Chief after the Soil Conservation Service was renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In this capacity, he spearheaded the most comprehensive reorganization of the agency in its 60-year history. He also initiated the American Indian outreach effort for NRCS to work directly with tribes and provided leadership in the development and implementation of the Conservation Title of the 1996 Farm Bill.

In 1997, Mr. Reed served as Acting Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Administration before he was promoted to Chief of NRCS in 1998, a position he held until 2002 when he was named Regional Conservationist for the Western United States.

In 1996, then-Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman appointed Mr. Reed to lead the Secretary's Civil Rights Action Team to develop recommendations to advance civil rights within USDA. The Team made 92 recommendations and President Bill Clinton issued an order that all recommendations be implemented. As Mr. Reed stated, ''the work of the Civil Rights Action Team is recognized as having set direction for civil rights policy at USDA to ensure that every employee treats every customer and co-worker fairly and equitably, with dignity and respect.''

Although Mr. Reed retired from USDA in 2003, his strong and effective leadership was widely noted, and he was nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in May 2009. Mr. Reed also served as a leader of several USDA-wide initiatives, such as the chair of the USDA/1990 Task Force, chair of the USDA Agricultural Air Quality Task Force, and chair of the USDA National Food and Agriculture Council. His service included international conservation experience and his contributions in South Africa, Australia, and the International Soil Conservation Organization demonstrate the breadth of his influence.

For nearly four decades, Pearlie Reed was a familiar face at USDA and a driving force for progress within the Department. He acted as a voice for disadvantaged and minority farmers and worked tirelessly to advocate for the conservation of our nation's precious resources. Over the course of his career, Mr. Reed received numerous awards and commendations, including the Distinguished Presidential Rank Award for strength, integrity, industry, and a relentless commitment to public service; the George Washington Carver Public Service Hall of Fame Award; and the USDA Secretary's Honor Award for equal opportunity and civil rights; among others.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of working closely with Pearlie during my time on the House Agriculture Committee and through my ongoing service on the Agriculture Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. I have truly been blessed by his friendship, counsel and inspiration throughout the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in saluting Pearlie S. Reed for his outstanding public service and his influence on progress at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We extend our deepest condolences to Mr. Reed's family and friends during this difficult time and we pray they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

IN APPRECIATION OF THE SERVICE OF STEPHANIE BÁEZ

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Stephanie Báez for her dedicated service to the House of Representatives. Over the past six years, she worked for several Members representing her home state of New York and most recently the House Judiciary Committee, where she has served as the Communications Director for the Democratic staff.

A 2008 graduate of Stony Brook University, Stephanie majored in political science with a concentration in journalism. She began her career on Capitol Hill in 2010 as a staff assistant for Congressman Anthony Weiner of New York, where she was promoted to press assistant and legislative correspondent. She then served as a press assistant and legislative correspondent for the office of Congressman CHARLES B. RANGEL, and later served as the communications director for Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES. In 2014, she was hired as the communications director for the House Judiciary Committee Democratic staff.

As the spokesperson for the Committee, Stephanie worked tirelessly to disseminate the messages of the Democratic Members, create and maintain relationships with the press, manage the Committee social media accounts, and overhaul the Democratic website. She organized many high profile press briefings and coordinated with other Committees and their Members to ensure the press received timely and accurate information. Stephanie excelled at all of these tasks. She earned a well-deserved reputation for being dependable, and her expertise and energy were appreciated by staff and Members alike.

We thank Stephanie for her many outstanding contributions to the House Judiciary Committee and the U.S. House of Representatives, and wish her well as she returns to New York to work for the New York Economic Development Corporation. She will surely be missed.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS ANNUAL ''STAMP OUT HUNGER'' FOOD DRIVE

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) on their continued efforts to eliminate hunger in the United States by creating and sponsoring the ''Stamp Out Hunger'' Annual Food Drive, the largest one-day food drive in the country.

On the second Saturday of May, letter carriers across the United States collect food donations on their postal routes to deliver to

community food banks, shelters, and pantries. Each year, over 175,000 letter carriers in more than 10,000 cities and towns participate in Stamp Out Hunger, which collected 71 million pounds of food nationwide in the last year.

Stamp Out Hunger began as a pilot program in just ten cities. But soon it became clear that the food drive was a resounding success, and it was expanded nationwide. The program asks postal patrons to place a box or bag of food next to their mailboxes. The food is then picked up, sorted at postal stations and then delivered to local food banks by letter carriers.

In my state of California, The California State Association of Letter Carriers is among the top contributors in the nation to the food drive, collecting over 6 million pounds of food in 2015 alone. It is my hope that during the month of May, more Americans will consider becoming involved in the NALC Food Drive to help those members of our communities who face hunger every day.

I express my strong appreciation for America's Letter Carriers, and their tradition of community service and commitment to improving the lives of needy citizens. I also wish to acknowledge the NALC's organizing partners—the United States Postal Service, United Food and Commercial Workers International, National Rural Letter Carriers Association, United Way Worldwide, AFL CIO, Valpak, and Valassis for their assistance and support for the Letter Carriers Food Drive.

Finally, I urge each American to leave a can of food by their mailbox on the second Saturday in May. Together, we can Stamp Out Hunger and make a difference in the lives of millions of Americans.

IN HONOR OF MIKE WESTCOTT, YAVAPAI COUNTY'S TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my constituents, Mike Westcott, of Verde Valley, Arizona.

Mike Westcott recently received the teacher of the year award for outstanding work as a teacher at Mingus Union High School. Westcott has excelled in teaching sciences, specifically Chemistry, at Mingus Union High for 30 years. Mr. Westcott has contributed greatly to the advancement of his local learning community.

Mike Westcott's dedication to the Mingus Union community extends even further back than his teaching career. He is a third-generation native of Verde Valley where he himself attended and graduated from Mingus Union High School. He continued his studies at Yavapai College and then earned a Bachelor's of Science degree from Northern Arizona University. In the following years he received a MAT degree in Physical Science and a M.Ed. degree in Educational Leadership from NAU as well. After his own academics successes, Westcott directed his energy to better the students of Mingus Union High School. He has taught a number of various science classes but favors chemistry. He has also taught Advanced Placement chemistry for more than 15 years. Mr. Westcott has further contributed to the school and community as a teacher on administrative assignment and as an instructional coach.

Mr. Westcott is a prime example of a great educator, and the positive influence that he has on his students will resonate for years to come.

HONORING OFFICER BRIAN STROCKBINE

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Brian Strockbine, of the Third Congressional District, who is an 11-year veteran of the Evesham Township Police Department, and in his past three work shifts, has miraculously saved the lives of three civilians

On March 8, 2016, and March 17, 2016, Officer Strockbine responded to two separate instances in which a female was reported unresponsive. In both incidents, Officer Strockbine was first on the scene and immediately began CPR on the victims, eventually able to stabilize and save their lives.

Finally, on March 12, 2016, Officer Strockbine responded to a car accident with injuries. Officer Strockbine was first on the scene and noticed that the interior of the vehicle was filled with smoke and about to catch fire. Officer Strockbine broke the passenger side window and carried the victim to safety.

In a one-week period, Officer Strockbine saved three lives, and prevented the families of these individuals from an immense level of suffering and grief. He is a true public servant, who continually puts his life on the line to protect and serve his community.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously honored to have Officer Brian Strockbine as a member of their community, who has dedicated his career to putting the safety of others before himself, and has saved many civilian lives in the process. I am honored to recognize him for his service and to commend him for all that he has done for his community, before the United States House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HENRY FORD COLLEGE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AFT LOCAL 1650

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Henry Ford College Federation of Teachers AFT Local 1650. The members of Henry Ford AFT have been dedicated to the Dearborn community and Southeast Michigan since their inception, demonstrating the power of education in uplifting a community.

Henry Ford Community College was founded in 1938 as a public two year college in Dearborn, Michigan. Henry Ford College, as it is called today, has been a gateway to higher education for thousands of students, offering high quality programming at an affordable tuition rate. Throughout the years, Henry Ford College has been able to deliver top level education because of their excellent faculty and staff.

In 1966, full time teaching faculty, counselors, and librarians at Henry Ford College chartered the AFT Local 1650 to ensure that the staff at the college had a voice in the future of the college. Their devotion to fair pay and workplace rules, security, academic freedom, and quality have created a tremendous benefit for both the faculty and the students, and have contributed to the strength of Henry Ford College. In their first year, AFT Local 1650 became the first college faculty bargaining unit in the country to go on strike; this action instilled a level of solidarity among staff members that exists even today. In 2013, the faculty bargaining unit negotiated a new community college contract with the Henry Ford College board of trustees. This agreement is widely interpreted as a model community college contract agreement in the country and has set the precedent for other educators throughout the country to pattern their agreements on. Through their efforts, AFT Local 1650 has preserved a tradition of shared governance for the common good and has ensured that teachers, faculty, and students will always have their voices heard by the College administration.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Henry Ford Community College Federation of Teachers AFT Local 1650 and wish them many more years of success.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CONGRESSIONAL LEGACY OF MINNESOTA'S MARTIN OLAV SABO

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on March 13, 2016 former Minnesota Congressman Martin Olav Sabo passed away. For twenty-eight years Rep. Sabo represented Minneapolis, Minnesota and the surrounding suburban communities in the U.S. House. He was a giant of a legislator, an exceptional public servant, and a man I respected tremendously.

It was my profound honor to serve with Martin during the final six years of his career. He was liberal, smart, and his values reflected the very best of Minnesota's traditions and heritage. In Congress, Martin was reserved, but when he spoke the room went silent because everyone knew something worth hearing was about to be said. Martin was truly an experienced and astute legislator.

In 1960 Martin Sabo was first elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives at the

age of 22. Over his eighteen year career as a state legislator he served three years as minority leader and six years as the Speaker of the House. He was elected to Congress in 1978 where he immediately was appointed a member of the House Appropriations Committee—an impressive and very significant status.

In the early 1990s Rep. Sabo served as the House Budget Committee Chairman and is credited with guiding the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1973 through the House. This historic legislation set the country on a course that resulted in a federal budget surplus.

Over his career Martin Sabo's work on behalf of Minnesota transformed our state and helped create the economic success experienced by the Twin Cities today. After Martin's delivered funding the Hiawatha light rail transit line in Minneapolis, I had the privilege of working with Martin to secure the Central Corridor light rail transit line that has now connected downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis. This infrastructure investment is transforming the Twin Cities and it all started with Martin Sabo's sage guidance and his ability to take ideas and turn them into tangible projects.

Martin was well known for being a quiet Norwegian. He loved baseball and especially the Minnesota Twins. He was also one of the kindest of souls.

When Martin left Congress at the end of 2006 we lost an effective and wise public servant. Now, Minnesota has lost the last of a generation of citizen legislators who was always respectful, civil, and true to his values. In other words, we've lost a good man.

My deepest sympathies go out to Sylvia Sabo, Martin's wife of fifty-two years, along with their daughters Karin and Julie, and their many grandchildren.

SKYWRITER MD

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Skywriter MD for receiving the Innovative Technology Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Innovative Technology Award is given to a company that is on the forefront of new and advanced technologies including the industries of aerospace, aviation, bioscience, energy, outdoor recreation and apparel, among others. As a startup, Skywriter specializes in electronic medical record (EMR) technology and provides a much-needed service for providers that have lost EMR documentation. The company developed a software tool that offers real-time communication and connectivity with virtual scribes, who serve as an extension of a physician's arm throughout the patient visit. Skywriter helps providers navigate the EMR, enter data and execute other tasks as directed. The user interface supports direct and indirect interaction throughout the patient visit, while non-intrusive presence of Skywriters enables a more personable patient-physician encounter.

Skywriter recently expanded its operations by adding a second location in Westminster's Westmoor Technology Park. The company leased 16,000 square feet and brought 120 jobs to Jefferson County. The company predicts to grow to 600 employees in the next three years.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Skywriter for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

HONORING NORTH PANOLA HIGH SCHOOL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable school, North Panola High School of Sardis, Mississippi and the great leadership it is under.

North Panola High School is a rural high school situated on the eastern edge of the Mississippi delta. For many years the high school has been a part of a school district that had been plagued by low test scores, violence and a negative school culture. The school district had been taken over by the state several times due to year after year of low test scores.

In July of 2011, Robert King, Conservator of the North Panola School District, hired Jamone Edwards as the principal of North Panola High School. Jamone Edwards, a graduate of Mississippi State University and The University of Mississippi, was the youngest principal the school had ever witnessed. He brought innovative ideas and worked tirelessly to increase teacher morale and create a positive school culture. Under his leadership and the staff's support, the school has made significant gains in the accountability model in which schools are rated. Prior to the new leadership, for many years the school was considered low performing and on academic watch. During his tenure, the school rose to Successful, which is equivalent to a C school. In the 2013–14 school year, Mr. Edwards led the school to its first ever High Performing Status, which is equivalent to a B school. This is a remarkable achievement as the school had never experienced such success and recognition.

Additionally, since 2010, the school has many successes to celebrate. The school's graduation rate was at an all-time low of 49 percent in 2010. Since that time, the graduation rate has risen to 73 percent for the 2013–14 academic school year. Currently, the high school is projected to have a graduation rate of 85 percent for the 2014–15 accountability rating. In addition, Algebra I and U.S. History subject area test scores have surpassed the state's average, and English II and Biology I state test scores are slightly trailing the state's average.

North Panola High School has also made significant improvement in preparing students for college and acquiring scholarships. In 2010, the mean ACT score was 14.8. Since that time, several students of North Panola High School have scored 20 or better on the ACT. In 2010, the high school graduating seniors had generated $150,000 in scholarship monies. In 2014, the high school graduating class of approximately 80 students received in excess more that $2 Million in scholarship monies creating more opportunities for our children to succeed in college and careers after high school.

In March 2015, North Panola High School received an award from the State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Carey M. Wright and the Mississippi Department of Education for closing the achievement gap between black and white students in the area of English/Language Arts and Mathematics. North Panola was one of the only predominantly minority high schools to be recognized with the Distinguished School Award. As a result, North Panola High School received $23,750.05 to further enhance the students' overall educational experience.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing North Panola High School for its dedication to serving our great state of Mississippi and country.

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN RATHJEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Susan Rathjen for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Vice President and Private Banker at Bankers Trust, Susan has worked tirelessly to keep her company ahead of the curve on technological advances, especially those that can provide a smoother customer experience. She has also been dedicated to finding the best and brightest employees to help move the company forward. Susan is also passionately involved in advocating for those who suffer from mental illness and serves on the board of Goodwill Industries of Central Iowa. Her dedication to her work as well as to her community is a true testament to Susan's Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Susan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the

United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Susan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

THE RISE OF ISIS ESSAY BY MELISSA LEE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Melissa Lee is a student from Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: The rise of ISIS.

The United States has always been wary of the Middle East. With an almost decade-long occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan in addition to sanctions on Iran, America has attempted to delicately balance prevention of future attacks as well as peaceful relations with other world leaders. The U.S. has experienced unstable footing in this particular area due to untimely action and a lack of understanding of Middle Eastern culture. A series of terrorist attacks in Paris last year became a new spark to a longstanding debate of how to protect the nation, establish justice, and promote healthy ties with other countries. The attacks caused the U.S. to rethink its position on issues such as immigration and foreign policy. Though the bombings were tragic and a forever reminder of the darkness of human nature, they ignited a healthy dialogue about the future of America.

On November 13, 2015, three teams of radical men purportedly aligned with ISIS launched six attacks in and around Paris. One hundred thirty people were killed and many more injured. As the world watched the bloody scene unravel, many questioned the effectiveness of America's foreign policy. Should the U.S. crack down on the Islamic State and increase support for rebels fighting this extremist group? Or should it avoid interfering with the Middle East so as not to arouse anger or hatred towards America? Foreign policy assurances intended to assuage these fears proved empty as they turned out to be mere words than action. However, nobody raised an uproar; the Middle East seemed too far away and the carnage of terrorist attacks was too distant from the comforts of American life. But the U.S. received its wake-up call on December 2, 2015. A radicalized health department employee accompanied by his wife opened fire at a holiday party in San Bernardino, killing 14 and seriously injuring 22 people. The attackers had been inspired by foreign terrorist groups and had committed to jihadism. Suddenly, Americans realized the growing threat of extremists in the Middle East and the extent of their influence on Muslims around the world.

The Paris attacks followed by those in San Bernardino made it clear to a growing number of people that the danger of radical jihadists is not a distant problem. Many still want to turn their heads away from the tangled web of terrorism, corruption, ineffective peace talks, and false promises encountered overseas. But as Americans have observed acts of terrorism grow closer and closer to home, they are confronted with the emerging reality that, unless the U.S. takes action promptly, these threats will travel to its shores and mature into a monster of evil, killing the innocent and having no mercy upon those who do not hold the same beliefs as the terrorists.

DC GRAY'S BASEBALL TEAM

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the DC Gray's baseball team for being accepted to run Major League Baseball's (MLB) Reviving Baseball in the Inner City (RBI) Washington, D.C. program. The new initiative, ''DC Grays RBI,'' will be a free middle school summer baseball and softball program for kids living in underserved communities in the District of Columbia.

The DC Grays is a talented collegiate summer baseball team that, in addition to competing in the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League, strives to engage inner-city youth and their families with baseball. Their mission is to be ''ambassadors for baseball'' in the District by running summer baseball camps and clinics for D.C. youth.

The DC Grays' partnership with MLB will further help its mission of providing disadvantaged youth an opportunity to learn and enjoy the game of baseball. The programs help motivate young players to stay in school and pursue secondary education. MLB's RBI program helps teach youth not only the importance of success on the field but also in the classroom and the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in commending the DC Grays for the important work it has done and continues to do in the community. We wish it luck in continuing to inspire and engage disadvantaged youth.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 142, between a pair of procedural votes on the rule for H.R. 2666, I left the floor of the House to meet with a group of constituents from back home. Accordingly, after our visit I went back to the floor as quickly as I could, but when I returned time had expired.

Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

37TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT (TRA)

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a very important day in U.S.-Taiwan relations. April 10th marked the 37th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). This important statute has been critical in defining the diplomatic, economic, and strategic relationship we have enjoyed with Taiwan over the last four decades. In 2015, Taiwan became the United States' ninth largest trading partner. The TRA has strengthened our relationship and helped to encourage a particularly strong economic partnership.

On March 30, 2016, Taiwan President Ma gave a speech at the American Chamber of Commerce in Taipei (AmCham) Hsie Nian Fan celebration. In his speech, President Ma pointed out that, in the U.S.-based Global Finance magazine's ratings of the world's richest countries from November of last year, Taiwan ranked 19th out of 185 countries worldwide. That put Taiwan right behind Germany, and far ahead of countries like France, Great Britain, Japan, and South Korea. And in the 2015 global competitiveness ratings published by the Institute of Management Development (IMD), based in Lausanne, Switzerland, Taiwan ranked 11th in the world, and third in the Asia-Pacific Region. Taiwan has created a thriving and innovative economy that most countries envy.

The growth of Taiwan is a living, breathing example that trade benefits humanity—and not just economically. President Ma highlighted the East China Sea Peace Initiative, which aimed to address sovereignty disputes in the region in 2012. Subsequently, in 2013, Taiwan signed a fisheries agreement with Japan. Both nations maintained their sovereignty while enhancing fishing rights, which resulted in a triple yield of catches. And that's good for a world in which the demand for fish keeps rising.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to a continuing successful cooperation between the United States and Taiwan. I am also confident that if we continue to enhance our economic relationship, this dynamic partnership that we've built together will not only last but also thrive in the future, working alongside one another to, as President Ma quipped, realize the day in which ''The only one party which is not happy is the fish.''

HONORING MEMBERS OF THE WINTERS MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND AND CHOIR

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we rise to recognize and honor the members of the Winters Middle School Band and Choir for their

contribution to the designation ceremony of the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument by President Barack Obama on July 10, 2015.

This outstanding accomplishment was made possible by the tireless work of countless advocates. Their commitment to engaging friends, colleagues, local residents, businesses, stakeholders across the country, and policymakers in a coordinated effort to achieve permanent protection was critical to the establishment of the Monument.

Now, the Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument may be counted among the hundreds of pristine parks across the country that represent America's most treasured public resources. The region's unique geological formations will play host for the world's scientists for years to come. Centuries-old archeological sites will draw curious historians and researchers as they piece together the stories of generations past. And avid bikers, hikers, campers, horsemen and women and sportsmen and women will be able to enjoy this landmark that is now forever open and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts from Northern California and beyond.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument serves as proof of the value of the Antiquities Act and the power of the Executive to protect these lands in the face of inaction by Congress. After extensive input from interested parties and substantial evidence of this region's value, the Obama Administration honored the support of stakeholders, and the gravity of conservation.

The legacy of public lands is one of the most important we can leave for future generations. The Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument is a critical piece of a preservation system that stretches from the Hawaiian Islands to the Maine Coast. We'd like to recognize the students of the Winters Middle School Band and—Jose Montes, Silverio Magallones, David Rivas, Katie Johnson, Melina Mora, Jasmine Moore, Kamila Mora, Melesio Perez, Arthur Cueva, Rylie Schroeder, Easton Rivera, Paige Davis, Karina Echeverria, Joseph Aguiar, Emmett Edman, Braydon Winslow, Erika Contreas, Josef Iten, Victoria Banuelos, Fatima Guzman, Jacqueline Mendoza, Veronica Soria, Jason Lichwa, Alejandra, Junez, Emily Aguiar, Maximiliano Reyes Barajas, Haley Compton, David Morris, Elle Palmer, Garrett Matheson, Kevin Garcia, Christian Sponsler, Alan Chavez, Molly Moore, Donovan Melendez, Lauren Gomez, Katie Medina, Mallory Layne, Ethan Berg, Emily Hoag, Valeria Ceja, Trinity Sponsler, Juan Blanoc, Ulises De La Cruz, Rose Kakutani, Stephanie Angel Lopez, Alex Herrera, Celeste Garcia, Victor Meledez, Lorenzo Arce, Jose Figueroa, Marcos del Toro, Lillian Wirth, Katie Pelletier, Kaylee Smith, Sierra Berry and Haley Archibeque—for their role in the Winters Middle School Band and Choir and their outstanding performance at the designation ceremony.

ROBERT GEHLER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Commerce City Attorney Robert Gehler for his decades of service to the City of Commerce City, Colorado. For over forty years Mr. Gehler has been active within the City, including helping to draft the city charter.

Originally from South Dakota, Mr. Gehler came to Colorado as a member of the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps at Rocky Mountain Arsenal in 1964. In 1965, ready to leave the Army, Mr. Gehler passed the Colorado Bar and joined the firm of Berger and Rothstein, whose office was just outside the west gate of the arsenal. He served as Assistant County Attorney for Adams County from 1965 to 1968. In January of 1968, he was sworn in as City Attorney at the request of then-Mayor Eli Koff. In 1970, residents voted overwhelmingly to become a home rule city, instead of a statutory city, and the process of adopting a city charter began. The charter, which guides how local government functions, was approved on its first vote but has only been amended five times since its adoption—one of the City's most memorable legal achievements.

I extend my deepest thanks to Robert Gehler for his service to the community. Thank you for your continuous dedication to serving the constituents of Commerce City, Colorado.

HONORING MASTER OF ARMS 1ST CLASS CARL S. RANDOLPH ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE NAVY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Master of Arms 1st Class Carl S. Randolph. He will be retiring from the Navy on May 1, 2016 after 22 years of dedicated service to our nation.

On July 10, 1995 Mr. Randolph joined the U.S. Navy and reported to Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Illinois. After graduating from recruit training he attended Ships Serviceman Class A School where upon graduation, MA1 Randolph was assigned to the USS *Russell* DDG 59 in Pearl Harbor, HI. In 1996 and 1998, Randolph was deployed to the Northern Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Northern Watch. During his time assigned to the USS *Russell*, Petty Office Randolph received numerous awards which included: a Maritime Unit Commendation, a Navy Unit Commendation, and a Meritorious Service Medal.

On March 20, 2000, MA1 Randolph reported to NTTC Pensacola, FL for Aviation Machinist Mate Class A School. After graduation, MA1 Randolph received orders and was then assigned to VF–211 at NAS Oceana in Virginia Beach, VA. MA1 Randolph was assigned to the USS *Stennis* CVN 76 and was deployed to the Northern Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Northern Watch. In August 10, 2001, MA1 Randolph was honorably discharged from active service duty to attend college. On December 18, 2004, MA1 Randolph graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree, in Criminal Justice and a minor concentration in Sociology, from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. MA1 Randolph began his employment as a Federal Police Officer for the Department of Veterans Affairs in St. Louis, Missouri, after graduation from college.

MA1 Randolph was voluntarily mobilized to Bagram Afghanistan for a Detainee Operation mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on October 15, 2007. During this deployment, MA1 Randolph earned his Aviation Warfare Specialist Pin from VAQ 134. MA1 Randolph had numerous responsibilities during his deployment including: cell guard, escort guard, segregation cell guard, and main floor NCO.

MA1 Randolph was assigned to COMNAVFORKOREA Det D on February 7, 2012. Then on November 6, 2014, MA1 Randolph was assigned to NSWDG in Virginia Beach, VA. From there he was deployed to support AFRICOM and returned back to COMNAVFORKOREA Det D in November of 2015. Additionally, MA1 Randolph has completed numerous Navy schools: Small Arms Marksmanship Instructor, Security Reaction Force Advanced, Non-Lethal Weapons Instructor, Anti-Terrorism Training Supervisor, Reserve Career Information, Beamhit Instructor, and Security Reaction Force Basic.

Since September of 2009, MA1 Randolph has been employed as an Inspector for the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Protective Service. With this employment, MA1 Randolph oversees the law enforcement of all federal buildings in the states of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa. The primary assignment location for MA1 Randolph is the St. Louis, MO area.

There are numerous professional schools that MA1 Randolph has graduated from; including: Department of Veterans Affairs Police Academy, Federal Protective Service Advance Individual Training Program, Department of Homeland Security Active Shooter Threat Instructor Training Program, Federal Protective Service Contract Officer Technical Representative, and the Federal Protective Service Electronic Control Device Instructor training.

MA1 Randolph has received many personnel awards including: Letter of Commendation from Rear Admiral G. R. Jones Commander of Amphibious Forces U.S. Seventh Fleet, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Navy Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Unit Commendation Award Ribbon, Afghanistan Service Medal, Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist Pin, and the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

With this retirement, MA1 Randolph can now spend more time with his family which includes: his wife Terri, 11-year-old son William, and 5-year-old daughter Katherine.

I ask you to join me in recognizing MA1 Randolph on his retirement after 22 years of commitment to his country, community, and state.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. ANNETTE G. KRAMER

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, Annette Kramer, formerly of Detroit, and the youngest of eight children, was a remarkable, courageous woman who spent most of her life in the service of others, yet she never sought recognition or spoke of her deeds or accomplishments. A Marine wife and mother for more than 35 years, Annette lived a life of quiet sacrifices and countless hardships yet her generosity and selflessness knew no bounds as evidenced so many times throughout her life. She was extremely proud to be a part of the Marine Corps family, stoically supporting her daughter and husband through numerous deployments into harm's way. A woman of integrity, honor and fierce loyalty, Annette chose not to ignore the needs of those around her and was always there to lend a helping hand. For more than two decades, Annette served as a mentor to her friends and other military wives by helping them navigate through a wide array of local and military cultures, address family requirements, and provide help to those in need of counseling and support. Annette supported numerous combat Wounded Warriors and their families during their recovery phases at both Walter Reed and Bethesda Military Medical Centers and spent countless hours providing support and assistance to the wives and families of fallen Marines. She continually gave a helping hand to Veterans of all services and found time to volunteer at her local ASPCA helping animals in need. Annette was a life member of the VFW Ladies Auxiliary, an Honor Flight volunteer, and was active and respected throughout her local community.

In the aftermath of 9/11, Annette spent long hours working at the Pentagon crash site as a volunteer member of the Pentagon Search and Recovery Task Force night shift, after working her regular day job. Receiving, organizing and distributing necessary supplies and equipment to task force personnel, Annette ensured that everyone had what they needed to complete their arduous tasks.

In 2003, during the early days of the Iraq war, there were equipment shortfalls for our warriors going into combat. Tirelessly ambitious, Annette organized several fund raising drives in order to send hundreds of much needed hydration systems to forward deployed Marines in Iraq. This effort was well received and had a very positive impact on combat forces conducting operations throughout Iraq. Over the years, she frequently helped organize and participate in drives supporting our deployed military personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq with equipment, care packages and other services to enhance capability, morale and let the brave men and women fighting for our freedom know that their sacrifices did not go unnoticed.

Every December for more than a decade, Annette helped with the laying of wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery. A proud American, upon returning home from Arlington, she would be filled with emotion having spent the day on hallowed ground in the company of so many fallen heroes.

A docent at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Annette was adored by the staff and visitors alike, resulting in the museum generously installing a permanent name plate in her memory in their rotunda.

Annette was highly regarded at all levels, from homeless Veterans to senior leaders, because she truly cared about those who served and her community. Although Annette left this world prematurely, her memory will endure in the many hearts of those who were fortunate to have known her. Annette was interred in Arlington National Cemetery on October 26, 2015. More than 250 of those whose lives she touched attended her memorial service and interment ceremony, from military professionals representing all the armed services, to civilians from all walks of life. They traveled from throughout the U.S. as well as overseas bases to honor her.

Annette Kramer was a shining star who gave so much to her family, those who served and this great nation. Her family, friends and the military community will miss her dearly and honor her as a valiant American.

IN RECOGNITION OF LORI WRIGHT'S RETIREMENT

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Lori Wright, who is retiring after 20 years of dedicated public service to the City of Highland Village, Texas. The community has benefited immeasurably from her unflagging encouragement, unfailing commitment to excellence, and from her attentive care to the city's council, staff, residents and businesses.

On January 3, 1995, Lori Wright began her career as a part time receptionist for the City of Highland Village. Her infectious personality and hard work boosted her through the ranks to administrative clerk by November of 1995. One year later, she advanced, yet again, to deputy city secretary. On March 1, 1999, she attained the position of executive assistant. She has capably provided support and continuity to three city managers during her career.

Mrs. Wright has fostered effective and consistent communication amongst the staff and beneficial dialogue between the city's administration and residents. Under her conscientious charge and in concert with her colleague Laurie Mullens, the Highland Village Business Association has grown into a vibrant organization to promote the city's business community. She has been instrumental in making the city's annual ''Salute Our Veterans'' luncheon a treasured event to honor local veterans. Each year, Mrs. Wright visits assisted living communities in the area to reach as many veterans as possible and encourage their attendance. She ensures that the luncheon operates smoothly and that every veteran present is greeted personally and treated with distinction. Mrs. Wright has worked closely with my district office to facilitate the public announcement and recognition of the 26th Congressional Veteran Commendation recipients.

In addition to her many administrative duties, Mrs. Wright has also played an important role in the development of the Honor Our Veterans Monument, working with city staff and council in the development and construction of the monument, serving as the city's liaison to the Veterans Committee to determine the policies for review and placement of veterans names and developed the presentation ceremony.

My best wishes to Mrs. Wright upon her well-earned retirement; her positive influence, her excellent work and tireless devotion to the community will be greatly missed. During her two decades as a public servant, Lori Wright was an able ambassador for the city and effectively helped the city government operate seamlessly for its residents. It is my privilege to honor such an outstanding citizen in the U.S. House of Representatives.

PROFESSOR DON T. NAKANISHI

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Don T. Nakanishi, a renowned professor and pioneer of Asian American Studies, who passed away on Monday, March 21, 2016.

Dr. Nakanishi's vision and contributions to the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, the most renowned research and teaching institute of its kind in our nation, forever changed the national dialogue surrounding Asian Americans in politics and academia. His legacy will live on long past his 35 year tenure at UCLA through this Center and the community of students and mentees he guided.

Dr. Nakanishi was no stranger to injustice. His mother, father, and elder brother were interned during World War II as a part of the policy against Japanese Americans. While he was born after the war, Dr. Nakanishi was raised in the multi-ethnic neighborhood of East Los Angeles, California and attended Theodore Roosevelt High School. It was in this diverse community that he found his roots and sense of belonging. He eventually became student body president and was selected as boy mayor of the City of Los Angeles during his senior year.

While studying political science at Yale University, Dr. Nakanishi cofounded the Amerasia Journal, the top academic journal in the field of Asian American studies. He would continue his work on Asian American issues as a professor at UCLA, eventually becoming the Director for the Asian American Studies Center. It was at the Center that Dr. Nakanishi transformed the understanding of Asian American engagement in politics. When Dr. Nakanishi retired in 2009, the Center's faculty, students, and alumni worked together to establish an endowment in his honor. Every year, the ''Don T Nakanishi Engaged Research Prize'' is awarded to UCLA faculty and graduate students in Asian American Studies who are pursuing ''outstanding, community-based research.''

Throughout his distinguished career, he published over 100 books, reports, essays and articles about the political participation of Asian Americans and other minority ethnic and racial groups in the United States. His work influenced and contributed to the rise of Asian American participation in all levels of government and politics in the later part of the 20th century. In 1976, he began what is now known as the National Asian Pacific American Political Almanac, which lists every Asian American elected official across the nation, and has been called ''an indispensable guide to Asian American politics.''

Due to his accomplishments, President Bill Clinton eventually appointed Dr. Nakanishi to the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund Board of Directors, which administered a nationwide public education and research program designed to inform people of the history surrounding Japanese internment.

I was honored to teach the Asian American Contemporary Issues and the Asian American Women courses while Dr. Nakanishi was Director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. He was dedicated, insightful and compassionate, and I will always remember his incredible sense of humor, despite the seriousness of the many issues that we had to face.

Dr. Nakanishi was a devoted mentor to his students, a stalwart champion for Asian American scholars and activists, and a loving husband and father. The field of Asian American studies has lost one of its great leaders, and we will continue to honor his legacy and commitment to representation for many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO RYAN OSBORN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ryan Osborn for being named a 2016 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2016 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 640 business leaders and growing.

As the Director of Advancement at Dowling Catholic High School, Ryan has committed himself to improving the lives and education of his students. He worked tirelessly to bring funds to the school that allowed them to improve facilities and opportunities for each of the young people at Dowling Catholic High School. Ryan has also dedicated himself to his community through the Junior Achievement of Central Iowa program where he serves on the board of directors. His commitment to providing a high quality education for Iowa's young people along with his willingness to serve others is a true testament to his Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ryan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Ryan on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2016 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

THE RISE OF ISIS ESSAY BY KYLE CURTIS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Kyle Curtis attends George Ranch High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: The rise of ISIS.

The rise of ISIS in the Iraq/Syria region has changed a lot of aspects of America as a whole. First off, it has re-entered the US into a war-torn region it has worked so hard to remove its military from in recent years. Also, ISIS poses a terrorist threat, not only in the Middle East, but also internationally, as is evident with the recent attack in Paris. And the US must find a new way of dealing with ISIS, as they have a larger network of terrorists residing in Western civilization, and possibly the US, than did other organizations such as Al Qaeda, which was made up of more tribal Islamic extremists. Also, ISIS uses the social network and Internet to plan attacks and recruit followers and people to carry out their plans, which is difficult for the US Government to put an end to, as deleting or arresting those taking part in these ordeals would go against the freedom of speech all American citizens are entitled to. Furthermore, ISIS is located in a prime economic region, as there are vast oil fields in the areas under ISIS' control, which they can pump out of the ground and sell it for money to fund their organization.

So the US faces a dilemma; how can you combat a terrorist organization that is spread out across the world and may even reside in your own backyard. This has allowed some presidential candidates for the 2016 election to take center-stage, with Donald Trump going as far as saying he will ban all Muslims from entering the US and build a wall on the American border. Another problem caused by ISIS' rise is the displacement of millions of people in the region from their home. The Syrian refugees who are being taken in by Jordan by the millions may also be taken in by the US, but any person can be disguised as a refugee, then the US may end up taking in terrorists who could commit some very terrible acts on American soil.

Nobody knows what will come of the recent rise of ISIS, whether it'll become a major enemy the US will have to fight in a war, or if it will subside and die off. Only time will tell, and hopefully Congress and the US military will be prepared to do whatever they need to if ISIS rises to endanger us or our country.

HONORING ETHEL C. MANGUM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mrs. Ethel C. Mangum who is a native of Madison County. Many of her formative years were spent in the Virden Addition Area. She attended school at Walton Elementary and Brinkley High School. At Jackson State University she earned a B.S. and Masters degree in Social Work and Guidance.

For twenty-eight years she has been an active member of Farish Street Baptist Church and its E.B. Topp Missionary Circle.

Mrs. Mangum has done extensive volunteer work which included: teaching and reading at Powell Middle School; serving as Co-Chairperson of Lake Hico Eubanks Creek Neighborhood Association; working as an HIV/AIDS educator for the American Red Cross; working with children to prevent teenage pregnancy; and motivate them toward moral and academic excellence.

Mrs. Mangum has been a ''first'' in opening opportunities for others by becoming the first African American Woman to hold a professional position at Baptist Children's Village; the first African American woman to work for Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. Consulting Engineers; and for SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect). She was one of two females who integrated the lunch room at St. Dominic's Hospital.

Mrs. Mangum currently strives for excellence in the community through her position as Administrative Assistant for Ward 3.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Ethel C. Mangum for her dedication to serving others.

SPYDERCO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Spyderco for receiving a Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to companies that show growth in primary employment, sales and/or capital investment in the last year. Spyderco designs and manufactures innovative knives and knife accessories including one-hand opening, serrations on a folder, and a clip to attach a knife to a pocket. In the company's million-dollar testing facility, continuous testing enables the company to examine edge retention with a CATRA machine, look for rust development with Q–FOG, and test the force needed to open and close a knife. The company also repeatedly tests for stress, wear, optimal heat-treating and actively searches for higher quality, performance enhancing materials. Currently, the company has over 200 different products and produces knives across the globe in Japan, Taiwan, Italy and China.

Located in Golden, Spyderco recently expanded from 5,000 sq. ft. to 17,500 sq. ft. to keep up with increased demand for its products, as well as added 10 employees and $1 million in capital investment to Jefferson County.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Spyderco for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.